The Deteriorating Image of the Templars: A Paradox

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**Abstract**

It is the thesis of this paper that the deteriorating status and image of the Templars was shaped by the changing attitudes of Christendom to the crusades and to the Holy Land. The growing deceptions following the Christian defeats in the battlefield blurred the former mystical halo of the *milites Christi*, who did not succeed to ensure the crusaders’ supremacy in the Levant*.*  Notwithstanding the gradual deterioration in both its image and status, there was a clear opposition to the dissolution of the Order, ‘since the Templars were most powerful, both in riches and renown.’ The contradiction between the declining image of the Templars and the opposition to their abolition thus creates a paradox that justifies further research.

**Key words**

Templars, Bernard of Clairvaux, Battle of Hattin, *milites Christi*, William of Tyre.

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There is a broad consensus in historiography that Christendom became more critical of the Military Orders, particularly the Temple, during the thirteenth century. Supporters of this view include, among others,Jonathan Riley Smith,[[1]](#footnote-1) Joshua Prawer,[[2]](#footnote-2) Alan J. Forey,[[3]](#footnote-3) and Sylvia Schein.[[4]](#footnote-4) Malcolm Barber called attention in this regard to the possibility that, ‘the empathy between the Templars and the interests of lay aristocratic society which can be seen in the twelfth-century had its dangers, for when it began to be believed that the Templars fell short of the ideal, the reaction could be as hostile as the initial reception had been enthusiastic.’[[5]](#footnote-5) It is reasonable to wonder, however, what the values and beliefs of twelfth-century nobles were and what they consequently expected from the Templars, the majority of whom were themselves drawn from the ranks of the aristocracy.[[6]](#footnote-6) Moreover, it is noteworthy that the most vociferous critics of the brothers were not secular nobles but members of the clergy and the Monastic Orders, who stood to lose more in status and income to the warrior monks than any other social sector.[[7]](#footnote-7)

It is the thesis of this paper that the deteriorating status and image of the Templars in the last quarter of the twelfth and throughout the thirteenth centuries did not stand as an isolated phenomenon. Instead, they were shaped by the changing attitudes of Christendom to the crusades and the Holy Land. The growing disillusionment resulting from repeated defeats on the battlefield, indeed, dimmed the haloes of the *milites Christi,* who did not succeed in maintaining crusader supremacy in the Levant*.* Yet, notwithstanding the gradual deterioration of its image and status, there was a clear opposition to the dissolution of the Order ‘since the Templars were most powerful, both in riches and renown.’[[8]](#footnote-8) The contradiction between the declining image of the Templars and the opposition to the abolition of the Order is therefore a paradox that calls for further research.

*De laude novae militiae* by Bernard de Clairvaux faithfully reflects the role and the behavioural norms that the Cistercian Abbot envisaged for the‘New Knighthood’:

A new sort of kinghood…unknown to the world is fighting indefatigably a double fight against flesh and blood as well as against the immaterial forces of evil in the skies. Indeed, where resistance is offered to a physical enemy by physical force alone, I do not deem this surprising, nor think it rare that. However, each time war is waged against vices or demons by the force of the mind, then I would not call this miraculous, even if it is laudable, since the world is seen to be full of monks. However, when both sorts of men gird their swords of power and don their belts of nobility, who will not consider this to be most worthy of total admiration in as much as it is clearly unusual ...However, the knights of Christ fight the battles of their Lord in all peace of mind, in no way fearing to sin in killing the enemy or to die at his hands, since indeed death, whether inflicted or suffered, is not tainted by crime but is marked by a large degree of glory.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Bernard de Clairvaux’s vehement rhetoric, however, did not depict the real knights fighting in the difficult conditions of twelfth-century Palestine but was meant to encourage support of the Order in its early stages. Notwithstanding its propagandistic value, the gap between the new *milites Dei* and the ordinary *malitia seculi,* which will become a gap between theory and practice, as well, accompanied the knights if not from the very beginnings of the Order at least from the second half of the twelfth century. Guigo, Prior of the Grand Chartreuse, called attention to the challenging double battle that the Templars took upon themselves (c. 1129):

It is pointless to wage war against external enemies without first overcoming internal ones. If we are unable first to subject our own bodies to our wills, then it is extremely shameful and unworthy to wish to put under our control any sort of military forces. Who could tolerate our desire to extend our domination abroad over vast tracts of land while we put up with the most ignominious servitude to vices in those minute lamps of earth that are our bodies?[[10]](#footnote-10)

The fact that the prior asked the first Master, Hugh of Payns, to read his letter to the entire congregation perhaps hints at his doubts about whether the new monastic knights would overcome or resist their fleshly weaknesses. At the same time, however, the Latin Rule established the Templars’ commitment to obedience and stability, coupled with their devotion to the Holy Church.[[11]](#footnote-11) Moreover, the French Rule, written before 1187, described the social and religious behaviour expected from the new knighthood while illustrating some awareness of the delicate web of relations between them and the members of other ecclesiastical orders:

Each brother should strive to live honestly and to set a good example to secular people and members of other orders in everything, in such a way that those who see him cannot notice anything bad in his behaviour, not in his riding, nor in his walking, nor in his drinking, nor in eating nor in his look, nor in any of his actions and works.[[12]](#footnote-12)

One can point therefore at the initial harmony between external expectations and the Templars’ own rules as to the behaviour patterns that should characterize the new knighthood. Support of the Order would therefore persist as much as this consensus persisted.

William of Tyre reflects the initial reactions to the new knighthood in the Ecclesiastical Order; he underlines the early Templars’ piety and emphasizes their subordination to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, as well as their commitment to the defence of vulnerable pilgrims on their way to the most sacred Christian shrines in the Holy Land:

In the same year (1118) some noblemen of knightly rank, devoted to God, pious and God-fearing, placed themselves in the hands of the lord patriarch for the service of Christ, professing the wish to live perpetually in the manner of regular canons in chastity, and obedience, without personal belongings. … Their main duty … was that they should maintain the safety of the roads and the highways to the best of their ability, for the benefit of pilgrims in particular, against attacks of bandits and marauders.[[13]](#footnote-13)

 The Archbishop of Tyre’s positive approach was therefore shaped, at least influenced, by the Templars’ submission to the secular clergy while piously defending Christian pilgrims in their roads at the Holy Land. Michael the Syrian, the Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch, corroborated that the Templars behaved in accordance with monastic principles, a peculiar amalgam with warfare that gained them wide admiration.[[14]](#footnote-14) Hugo Peccator went much further. While acknowledging that ‘people of no wisdom’ condemned ‘carrying arms against the enemies of the faith and peace in defence of Christians,’ he claimed that the Templars’ pugnacious devotion was more valuable to God than prayer and contemplation.[[15]](#footnote-15)

Although some theologians continued to insist upon the Gospels’ injunction against violence,[[16]](#footnote-16) which was clearly inconsistent with the Templars’ commitment to the Holy War, the emergence of warrior monks did not seem to have aroused significant opposition. In some sectors, moreover, their courage on the battlefield was not only justified but also admired.[[17]](#footnote-17) The wide appreciation of the early Templars is largely confirmed by Muslim sources, as well.[[18]](#footnote-18) No wonder, then, that Pope Innocent II addressed them as ‘beloved sons in the Lord … true Israelites and warriors most versed in holy battle … defenders of the Church and assailants of the enemies of Christ’ (29 March 1139).[[19]](#footnote-19) Papal admiration, however, was not free of political considerations. Indeed, as claimed by Jonathan Riley Smith, the *raison d’être* of the Templars, as other Military Orders, was to serve as an extended branch of the Apostolic See across the Mediterranean.[[20]](#footnote-20) A *quid pro quo* thus prevailed, with the knights extending the influence of the papacy in the East and the papacy, in turn, conferring its blessing on the Templars’ activities, along with extensive privileges.

The delicate balance between the Apostolic See, the Military Orders, and Christendom at large, however, was not immune to change. The traumatic Christian defeat at the Horns of Hattin (3 July 1187) soon turned into a most critical test while acting as a watershed for the deterioration of Western attitudes towards the crusades, the Holy Land, and, eventually, the Templars, as well. Conrad of Montferrat – ruler of the Kingdom of Jerusalem as consort to Queen Isabella I – reported to Baldwin, the Archbishop of Canterbury, on the tragic consequences of the Christian defeat at the Horns of Hattin:

God has stood back as if from the defilement of our evil, and Mohammed has taken over; where Christ was prayed to day and night at the appointed hours, now Mohammed is praised with uplifted voice.[[21]](#footnote-21)

The traditional justification of *peccatis nostris exigentibus* could not assuage the trauma of the crushing defeat of the Christian forces by the Muslim soldiers, and a growing sense of frustration and disillusionment began to fester. The original biblical concept of ‘a land flowing with milk and honey’ (Ex. III: 8) retreated before the ominous threat of ‘a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof’ (Num. XIII: 32). The much treasured and foreseeable Holy Land thus blatantly exposed its most dangerous threats. Thomas Agni of Lentini, papal legate and Bishop of Bethlehem, bitterly mourned the unexpected consequences of the dreadful defeat for those living *Outremer*, namely, the gradual dissociation of European Christendom from its brothers across the sea:

We have turned a deaf ear to the tribulations suffered by the cities of the eastern regions from afar and from so near that they seemed to come from the other side of the wall. Fear and paralysis have blunted our sense and those of our children.[[22]](#footnote-22)

Repeated military failures and the consequent growing feeling that the crusaders were no match for the armies of Islam, indeed, resulted in the disengagement of European Christendom from the crusaders,which Thomas condemned so strongly. The frequent fiascos further required a scapegoat, for which the Templars, on account of their privileged status and purported mythical wealth, offered a most convenient target. Moreover, since the knights’ *raison d’être* was to ensure the Christian victory on the battlefield, their recurring defeats could be interpreted as proof of God’s displeasure of them. One should note in this regard that the Templars were more vulnerable to criticism than the other two great Military Orders because both the continuous charitable works of the Hospitallers in the Holy Land and the Teutonic knights’ military achievements against the Baltic Prussians in Christendom. It is rather doubtful whether the financial activities of the Templars could offer in this regard a suitable balance to the disastrous military situation *Outremer.*

One of the first and perhaps most important source of this critical view was William of Tyre,[[23]](#footnote-23) quoted almost verbatim by Matthew Paris:[[24]](#footnote-24)

They are said to have vast possessions, both on this side of the sea and beyond … and their property is reported to be equal to the riches of kings. ... For a long time, they remained faithful to their noble purpose and carried out their profession wisely enough. At length, however, they began to neglect humility, the guardian of all virtues ... They withdrew from the patriarch of Jerusalem, from whom they had received the establishment of their Order and their first privileges, and refused him the obedience which their predecessors had shown him. To the churches of God, also they became very troublesome, for they drew away from them their tithes and first fruits and unjustly disturbed their possessions.[[25]](#footnote-25)

John of Würzburg, a German priest who came to the Holy Land around 1165,[[26]](#footnote-26) John of Salisbury,[[27]](#footnote-27) Walter Map,[[28]](#footnote-28) and James of Vitry,[[29]](#footnote-29) among others, shared similar views.[[30]](#footnote-30)

Walter Map used the occasion to further deny any legitimacy of the Templars’ military actions since they ‘take up in defence of Christianity the sword that had been denied to Peter in the defence of Christ.’[[31]](#footnote-31) Clearly, the knights’ exemption from episcopal patronage and their discharge from the tithe became a source of resentment on the part of the clergy, with the Patriarch of Jerusalem leading the charge. As time went by, the Templars’ alleged retreat from the original monastic expectations left its mark on popular idioms like ‘to drink like a Templar,’ ‘to swear like a Templar,’ or worse still, the German appellation of *Tempelhaus* for brothel, because of the knights’ supposed predilection for womanizing.[[32]](#footnote-32) Matthew Paris further reminds his readers of the ‘ancient infamy’ of the Templars, accusing them of futilely prolonging the war against the Saracens only to fill their coffers at the expense of defenceless pilgrims.[[33]](#footnote-33) It was further said that when King Henry III of England was reprimanded for his behaviour, he claimed in his defence that he had the Templars’ example.[[34]](#footnote-34) The brothers were further criticized for their pride, avarice, simony, never-ending struggles with other Military Orders, and for prioritizing their Order’s interests above those of the Holy Land.[[35]](#footnote-35) No wonder, therefore, that no Templar was ever canonized and only four brothers were ordained to bishoprics, and even them mostly in areas under the Order’s rule.[[36]](#footnote-36)

As Christendom soured towards the Templars, the knights increasingly came to rely on papal support to defend themselves against not only the Saracens, but the very faithful whose safety the Order was originally established to defend. Thus, Pope Honorius III found it necessary to remind his flock in Sicily of the knights’ meritorious role (24 November 1218):

Indeed, we do not believe that you are all unaware of the fact that since the beloved … brothers of the knighthood of the Temple have up until now had a special status among other Christians throughout the world, and still are the defenders of the orthodox faith, their hearts are so fired with the flame of the Holy Spirit that not only do they continually fight the Lord’s battles for which they will receive the crown of martyrdom …[[37]](#footnote-37)

Papal appeals of this kind were not exceptional. Pope Alexander III had already issued a bull prohibiting people from pulling Templars off their horses, treating them dishonestly, or abusing them.[[38]](#footnote-38) Notwithstanding these sporadic attacks, the Templars’ aura of heroism persisted across the thirteenth-century, and sometimes even increased.[[39]](#footnote-39) Their participation in the Damietta campaign (May 1218 – September 1220), for example, contributed to establishing an almost mythical image of the knights. Hugh, Lord of Berze, declared that the Templars ‘give up their bodies in martyrdom and defend the sweet land where the Lord died and lived.’[[40]](#footnote-40) Matthew Paris used the occasion to confer on the knights both the mythical image of the biblical Samson and the honour of martyrdom reserved for Christian champions.[[41]](#footnote-41) The Templars’ mythical image inspired contemporary epic texts praising the Order,[[42]](#footnote-42) such as the Cistercian *Queste*,[[43]](#footnote-43) *Parzifal*,[[44]](#footnote-44)the *Nouvelle complainte d’outre-mer*,[[45]](#footnote-45)and the *Speculum Stultorum.*[[46]](#footnote-46)

One may therefore conclude that prior to the Templars’ arrests in France, the condemnation of the knights was neither universal nor decisive. Their reputation as the courageous *milites Christi* persisted and continued to be voiced by supporters and detractors alike. Moreover, notwithstanding sporadic disagreements, the Apostolic See proved itself the most devoted defender of the Order against the many accusations from both the clergy and the laity.[[47]](#footnote-47) This complex and ambiguous situation was the background of the Templars’ unexpected arrest in the Kingdom of France:

In the early hours of the morning, on Friday, October 13, a strange event occurred, the likes of which have never been heard since ancient times. The Grand Master of the Temple … was arrested in the Temple of Paris and, on the same day, all Templars in France were suddenly arrested and incarcerated in various prisons …[[48]](#footnote-48)

The testimony of John of St Victor faithfully reflects the wide-ranging astonishment following the capture of the Knights Templar.[[49]](#footnote-49) It further hints at the ambiguous reactions of contemporaries to the continuous Capetian aggressive policy against an ecclesiastical, exempt organization.[[50]](#footnote-50) Indeed, the arrest of the Templars came only four years after the Capetian attack on Pope Boniface VIII at Anagni.[[51]](#footnote-51) This time, moreover, it did not occur in some far-flung village in the Italian peninsula, but in the heart of the Ile de France and, in parallel, throughout the Capetian kingdom.

At this critical stage, Capetian propaganda performed a *reductio ad unum* that cast the Templars as the main and perhaps the only cause of the downfall of the Crusader Kingdom sixteen years earlier. Once again, Philip the Fair returned to his former, cherished role of *advocatus ecclesiae*, this time vis-à-vis a weak pope, who chose to expatriate the apostolic curia to wanderings across the Languedoc.[[52]](#footnote-52) Gervais du Bus, a Norman clerk in the Capetian court, expressed the Church’s disappointment in light of the Templars’ alleged treason:

The Templars, whom I (the Church) loved so much

 And had so much privileged

Had despised and committed felony against me.[[53]](#footnote-53)

Denunciations of treachery and cowardice sweepingly replaced the martyrological fervour attributed to the Templars over generations. In a meeting with Pope Clement V at Poitiers (May 1308), William of Plaisians, the senior adviser to Philip the Fair, further contended, ‘because of their many vices we lost the Holy Land since, as is well known, they made secret agreements with the Moslems.’[[54]](#footnote-54) The Templars’ fictional lack of Christian zeal acquired the weight of fact during their prolonged trial, when Philip the Fair’s representatives looked for any scrap of evidence that might corroborate the accusation of heresy, a charge that had never been levelled against the Templars before their arrest in France.

The pact between the *Rex Christianissimus* and the *Summus Pontifex* did not enjoy universal support outside of France, notwithstanding the former criticism of the knights’ many vices and the political pressure exerted by Philip the Fair. Even in the ecclesiastical ranks, some members reacted with suspicion, if not antagonism, to the charges of heresy, as voiced at the Council of Vienne.[[55]](#footnote-55) From a later perspective, the English writer William Langland convincingly solved the paradox between the clergy’s former antagonism to the knights and its hesitancy, if not open disgust to acquiesce to the papal and royal pressure, since time approaches when men of the Holy Church will share the Templars’ fate. [[56]](#footnote-56)

It seems, therefore, that the clergy’s unexpected support of the Order was not motivated by any particular belief in the Templars’ innocence neither in their support of the Military Orders, but by the fears that this unparalleled royal move against traditional ecclesiastical privileges – first and foremost the complete exemption from secular judgment -- might create an unwelcome precedent. Indeed, different concerns, if not interests, shaped the otherwise surprising reactions against the abolition of the Templar Order. The hesitant policy of Edward II toward the knights coupled with his suspicions regarding his father-in-law’s true motives,[[57]](#footnote-57) hint at the contemporaries’ reactions to the unholy agreement between Pope Clement V the Most Christian King. As to the feedbacks in the Ecclesiastical Order, one should note that the Council of York (1311) was ultimately satisfied with the Templars’ pledge of innocence under oath, after exhaustive deliberations.[[58]](#footnote-58)

Outside of the Capetian sphere of influence, chroniclers from the Holy Roman Empire and the Italian Peninsula were at the forefront of the opposition to the Temple’s suppression. Most authors regarded the agreement between Pope Clement and the Philip the Fair as a blow to justice to satisfy the endless ambition of the Capetian king.[[59]](#footnote-59) *De laude novae militiae* inspired Johann von Vitring to reproach the pope by echoing Patriarch Abraham’s grievance to the Almighty: ‘Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?’ (Gen.xviii: 23).[[60]](#footnote-60) Dante Alighieri labelled Philip IV as a new Pilate and cautioned that the dissolution of the Order would eventually bring about the destruction of Christendom.[[61]](#footnote-61) The burning of the Templar leaders in Paris ultimately brought about the popular worship of their remains as holy relics.[[62]](#footnote-62) When the Black Death struck Europe, it was deemed as divine retribution for the iniquity of suppressing the Templar Order.[[63]](#footnote-63) The paradox between conflicting images and expectations thus ultimately gave rise to new myths,[[64]](#footnote-64) with the knights continuing to be active and remaining a topic of interest to this very day.

One may therefore conclude that the deteriorating image of the Templars was the result of complementing factors, namely, the worsening approach to the crusaders and the Holy Land following the defeat at Hattin and the Order’s gradual dissociation from its original ideals. However, the same political reasons that brought about its dissolution rather paradoxically brought in parallel about the clergy’s support of the Templars while it understood the far-reaching consequences of the close alliance between the *rex* and the *sacerdos*.

1. J. Riley Smith, *The Knights of St. John in Jerusalem and Cyprus, 1050–1310* (London, 1967), pp.201–202, 385–89. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. J. Prawer, ‘Military Orders and Crusader Politics in the Second Half of the Thirteenth Century’, *Die geistlichen Ritterorden Europas*, ed. Josef Fleckenstein und Manfred Hellman (Sigmaringen, 1980), pp.227–28. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. A. J. Forey, ‘The Emergence of the Military Order in the Twelfth Century’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 36–2 (1985), pp.191–94. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. S. Schein, *Fidelis Crucis: The Papacy, the West, and the Recovery of the Holy Land 1274–1314* (Oxford, 1991), pp.97, 130–31, 153, 220–221, 243, 259. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. M. Barber, ‘The Social Context of the Templars’, in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*,5th series, 34 (1984), pp.31, 37, 39. Compare with A. Forey, ‘How the Aragonese Templars viewed themselves in the Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries’, *Ordines Militares: Colloquia Torunensia Historica* 13 (2005), pp.59–68. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The French nobility’s support of the Templars was notable during their trial, notwithstanding royal pressure. See S. Menache, ‘Contemporary Attitudes Concerning the Templars' Affair: Propaganda Fiasco?’, *Journal of Medieval History* 8 (1982), p.142. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Helen Nicholson rightly specified, ‘The most savage criticism of the Military Orders came from the regular rather than from the secular clergy.’ H. Nicholson, ‘Images of the Military Orders, 1128–1291: Spiritual, Secular, Romantic’(Unpublished Ph.D dissertation, University of Leicester, 1989a), p.125. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Jean de St Victor, *Prima Vita*,in *Vitae Paparum Avenionensium hoc est historia pontificum romanorum...ab anno Christi 1305 usque ad annum 1394*,ed. Etienne Baluze, new ed., Guillaume Mollat, 4 vols. (Paris 1916–28), vol. 1 (Paris, 1916a), pp.8–9; E. Baluze, *Notae ad vitas Notae ad vitas paparum Avenionensium,* ed. E. Baluze, (Paris, 1927b),in *Vitae,* vol. 2, pp.52–55. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. *Liber ad milites Templi de laude novae militiae*,in *S. Bernardi Opera*, vol. 3, ed. J. Leclercq and H. M. Rochais (Rome, 1963), pp.205–208. Trans. M. Barber and K. Bates, *The Templars: Selected sources translated and annotated* (Manchester, 2002a), pp.216–219. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. *Lettres des premiers Chartreux*,vol. 1, *Bruno, Guiges, S. Anthelme,* Sources Chretiennes 118 (Paris, 1966), p.154. Trans. M. Barber and K. Bates, (2002a),pp.213–215. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. *Regular pauperum commilitonum Christi Templique Salomonici*,ed. S. Cerrini, Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Medievalis. Trans. Barber and Bates (2002a), pp.34, 43–44. Simonetta Cerrini, ‘A new Edition of the Latin and French Rule of the Temple’, *MO* 2, pp.207–215. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. *La Règle du Temple,* ed. H. de Curson, Société de l’histoire de France (Paris, 1886), pp.195–296. Trans. Barber and Bates (2002a), p.117. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. WT 12. 7, pp.553–555. Trans. Barber and Bate, (2002)a*,* pp.25–26. Friedrich Lundgreen, *Wilhelm von Tyrus und der Templerorden* (Berlin, 1911), *ad a*. 1179 and passim; see, also, P. Edbury and J. G. Rowe, *William of Tyre, Historian of the Latin East* (Cambridge, 1988), pp.123–126. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. *Chronique de Michel Le Syrien. Patriarche Jacobite d’Antioche (1160–99),* ed. and trans. J. B. Chabot, vol. 3 (Paris, 1905), 15.11, pp.201–202. Trans. Barber and Bate, (2002a)*,* p.27. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Barber and Bate (2002a), pp.55–59. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. H. Nicholson, *The Knights Templar* (Leeds, 2021), pp.21–26. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. M. Bennet, ‘La Règle du Temple as a Military Manual or How to Deliver a Cavalry Charge’, in *The Rule of the Templars: The French Text of the Rule of the Order of the Knights Templar* (Woodbridge, 1992), pp.182, 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. *RHC Occ*, vol. 4, pp.246–247; J. Prawer, *A History of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*,2 vols. (Jerusalem, 1963) [Hebrew], vol. 1, pp.509, 529–530. Imad ad–Din al–Isfahani (1125–1201), secretary of Saladin, accompanied his master’s victories over the Crusaders with rethorical observations, such as ‘What evils he cures in harming a Templar!’. See Imad ad–Din al–Isfahani, *Conquete de la Syrie et de la Palestine par Saladin*, trans. H. Masse (Paris, 1972), pp.31 et passim. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. ‘*Omne datum optimum*’*, CT,* no. 5, pp.375–379. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Riley Smith (1967), pp.201–202, 385–389. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Ralph of Diceto, *Opera Historica*, in *Chronicles and Memorials of the Reign of Richard I*,R.S*.,* ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols. (London, 1865), vol. 2, pp.60–62. Trans. P.W. Edbury, *The Conquest of Jerusalem and the Third Crusade: Sources in Translation* (Aldershot, 1998), pp.168–169. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. *Menkonis Chronicon,* ed. L. Weiland, *MGH SS,* vol. 23 (Hanover, 1874), p.547. Trans. M. Barber and K. Bate, *Letters from the East: Crusaders, Pilgrims and Settlers in the 12th –13th centuries* (London, 2013b), pp.153–154. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. WT,12. 7, pp.553–555. P. Edbury and J.G. Rowe, *William of Tyre, Historian of the Latin East* (Cambridge, 1988), pp.123–126. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. R. Vaughan, *The Illustrated Chronicles of Matthew Paris: Observations of Thirteenth–Century Life* (Cambridge, 1993), p.x; B. Smalley, *Historians in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1974), p.161; Arthur L. Smith, *Church and State in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1913), p.168. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. *Chronica Majora*, ed. H. Luard, RS, 7 vols. (London, 1872–1883), vol. 2, pp.144–145. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. ‘Description of the Holy Land by John of Wurzburg’, PPTS,ed. E. Tobler, vol. 5 (New York, 1974), p.21; *Annales Herbipolenses,* ed. G. Pertz, *MGH SS*, vol. xxvi, p.7. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. John of Salisbury, *Policraticus,* 7. 21, ed. C. Webb, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1909), vol. 2, pp.198–201. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Walter Map, *De nugis curialium,* 19, 20, 23, ed. M.R. James (Oxford, 1914), pp.29–31, 34–35. F. Seibt, *Die Schrift De nugis curialium: Studien zum Welbild und zur geistigen Personlichkeit Walter Maps* (Unpublished Ph.D dissertation, Munich Universitat, 1952), pp.36–37. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Jacques de Vitry, *Sermo 37, ‘ad fratres ordinis militaris,’* in *Sermones Vulgares, Analecta novissima: Spicilegii Solesmensis altera continuatio*,ed. J.B. Pitra, 2 vols. (Paris, 1888), vol. 2, pp.409–411, 419. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. See for instance *Continuatio Weichardi de Polhaim*, *MGH SS*, vol. 11, p.813; Eberhar of Regensburg, *Annales,* *MGH SS*,vol. 17, p.594; Ptolemy of Lucca, *Die Annalen*, ed. B. Schmeidler, *MGH SRG*,vol. 8 (Berlin, 1955); John Elemosina, *Liber historiarum*, in *Bibliotheca bio–bibliografica della Terra Santa e dell'Oriente francescano*,ed. G. Golubovich (Quaracchi, 1906–27), vol. 2, p.109; Bartholomew of Neocastro, *Historia Sicula*, *RIS*, n.s., ed. G. Carducci et al., vol. 13, p.131. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Walter Map, *De nugis curialium,* I, 18-20, pp.27–31. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. *Gontiers de Soignies: il canzoniere,* ed. L. Fornisano (Milan and Naples, 1980), lines 63–64; *Li romans de Claris et Laris,* ed. J. Alton (Tübingen, 1884), lines 9863–9871; Antoine Le Roux de Lincy, *Le livre des proverbs français* (Paris, 1859)*,* 2 vols., vol. 1, pp.54–55. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. *Chronica Majora,* vol. 4, p.291. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Roger of Howden, *Chronica,* ed. W. Stubbs, 4 vols. R.S.57 (London, 1871), vol. IV, pp.76–77; *Chronica Majora,* V, p.339. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. H. Nicholson, *Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights: Images of the Military Orders, 1128–1291* (Leicester, 1993), pp.25–34, 41–48. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Nicholson *(*1989a), pp.187, 281–284. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. *CH*, vol. 2, p.253. Trans. Barber and Bates, (2002a), p.231. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. *Malteser Urkunden und Regesten zur Geschichte der Templeherren und der Johanniter*,ed. H. Prutz (Munich, 1883), no. 4, p.38. Prutz recorded twenty–one renewals of the papal document. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. *Chronica Majora,* vol. 2, pp.327, 529–530; vol. 3, p.14, 44, 49; vol. 4, pp.197, 304–305, 310–311; vol. 5, p.108*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. *La ‘Bible’ au seigneur de Berze,* ed. F. Lecoy (Paris, 1938), lines 261–293. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. *Cronica Majora*,vol. 3, p.44, 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Nicholson (1989a), pp.189 ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. *The Quest of the Holy Grail*,Trans.P.M. Matarasso (Baltimore, 1969), p.20. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. H. Adolf, *Visio pacis: Holy City and Grail* (Philadelphia, 1960), p.72. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. *Onze poèmes de Riteubef concernant la croisade*,ed. J. Bastin and E. Faral (Paris, 1946), p.129. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Le Roux de Lincy (1859), vol. 1, pp.54–55. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. S. Menache, ‘The Relationship between the Templar Order and the Holy See’ (Unpublished M.A. dissertation, University of Haifa, 1973, *passim.* [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Jean de St Victor, *Prima Vita, Vitae* (1916a)*,* pp.8–9. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. The trial of the Templars and the political balance between King Philip the Fair and Pope Clement V has attracted the attention of historians throughout generations. See the pioneering research of M. Barber, *The Trial of the Templars* (Cambridge, 1978); Id., *The New Knighthood: A History of the Order of the Temple* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 280-313 and S. Menache, *Clement V* (Cambridge, 1998),pp.205–246. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. According to J. Théry, ‘the suppression of the Templars’ heresy was an important moment for the rise of French royal absolutism, which initially took the form of a royal theocracy’. It was a crucial step ‘in the transformation of the kingdom into a united and autonomous entity in the form of an indissoluble political and religious community, cemented by a Christian faith whose guarantor was the king’. See, J. Théry, ‘A Heresy of State: Philip the Fair, the trial of the ‘perfidious Templars’, and the Pontificalization of the French Monarchy’, *Journal of Religious Cultures*,39–2 (2013), pp.135–137. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. J. Théry, ‘Pourquoi le roi de France Philippe le Bel a–t–il attaqué l’ordre du Temple? Une Nouvelle Aliance’, in *Gli Ordine di Terra Santa,* ed. A. Baudin, S. Merli, M. Santanicchia (Perugia, 2021), pp.333–347; E.A.B. Brown, ‘The Excommunication of Guillaume de Nogaret, *Letamur in te,* and the Destruction of the Templars’, in *Gli Ordine di Terra Santa* (2021), pp.349–417. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Menache (1998), pp.23–30. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Gervais du Bus, *Le Roman de Fauvel*,ed. A. Langfors (Paris, 1914), p.38. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. *Papsttum und Untergang des Templerordens*,ed. H. Finke, 2 vols. (Münster, 1907), vol. 2, pp.139–145. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. S. Menache, ‘Contemporary Attitudes Concerning the Templars’ Affair: Propaganda Fiasco?’ *Journal of Medieval History* 8 (1982): pp.135–147. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. ‘Bothe riche and religious, ƥat Rode ƥei honoure,

Hat in grotes is ygraue and in golde nobles,

For coneityse of ƥat crosse, men of holykirke

Shul tourney as templeres did, ƥe tyme approcheth faste.’

W. Langland, *The Vision of William concerning Piers Plowman, text B*,passus XV, edited by W. Skeat, Early English Text Society (Oxford, 1869), p. 282. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. *Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae et cujuscunque generis acta publica …*,ed. T. Rymer (London, 1739), vol. 2, pp.94–95, 100; *Gesta Edwardi de Carnavan,* in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II,* ed. W. Stubbs, R.S., 2 vols. (London, 1882), vol. 2,p.32. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. *Councils and other Documents relating to the English Church*,ed. E. Powicke and C. Cheney, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1964), vol. 2, pp.1277–1288; Walter of Hemingburgh, *Chronicon,* ed. H. Hamilton, English Historical Society, 2 vols. (London, 1848), vol. 1, p.395. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. *Papsttum und Untergang des Templerordens* (1907),p.245; *Vitae*, (1693), vol. 2, p.590; *Cronaca Senese aggribuita ad Agnolo di Tura del Grasso detta la Cronaca Maggiora*,in *RIS,* vol. 11–6 (Bologna,1939), p.299. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Iohannes Victoriensis, in *Fontes Rerum Germanicarum*,ed. J. Böhmer, 4 vols. (Stüttgart, 1843), vol. 1, pp.369–370. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Dante Alighieri, *Divina Comedia, Purgatorio*, 25, ed. L. Magugliani (Milan, 1949), pp.91–93. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Agnolo di Tura, p.300; *Annales Hibernie*,in *Cartulaires of St. Mary’s Abbey*, ed. J.Gilbert, RS, 2 vols.(London, 1885), vol. 2, p.341. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. *Storie Pistoresi (1300–1348)*,ed. Adrasto Barbi, in *RIS,* vol. 11–1 (Città di Castello,1927), p.224. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Nicholson (2021), pp.84–90. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)