

The Naming Patterns of the Inhabitants of Frankish Acre

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The anthroponymic method and analyses that have been developed and used in medieval studies in recent decades perceive the personal name as one of the means by which a social group may express itself. These methods enable researchers to trace socio-cultural evolutions within groups and to explore the differences between them. Using evidence from name-giving patterns from the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem and from crusader Acre in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, I will attempt to examine whether there were any special characteristics of the naming patterns of the inhabitants of Acre, both in comparison with the rest of the Latin kingdom, and in comparison with Italian maritime towns in the thirteenth century. I will also attempt to verify whether a so-called “urban anthroponymy”, a phenomenon described in European contemporary studies, can be identified in thirteenth century Acre. I will first present briefly the basic terminology and the main findings on the naming patterns of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. I will then examine the findings from a sample of people specifically identified as inhabitants of Acre, and compare these findings with Franks from the rest of the Latin kingdom. A third section attempts to compare Acre and the Italian maritime cities in the thirteenth century, mainly Venice and Genoa, and intends to identify an “urban phenomenon” in the naming patterns in Acre.

The Naming Patterns of the Latin Kingdom in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries

The sources for the study of the naming patterns in the Latin kingdom are formal documents, acts and transactions, related to the kingdom, from which around 6,200 personal names were extracted. A structured data file was designed based on these names, and was used for a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the name-giving practices and preferences of the people who lived in the Latin kingdom between 1100 and 1291.¹

A basic assumption of the anthroponymic approach is that the choice of a personal name reflects social and cultural orientations; that giving a name is an individual decision embedded in a social, cultural and religious context. The naming

¹ Iris Shagrir, *Naming Patterns in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Oxford, 2003).

patterns of a defined group (in other words a group with a social meaning, like diocese, town, region), thus serve as indirect indicators for tracing meaningful trends and fashions in that group. The patterns are likely to reflect changes evolving from socio-cultural interaction between groups, and can serve as a basis for comparisons between different groups. Name studies offer a novel way of examining the question of identity, in the specific context of an immigrating society in the process of creating a new group identity. In sociological research, three models are used to analyse the behaviour of immigrant or colonizing groups: (a) adaptation – the immigrants adjust to the host society; (b) segregation and isolation – in other words minimal or no interaction between groups; and (c) acculturation – which means that, through the encounter with the indigenous society, the immigrant group will gradually develop a special pattern, which is not identical either to the original old culture or to the local one.²

The anthroponymic analysis of the naming patterns in the Latin kingdom has revealed the following major evolutions:

- 1 The Frankish naming pattern shared the major evolutions observed in the naming patterns in contemporary Catholic Europe.
- 2 The convergence of various European traditions in the Latin East is evident in the Latin kingdom's more heterogeneous and dynamic pattern, compared to specific localities in western Europe.
- 3 The name preferences of the indigenous oriental Christians made an impact on the preferences of the Franks. This impact was limited to oriental Christian names that were then familiar, but not frequent, in western Europe. The findings support the hypothesis that Frankish culture integrated some European and oriental elements.
- 4 The preference of names of Christian connotation, mainly saints' names, over names of Germanic and Latin origin without a distinct Christian connotation, is an evolution common to western Europe and the kingdom. However, there are differences in its pace: among the Franks of Outremer central saints' names gained prevalence relatively early.
- 5 Contrary to the process of shrinkage of the name stock, characteristic of western Europe, it appears that the Frankish name stock did not shrink significantly over the period of the kingdom's existence.

The Naming Patterns in Acre Compared to the Rest of the Latin Kingdom

The comparison of the naming patterns of the inhabitants of Acre with the patterns of the whole kingdom shows that the prevalent trends in the kingdom were present in Acre, and even seem to be more pronounced. The analysis of the naming patterns

² John W. Berry, "Acculturation and Adaptation in a New Society," *International Migration* 30 (1992), 69–85.

of the inhabitants of Acre is based on a sample of people identified specifically as *habitatores* or *burgenses* of Acre in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The names of these people were drawn from the documents in Reinhold Röhrich's *Regesta Regni Hierosolymitani* and from the *Documenti del commercio veneziano*.³ The sample does not include members of the military orders.⁴ It consists of 287 people, who are unevenly divided over the two centuries of study, with 41 people in the twelfth century and 246 in the thirteenth. The findings therefore reflect more strongly the thirteenth century, due to its relative weight in the total sample.

The major characteristics of the naming behaviour in the kingdom as a whole, are also observed in the data relating to Acre alone. The common development is perceived in the trend of the increasing popularity of Latin names in Acre as well as in the rest of the kingdom. In both groups the rates of Latin names increased constantly: in Acre from 41 per cent to 63 per cent over the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries, compared with the slightly more moderate increase in the rest of the kingdom of 32 per cent to 53 per cent. It is notable that the percentage of Latin names is higher in Acre than in the rest of the kingdom. This evolution coincides with a decrease in the prevalence of Germanic names, in Acre from 59 per cent to 35 per cent between the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries; the rates were decreasing also in the whole kingdom from 65 per cent to 44 per cent. Here too it should be noted that the rates of Germanic names are lower in Acre than they are in the rest of the Latin kingdom.

An evident corresponding evolution occurred in the application of saints' names. In Acre the rates of saints' names rose from 34 per cent to 56 per cent over the whole period (Fig. 1), while in the rest of the kingdom they rose from 28 per cent to 46 per cent. In the case of saints' names it can be seen as well that in Acre both the minimum and the maximum rates are higher than in the rest of the kingdom. When the patterns relating to Acre are compared to the Latin kingdom they show similar phenomena, yet in Acre they seem stronger and more pronounced. The proportion of saints' names in Acre is elevated compared both to the rest of the kingdom and to contemporary western European localities, such as Genoa 1261 (48 per cent) and English towns of the beginning of the thirteenth century (Winchester, Canterbury and Leicester range between 25 per cent and 30 per cent). The pattern in Acre also shows a lower rate of Germanic names than in contemporary western Europe. It seems to bend even more than the Latin kingdom itself towards the "Mediterranean" naming pattern, which, more than its western European counterpart, favoured Latin names and saints' names as opposed to the Germanic names that were dominant in early medieval Europe.

³ *Documenti del commercio veneziano nei secoli XI–XIII*, ed. Raimondo Morozzo della Rocca and Antonino Lombardo, 2 vols (Turin, 1940); *Nuovi documenti del commercio veneto dei secoli XI–XIII*, ed. Antonino Lombardo and Raimondo Morozzo della Rocca (Venice, 1953).

⁴ Rates given for the Latin kingdom also exclude the military orders. This is based on the assumption that most of the brothers were recruited in western Europe.

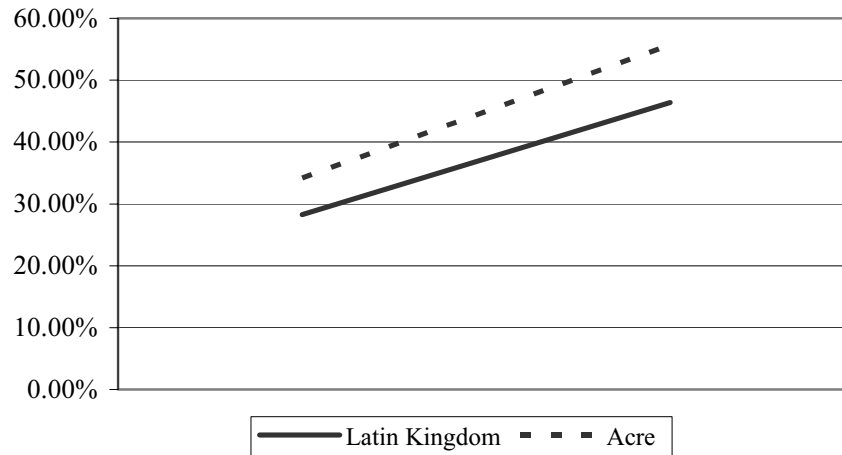


Fig. 1 Increase in preponderance of saints' names: twelfth to thirteenth centuries

This can also be observed in the list of the most popular name choices. Figure 2 presents the top choices in Acre and in the rest of the Latin kingdom (excluding Acre), showing the names with more than a 2 per cent rate of popularity. The four top names are identical: John, James, William, Peter. Yet in Acre the higher rates of other well-known saints' names are noticeable: Nicholas, one of the most popular saints in the east, patron of seafarers, merchants, cities, and an especially popular saint in Italy; Thomas, Stephen, and Andrew, saints specifically related to the Holy Land, being two apostles and the first martyr; and Anthony, a desert father, founder of Christian monasticism as well as a popular Italian saint, Anthony of Padua.

It should be pointed out that the total sample of the Latin kingdom probably contains more people from Acre (but not identified as such) than the smaller pool of individuals clearly identified as living in Acre. Therefore, in order to refine the comparison between inhabitants and non-inhabitants of Acre, the group hitherto defined as the "rest of the kingdom" was broken down into those individuals who clearly lived in places other than Acre (such as Gerald Rufus of Mahomeria; RRH no. 302), and those whose place of residence remains unknown. In this manner, the individuals who may be from Acre but are not identified by their place of residence are isolated into a residual sample of "unidentified persons".

This more focused comparison between residents of Acre and those who are clearly not from Acre yields interesting results. The new group, consisting only of people with a defined place of residence other than Acre, includes 1,488 individuals: 1,055 in the twelfth century and 433 in the thirteenth. Comparing it again with the findings of Acre, the results point towards a less robust difference between the groups, though a difference still exists. In the case of Latin names in the thirteenth century, where Acre shows a rate of 63 per cent, the group of people not from Acre

Latin Kingdom Name	%	Acre Name	%	Venice Name	%	Genoa Name	%
John	12.31	John	13.8	John	16.5	William	8.8
William	5.6	William	4.9	Mark	13.2	James	7.9
Peter	4.8	Peter	4.1	Marinus	11.2	Simon	6.3
James	3.7	James	3.7	Peter	9.4	Nicholas	5.9
Hugh	2.9	Nicholas		Nicholas	5.6	John	
Nicholas	2.3	Thomas	3.3	James	5.1	Lanfranc	5.4
Guy	2.1	Stephen	2.8	Philip	3.3	Henry	4.2
Philip		Hugh	2.4	Andrew	3.1	Obertus	
Henry		Andrew	2.0	Leonard	2.8	Peter	3.0
Thomas		Anthony		Thomas		Paschal	2.5
		Godfrey					
		Robert					

Fig. 2 Top name choices in the thirteenth century

shows 53 per cent (compared to 53 per cent in the rest of the kingdom comprising those who lived in places other than Acre and those of unidentified location). The rate of saints' names in Acre is 56 per cent in the thirteenth century, as reported above, and is 51 per cent among the people not from Acre (compared to 46 per cent in the unfiltered group). It appears that the better identified group has a rate of saints' names higher than those people whose first names are not accompanied by a toponymic descriptor. This may be explained by a probable link between the preponderance of by-names and greater homonymity, since a growing use of popular saints' names may, given the limited choices, promote homonymity.

The results also show clearly that in Acre there were more people carrying Latin names which are not saints' names (for example, Bonaventura, Homodeus), a pattern generally typical of Italian name repertories of the period.⁵ This Italian impact on the naming pattern in Acre can be ascertained by deducting the individuals who lived in Acre and are clearly designated as Italians by origin (such as Johannes Pisanus): without the Italians the discrepancy between holders of Latin names (57 per cent) and holders of saints' names (53 per cent) diminishes significantly compared to the sample including them (in other words there are fewer individuals carrying Latin names which are not saints' names). An additional finding is that the percentage of saints' names among the people who have a defined

⁵ For example, Olivier Guyotjeanin, "L'onomastique émilienne," *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome* 106 (1994), 381–446, table 13, 411.

location other than Acre is closer to that of inhabitants of Acre. This presents a question regarding the composition of the group. Clearly it is the better-identified sub-group of those who lived in places other than Acre, which may mean that they are better recognized, as a result of being more prominent members of society.⁶ The assumption that this group contains a significant proportion of members of the Frankish nobility may be supported by its top name preferences. Notably, the rise of the name John was specifically strong and significant among the Franks in the Levant, a predilection reflected both in its high frequency compared to contemporary European name stocks and in its lead rate over the second most popular name. Furthermore, the preference for John was especially striking among the Frankish nobility, peaking to about 19 per cent at the middle of the thirteenth century.⁷ In the sample of people living in places other than Acre the frequency of John, the top name, is 16 per cent, compared to 14 per cent in Acre and to 11 per cent among those individuals of undefined place of residence.

In sum, the comparison between the inhabitants of Acre and those who do not live in Acre shows that the evolutions taking place throughout the kingdom also occurred in Acre, and appear to be more prominent in Acre, especially in the thirteenth century. However, the attempt at a more focused comparison between those who lived in Acre and those who definitely did not produced mixed results. They may be a consequence of the significant Italian presence in thirteenth-century Acre and from the particular composition of the filtered group, which may contain a greater proportion of nobles.⁸

The Naming Patterns in Acre Compared to Italian Maritime Cities

The patterns of the personal names of the inhabitants of Acre were compared with the findings on the naming practices available from contemporary Venice and Genoa. For the comparison with Venetian names I used the personal names of the 127 *boni homines* who attested the granting of assets in Constantinople to the monastery of S. Giorgio Maggiore in 1090,⁹ and a list of 393 people elected for

⁶ This phenomenon is documented in medieval western Europe. See Heinrich Rüthing, "Der Wechsel Personennamen in einer spätmittelalterlichen Stadt. Zum Problem der Identifizierung von Personen und zum sozialen Status von Stadtbewohnern mit wechselnden oder unvollständigen Namen," Neithard Bulst and Jean-Philippe Genet, eds, *Medieval Lives and the Historian. Studies in Medieval Prosopography*, eds. (Kalamazoo, 1982), pp. 215–26.

⁷ Shagrir, *Naming Patterns*, chap. 3.

⁸ In other words, the more focused comparison inserted an additional, probably significant, variable into the procedure; by which I mean how well individuals are identified in the documents and who are the better-defined ones.

⁹ The document is reproduced in Vittorio Lazzarini, *Scritti di paleografia e diplomatica* (Venice, 1938), pp. 171–77. The name list and count appear in Gianfranco Folena, "Gli antichi nomi di persona e la storia civile di Venezia", *Atti del'Istituto Veneto di Scienze* (1971), pp. 464–67. Folena's count is erroneous, however, since several names appear twice in the signature section of the document.

the General Council (*Maggior Consiglio*) of 1261–62.¹⁰ The comparison with Genoa is based on the data made available by Alain Birolini's study of Genoese anthroponymy and by Kedar's study of saints' names in Genoa.¹¹

Birolini asserts that in Genoa, from around 1100 to around 1220, Germanic names predominated in the Genoese name stock, with Obertus and William as the most dominant names. This is also demonstrated in the lists provided by Kedar for 1157 and 1188 (these lists accordingly represent "more aristocratic" and "less aristocratic"). The Germanic names, specifically those without a Christian content, were being replaced towards the middle of the thirteenth century by Latin names, with a remarkable rise of John and especially of James. On the other hand, in Venice the levels of Latin names at the end of the eleventh century (1090) and in the middle of the thirteenth – 96 per cent and 97 per cent, respectively – were extremely high and unparalleled elsewhere. This exceptional proportion of Latin names in Venice correlates with an outstanding rate of saints' names as well, to which the closest figure is the 56 per cent rate of saints' names in Acre. The most frequent names in thirteenth-century Acre are John, William, Peter, James and Nicholas (in equal fourth place), and Thomas (see Fig. 2). The list has much in common with the most popular names of both Venice and Genoa (Fig. 2). John and Nicholas are very popular across the samples, as well as James and Peter to a lesser degree.¹² Each list also has its unique characteristics: William is absent in Venice but ranks first in Genoa, whereas Mark and Marinus rank high in Venice but not elsewhere. The greater similarity between the most dominant Frankish names and the dominant names of the Italian towns compared to other parts of Europe is also evident when looking at the names from Acre only, a similarity that may be ascribed to a growing level of cultural integration between these areas resulting from communications and trade between the Italian towns and the Levant, and from a greater number of Italian merchants settling permanently in Acre.¹³

¹⁰ Folena, "Gli antichi nomi", pp. 468–73. The list is based on *Deliberazioni del Maggior Consiglio di Venezia*, ed. Roberto Cessi, 1 (Bologna, 1950).

¹¹ Alain Birolini, "Étude d'anthroponymie génoise", *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome* 107 (1995), 467–96; Benjamin Z. Kedar, "Noms de saints et mentalité populaire à Gênes au XIV^e siècle," *Le Moyen Age* 73 (1967), 431–46; Benjamin Z. Kedar, *Merchants in Crisis* (New Haven, 1976), pp. 98–101.

¹² The affinity between the names from Frankish Acre and the Italian preferences is evident in various Italian studies. See, for example, Sante Bortolami, "Il sistema onomastico in una quasi-città del Veneto medioevale," *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome*, 106 (1994), 343–80; François Menant, "L'Italie centro-septentrionale," in *L'Anthroponymie. Document de l'histoire sociale* (Rome, 1996), pp. 19–28. An illustrative example of the difference between the preferences of the Latins of the East and their western European contemporaries can be illustrated in a list of most frequent names of Poitevin knights who sailed to the Holy Land in 1252: Raymundus, Arnaudus, Guillelmus, Petrus, Bernardus, Odo, Hugo, Berengarius and Augerius. All, except Peter, are Germanic names, and none is named after a universally popular saint. *Preuves de l'histoire de Languedoc*, ed. Auguste Molinier (Paris, 1875), document 432.–CCC, year 1252, pp. 1314–15.

¹³ Joshua Prawer, *Crusader Institutions* (Oxford, 1980), p. 221

Did Acre, the largest city of the Latin kingdom and its capital in the thirteenth century,¹⁴ display the characteristics common to the larger urban areas in western Europe? Studies from France, England and, especially, from Italy have documented a typical difference between urban and semi-urban areas during the thirteenth century.

Based on three case studies in central Italy, Etienne Hubert suggested that the bigger cities in the central Middle Ages (eleventh to thirteenth centuries) exhibited more evolution in their naming system (such as the addition of a by-name, renewal of the name stock) than did their more rural surroundings.¹⁵ Kedar found that the *contadini* of the Genoese countryside also exhibited an onomastic conservatism compared to the citizens of Genoa itself, by continuing to use some Germanic names that were already outmoded in the city.¹⁶ These findings are corroborated by findings from Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna, as well as by findings from Languedoc, where Jean-Louis Biget found that in terms of naming Toulouse presented “a specific cultural milieu”.¹⁷ This specific milieu, and the role of the great urban area as a source of innovation, was usually reflected, especially in the thirteenth century, in high frequencies of the name John and those other major saints’ names which were on the rise in the thirteenth century, like James and Nicholas; in a relatively early and rapid renovation, essentially a “Christianization”, of the name-stock; in higher concentration levels on the dominant names;¹⁸ and in the contraction of the name-stock.

For the purpose of this study I compared the city of Venice with a smaller town in the Veneto area, Padua, for which data are available from 1254 and 1275. The difference between the great urban centre and its provincial town is evident. The level of saints’ names in Venice is 86 per cent (in 1261) and in Padua (in 1254) 37 per cent. The ever-decreasing rate of Germanic names in Venice was 4 per cent and 15 per cent in Padua. The stock of names was considerably larger in Padua than in Venice (on average 53 names per 100 individuals in Padua, 13 in Venice), and the concentration, or clustering, on the top choices, was much stronger in Venice

¹⁴ Prawer estimated the city’s population at around 40,000. *Crusader Institutions*, p.182, n. 159.

¹⁵ Etienne Hubert, “Structure urbaine et système anthroponymique,” *L’anthroponymie. Document de l’histoire sociale des mondes méditerranéens médiévaux. Actes du colloque international organisé par l’Ecole Française de Rome* (Rome, 1996), p. 313.

¹⁶ Kedar, *Merchants in Crisis*, p. 98. The conservatism of the peasantry was also noted in an earlier period in England, where the post-conquest peasant population clung to traditional Anglo-Saxon personal names. See Cecily Clark, “*Willelmus rex? Vel alius Willelmus?*”, in Peter Jackson, ed., *Words, Names and History* (Woodbridge, 1995), pp. 281, 284 n. 22.

¹⁷ Jean-Louis Biget, “L’évolution des noms de baptême en Languedoc au moyen âge,” *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* 17 (1982), 297–341, esp. p. 322.

¹⁸ Concentration is the accumulated frequency of a defined number of the top choices. It is represented in percentages, and reveals the intensity of the shared element in naming preferences. A trend of increasing concentration reflects the clustering of commonly shared preferences. As a social phenomenon, greater homonymity may reflect greater socio-cultural cohesion, prevalent fashion and imitation.

(73 per cent of people held the ten top choices in Venice, 40 per cent in Padua). A similar pattern is confirmed in Vicenza, a smaller town in the Veneto.¹⁹ These phenomena seem to be characteristic of the difference between large urban areas and their surroundings in most of Catholic Europe.

The data from Acre, as compared to the rest of the Latin kingdom, give a similar, though not as robust, impression. In the thirteenth century the residents of Acre presented the lowest rate of Germanic names, 35 per cent, while in the rest of the kingdom the rate was 44 per cent and among the people who lived in places other than Acre 45 per cent. The rate of saints' names in the thirteenth century was higher in Acre (56 per cent) than in the rest of the kingdom (46 per cent) and was also higher than among those people who lived in places other than Acre (51 per cent). So far, then, the patterns accord with the expected characteristics of a larger town. Yet, the difference between those who lived in Acre and those who did not is not to be found in other parameters. The preference for John, the leading name, was slightly higher among those who definitely did not live in Acre (16 per cent) than among those from Acre (14 per cent). The linked phenomenon of greater concentration on the top choices displays a similarly complex picture, as the ten top choices in Acre are held by 43 per cent of the population (Fig. 2), compared with 40 per cent in the rest of the kingdom, but among those living in places other than Acre the concentration rate is higher (45 per cent) than in Acre. In addition, the number of names in the name-stock presents a mixed picture: there are no significant differences between the groups. These results blur the expected difference between Acre, as the largest city, and other places in the kingdom. On the one hand, the results produced by the statistical measures do not support the urban pattern shown in various western European studies: there is a relatively high number of names in circulation in Acre, and the concentration level is not particularly high compared to the other groups. This may be explained by the diversity of the population within the city and to the inhabitants of Acre being less distinctive, compared to the rest of the kingdom; indeed, most of the people who lived in places other than Acre lived in other towns, since the size of the non-urban settler population was insignificant in the thirteenth century. On the other hand, a difference between Acre and the rest of the kingdom is to be found in the levels of Latin, Germanic and saints' names in a way that corresponds to the general urban phenomenon. This suggests a more innovative naming behaviour, one that rejects the older Germanic names and names of weak devotional significance in favour of the names of major saints.

¹⁹ Based on the chronicle of Battista Pagliarini it has been suggested that in the thirteenth century augural and descriptive names (such as Bonagente, Brutofante, Senzabriga) were much more current among the Vicentian *estimi* than later on. Indeed, among the Venetian *estimi* of the 1254 list, such names were almost non-existent. For later patterns of Vicentine popular names see James S. Grubb, *Provincial Families of the Renaissance. Private and Public Life in the Veneto* (Baltimore, 1996), p. 225.

Conclusion

The findings on the naming patterns in the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem show that the naming practices followed the major trends prevalent in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Catholic Europe, but also incorporated elements from the naming practices of the Eastern Christianity. This reinforces the notion that immigrant groups in new areas of settlement rarely form insulated cultural units, even within what is considered a hostile environment. The religiously-oriented profile of the Frankish name-stock is reflected in the trends of abandoning names of no Christian significance and favouring the names of major saints that were dominant in eastern Christian name-stocks for centuries. These trends are characteristic of the whole kingdom, but are even more pronounced in its capital in the thirteenth century. This finding underscores the role of Acre, with its dense and diverse population, in the promotion of interaction between Catholics and non-Catholics. The encounter needs naturally to be seen within the wider context of the impact of the Greek Orthodox naming tradition in the Mediterranean region, where a preference for saints' names was a centuries-long legacy. The comparison between Acre, Venice and Genoa demonstrates the extent of the shared element and general affinity between them, and thus places Acre distinctly in this world. The comparison between naming patterns of the residents of Acre and others suggests that unlike the observed phenomena in other towns, Acre does not demonstrate a trend of greater concentration and shrinkage of the name-stock when compared to the rest of the kingdom. This may result from a greater extent of similarity between the inhabitants of Acre and those of the rest of the kingdom in the thirteenth century. Yet the city presents important characteristics of a greater urban area, especially in being on the avant-garde of the vogue of popularity of major saints' names, which was to be the dominant western European trend for centuries.