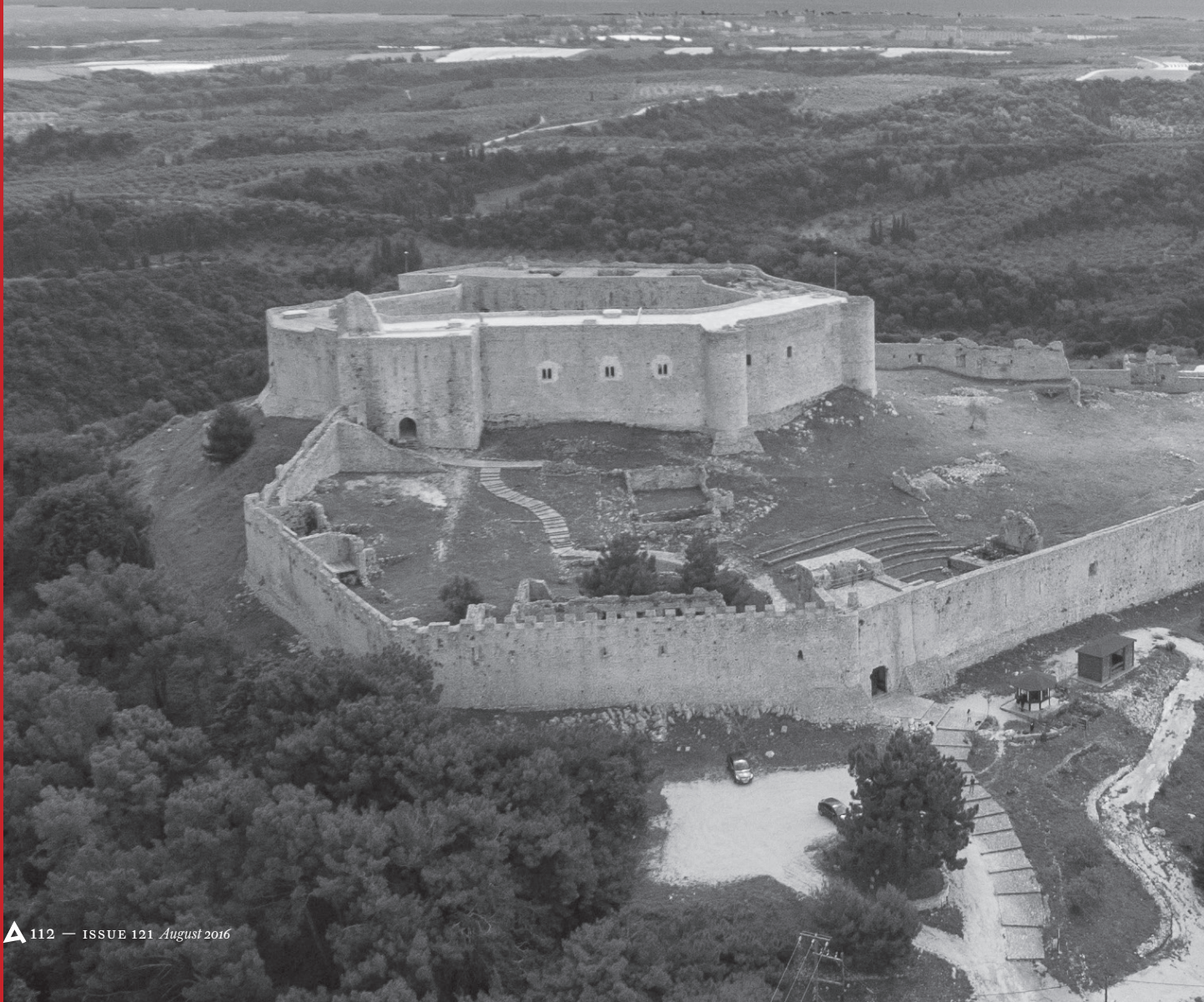


Chlemoutsi Castle, view from the NW. On the right : Projecting knob (boss) from the centre of a cross vault, carved in relief with man's face shaped out of leaves (c. 1225-1236).





ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

ILIA

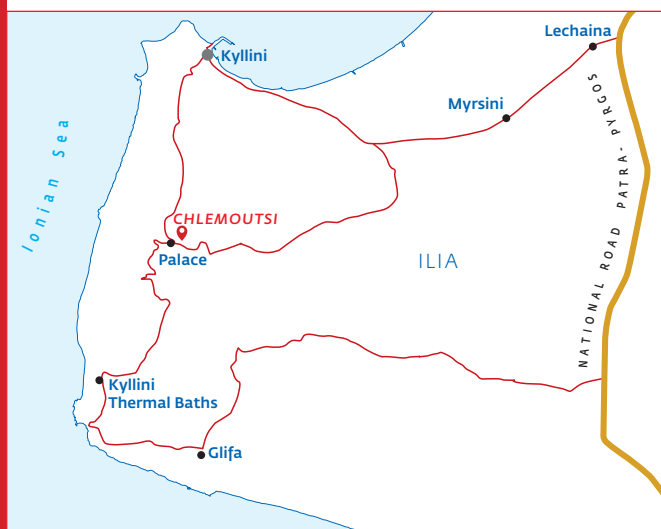
CHLEMOUTSI CASTLE

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Archaeologist



→ **Modern visitors reach Chlemoutsi Castle via the Patras–Pyrgos national road, covering a distance of 15 km through the villages of Lechaina, Myrsini, and Niochori. They approach the archaeological site by passing through the modern settlement of Kastro, which has developed at the foot of Chelonata Hill, approximately 300 m from the point where the fortress dominates the landscape.**



Map depicting the site of the castle in the greater area.

INTRODUCTION

The archaeological site of Chlemoutsi Castle is situated in the village of Kastro, in the Municipality of Andravida – Kyllini, of the Ilia Regional Unit, on the westernmost cape of the Peloponnese, between Kyllini and the Kyllini Thermal Baths. Chlemoutsi is built on the summit of Chelonata Hill, the region's highest point. From its prominent, strategic position it dominates the entire plain of Ilia, while overseeing southern Achaia, the Ionian Sea and the coast of Aitolokarnania.

The name

Originally built by the Franks, the castle was named Château Clermont or Clairmont by its founders. In Greek it is known as Chloulmoutzi, while the Venetians called it Castel Tornese. Today the name Chlemoutsi has prevailed.

Many theories have been expressed regarding the name's origins. It is believed among others that Clermont comes from the latin *clarus mons*, i.e. *renowned mountain*, or *shining/bright mountain*. The names Chloulmoutzi, Chlomoutzi or Chloulmoutsi are encountered in the *Chronicle of Morea*. R. Pococke believes Chloulmoutzi to be a Turkish name, in Buchon's opinion, it is a phonetic alteration of *Clermont*, Wasmer claims it has a Slavic origin and means *hill/height* (see: Chelmos), while D.I. Georgakas reckons it comes from the Greek word for *pale* (*chlomos*). A. Chatzis argues that the place name comes from *Chlomoutsis*, a family name, i.e. the land owned by Chlomoutsi. Since the castle's original name is French like its founders, we can argue that Chloulmoutzi is a Greek adaptation of the French name, which Bon also accepts as the most likely interpretation. Regarding the name Castel Tornese, this is directly connected with the Frankish mint of *deniers tournois* coins of the Principality that was, wrongly, thought to have been inside the castle.

The Castle's History

Chlemoutsi Castle, the administrative and military centre of the crusading Principality of Achaia, was the Franks' largest construction programme in the Balkans, a remarkable example of fortification architecture of the Crusades, during the time of Frankish rule in the Peloponnese. It is one of the few cases where the Franks prefer to build a new castle rather than modernizing and reinforcing existing fortifications with Byzantine or even more ancient phases of construction. This fortress-like Medieval palace is essentially an "implant" of French architecture, that



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1 Chlemoutsi/Clermont Castle,
dominating the plain of Ilia.

transfers French 12th and 13th century prototypes to the territories of southern Europe. At the same time, however, it assimilates influences from castles of the crusading Middle East and being a landmark has a catalytic influence on the local Byzantine architectural tradition.

According to the *Chronicle of Morea* (verses 2631–2720), Chlemoutsi is constructed between 1220 and 1223 by Geoffrey I Villehardouin, first ruler of the Principality of Achaia. To carry out the construction of the castle the Frankish ruler clashed with the Catholic clergy of Achaia, retaining ecclesiastical revenues which caused him to be excommunicated by the Pope. "The prince became enraged and ordered that all the lands and fiefs wherein they had holdings be seized. And he would not take anything at all for himself from the incomes of the fiefs of all the churches but he ordered that the construction of Chloulmoutsi be begun" (verses 2648–2653). The moment its construction was completed, Villehardouin sent word to the Pope that with Chlemoutsi he wished to protect the harbor and coast from the schismatic Greeks, thus serving the interests of the Roman Catholic church. The pope was convinced and revoked the excommunication reconciling Villehardouin with the clergy: "Now, for three years, the prince held the lands of all the churches, I tell you, of the principality, until he finished the castle of Chloulmoutsi... And the most holy pope, as soon as he was informed of this, straightway sent



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- 2 Marble funerary plaque of the princess Anna Villehardouin, daughter of Michael II, Byzantine sovereign of Epirus, third and last wife of William II Villehardouin (origin: Andravida, 1286).
- 3 Lead seal of the Knights of St John of Malta, 14th c.

absolution to Prince Geoffrey. When the prince saw the absolution of the pope, he was very happy and glorified the Lord" (verses 2654–2656 and 2679–2682).

Archaeological data, however, shows that despite its homogeneous character, Chlemoutsi was built in the 13th century in three successive phases. Its use as a fortress was not really what determined its final design. As an extremely luxurious construction its main aim was to function as a fortified palace and absolute symbol of the Frankish rulers' sovereignty. Chlemoutsi Castle flourished during the dynasty of the Villehardouins, particularly in the reign of Guillaume II Villehardouin (1246–1278). Its strategic position had always been its strong point, because it was of value to the Franks' ambitions as conquerors: "If by chance, the Franks were to lose Morea, they would win it back with this castle" (*Chronicle of Morea*, verses 2673–2674). The death in 1278 of William II was followed by a period of uncertainty and upheavals. Chlemoutsi was



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claimed by various members of the nobility in the violent struggles for succession to the sovereignty. It was initially inherited by Anna Agnes, wife of Guillaume II and daughter of Michael II, Komnenos Doukas, Despot of Epirus. The greatest conflict however broke out in 1313. Villehardouin's granddaughter married Louis of Burgundy, who as Prince of Achaia succeeded Philip of Taranto who had died without descendants. However, Villehardouin's other daughter, Marguerite, baroness of Akova, then arranged that her daughter be married to Ferdinand of Majorca, leader of the Catalans, who lay claim to the Morea in the name of his wife. Marguerite was accused of treachery for her action and arrested and imprisoned in Chlemoutsi where she died in February 1315. Ferdinand nevertheless remained undaunted and seized Chlemoutsi where he would remain till 1316, when Louis of Burgundy defeated the Catalans and the castle was reclaimed by the Franks.

In the early 15th century, Chlemoutsi passed to Carlo Tocco, Count of Cephalonia and Despot of Epirus, while in 1427 it was peacefully handed down as dowry to Constantine Palaiologos, after his marriage to Tocco's daughter. Palaiologos declared Chlemoutsi the official seat of the Despotate of the Morea and used the castle as a military and administrative centre to prepare his attack on Patras. A few years later, Constantine surrendered Chlemoutsi to his brother Thomas Palaiologos. Here, in 1454, the latter would imprison Giovanni, illegitimate son of the last prince of Achaia, Zachary II Centurione, who had rebelled against the Byzantines. In 1460, when the Turks invaded the Morea, Chlemoutsi was seized on their behalf by the Albanian Zagan Pasha, while in 1620 it was attacked and plundered by the knights of the order of St John of Malta. In 1687 the Venetians seized Chlemoutsi which they held till 1715 when it was reclaimed by the Turks, remaining in their hands till the Revolution of 1821. In the Venetian period, the castle had already lost its important role in the region's defence which is confirmed by the proposal made in 1701 by the Venetian engineer Francesco Grimani to demolish Chlemoutsi and build a new fortress at Glarentza. Chlemoutsi appears to have played some part during the Greek Revolution, since it had already been taken over by the Greeks in 1821. When Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt and his army plundered Ilia in 1825, the local population fled to Chlemoutsi. It was then to be considerably destroyed when invaded by Ibrahim and partly blown up. Despite its significance, the castle was abandoned over a long

period and suffered significant damage not so much by its occasional conquerors, but by being used by the locals as building material. For many years following Greece's liberation, the inhabitants of the village just below Chlemoutsi would remove stones and other materials from the castle and used for building their houses.

HISTORY OF RESEARCH AND INTERVENTIONS

The pre-excavation phase

Travellers (16th–1st half of 19th c.)

Chlemoutsi castle with its strategic and prominent position on the top of Chelonata Hill functioned as a landmark in the NW Peloponnese, despite the damage it had suffered over the centuries. Chroniclers, historians, scholars,



- 4 View of Chlemoutsi fortress , V. Coronelli, 17th c.
- 5 The gate of the inner enclosure prior to the interventions. Bon 1969.



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cartographers, diplomats, soldiers, engineers, travelers and writers, when approaching or passing through the region, mention the famous castle in their texts, describe its powerful structure, identify the place with historical events and talk about its passage through time to its gradual decline and abandonment. One of the first texts referring to Chlemoutsi is the manuscript of a journey made by Denis Possot from Venice to the Holy Lands who, on his way, visits the shores of Ilia in 1534 and the mighty castle which he calls Tornese. In 1574, the Tornese Castle appears on a map by Giovanni Camocio, while in 1619, its name is written on a map of the Peloponnese by the Flemish Johannes van Cootwijk.

The region is visited by Evliya Çelebi between 1668 and 1671. The Turkish traveller who attributes the castle's construction to the Venetians, mentions that Chlemoutsi was conquered by Bayezid Veli, it is a kaza and has a hundred guards. His description presents quite a decadent picture of the castle during the period of Ottoman rule: "In the inner fort is the house of the captain of the guard, the warehouses for ammunition, supplies and cisterns for water. Nothing else... Eighty stone houses with tiled roofs are built inside this wall, around the Mosque of Sultan Bayezid Veli. Outside the western part of the wall are two hundred houses of the Greek infidels, who are not allowed to enter the castle... Inside and outside the fort there is neither a market nor a bazaar, an inn, a hamam (baths), a school or a *tekke* (place of worship). It seems deserted...".

In 1675, the region is visited by George Wheler and Jacob Spon arriving from the island of Zakynthos, who mention the existence of the Tornese castle six miles from the coast and the Turkish village called Clemouzzi surrounding it. In 1687 Chlemoutsi is occupied by the Venetians. A. Locatelli describes how on August 3rd the Turks surrendered the historic bastion, essentially without a battle, leaving behind 34 cannons, while about 150 men of the Turkish garrison remained in the castle and were converted to Christianity. At about that time V. Coronelli also visits the region. Apart from his written account, the drawings of the castle that illustrate Coronelli's editions are extremely significant and since then have appeared in numerous reeditions, translations, later travel chronicles, historical writings and geographical work.

During Venetian rule, Chlemoutsi operates as the centre of the economic region of Ilia and consequently there are frequent references to it in official Venetian documents.

6 The royal chapel prior to its renovation. Bon 1969.

In his report of 23rd January 1690, Giacomo Corner, first governor general of the Peloponnese after it was conquered by Morozini, notes the shortages of the fort, which he describes as small, without any particular infrastructure and barely fit for habitation. The same tone is adopted in his successor Tadio Gradenigo's report on March 15th 1692. A report by the Venetian engineer Francesco Grimani, on October 8th 1701, confirms the decreased importance at that time of Chlemoutsi Castle in the region's defense. His proposal, not realized however, is for Chlemoutsi to be demolished, as it no longer serves the interests of the Venetians, being old, far from any harbour and too costly to be restored. In its place a new fort would be built on the site of Glarentza, near the sea and the islands, where lay the economic interests of the Serenissima.

From the early 18th century many Europeans wish to tour Greece. The location of Chlemoutsi Castle, adjacent to the ancient remains of Ilia and Olympia, the travellers' main destinations, results in its being referred to in most of the travel books and maps of the time.

In 1760, Richard Chandler disembarks in Glarentza and heading towards Palaiopolis in Ilia "leaves the town of Clemontzi or Clemouzzi on his right hand, above which, on top of a hill visible from Zakynthos, rises the Tornese castle". In 1798 François Pouqueville passes through the region, citing the abandoned Chloumoutzi with the village by that name on its perimeter, as well as the history of the castle's construction as handed down in the *Chronicle of Morea*. William Martin Leake offers us valuable information about Chlemoutsi, when he visits the region in 1806. Leake makes a distinction between Khlemútzi or Khlomútzi, the modern village at the foot of the Chelonata Hill, and the medieval Tornese castle. According to the traveller, the village's name originates either from the word *chlemos*, *chlomos* or *chelmos* which often describes small wooded hills with reference to the vegetation, from the Greek word *chloa*, while the castle owes its name to the *tornesi* or *tournois* coined by the Frankish princes. Leake believed that, in any other hands but the Turks', who did not appreciate its value, the strategically placed castle could be used to advantage as a significant military hub. He writes that although half ruined, it is still one of the most respected fortresses in Greece. Leake describes the fort's interior, while guessing from remains of icon paintings and testimonies of the locals, that at a later date it was turned into a monastery. Last he criticizes designs by Coronelli of plans of the castle



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because, in his view, they do not correspond to reality.

Scholars (2nd half of 19th–early 21st c.)

From the 2nd half of the 19th century, the region is no longer visited by travellers, but by scholars of ancient and medieval monuments of corresponding historical periods in Greece.

Jean Alexandre Buchon comes to the region in 1841. He cites information from the *Chronicle of Morea* about the founding of the castle, while making lengthy reference to its name's origin. According to the traveller, the Franks named the castle Clermont (clarus mons) but also Mata–Grifon (Matte–Grecs) because of its contribution in their struggle to prevail upon the Greeks, while the latter named it Château Tournois / Castro Tornese, which was also used by the Venetians (Castel Tornese). Buchon emphasizes its pivotal position which contributed to the defence of Frankish territories, but

notes that despite its strong construction it could not withstand Ibrahim's bombardments. Lastly, reference is made to the confusion surrounding the name of Chlemouts castle which is often given the name of Glarentza castle.

In the summer of 1905, the architect and academic Ramsay Traquair visits Chlemouts (Clairmont, Chlomoutsi, Castel Tornese). Although he finds the medieval fortress in ruins, he is impressed by its luxurious construction. Traquair however formulates an interesting theory about determining the castle's date; he places it in the early 15th century by a comparative examination of the walls of the three castles of Chlemoutsi, Glarentza and Pontikokastro and various historical data. Traquair finds it strange that while sources speak extensively about the erection of Chlemouts Castle, nothing is mentioned about the construction of Glarentza castle and he discerns some confusion as to the position of either one. He assumes, therefore, that Chlomoutsi or Castel Tornese, which



7 Halls and central courtyard of the inner enclosure, view from W.



- 8 Restored window with window seats.
- 9 Chlemoutsi Castle, view from the NW.



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took its name from the famous mint whose coins bore the word "Clarentia", was not a separate castle, but the fortress–tower located at the south western edge of the town of Glarentza. He also argues that the Castel Tornese still surviving in the peninsula's hinterland, 5 klm from Glarentza, is a second Castel Tornese built by Constantine Palaiologos in the 15th century.

Traquair's radical theory led to the Minister of Education Spyridon P. Lambrou ordering an extensive study of the medieval fortress. In 1919, the curator of antiquities George Sotiriou arrives at Chlemoutsi Castle and carries out an excavation survey. Sotiriou identifies the building remains in the outer enclosure as barracks, he points out those parts of the walls repaired during Turkish rule, excavates the remaining mosque and concludes that Chlemoutsi was never inhabited by an urban population. In the inner enclosure he identifies some of the halls as sleeping quarters, while pointing out the site of the castle's church and prison. From a detailed examination of excavation data, from the masonry and the castle's careful construction, Sotiriou concluded that coins were minted here. Moreover, this was further confirmed by his locating the tournois mint in a hall of the inner enclosure, where upon pulling down a furnace from Turkish times, he discovered charred bricks, coins, rust, traces of a fire and a basin. This discovery offers Sotiriou the necessary arguments to disprove Traquair's theory and firmly argue that Chlemoutsi is beyond doubt a Gothic building. A few years later in 1922, the medieval castle of Chlemoutsi is declared an outstanding Byzantine monument by royal decree (Royal Decree 25-2-1922/Government Gazette, Issue 28/A/26-2-1922), in an attempt to protect the remaining ruins, according to Greek legislation then in force (Law 2447/1921).

In 1925, George Papandreou, teacher and eminent historian, publishes his book *Ilia through the centuries* where he speaks at length about Chlemoutsi. In it he notes: "Unfortunately, for some years now, some terrible builders gradually destroy mercilessly and unreasonably, without any control or punishment by the authorities, this major work of Frankish rule in the Morea, so as to use its stones to built the surrounding villages", pointing out the danger of the monument being totally destroyed by the locals using it as building material.

Between 1925 and 1938 the region is visited and explored by the archaeologist Antoine Bon. In his work *La Morée*

franque, one of the most important sources of historical and archaeological data on Chlemoutsi to date, he mentions in detail the different names attributed to it, analyzes the historical framework and the conditions of its founding, describes the castle, its various architectural phases, the function of the halls and the buildings inside it. He stresses that it is a grand Gothic building and concludes that Chlemoutsi essentially starts to lose its important role in the region's defense from the period of Venetian rule, despite its use up to the Greek Revolution. The disagreement of the French archaeologist with his Greek colleague on the use of the hall of the inner enclosure was particularly significant. Where Sotiriou had pictured the mint, Bon saw the castle's kitchens. At the same time, he supported the existence of the mint at Glarentza, basing this on evidence from sources and archaeological observations, a position also confirmed by contemporary archaeological research.

A few years later, English archaeologist Kevin Andrews visits Chlemoutsi as part of his research, which is published in 1953. Andrews bases his comprehensive description on historical sources and archaeological data, focuses on the architectural presentation and documentation of the castle, enhanced with plenty of photographs and drawings. He concludes that Chlemoutsi retains numerous architectural features that date to its initial phase of construction during Frankish rule.

Also significant is the study by French archeologist Jean Servais, who visits the region in the 1960s and excavates the lower strata of Chelonata Hill. Servais locates remains from Middle Helladic and Mycenaean times which support the view that, with the exception

of these prehistoric traces, the site remained uninhabited till the period of Frankish rule.

Among younger researchers exclusively studying Chlemoutsi castle by doing mainly field work, it is worth mentioning Myrto Georgopoulou–Verra, Stefania Skartsis and particularly Demetris Athanasoulis. There are also a few publications on Chlemoutsi addressed to the general public, e.g. Eric Forbes–Boyd, I. Sfikopoulos, Athena Tarsouli, Dinos Psychogios, Alexander Paradissis, E. Karpodini–Demetriadi.

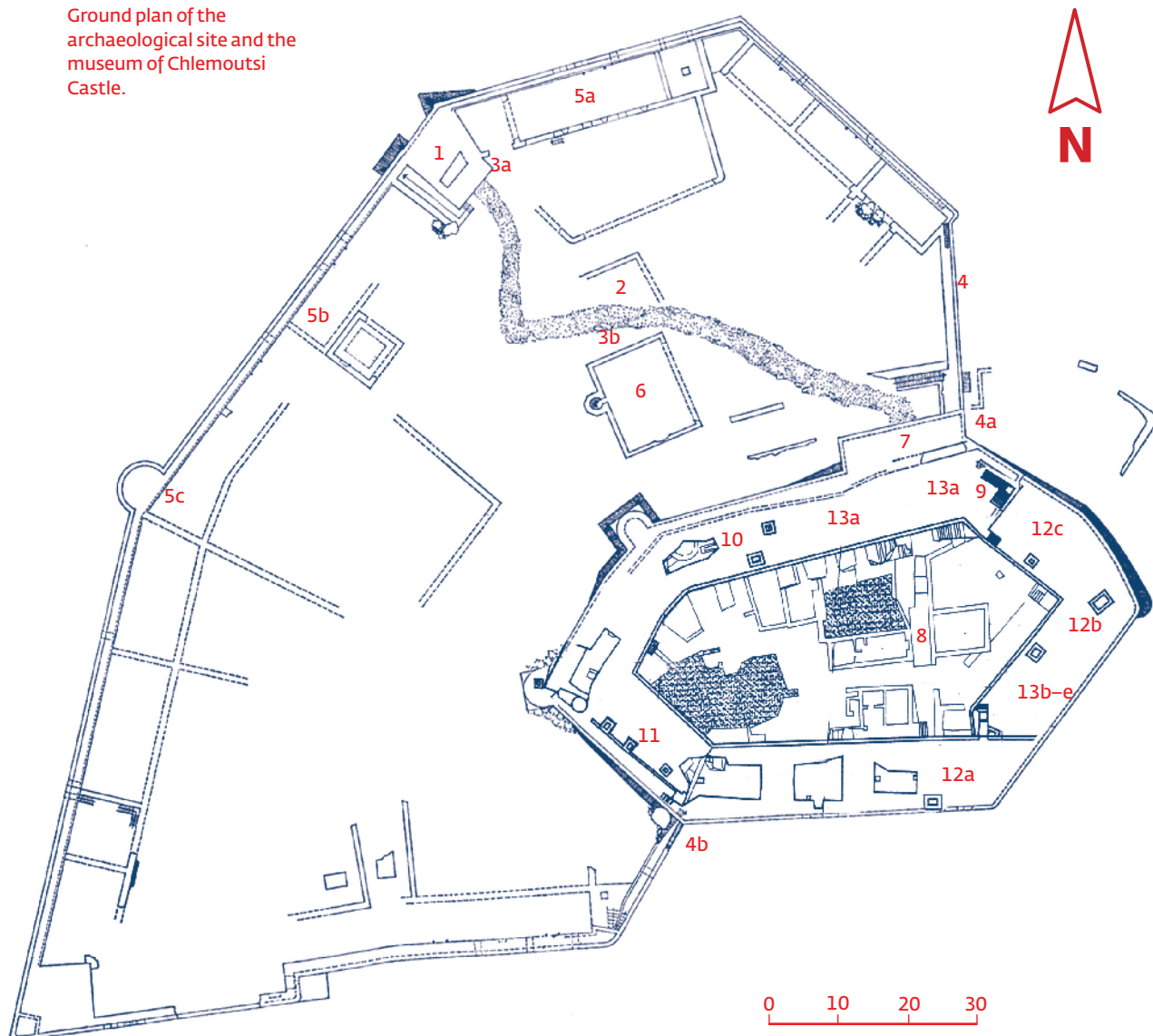
Interventions: Excavations, restoration, and works of enhancement

The first period of interventions (1968–1996)

Since 1968, Chlemoutsi Castle has systematically attracted the interest of the Archaeological Service. The uniqueness of the monument and its mediocre state of preservation have led to a series of interventions: clearing of vegetation, gathering demolished building material, stabilizing and restoring masonry of the outer walls, removal of soil and opening excavation trenches for the discovery of architectural remains, conducting rescue restoration interventions in the outer enclosure, partially renovating the vaults, completing the existing cobbled route, designing the outer enclosure with a suitable space for events, installing electric lighting, constructing a guard booth etc. All this work aims to restore the monument and prevent further damage, despite the fact that certain interventions have somewhat altered the castle's original appearance, even though important architectural elements were rescued in the process. In 1981 and 1985, protection zones are specified on the archaeological site and conditions and restrictions are determined regarding any building activity or usage.



Ground plan of the archaeological site and the museum of Chlemoutsi Castle.



- | | | | |
|----|---|-----|---|
| 1 | Main entrance | 12 | Accommodation areas (a–c) |
| 2 | Outer enclosure | 13a | Section A: Chlemoutsi Castle and architecture in the period of Frankish rule |
| 3 | Cisterns (a, b) | 13b | Section B: The world of ideas and institutions – The knights in Morea |
| 4 | Walls and gates of outer enclosure (a, b) | 13c | Section C: Faith and worship – Churches of the knights |
| 5 | Buildings of outer enclosure (a–c) | 13d | Section D: Life of the Principality's inhabitants – Aspects of daily life |
| 6 | Mosque | 13e | Section E: Economy and trade, relations and communications – Morea in the Medieval universe |
| 7 | Main gate of inner enclosure | | |
| 8 | Inner enclosure (palace) | | |
| 9 | Prince's chapel | | |
| 10 | Reception hall | | |
| 11 | Kitchens | | |



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- 10 Castle's main entrance. Traces of the gate's portcullis and murder hole are visible.
- 11 Dome of main entrance, designed in the Ottoman period.

Works on the castle's restoration, enhancement and landscape design as part of European co-funded programmes (1997–2014)

The Ministry of Culture's systematic promotion of a plan to restore and enhance the castle begins in 1997, when Chlemoutsi was included in the 2nd CSF. The first phase, completed in 2000, includes the complete restoration of hall A5 of the inner enclosure, so as to create an exhibition space for Ilia's medieval antiquities. Between 2005 and 2008, work funded by the 3rd CSF continues. It involves restoring the entrance, designing the courtyard of the inner enclosure, converting a hall into an office and workshop for conserving antiquities, modifying three halls into suitably equipped museum spaces and implementing the museology–museography study of the exhibition entitled "The era of knights – Crusaders in the Morea" that will finally open to the public in June 2009. The restoration and layout work at Chlemoutsi continues also with funding from NSRF. Between 2011 and 2014 extensive work is carried out on stabilizing and enhancing halls A1–A2 as follows: replacement of destroyed parts of their vaults, jointing of inside masonry, restoring parts of the floor and windows, installing lighting for the enhancement of the space, constructing a wooden walk for visitors, putting up protective railings, constructing an information kiosk and access for the disabled etc.

Systematic maintenance and upgrading work is currently being carried out at the archaeological site to make the medieval castle accessible to the public on a daily basis.

TOURING THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

Chlemoutsi castle belongs to the joint Kallikratis Municipality of Andravida and Kyllini in the Ilia Regional Unit.

Visitors who arrive in the district by the Patras–Pyrgos national road, having driven 15 klm through the villages of Lechaina, Myrsini and Niochori, approach the archaeological site passing by the modern settlement of Kastro that extends at the foot of the Chelonata Hill, approximately 300 m from the castle. Chlemoutsi is one of the best preserved medieval castles in Greece, dating to the first Frankish period (archaeological data indicates that it was built in three successive phases during the 13th century), without having undergone notable subsequent changes to its architecture.

- 12 View of the outer and inner enclosure from the West.
- 13 The outer walls with the wall walk and battlements.
- 14 Outer enclosure. The cistern and the complex of the main entrance can be distinguished.
- 15 The SW point of the outer walls joined to the inner enclosure; a small, secondary gate has been opened there.



1.– **Main entrance**

To enter the archaeological site, the visitor crosses the castle's main entrance located on the hill's NW side. When first constructed by the Franks, the entrance was a simple corridor with a gate at its end. The gate forms a recess and features a portcullis, a wooden door and a murder hole. In the Ottoman period, the entrance is opened inside a four-sided tower and has three successive arched gates closing with double doors, a quadrilateral vaulted space, over which a flat roof is formed where fire arms are stored and a murder hole for pouring down boiling oil or throwing stones. The entrance's design has been preserved until today.

2.– **Outer enclosure**

Crossing the main entrance, the visitor enters the castle's big outer enclosure, while opposite it, to the SE and on the hill's summit, rises the inner enclosure identified as the palace of the Frankish princes. The outer enclosure, extending to the north and west of the palace across the hill's gentler slopes, is added for the castle's better protection when Chlemoutsi acquires its final appearance in the 13th century. It is surrounded by high walls and its interior is occupied by stables, storerooms for food and firearms, barracks for the guard and reservoirs for collecting water.

3.– **Cisterns**

As Chlemoutsi lacks spring water, it is necessary to store rainwater, collected from the roofs of the buildings, in large cisterns whose pipes run through the masonry. Most of the castle cisterns are rectangular, vaulted, their inner walls coated with lime mortar for waterproofing and with an opening for pumping the water. They are built underground, beneath the buildings of the outer enclosure. The inner enclosure also features a large underground vaulted cistern in the palace's east wing. Naturally, there is no lack of overground or semi-underground reservoirs, such as the cistern (3a) to the left on entering the outer enclosure, or the reservoir (3b) adjacent to the mosque.

4.– **Walls and gates of the outer enclosure**

The visitor walks up the stone path towards the inner enclosure having an overall view of the outer walls with their arched windows, topped by a wall walk



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15

and battlements. The wall walk allows the soldiers to patrol, while the battlements protect them and give them an advantage over the enemy in case of a siege. Two small, secondary gates (4a, 4b) have been opened at the points where the walls adjoin with the inner enclosure. When the castle was first occupied by the Turks (1460–1687), the walls were modified; a semicircular watch tower was added on their west flank, their outer side was reinforced with a *scarpa*, i.e. a widening of the walls at their base for extra protection from fire arms, the wall walk and the battlements were rebuilt, while the corners to the west of the enclosure were modified with the addition of three bastions on which to install cannons.

5.– *Buildings of the outer enclosure*

Alternatively, instead of following the stone path, the visitor can freely tour parts of the outer enclosure where ruins of medieval buildings can still be distinguished. These are big two-storey, oblong buildings (5a–c) constructed on the inside of the walls, containing fireplaces, privies and cisterns and intended for the servants of the prince's court. In the walls, the visitor can distinguish traces of the backs of fireplaces

- 16 Outer enclosure. Remains of a mosque and two-storey medieval buildings are visible.
- 17 Inner enclosure (palace), view from the North.
- 18 Entrance to inner enclosure with vaulted passageway.



built of fire-proof materials (bricks and tiles), the marks left by chimneys and the holes for wooden beams holding up the buildings' wooden floors. All over the enclosure there are also ruins of poorly constructed buildings dating to Ottoman times.

6.– *Mosque*

Heading towards the entrance of the inner enclosure by following the stone path, the visitor comes to a building on his right constructed with more care, that can be identified with the mosque of sultan Bayezid Veli, referred to by Evliya Çelebi. A central square hall has been preserved with a "mihrab" on its south wall facing Mecca, while to the west are surviving remains of a minaret and to the north those of a reservoir.

7.– *Main gate of inner enclosure*

Having climbed to the top of the hill, the visitor reaches the castle's inner enclosure which is identified as the royal residence. The entrance from the castle's outer to its inner enclosure is through a vaulted passageway reached by the main gate. The entrance gate in its initial form (early 13th c.) was between two rectangular towers. In its final 13th century construction, the gate becomes a recess in the middle of two towers, rectangular in plan. The earlier towers are joined on the gate's two sides by a barrel vault and a large arch is formed on the lower part of their façade. Above the gate is a single arched window with a built in, intricate frame, in relief. The present appearance of the entrance complex dates to the period of Turkish rule, when the towers of the gate are joined creating a single front on which a first gate is opened.

8.– *Inner enclosure (palace)*

The modern visitor opens the big wooden castle door of the palace and enters the inner enclosure, which is a fortified, solid, hexagonal structure, now made up of five two-storey halls and one on the ground floor round an inner courtyard.

During its first construction phase (early 13th c.), the hexagonal enclosure, which is on one level, made up the entire castle. A little later, its walls were raised and topped by battlements (their traces are discernible even today over the main gate), two semi-circular towers reinforce the enclosure at the





hill's lowest point and the entrance gate is also built. A two-storey hall was built inside, with a wooden roof, fireplaces, cupboards, double arched windows and an underground water reservoir for the castle lord's needs. The castle's aim was, on the one hand, to protect the prince's residence in the unfortified capital of Andravida and on the other, to oversee the port when the town of Glarentza had yet to be built. It is also likely that Chlemoutsi functioned as the prince's hunting lodge or summer residence.

Later in the same century, when the castle acquires the form it still preserves, the initial hexagon is turned into a luxurious palace, symbol of power and sovereignty of the Villehardouins, with vaulted halls surrounding the central courtyard. Today, when the visitor goes through the passage way, he/she has an impressive view of the whole north eastern wing of the fortified hexagon that is covered by a large barrel vault, since the halls no longer have their original lower floors and so are on one level. When the castle was used as a prince's lodge, the ground floor halls, with no heating and small windows, functioned as auxiliary spaces, storerooms and kitchens, while the ruler's apartments were located on the first floor, accessed by outdoor stone steps from the inner courtyard.

9.– *Royal chapel*

The first hall encountered by the visitor when crossing the passage way and exactly above it is the royal chapel, distinguished by the double arched windows within a pointed frame. The chapel, which according to local tradition is dedicated to Aghia Sophia, still preserves traces of its wall paintings.

10.– *Reception hall*

Next to the chapel is the largest and most impressive hall in the palace; it is the big reception hall with multiple functions, being a throne room, a place for administering justice and receiving official guests, while banquets were also held here as were festivities and events. The hall has windows with stone seats and an impressively big fireplace. It should be noted that fireplaces, a feature of northern Europe unknown till then in Byzantine architecture, appear for the first time in Chlemoutsi, proving the French origins of the owners who copy the large medieval castles of their country.

- 19 The reception and banquet hall.
- 20 Medieval fireplace.
- 21 View of the reception hall from the outside with monumental stone steps and balcony.
- 22 The wing with the prince's apartments, interior view from the East.
- 23 The palace's underground vaulted cistern.



Today, all that is left of the fireplaces are their stone beveled jambs and their recesses in the wall, as well as the part of the wall built with pieces of brick and tiles, where the fire was lit. Following its recent restoration, the visitor can admire both the hall's architectural features and view it as a whole from above by using the wooden walk. Outside the reception hall, part of the monumental stone stairway has been preserved, leading to a large gallery supported by three pointed vaults, and by which the upper storey was accessed.

11.– Kitchens

The reception hall communicates directly with the kitchens. Remains can still be distinguished of an oven, the chimneys above the hearths and a cistern and storeroom on the ground floor. Access to the kitchens was also by an outdoor stone stairway.

12.– Accommodation areas

The three wings of the palace are situated on the south side of the courtyard and include the bedrooms of the prince (12a), princess (12b) and other members of the prince's family (12c). These rooms that communicated with each other through passages, still bear traces of windows with double arches and window seats, fireplaces, walled cupboards that closed with wooden doors, privies, and rain water pipes. Wing 12a is identified as the two storey hall with the wooden roof, of the castle's first period (early 13th century) that later underwent modifications and conversions. A large vaulted cistern is in its basement to collect rainwater for the palace. It is worth noting the difference of floors between the private areas of the palace and those for display; wooden floors in the sleeping quarters supported by a central row of pillars and stone floors built on barrel vaults in the chapel and throne room. Despite the passage of time and the ensuing damage, Chlemoutsí continues to this day to be an exceptional example of the western medieval art of fortification, a visible symbol of the Villehardouins' sovereignty, designed to dominate and impress. When wandering through its spaces guided by one's imagination, the visitor can travel back to the time of the crusaders and feel the charm of discovering the medieval world. Contributing to this, moreover, is the unique exhibition "The era of knights – Crusaders of the Morea" on display in the palace.

- 24 Gate of the inner enclosure, design of the Ottoman period. The steps can be seen, leading to the wall walk of the outer walls.

CHLEMOUTSI CASTLE AS SEEN IN LEGENDS AND LITERATURE

The fascinating myth of the era of knights, reflected on the Chlemoutsi Castle, has always been a source of inspiration for historical novels, travel books, poems or legends. Such examples are *Princess Ysabeau* by Angelos Terzakis and *The Franks and Us* by Nikos Tsiforos.

In his poem "The Descendant" Greek poet, travel writer and journalist Kostas Ouranis writes:



*I must be descended from those knights
because neither the Parthenon, nor Aghia Sophia
brought out in me that sweet nostalgia
I felt when once in Achaia I saw
a Frankish castle, silent, alone,
raising its battlements in defiance against time.*

Nikos Kazantzakis in his book *Travelling to the Morea* vividly describes his trip there as follows:



Castles exert a mysterious fascination on man's soul. When in a plain, a steep mountain suddenly rises up far on the horizon and at its top one discerns a crown of half ruined jetties, towers and battlements, one's soul leaps and soars...

Suddenly, upon turning a hill, I raised my hand joyfully. High on the hilltop ahead of me gleamed the renowned castle of Chlemoutsi. Square, wounded, still standing...

...I climb the mountain. I am impatient. Conversation is dull when a deserted castle stands above you and calls to you...

When I entered through the narrow, wide open castle door and crossed the ruined Gothic halls and courtyards overgrown with weeds and grasped a wild fig tree to climb to the floor above and stood on a stone, I felt the urge to let out a shrill cry like a hawk...

At my every step, threatening flocks of crows rose into the air, blocking the sun for a moment and fell again on the other side of the castle...

I paused at a Gothic window and gazed out at the plain of Glarentza and the sea around it steaming. And in the distance sparkled the divine islands: Zakynthos, Kefalonia, and faintly, like a vision of blue light, Ithaca...

Like all castles, Chlemoutsi has its own legends. The two best known are the legend of Aneliagos (the sunless one) and the legend of the Fairy Sisters. According to the first, there was once a prince who lived in Paliopolis (Ancient Ilis) and he fell in love with the princess who lived at Chlemoutsi. The prince was called Aneliagos, because if ever he was seen by the sun or the light of day he would turn to stone. The princess, whose name was Aneliagi, would suffer the same fate. For the prince to meet with his princess, the two young people made an underground gallery from Paliopolis to Chlemoutsi. Unfortunately, however, one day the prince fell asleep in the arms of his beloved and upon awakening, leaped outside to reach the gallery, but was seen by the daylight and turned to stone...

As for the second myth, it is said that there were once two fairy sisters, one who lived in Chlemoutsi and the other in Santomeri. The one who lived in Chlemoutsi was beautiful but childless, while the other who lived in Santomeri was ugly and had five boys and an extremely beautiful daughter. The beautiful fairy pleaded with her sister to give her the beautiful daughter with the promise however that she, the mother, could visit her child at Chlemoutsi. But the fairy at Chlemoutsi did not keep her word and forbade her sister to see her child. The laments and the fury of the ugly fairy were





25 View of exhibition section "Chlemoutsi Castle and architecture from the period of Frankish rule" in the reception hall.

- 26 View of the museum.
- 27 Exhibition section on Glarentza on the ground floor of the prince's chapel.
- 28 Overall view of exhibition section "The world of ideas and institutions - Knights in the Morea", in the prince's apartment on the upper level.
- 29 Capital from Andravida with coat of arms in relief, belonging to Princess Isabelle Villehardouin and her husband Florent d'Hainaut (1289–1297).



such, that from that day onward, whenever the winds howl and nature rages, they say it is the mother moaning for her child...

THE THEMATIC MUSEUM OF CHLEMOUTSI/CHLOUMOUTSI CASTLE

The museum's character and aims

The museum of Chlemoutsi Castle is, to date, the first and only thematic museum exclusively concerned with the period of the crusaders in Greece. In the field of culture, a museum inside a monument is an original idea, because it evolves in such a way that the shell of the museum space, i.e. the castle itself, also constitutes its main exhibit. It is an "open museum", with the visitor viewing the exhibits in their natural environment, without particular scenographic interventions, and experiencing something unique through this experiential approach. Its theme concentrates on the period of the Frankish rule (13th–15th century), as seen in southern mainland Greece, with particular emphasis on the region of Ilia which was also the centre of the principality of Achaia. The culture displayed is of a period that is fascinating to the general public, but also negatively charged, since this period is often considered as one of decadence under foreign rule.

The museum is original in its new approach of not fearing to enhance monuments that are symbols of "foreign rule" in Greece. In contrast with the policy that was prevalent till recently, the exhibition in Chlemoutsi Castle introduces a new practice that is museologically, culturally and ideologically innovative. Although it is housed in the emblematic Chateau Clermont — royal palace of the Villehardouins which is the most representative monument of crusader rule in Greece — it allows a positive interpretation of this rule, which cannot be achieved by the monument alone, being a symbol of absolute power. The exhibition's aim is to offer new historical facts, to function as a place of museum education, lifelong learning and recreation, but also to be an agent of creative development and social activities, contributing to the region's economic growth.

The exhibition: The fascination of discovering the medieval world

The museum that opened to the public in June 2009, is housed in the "heart" of the castle, since it unfolds in



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four parts of the inner enclosure: in A5, the restored two storey hall with a total area of 320 sq.m., identified as the princess's apartments and in the two ground floor halls on either side of the passage way (approximately 35 sq.m. and 70 sq.m. respectively), under the royal chapel and reception hall. Moreover, in an appropriately adapted part of the inner courtyard (approx. 40 sq.m.) an outdoor exhibition displays stone architectural members from the area of Ilia.

The exhibition evolves in five basic sections with subsections that include over 500 artifacts, dating from the 13th to the 15th c. AD. The exhibition material, almost exclusively from excavations, comes from medieval sites in Ilia (mainly from the town of Glarentza, Chlemoutsi Castle and the Isova Monastery) but also from the greater area of excavations in the Principality's territories (Patras, Corinth), while there is a very rich collection of medieval ceramics. Each section is self contained, so the visitor is not obliged to follow one compulsory route. On the contrary, one is given the opportunity to freely tour a Frankish castle, constructing a narrative of one's choice, as one gradually discovers ideas, stories and artifacts of the Medieval period.

13a.- Section A: Chlemoutsi Castle and architecture in the era of Frankish rule

The first section, housed in the semi-open spaces on either side of the passage way, introduces the visitor to the monument itself. The morphological and structural features of Chlemoutsi castle are presented, its relation with the French fortification techniques of that time and the fortresses of the crusading East, while the functions of its individual areas are determined and its role is emphasized as a royal palace and a symbol of the sovereign's might.

In the same section, an analysis is made of the organization of castles and settlements of Medieval Ilia, with particular emphasis on Glarentza which was a significant economic, urban and administrative centre of international repute.

At the same time, Gothic monastic architecture is presented through the impressive ruins of Gothic churches in the region (the Monastery of Isova, Aghia Sophia of Andravida, Saint Francis of Glarentza), as well as its influences on the construction of Orthodox churches. The section's narrative is based on the model of Chlemoutsi Castle and the architectural members or sculptures from religious or secular buildings, such as pointed arches and

- 30 Pair of copper spurs, 2nd half of 14th c.
- 31 Denier Tournois coin of Isabelle Villehardouin (1297–1301).
- 32 Cup with written decoration of a coat of arms.
- 33 Projecting knob (boss) from the centre of a cross vault, carved in relief with man's face shaped out of leaves (circa 1225–1236). It comes from the Cistercian Abbey of Zaraka (Stymphalia), Corinth.
- 34 Small cup with glazing ("motif of Taranto", 14th–early 15th c.).
- 35 Cooking utensil (frying pan) with perforated bottom and glazing (after 1312).
- 36 Clay vessel with Arabic inscriptions and relief decoration from the Middle East (?) (14th c.).
- 37 Follaro / pul from the Golden Horde of the Mongols (Crimea, late 13th c.).
- 38 Silver gigliato of Robert I of Anjou (mint of Naples, 1309–1343).
- 39 Merchant's coin possibly originating from Lombardy (late 13th–14th c.).
- 40 Clay jug with multicoloured decoration from Italy (late 13th–14th c.).



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- 41 View of the exhibition section "Faith and worship - The churches of the knights", where the example of the Gothic church of St Francis is on display.
- 42 Restored cupboard with costly medieval ceramics.
- 43 Overall view of the ground floor.
- 44 View of the exhibition section "Aspects of daily life" with a recreation of the medieval table.
- 45 View of the exhibition section "Economy and trade - The Morea in the medieval world".



Gothic capitals. Also remarkable is the restoration of part of the sanctuary of the church of the Saviour from Anelio.

13b.- Section B: The world of ideas and institutions - The knights in the Morea

This section that evolves in the prince's apartments on the upper storey, takes the visitor on a trip to the era of knights, their political and social system, their ideas and beliefs. It presents the conquest of the Peloponnese by the crusaders, the founding and historical course of the Principality of Achaia, while going back in time to the House of the Villehardouins and the other rulers of the Principality. Coats of arms, wall paintings, coins, luxury items, bronze and gilded spurs, buckles and jewellery, cosmetic and sewing kits bring to life the knights and ladies of the Principality.

13c.- Section C: Faith and worship - The churches of the knights

The third section is housed on the upper storey in the prince's apartments, where an example of a Gothic church is presented; the church of St Francis in Glarentza. The church service is referred to, as are matters of faith and dogma, also Gothic painting, decoration and sculpture.





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D. Athanasoulis / Athanasia Ralli, archaeologist: Museological study and implementation.

Alkmini Paka, architect: Museographic study.

The most prominent exhibit is that of a sculpture in relief of a man's face formed by leaves. Funerary customs are presented, burial practices and prominent monuments, such as the grave plaque of the princess Anne Villehardouin, from Andravida, while a restored cupboard's original use is recreated.

13d.- Section D: Life of the Principality's inhabitants - Aspects of daily life

The fourth section unfolds on the ground floor of the princess' wing, where the visitor is given a tour of everyday life in the era of the knights. Through corresponding subsections, one can be informed on activities of the inhabitants of the Morea under Frankish rule, their recreation, the organization of their houses, home economics and household utensils, the medieval table and the kitchen with its hearth and storeroom. Building tools, oil lamps made of clay and bronze, keys, door frame and furniture fittings, toys, vases, tableware such as mugs, pitchers, plates and pots for oil, vinegar or spices, cooking utensils, pots, pans, baking trays and frying pans bring daily scenes from the Middle Ages to life.

13e.- Section E: Economy and trade, relations and communications - The Morea in the medieval world

The fifth section in the ground floor hall completes the exhibition, referring to the Principality's place in the medieval world and its relations abroad through economy and trade, presenting its trading activities with East and West. The mint of Glarentza is extensively referred to, as is coin production and circulation, the hoarding of treasures, imitation of or invalid currency. A multitude of ceramics of different shapes and varieties of ornamentation from all over the Mediterranean, from Spain and Italy, to Syria and Egypt make up the richest collection of medieval imported ceramics to date in Greece. They also serve as evidence of the Principality's key geographic position and its evolution into a centre on the periphery of the medieval world.

Figs 2, 3, 8, 22–24, 31–40 and the ground plan on page 126 belong to the Archive of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Ilia / Ministry of Culture / The Archaeological Receipts and Expropriations Fund.

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