

# **The Templars**

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## **Part I**

### **Introduction**

The historical period in which the Crusades took place is included in the span of two scarce centuries, roughly between the last years of the 11th century and the final ones of the 13th, that is between 1099 and 1272. A period, this, included in that historical epoch, conventionally defined as "Middle Ages", and that even in Crusades events inevitably lives and interprets in spirit and in facts what the term "medieval" has taken as a judgment of historical value.

The crusades were a series of holy wars launched by the christian states of europe against the saracens. The term 'saracen' was the word used to describe a muslim during the time of the crusades. The crusades were eight in number, the first four being sometimes called the principal crusades, and the remaining four the minor crusades. in addition there was a children's crusade, there were several other expeditions which were insignificant in numbers or results.

The first crusade was officially banned by Pope Urban II, organized and composed of real knights, well armed and equipped. After a stop in Constantinople, where political, military and logistical agreements were made, the crusaders headed for Asia Minor. They laid siege and conquered Nicea and Antioch. Then Edessa, where they founded their first state.

### **The Capture Of Jerusalem**

After some delays pushed on towards Jerusalem, the first assault made by the christians upon the walls of the city was repulsed; but the second was successful, and the city was in the hands of the crusaders by july 1099. Godfrey of Bouillon and Tancred were among the first to mount the ramparts. once inside the city, the crusaders massacred their enemies without mercy. a terrible slaughter of the infidels took place. for seven days the carnage went on, at the end of which time scarcely any of the muslim faith were left alive. the christians took possession of the houses and property of the infidels, each soldier having a right to that which he had first seized and placed his mark upon.

For the conquest of new territories and the forced Christianization of their populations were established the KNIGHTLY ORDERS (that of TEMPLARS, of French origin, the Teutonic one, of German origin and that of the GIOVANNITI, of Italian origin). They were a kind of humanitarian assistance orders, whose members, in addition to the monastic vows of chastity-poverty-obedience, also swore to also defend the Holy Places against the infidels.

### **The Order of the Temple**

The Order of the Temple has always been shrouded in mystery and legend and reality, prose and poetry of the Knights Templar merge and mingle. The Templars were a monastic military order which marked the medieval history, greatly influencing the culture of the time. In a social system divided until then Ballatores (those who fought), Oratores (those who pray) and Laboratores (those working) there arose a new order which reconciled the basic principles of monasticism: poverty, chastity and obedience to the use of weapons to protect pilgrims visiting the holy sites, and consists of monks who were both soldiers. These monks soldiers, born with the purpose of protecting the pilgrims and not to expel the Muslims from Jerusalem and other areas sacred to both religions, were devoted to Christianity and the Cross who remained loyal to the end.

### **Source**

On November 27, 1095 Pope Urban II at the Council of Clermont, made an appeal calling for the Christian knights weapons for a crusade to liberate the holy places in Palestine. Groups of crusaders began in August of 1096 the journey to Constantinople, where they arrived later on the other groups to form a single fighting force that subjugated the entire region to Christian control, would march towards Syria and Palestine to conquer Jerusalem, that was conquered in 1099 and in 1100 was crowned as the first Christian king of City Baldwin I. At that time the Crusaders were with a group of nine French knights, led by Hugh of Payns, who had pronounced a solemn mutual promises of chastity, obedience and communion of all the properties. These knights had come to the Holy Land to get on the king of Jerusalem and, under his leadership, had participated in many battles. During his stay in the holy places had seen the poor conditions in which came hundreds of pilgrims and how many on the dusty roads leading to Jerusalem kept dying victims of the attacks of armed gangs out of control in the region and in 1118 this group of knights showed up to king Baldwin II putting at its disposal for the protection of pilgrims and patrolling the streets in and around Jerusalem. Unlike these other knights came to the king not glitzy or shining armor clothes but covered by a simple white robe. Baldwin II granted them as headquarters wing of the fortified monastery of Our Lady of Sion, near what had been the Temple of Solomon, and the

knights gathered in a first order called the "Poor Knights of Christ" began patrolling the streets. After a short time, being increased the number of knights, moved occupying the whole area of what was once the esplanade of the Temple of Solomon, including the Dome of the Rock and the Mosque of Al-Aqsa, and its name was changed to " Order of the Poor Knights of Christ and of the Temple of Jerusalem "and from then were recognized as" Knights Templar. " The uniform was composed of a white mantle, enriched by a red cross on the chest and on the right shoulder. The shape of the cross was Greek (symmetric) or Latin (with the longest bottom tip), with the tips which widen toward the end terminating with a straight edge or, more rarely, concave.

The Templars then arose as both monastic and military order: the monks so-called traditional pronounced three votes, ie obedience, poverty and chastity: the Templars, in addition to these three votes, he also pronounced a quarter, that is, "stay in arms" therefore the armed combat. They were so real warrior monks, and this situation was quite unusual for the Church, because of the "stay in arms" it is difficult to reconcile with the other three. It was therefore necessary to find a clear and precise position, also looking for a rule that will perfectly suit the job situation. It is no coincidence that from this moment enters in the Templar story, one of the most charismatic and influential of the time: Bernard of Clairvaux. Monaco Cistercian, founder of the Abbey of Clairvaux (1115), writer and later Doctor of the Church St. Bernard, returning to the concept of "just war" expressed by St. Augustine, considered the use of weapons Templar vote against the infidels no intention of "murder", but a real action against Evil, a "malicidio", as you can read in "De Laude Novae Militiae Christi", written in his own hand as the entire Templar Rule. At this point, all the Order statutes were approved and the Templar Rule bloc was signed by all and was affixed thereto the papal seal, while Hugues de Payens, who was also present at the Council, was appointed Grand Master of the Order. The order was based on the cistercians and devised a code of behaviour known today as the latin rule with 72 clauses, which determined how many horses they could have, what they could wear, to take their meals in silence and to not eat meat more than 3 times a week. Over time the number of clauses increased to over several hundred. At Troyes then the Templars adopted a motto: "*non nobis Domine, non nobis, sed nomine tuo da gloriam*" St. Bernard also transmitted to the Knights devotion to Mary and the great respect for the woman, the fact cites Rule: "Maria presided over the beginning of the Order, it will also preside, if it be the will of the Lord, the end." Dome of the Rock and the other two knights on a horse that stood for the initial poverty of the Knights who were forced to go two on one horse and universal duality of things, which draws their ideal, that is, the coexistence Terra Santa peaceful in the Christian culture and the Islamic. In 1139 there was the bull "Omne datum optimum", Pope Innocent II who granted the Order the complete independence, including exemption from payment of taxes and duties, in addition to the

directive that the Order was not accountable to none of his actions, except directly to the Pope, making it a body part with a very privileged position.

### **Organization and economic activities**

The Order, through its Rule gave himself a top-down internal and formidable organization: a Grand Master who had overall responsibility for the command and the whole Order; a Marshal, who was in charge of the weapons and provision; a Grand Seneschal, who had the administrative responsibility and the Order policy. After this, both the possessions that land donations were divided into Grand Priories, which amounted to Member; the Priories, which amounted to a group of regions in the same state; the Balivati, which were equivalent to a province; the Precettories, which were equivalent to our towns and cities. So there were the preceptors, the Bailiffs, Priors, Grand Priors. It was a perfect organization, since each for the internal management was totally independent of the other, and everyone had to report to his superior, until you get to the Grand Master. The headquarters remained in Jerusalem to the Muslim reconquest of the city in 1187, after which they were transferred to Antioch, Acra, Caesarea and then to Cyprus.

For what concerned the economic side, each Precettorie had to support herself, doing work both riders that other staff: each Precettoria had his gardens, his livestock and everything else needed for the support of the Knights. The Precettorie or Commende were so complex self-sufficient in which there were agricultural, metallurgical, religious and military. In Commende they were bred and selected the horses, which are essential to the war, the cattle for work in the fields and pigs for meat. To feed the animals was necessary to increase our harvesting equipment and thereby improve the yield of cultivated land. They were introduced for this purpose, new technologies that enabled the achievement of remarkable results for its time. At the end of each month, the Precettorie had to send to the Great Seneschal, who also served as Treasurer, one tenth of the forfeited income, while the rest remained at Precettoria for operating costs. Thus the Templars, both in Terrasanta which became a constant reference in Europe, for the troops and also for pilgrims, who considered the Precettorie, namely the barracks, real refreshment points and possibly also impervious shelters the raids of robbers.

The donations constituted the main source of the patrimony of the Order in the West. They could be all kinds: land, houses, mills, money, etc. Very often the heirs contested the donations and the Templars found themselves involved in legal disputes. Donations were administered diligently as it was from these that they derived the revenue needed to pay responsions. Every donation was used to finance the campaign of war in the Holy Land, and everyone, while not directly participating in the war, however, could make their contribution: in practice, donating to the

Templars meant materially contribute to the liberation of "Possessions of God "as it was often called the land to the sea beyond.

The riches obtained by the Templars were unthinkable and they themselves were good at handle: not let the excess money to rot in dark rooms, but invested it, especially by the treasury service for nobles and kings and lending money, of course, as Christians do not they could charge interest, but they knew how not to suffer damages with loan rates. Some brothers were exclusively concerned with banking activity and the business they carried out were mainly of four categories:

- Free taxes and sums of money of a prince who voted in the Crusade;
- transfer to the Holy Land of said sums;
- collection of papal tithes for the Crusades;
- loans to princes or nobles, who need money to motivate this with pious reasons.

To them is also due to the invention of the check or letter of exchange: for example the pilgrims who wanted to go to the Holy Land, but they were afraid of being robbed, could leave money in any Templar mansion and receive a receipt for recovery ; on arrival in the Holy Land they brought a receipt in the mansion and returned in possession of the amount of money left before their departure.

### **Monks soldiers**

After the Council of Troyes of 1128/29 and the official recognition of the Order by the Church, the popularity of the New Christian Militia spread throughout Europe and the ranks of the Order were reinforced by a large number of staff. As mentioned, not all members of the Order were knights, indeed the number of these was limited compared to the totality of the Frates; By far the most numerous were the Sergeants Brothers, Serventes, not noble birth, who were divided into brothers by trade and sergeants on horseback, the latter destined to support the Knights in battle, although with a kit usually lighter and with a different dress, black or brown. There were four divisions of brothers in the Templars:

- knights, with heavy equipment [2] - The knight-brothers came from the military aristocracy and were trained in the arts of war. They assumed elite leadership positions in the order and served at royal and papal courts
- sergeants, equipped as light cavalry, [3] from who were usually from lower social classes, made up the majority of members. They dressed in black habits and served as both warriors and servants
- factors, which administered the property of the Order

- chaplains, who were ordained priests and took care of the spiritual needs of the Order

Each Knight had always two or three sergeants who accompanied him in battle, and a group of six or seven squires to assist both in peacetime and war. The majority of the Knights Templar was devoted to military maneuvers, and they were probably combat units better trained and disciplined of their time. The vast majority of the Templars fought on horseback, while the sergeants and novices used to fight on foot. Of course, in fighting their trump card was the devastating charge, you can imagine the devastation and panic that can create a heavy cavalry charge among the ranks of the infantry!

The basic unit of Templar cavalry was the lance, or *concroi*, formed by 20 or 30 Knights and controlled by a *Commendatory*. A row of heavily armored Knights constituted the front row, just behind them sergeants horse arranged in two rows followed by even more behind grooms. The *Commendatory* was recognized compared to normal because he had on his spear a white-black pennant which served to guide the Knights entrusted to him also towards objectives different from those of the rest of the formation. The pennant was the same color of the banner of the Templars, the *Baussant* or *Baucent*, or *Vaucent*, translated by some as "I'm worth for Hundred", a clear warning to the enemies! However, it was a word that praised to the beauty of victory. The *Baussant* was half black and half white, and these two colors standing for their dual vocation: to live the faith and to give death to error.

Their strength came from a strict discipline, which made them a consistent and disciplined group, determined to sacrifice, not being permitted them to "surrender" to the enemy. The Knights Templar have always been distinguished for their incredible determination in battle, they had a discipline inhumane and ruthless in front of the opponent firmly. Not by chance were called by Muslims the "red devils", while the Knights were called "devils blacks." They demanded the privilege of the first line during the fighting, often had to pay a high price in blood that privilege, but with their reputation for being the bravest defenders of the Cross had no difficulty recruiting new fighters. Within a few years he became the crusader contingent most feared by the enemy and the Saracens, contrary to their custom, when they managed to take them prisoner, not leave them alive unless they were to deny their faith. Which never happened. To the Templars, in fact, the battles reserving two perspectives: victory or death. They used to massacre enemies, not because he felt pleasure in killing, but to compensate with terror the irremediable outnumbered ... they knew that only victory or death on them could escape the terrible torture to which they were subjected when they fell into the hands of Muslims; hence one of the main reasons of the extraordinary heroism of which gave repeated evidence.

The first real act of war of the Knights Templar in the Holy Land dates back to 1138, when Grand Master was elected Robert of Craon. The action took place in Tecua, Muslim town not far from the current Ghaza. The Crusaders attacked and took the town, and instead to retire immediately, as Robert of Craon advised, the crusaders decided to stay to plunder the city. The Muslims, reorganized, attacked the Crusaders by surprise, making a real massacre, and also many Templars were on the ground.

A great Muslim leader, Zengi, who had managed to reorganize the forces of Muslims, creating the cohesion that was lacking among the various sheikhs and putting together a formidable army of over 100,000 men ready to do anything to regain the lands once they had in 1128. Seized of Aleppo and some areas of the Principality of Antioch, threatening the County of Tripoli and the city of Damascus, the night of Christmas eve of 1144, after a whole month of very hard siege, conquered Edessa and most of his county. The defeat and the fall of Edessa aroused great impression in the Christian West, and Baldwin III, although very young, asked Pope Eugene III to banish another crusade, which takes place December 1, 1145 with their papal bulls.

The Second Crusade was ready and, to avoid annoying glitches between France and Germany, the two armies set out for the Holy Land apart. First the Germans left, passing through Hungary and arriving to Byzantium. But the Crusaders were not frowned upon by Manuel Comnenus, Emperor of Constantinople, also because the German soldiers considered the city as if it were an achievement, stealing and looting. Finally, after some time, the Germans left Constantinople, heading south, crossing Anatolia and then to reach Ephesus and then the Holy Land. In the midst of the mountains, the German Crusaders were attacked and almost completely destroyed by the Seljuk Turkish army, so that the Crusaders lost nine-tenths of the workforce, and retreated fortuitously at Nicaea, where they waited the French army led by Louis VII.

The King of France arrived at Nicaea in the first days of November, and picked up what was left of the German army in Lapodion, near Lake of Apollonia, a little further south. Conrad III, listening to the advice from Everard of Barres, Grand Master of the Knights Templar, arrived by sea in the Holy Land in 1148. Meanwhile, the French crusader army was forced to defend itself from the continuous attacks of the Turks, with whom they engaged battle to Antioch in Pisidia, and they managed to get to Laodicea, but in pitiful condition. The city had been evicted for the Crusaders violence against the civilian population, and famine was making many victims. The French crusaders were now in defeat and many of them deserted and rebelled their officers: only the Templars remained in compact and disciplined ranks.

While crusader army crossed the mountains Cadmus, Geoffrey of Rancon, commander of the avant-gard, heedless of the advice of the Templars, crossed the gorges instead of camping in the

mountains for the night: it was the mistake awaited by the Turks, who attacked the crusader army in his rear, and only the fall of the night saved the crusaders from the complete defeat.

At this point Everard of Barres, after an interview with the King of France, took command of the army, reorganizing it, placing at the head of each group of 100 soldiers a Templar, who well knew what to do. Thus, the French controlled by the Templars managed to cross the mountains and came to Attalia, where, however, they found a nasty surprise: the ships promised by the Bizantines were few and shabby so a part of crusaders left with the ship, another part, including the Templars, continued on the ground.

In 1150, Baldwin III had done to fortify the city of Gaza and had donated to the Templars, to defend it and to act as a sentinel to the south of Palestine. On January 25, 1153, the entire Christian army laid siege to Ascalon, but after four months, nothing had yet been concluded, each attack was systematically rejected. Towards the end of July 1153, a Christian army Mobile tower caught fire, and was thrown against the walls of the city: the strong impact and the heat caused a gap where there was a group of Templars led by Bernard of Tremelay. Tremelay viewed the breach sized the opportunity to jump into the front line, and then lunched with forty knights inside the breach. Other Crusaders at that time were across town and did not have time to follow the Templars who had thrown in Ashkelon. Muslims, seeing only forty men, counterattacked, killing the Templars and the same Tremelay. The bodies of the Templars were hung by their feet outside the walls, and their heads thrown on Christian camp with small catapults. The fury of the Christians in this show was such that August 19, 1153, after a powerful and intense siege, the city was taken and laid waste fire. A this event followed a period of relative peace. But it did not last long. Sal-Hal-Din, better known as Saladin reorganized the Muslim army, bringing to more than 200,000 men, with whom he attacked Cairo, getting rid of the vizier Shawar, now friend of Christians, and speaking directly to Jerusalem. The entire Muslim world joined Saladin against Christians in 1174. In November 1174 Saladin entered in Damascus, and on December 9 of that year entered in Homs, then go to Aleppo, which was besieged December 30.

In 1178, Baldwin built a fortress called "Ford Jacob," which was given to the Templars, but Saladin did not take into account the strength of the Templar fortress of "Ford Jacob," which did not fall, and prevented him to reach Jerusalem. But it was not all: on 10 June 1179, at Mesaphat, the Christian army of Raymond III and the Templars clashed with the Muslim army 200,000 men. It was a massacre, so that Saladin then won the Ford of Jacob, executing all the Templars stationed in the fortress, and taking prisoner the Grand Master, Odo of Saint Amand, but did not want it to be paid anything for his ransom, and ended his days dying of hunger and exhaustion in the Damascus prison.

In 1187, it happened a very serious: Reynald of Chatillon, an act absolutely irresponsible and crazy, march to Medina and Mecca, with the intent to appropriate the "black stone", the Muslim holy symbol. This act of piracy unleash the wrath of the Arabs, and Saladin gathers and organizes the largest army man has ever seen among knights, archers and foot soldiers, over 300,000 men were under the command of the Muslim commander.

The real battle took place the horns of Hattin on July 4, 1187. The Crusader army after several days of hard marching and without water (the only source of water was manned by Muslims) clash with the army of Saladin who was able to encircle the Christian army, which among other things had not a single guide, but each regiment had its head and so divided the Christian army lost very effective and if you add fatigue and thirst is not clear because the Christians were severely beaten. The archers on horseback Muslims succeeded too well to hold off the infantry Christian, while the infantry of Saladin had the daunting task of holding the devastating charge of European heavy cavalry. The battle lasted several hours, but in the end, with the gradual loss of consistency of the heavy cavalry charges, the Muslims gained the upper hand, the Christian army was severely beaten, only very few were saved and the Templars and Hospitallers captured alive were delivered to Arab tormentors.

After this Christian defeat, one after another fall into Arab hands Tiberias, Acre, Nablus, Jaffa, Sidon and Ascalon. Jerusalem remained that after a few weeks of siege, October 2, 1187 was conquered by Saladin. After the fall of Jerusalem and the whole kingdom, April 6, 1291 Acre was besieged by 50,000 men. The Templar garrison held out: the May 18 all Acre was in Muslim hands except the fortress where they had perched the last 150 Templars. No longer able to lead the vanguard in the battle turned into rearguard and so sacrificed their lives defending the fortress was clearly hopeless, though without any danger they could save themselves by sea, the Knights Templar fought, they stood up to all attacks for ten days, until the Muslims not succeeded in forcing the defenses, also exploiting their high number. They died all of them, except a dozen who survived. The Holy Christian Land adventure was finally over. In two centuries the Templars had left on the ground of the Christian kingdoms over 12,000 knights and were the last to leave the Holy Land.

But it was not only in Holy Land protagonists: when Mongol hordes threatened Europe the Templars contributed greatly to his defense, that he found a temporary solution with the battle of Legnica in 1241. In the Iberian Peninsula also stood at the forefront, the sovereigns of Spain and Portugal could hardly have achieved their victories without the Templars, not in vain entrusted them their most armed fortresses and covered them with lavish gifts. Even the Templar fleet was among the best, no one would have dared to attack a ship flying the flag Templar and the Saracens he kept

well away. Famous were the Nordic Templars, who brought with them the monastic life that is useful in the field of nautical and naval battles.

## **Part II**

### **The trial**

The definitive conclusion of the crusade and the end of the Latin states of the East created enormous problems for the military orders that had given so much to the cause. The Templars had acquired, despite everything, political and diplomatic prestige recognized by all, the riches that had allowed the long stay in the Holy Land were now at their disposal in Europe. The same master Jacques de Molay left the seat of Cyprus to go to Paris, in the new headquarters and decide what to do, but the definitive return of the monks-riders in Europe also raised many bad moods. Almost all European kings had often resorted to the Templars finances for their insatiable budget needs, the Church of Rome, even if recently transferred to France, was afraid of its political power, the people looked at them more and more with suspicion: the Templars began to frighten many. In these years the economic situation of France was very delicate, King Philip IV, after trying in vain to enter the order of the Templars, does not seem able to raise the now empty coffers of the state. The French people, tired of the continuous increase in taxes, began to give signs of turbulence very dangerous. Rumors of a loan made by the treasurer of the Temple without Molay's authorization help to create a situation of tension between the French king and the master of the order. The Templars have become uncomfortable for the greedy Philip IV and for his political power.

The whole story began in 1305, when such an Esquiu De Floryan presented himself to the king of Spain Jaime II with an amazing story: he said he had been in the prisons of Béziers in the company of a Templar knight driven out of the Order who had told him about the unheard of atrocities that were accomplished: Christ was denied when he was accepted in the Order, he spat on the Cross, he practiced sodomy and adored an idol Jaime II, however, advised De Floryan to turn to Philip IV of France who had some experience in struggles against the Church thanks to his astute adviser: William of Nogaret.

De Floryan eventually managed to meet with Nogaret who immediately perceived how much information he was given was high explosive potential. He was now specialized in looting ecclesiastical goods and annihilating an Order for vile money did not bother him in the slightest. He also had perhaps one more reason to act against the Templars: the Knights had denounced to the Inquisition his grandfather as a heretic who had been so burned at the stake. For the moment, however, he had very little in his hand to accuse an entire Order, he only had the affirmations of a convicted

person, a witness who was therefore quite unreliable, and who was also expelled from the Order. There was only one solution to obtain safe and undeniable proof of the guilt of the Order: all the Templars were to be subjected to torture and had to be forced to sign the depositions with the recognition of their guilt.

"The friars of the order of the Temple militia, wolves hidden under a lamb's appearance and under the habit of order, insulting the religion of our faith in an unfortunate way, are accused of denying Christ, of spitting on the cross, of indulge in obscene acts at the moment of admission to the order: they commit themselves with the vote that they say, and without fear of violating human law, to give themselves to one another, without refusing, if they are requested ... "With these words King Philip IV justified the mass arrest, unknown to the pope, of the Templars in the French commendations occurred at dawn on Friday 13 October 1307. Almost all the monks were imprisoned including the master Jacques de Molay who it was in the Paris commandery, all the goods of the confiscated order including the treasure and all the documents. The charges were heavy but what worried was the suspicion that hid behind this maneuver of the king: the desire to suppress the order of the Temple. The capture had been ordered by the Grand Inquisitor of France, William d'Imbert who was supposed to proceed with the interrogations, but the torturers immediately began, torturing the unfortunate poor and starting to make as many Templars as possible their declarations of guilt. Chained, isolated from the conventual life and tortured, to the poor imprisoned monks-knights was presented a long list of misdeeds that had long been habitual in the Order. Those who confessed were promised freedom, forgiveness and an ordinary pension drawn from the goods of the Order. It was only necessary to fulfill the very small formality of undersigning one's guilty affirmations under oath. On the other hand, those who stubbornly denied the accusations were put on the wheel one, two or three times a day, until they confessed ... or died. Not everyone did it to endure the torture and many signed the documents with bloody hands. The most important indictments were: to have denied Christ, to have spat on the Cross, sodomy and adoration of an idol. These are difficult months for the Templars, the memory of epic battles is far away and confusion appears to be the only certainty, where confessions, clarifications but also retractions and the specter of serious condemnation approach the white mantles to the fire of the stake. Torture begins to produce the desired effects of the King of France, Philip IV. The courage of the feared knights has remained very little and the discouragement in the ranks of the order hierarchy seems to confirm a sad path already designed and from which it seems there is no way out of escape.

Clement V, a French pope very close to King Philip IV, did not maintain his role of guarantor in search of the truth but he himself contributed, with his political indecision, to the final

condemnation of the order. Following the council of Vienne in 1312, the pope approved, at the request of the king of France, the suppression of the Templars by signing the bubble 'vox in excelso' and the following 'ad providam' with which it was ordered that all the Templars assets became properties of the Hospitallers, another religious-military order. The decisions of the Pope for the Templars were: those who had been judged innocent had to be kept with the goods of the Order and could live in their homes or in monasteries, provided they were not too many in the same house; those who did not repent or recidivists were severely punished and those who, despite the torture continued to not confess, were to be judged according to canon law; the fugitives had to report to the authorities within a year.

So the Order was suppressed, the condemnation of the dignitaries of the order to the perpetual prison seemed the final act of a political process that freed all of Europe of an order that became too powerful and influential, but the Process remained to the single defendants of heresy and highest exponents of the Order who continued to rot in prison. Philip did not wait for a moment, on 18 May he pronounced the sentence of death and the same day the high dignitaries of the Order were burned alive on the islet of Pont Neuf, Senna saddle, behind Notre Dame. An exterminated crowd gathered for the show. At this juncture the Grand Master Jacques Molay said a historical sentence:

*"At the threshold of death, where even the slightest of lies is fatal (it refers to the risk of not being able to ascend to Paradise), I confess by calling heaven and earth to witnesses, that I have committed very serious sin to the detriment of mine and mine, and that I have been guilty of the terrible death, because to save my life and escape from too many torments, and above all enticed by the flattering words of the King and the Pope, I have testified against myself and against my Order. he waits for me, I do not want to add other lies to those already said and, in declaring that the Order was always Orthodox and a world of every stain, I willingly renounce to life".*

At the last Grand Master Jacques De Molay, who had also been tried but then pardoned and freed, in the course of a public function to which he had been sent to assist, his pretended confessions were read. Following the rebellion of the Grand Master, who denying what was said, he affirmed the complete strangeness of the Order, to the accusations revolting, stating indignantly, that the Knights of the Temple had always remained faithful to the Rule received, to Christ and to Catholicism. He was again arrested and March 28, 1314, burnt on a low flame, like a heretic. De Molay, in the course of his torture, did not get tired of denying any guilt charged to the Order, accusing his torturers of mendacity and invoking Divine Justice.

During the numerous interrogations, de Molay has lacked coherence, certainly of intelligence, perhaps even of courage. He first recognizes some of the accusations made against the Order, later

portrayed his confessions, and then adopts a position that will no longer change: he will not speak except before the pope. So it remains silent even when, in 1310, the Templars rose in mass to defend their Order. And he does not even say anything when, two years later, the pope abolishes it. An examination of the sources of the process shows that the confessions of the Templars are stereotypical copies that tell all the same misdeeds, as is typical of the depositions extorted or suggested and the Inquisition processes outside of France almost all came to an acquittal of the order.

### **Conclusions**

With the suppression of the Order it was also the Church and especially the papacy to suffer a great damage, a Pope had sacrificed an Order to the greed of a King. The scandal of the trial, the confessions of the Knights, the weakness of the Pope, the deployment of a sneaky King against a secular Order, they undermined the foundations of society itself. The high medieval ideals such as cavalry, the sense of honor, discipline, value, courtesy, and religiosity were questioned. It did not have to be a trivial thing! The trial took place against a myriad of rules of canon law and civil law, the Templars were treated in an inhumane way, their confessions were extracted with violent ways and means and it was all too clear that the Order was innocent.

But after the suppression of the glorious Templar Order?

The Templars outside the borders of France succeeded for the most part to save themselves, especially in Portugal, Germany and Great Britain. Some think that they gathered in secret societies, such as the Rosacrociani of the sixteenth century, but for many it is difficult that this happened, the Templars of the various nations were too far away to communicate: they could no longer use their real name, they did not have a reference point, they were persecuted and promptly hit in the heart.

The survivors had no money, they were fugitives wanted by the authority, they had no children to pass on their traditions and their secrets (the Rule did not allow marriage) and had great difficulty finding new followers: who would have wanted to enter a Order suppressed by the Pope and sought by the police? Even if there were people with very pure ideals and the right spirit would have been better to join already existing Orders (especially the Gerosolimitani enjoyed great fame) or at least create a completely new one.

Over the centuries there have been many companies that claimed the title of "Templari", but this is another story.

[1]The Rule of the Temple, which was approved at the Council of Troyes of 1128, will come to count 678 articles from 72 departure. The text begins with an admonition and direct exhortation to the lay knights, "you who have so far led a secular chivalrous life ... you have embraced only for human convenience, because you to follow those whom God has chosen from the mass of perdition and He is shown with his sweet mercy of the defense of the Holy Church, and why you hasten to join them forever. " The seven following items make up the minutes of the council process, while those from the ninth to sixteenth, treat essential duties of the Templars, which are very similar to those of the Cistercian monks. Articles from the XVII to XXIII describe the clothing of the Templars. The white color is intended for riders, while black is for Sergeants. Articles from XXIV to XXX treat meals, providing that the Templars should consume their daily ration in common, in silence in one bowl. Convent life is regulated by Articles XXXI to XLIV, underlining the importance of silence, obedience to the Great Master, mutual help between brothers and the obligation of individual poverty as deprivation of objects, weapons and attires beyond normal individual allocation of each knight or sergeant. The lack of these provisions are governed by Articles XLV to L: for offenses of a certain size the culprit will be removed from the company of other brothers nor drink nor eat with them, or even more 'serious cases will be expelled from the order.

Articles ranging up to LXIX different topics: it is forbidden to hunt animals, except the lion, and beating their squires whatever they do; it is recommended to look after older siblings or sick. Latest articles are those that have given rise to speculation about the alleged homosexuality of the Templars. And 'it is forbidden to accommodate women in order and kiss the other sex. Even the main meetings had to be held in private fueling the hypothesis of special rites heretics ...

Mounted units were very important tactically until the end of the 19th century for their mobility and speed characteristics. Since its claim until its sunset cavalry, whose origin can be traced back to Medieval knight and symbolism as the Medieval Cavalry , it was the most important weapon, as much as for purely military reasons, social and political reasons.

The cavalry, composed of military men able to fight on horseback, in fact in need of a lot of men trained in this kind of fighting and animal mounts selected and employed exclusively in the fighting.

[3]The light cavalry used smallhorses, fast and agile; the knights wore armor very light or lacked

one. The arches were short with long-range, they did not, however, have the same power of the long arcs or leaf springs .

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