

Adrian J. Boas, *Montfort Castle, the Western Wing and the Great Hall. Preliminary report of excavations of the University of Haifa and the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East, August–September 2011*, University of Haifa, Society for the study of the Crusades and the Latin East and Zinman Institute of Archeology, Haifa 2012, 97 pp., ISBN 978-96-57547-01-4.

One of the most beautiful sites remaining in the Holy Land from the Middle Ages is the Montfort Castle (Starkenberg), located in the Upper Galilee in Israel. This castle is one of the better preserved Crusader fortresses. It was built by the Teutonic Military Order before the Sixth Crusade in 1227, and destroyed by the Mamluk troops led by the Egyptian Sultan Baybars in 1271. Montfort was the principal castle of the Teutonic Order in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in the 13th century and was built on the cliffs of Nahal Kziv (Wadi Qurain). The Teutonic brethren in the fortress took some of the administrative functions over from the other compound of the Teutonic Order in Acre. In addition, it probably served as the official residence of the Teutonic Grand Master (*Hochmeister*) during his stay in the Latin Kingdom.

In 1926 an expedition was organized by Bashford Dean from the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. The aim of the expedition was to carry out excavations at Montfort with the hope of recovering 13th century armor. The team concentrated on excavating the central, domestic part of the castle and the basement vaults below the Great Hall on the western side, and did not excavate the collapsed debris in the Great Hall itself. This place was called the Residence, the Master's quarters and the Ceremony Hall, as well as the Treasury of the Military Order, in the report published by Dean in 1927.

In 2011, following five years of surveying the entire site of the castle and the surrounding slopes, a team of archaeologists headed by Professor Adrian Boas from Haifa University in Israel, carried out excavations in the Great Hall with its two stories of vaulted chambers, during which they removed all the debris between the great octagonal pier at the center of the Great Hall and the eastern wall which divided this part of the castle from the domestic building. This excavation provided the expedition the opportunity to investigate and learn more about this unique part of the Teutonic castle.

One of the main discoveries of the archeological team was the dividing wall that separated the Great Hall into two sections. It seemed strange that such a roughly built wall should have been built here across the center of the hall. The wall was built directly on the floor of the Great Hall, and had clearly been constructed after the floor had already been damaged. Based on this, the team concluded that this

structure had been built before the destruction in 1271, probably due to a dramatic event which changed the Castle's surface – quite possibly the 1259 earthquake which caused damage in the area where the castle is situated forced local population to rebuild and repair the regional infrastructure.

This report is very important to the studies of the Crusader period as it presents main discoveries made by Adrian Boas and shares his thoughts about the building and construction methods of the castle, as well as about technological issues. This report enlarges our knowledge of the fortress' functions, adding detail to the important findings previously discovered in this castle, such as the limestone's ashlar, the ribs of the vaulting, the keystones, the sculptured and painted decorations, the glazed vessels and the stained glass.

The conclusion part of this report is also interesting. Boas discusses Dean's and Nickel's descriptions of the Great Hall, adding his own suggestions regarding its function, including the residence of the Grand Master during his visit in Montfort, a place for headquarters assemblies on various ceremonial occasions, or perhaps a place for the Castellán of the Montfort, which according to the Teutonic rule had to be protected in this important castle.

Undoubtedly, this important research and the other reports about the excavations in the Montfort castle must be continued and enhanced by historical background research. Some of the most important questions in my mind consider the role of the Great Hall during the general chapters and meetings of the Teutonic leadership and whether this was the place where in 1244 Gerhard von Malberg resigned his position of the Teutonic Grand Master? What was the status of this site during the Grand Master Anno von Sangerhausen's stay in the Latin East (1257–1261), during which, according the archeological report, the 1259 earthquake occurred? What was the military rule of this important structure during the Mamluk sieges in 1266 and 1271? These and more questions must drive the significant academic process which began over the last few years at the Montfort castle.

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Rafał Kubicki, *Młynarstwo w państwie zakonu krzyżackiego w Prusach w XIII–XV wieku (do 1454 r.)*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk 2012, 608 pp. + CD, ISBN 978-83-7865-883-8.

The presented study is a habilitation by Rafał Kubicki from Gdańsk University. It is the first monograph discussing the broad subject matter of milling and millers