



The Knights Templar: The History and Myths of the Legendary Military Order

By Sean Martin

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This book is an essential exploration into the history of a legendary group of Crusaders, which are prominently featured in Dan Brown's recent best seller, *The Da Vinci Code*. The Knights Templar rose from humble beginnings to become the most powerful military religious order of the Middle Ages. Formed to protect pilgrims in the Holy Land, they participated in the Crusades and rapidly gained wealth, lands, and influence. Seemingly untouchable for nearly two centuries, they fell from grace spectacularly after the loss of the Holy Land. In the ensuing centuries the Templars have exerted a unique influence over European history; orthodox historians see them as nothing more than soldier-monks whose arrogance was their ultimate undoing, while others see them as occultists of the first order. With clarity and ease, Martin navigates between the orthodox and the speculative, the historical and the myth, to bring alive the story of the Templars. Like those other legends of the Middle Ages—the characters of the Arthurian tales—*The Knights Templar* holds captive the imagination of all those intrigued by conspiracy and how history and myth intertwine to become the stuff of legend.

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