The Secrets of
Knights Templar
The Hidden History of the World's Most Powerful Order
3 x 48 min.

Secrets of the Knights Templar

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Concept

Discover the secrets of the most mysterious and powerful knightly order of the Middle Ages; The Knights Templar. From the rise of their heavenly power through their fall within the flames of diabolism. From to the traditions of their supposed secret survival and their official legacies bridging the Holy Land and the European continent.

Summary

Templar knights in their distinctive white mantles with a red cross, brave in the face of death rather than fleeing from the enemy, fighting for Christ and the Pope in the Holy Land during the Crusades. This documentary series aims at reconstructing, for the first time, in a complete fashion the evolution of the knights belonging to the Order of Solomon's Temple, whose original goal was to protect pilgrims during their travels to Jerusalem after the victory of the Crusaders at the First Crusade. The Knights Templar grew in power and wealth becoming the earliest banking institution of the Middle Age. They were so rich that they financed the King of France and benefitted from a direct and exclusive link with the Pope. Through three episodes of 45 minutes each, you will discover the developments that led the Templars to extreme power and subsequently to becoming the target of an unprecedented campaign of hatred aiming to place them beyond the boundaries of humanity itself through inexpressible accusations of diabolism and monstrosity. Within two centuries, they were tortured, killed, burnt at the stake and completely extinct. The secrets and mysteries of their rise and fall will be attentively reconstructed by an accurate recourse to historical records which will also lead you through a time voyage in the period following the destruction of the Order. Discover legacies and mysterious traditions which claimed their posthumous survival.

Episode 1: The Rise and Fall of a Knightly Order

The Knights Templar were established as a special religious-military order by Hugues de Payens within the tradition of medieval knighthood, benefitting from a direct link with the king and the pope and distinguishing themselves by other knightly orders such as the Hospitallers or the Order of Malta. The rise and fall of the Order follow specific lines of developments and entail several secrets and mysteries, such as the financial donations to the Order, the survival of a supposedly very rich treasure, the rituals through which one could become a member, and eventually the fall of the Order under the attack of King Philip the Fair.

• Subjects & Topics of Eps 1 :

a. Origin and organization

- Historical background, the birth of knighthood
- Some Knights Orders
- Distinction between Hospitallers and those of the Holy Sepulchre
- Knights Templar

b. Secrets

- Why so popular?
- How to become a Templar, ceremony: details
- Who can become a Templar? How? And why?
- Why so powerful? Donations by?
- The supernatural
- The treasure of the Templars
- How do they use their power?
- The end of the Templars
- Satisfaction of the King of France
- Heresy

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Episode 2: The Templars and the Devil ?

The Knights Templar become the target of specific accusations arranged by the French court. The charges employed against the Templars constitute one of the earlies examples of a massive use of both traditional and novel stereotypes for the destruction of a specific social group: homosexuality, blasphemy, diabolism, heresy, secret rituals and idols to be worshipped, to mention a few. If Jacques de Molay was burned at the stake as a heretic, other Templars managed to survive, especially – but not only – in Portugal.

Subjects & Topics of Eps 2 :

- 2 minutes recap of the evolution of the Templars
- Order of the Hospitallers (The order of Malta)
- The beginning of the end: economic power, political strategy, the envy of the other Orders, the behavior of the Templars: the relationship with the Pope
- The devil works against the Templars
- Accusations against the Templars
- The secrets of the ceremony: from the official one to the satanic ceremony
  - *a. Homosexuality*
  - *b. Baphomet (idol)*
  - *c. The 'game of the keg'*
  - *d. Torture*
  - *e. Numbers of victims (6 do not confess)*
  - *f. Inquisitors*
  - *g. Temple of Paris (Templar churches)*
  - *h. Heresy and the devil*
- The death of the Templars
- The burning of De Molay
- What about the other Templars?

Episode 3: The Templars after the Templars (or The Mysterious Legacy of the Templars)

The Knights Templar left a legacy, both visible in a consistent number of castles, villages, and abbeys throughout Europe, and invisible through the diffusion of long-lasting traditions claiming the survival of individuals belonging to the Order, with their array of secrets and riches. Rosslyn Chapel in Scotland is only one of the many mysterious places to which a strong continuity with the world of the Templars is attached.

Subjects & Topics of Eps 3

- Two minute recap about the destruction of the Knights Templar and the shift of their properties to the Knights Hospitaller (The Order of Malta)
- Invisible Mysterious Legacies: Traditions on the escape of Templar knights and the founding of new Templar groups

a. The tradition of the Chart of Larménius (1324) and the re-establishment of The Order of the Temple of Jerusalem by Bernard-Raymond Fabré-Palaprat in the 19th century
b. Hertfordshire Templar mystery
c. Rosslyn Chapel
d. In Portugal the Knights Templar survived under the name of the "Knights of Christ"

- Visible Mysterious Legacies: Templar Architecture in Europe (castles, monasteries, villages)
- Pope Innocent II grants the Templars the right to build and own churches, cemeteries and buildings in 1139 and 1141

- Numerous Templar buildings all over Europe, especially France, Italy, UK. Some of them are: Villa del Priorato di Malta, Aventine hill, Rome; Abbey of Valvisciolo, Italy; Castel del Monte, Puglia; Church of Santa Prudenziana, Narni; village of Castelmezzano, Potenza; Caves of Osimo, Marche; Church of Santa Maria di Calentano, Ruvo di Puglia; Church of Santa Croce, Marche; Dome of Barga, Lucca, Tuscany; Rosslyn Chapel, Scotland; Church of Laon, France; Lanleff Church, Bretagne, France; Castle of Ponferrada, Spain; Castle of Almourol, Portugal; Holy Sepulchre, Cambridge; Moissac-Bellevue Chapel, Provence; villages of Sante Eulalie du Cernon, La Couvertorade, and La Cavalerie, Provence; Church of La Couvertorade, Provence;

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Advantages & Exclusivity

1) We have access to the "Vatican's Secret Archives": We are talking about 85 kilometers of shelving which was only opened in 1881 to researchers and only with limited access. You need to be a qualified scholar from an institution of higher education pursuing scientific research and with an adequate knowledge of archival research just to apply for an entry card. Students are not even permitted. Even if you are accepted, there are strict limitations to what archive users are able to view and access.

2) First Team: We are the first team that will take a deep dive into the connection between the historical events and contemporary developments of the Knights Templar to construct a political and financial power.

3) Unpublished Topics: We will reveal unpublished topics in depth describing how it was even possible for them to raise so much money even the King was indebted to them, how it was even possible for them to become so powerful they worried the Pope and stimulated the appetites of the state and how it was even possible for them to be demolished in such a rapid amount of time. The same cause for them to flourish was the same cause of their demise. Heresy.

4) Access to the House of Hospitallers: The Sovereign Military Order of Malta, now based in Rome, is the present-day continuation of the medieval Knights Hospitaller, with origins in the Fraternitas Hospitalaria hospital founded circa 1048. Hospitallers are still active today and have resources and special jurisdictions that also issue their passports. We will try to understand why and possibly what is hidden behind this?

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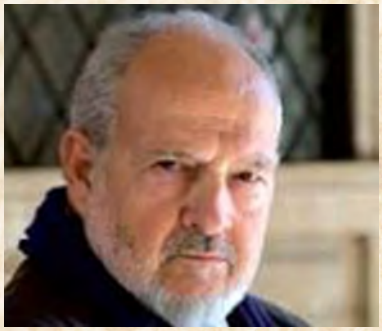
All this will be possible with the extraordinary collaboration of our experts:

Barbara Frale

Is an Italian paleographer works in the Vatican Archive and she has discovered important documents never studied before. She is the author of numerous books specifically dedicated to the studies and history of the Knights Templar.



Franco Cardini

Historian, scholar and writer. Specialized in the study of the Middle Ages, author of many books dedicated to the study of our subject.

Alain Demurger

A modern French historian, and a leading specialist of the history of the Knights Templar and the Crusades. He is honorary maître de conférences at the Université de Paris Panthéon-Sorbonne. He specializes in the history of the Crusades, the history of the religious orders, and the state of France at the end of the Middle Ages.

Marina Montesano

Professor of medieval history at the DICAM - University of Messina and at the Faculty of Philosophy - San Raffaele Vita-Salute University. He studied at the University of Bari and Florence; she specialized as a fellow at the Accademia della Crusca and the Harvard University - Berenson Foundation. He has spent periods as a visiting scholar at Brown University (Rhode Island) and is a Harvard fellow. She won the Lila Wallace award in 2000.

Fabrizio Conti

Received a dual Ph.D. in History and Medieval Studies from the Central European University, Budapest (Hungary). He is a graduate in the Humanities from the University of Rome "La Sapienza", and has earned certicates from the Pontical Institute for Christian Archaeology in Rome and the School of the Vatican Secret Archive. His book entitled Witchcraft, Superstition, and Observant Franciscan Preachers:Pastoral Approach and Intellectual Debate in Renaissance Milan was published by Brepols in 2015.

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