

SAPERE AUDE 16 MARZO 2022

Notes for a reflection by  
Lucio Artini & Martino Cartella

TEMPLAR INFLUENCE ON FREEMASONRY  
ORGANIZATIONS AND ON SPECULATIVE MASONRY:  
LEGEND OR REALITY?

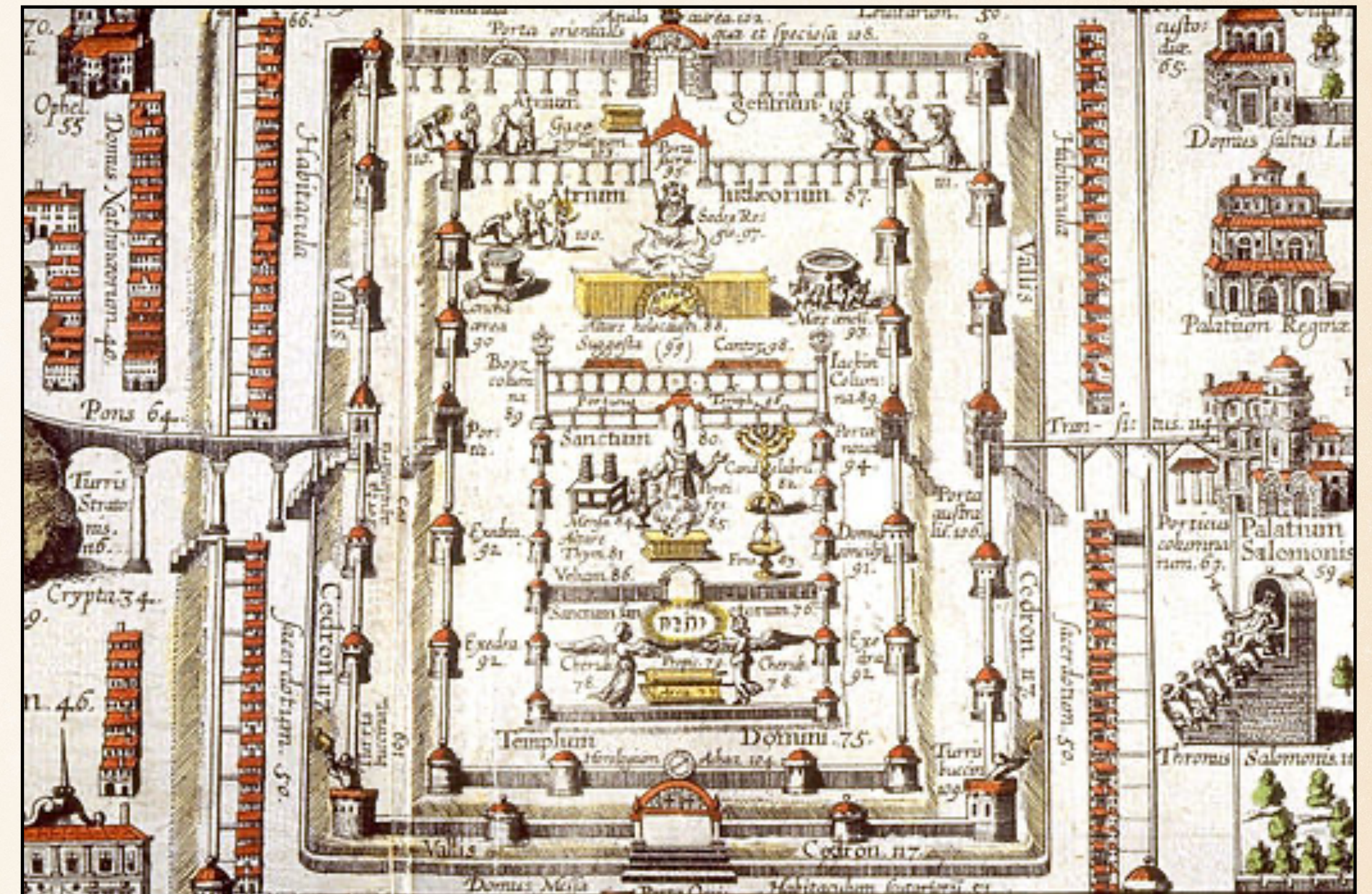
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TO ANSWER OUR QUESTION, WE SHOULD FIRST REBUILD THE HISTORY OF THE TEMPLAR ORDER, AND ONCE ANALYZED ITS CULTURAL  
PATH WE COULD VERIFY HOW THIS HAS INFLUENCED THE RITES AND THE HISTORY OF SPECULATIVE FREEMASONRY.  
BUT THE ARCHIVES OF THE ORDER HAVE DISAPPEARED, AND THE EXCOMMUNICATION, TRUE OR FALSE AS IT WAS, HAS DAMAGED ITS MEMORY.  
BUT FROM THE VATICAN ARCHIVES, MANAGED BY SALESIAN CARDINALS, DOCUMENTS WERE PUBLISHED WHICH HAVE SHOWN A NEW LIGHT.  
THE HISTORIANS HAVE LOOKED ON THE LAST EPISODES OF THE TEMPLAR ORDER'S LIFE, BUT NOT MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN ABOUT THE DECADES THAT  
PROCEEDED THIS EVENT. THERE ARE SOURCES FROM WHICH IT IS POSSIBLE TO RECONSTRUCT  
SOMETHING OF WHAT DID HAPPENED THEN.  
THERE ARE A NUMBER OF LETTERS AND DECISIONS BY THE PONTIFFS THAT, FOR A FEW CENTURIES,  
HAD PROTECTED AND SUPPORTED THE ORDER.  
CAN THIS STORY, THE REAL ONE, IN SOME WAY CONNECT WITH THE BIRTH OF FREEMASONRY?



# A HISTORICAL RESEARCH TO COMPLETE

- ❖ THE IDEA OF TEMPLARS SPREADED BY SOME FILMS IS THAT OF UNCOUTH WARRIORS, BUT THIS THING PROBABLY WAS NO LONGER TRUE WITH THEIR LONG STAY IN THE EAST, THEY WERE TRANSFORMED BY THE MANY CULTURAL CONTACTS.
- ❖ THE HISTORIANS HAVE SPENT TOO MUCH TIME ABOUT THE ARREST OF THE HEADS OF THE ORDER AND THEIR TRIAL, AND NOT ENOUGH ON WHAT HAD HAPPENED BEFORE
- ❖ IN 1200 WE FIND THE TRACES OF A CLASH BETWEEN A SPIRITUAL CHURCH AND THE CARDINALS LINKED TO FRANCE, THE LATEST WILL PREVAILING AND MANY CRISES, EVEN SUBSEQUENT, WILL RESULT FROM THE ASSERVATION OF THE PONTIFFS TO THE KINGDOM OF FRANCE, AND BY THE CONTROL, FOT POLITICAL REASONS. OF THE POPES.
- ❖ A LITTLE-KNOWN PONTIFF, BLESSED GREGORY X, WAS A SUPPORTER OF THE TEMPLAR ORDER, WAS AN INTELLECTUAL, HAD A VISION OF THE WORLD ROLE OF THE CHURCH, WAS A CONVINCED SUPPORTER OF THE DIALOGUE WITH ORTHODOX, JEWS, MUSLIM AND WAS LOOKING AT CHINA



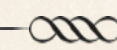
IL TEMPIO DI SALOMONE IMMAGINE  
TRATTA DA WIKIPEDIA



AS THE HISTORIAN BARBARA FRALE NOTES. SINCE THE SUSPENSION OF THE TEMPLAR ORDER, SUCH WAS THE IMPRESSION IN WESTERN CHRISTIANITY FOR WHAT HAPPENED, THAT MYTHOLOGIES AND LEGENDS AROSE. THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO APPROACH THE THEME OF THE TEMPLARS: ONE IS THE SCIENTIFIC AND HISTORIOGRAPHIC ONE, WHICH IS BASED ON DOCUMENTS AND OBJECTIVE DATA, THE FEW WE CAN FIND; THE OTHER IS THE ONE THAT DEALS WITH THEIR LEGEND (WHICH SOMEONE WANTS TO TRANSFORM INTO MYTH).

FOR THIS REASON, THE BIBLIOGRAPHY IN THIS REGARD HAS BECOME EXORBITANT AND NOT HOMOGENEOUS, AN INEXTINGUISHABLE STRAND OF THAT PSEUDO-HISTORY THAT FEEDS ABOVE ALL ON INEXTRICABLE ENIGMAS AND MYSTERIES.

IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT A DOCUMENTED AND REFINED WRITER LIKE UMBERTO ECO IN HIS "FOUCAULT'S PENDULUM" MAKES ONE OF HIS CHARACTERS, THE EDITOR BELLO, "WHEN ONE GOES TO A PUBLISHING HOUSE TO PROPOSE A BOOK ON THE TEMPLARS, HE IS ALMOST ALWAYS CRAZY."



THE ARCHIVES OF THE ORDER NO LONGER EXIST, THERE IS NO TRACE OF DOCUMENTS, EVERYTHING HAS BEEN DESTROYED.

INSTEAD, IT IS POSSIBLE TO FIND USEFUL ELEMENTS FOR A HISTORICAL RECONSTRUCTION, BUT IT IS PERHAPS SOMETHING THAT IS NOT WELCOME. THERE ARE DOCUMENTS AND LETTERS THAT HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY THE NUMEROUS POPES WHO SUPPORTED AND FAVORED THE ORDER FOR ALMOST TWO HUNDRED YEARS.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS WERE MADE PUBLIC IN THE PERIOD IN WHICH THE SALESIAN CARDINALS CONTROLLED THE VATICAN ARCHIVES BUT TODAY EVERYTHING SEEMS TO HAVE STOPPED.

THE CLOSE BOND OF NUMEROUS POPES WITH THE CROWN OF FRANCE HELPED TO DELEGITIMIZE THE HOLY SEE EVEN IN THE EYES OF OTHER SOVEREIGNS, CREATING THE POLITICAL BASIS FOR THE SCHISMS THAT WILL MARK THE WESTERN CHURCH IN THE FOLLOWING CENTURIES.

LUCIO ARTINI  
**BEATO GREGORIO X**  
**IL PAPA CROCIATO:**  
**IL PAPA TEMPLARE?**

ANNALES FOROLIVIENSES

c. 45 a 1276 MCCLXXXVI. Pape quatuor mortui; duo divino iudicio et duo veneno exausto.  
Dominus Guido de Montefeltro et comes Rogerius et comune Forlivij et Faventini...



Costanzo D'Agostino Editore



In his article “The Lost Rites of Freemasonry” which appeared on The Square (September 2017), David Harrison made mention of the inception of masonic rituals in 1700 and referred to the A.A. Scottish Rite and the Strict Observance, two entities claiming a connection to the disbanded Templar Order.

The former traces its origins back to Andrew Michel Ramsey, the Chevalier Ramsay, who supported the idea of a connection between the above-mentioned rituals and the presence of some Templar Knights in the Scottish area who escaped arrest and persecution by finding a safe place in Scotland. A well-known speech was held in Paris in 1737.

The latter was founded by Karl Gotthelf von Hund, the German Baron who asserted he had had a peculiar initiation. He mentioned some successors of the Order, some Unknown Superiors, who used to hide. Some expeditions even started from Germany to seek out these presumed Unknown Superiors, whom someone associated directly with the pretender to the throne of England, the Stuart Young Pretender.

From an historical point of view, on one hand these new rituals were the result of an increasing knowledge of non-European religions and philosophies, which could find some correspondence with both foundation legends and rituals within the several grades. On the other hand, they were the result of nobles, upper classes, and clergymen’s intention to find a connection between the Freemasonry rituals and the Chivalry and Aristocracy traditions, and not only to Freemasonry bodies.

According to the historian Carlo Francovich’s “Storia della Massoneria in Italia - Edizioni Ghibli 2013”: «In his speech, Ramsey rejects the corporative interpretation of Masonry; he moreover rejects bourgeois and egalitarian aspects of English Freemasonry, associating them with an aristocratic and chivalric inheritance, to appeal to the young French aristocracy».

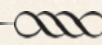
He reports that «the general idea that knights, during their stay in the Holy Land, could have had frequent contacts with Middle-Eastern doctors, who passed down to them a secret knowledge of alchemy and medicine. This one idea became stronger and stronger over the years and legend ended up replacing history. »



As for the presence of Templars within Corporations, this is a possible scenario, especially in Scotland, an area far away from Roman and French persecutors, and for some additional reasons: first, because the Templars, in two centuries, had been commissioning castles, churches and fortresses; and furthermore, some members of the Chivalry came from those same noble families governing European countries, who had the power to get them away from persecutions.

One more record of the links between history and legend is offered by Salvatore Farina in his book “Il libro completo dei Riti Massonici (Complete book of Masonic Rituals)” - Gherardo Casini Editore. The author tries to trace the process which brought to the transfer into modern speculative Masonry of symbols and elements coming from the Templar Order, showing the interconnection between history and transmitted legends. Farina reports that, according to one of these legends, the Chivalric Order of the Temple also counted a “Saints” group, the so-called Kadosch (Hebrew): «after the Order was disbanded, this group could perpetuate through initiation in Saint Andrew Knights Circle and as an independent entity. » Nonetheless, in the following paragraphs, Farina shows a possible historical scenario:

After the Order was banished, they sought out a safe place for themselves, their symbols, and documents, finding it in masonic Corporations, which in the XIV century had reached their apogee of prominence.



It is remarkably interesting to notice that the late Cardinal Manning shared the same opinion:

« Southern France », he wrote, « was a breeding ground of heresy and one of the favorite regions of Freemasonry corporations. It is maintained that the Lodges of corporations had Templar Knights’ protection since the XII century. Therefore, it becomes clear why symbolic references to Solomon and to his Temple could pass through the masonic ritual. Moreover, this might explain why, after the suppression of the Templar Order, some obstinate circles who had a strong influence on Freemasons, could transform a harmless ritual into a complex one, through which they could transfer part of the Templar mistakes to initiates. »

A historical reconstruction of the events regarding the Order is made difficult, because of the destruction at the hand of monks, of both central and peripheral Archives at the time the persecutions started. Historical research focused on the more recent events, the persecution, and the trial, overlooking the prior centuries and documents, such as letters and decisions coming from Papacies supported by the Order itself.

These letters and instructions are nowadays partly available

DA ACRI LO SGUARDO VERSO IL MONDO:  
LETTERA DI GREGORIO X  
AD ABAGHAE, REGI TARTARORUM

577

Lyon, 13 mars 1275.

Abaghae, regi Tartarorum, scribit se ejus litteras recepisse  
eique nuncios apostolicos mittere decrevisse. (Reg. curiales,  
ann. III, n° 103, f. 209 ; POTTHAST, n° 20999.)

« Abagha, regi Tartarorum illustri, gratiam in presenti, que  
perducat ad gloriam in futuro. Excellentie tue litteras et

nuntios, latores ipsarum, quorum alterum postmodum  
sors, ut dicitur, humana subduxit, ad nostram presen-  
tiam venientes, una cum sacro concilio, adventus eorum  
tempore, in nostra presentia congregato, in quo, sicut  
per superstitis relationem intelligere poteris, principum  
et prelatorum multitudo copiosa et veneranda convenit,  
cum animi letitia et vultus serenitate recepimus et, litte-  
ris in communi perlectis ac nuntiis ipsis benigne in  
omnibus que proponere voluerunt, auditis, corde con-  
trito et humiliato spiritu exoravimus et exoramus Altis-  
simum ut ipse, qui est lux vera omnem hominem ve-  
nientem in hunc mundum, illuminans, tibi et tuis sua  
pietate concedat sic semper in lumine vultus sui lumen  
veritatis agnoscere, quod in suis beneplacitis ambulantes,  
ad exaltationem fidei christiane vestramque salutem in-  
defesso proposito intendatis. Ceterum, super hiis que per  
nuntios et litteras predictas tua magnificentia intimavit,  
ante Christiani exercitus ad transmarinas partes adven-  
tum, disponimus ad tuam presentiam legatos nostros,  
prout opportunitas permiserit, destinare, qui et magni-  
tudini tue ad illa plene respondeant, et te nichilominus  
ad alia que, si aures illis exauditionis prestiteris, tuam  
tuorumque salutem et utilitatem comunem respicient,  
sollerter inducant. Datum Lugduni, iii idus martii, anno  
tertio. »



# CHINON PARCHMENT FROM WIKIPEDIA:

The **Chinon Parchment** is a historical document discovered in September 2001 by Barbara Frale, an Italian paleographer at the Vatican Secret Archives On the basis of this document she has claimed that, in 1308, Pope Clement V absolved the last Grand Master,Jacques de Molay, and the rest of the leadership of the Knights Templar from charges brought against them by the Medieval Inquisition.

The Parchment is dated 17-20 August 1308 at Chinon France, and was written by Berenger Fredoli, Etienne de Suisy and Landolfo Brancacci, Cardinals who were of Saints Nereus and Achileus, St. Cyriac in Thermis and Sant'Angelo in Pescheria, respectively.

The Vatican keeps an authentic copy with reference number Archivum Arcis Armarium D 218, the original having the number D 217 (see below for the other Chinon Parchment published in 1693).

The existence of this document has long been assumed. In the bull Faciens misericordiam , promulgated in August 1308, Clement V explained that Templar leaders were supposed to be brought to Poitiers in order to be questioned by the Pope himself, but "since some of them were so unwell at that time that they could not ride and could not by any means be brought into our (*i.e. the Pope's*) presence" three cardinals were sent out to perform the necessary inquiries at Chinon. The commissioned envoys were instructed to create an official record of their investigations and, according to the bull, upon returning they presented the Pope with "the confessions and testimonies of the aforementioned Master and Commanders written down as spoken as a legal record by notarial attestation". In addition, a letter exists, supposedly written by the three cardinals to King Philip IV, in which they inform him of the absolution granted to the high-ranking officers of the Knights Templar. The text of the Chinon Parchment is also supported by records in register *Avignonese 48* of the Vatican Secret Archives, published in *Processus Contra Templarios*

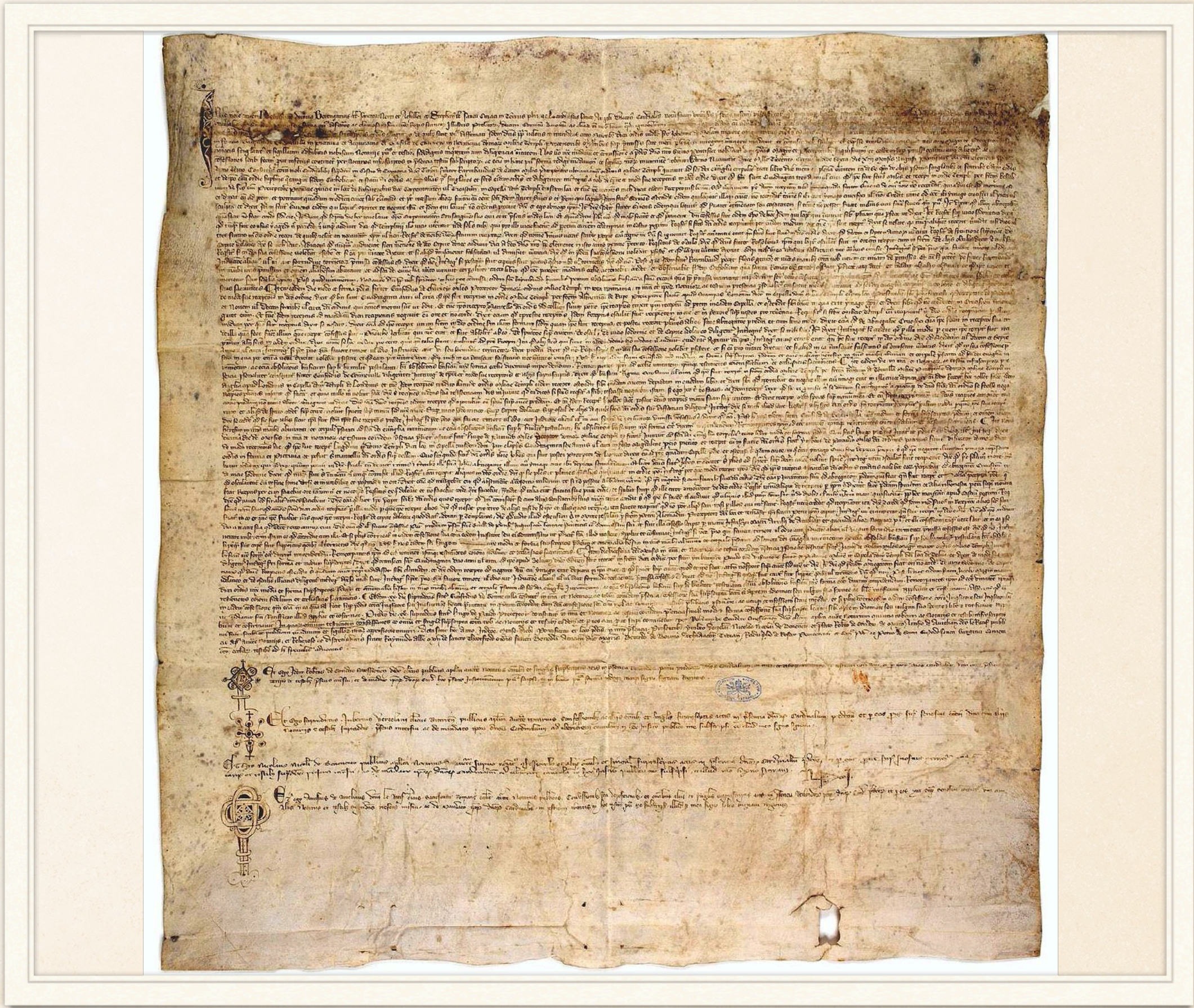
The historian Barbara Frale writes that, by scrutinizing several documents dating back to 1300:

«[...] The first immediate impression is that we are about to enter into a parallel universe, a dimension in which irrationality rules and obvious logical assumptions are irrelevant».

This testifying that the suppression-suspension of the Order was all but harmless, and on the contrary, it had been a phenomenon which could open a wound in Western Christianity. It was an event mainly considered as unfair and inexcusable.

Lately, after the Chinon Parchment was discovered, it was revealed that the Order was suspended but not banished and, furthermore, the trial was managed in a most unfair way, due to the publication of the “Processus contra Templarios.” The Chinon Parchment has been addressed extensively, therefore I will not go into detail on the subject. A focus on the documentation regarding the trial would be though remarkably interesting.

In the book “Processus Contra Templarios,” a limited edition published by Scrinium, there are reports by three cardinals who attended the trail. There are only 799 copies of this work and the comment distributed during its presentation, explains that it was curated by «...officers from the Vatican Archives and it shows seals owned by Cardinals and Apostolic commissioners Pietro Colonna, Pierre de la Chapelle and Berenger Frédol», furthermore it states that «the Secret Vatican Archive makes available for scholars, and whoever loves this subject, a most fine and scientifically reliable instrument to study historical events regarding the Order of the Temple»





## PROCESSUS CONTRA TEMPLARIOS, DAL SITO SCRINIUM:

**Scrolls of the complete acts of the Trial of the Knights Templar (1308)**

**Vatican Secret Archive Archivum Arcis Arm. D208, 209, 210, 217**

**The Vatican Secret Archive preserves the surviving acts of the pontifical investigation into the Order of the Knights of the Temple, held in Poitiers in 1308.**

**The first three documents (208, 209, 210) constitute the surviving examples of an original corpus of five parchment scrolls, containing the confessions of the 72 Templars questioned by Clement V from 28 June to 2 July 1308.**

**The long research and study work on documentary material, started in view of the first facsimile reproduction of the ancient parchments, revealed in 2001 the existence of a fourth parchment, (217) which is recognized as the original act of acquittal granted from the plenipotentiary cardinals of Clement V to the grand master of the Temple Jacques de Molay and the high Templar dignitaries in the castle of Chinon, where Philip IV the Fair had illegally imprisoned them.**

**In addition to the parchments, one booklet of twenty-four sheets has been reproduced, bound in the Reg. Aven. Forty-eight of Benedict XII. Drafted by order of Clement V, it preserves forty-seven headings, which is the extracts of the depositions of the Templars contained in the parchments 208-210 and 217, but also those of nine other interrogations attested by the register alone .....**

**The main value of the publication lies in the documents and critical texts, which help to clarify the events that led the pope to acquit the Templars from the accusation of heresy. Clement V suspended the order without dissolving it, reinstating the high Templar dignitaries - but with them the whole Order - in communion and in the sacraments of the Church. The whole Order - in communion and in the sacraments of the Church.**

The paragraph about the content of this work is incredibly relevant:

« The key value of this work lies in the documents and critical texts, which can help to explain the circumstances bringing the Pope to absolve the Templars from the accusation of heresy. Pope Clement V suspended the Order without disbanding it. He welcomed back Templar dignitaries – and in doing so, the Order itself – into holy communion and sacraments. This decision was made at a time when political conflict showed an escalation because of the dispute with Philip IV, who was fighting against England. A very expensive and well-known war, which made the Temple's monetary support necessary...».

It is now clear why this book is so valuable under a historical point view. And it is fundamental for the Roman Church as well, since it was the Roman Church itself to make it possible, and at the same time it could bring honor back to Templar Knights.

Practically, the documentation regarding the Templar Knights' "real story" was kept alive in those sections of the Roman Church in charge of preserving and studying documents





Were maybe those Unknown Superiors only scholars, coming from the same clerical hierarchy, who wanted somehow to bring the ancient Order back, as happened in recent times?

**Based on the logic of power and faction, the Roman Church tends to deny its Popes' "mistakes" – relying on the misinterpreted concept that Papal infallibility, is extended to both spiritual matters and secular ideas.**

I could make a small contribution to this research field, by analyzing the historical figure of Pope Gregory X from the published work “Gregory X, the Crusader Pope: a Templar Pope?”

Some years ago, I was told that during an examination of the remains of Pope Gregory X, born Teobaldo Visconti, a “textile evidence” was found, precisely a band, showing Templar crosses. In the following years I tried to verify the truthfulness of this report without any success.

Gregory X was elected in 1271 in Viterbo; at the time he was on a crusade in St. John of Acre (Acre); he died in Arezzo five years later, in January 1276.

Although I could not succeed, I started reading books and documents dealing with this matter, to get to know better the figure of the Pope, and this is how I could notice that Gregory X was fundamentally and strongly tied to the Order of the Temple, to the Knights Hospitaller and to the Holy Land. His commitment in preserving the Christian influence (which is still in danger) in the East was extremely significant, as well as the cultural and theological path he undertook with great determination and coherence.

By reading Gregory X's papers I could find out that in the second half of the XIII century the Roman Church was experiencing a strong internal conflict and fighting against the Angevin Crown.

**Two aspects found in his papers regarding the papacy and his history are truly relevant for this research: first, the Templars were considered an entity belonging to Christianity and, second, the proof of the existence of a college of Sages.**

Moreover, I found proof that all events occurring in the following ten years were influenced by the murder of three prominent figures, namely Gregory X, the Dominican theologian Saint Thomas Aquinas and the Franciscan General, Saint Bonaventure.

Several times, Gregory X had defended the Franciscan and Dominican Orders, as well as the two Warrior Monks Orders, giving them protection in occasion of the Second Council of Lyon.

It is possible that the textile band with a Templar crosses motif found in Gregory's tomb could be a proof that the Temple was part of the Roman Church and that it shared Gregory X's intention to defend the last Christian properties in the Middle East, “Outremer,” and the Christian influence itself



# THE BLESSED POPE GREGORY X

There are three particularly interesting letters, one of these was sent from the Lateran Palace to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem on the 13th of April 1272 and was addressed to «Thomae, patriarchae Hierosolymitano, concedit quod, non ostantibus indulgentiis Templarii et Hospitalariis ab Innocentio et Alexandro predecessores suis concessis, votorum cruce signatorum redemptiones et legata in Terrae Sanctae subsidium, ab ipso patriarcha percepiatur».

The paragraph deals with “commutations,” that is a monetary penalty to be paid in case someone reneged on the pledge to join the crusade in the Holy Land. It also mentions bequests and wills in favor of a defense of overseas territories: the Patriarch himself could collect them, although the two Orders could maintain the privileges granted by Pope Innocent III and Pope Alexander IV.

The first lines of the letter, whose meaning is unmistakable, assert: «Eidem – Non minus acceptum – Sane fraternitas tua nobis exposuit quod felicis recordationis predecessores nostri romani pontifices Innocentius .... magister et fratribus militie Templi et Alexander .... Magister et fratribus hospitalis Jerosolimitani.....» ; the text is incomplete, and it seems that Pope Innocent was Master and Brother of the Militia Templi, while Alexander was master and brother of the Hospital's. Nonetheless, this information is not true. It is indeed documented that Innocent and Alexander granted privileges to the masters and brothers of both Temple and Hospital, which Gregory renewed. Magister et fratribus and not Magister et frater. The word “Brother” may raise a doubt, since we read that both were masters and brothers! **Masters and Brothers, though not dangerous heretics.**

Thomae, patriarchae Hierosolymitano, concedit quod, non obstantibus indulgentiis Templariis et Hospitalariis ab Innocentio et Alexandro praedecessoribus suis concessis, votorum cruce signatorum redemptiones et legata in Terrae Sanctae subsidium, ab ipso patriarcha percepiantur. (Reg. n° 26, f. 10 v°.)

« *Eidem.* — Non minus acceptum. — Sane fraternitas tua nobis exposuit quod felicis recordationis predecessores nostri romani pontifices Innocentius .. magistro et fratribus militie Templi et Alexander .. magistro et fratribus hospitalis Jerosolimitani ut inter alia de redemptionibus votorum cruce signatorum in terre sancte subsidium quos a persecutione voti sui paupertas vel probabilis personarum debilitas seu obtenta per sedem apostolicam dispensatio, commutans in reale subsidium personale, executionem voti huiusmodi excusaret, necnon et de testamentis fidelium que legantur in subsidium dicte terre, non expressis locis aliquibus vel personis, iidem Templarii usque ad decem milium et Hospitalarii usque ad duorum milium marcarum argenti summas ubicunque locorum extra regnum Alamannie possent recipere, sub certa forma per suas duxerunt litteras indulgendum, certis eis super hoc conservatoribus deputatis, cujus indulgentie pretextu iidem magister et fratres militie Templi huiusmodi redemptiones et legata



# LETTERS TO THE ORDER TEMPLAR

We have found one more letter from the 4th of March 1472, unfortunately this one also is incomplete, as shown by the missing sections.

Here we provide a translated synopsis of the letter:

« Viterbo, 4 March 1272.

To the Inspector and Preceptor of Militia Templi and to the Prior of the Order of Knights of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem in France. The letter concerns events going on in the Holy Land and pleads with them to collect loans in case the King of France was not willing to offer a monetary help to avoid the destruction of the Holy Land itself. The amount should be up to 25.000 silver marks and could be a prompt support to soldiers and galleys. »

The text following the above-mentioned letter is not complete, there are missing sections, and it is therefore hard to state their relevance.

Here is a translation:

“If the King will not give his support, Templar and Hospitaller Knights of France are asked to collect loans to help the Holy Land and should rely on the Archbishop of Corinth. Gregory, elected Bishop, Servant of the servants of God...will offer his beloved children...to the Inspector and...to the Preceptor of Militia Templi and...to the Prior of Order of Knights of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem a long life and his apostolic blessing.

Baleful and unbearable.

Letter written in Viterbo, on the ninth, in the first year of our Apostolate.”

On his way back from Acre, Tebaldo – Pope Gregory – could realize that the last Christian territories in the Holy Land were in serious danger.

His first action was indeed aimed to providing a fundamental support: arming and provisioning for the Holy Land.

The letter shows that the King of France was supposed to contribute money in support of Christian troops. Although the text is incomplete, it is clear, that Gregory doubts the King’s commitment, and asks the two Orders to look for loans to take care of the most urgent matters if the King did not keep his word.

Once more, the Pope had a lot of esteem for the two Orders and it is possible that Templars and Knights Hospitaller in France were mediators between the Pope and the King, supporting the Papacy side in France. People at the top of the Orders are addressed as: «BELOVED CHILDREN».

There is one more and last letter, which is incredibly interesting for our research and this time it is addressed to the Knights Templar.

This letter was written in Lyon after the Council, at the time when the Secular clergy harshly criticized monastic societies. On the contrary, Pope Gregory defended Franciscans, Dominicans and the two monastic military orders from criticism and attacks.

The letter was sent to the Master and brothers of Militia Templi.

Here we provide a translation:

« Lyon, 27th of September 1274.

The Master of Militia Templi is commanded to ask his brothers to consign to him, or to a person on his choice, all the goods they are not allowed to own, based on an Order’s decision. »

In this case, the brief text is complete.

We go on with a further translation:

« To the Master and brothers of Militia Templi. By means of these Apostolic papers, you, dear son, and master, are assigned the **task of commanding your community and all professors of your Order** to consign (it) to you or to a trusted member, not later than one month after receiving this warning and without opposing in any way. To you, brothers, I therefore command to unpretentiously obey your Master, promptly and without impeding him. We will take action against those who will not obey – we refer to both groups of professors and single members – by excommunicating them. This excommunication will be irreversible and not even a special licence by the Apostolic See will revoke it. Written in

Lyon, third year of sixth day of the calends of September.”

348

Viterbe, 4 mars 1272.

Visitatori et praeceptori domorum Militiae Templi ac priori domorum Hospitalis s. Johannis Jerosolymitani in Francia scribit de eodem Terrae Sanctae negotio eosque rogat ut, si rex Franciae ad destinandum illuc subsidium opportunum non adeo liberaliter se promptum et facilem exhibeat, ad vitandum exterminium ipsius terrae, mutuum usque ad quantitatem 25000 marcarum argenti, per quod in militibus et galeis promptus possit haberi succursus, communiter contrahant. (Reg. ann. I, n° 7, f. 116 v°; POTTHAST, 20515.)

« Ut Templarii et Hospitalarii domorum Francie, si rex non provideat, contrahant mutuum pro subsidio Terre Sancte et super eo credant archiepiscopo Corinthiensi. Gregorius, electus episcopus, servus servorum Dei, dilectis filiis .. visitatori et .. preceptori domorum Militie Templi ac .. priori domorum Hospitalis s. Johannis Jerosolymitani in Francia, salutem et apostolicam benedictionem. Diras et intolera- biles —. Datum Viterbii, iiii nonas martii, suscepti a nobis apostolatus officii anno primo. »



# A COLLEGE OF KNIGHTS KADOSH?

Pope Gregory keeps the content of this letter vague: **The Grand Master, called “son and master” must force his own brothers and professors of the Order** to give back goods they were not allowed to own, as established by the Order’s regulations as well. The penalty is otherwise an irrevocable excommunication.

I could not especially understand what these “professoribus” were since this word was not of common use in ancient Latin. It was however present in medieval dictionaries:

- **professor: scribe of the Curia**
- **professor: a member in charge of overseeing the conformity to the religious order’s rule.**

Therefore, this letter clarifies what follows:

- **A College of Sages really existed. They were erudite guardians of knowledge and tradition.**
- **They owned documents unpopular with Roman Christian Church.**

These documents were to be given to the Grand Master of the Order, at the risk of excommunication.

Was it, maybe, a college of Knights Kadosh?

We should keep in mind that the Templar Knights were very tolerant towards all cultures: as testified by historical events concerning Pope Gregory X, they used to deal with Muslims and forged alliances with them, arranged truces, protected Jews, and opened a dialogue with Orthodox Christians.

“Professors”: “Protectors of the Rule” or “Scribes”, that is, those who could read and write, the erudite, had to give back their goods to their Master, under pain of excommunication.

This proves that there were both a College of Sages within the Order and a historical documentation, which was inaccessible. Even nowadays these papers are most likely only partly disclosed.

Were perhaps, the Unknown Superiors, prelates, or scholars,

who in 1700 already could have access to the above-mentioned papers? Or were they only Baron von Hund’s and The Chevalier Ramsey’s private fantasy?

Inter alia, Gregory X produced the papal bull on defense of Jewish people living in the Christian community. In 1700, Liberal Catholics in the Council of Regency in Florence produced a similar statement: they opposed the Florentine Pope Clement XII, because of the first excommunication of Freemasons, and issued an ordinance to ensure freedom of religion and protection for the Jews.

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Lyon, 27 septembre 1274.

Magistro ordinis Militiae Templi mandat ut districte praecipiat universis fratribus ut omnia quae ipsis habere secundum ordinis instituta non licet, in manibus suis vel illius quem elegerit, assignent. (Reg. ann. III, n° 37, f. 141.)

« *Magistro et fratribus ordinis Militie Templi.* Super hiis que —, universitati vestre per apostolica scripta mandamus quatenus tu, fili magister, universis et singulis

ejusdem ordinis professoribus districte precipias ut omnia que ipsis habere secundum ordinis instituta non licet, in manibus tuis vel illius aut illorum quos ad id duxeris deputandos, infra mensem postquam hujusmodi perceptum tuum ad ipsorum pervenerit notitiam, libere absque obice cujuscumque contradictionis vel difficultatis assignent vosque, fratres, ejusdem magistri precepto sine alicujus dilationis obstaculo humiliter pareatis. Nos enim in omnes et singulos ex predictis professoribus qui eidem precepto non paruerint, excommunicationis sententiam promulgamus, quam prohibemus relaxari per aliquem absque sedis apostolice licentia speciali. Datum Lugduni, vi kalendas septembris, anno tertio. »

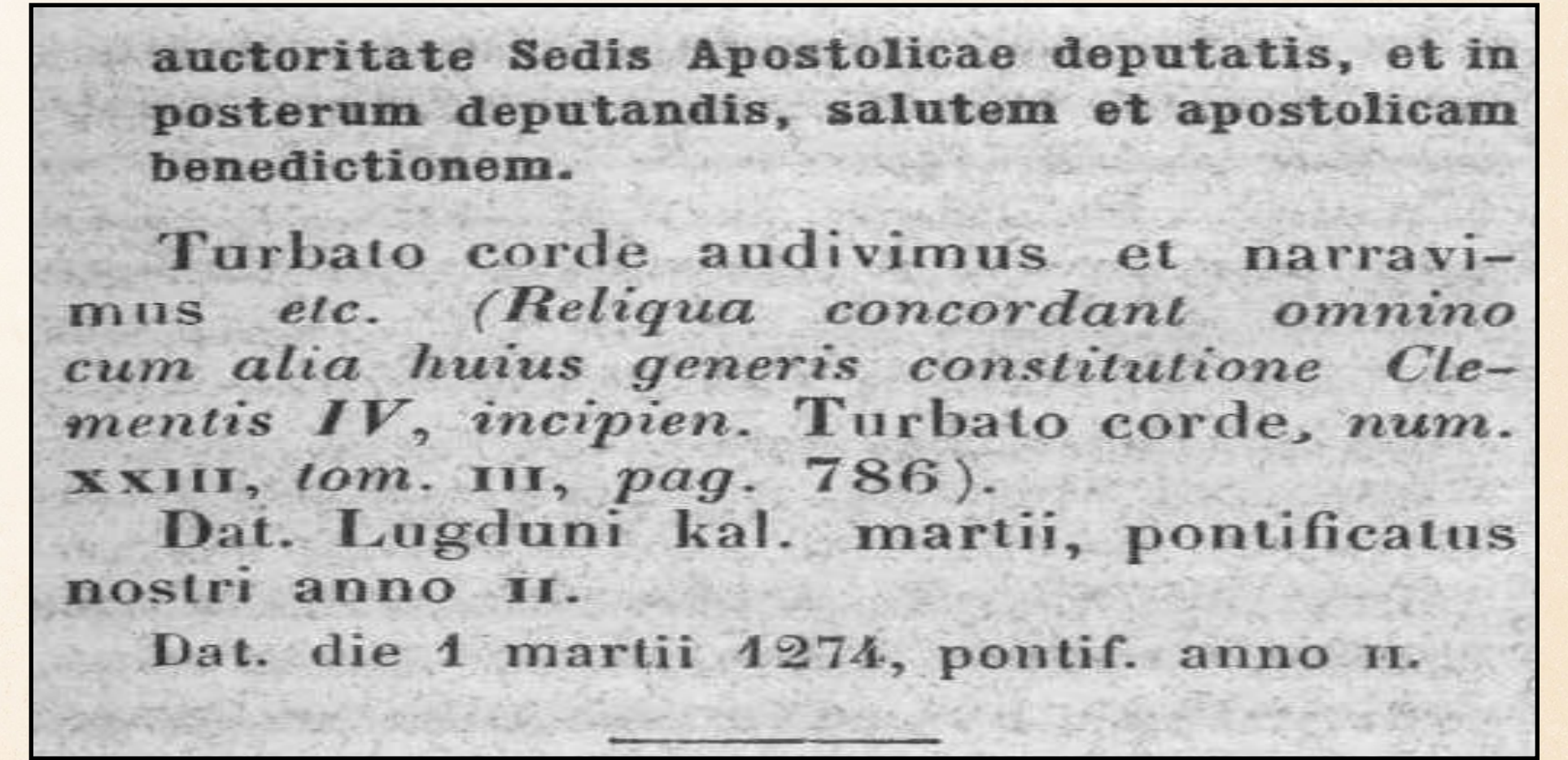
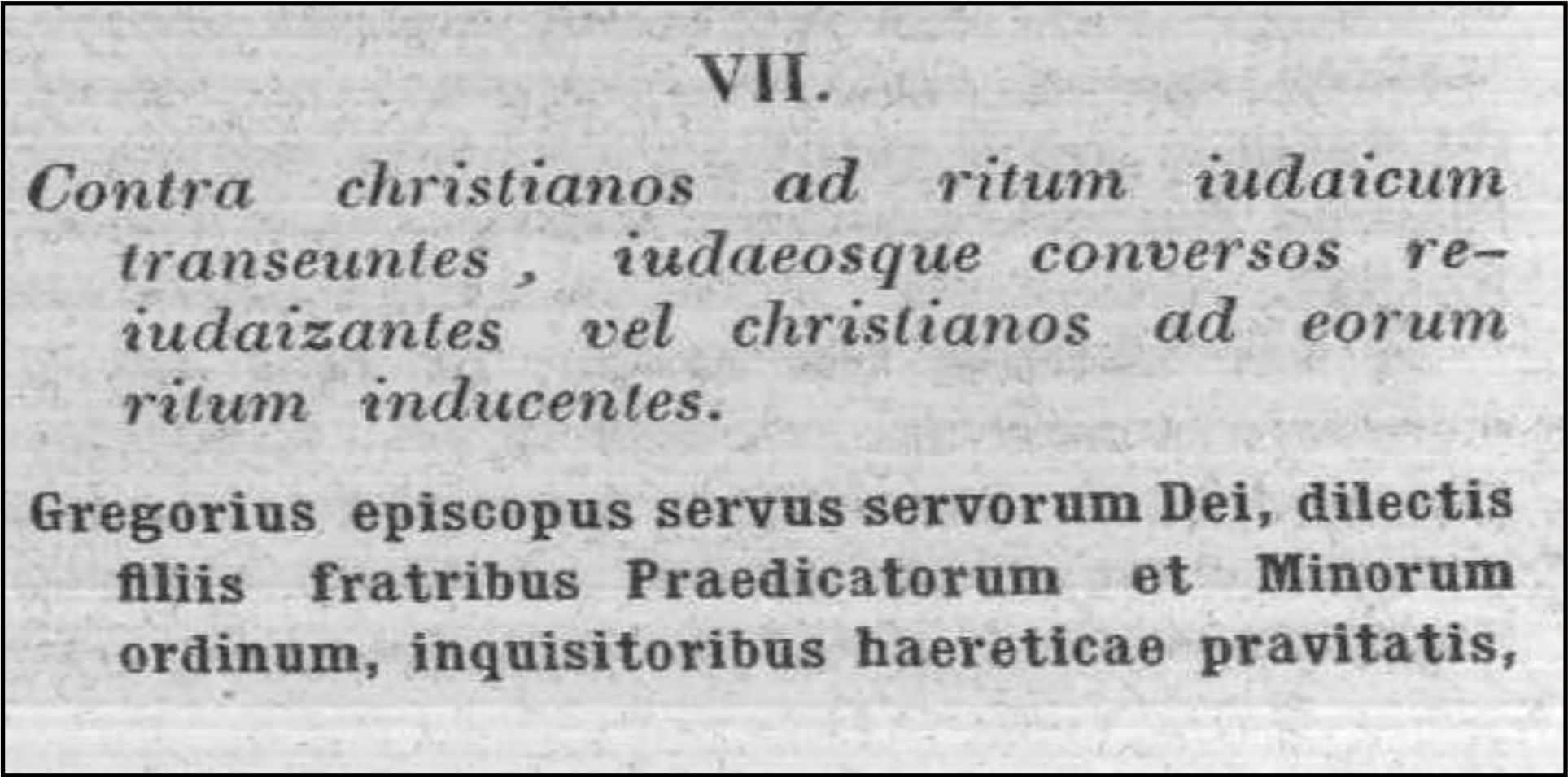


# PAPAL BULLS IN DEFENSE OF THE JEWS

Let us recall its contents through two Bulls by Pope Gregory X (1210 - 12/01/1276). This Pope was elected on 1 September 1271 while he was in Acre (Outremer). The analysis of his behavior and his decisions show us a Pontiff who deals with Muslims, defends the Jews and at the Council of Lyon unifies the Churches of the East and the West, a quite different figure from that of the crude and uncultivated crusaders that some films show us, that, according to some sources, was poisoned to death. With these two bulls Gregory tries to put an end to the persecutions of the Jews in the West even if shortly after a new king of France, Philip the Fair, will start one of the most important persecutions. The first bull is dated 7 October 1272 and it is probably repeated the following year, as Franco Molinari reports in his essay "Gregory X and the Jews" published in the collection of essays published by the Piacentina Historical Library entitled "Gregory X in the VII centenary of his death ", Piacenza 1977. Although the letter does not have innovative contents, it reaffirms a series of concepts, first of all "... the Augustinian principle of nemo invitus baptizetur: no Christian forces Jews to baptism". Then the Pope tries to put a stop to the persecutions to which the Jews were subject, often aimed at the sole purpose of acquiring their goods and riches:

"... the Machiavellian exploitation of anti-Jewish hatred is reproached: it happens that perverse Christians hide their children and then accuse the Jews of having kidnapped them for their ritual sacrifices, and thus extort sums from the Jews; it must no longer occur that Christians dare without reason to capture them, imprison them, mutilate them, torture them, usurp their goods. The pope warns against frivolous accusations and guarantees a minimum of juridical rigor to judicial actions ". So, Gregory forbids forced conversions and false accusations, always for the sole purpose of stealing their wealth by forcing the authorities, in the event of trials, to carry them out with a minimum of fairness: once Gregory dies, another type of Church will prevail and soon thereafter. great and widespread persecutions, in Spain and France. Gregory had lived between France, Belgium and England and then arrived in Palestine, so he was trained in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious environment, and in the Holy Land, as well as the Southern Italy of Frederick II and Southern Spain. Christians (Catholics and Orthodox), Muslims and Jews lived together and the learned exchanged knowledge and knowledge by knowing and respecting each other, the merchants traded and enriched themselves. Gregory is a very rigorous intellectual in his being a consistent Christian and in pursuing the liberation of sacred places for the Catholic religion and the protection of the Christians in the East, but as the provisions in favor of the Jews demonstrate, he is not devoid of the will for dialogue and confrontation with other religious currents. Above all, no one can be converted by force; it means that the power of the spirit does not need power of the sword to spread but of example, coherence and fervor of the Faith, and today as then ecclesiastics slaves of their material desires, whether they are carnal and of wealth, cannot fail to seek the protection of their material power in temporal power. Molinari continues: "Finally he intervenes to preserve the Jewish cemeteries from profanations by fanatical people and expresses a severe prohibition on Christians to disturb the celebration of their feasts with stones and sticks.". Molinari rightly notes a path that we can also highlight in the story of Gregory X and that is that when the church, or rather the men of the church, are driven by a spiritual strength and evangelical ardor, tolerance prevails towards the Jews: no one can be baptized by force and converted by force, but with example and conviction. But when the evangelical office "... was substituted by the idea of conquering earthly reality and subordinating it to the Papacy in the context of Christianitas, an anti-Jewish struggle approach intervened, and oppressive and inquisitorial structures were created, which in the various countries followed different itineraries and which never practiced ruthless and repressive intransigence literally. Italy especially, while walking in the wave of widespread anti-Semitism, shone for fairness and long-suffering and never fell into the bloody and inhuman excesses that occurred elsewhere. Sometimes a Pontiff who was suffering from obstinate infirmities, called a doctor to his bed (although the art of medicine is forbidden to Jews) ... ".

Molinari always reports that the first to intervene to protect Jews and defend them from persecution was Callisto II (1119 - 1124), his "Constitutio pro Judoeis" is intended to guarantee civil and religious rights for Jews: they should not have been forced to convert, they had to be left free to conduct their religious rites nor harassed their cemeteries and their property protected. And together with Callisto and Gregorio other Popes in 1200 issue bulls to protect the Jewish communities: Eugene III, Clement III, Celestine III, Innocent III. The relationship between Churches and political power and therefore the use of the tools of secular power in order to guarantee religious observance and respect for the Church understood as an apparatus are the focal points of political and cultural conflicts in 1200. Does one convert through example and reasoning or does he convert with the sword and the threat of torture? The secular power is however subordinate to the spiritual one, but it is so only in a moral sense or do the Popes also decide which are the mechanisms through which temporal power is expressed, who governs, how it governs and what it governs? And when the power of the Spirit, a message aimed at the conversion of souls, is confused with the earthly government, it will become inevitable that earthly rulers will aspire to make it an instrument of their private and personal ambitions and to build through it an "otherworldly" legitimacy for a materialistic government, indeed very materialistic





# THE COUNCIL OF LYON: THE UNION WITH THE EASTERN CHURCH

In a "History of the Church" published by the Jaca Books, Professor Hans Wolter of Frankfurt am Main, author of the chapter entitled: "Between the fourth crusade and the 2nd Council of Lyons (Volume V, chapter 16)" focuses on path undertaken by Gregory X towards the Eastern Church: "Whatever the judgment one wants to give about this Pope in his oriental politics there is something of the greatness of the balance and the clairvoyance of the first Pope of the Urban II crusade".

Gregory agrees with Michael VIII and the “modus proceeded” is important: on 24 June, the Greeks arrive in Lyon, on 29 June the act of the Union is celebrated, the liturgies are subsequently unified, on 16 January 1275 the Orthodox Patriarch resigns. Gregory died on 10 January 1276.

Among the popes that will succeed, those linked to France will support the Latin Emperor, the others will try to keep open the dialogue with the East at least until Pope Martin IV who openly favored the alliance between Charles of Anjou, the Latin emperor and Venice, intended to reconquer Constantinople, instead of aiming to free Jerusalem (perhaps with a negotiable agreement like the one with Frederick II, who was excommunicated for it and then Edward of England instead supported by Pope Gregory) and saving what remained of the Christian kingdoms of the East

On 12 November 1281, the Emperor Michael VIII was excommunicated and on 26 March 1282 the Pope forbade Catholics "under penalty of excommunication and interdict" any relationship with Michael VIII, "including the sending of war material"; Remember that Gregory had prevented this towards the Muslim countries!

Wolter comments:

**"There can be no doubt in recognizing those who have trampled on without regard the tender little plant of the union between the two Churches, in fact the pontiff's excommunication did not strike a guilty party, but one who, postponing his own political interests, had carried out for the reunification the greatest efforts and the most serious sacrifices ".**

A man of the church and an apparatus that instead of trying to unite Christians divides them dramatically, putting the dynastic interests of this or that ruler first.

The results of the clash between Christians and Orthodox are well known, we remember that it was with the fourth crusade that t ended with the sack of Constantinople and the imposition of a "Latin" emperor that begun 70 years of civil wars began, which will weaken the Empire of the East and lay the foundations for its fall and the defeat of the Latin kingdoms of the holy land, while Islam would find a new political unity.

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Lyon, 28 juillet 1274.

Michaeli Palaeologo, imperatori Graecorum, scribit de multiplici gaudio habito de professione fidei quam ejus nuncii nuper in Lugdunensi concilio generali fecerunt. (Reg. curiales, ann. III, n° 10, f. 182 ; POTTHAST, 20869.)

« Carissimo in Christo filio Michaeli Paleologo, imperatori Grecorum illustri, salutem et apostolicam benedictionem. Exultat mater Ecclesia nascentis populi fecunditate jucunda, exultat et jubilat gaudenter attendens se dragmam perditam invenisse, immense letitiae rore perfunditur dum ruinas quas in ea scisma multiplicarat antiquum, impleri per tuum aliorumque reditum ad ipsius Ecclesiae unitatem sine stragis cujusquam periculo, solo pacis auctore previo, intuetur; exultamus et nos pastoris, prout Domino placuit, vices gerentes in ea, exultamus procul dubio in illo vero Pastore qui animam suam pro suis ovibus ponere non expavit, ipsi vitulum labiorum exsolvimus de cujus non est dubium munere processisse ut ovisque perierat, sit inventa, et revixerit filius quem mors anime, mors utique gravior, occuparat. Occurrentes itaque tibi de regione dissimilitudinis redeunti collo tuo brachiis paterne affectionis accumbimus et te solide caritatis

osculo pressius osculamur. O utinam, fili, tibi pateret ad plenum cum quanto in hiis occurrit tripudio eadem Ecclesia nuper in Lugdunensi concilio congregata! O si voces psallentium inibi Deumque flexis genibus et nudatis capitibus laudantium precipue prelatorum in tuis sonuissent auribus, et, revelata facie ipsorum, oculos deducentes quasi aquarum exitus inspexisses, profecto prudenter adverteres quod erant eorum lacrimae tam excussi doloris indices, quam adepte letitiae proditricae, nec minus intelligeres quam grati tui advenerint nuncii, quam fuerint gratanter accepti, cum quanto etiam jubilo tua professio acceptata. Exulta igitur et tu, fili, exulta et letare in eo qui est splendor lucis eterne, divinae quaedam emanatio claritatis, qui tuum sic animum suo lumine illustravit ut lumen veritatis intelligens non solum redires ad illam, sed ad redeundum aliis dux et previus effici merereris, exulta et gaude talem et tantum jam datum laboribus tuis effectum ut et de tuo ad sinum unitatis ecclesiasticae reditu indubitatum expectare valeas premium, et de aliis per te redeuntibus tibi plenioris debeatur retributionis augmentum. Persta ergo et quod cepisti sollicite, cum omni diligentia et sollicitudine prosequaris, efficacem pro posse daturus operam ut nec in aliquibus ejusdem scismatis reliquiae qualescumque supersint; Dei quidem perfecta sunt opera et tu, creatura illius, Creatorem tuum in tam placidi consummatione operis pro viribus imitare ut spei concepte de premio res succedat et premissum debitum exhibitio realis exolvat. Super hiis autem et aliis habitis circa premissa processibus, prefati tuae celsitudinis nuncii, quorum tibi notior est virtus et probitas, ad te plenius revertuntur instructi, quibus te non dubitamus fidem indubiam adhibere. Datum Lugduni, v kalendas augusti, anno tertio. »



# THE NEED FOR A STRONG EMPIRE THAT IT MAY RESTORE ORDER TO THE WEST AS DANTE THOUGHT

That it may restore order to the West as Dante thought

Gregory X encourages the German voters to vote for a new Emperor and in the end Rudolf of Habsburg is elected, who perhaps was not the Pope's favorite candidate, but since Gregory moved with a view to stabilizing and pacifying the Italian and European situation, this election had nevertheless marked a crucial step in his projects. Gregory's legates obtain from the new Emperor the renunciation of his claims on the papal territories (the Exarchate, The Marc of Ancona, and the Duchy of Spoleto), as well as the definitive separation of Sicily from the Empire and the commitment to become a crusader and to go with the Pontiff to the East.

The analysis of the historian Ludovico Antonio Muratori is, as always, simple and clear, Gregorio "**.... he sought nothing but the public good and peace everywhere. For lack of a King and Emperor, a large part of Italy had been in a rout for a long time, and more and more factions and civil discords were reinvigorated in the cities**".

Gregory thus displeased Alfonso X of Castile, another pretender to the imperial crown and again Charles of Anjou, who supported Philip III, king of France.

Alfonso threatened a direct military intervention, supported by Charles and the cities of Northern Italy, but a resumption of attacks by Muslims would block his action.

GREGORIO WRITES TO RUDOLF OF HABSBURG ON FEBRUARY 15, 1274:

"(The Pontiff) assigns All Saints' Day to Rudolf, King of the Romans (of the Holy Roman Empire), for his coronation in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome"  
[To Rudolf, illustrious king of the Romans].

Civil science (or: politics, civil law) has stated that the priesthood does not differ much from political power (the empire) in merit. If it is true that the identity of the origin unites them, like the highest (greatest) gifts of God put together by celestial (divine) kindness; and as with mutual aid on things (matters, problems) that need approval, necessity brings them together by alternating their respective functions among themselves, instituted moreover for the purpose of the perfect government of the world, so that the one (the priesthood) naturally takes care of spiritual things (affairs), while the other (the empire) oversees human things (human interests), the one and the same final cause of the institution assigns the same (institution) in an inseparable way, although under the diversity of functions. Furthermore, the weighted lack of one and the other (institution) clearly introduces the necessary union of them and makes evident the differences that emerge. The Empire, during the absence (the vacancy) of the apostolic see is deprived of the guide of its salvation (sue direttore salutis). The Church, on the other hand, in case of absence (vacancy) of the throne of Caesar is exposed to the attacks of the oppressors, as long as it remains without its defender. Therefore, those who govern, and rule (lead) empires and kingdoms must provide with the greatest commitment to support the churches and ecclesiastics (the people of the church), to defend their freedoms and rights and not to deprive the temporal support of those by whom they are supported. spiritually, but rather to support in every circumstance (promptitudo) those whose protection they receive spiritual defenses. (...)

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Lyon, 15 février 1275.

Radulpho, regi Romanorum, diem Omnium Sanctorum pro coronatione in basilica s. Petri de Urbe assignat. (BORDEAUX, 761, n° 87; ARCH. VATIC., Reg. 29A, n° 83; BIBL. VATIC., 6735, n° 132; BIBL. VATIC., 3977, n° 69; BIBL. NAT., 14173, n° 67; BIBL. NAT., 4043, n° 64; POTTHAST, 20989.)

« [Rudolfo, regi Romanorum illustri]. Sacerdotium et imperium non multo differre merito sapientia civilis asseruit. Siquidem illa, tanquam maxima dona Dei a celesti collata clementia, principii conjungit idemplitas; et velut auxiliis mutuis super egentia suffragii, suis inter ipsa vicibus alternandis unit necessitas, et ad perfectum mundi regimen instituta, ut alterum videlicet spiritualibus ministret, reliquum vero presit humanis, una et eadem institutionis causa finalis ipsa inseparabiliter, licet sub ministeriorum diversitate, conjuncta designat. Horum insuper necessariam unionem alterutrius consi-



## THE HUNTING OF THE BISHOP OF LIEGE

### THREE BIOGRAPHERS OF POPE GREGORY X REPORT ON THE EPISODE:

\*LUDOVICO GATTO, "THE PONTIFICATE OF GREGORIO X (1271 - 1276)", ITALIAN SCIENTIFIC EDITIONS, NAPLES 2007

\*RENATO PASINI, "A SUPREME CONCILIATOR: GREGORY X", EDITED BY THE CRUX ORGANIZATION, MILAN, MARCH 1962

\*EMILIO NASALLI ROCCA DI CORNELIANO, "RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY IN THE WORK OF TWO GREAT ITALIANS", MERLINI PUBLISHING HOUSE, PIACENZA, 1938

- ❖ Nasalli Rocca tells us that in 1255 returning to Liège from Paris "... he suffered persecution and even violence, for the fervor with which he fought vices and reformed customs, which would also have constituted the most splendid feature of his work future". The conflicts with the Bishop will grow stronger.
- ❖ The Archbishop of Liege Henry of Gelderland, as described to us by Gatto, was an overbearing and angry prelate and an unrepentant womanizer, a lax bishop with whom Visconti, a rigorous person with strong moral temperament, will soon come into conflict.
- ❖ This is how Renato Pasini talks about it: the "Episcopal see of Liège since 1247 has been legally occupied by a sort of rogue in place of an authentic Bishop".
- ❖ The clash will reach its peak when Visconti, saving the life of the Bishop attacked by a group of people, discovers the reason for the attack; Tybalt will openly criticize the prelate, unleashing his anger and being violently beaten.
- ❖ This is how Ludovico Gatto relates the incident: "It was precisely in 1266 that the family members of a girl, raped by the unrepentant Bishop, confronted him by making an attempt on his life. Tybalt, present at the scandalous event, shielded the prelate with his own body, thus avoiding his death. Immediately after, however, he allowed himself to take back the Bishop and the Bishop reacted by hitting him hard. Following the deplorable episode, Tybalt contracted a hernia from which he never freed himself." In 1274, elected Pope, he deposed the Bishop "forever removing him forever from the Church, shortly after the unfortunate was killed". Now deprived of the protection of the cassock, he was made to pay for his prevaricating and bullying.
- ❖ This stark contrast leads him to seek other objectives and to take different paths.
- ❖ Gregory will not forget the Bishop of Liège and once elected Pope will remove him from the Church, there is a letter of condemnation of Henry of Gelder by Pope Visconti, the clarity of the reasoning reported therein and I hope leads to reflect all those who instead maintain in ecclesiastical communion and in some way justify those priests who instead commit serious sins of the flesh, of sex and / or acquire goods and riches for personal and material advantages



Gregorio X incontra i  
Fratelli Polo, immagine  
tratta da Wikipedia



# THREE MURDERS? DEATH OF A POPE

c. 45 a 1276 MCCLXXVI. Pape quatuor mortui; duo divino iudicio et duo veneno exausto.  
Dominus Guido de Montefeltro et comes Rogerius et comune Forlivij et Faventini...

The curse of the Templars is the title of an old French drama in which the events of the early 1300s in France are narrated, with the conflict between Philip the Fair and the Templars and the subsequent war between the French and the English, with the dramatic dynastic struggles within the two ruling houses.

We find a De Molay, played by Gerard Depardieu, about to die at the stake, cursing his persecutors and the pontiff who had not defended him.

And his curse seems to have had an effect: Pope Clement will die shortly thereafter, as well as the Capetian dynasty, all of whom died by violent death, so much so that the Crown of France will pass to the cadet branch of the Valois.

I remember the film because it tells in great detail the frequent use of poison within the French court, which interests me because all the opponents of the French in Italy were poisoned.

Gregory X, St. Thomas Aquinas, and St. Bonaventure of Bagno Regio, general of the Franciscans and Cardinal, all three appear to have died of poisoning.

These are testimonies reported in the book "Blessed Gregory X the Crusader Pope: the Templar Pope?" of which we are not able to verify the veracity, but which we still put to the attention of readers, given the reliability of the sources.

Let's start with Blessed Gregory X: the source is the "Annales Forolivienses" in the transcription of Ludovico Antonio Muratori, in his "Collection of Italian historians - from the sixteenth to the fifteenth century", the edition to which we refer has been rearranged, revised, and corrected by a group of scholars coordinated by Giosuè Carducci and Vittorio Fiorini, the words reported are the following: **"1276 Pape quatuor mortui, duo divino iudicio et duo veneno exausto."**

These are words that have a very precise meaning, it is in a sense connected to the fact that there were those who claimed that Gregory's death was a sort of "judgment of God", which by calling Visconti to himself would have prevented the coronation in Rome of Rudolph of Habsburg, the agreement with the Byzantine Emperor, the union between the 2 Churches and the new crusade with the troops that

were supposed to reach Valona and from here to Byzantium, Acre and beyond.



# THE DEATH OF THOMAS AQUINAS

We come to the Dominican theologian St. Thomas Aquinas, also in this case the source is Muratori, this time with his annals of the history of Italy, who cites Dante Alighieri. Ludovico Antonio Muratori in his Annals of Italy refers to the words of Dante Alighieri who in his Divine Comedy speaks of the death of St. Thomas Aquinas:

"Two great lights this year lost Italy [1274 the year of the Council of Lyons] and the Church of God. The first was Thomas of Aquinas of the Order of Preachers, of the noble house of the Counts of Aquinas, Admirable genius and Angelic, Theologian of such profound knowledge, that after Saint Augustine another similar one had not the Christian Republic ever had. From Paris, in whose university he had been with infinite public acclaim, a reader who came to Naples in the year 1272, he had stopped there by order of King Charles, to read Theology there. But having to hold the Council, in which it would be necessary to dispute with the Greeks, Pope Gregory commanded that he come to Lyons for such an important business.

Having Fra Tommaso started on his way, but hurting himself on the way, since there was no convent of his order nearby, he stopped at the Cistercian Monastery of Fossanova in Campania. There, after a few months, he passed away on the 7th of March of the present year at the age of only forty-nine years, at most fifty, with admiring himself however, as he could accomplish so many works, and famous works, in such a limited course of life". **I do not know what faith can be given to Dante who represents him removed from the world with slow poison, made to give him by King Charles, for fear that he would not make any bad offices at the Papal Court because of the persecution he made to the Counts of Aquino his brothers.**

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tore, venuto a Napoli nell' Anno 1272. s'era ivi fermato per ordine del Re Carlo, affinchè vi leggesse Teologia. Ma dovendosi tenere il Concilio, in cui sarebbe occorso di disputar co i Greci, Papa Gregorio comandò, ch'egli venisse a Lione per così importante affare. Mise Fra Tommaso in viaggio; ma infermatosi per via, giacchè non v'era vicino Convento alcuno del suo Ordine, si fermò nel Monistero de' Cisterciensi di Fossanova nella Campania. Quivi dopo qualche Mese passò a miglior vita nel dì 7. di Marzo dell' Anno presente in età di soli quarantanove anni, o al più cinquanta, con ammirarsi tuttavia, come egli tante Opere, ed Opere insigni, potesse compiere in un sì limitato corso di vita. Io non so qual fede si possa prestare a Dante (a), che ce ne rappresenta tolto dal Mondo con lento veleno, fattogli dare dal Re Carlo per timore, che non facesse de' mali ufizj alla Corte Pontificia a cagion della persecuzione da lui fatta a i Conti d'Aquino suoi Fratelli. Fu egli poi canonizzato, e posto nel Catalogo de' Santi, e dopo molti anni trasportato a Tolosa il sacro suo Corpo. Gran perdita parimente si fece nella persona di Fra Bonaventura da Bagnarea dell' Ordine de' Minori (b), insigne Teologo anch'esso, già creato Cardinale della santa Romana Chiesa, e Vescovo d'Albano. Trovavasi egli al Concilio in Lione;

ERA Volg. ANN. 1274.

(a) Dante Purgator. cap. 20.

(b) Bollad. Act. Sanct. ad diem 14. Julii.



# THE DEATH OF ST. BONAVENTURE

The last one who died in a suspicious way is Saint Bonaventure of Bagno Regio, General of the Franciscans, Bishop, and Cardinal.

Saint Thomas had kept relations with the Orthodox on behalf of Pope Gregory and should have been present at the second council of Lyon to allow the agreement that would once again unite the 2 Churches.

Bonaventure replaced Thomas Aquinas in the task of promoting the union between the Eastern and Western Churches.

Bonaventure created the conditions for which the agreement was concluded, Ludovico Gatto, in his "The Pontificate of Gregory X (1271-1276)" reports what happened in the days of the Council of Lyon:

“Then fell in those days the feast of Saints Peter and Paul and Gregory in the church of San Giovanni sang the solemn Mass in the presence of the Greeks and all the prelates. The Epistle and the Gospel were read in Greek by a Byzantine deacon and in Latin by Ottobono Fieschi of Sant’Adriano. Bonaventure gave a second and final sermon or an out-of-session address, which was perhaps the last major speech at a public meeting of the seraphic doctor. The chosen theme was related to the union of the Roman confession with Constantinople and showed the role, in this case at least, played by this character in a very particular meeting, in which he replaced the function that according to Gregory, Thomas Aquinas should have assumed, who instead died on 7 May 1274 in Fossanova, while he was traveling to the council seat from which he was forcibly absent. Bonaventure then dwelt on the purity of the Roman Church.”

We continue with the words of Ludovico Gatto:

"The Creed was then sung in Latin by Archbishop Erardo of Auxerre, immediately afterwards by the cardinals, prelates and canons of the cathedral. It was then repeated in Greek by Germano, by the Greek archbishop of Calabria, loyal to the pontiff of Rome since the time of the synod of Bari and also by the two pontifical penitentiaries William of Moerbeke and Giovanni Parastron. The phrase "here in Patre Filioque procedit" was repeated three times. At the end of the Creed, to underline their full return to the Roman Church, the Greeks sang solemn laudes in honor of Gregory."

And the whole of Christianity was impressed by the result achieved, so admirable and so unexpected.

In this case, the doubts about the causes of death come from a less illustrious witness than Dante and in the Forlì Annals transcribed by Muratori, we found the description of what happened on the pages dedicated by Wikipedia to the Franciscan General: "It was Gregory X who ordaining him cardinal with the title of Albano ..... he participated in the Council of Lyon ..... during which he died, perhaps due to poisoning, at least according to what his secretary, Pellegrino da Bologna later stated. " .

Slow poison, slow poison, slow poison.....

THE FRENCH WERE AGAINST THE AGREEMENT OF THE TWO CHURCHES BECAUSE THEY SUPPORTED THE CLAIMS OF THE LATIN EMPEROR, EXPELLED BY THE BYZANTINES, TO RETAKE CONTROL OF THE EASTERN EMPIRE, AN OBJECTIVE THAT AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO CHURCHES WOULD HAVE PREVENTED. AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE FAVORED A MILITARY EXPEDITION FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE LAST TERRITORIES CONTROLLED BY THE CRUSADERS IN THE EAST: WITH THE

CHRISTIAN ARMY AND BYZANTINE ARMY UNITED.



Immagine tratta da Wikipedia



# SPIRITUAL CHURCH AND POLITICAL CHURCH

- ❖ There are traces of a clash between a Church aimed at the conversion of the spirit, tolerant towards Jews, dialoguing with the Orthodox, willing to deal with Islam, convinced that the Empire as guarantor of the secular order was necessary, A Pontiff who looked to China and the Far East, but also determined to maintain the presence, even military, of Christians in the East, starting with the defense of Acre
- ❖ A clash that will instead be resolved with the control of the college of cardinals by the prelates linked to the King of France with the transfer of the Papal see to Avignon. This subordination to the interests of the French ruling house will eventually de-legitimize the Church itself, creating the conditions for the decline that will be the basis of the Lutheran Reform and the political support that lords and rulers will give to the action of the German monk. A Church too tied to temporal interests in this, or that reigning House lost its reason for being. Then as today the Church loses itself if the Pontiff marries this or that political faction.



Il Palazzo dei Papi ad Avignone  
immagine tratta da Wikipedia



# TO CONCLUDE

When the Templar order was suppressed, with it disappeared the archives, registers and minutes, the collections of correspondence making it difficult to reconstruct its events. The sentence of heresy had a powerful effect, followed by persecutions and the confiscation of goods and wealth, not the least reason for the trial itself.

As the historian Barbara Frale notes, since the suspension of the Templar order, such was the impression in Western Christianity for what happened, that mythologies and legends arose, the journalist and historian Peter Partner, always reports the Frale, in one of his books (*Murdered Wizards: the Templars and their Myth*) highlighted the flourishing of books on the subject often the fruit of "self-styled writers of historical books who have the same seriousness as the Mad Hatter".

In his excellent and well-documented book on the history of the Templar Order, Dumerger tells us that the Templars didn't have either Popes or saints; but there were certainly Popes who strongly supported the Templar Order, certainly a Pontiff belonging to this Order tried and dissolved for heresy was a contradiction for the Order's opponents, the same ones who tried, in vain, to bring to trial the deceased Boniface VIII.

The Crown of France and the Anjou had opposite objectives to that of a Pope like Gregory X, remarkably close to the Order, to relations with Byzantium and the Orthodox Church, to the role of the Empire. With the affirmation of French influence on the College of Cardinals and on the Popes elected in Avignon the memory of those who had opposed the wishes of the Crown of France and the related Popes was obliterated.

There were two visions, one spiritual, addressed to the world, including China, and one closely related to the dynastic conflicts of the European monarchies.

It is certain that the deaths we have spoken of were exactly right for the designs of Angevin and the French Crown; the clash was clear: on the one hand those who defended the Church from French interference and on the other those who supported them. Until the complete Francization of the College of Cardinals and the transfer of the Pontifical Curia to Avignon and until Boniface VIII the clash is still open.

Then the rapprochement of Gregory with the empire and the German clergy, after the clash with Frederick II of Swabia and his heirs, the peace made with the patriarchs of the Eastern Church would certainly have led to new presences in the College of Cardinals which would thus have escaped the control of the groups of French and Italian cardinals. Would Gregory, in order to pay off the reborn union, have involved the Patriarchs in the college of cardinals?! The same way the exponents of the German Church would have returned after the coronation of Rudolph?!

Gregory has his own conception of the relationship between the Church and temporal powers and of the tasks which the Church itself must perform and he tried to carry it out in deeds and actions, and it is believed that it was similar to that of Bonaventure and Thomas.

Gregory within a few months should have crowned Rudolph of Habsburg emperor in St. Peter's and leave with him to go to Valona where they would have met the Emperor of the East to ratify the agreement with the Orthodox and, perhaps, to leave for Acre and Jerusalem.

With these two acts, Anjou would have lost control of Central-Northern Italy and the attempted reconquest by the Latin emperor of Byzantium would have ended its dreams of domination in the Eastern Mediterranean. However, his design will not succeed, also thanks to the Sicilian Vespers and the subsequent Aragon's presence, but deaths never came at the most appropriate time for Anjou itself. AND THE TEMPLAR ORDER WAS CLOSELY LINKED TO THIS PONTIFF.



# FREEMASONRY

We can grasp, in the activity of this Pontiff, who we said to have been among the supporters of the religious / military Orders, the attention and respect towards the different religious and wisdom paths from the Catholic Christian one, that were intertwined in the Holy Land. Could this be one of the characteristics of that Order protected by him? The research should be deepened by reading the correspondence of the Popes that the Order supported.

It is certain that Freemasonry is a secular organization that deals clearly with the thoughts of the great scholars, with those who have been and with those who will come and not with Dogmas or religious Rites, even if it is true that Masonic rituality, like all rituals, it tends to create harmony between those who share it and to enhance the spirituality of those who participate in it.

Freemasonry:

Knows and respects Confucius who gave China his moral doctrine

Knows and respects Zarathustra who taught the Bactrian Arians to worship the omniscient Lord Ahura Mazda

Knows and respects Gotama the Buddha who renounced all privileges to open the way to the end of suffering

Knows and respects Moses, saved from the waters and who will venerate the one God

Knows and respects Hermes Trimegistus three times the great, possessor of the science of Ancient Egypt

Knows and respects Rabbi Jeshua who gave his life for the salvation of men

Knows and respects Muhammad who explained that Allah imposes justice, kindness, and generosity

Knows and respects the one who will come tomorrow: because the chain of research has never been broken, nor will it ever be. 21



# CHEVALIER RAMSAY'S ORATION

(...) **Our ancestors, the Crusaders**, gathered together from all parts of Christendom in the Holy Land, **desired thus to reunite into one sole Fraternity the individuals of all nations.**

What obligations do we not owe to these superior men who, without gross selfish interests, without even listening to the inborn tendency to dominate, imagined such an institution, the sole aim of which is to unite minds and hearts in order to make them better, and form in the course of ages a spiritual empire where, without derogating from the various duties which different States exact, a new people shall be created, which, composed of many nations, shall in some sort cement them all into one by the tie of virtue and science.

The second requisite of our Society is sound morals. The religious orders were established to make perfect Christians, military orders to inspire a love of true glory, and the Order of Freemasons, to make men lovable men, good citizens, good subjects, inviolable in their promises, faithful adorers of the God of Love, lovers rather of virtue than of reward.

Polliciti servare fidem, sanctumque vereri Numen amicito, mores, non munera amare.

To faithfully keep a promise, to honour the holiness of friendship To love virtue, not its reward.

Nevertheless, we do not confine ourselves to purely civic virtues. We have amongst us three kinds of brothers: Novices or Apprentices, Fellows or Professed Brothers, Masters or Perfected Brothers. To the first are explained the moral virtues; to the second the heroic virtues; to the last the Christian virtues; so that our institution embraces the whole philosophy of sentiment and the complete theology of the heart. This is why one of our worshipful brothers [the Count de Tressan] has said -

Free-Maçons, Illustre grand Maître,

(...) After the deplorable mishaps in the Crusades, the perishing of the Christian armies, and the triumph of Bendocdar, Sultan of Egypt, during the eighth and last Crusade, that great Prince Edward, son of Henry III., King of England, seeing there was no longer any safety for his brethren in the Holy Land, from whence the Christian troops were retiring, brought them all back, and this colony of brothers was established in England. As this prince was endowed with all heroic qualities, he loved the fine arts, declared himself protector of our Order, conceded to it new privileges, and then the members of this fraternity took the name of Freemasons, after the example set by their ancestors. Since that time Great Britain became the seat of our Order, the conservator of our laws, and the depository of our secrets. The fatal religious discords which embarrassed and tore Europe in the sixteenth century caused our Order to degenerate from the nobility of its origin. Many of our rites and usages which were contrary to the prejudices of the times were changed, disguised, suppressed.

Thus it was that many of our brothers forgot, like the ancient Jews, the spirit of our laws, and only retained the letter and shell. The beginnings of a remedy have already been made. It is only necessary to continue, and to at last bring everything back to its original institution. This work cannot be difficult in a State where religion and the Government can only be favourable to our laws. From the British Isles the Royal Art is now repassing into France, under the reign of the most amiable of Kings, whose humanity animates all his virtues, and under the ministry of a Mentor, who has realised all that could be imagined most fabulous.

In this happy age when love of peace has become the virtue of heroes, this nation one of the most spiritual of Europe, will become the centre of the Order. She will clothe our work, our statutes, and our customs with grace, delicacy, and good taste, essential qualities of the Order, of which the basis is the wisdom, strength, and beauty of genius. It is in future in our Lodges, as it were in public schools, that Frenchmen shall learn, without travelling, the characters of all nations, and that strangers shall experience that France is the home of all peoples. Patria gentis humano.