

THE KNIGHTS TEMPLARS

HARUN YAHYA

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction Chapter 1. The Dark History of the Templars Barbarism of the Crusaders Founding of the Order of the Knights Templar The Order's Mission The Development of the Order The Structure of the Order Admission to the Order "Christian Usurers" The Enigma of the Templars and Gothic Architecture The Battle of Hattin Cyprus: A Temporary Base Decadence and Its Unmasking The Templars' True Face Perversion in the Templars' Faith and Practice The Templars Go Underground Chapter 2. From Templars to Freemasonry Templars' Confessions in Masonic Sources Origins of the Scottish Rite For Other Purposes: The Rosicrucians Chapter 3. Templars, Revolutions, Murders, and the Mafia The Illuminati's Plans for Revolution The French Revolution and Jacques de Molay's Revenge An Inside Account of Jack the Ripper Propaganda Due (P-2) The P-2's Secret Lodge and Strange Rituals P-2 and Mossad After P-2 – P-3? Chapter 4. Freemasons (or Templars) in Turkey The Tanzimat Reforms, Mustafa Reshid Pasha,

and August Comte Young Turks, the Committee of Union and Progress , and
Freemasons Abdullah Cevdet: An Anti-Religious Mason of the Ottoman Era Halkevi
Community Centers, Village Institutes, and the Imposition of Masonic Teachings on
the Masses The Masons' War Against Religion P-2's of Turkey: Secret Lodges
Footage from the Lodge: Templars' Secret Rites on the Screen The Templars and
the Mafia From the History of the Templars Chapter 5. The Deception of Evolution

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Now writing under the pen-name of HARUN YAHYA, he was born in Ankara in 1956. Having completed his primary and secondary education in Ankara, he studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, he has published many books on political, scientific, and faith-related issues. Harun Yahya is well-known as the author of important works disclosing the imposture of evolutionists, their invalid claims, and the dark liaisons between Darwinism and such bloody ideologies as fascism and communism. His pen-name is a composite of the names Harun (Aaron) and Yahya (John), in memory of the two esteemed Prophets who fought against their people's lack of faith. The Prophet's seal on the his books' covers is symbolic and is linked to the their contents. It represents the Qur'an (the final scripture) and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), last of the prophets. Under the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (teachings of the Prophet), the author makes it his purpose to disprove each fundamental tenet of godless ideologies and to have the "last word," so as to completely silence the objections raised against religion. He uses the seal of the final Prophet, who attained ultimate wisdom and moral perfection, as a sign of his intention to offer the last word. All of Harun Yahya's works share one single goal: to convey the Qur'an's message, encourage readers to consider basic faith-related issues such as God's Existence and Unity and the hereafter; and to expose godless systems' feeble foundations and perverted ideologies. Harun Yahya enjoys a wide readership in many countries, from India to America, England to Indonesia, Poland to Bosnia, and Spain to Brazil. Some of his books are available in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Urdu, Arabic, Albanian, Russian, Serbo-Croat (Bosnian), Polish, Malay, Uygur Turkish, and Indonesian. Greatly appreciated all around the world, these works have been instrumental in many people recovering faith in God and gaining deeper insights into their faith. His books' wisdom and sincerity, together with a distinct style that's easy to understand, directly affect anyone who reads them. Those who seriously consider these books, can no longer advocate atheism or any other perverted ideology or materialistic philosophy, since these books are characterized by rapid effectiveness, definite results, and irrefutability. Even if they continue to do so, it will be only a sentimental insistence, since these books refute such ideologies from their very foundations. All contemporary movements of denial are now ideologically defeated, thanks to the books written by Harun Yahya. This is no doubt a result of the Qur'an's wisdom and lucidity. The author modestly intends to serve as a means in humanity's search for God's right path. No material gain is sought in the publication of these works. Those who encourage others to read these books, to open their minds and hearts and guide them to become more devoted servants of God, render an invaluable service. Meanwhile, it would only be a waste of time and energy to propagate other books that create confusion in people's minds, lead them into ideological chaos, and that clearly have no strong and precise effects in removing the doubts in people's hearts, as also verified from previous experience. It is impossible for books devised

to emphasize the author's literary power rather than the noble goal of saving people from loss of faith, to have such

a great effect. Those who doubt this can readily see that the sole aim of Harun Yahya's books is to overcome disbelief and to disseminate the Qur'an's moral values. The success and impact of this service are manifested in the readers' conviction. One point should be kept in mind: The main reason for the continuing cruelty, conflict, and other ordeals endured by the vast majority of people is the ideological prevalence of disbelief. This can be ended only with the ideological defeat of disbelief and by conveying the wonders of creation and Qur'anic morality so that people can live by it. Considering the state of the world today, leading into a downward spiral of violence, corruption and conflict, clearly this service must be provided speedily and effectively, or it may be too late. In this effort, the books of Harun Yahya assume a leading role. By the will of God, these books will be a means through which people in the 21st century will attain the peace, justice, and happiness promised in the Qur'an.

TO THE READER

A special chapter is assigned to the collapse of the theory of evolution because this theory constitutes the basis of all anti-spiritual philosophies. Since Darwinism rejects the fact of creation—and therefore, God's Existence—over the last 140 years it has caused many people to abandon their faith or fall into doubt. It is therefore an imperative service, a very important duty to show everyone that this theory is a deception. Since some readers may find the chance to read only one of our book, we think it appropriate to devote a chapter to summarize this subject. All the author's books explain faith-related issues in light of Qur'anic verses, and invite readers to learn God's words and to live by them. All the subjects concerning God's verses are explained so as to leave no doubt or room for questions in the reader's mind. The books' sincere, plain, and fluent style ensure that everyone of every age and from every social group can easily understand them. Thanks to their effective, lucid narrative, they can be read at a one sitting. Even those who rigorously reject spirituality are influenced by the facts these books document and cannot refute the truthfulness of their contents. This and all the other books by the author can be read individually, or discussed in a group. Readers eager to profit from the books will find discussion very useful, letting them relate their reflections and experiences to one another. In addition, it will be a great service to Islam to contribute to the publication and reading of these books, written solely for the pleasure of God. The author's books are all extremely convincing. For this reason, to communicate true religion to others, one of the most effective methods is encouraging them to read these books. We hope the reader will look through the reviews of his other books at the back of this book. His rich source material on faith-related issues is very useful, and a pleasure to read. In these books, unlike some other books, you will not find the author's personal views, explanations based on dubious sources, styles that are unobservant of the respect and reverence due to sacred subjects, nor hopeless, pessimistic arguments that create doubts in the mind and deviations in the heart.

INTRODUCTION

The Order of the Knights Templars has its roots in the crusades. To some extent, we had explored it in our previous works, *The New Masonic Order* (1995) and *Global Freemasonry* (2002). This order was originally founded to fight for Christianity, but over time—as the Templars acquired immense power, adopted heretical teachings, and established a capitalist system based on material gain, their order fell afoul of the Church. Rumors circulating about the Templars led to years of investigations, revealing that the order was blasphemous and that it performed black magic rituals, similar to today's satanic sects. The order was subsequently declared unlawful. The Knights' liquidation and arrest arose from a joint decision by the French King and the Pope. Some historians regard the Templars' trial and subsequent liquidation as one of the most significant social events of the Middle Ages. Ironically, the truly interesting part of the Knights Templars Saga began only after the order was liquidated. According to the generally accepted view, the order went underground, developing a deep animosity for monotheistic religions and the Church in particular and, in the long-term, transmuted into the organization known today as Freemasonry. The Masons' antireligious philosophy and involvement in revolutions and political movements is a consequence of their Templars ancestry. In other words, the Knights Templars still survive in the present, under the name of Freemasonry. Those who reach the highest degrees of Masonry are granted Templar-inspired titles such as "Guardian of the Temple." In the United States, some lodges that convene under the name of the Knights Templar are affiliated with Masonry. Masonry, on the other hand, continues the Templars' foremost tradition of opposing religion, as well as being actively avaricious, now and again relying on extra-legal methods similar to the Mafia's. Compelling examples—including the P2 Masonic lodge and murders of Jack the Ripper—are scrutinized in this book's later chapters. We will also investigate the Templar/Masons' Syndication's impact on Turkey's recent history. All this will demonstrate that accepted history facts, and especially current developments, are not always what they appear to be; and that behind processes and events thought to be developing naturally, shadowy designs can be detected. As God reveals to us in the Qur'an (16: 45), those who "organize and propagate evil" are closer than we imagine—often, in fact, nearby.

CHAPTER I THE DARK HISTORY OF THE TEMPLARS

Although the crusaders are commonly thought to have been motivated by their deep Christian faith, crusades were actually wars inspired by avarice. At a time of utmost poverty and misery prevalent in the West, the attractions of the East—in particular, the Muslim societies' wealth and prosperity—played on the minds of Europeans, especially those in the Church. These attractions, bolstered with Christian teachings, begot the crusaders' mindset, seemingly motivated by religion but actually motivated by worldly designs. This is the reason why Christians, who had followed more or less peaceful policies in the previous 1,000 years, suddenly began to display an appetite for war—specifically, the "liberation" of the holy city of Jerusalem and Palestine as a whole. We can retrace the beginnings of the crusades to November 1095, when Pope Urban II gathered the Council of Clermont. Three hundred members of the clergy convened under his chairmanship. The pacifist doctrines that had dominated Christendom were abandoned, laying the foundations for the conquest. At the close of the Council, Urban II announced this state of affairs in his famous speech to a congregation that comprised all social classes, demanding that Christians stop the infighting and warring among themselves. The Pope called on them—whether rich or poor, aristocrat or peasant—to unite under one banner and to free the holy land from the Muslims. To him, this was "a holy war." Historians describe Urban II as a good orator. He intended to incite the Christians against Muslim Turks and Arabs, and succeeded by alleging that the Muslim were assaulting pilgrims and that Christianity's sacred places were being desecrated.¹ Of course, none of this was true. As historians have confirmed, the Muslims were very tolerant towards Christians and Jews, whom they permitted to pray and worship. All minorities co-existing in the Holy Land benefited equally from this atmosphere of tranquility, created by the moral code of Islam. But because means of communication at the time were terribly primitive compared to today's, medieval Europeans weren't aware of this. Owing allegiance to the Vatican in Rome and conducting services in Latin, they knew little about the Eastern Orthodox Church or the Greek-speaking Byzantium, and even less about Islam. Since what the common people did know amounted to nothing more than hearsay, the Pope found it easy to excite their emotions. Urban II went on to proclaim as an encouragement that for those who participated in the crusade, all sins would be forgiven. The exuberant crowd was distributed fabric crosses to emblazon their garments, and they dispersed to spread the word of the "holy war." The overwhelming response to this call made history. In a very short period of time, a massive "crusaders' army" was assembled, consisting of not only professional warriors, but also ten thousands of ordinary people. Some historians suggest that the impoverished kings of Christendom, eager to exploit the fabled riches of the East, pressurized the Pope to call a "holy war." Others find an altogether different motive for Pope Urban II, suggesting that he wished to gain power and prestige for himself at the expense of a rival claiming to be pope. But in reality, all the various kings, princes, aristocrats and others who obliged this call did so for worldly purposes. As Donald Queller of

the University of Illinois put it, "the French knights wanted more land. Italian merchants hoped to expand trade in Middle Eastern ports. . . Large numbers of poor people joined the expeditions simply to escape the hardships of their normal lives."²

On the way, greedy hordes murdered countless Muslims and Jews in the hope of finding gold and jewels. Among crusaders, it was common practice to disembowel their victims in the hopes that they might have swallowed their gold and jewels to hide them. In the Fourth Crusade, their avarice reached the point where they looted Christian Constantinople, scratching gold leaf off the frescos in the Cathedral of Hagia Sophia.

Barbarism of the Crusaders

In the summer of 1096, this mob of self-appointed crusaders set off in three separate groups, each taking a different route to Constantinople, where they met up with one another. The Byzantine Emperor, Alexius I, did what he could to aid this force, comprising 4,000 mounted knights and 25,000 infantry troops. 3 Raymond IV of Saint-Gilles, Count of Toulouse; Bohemond, Duke of Taranto; Godfrey of Bouillon; Hugh, Count of Vermandois; and Robert, Duke of Normandy commanded this army. Bishop Adhemar of Le Puy, the close friend of Urban II, was their spiritual leader.4 After ransacking and setting fire to many settlements and putting countless Muslims to the sword, eventually the crusaders reached Jerusalem in 1099. After a siege of approximately five weeks, the city fell. When the victors finally entered Jerusalem, according to one historian, "They killed all the Saracens and the Turks they found... whether male or female."5 Crusaders slaughtered everyone they met and looted everything they could get their hands on. They murdered indiscriminately those who had taken refuge in the mosques, whether young or old, and devastated the Muslim and Jewish holy sites and places of worship setting the city's synagogues aflame, burning alive Jews who had hidden inside. This slaughter continued until no longer could they find anyone to kill.6 One of the crusaders, Raymond of Aguiles, boasts of this incredible cruelty: Wonderful sights were to be seen. Some of our men (and this was more merciful) cut off the heads of their enemies; others shot them with arrows, so that they fell from the towers; others tortured them longer by casting them into flames. Piles of heads, hands and feet were to be seen in the streets of the city. It was necessary to pick one's way over the bodies of men and horses. But these were small matters compared to what happened at the Temple of Solomon, a place where religious services are normally chanted . . . in the temple and the porch of Solomon, men rode in blood up to their knees and bridle reins.7 In *The Monks of War*, researcher Desmond Seward narrates the events of these tragic days: Jerusalem was stormed in July 1099. The rabid ferocity of its sack showed just how little the Church had succeeded in Christianising atavistic instincts. The entire population of the Holy City was put to the sword, Jews as well as Moslems, 70,000 men, women and children perished in a holocaust, which raged for three days. In places men waded in blood up to their ankles and horsemen were splashed by it as they rode through the streets.8 According to another historical source, the number of Muslims pitilessly slaughtered was 40,000.9 Whatever the actual number of the dead, what the

crusaders committed in the Holy Land has gone down in history as an example of matchless barbarism. The first crusade ended with the fall of Jerusalem in 1099. After 460 years of Muslim rule, the Holy Land came under Christian control. The crusaders established a Latin kingdom that stretched from Palestine to

Antioch and made Jerusalem its capital city. Thereafter, the crusaders began struggling to establish themselves in the Middle East. But to sustain the state they had founded, they needed to organize themselves—and to achieve this, they established unprecedented military orders. Members of these orders had emigrated from Europe and, in Palestine, lived a monastic life of sorts. At the same time, they trained for war against the Muslims. One of these orders went down a different route, undergoing a change that would significantly alter the course of history in Europe and—eventually—the world: the Knights Templar.

Founding of the Knights Templar

About 20 years after the conquest of Jerusalem and the creation of a Latin Empire, the Templars first appeared on the scene of history. Otherwise known as Templars or Knights Templar, the order's full and proper name was *Pauperes commilitones Christi Templique Salomonis*, or "Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and the Temple of Solomon." (A major part of the information we have today on the Templars was recorded by the 12th century historian Guillaume of Tyre.) The order was founded in 1118 by nine knights: Hugues de Payens, Geoffrey de St. Omer, Rossal, Gondamer, Geoffrey Bisol, Payen de Montdidier, Archambaud de St. Agnat, Andre de Montbard, and the Hugh Conte de Champagne. Thus was quietly born one of the most talked-about, effective and powerful organizations of Medieval Europe. These nine knights presented themselves to Baldwin II, the Emperor of Jerusalem, asking him to assign them the responsibility of protecting the lives and property of the many Christian pilgrims now flocking to Jerusalem from all over Europe. The Emperor knew Hugues de Payens, the first Grand Master of the order, well enough to grant the nine their request. Accordingly, the district where Solomon's Temple once stood (and by then, included the site of the al-Aqsa Mosque, which survives to this day), was allocated to the order of the Templars, giving the order its name. The Temple Mount thus remained the order's headquarters for the next 70 years until, following the battle of Hattin, the great Islamic commander Saladin reconquered Jerusalem for the Muslims. The Templars had established themselves there by choice, because the site of the Temple represented the earthly power of the Prophet Solomon; and the remnants of the temple contained big secrets. Protecting the Holy Land and the Christian pilgrims was the official reason the nine founders gave for joining forces and for creating the order in the first place. But the true reason behind it all was altogether different.

The Order's Mission

At the time, there were a number of other orders of warrior monks in Jerusalem, but all acting according to their charters. Besides training as soldiers, the Knights of St. John—a large organization also known as the Knights Hospitalers—took care of the

sick and the poor and were performing other good deeds in the Holy Land. The Templars, however, had taken it upon themselves to protect the lands between Haifa and Jerusalem— a physical impossibility for the nine knights to shoulder all by themselves. Even then, it was now obvious that

they sought political as well as economic gains, quite aside from performing works of charity. In *Morals And Dogma*, one of Freemasonry's most popular books, Grand Master Albert Pike (1809–1891) reveals the Templars' true purpose: In 1118, nine Knights Crusaders in the East, among whom were Geoffroi de Saint-Omer and Hughes de Payens, consecrated themselves to religion, and took an oath between the hands of the Patriarch of Constantinople, a See always secretly or openly hostile to that of Rome from the time of Photius. The avowed object of the Templars was to protect the Christians who came to visit the Holy Places: their secret object was the rebuilding of the Temple of Solomon on the model prophesied by Ezekiel...¹⁰ The Knights Templar, he continued, were from the very beginning "devoted to . . . opposition to the tiara of Rome and the crown of its Chiefs. . ." The object of the Templars, he said, was to acquire influence and wealth, then to "intrigue and at need fight to establish the Johannite or Gnostic and Kabbalistic dogma. . ." Adding to the information that Pike provides, the English authors of *The Hiram Key*, Christopher Knight and Robert Lomas—both Masons—write about the Templars' origin and purpose. According to them, the Templars discovered "a secret" in the ruins of the temple. This then changed their worldview; and from then on, they adopted un-Christian teachings. Their "protection for pilgrims" became a front behind which they hid their real intent and activities. There is no evidence that these founding Templars ever gave protection to pilgrims, but on the other hand, we were soon to find that there is conclusive proof that they did conduct extensive excavations under the ruins of Herod's Temple [as Solomon's temple was called after Herod rebuilt it].¹¹ The authors of *The Hiram Key* are not the only researchers finding evidence for this. Writes the French historian, Gaetan Delaforce: The real task of the nine knights was to carry out research in the area, in order to obtain certain relics and manuscripts which contain the essence of the secret traditions of Judaism and ancient Egypt...¹² In *The Hiram Key*, Knight and Lomas conclude that the Templars excavated items of such importance at the site that they adopted a wholly new world view. Many other historians draw similar conclusions. The order's founders and their successors were all of Christian upbringing, yet their philosophy of life was not a Christian one. At the end of the 19th century, Charles Wilson of the Royal Engineers, began conducting archeological research in Jerusalem. He concluded that the Templars had gone to Jerusalem to study the temple's ruins and, from the evidence Wilson obtained there, that the Templars had set themselves up in the vicinity of the temple to facilitate excavation and research. The tools that the Templars left behind form part of the evidence Wilson gathered, and are now in the private collection of the Scottish Robert Brydon.¹³ According to the authors of *The Hiram Key*, the Templars' search was not in vain. They made a discovery that altered their perception of and outlook on the world entirely. Despite being born and raised in a Christian society, they adopted wholly un-Christian practices. Black magic rituals and rites and sermons of perverse content were common practice. There is a general consensus among historians that these practices were derived from on the Cabala. Cabala literally means "oral tradition." An esoteric branch of mystical Judaism, the Cabala is also a school that researches the secret, hidden and

meanings of the Torah (or first five Books of Moses) and other Jewish writings. There's more to it, however. A close examination of the Cabala reveals that it actually precedes the Torah. A pagan teaching, it continued to exist after the revelation of the Torah and lived on to spread amongst the followers of Judaism. (For further reading on the subject, see Harun Yahya's Global Freemasonry, Global Publishing, 2002)

For thousands of years, the Cabala has been a resource for sorcery and practitioners of black magic and now enjoys a strong following all around the world, not only in the Jewish community. The Templars were one such group, engaged in research into the Cabala with the goal of acquiring supernatural powers. As the following chapters will examine in detail, they were keen on establishing ongoing relationships with Cabalists in Jerusalem as well as in Europe—a view widely accepted by researchers working on the subject.¹⁴

The Development of the Order

With new members joining their order, the Templars soon entered a phase of rapid growth. In 1120, Foulques d'Angers became a Knight Templar and so did Hugo, Count of Champagne, in 1125. The enigma surrounding the order and its mystic teachings drew the attention of many European aristocrats. At the Council of Troyes in 1128, the Papacy officially recognized the order of the Templars, which further aided their growth.¹⁵ Rome's recognition of the Templars is related in the Turkish Masonic journal, *Mimar Sinan*: To obtain the Papacy's approval of the order, Grand Master Hugues de Payens, accompanied by five knights, paid a visit to Pope Honorius II. The Grand Master submitted two letters—one from the patriarch of Jerusalem, the other from King Baudouin II—setting forth the order's honorable mission, its services to Christianity, and many another good deed. On the 13th of January, 1128, the Council of Troyes convened. Present were many high-ranking officials of the Church, including the Abbot of Citeaux, Etienne Harding, and Bernard, the Abbot of Clairvaux. The Grand Master presented his case once more. It was agreed that the Church would officially recognize the order under the name of Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ. Bernard was commissioned to prepare a Rule for the Templars. So, the order was officially founded.¹⁶ In the order's development and progress, the single most important person is undoubtedly St. Bernard (1090-1153). Becoming the Abbot of Clairvaux at the tender age of 25, he had risen in the Catholic Church's hierarchy to become a respectable spokesman for the Church, influential with the Pope as well as the French King. It must be added that he was a cousin of Andre de Montbard, one of the founders of the order. The Templars' Rule was written according to the principles of the Cistercian Order to which St. Bernard belonged—or short, the Templars adopted the rules and organization of this monastic order. But most of their rule never went any further than being written down and recognized: The Templars continued in their un-Christian practices that the Church had strictly forbidden. It's entirely possible that St. Bernard was duped, and that he never knew the truth about the Templars who, taking advantage of his trustworthiness and status in the Church and throughout Christian Europe, used him for their own ends. He wrote a favorable appraisal of the order, "De Laude Novae Militae" (In Praise of the New Knighthood) following Grand Master Hugues de Payens's persistent requests for him to do so.¹⁷ Around that time, St. Bernard had become the second most influential person in Christendom, after the Pope. One

source illustrates the importance of Bernard's support of the Templars: Bernard's document, "De Laude Novae Militae", swept through Christendom like a tornado, and in no time the number of Templar recruits increased. At the same time donations, gifts and bequests, from Monarchs and Barons throughout Europe, were arriving regularly on the Templar doorstep. With a staggering rapidity, the fledgling little band of nine knights grew into what we refer to as Templar, Inc.¹⁸ With this document, the Templars obtained unprecedented privileges not granted to other orders and—

according to Alan Butler and Stephen Dafoe, known for their research is this field—became the most successful military, commercial and financial organization in Medieval Europe. As their legend and renown spread from mouth to mouth, they became a multinational company with seemingly unlimited capital and financial resources and ten of thousands of trained employees: Recruits, and offers of money and land came flowing in from far and wide. Soon, numerous presbyteries, castles, farms and churches, were built and occupied by the Templar Knights and their servants. The Templars fitted out ships, creating both a merchant and fighting navy. In time, they became the most famous warriors, travellers, bankers and financiers of their day.¹⁹ In short, the Templars were an autonomous entity answerable only to the Pope, with no obligation to pay dues to any king, ruler or diocese. Their wealth increased day by day. In the Holy Lands, the order's power was legendary and continued until the fall of Acre (1291). They controlled the shipping routes from Europe to Palestine used by pilgrims, but all these constituted just a fraction of the Templars' overall activities. They had entered the scene as "Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ," but no description could have been less accurate. Amongst their ranks were to be found the wealthiest people of Europe: leading bankers from London and Paris, among whose customers were Blanche of Castile, Alphonso de Poitiers, and Robert of Artois. The finance ministers of James I of Aragon, and Charles I of Naples and the chief advisor of Louis VII of France were all Templars.²⁰ By the year 1147, 700 knights and 2,400 servants of the order were stationed in Jerusalem. Across the known world, 3,468 castles had become the Templars' property. They had established trading posts and routes on both land and sea, had won war booty and spoils from the wars they participated in. Among Europe's states, they were a political power to be reckoned with, often called in to arbitrate between rulers during times of conflict. It is estimated that in the 13th century, the Templars numbered 160,000, of whom 20,000 were knights— in those times, constituting an undoubted superpower. In *The Temple and the Lodge*, authors Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh document the Templars' incredibly widespread influence throughout Christian Europe. They were simply everywhere, even playing a role in the signing of England's Magna Carta. Having amassed huge wealth, they were the most powerful bankers of their time and also the largest fighting force in the West. The Templars commissioned and financed cathedrals, mediated in international transactions, and even supplied court chamberlains to the ruling houses of Europe.

The Structure of the Order

One of the most interesting aspects of the Templars was their emphasis on discretion. In the two hundred years between the order's founding and its liquidation, they never compromised on secrecy. This, however, is inexplicable by any standard of reason, logic, or common sense. If they were truly devoted to the Catholic Church, there was no need for this secrecy: All of Europe was under the sovereignty of the Papacy. If they were merely following Christian teachings, then they had nothing to hide and there was no need for secrecy. Why adopt secrecy as a fundamental principle if you are in compliance with Church doctrine and your mission is to uphold and defend Christianity—unless you are engaged in activities incompatible with the Church? Discipline was so very strictly observed within the order's hierarchy that it can only be described as a chain of command. According to the Templar rule, obedience to the Grand Master and Masters of the order was paramount: ... if anything be commanded by the Master or by one to whom he has given his power, it should be done without demur as if it were a command from God.²¹ The Templars were not allowed any personal possessions; everything remained the property of their order. They also had their own unique dress code. Over their armor, they wore a long white mantle emblazoned with a red cross, so that they were recognized as Templars wherever they went. The Red Cross symbol was assigned to the order by Pope Eugene III, who, incidentally, had been tutored by St. Bernard. There were three classes of Templars: Knights and warriors of various ranks, men of religion, and finally servants. Other rules specific to the order prohibited marriage, correspondence with relatives or a private life. ²² Meals were taken together en masse. As portrayed on their seal—which depicted two knights on one single horse—they were required to go about their business in pairs, share everything, and eat from the same bowl. They addressed each other as "my brother," and each Templar had the right to three horses and one servant. Breach or disrespect of any of these rules was harshly punished. Grooming and cleansing were considered an embarrassment, so Templars rarely washed and went around filthy and stinking of sweat, from the heat of wearing their armor. But according to history, the Templars were good seafarers. From the surviving Jews and Arabs in the Holy Land, they had acquired various maps and learned the sciences of geometry and mathematics, enabling them to navigate not only along the shores of Europe and along the African coast, but to explore lands and seas lying farther away.

Admission to the Order

Before one could be considered for admission into the order, he had to meet a number of preconditions. Among them, a man had to be in good health, not married or indebted, without any obligations and not bound by any other order, and willing to accept becoming a slave and servant of the order. The initiation ceremony was held in a domed chamber resembling the Church of The Holy Sepulchre and was to

be conducted in absolute secrecy.²³ Just as in Freemasonry centuries later, esoteric rituals had to be performed during this ceremony. In his article titled "Tampliyeler ve Hurmasonlar" (Templars and Freemasons) mason Teoman Biyikoglu refers

to the order's rule of 1128 about the initiation ceremony: The Master addresses the congregated brothers of the order: "Dear brothers, some of you have proposed that Mr. X may be admitted to the order. If any of you know of any reason to oppose his initiation, say so now." If no word of opposition is spoken, the candidate will be led to the adjoining chamber of the temple. In this chamber, the candidate is visited by three of the most senior brothers, told of the difficulties and hardship awaiting him if he is admitted to the order, and then asked whether he still wishes to be admitted. If his answer is affirmative, he is asked whether he is married or engaged to be married, has links to other orders, is indebted to anyone, is of good health, and whether or not he is a slave. If his answers to these questions comply with the requirements of the order, the senior brothers will return to the temple and say, "We told the candidate of all the hardships awaiting him and our conditions of admission, but he is insistent on becoming a slave of the order." Before being readmitted into the temple, the candidate is again asked whether he still insists on being admitted. If he still answers yes, the Grand Master addresses the candidate: "Brother, you are asking much of us. You have seen only the façade of the order, and you hope to acquire pureblood horses, honorable neighbors, good food and nice garments. But are you aware of how hard our conditions really are?" Proceeding to list the difficulties awaiting the candidate, he continues: "You must not seek admittance for wealth, nor for status." If the candidate agrees, he is again led out of the temple. The Grand Master then asks the brothers whether they have anything to say about the candidate. If there is nothing said against him, he is brought back, made to kneel down, and given the Bible. He is asked if he is married. If he answers no, the oldest or most senior in the congregation is asked, "Have any questions that need to be asked been forgotten?" If the answer is no, the candidate is asked to swear an oath that he will remain loyal to the order and his brothers until the day he dies, and that he will not reveal to the outside world a word that is spoken in the temple. After he has sworn the oath, the Grand Master kisses the new brother on the lips [according to another source he is kissed on the belly and neck]. He then is given a Templar mantle and a woven belt, which is never to be taken off.²⁴

"Christian Usurers"

According to Alan Butler and Stephen Dafoe, "The Templars were expert financiers, using trading techniques quite unknown in the Europe of their day. They had clearly learned many of these skills from Jewish sources, but would have much more freedom to extend their financial empire, in a way that any Jewish financier of the period would have envied greatly."²⁵ Even though usury was strictly forbidden, they weren't afraid to lend money on interest. The Templars had acquired such wealth—and the power that came with it—that nobody dared speak out against them or do anything about it.²⁶ This so went to their heads that they went out of control. They were disobedient to kings and the Pope and in some cases, even challenged their authority. In 1303, for example, few years before their order was

liquidated, they refused a request for assistance from the French King Philip IV, as well as his later request in 1306 for the Templars' order to merge with the Hospitalers.²⁷ Travel could be a hazardous enterprise in the 12th century. En route, wayfarers could be robbed by bandits anywhere and at anytime. Transporting money, as well as other precious commodities essential for

trade, was particularly risky. Out of this situation, the Templars made a fortune by means of a fairly simple system of banking. For example, if a tradesman wanted to go from London to Paris, first he would go to the Templars' office in London and hand over his money. In return, he was given a paper with an encoded message written on it. On his arrival in Paris, he could hand in this note in exchange for the money he'd paid in London, minus a fee and interest. Thus the transaction was completed. Along with traders, wealthy pilgrims too made use of this system. "Checks" issued by Templars in Europe could be cashed in on arrival in Palestine, minus a hefty interest charge for this service. In *The Temple and the Lodge*, co-authors Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh explain the Templars' economic dimension, recording that the beginnings of modern banking can be traced back to them, and that no other organization contributed as much as the Templars to the rise of capitalism.²⁸ History records Florentine bankers as having invented "checking accounts," yet the Templars were using this method of money transfer long before. It is generally accepted that capitalism first arose in the Jewish community of Amsterdam, but long before them, the Templars had established their own medieval capitalism, including banking based on interest. They lent money on interest rates of up to 60% and controlled a major proportion of capital flow and liquidity in the economy of Europe. Using methods much like those of a modern private bank, they derived profits from both trade and banking, as well as from donations and armed conflict. They became as rich as the multinational company that, in effect, they were. At one time, the finances of the English and French monarchies were controlled and run by the Templars' respective offices in Paris and London, and both the French and English royal families owed the Templars huge amounts of money.²⁹ The kings of Europe were literally at their mercy, hoping to borrow money, and most royal households had come to depend on the order. This let them manipulate the kings and their national policies for their own purposes.

The Enigma of the Templars and Gothic Architecture

After Innocent II was elected Pope with St. Bernard's backing, he granted the Templars the right to build and run their own churches. This was a first in the history of the Church, which ruled as an absolute power at the time. This privilege meant that from now on, the Templars were answerable only to the Pope and beyond the reach of other authorities, including kings and lesser rulers. It also reduced their responsibilities to the Papacy, letting them hold court, impose their own taxes and collect them. Thus they could realize their worldly ambitions free of any pressure from the Church. In the process of planning their churches, they developed their own style of architecture, later to be known as "Gothic." In *The Sign and the Seal*, Graham Hancock states that Gothic architecture was born in 1134 with the construction of the north tower of Chartres Cathedral. The person behind this work of architecture was St. Bernard, the Templars' mentor and spiritual leader. He felt it important that this construction symbolize in stone the cabbalistic

approach and the esotericism that the Templars esteemed so highly. As Graham Hancock wrote, St. Bernard, the patron of the Templars, "played a formative role in the evolution and dissemination of the Gothic architectural formula in its early days (he had been at the height of his powers in 1134 when the soaring north tower of Chartres cathedral had been built, and he had constantly stressed the principles of sacred geometry that had been put into practice in that tower and throughout the whole wonderful building.)"

Elsewhere in the same book, the author writes: The entire edifice had been carefully and explicitly designed as a key to the deeper religious mysteries. Thus, for example, the architects and masons had made use of gematria (an ancient Hebrew cipher that substitutes numbers for the letters of the alphabet) to "spell out" obscure liturgical phrases in many of the key dimensions of the great building. Similarly the sculptors and glaziers—working usually to the instructions of the higher clergy—had carefully concealed complex messages about human nature, about the past, and about the prophetic meaning of the Scriptures in the thousands of different devices and designs that they had created. (For example, a tableau in the north porch depicts the removal, to some unstated destination, of the Ark of the Covenant—which is shown loaded upon an ox-cart. The damaged and eroded inscription, "HIC AMICITUR ARCHA CEDERIS," which could be "Here is hidden the Ark of the Covenant." Clearly he had regarded the Templars' architectural skills as almost supernaturally advanced and had been particularly impressed by the soaring roofs and arches that they had built. . . Soaring roofs and arches had also been the distinguishing features of the Gothic architectural formula as expressed at Chartres and other French cathedrals in the twelfth century—cathedrals that . . . were regarded by some observers as "scientifically... far beyond what can be allowed for in the knowledge of the epoch."³⁰

The Battle of Hattin

Following the death of the Latin King Baldwin I in 1186, Guy de Lusignan—who was known to be close to the Templars—succeeded to the throne in Palestine. Reynald de Chatillon, Prince of Antioch, became the new king's closest aide. After fighting in the Second Crusade, Reynald had stayed behind in Palestine, where he became good friends with the Templars. Reynald's cruelty was well known in the Holy Land. On the 4th of July, 1187 the crusader armies fought their bloodiest battle at Hattin. The army numbered 20,000 infantry and a thousand mounted knights. Assembling this army stretched to the limit the resources of towns along the border, leaving the others unprotected and vulnerable. The battle ended with the virtual annihilation of the crusaders. Most lost their lives, and every survivor was captured. Among the prisoners of war were King Guy himself and the leading commanders of the Christian army. According to the Templars' own records, Saladin, the great commander of the Muslim forces, was fair. Despite all the cruelty inflicted on Palestine's Muslim population over the previous 100 years of Christian rule, the defeated forces were not ill-treated. While most Christians were pardoned, the Templars had been responsible for the savage attacks carried out on the Muslim population, and for this reason, Saladin had the Templars executed, along with the Grand Master of the order and Reynald de Chatillon, both known for their inhumane cruelty. King Guy was freed after only one year in captivity in the town of Nablus. After Saladin's victory at Hattin, he advanced with his army and proceeded to free Jerusalem. Despite serious losses, the Templars survived their defeat in Palestine

and along with other Christians, withdrew to Europe. Most headed for France where, thanks to their privileged status, they continued to increase their power and wealth. In time, they became the "state within the state" in many European countries. Acre, the crusaders' last stronghold in Palestine, was captured by the Muslim army in 1291. With this, the

original justification for the Templars' existence—the protection of pilgrims in the Holy Land—disappeared as well. Now the Templars could concentrate all their efforts on Europe, but needed a little time to adapt to this new situation. During this transitional period, they relied on the help of their friends in the royal houses of Europe, of whom the best-known was Richard the Lion-Hearted. His relationship with the Templars was such that he was regarded as an Honorary Knight Templar.³¹ Furthermore, Richard had sold to the Templars the Island of Cyprus, which was to become the temporary base of their order, while they strengthened their position in Europe to counteract their losses in Palestine.

Cyprus: A Temporary Base

In order to understand the links between Cyprus and the order, we need to examine the events that culminated in the 3rd Crusade. By July 4, 1187, Jerusalem was conquered. Guy de Lusignan was taken prisoner the same day to be freed a year later, after swearing an oath never to attack the Muslims again. Germany, France, and England made the joint decision to launch the 3rd Crusade in order to retake Jerusalem. But before proceeding to attack the Holy City, they considered it essential for their success to first capture a harbor, where they could land troops and supplies. Acre was selected; and King Philip of France and England's King Richard began their sea journey. After King Richard's naval forces took Cyprus, Templar Master Robert de Sable entered the scene with a proposal to purchase Cyprus from Richard the Lion-Hearted. A price was fixed at 100,000 bezants (then gold currency of Byzantium), and de Sable made a down payment of 40,000 bezants. This sum, available so soon after the defeat at Hattin, is enough to illustrate the order's financial strength. In 1291, Acre fell to the Muslim army. As the Christian presence in Palestine came to an end, the Templars moved on. Some settled in Cyprus, later to serve as their temporary base in the Mediterranean. The Templars had been hoping to acquire a kingdom, such as the Teutonic Knights had won for themselves in northern Europe, except they wanted theirs in center of Europe—preferably in France. In Europe, under the guidance of their Master based in France, the rest of the Templars carried on their usual activities, with an unequalled degree of freedom. The Grand Master enjoyed a status on a par with kings; the Templars owned land in most countries of Christendom, from Denmark to Italy. A massive warrior army formed the basis of their political power. Because all the ruling houses of Europe were indebted to the Templars, they feared that their future was threatened. The throne of England was seriously indebted to the order. King John had emptied the coffers of the treasury between 1260 and 1266 in order to finance his military operations; and Henry III, likewise, borrowed heavily from the Knights Templar.³² The situation in France was such that the Templars' offices in Paris housed their own treasury as well as the state's and the treasurer of the order was also the treasurer of the King. The Royal household's finances were thus under the control of the Templars and dependent on them.³³

Decadence and Its Unmasking

After Christian presence in the Holy Land ended on June 16th, 1291, the Templars returned to Europe. Even though their original purpose—protecting European pilgrims—had ceased to exist, they kept on strengthening their power base, increasing their number of soldiers and amassing ever greater fortunes. But from this date onward, events began to turn against the Templars. While their numbers and their wealth were on the rise, their greed, arrogance and tyranny increased accordingly. By now, the Knights Templar had grown apart from the Catholic Church's teachings, beliefs, and practices. In general, no longer did any European have anything to say in their favor. In France, expressions like "to drink like a Templar" were common and widespread. In Germany, "Tempelhaus" meant whorehouse, and if anyone acted in an unacceptably arrogant way, he was said "to be proud as a Templar."³⁴ The kingdoms of Europe, especially France, were angered by the Templars' political intrigues and shadowy designs. After having plenty of opportunity to get acquainted with them, people started to realize that their order was not comprised of genuinely religious knights. Finally in 1307, Philip the Fair, King of France, and Pope Clement V realized that the Templars were seeking to change not only Europe's religious landscape, but its political balance as well. In October 1307, they moved in on the Templars, with the view of liquidating this decadent, treacherous order.³⁵

The Templars' True Face

Modest missionaries, fighting for Christianity—this was how the Templars presented themselves to the ordinary people. Undeservedly, they were perceived to be saints of great virtue, mentors of Christianity, devoted to aiding the poor and the needy. It's amazing that they managed to create such a positive image while leading lives contrary to Christian teachings and, on the way acquiring status and wealth through donations, trade, banking and even looting. The few who discovered their true identity did not dare to speak out against this powerful order. Philip, King of France, feared the dangers their financial strength could create for him. It was high time to unmask the Templars. As a Masonic writer of the 18th century explains: The war, which for the greater number of warriors of good faith proved the source of weariness, of losses and misfortunes, became for them [the Templars] only the opportunity for booty and aggrandizement, and if they distinguished themselves by a few brilliant actions, their motive soon ceased to be a matter of doubt when they were seen to enrich themselves even with the spoils of the confederates, to increase their credit by the extent of the new possessions they had acquired, to carry arrogance to the point of rivalling crowned princes in pomp and grandeur, to refuse their aid against the enemies of the faith... and finally to ally themselves with that horrible and sanguinary prince named the Old Man of the Mountain Prince of the Assassins.³⁶ The Templars became increasingly confident and impertinent in

their practices and in disseminating their teachings, trusting in the unjustifiably positive image they had managed to create throughout society. This in turn led to an increase in the numbers who witnessed their perversion and began to whisper about it. Whatever might the Templars be doing behind the closed doors of their palaces? The knights' avarice, inhumanity, greed and zeal, already well known, awakened the curiosity of the locals, the clergy, and the

monarchy. The Papacy was almost certain that this group, which it could no longer control, was living an irreligious life and abusing the privileges it had granted them. Rumors and complaints circulated about the Templars. There were increasingly credible accusations that they engaged in forbidden practices and other wrongdoing and that was why they operated under strict secrecy. People had begun to whisper of secret rites performed in their palaces, rituals of Satanist worship, and various immoral relationships. All these rumors were combined with actual fact—what servants in Templar palaces and the people living in the vicinity of them witnessed and reported. The Papacy found itself in a predicament, not knowing what to do. Clement V, elected Pope in 1305, was trying to calculate the damage to Christianity—and therefore, to the Vatican—and how to minimize its effects. At the same time, he had to put an end to constant pressure from regional dioceses and the King of France. Meanwhile, in Cyprus, Jacques de Molay, leader of the Templars, was making preparations for war, as the order had not given up hope to go back in the Middle East. He was recalled to France and ordered by the Pope to investigate these allegations. All this, however, was unacceptable to the French King. He quickly passed a new law, under which he had the Templars arrested. On October 13, 1309, they were accused in the courts with the following charges:

1. That during the reception ceremony, new brothers were required to deny Christ, God, The Virgin or the Saints on the command of those receiving them.
2. That the brothers committed various sacrilegious acts either on the cross or on an image of Christ.
3. That the receptors practiced obscene kisses on new entrants, on the mouth, navel or buttocks.
4. That the priests of the Order did not consecrate the host, and that the brothers did not believe in the sacraments.
5. That the brothers practiced idol worship of a cat or a head.
6. That the brothers encouraged and permitted the practice of sodomy.
7. That the Grand Master, or other officials, absolved fellow Templars from their sins.
8. That the Templars held their reception ceremonies and chapter meetings in secret and at night.
9. That the Templars abused the duties of charity and hospitality and used illegal means to acquire property and increase their wealth.³⁷

Perversion in the Templars' Faith and Practice

The documents at hand, together with the allegation made against the Templars, demonstrated that this was no ordinary order of knights. It was a darker organization altogether: one of perverted faith, frightening methods, and cunning strategies. It was well organized and well prepared, always scheming, always ready and dangerous, and—unlike anything seen before—forward thinking, with comprehensive plans for the future. During their time in the Middle East, the Templars had established and maintained contact with mystic sects belonging to different religions and denominations, including sorcerers. They were known to have close links to the hashashis (assassins) who, while influential, were regarded as a perverted sect by the Muslim population. From them, the Templars had learned some mystic teachings and barbaric strategies, as well as how to organize a sect. As will be seen in the coming chapters, the order's higher echelons in particular had also acquainted themselves with—and incorporated into their practice—beliefs based on the mystic teachings of the Cabala, the influence of the Bogomils, and Luciferians, thus leaving Christianity behind. According to the Templars, Jesus was a god ruling in another world, with little or no power in our present one. Satan was the lord of this material world of ours. Now the rumors were confirmed: Candidates for the order were indeed required to deny God, Christ and the Saints, committed sacrilegious acts, spit and urinate onto the holy Cross, be kissed square on the mouth with the "Osculum Infame" or "The Kiss of Shame" on the navel and buttocks by the more senior Knights Templars, during the initiation ceremony. That they freely practiced homosexuality and other sexual perversions, that the Grand Master wielded total authority over everything, that they practiced rituals of sorcery and used Cabalistic symbolism was clear evidence that the order had had become a sect blasphemous to Christianity. Their questioning revealed yet another of their unorthodox practices: Without being specific, they had admitted to idolatry, but during their ongoing interrogation, it gradually emerged that without any doubt, they were worshipping Satan. The Templars revered an idol of Baphomet; a demon with the head of a goat, whose image was later to become the symbol of The Church of Satan. From Peter Underwood's Dictionary of the Occult and Supernatural: Baphomet was the deity worshipped by the Knights Templar, and in Black Magic was the source and creator of evil; the Satanic goat of the witches' Sabbath...³⁸ During their trial, almost all Templars mentioned having worshipped Baphomet. This idol they described as having a scary human head, a long beard and frightening, shining eyes. They also mentioned human skulls and idols of cats. The consensus among historians is that all these figures are objects of Satanic worship. The demon Baphomet has ever since been an object of Satanic veneration. Details about Baphomet were later conveyed by Eliphas Levi; a 19th century Cabalist and occultist, whose drawings illustrate Baphomet as having a goat's head with two faces, and a winged human body that is female above the waist and whose lower half is male. Most Templars confessed that they didn't believe in Jesus because they held him to be "a false prophet"; that they had committed acts of

homosexuality during the admission ceremony as well as afterwards, that they worshipped idols and practiced Satanism. All these admissions entered the court records, and following their trial, most of the Templars were imprisoned. Much has been said about the Templars' homosexual practices, and it has been suggested that their insignia—of two riders on the back of one horse—represented this custom. In his novel *Foucault's Pendulum*, Umberto Eco extensively touches upon this aspect of the Templars.³⁹

After their confessions in the courts of the French King, the Pope himself interrogated 72 of the Templars. They were asked to swear an oath to tell the truth and then, proceed to confirm that their previous confessions were truthful: that they rejected belief in Jesus, that they spat on the holy cross and committed all the other acts of perversion they'd admitted to. They then knelt down and asked for forgiveness. The interrogation of the Templars culminated in the dissolution of their order. In 1314, Grand Master Jacques de Molay was burned at the stake. Templars who had managed to escape arrest by fleeing to other countries were pursued throughout the whole of Christendom. Other countries including Italy and Germany followed suit, arresting and interrogating the Templars they could apprehend. But for various reasons, some countries offered the Templars refuge. On November 10, 1307, England's Edward II wrote the Pope that he would not persecute the Templars and that in his country, they would remain safe. But two years later, after interrogating the Templars, the Pope issued a Papal Bull declaring that the Templars' "unspeakable wickednesses and abominable crimes of notorious heresy" had now "come to the knowledge of almost everyone." Upon reading it, King Edward agreed to prosecute the Templars. Finally, at the Council of Vienne in France in 1312, the Order of the Knights Templar was officially declared illegal in all of Europe, and captured Templars were punished. On March 22nd, Clement V issued a Papal Bull under the name of Vox in Excelso (A Voice from on High), in which the order was declared to be dissolved and—on paper, at least—its existence erased from the official records: ... Hark, a voice of the people from the city! a voice from the temple! the voice of the Lord rendering recompense to his enemies. The prophet is compelled to exclaim: Give them, Lord, a barren womb and dry breasts. Their worthlessness has been revealed because of their malice. Throw them out of your house, and let their roots dry up; let them not bear fruit, and let not this house be any more a stumbling block of bitterness or a thorn to hurt. . . . Indeed a little while ago, about the time of our election as supreme pontiff before we came to Lyons for our coronation, and afterwards, both there and elsewhere, we received secret intimations against the master, preceptors and other brothers of the order of Knights Templar of Jerusalem and also against the order itself. . . . [T]he holy Roman church honoured these brothers and the order with her special support, armed them with the sign of the cross against Christ's enemies, paid them the highest tributes of her respect, and strengthened them with various exemptions and privileges; and they experienced in many and various ways her help and that of all faithful Christians with repeated gifts of property. Therefore it was against the lord Jesus Christ himself that they fell into the sin of impious apostasy, the abominable vice of idolatry, the deadly crime of the Sodomites, and various heresies.⁴⁰

The Templars Go Underground

Liquidating the order of the Templars proved harder than anticipated. Even though Grand Master de Molay and many of his brothers had been eliminated, the order

survived, albeit by going underground. In France alone, there were more than 9,000 representatives to be found and across the countries of Europe, thousands of castles and other strongholds were still in their possession. According to historical sources of the time, the Inquisition had captured and punished only 620 out of a total of 2,000 knights. It has since been estimated that the knights' actual grand total was in the vicinity of 20,000, each of whom had a team of seven or eight Templars of other

professions at his service. A simple calculation based on eight Templars per knight gives us a total number of 160,000 organizing and carrying out the order's activities, including shipping and commerce. The Pope and the French King couldn't possibly locate and confiscate all of their property. This network of active members across Europe and along the Mediterranean coast, 160,000 strong, was the largest logistical force of their time. In terms of property, they could measure up to any king and this wealth assured their protection and safety. Despite the Papacy's claim that the Templars had been annihilated, not only did they survive the Inquisition by going underground, but they kept on being active, especially in England and in Northern Europe: [I]n the years following the loss of the Holy Land, the Templars had shown a continuing desire to create a 'state' of their own. . . [W]e are now left in no doubt that the Templars indeed manage, against all odds, to carve out their own nation. It wasn't some Eldorado in the New World, nor a hidden kingdom of the Prester John variety in darkest Africa. In fact the Templars remained absolutely central to everything that was happening in Europe, and what is more they were partly instrumental in the formation of the Western World as we know it today. The Templar State was, and is, Switzerland.⁴¹ In order to carry on their activities in safety, Templars escaping persecution and arrest in France and some other countries of Europe needed to regroup somewhere. They chose the confederation of cantons now known as Switzerland. The Templars' influence in Switzerland's formation and traditional makeup can still be easily recognized today. Alan Butler, a Mason and co-author of *The Warriors and the Bankers* is an expert on the subject of Templars. In a discussion forum held in 1999, of he said: There are a few important reasons why this [that the Knights Templar went to Switzerland after their liquidation] is likely to have been the case. For example: 1. The founding of the embryonic Switzerland conforms exactly to the period when the Templars were being persecuted in France. 2. Switzerland is just to the east of France and would have been particularly easy for fleeing Templar brothers from the whole region of France to get to. 3. In the history of the first Swiss Cantons, there are tales of white-coated knights mysteriously appearing and helping the locals to gain their independence against foreign domination. 4. The Templars were big in banking, farming and engineering (of an early type). These same aspects can be seen as inimical to the commencement and gradual evolution of the separate states that would eventually be Switzerland. 5. The famous Templar Cross is incorporated into the flags of many of the Swiss Cantons. As are other emblems, such as keys and lambs, that were particularly important to the Knights Templar.⁴² A significant number of Templars found refuge in Scotland, the only monarchy in 14th century Europe that didn't recognize the authority of the Catholic Church. Reorganizing under the protection of King Robert the Bruce, they soon found the perfect camouflage to hide their existence in the British Isles. Outside of the state and local governments, the Masons' Lodges were the most powerful organizations of the time, and the Templars first infiltrated them, then brought them under control. Lodges that had been professional bodies were turned into ideological and political organizations, which are now the Freemason Lodges of today. (This is what Masons

call "progress from operational to speculative Masonry") Another Masonic source estimates that between 30,000 and 40,000 Templars escaped the Inquisition by wearing Masons' cloth and mingling with them. So as to flee abroad, others obtained and used the "Laissez

passer" (free passage) given to Masons. Some Templars escaped to Spain and entered orders like the Caltrava, Alcantra, and Santiago del Espada, while others moved on to Portugal and they renamed themselves the Order of Christ. Still others fled to the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation and joined the Teuton knights, while another large group of Templars is known to have joined the Hospitalers. In England, the Templars were arrested and interrogated, but quickly released again. In still other countries, the Templars remained unmolested. The Templars seemed to have disappeared from the history until 1804; when Bernard-Raymond Fabré Palaprat became Grand Master. Truly interesting is an accidental discovery he made in 1814... In one of the bookstalls along the river Seine in Paris, he came upon a handwritten Bible of the Yuhanna translation in the Greek language. The Bible's last two chapters were missing; and in their place were notes divided by—and containing—numerous triangles. Examining these notes a bit closer, he realized that this was a document listing the Grand Masters of the Templars, beginning with the fifth Grand Master, Bertrand de Blanchefort (1154), through the 22nd, Jacques de Molay, the 23rd Larmenius of Jerusalem (1314) and then on to Grand Master Claudio Mateo Radix de Chevillon (1792). This document suggested that Jacques de Molay passed the title of Grand Master on to Larmenius of Jerusalem. It could be concluded that the Templars never ceased to exist. They live on today in the lodges of Freemasonry. In Foucault's Pendulum, Umberto Eco writes: After Beaujeu, the order has never ceased to exist, not for a moment, and after Aumont we find an uninterrupted sequence of Grand Masters of the Order down to our own time, and if the name and seat of the true Grand Master and the true Seneschals who rule the Order and guide its sublime labors remain a mystery today, an impenetrable secret known only to the truly enlightened, it is because the hour of the Order has not struck and the time is not ripe...⁴³ Many sources suggest that after the death of Jacques de Molay, survivors of the order planned a conspiracy. Supposedly, the Templars sought to bring down not only the Papacy, but the kingdoms that had declared them illegal and executed their Grand Master. This secret mission was handed down through generations of members, preserved and maintained by later organizations like the Illuminati and Freemasons. It's widely accepted that the Masons played a major role in the downfall of the French monarchy and the ensuing Revolution. When Louis XVI was guillotined in a public square in Paris, one of the onlookers shouted, "Jacques de Molay, you have been avenged!" We'll examine these events in greater detail in the coming chapters.

CHAPTER II FROM TEMPLARS TO FREEMASONRY

Even a quick examination of the Templars' history reveals the major transformations they underwent along the way. They first appear under a Christian façade, but soon enter a darker phase in which un-Christian and perverse philosophies and teachings show through. This doesn't happen all at once, however, and many events are responsible for the changes that occurred. These changes first came about during the Templars' sojourn in the Holy Land: During this phase, they became acquainted with the Cabala and learned the mysterious teachings of various other Jewish sects. The Assassins' mysticism and perverse practices were also incorporated into their system; and the emerging picture reveals that their Christian faith had given way to secret occultist rituals and Black Magic rites. Needless to say, their ideals and mission changed accordingly. The second cause of their transformation can be explained when we consider that the poor knights of the Templar Order acquired incredible wealth over a relatively short period of time. Given their hopes of attaining mystical powers over the material world through their newly-acquired dark beliefs and practices, it's no surprise that they began to set their sights on much grander goals. It's important to keep in mind that at that time, mystic and secretive beliefs played an important, even everyday, role in people's lives. Many were convinced that in order to gain wealth or power, one needed the help of dark powers, which could be compelled through Black Magic. Using what they considered "scientific" methods, people were investigating ways of contacting and controlling invisible powers-by means of secret codes, magic signs and formulas, and incantations. Poisons were prepared, the elixir of life was sought in experiments, and alchemists tried to create gold out of lesser metals. The Templars, seeking to rule this world with the help of the invisible one, came to worship Satan and called on him to dominate the powers of darkness. Many years of investigations by the courts of the King and the Pope documented the Templars' real ideals and proved that they were hiding behind a Christian façade. The order had gathered together the dark world's symbols, traditions and rituals, and founded a system in castles built for that purpose, leading the way for many later secret societies.

Templars' Confessions in Masonic Sources

As we saw in the last chapter, after going underground to escape the Inquisition, the Templars infiltrated various other sects and organizations. For their purposes, the masons' lodges were an ideal choice. Very quickly, they infiltrated them, brought them under their own control, adapted and altered them to accommodate the Templars' own philosophy, beliefs, and rituals. Since they had long been trained in the arts of architecture and masonry and had gained expertise in building castles and Gothic cathedrals, it was easy enough for the Templars to infiltrate and control the professional guilds of masons. Published reference works by Masons refer more

often to the symbolic features of their merger with the Templars, than to the darker aspects the Masons inherited from them. As one Turkish Masonic source writes:

The Grand Master's abacus [staff of office] is evidence for the connection between the Templars and Freemasons. This staff is a symbol representing Aaron's rod [mentioned in the Bible—a walking stick that sprouted leaves]. Its head is in the form of a temple, and along length of its body is carved measurements. This staff is a symbol of masonry. In France as well as in Jerusalem, Templars and Freemasons existed side by side and must have influenced each other's esoteric knowledge. An examination of architecture when the Gothic style came to be adopted reveals that the first European churches built deliberately in the new Gothic style began to be constructed after Jerusalem's conquest by the crusaders. With the Templars' Grand Master being also the Freemasons', it can be observed that the gradual progress from operational Masonry to speculative Masonry had already begun. The Cistercian monks, dealing with construction planning, had also been members of masons' lodges—an example to the clerical or monastic type of mason; In Paris, where all other professions had their own lodges, the masons shared quarters with the Templars, also showing the close relationship between the two organizations. The Papal decree of 1312 that liquidated the Templars' order also ended the Masons' right of free passage. Fearing even worse reversals, French Masons fled to Germany where, from then on, Gothic architecture became suddenly dominant. There, the Masons' lodges that received Templars escaping from France experienced the same gradual transformation as the British ones had—from operational to speculative Masonry. The first handwritten Masonic document of 1390 is titled *Regius*. Evidently, from its verse style and the fact that it speaks of Lords and Ladies during lodge meetings, masonry had already become speculative at those dates. It is also interesting that masonry, as old as human history, had no recorded charter preceding the *Regius* of 1390. Architecture and construction require advanced knowhow. Understandably, those who enjoyed this expertise weren't eager to put their knowledge on paper, where undesirables might obtain it. But another explanation for their having no written rules may be that they existed within an order just as secretive as they were. The Masons survived with their secrets, safe within this order, until the Templars were annihilated and abolished by the Inquisition. Then some of their secrets began to emerge. The Templars' rules were also the Masons' rules... As stated above, Masons and Templars shared quarters for two hundred years and they must have influenced each other to some extent. Masonic rituals are so similar that they must have been copied from the Templars. The Masons identified themselves with the Templars to a great extent, and what is viewed as original Masonic esotericism (secrecy) can be said to be a fairly important inheritance from the Templars. As stated at the very beginning of this research—and in a nutshell—the starting point of Freemasonry's royal art and initiatic-esoteric line belonged to the Templars.⁴⁴ Another Turkish Masonic source examines various aspects of the Templar-Mason connection: Le Forestier was researching the same subject [the link between the Templars and the Freemasons], and his conclusions seem undisputable today. The first document in which the Templars appear to be the forefathers of the Masons is a handwritten one from Strasbourg dated 1760 that makes no secret of their inclination to mystical knowledge. This document includes

the basis of the myth: It defines how the order secrets have been handed down from Jacques de Molay to contemporary Freemasonry. According to Le Forestier, the influence of the German Rosicrucians is unquestionable, but "their only purpose was to find a different interpretation by attributing to the masonic tradition and enigma a secretiveness and a deliberate covertness." On the other hand, the continuity of the

temple had a certain logic: "This continuity also brought the historical succession that it lacked and the established order that it did not have until then." As these examples show, the Templars never ceased to exist. Instead, they infiltrated the lodges of the weak and passive Masons, founded the Rosicrucians, organized and strengthened the order, and turned it into an effective tool. The Templars are not a branch or aspect of Masonry. Nor, as the Masons claim, are they "a little influenced by them." Masonry, along with its symbols, history and ideals, has become a den for the Templars, albeit under a different name. The Masons' history being linked to the Temple of Solomon, their basic use of Hiram's name as a symbol and the profession of stonemasonry, their use of mystic symbols from the Cabbala, their adoption of the Templars' organizational structure, their ceremonies, oath, dress and rules of promotion being prepared according to the Templars' rule—all prove that the Templars and Freemasons are one and the same. As mentioned the Templars encountered no difficulties in penetrating the workers guilds and in Germany, England and Portugal brought these lodges under their control and with this they had found an ideal front and a new, strong organization suitable to be adapted to their purposes.

Origins of the Scottish Rite

The Scottish rite of Freemasonry, oldest of the Masonic lodges employed to provide shelter for the Templars, was established in the 14th century by Templars seeking refuge in Scotland. It became an example for the rest to follow. The titles of the Scottish lodges' highest ranks continue to be identical to those given to the Knights Templar centuries before. Baron Karl von Hund, one of the most famous Masons of the 18th century who compiled research on the Templars, called the Scottish lodges a "restoration" of the Templars. According to him, eight prominent Templars fled first to Ireland and thence to Scotland, where they reorganized. The Templars were soon active again in many other countries, but Scotland became their new stronghold, where they based their operational headquarters. Baron Karl von Hund, the creator of the grade of Masonry known as the Rite of Strict Observance [was responsible for adding the Templar legend to the Craft]. Von Hund's Rite of Strict Observance spread throughout Europe including parts of Switzerland and even as far as Russia. [T]here is no doubt that the Order of the Temple, the highest of the Chivalric Orders in the York Rite, and the Knight Kadosh grade of the Scottish Rite owe a great allegiance to the legend first put forth in Von Hund's Rite of Strict Observance.⁴⁵ In the following centuries, Masonic Templarism branched out, expanding around the world to become a serious global power, while always remaining true to its Templar ideology: In 1717 "accepted Masons," working in operative lodges, decided to create for themselves an organization to provide them tolerance and freedom of thought within the religious, political and ideological environment of the 18th century. This organization's signs, traditions and ceremonies were derived from secret societies like Freemasonry, Templars and

Rosicrucians. Its philosophy of contemplation was inspired by the idea of free thought, originating in the 17th century and just beginning to spread in England in the 18th.⁴⁶ As the coming chapters will show, the true ambition hidden in this plan was to weaken and destroy religion, especially Christianity and Islam, by any means, creating a materialistic world order opposed to religion and religious organizations, in line with the Masonic ideals.

For Other Purposes: The Rosicrucians

The Rosicrucians, founded by the Templars as a sister organization to Freemasonry but serving a different purpose, were darker and more secretive. Even today, it cannot be ascertained where and when this organization was founded. It has circulated various documents and legends (such as the suggestion that their order first arose in the Mystery Schools of ancient Egypt), most of which contain little or no truth. The first authentic printed Rosicrucian documents, "Confessio Rosae Crusis" and "Fama Fraternitatis," appeared in Germany in 1614 and 1615, and contain important information about the order. According to these and some later documents, the Rosicrucians are an esoteric/secretive sect combining Egyptian Hermeticism, Gnosticism and Cabalistic lore. According to the German documents, they were founded by a German knight by the name of Christian Rosencreutz—though some experts suggest that his name is either false or merely symbolic. In this sect, the Templars felt more at home than in the Freemasons' lodges. The Templars accepted non-Templars into Masonic lodges, where they didn't practice the dark activities, like sorcery and alchemy, that they did in the Rosicrucian organization. Viewed from this perspective, Rosicrucian centers were an obvious place for the Templars to obtain the magical powers required to control material world. Therefore, these places became the research centers for the Templars. Interestingly, both the Freemasons and the Rosicrucians are of Templar descent and closely linked. In the Scottish rite, the title of the 18th degree is Rosicrucian Knight: The Rosy Cross derived from the Red Cross of the Templars. Mirabeau, who as a Freemason and an Illuminatus was in a position to discover many facts about the secret societies of Germany during his stay in the country, definitely asserts that "the Rose Croix Masons of the seventeenth century were only the ancient Order of the Templars secretly perpetuated."⁴⁷ Lecouteulx de Canteleu, an expert in the subject, clarifies further: In France the Knights [Templar] who left the Order, henceforth hidden, and so to speak unknown, formed the Order of the Flaming Star and of the Rose-Croix, which in the fifteenth century spread itself in Bohemia and Silesia. Every Grand officer of these Orders had all his life to wear the Red Cross and to repeat every day the prayer of St. Bernard.⁴⁸ Of all the Rosicrucian practitioners, the most famous and fervent was a man who's often been surmised to be the true author of Shakespeare's plays—Sir Francis Bacon, born in England in 1561. For his services to science and philosophy, he was knighted 1st Baron of Verulam and also Viscount of St Albans. He earned a reputation as Father of the Positive sciences for his philosophical and scientific writings, although none of them explains anything about his real identity. He was the Grand Master of the English Templars and in this capacity, the most senior Rosicrucian. He was an undisputed expert in the secret sciences, especially the Cabala, alchemy, and sorcery. The so-called scientific research he undertook had little to do with real science, but much with engaging mystic and supernatural forces to win power over nature. Bacon's New Atlantis; his 1626 utopia of a heaven on earth, is an adaptation of the Templars' ideal state. Bacon recounts the story of an imaginary people on an imaginary island called

Bensalem (which means "New Jerusalem")—an entirely scientific society, full of inventions, where the residents control even the winds. There's also the science house he calls Solomon's house, which is the Templars' starting point as well as their destination. In short, we have three sister organizations, operating under different names—Templars, Masons and

Rosicrucians—but with one single common aim. As the next chapter documents, they continued to increase in power and influence and actively tried to alter the face of the Earth to suit their purposes and still continue to do so, using every means at their disposal.

CHAPTER III TEMPLARS, REVOLUTIONS, MURDERS, AND THE MAFIA

Previous chapters have examined the Templars' secret history and how they became Masons in turn. Not that the Masons are identical copies of the Templars, but their intentions are the same—to replace monotheistic religions like Christianity and Islam with pagan belief systems and a materialistic worldview, aggressively targeting all religious organizations. This perverse teaching, painted in the colors of mysticism and occultism, was inherited from the Templars and forms the central belief of Masonry. It reveals itself in full to the upper echelons of the order, increasing in transparency bit by bit as one advances up the ladder. Masonry's global strategy is to impose this worldview on the masses by preparing the ground in a nice sort of way—or, in some cases, by ruthlessly eliminating any obstacles. From the 18th century on, Freemasonry's global strategy can be recognized behind the scenes of some ideological and political movements. In *The Occult Conspiracy*, English historian Michael Howard explains the cooperation of occultist secret societies like the Templars, Masons, Rosicrucians and Illuminati, whose long, ongoing struggle is to return the West to a pre-Christian paganism. The backcover of the book reads: It is a little known fact that for thousands of years secret societies and occult groups—guardians of ancient esoteric wisdom—have exercised a strong and often crucial influence on the destiny of nations. As Freemasons, Knights Templar, and Rosicrucians they affected the course of the French and American revolutions as well as the overthrow of the medieval order. . . . The Nazis, of course, but also the British security forces, the founding fathers of America, and the Vatican have all had a part—for good or ill—in the occult conspiracy. As quote points out, the fight against religion was not fought on one front only. It extended to a wide range of neo-pagan philosophical or political movements, the Illuminati who paved the way for the French Revolution, their Bavarian brothers who were trying to realize a pan-European socialist revolution, even to the fascists who founded the Nazi Party, and the Carbonari who prepared the ground for the Italian National Front. These organizations and movements had significant ideological differences, but they also shared common aims and methods, such as applying pressure to religious organizations and ousting religion, replacing it with a materialistic or naturalistic philosophy. To this end, Freemasonry has taken different shapes ever since the 18th century, recruiting members from all different political and philosophical movements and even penetrating the Vatican, seeking to manipulate this most powerful Christian institution according to Masonic ideologies. Another remarkable aspect of Masonry is that it's profit-orientated. Being a pagan (and therefore secular) organization, it's natural for its members to seek worldly gains rather than idealist goals. For this reason, while carrying out a seemingly philosophical struggle, Masonry has been a focus for both political and economic interests, just like the Templars—the most influential bankers of Europe while promoting the teachings of paganism at the same time. Following chapters will examine more closely this aspect of Masonry and the role it plays in the

organization's links to the Mafia. It's impossible to state exactly all that the Masons have done, for by their very nature, they are a secret

society. The only way of investigating their activities is to find the tip of the Masonic iceberg, exploring as much and as deeply as possible and then guessing at the rest of the picture. We'll begin this strategy by examining their impact on the past two hundred years.

The Illuminati's Plans for Revolution

The Templars' transformation into Masons also produced a number of byproducts, the Rosicrucians being one of these. Another is the Illuminati, one of the most talked about associations in the history of occultism. Founded in Bavaria, in southern Germany, it was also known as the Bavaria Illuminati, and its mission was to bring about a secular Masonic world order by revolutionary means. Its founder was Adam Weishaupt, a professor of law. Fiercely opposed to monarchies as well as to the Church, he listed the society's goals: 1. Abolition of monarchies and all ordered governments. 2. Abolition of private property and inheritances. 3. Abolition of patriotism and nationalism. 4. Abolition of family life and the institution of marriage, and the establishment of communal education of children. 5. Abolition of all religion.⁴⁹ The Encyclopedia of the Occult reveals that the Illuminati society, increasingly powerful in Germany, was practicing all Masonic rituals while preserving its own distinct identity. Weishaupt, the "Grand Master," stamped his authority on the hundreds of intellectuals who had joined the society, even though only a very few had access to Weishaupt himself. In 1780, the German Baron von Knigge, a Grand Master Mason, joined the society and increased the society's influence even further. Weishaupt and Knigge began preparations for a revolution aimed at bringing down both Church and Hapsburgs. In 1784, when the Bavarian government received intelligence about the planned revolution, the two Grand Masters quickly dissolved the Illuminati and joined ordinary Masonic lodges. As occultist historians acknowledge, some of the players of the French revolution like François-Noël Babeuf were of Illuminati origin.⁵⁰ The Illuminati was renowned for its uncompromising hostility towards religion. According to historian Michael Howard, Grand Master Weishaupt felt a "pathological hatred" against religion ⁵¹ that their planned revolution tried to realize. It never happened, but their "brothers" in France successfully carried out theirs—in the form of the French Revolution.

The French Revolution and Jacques de Molay's Revenge

You'll recall that in France, by a joint operation of the Catholic Church and the King, the Templars were arrested and their order subsequently liquidated. No doubt, one of the surviving Templars-turned-Masons' foremost ambitions was to weaken, even destroy, these two institutions. It is therefore very significant that the Masons played such a role in the birth of the French Revolution.

In *The Occult Conspiracy*, English historian Michael Howard points to the role played by the Masonic lodges in the preparation of the revolution. Its Grand Master, Savalette de Lage, founded one of these lodges, Friends of Truth, whose political philosophy drew up the framework for the social reforms that brought about the Revolution. Another important lodge connected with Savalette de Lage was the Neuf Soeurs (Nine Sisters) —one, which counted among its members names like Voltaire, Benjamin Franklin, John Paul Jones and was busy formulating alternative, secular systems of education and developing completely secular theories of history, literature, chemistry and medicine in opposition to the Church's. During the Revolution, the College of Apollo, founded by the lodge, was renamed the Lycée Republican. Books written within the short period of the Revolution testify to the important role Masonry had played. According to a claim widely circulated, the uprising that ignited the Revolution was planned at the Great Masonic Convention in Wilhelmsbad in 1782. One participant of this convention was Comte de Mirabeau, a leader of the revolutionaries. Upon returning to France, he immediately moved to implement in the lodges of France the decisions taken at the convention.⁵² Behind the scenes, Comte Cagliostro played a leading role in the Revolution. Born in Sicily, his real name was Joseph Balsamo. A member of the Illuminati and of the classic Masonic lodges in Germany, he was chosen to be one of the agents entrusted with the mission of disseminating radical and revolutionary ideas across Europe, thus preparing the ground for the eventual French Revolution. At the end of his tour he went to France and became a Jacobin. At the Grand Masonic Congress in 1785, he received new orders for preparing for the revolution. In the same year, Cagliostro was the focal point of the Diamond Necklace Affair, making the Queen the victim of a conspiracy devised to give the impression that she had a love affair with a Cardinal. Among the people, this irreparably dented the reputations of both the Church and the Monarchy. French novelist Alexandre Dumas confirmed that this scandal was arranged by the Masons.⁵³ In his capacity as the lodge's agent provocateur, Cagliostro was at the center of many events leading up to the Revolution. In a letter about the coming revolution that he wrote from London to a friend in Paris in 1787, he spoke about how the Bastille would be stormed, that the Church and monarchy would be abolished and replaced by a new religion based on the principles of reason.⁵⁴ Cagliostro was no fortune teller, so the information contained in his letter more likely came from his superiors in the lodge. As Michael Howard puts it, "From 1785 to 1789 several of the Masonic lodges in France were working full time to undermine the monarchy and the established government."⁵⁵ To a great extent, the French Revolution was the making of Freemasonry. The Masons saw the Revolution as a major milestone on the way to their desired new social order, as well as an act of revenge for what the French monarchy had done to the Templars. When an agitated mob marched on the Bastille, Comte Mirabeau shouted, "The idolatry of the monarchy has received a death blow from the sons and daughters of the Order of Templars."⁵⁶ The real aim of the storming of the Bastille wasn't to free a handful of prisoners from this strategically unimportant prison. It was made a symbol of the Revolution for a different reason: This was

where the Grand Master Jacques de Molay had been imprisoned for years before his execution in 1314! If one purpose of the Revolution was to avenge de Molay, then the Bastille was a priority target.⁵⁷ The role played by the Masons—or to be more precise, the neo-Templars—in realizing the Revolution was revealed in 1789, when the Inquisition arrested Cagliostro. He quickly confessed and told all he knew, hoping to save his life. One of the first things he told the Inquisition was that the Masons were planning revolutions right across Europe, intending to finish off what the Templars had begun: namely, to either destroy the Papacy or bring it under

their control. The methods used by the Masons and Illuminati to advance the revolution were equally ruthless and merciless. According to William T. Still in *The New World Order*: In the spring and summer of 1789, an artificial shortage of grain was created by Illuminist manipulations of the grain market. This produced a famine so intense that it brought the nation to the edge of revolt. One of the leading figures in this scheme was the Duc d'Orleans, the Grand Master of the Grand Orient lodges. The Illuminists claimed that their revolution would be "for the benefit of the bourgeoisie with the people as instruments ..." But in reality the conspirators held up the food supplies and blocked all reforms in the National Assembly to exacerbate the situation, and the populace starved... A panic was created simultaneously around the nation. Horsemen rode from town to town telling the citizens that "brigands" were approaching and that everyone should take up arms. Citizens were instructed that the conspirators were being harbored in the larger estates, the chateaux, and that by edict of the King all should be torched. The people, obedient to their monarch, complied. Soon, the flames of destruction were burning out of control. Anarchy continued to grow as citizens began raiding and pillaging—and not only for food.⁵⁸ With the beginning of the Revolution, the Jacobins, most of whom were also Masons, began a campaign of terror. Ten thousand royalists and church members were sent to the guillotine, drowning France in a sea of blood. The details of this time of terror and the Masonic messages they contained gives food for thought: Terror was rampant in the streets of Paris... Not surprisingly, in November 1793 a campaign against religion was inaugurated by a massacre of the priests all over France. In the cemeteries the cherished motto of the Illuminati, "Death is an eternal sleep," was posted by order of the Illuminatus "Anaxagoras" Chaumette. In the churches of Paris, Feasts of Reason were celebrated where women of easy morals were enthroned as goddesses. These were also known as "Eroterion," and were modeled on Weishaupt's plan to honor the god of Love...⁵⁹ ... Toward the end of 1793, the new revolutionary Republic found itself faced with hundreds of thousands of working men for whom it could not find employment. The revolutionary leaders embarked upon a fearful new project that was to be copied by tyrants ever after, called "depopulation." The idea was to reduce France's population of twenty-five million down to either eight or sixteen million, depending on which source you believe. Maximilien Robespierre believed depopulation to be "indispensable."⁶⁰ In France, members of the revolutionary committees in charge of the extermination toiled day and night over maps, calculating just how many heads must be sacrificed in each town. Fearful Revolutionary Tribunals tried to determine who would be killed, and a never-ending stream of victims marched to a variety of deaths. In Nantes, 500 children were killed in one butchery, and 144 poor women who sewed shirts for the army were thrown into the river.⁶¹ This terror was the product of hostility towards the monarchy and the church by the Masons and the Illuminati, the Templars' successors. In 1796, a book entitled *The Tomb of Jacques de Molay* was published in France, stating that the Revolution was realized by the Freemasons, whose origins are the Order of the Templars. The following year, a Jesuit priest, Father Bamuel published his *Memoires pour servir de l'histoire*

du Jacobinisme (Memoirs toward a History of Jacobinism), revealing that the Templars still lived on behind the front of Freemasonry and that the Revolution was of their making. The English civil war, he claims, was also a Templar conspiracy.⁶² In 1808, a public requiem was held in the Church of St Paul in Paris for Jacques de Molay. The Masons attending this service were dressed exactly like medieval Templars, performed some rituals over de Molay's bones and

personal belongings, then proceeded to march down the streets of Paris carrying the piebald banner of the Templars. 63 Five centuries after his execution by the King and the church in Paris, de Molay was remembered in Paris with a great ceremony. This time there was no king and no church, and blood was cheap.

An Inside Account of Jack the Ripper

In researching the Masons' political activities, especially their illegal ones, the infamous "Ripper" murders cannot be overlooked. These serial murders were committed in London in 1888. Over a span of nine weeks, five prostitutes were brutally murdered and their bodies disembowled, sometimes dismembered. These murders were never actually solved, and the murderer was never caught. Letters "signed" under the name of Jack the Ripper sent to the police force, shortly after these murders were committed, provided the murderer with his nickname. Who the person or people responsible for the murders is or are is still unknown. A number of people who have investigated this mystery concluded that the murders were politically motivated and that evidence suggests that Masons were to be found behind this conspiracy. Shortly before the time of the murders, the British monarchy was threatened with a great scandal. The eldest son of Queen Victoria, later King Edward VII was the Grand Master of the English Freemasons. Theoretically, his son, Eddy, would have become King if his grandmother and father had died before him, but Eddy had a private life incompatible with palace discipline. He was secretly visiting his painter friend Walter Sickert and his friends; and at one of these visits he met and began an affair with Annie Crook, a Catholic shopgirl of the lower classes. After some time she gave birth to his child, and they were secretly married. Sickert hired a nanny for Eddy and Annie's baby girl. Mary (or Marie) Kelly and Sickert were the witnesses at their secret wedding. At the time, Britain was in political turmoil. Had the public learned of Eddy's marriage to a woman like Annie, it could have had far-reaching repercussions, including the abolition of the monarchy. (It was against British law for the monarch to marry a Catholic, not to mention the problems posed by her working-class background.) Such a scandal was a serious threat to anyone with an active interest in the Britain's political and social systems, especially the Freemasons. When word of all this got to Queen Victoria, she demanded that, Lord Salisbury—her Prime Minister, and a renowned Mason—cover up this affair. Salisbury had Annie admitted to an asylum, where she was to die 32 years later. Her daughter later became Sickert's mistress and bore him a son. Marie Kelly, the witness at the marriage, became an alcoholic and prostitute and later shared this secret with three of her prostitute friends. When these women threatened to reveal Eddy's secret, Salisbury decided that this threat had to be ended and enlisted the help of Sir William Gull, physician to the Queen and a high-ranking Freemason; it was he who had declared Annie insane and sent her to the asylum. Considering his options, Gull concluded that these prostitutes constituted an unacceptable threat to the monarchy and Freemasonry and decided to kill them, one by one, according to

Masonic ritual. This is how the shocking "Ripper" murders came about. Prime Minister Salisbury, the other members of government and the police force provided the cover-up, as was expected of the Masonic brotherhood. They kept this secret and admired Gull for his great sense of "responsibility." Gull sent his driver Netley to persuade Sickert to help locate

and identify the four prostitutes. They were located, picked up, brutally murdered, and then their bodies mutilated and dismembered as prescribed in Masonic rites and finally disposed of at the chosen sites. This is the tally of Gull's murders: 1) On August 31, 1888, Mary Ann (Polly) Nichols was murdered by having her throat cut deeply, starting at one ear and circling her throat, and her abdomen was cut open. 2) On September 8 of the same year, Annie Chapman was murdered by having her throat cut. Her tongue protruded between her teeth and was swollen. Her abdomen was entirely opened; her small intestines were removed and placed above her right shoulder but still attached. Part of her stomach had been cut out and placed above her left shoulder. Her womb and portion of her vagina were removed. Her jewelry and coins were removed and two brass rings put on her toes. 3) On September 30, Elizabeth (Liz) Stride was murdered by having her throat cut, from one jaw to the other. 4) Also on September 30, Gull thought that he was killing his last and most important victim, Marie Kelly. Instead, by mistake he murdered Catherine (Kate) Eddowes, who went by the name of Mary Ann Kelly. Eddowes was murdered by cutting her throat from ear to ear. Her nose was completely cut off, part of her right ear was cut off, her face was mutilated with deep triangular cuts, her abdomen was completely cut open, and her intestines taken out and placed over her right shoulder. A two foot piece was removed and placed between her left arm and her body, and her left kidney and part of her womb removed and taken away. The police found a piece of her cut apron, soaked in blood, that fit the part still on her body. On the black wall above Eddowes' body was written in white chalk,: "The Juwes are The men That Will not be Blamed for nothing." 5) On November 9th, Gull and his partners in crime corrected their earlier mistake by murdering Mary Kelly in her flat. Her throat was cut with the tissue severed all around, whole surface of abdomen and thighs removed and abdominal cavity emptied. Her breasts were cut off, her arms mutilated and her face hacked to the extent that it could no longer be recognized. Her womb, kidneys and one of her breasts were placed under her head, the other breast by her right foot, liver between her feet, intestines by her right side, and spleen by her left side. Skin removed from her abdomen and thighs was on a bedside table. Part of one lung was missing, as was her heart. These events led researchers to the reality behind the scenes: Had these murders not been premeditated, it would have been risky to mutilate and dismember the victims' bodies. (Stride, the third victim, refused the carriage ride, so she was murdered quickly then and there, in the middle of the street.) The only explanation for these horrific acts of slaughter is that they were ritualistic murders, committed according to Masonic ritual. All of their aspects— cutting of the throats, removal of the heart, removal of intestines, triangular cuts, cutting off part of the victim's apron —can be found as prescribed punishments for traitors in the books read in the lodges of Masonry. The Ripper's next victim was dumped in the district known as Mitre Square. The mitre is a Mason's tool, and the Mitre Tavern is a well-known meeting point of the Masons. What does "Juwes" mean? Some have suggested that this is a spelling error for Jews—perhaps deliberate, intended to deflect suspicion onto some illiterate bigot. Instead, the circumstances and methods of the murders suggest that

they were committed by an educated individual who would hardly make such an ignorant spelling mistake. Others who have researched these murders suggest that the word juwes stands for Jubela, Jubelo and Jubelum, the three traitors who murdered Hiram Abiff, the legendary founder of Masonry. Another unexplained detail is that the writings on the wall that the police found when they discovered the

body were immediately washed off, by the order of the head of the police, Sir Charles Warren, who had never gone to a crime scene before. Incidentally, he was also a Mason. All of this suggests that this violence later to be called as the Jack the Ripper murders was actually part of a political conspiracy and committed by Masons. There is evidence that the Masons committed other murders including the famous murders of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Captain William Morgan, both of whom were thought to have committed treachery against the Freemasons. In 1890, news of the death of high-ranking Mason and murder suspect Dr. Gull were circulated, but actually, he lived on under the name of "Thomas Mason" as a patient in an insane asylum, and died many years later. Sickert the painter, who knew everything, told the true story to his son Joseph. Three quarters of a century later, Joseph related the events witnessed by his father to the journalist Stephen Knight, an expert on Masonry, who then published *Jack The Ripper: The Final Solution* in 1976. In the ensuing controversy surrounding the book, the Freemasons vehemently denied these allegations, despite all the evidence to the contrary. The subject made headlines again in 2001 when the Hollywood blockbuster *From Hell* was released. In this film, the Jack the Ripper murders are retold as a story based on historical evidence, and the Masonic conspiracy behind these murders is revealed in graphic detail. This story is probably only the tip of the iceberg. Masonry is a secret society and as such, never reveals its secrets to outsiders. It is difficult to glimpse their real activities past the smokescreens, behind which much worse is hidden. Leaks in the Jack the Ripper case only illustrate what horrors this secret society is capable of. Now we'll move on beyond the iceberg's visible tip for a better idea about the whole.

Propaganda Due (P-2)

In March 1981, two Milanese prosecutors were investigating a fake kidnapping incident from 1979, in which an international banker disappeared. The Sicilian-born Michele Sindona was a financial adviser to the Vatican and thought to have links to the Mafia. The prosecutors made an interesting discovery: While on the run from the authorities and hiding in Palermo, Sindona suddenly traveled to Arezzo, a town 600 miles north, where he met with the textile manufacturer Licio Gelli. If a personality like Sindona leaves the safety of his hiding place to meet Licio Gelli, then this Gelli must be an important person indeed. For this reason, prosecutors ordered the investigation of Gelli. On March 17th, the investigating police officer searched this industrialist's office and found a list containing the names of 962 people. No ordinary list, it gave the names of the members of the Propaganda Due Masonic lodge—P2, for short—of which Gelli was the Grand Master. What was really surprising was, the list contained the names of some of the most important persons in Italy: three ministers, 43 members of parliament, 43 generals, eight admirals, secret service chiefs, hundreds of top bureaucrats and diplomats, the police commanders of Italy's four largest cities, industrialists and financiers, the editor and

publisher of the newspaper Corriere della Sera and 24 other journalists and TV personalities. Michele Sindona was also listed. Another member of the lodge was banker Roberto Calvi, later to be found hanged from the Blackfriars Bridge in London, in the Masonic style of ritual execution, and only a few hundred yards away from a church that in the Middle Ages had once belonged to the Templars.

As far as could be understood, every member of the P-2 had sworn loyalty to Gelli and to do anything that he might ask of them. These 962 members were grouped into 17 cells, each with its own Master. Gelli ran the lodge with such secrecy and professionalism that even the members themselves knew no one outside their own cells; only the Grand Master of each cell knew all its members. But who was Licio Gelli, the Grand Master of the lodge? He was a militant who had fought in the Spanish Civil War on the side of the fascists, and had been a fervent supporter of Mussolini. Later, after the war, when his involvement in the torture of Italian partisans was discovered, he was forced to flee the country for Argentina, where he became a close friend of the president Juan Perón. And now here he was, the Grand Master of the P-2 Masonic lodge. These revelations shook Italy to the core. The investigation further revealed that the lodge was participating in the government affairs and was central to Italy's endless corruption scandals. With the aid of their Masonic cardinal brothers, the lodge had turned the Vatican into a money-laundering institution and the lodge was also the strongest branch of the legendary Italian Mafia. The P-2 was behind many assassinations, acts of terror like bombings and was closely linked to the contra-guerilla cell Gladio. For a long time the P-2 had been channeling CIA and Vatican funds to fascist groups in Europe and Latin America. Lodge Member Michele Sindona was later arrested on charges of the murder of an Italian lawyer, and died in prison after drinking a cup of poisoned coffee. He was not only the treasurer of the P-2, but also the investment advisor to the Vatican. Sindona was responsible for selling the Vatican's Italian assets and investing the proceeds in the US. He was working for the Mafia as well as the CIA and had previously channeled funds to his Yugoslavian "friends" and to the Greek military junta that came to power in 1967. The parliamentary commission investigating this affair discovered that the P-2 was an international organization influential in everything from arms trading to crude oil prices. Licio Gelli, the dark name of banking scandals and the secret and illegal P-2 Lodge, received a prison sentence of 12 years.

The P-2's Secret Lodge and Strange Rituals

The P-2's political activities and murders make horrific reading, but its organizational structure and ritualistic practices are equally so. This far-from-ordinary lodge had been building in great secrecy and every member was required to maintain this secrecy when coming or going. In his book *St. Peter's Banker*, Italian journalist Luigi Difonzo explains the P2, based on former members' confessions, with its activities of money laundering and links to the Mafia. About the lodge's location, he has the following to say: In interviews two former members have described the oaths they took. They were taken to a compound, a Villa hidden in the Apennines in the region of Tuscany. A 12-foot wall seals the neatly manicured grounds from view. In the centre of the main courtyard stands a fountain shaped like a tree trunk. The cobra-like sculpture, with its inflated hood, watches over the

compound in a protective posture, as if ready to strike. The cobra's head is twice the size of a human skull. It has a single eye, which is blue during daylight and red after nightfall, for inside the cobra's hood and behind its eye there is a closed-circuit camera that follows a visitor, invited or unwelcome, as the fountain rotates in the direction the intruder moves. The fountain-camera is controlled from a room within the villa where eight monitors, each with five stations, cover eight guest rooms, patio, pool, dining

room, sitting room, and party room. Approximately ten cameras, including the one inside the cobra, have infrared lenses. All of the exterior cameras are camouflaged by the landscaping. The Villa's interior is magnificent. Every room has marble floors and is furnished with antiques. Observing the high ceilings, the finely crafted gold-leaf moldings, the portraits of Mussolini, Hitler, and Peron, the visitor experiences a feeling, a sort of living, breathing odor of danger and power that penetrates the soul and cell by cell contaminates the mind with fear. The year is 1964.⁶⁴ In this lodge were conducted hair-raising rituals: In the meeting room, twelve members of P-2, dressed in satin ceremonial robes and wearing black hoods reminiscent of those worn by members of the Ku Klux Klan, sit in leather chairs at a red marble conference table. They are the elite members of the Wolf Pack, Gelli's disciples—some say his execution squad. None of the black-clad disciples knows the identity of any of his eleven brothers. Grand Master Licio Gelli is the only one who bares his face. Two Masons stand post at the entrance to the meeting room. Their faces are also covered... They are ... personal bodyguards, some say his death squad—former Mussolini Fascists whose job is to protect the Grand Master and kill any of the twelve disciples who betray the cause "Il Momento di Passare all"(The Time for Real Action)... Each bodyguard carries an axe; they also bear automatic weapons.⁶⁵ In the admission ceremonies for the initiates to the P-2, which is organized like the Mafia, one could witness the lodge's merciless methods and political ideals: The ceremony begins. There is an uneven series of knocks at the door. "Your Worshipful," a disciple announces, "a pagan wishes to enter." The Grand Master strikes the table with one blow with his axe. Immediately the oversized door swings open and slams against the inner wall. Two guards escort the initiate to the center of the room where he faces the twelve Masons with his back to the grand master's throne. The Pagan, as he is called, is wearing a plain black hood and a blindfold. His identity is known to Grand Master Licio Gelli, but to no one else. He is asked one question by each of the disciples, but the Pagan does not answer, instead, one of the guards speaks for him. Once all the ritual questions about purpose and belief and reason for wanting to become a member of Propaganda Due are answered, the Pagan is turned to face the Grand Master, who asks, "Pagan, are you prepared to die in order to preserve the secrets of Propaganda Due?" The initiate now answers for himself: "I am." "Do you have the necessary quality of contempt for danger?" "I do." "Do you have the necessary quality of courage?" "I am courageous...". "And Pagan, are you prepared to fight and perhaps face shame, even death, so that we who may become your Brothers may destroy this Government and form a Presidency?" "I am." Then the blindfold is removed. It takes a moment for the initiate's vision to clear, because this is the first time since entering the compound that he has been allowed to see light. The blindfold serves a purpose other than security. It also represents the power of P-2: "Without membership one is blind; with the help of the order, however, the way is clear."⁶⁶

P-2 and Mossad

Along with the darker sides of the P-2, the lodge had also an Israeli connection. The July 1981 issue of The Middle East International Journal established that the P-2 had close links with Israel, especially with Mossad, and that the Jewish community in Italy played an important role in this connection. In later years, Carlo

de Beneditti, the second richest man in Italy, was discovered to have had a close relationship with the P-2 Lodge and also very good contacts with the Jewish communities in Europe and the US. The foremost names who had contact with the P-2 are Henry Kissinger, Edmond de Rothschild, and David Rockefeller. The Italian journal Panorama wrote that Ellie de Rothschild arranged the necessary amount of money for the Masonic hanging of banker Roberto Calvi, who either had or was about to "talk" against the P-2.⁶⁷ Henry Kissinger was directly involved at the top of the lodge. In Papa, Mafya, Agca (The Pope, The Mafia and Agca), Ugur Mumcu, a prominent Turkish journalist wrote, "Henry Kissinger is a member of the Monte Carlo lodge, which is the P-2's 'board of directors,' also known as the Monte Carlo Committee. All the members of this lodge are Grand Masters and Masons of the 33rd degree."⁶⁸ The alliance between the P-2 and Israel or to be more specific, with Mossad is illustrated by ex-Mossad agent Victor Ostrovsky in The Other Side of Deception, published in 1994 after his other greatly controversial book, By Way of Deception. Ostrovsky writes that Licio Gelli, P-2's Grand Master, was the ally of Mossad in Italy and that Gelli also had a close relationship with the Gladio contra-guerilla group, allied with Mossad and that Mossad used this Gelli-Gladio alliances for its arms dealings with Italy in the 1980s.⁶⁹

After P-2 – P-3?

The P-2 scandal had educational value for Italy as well as other countries. Now, there was no doubt that the Masons could become an invisible government in any country and, like a Mafia organization, empty the coffers of the state. Quickly enough, Freemasonry lodges around the world were distancing themselves from the P-2 by claiming, for example, that the P-2 Lodge was an exception and not a true Freemason's lodge, that it had developed its own organization independent of Masonry, and so forth. All these statements were just attempts at erecting smoke screens around Masonry's true nature. English journalist and writer Martin Short states that P-2 was a regular lodge, founded and run according to the rules by which Masonic lodges abide. With plenty of details, he reveals the close relationship between the P-2 and the English Grand Lodge. Short states that P-2 was different from other lodges only in that it was to remain a secret lodge. In 1977 Lino Salvini, Grand Master of the Italian Grand Lodge, instructed Gelli to continue its work—albeit in secrecy and isolated from the other Italian lodges.⁷⁰ After the P-2 scandal exposing the Masons' links to the Mafia, their relationship continued. A legendary politician like Giulio Andreotti, often addressed as "the Godfather," had also been exposed as a Mason. The list continues, with the Social Democrat Prime Minister Bettino Craxi's connection to the Masons being revealed, along with many more at lesser levels. All this was evidence enough that the P-2 was no exception, and for this reason, the Italian media discussed whether there might be a P-3. In the last days of 1993, the Italian police caught the Mafia's boss of bosses, the legendary Salvatore Riina. He too was exposed as a Mason. The newspaper La Stampa printed

excerpts of Riina's confessions in which he stated that many Italian Mafia bosses were Masons like him—but because many judges were Masons too, the legal system didn't not prevent judges from aiding their Mafia brothers instead of prosecuting them. After this revelation, Italy's highest court ruled it illegal for judges or prosecutors to be—or become —Masons. After all these Mason-connected corruption scandals came an attempt to clean up Italy's political and

legal institutions—Operation Clean Hands, which didn't go very far either: After this, media mogul Silvio Berlusconi of his Forza Italia party was elected Prime Minister. He too had been a P-2 member and had some interesting connections with Israel.⁷¹ In short, the P-2 is not an "exception" or "accident" as the Masons say in an attempt to cover up the scandal. On the contrary, they need these "secret and isolated lodges" to accommodate the top government officials in a country. What is an "exception" or "accident" is that the P-2 was exposed. Evidence to this effect came also at the middle of 1990's from England. Lord Nolan was appointed by the Prime Minister John Major in 1994 to lead a Committee on Standards in Public Life to investigate allegations of corruption in British politics. Realizing that Masons were at the center of the allegations, he decided to focus on their involvement in politics. The newspaper Independent's 21st January 1995 issue gave it a headline article, launching an inquiry into Freemasonry for the first time in British history. It reported that the Masons were an organization 300,000 strong, represented at the top of the police force, in the government, the House of Lords, the high court, banking, the boardrooms of the largest companies and every part of the establishment, even the Royal family! Nolan's committee also established that, just as with the P-2 in Italy, along with the ordinary English lodges there were more secretive ones. Some were very selective about where they recruited their members. One of these lodges, for example, was recruiting only from the Ministry of Defense, among high-ranking officers, and the senior management of the arms industry. A similar scandal hit the front pages in France. For years the corruption of Roland Dumas, former French Foreign Minister and Mason, had been covered up by other high-ranking government officials who were also Masons. Le Point, the French weekly magazine, exposed other cases of corruption, revealing how the Masons covered up for each other in their illegal activities. Clearly, the P-2 scandal in Italy wasn't a series of coincidences. Considering other scandals in Britain and France, it can safely be said that these weren't isolated cases. This leads to the question of whether every country has its own P-2s.

CHAPTER IV FREEMASONS (OR TEMPLARS) IN TURKEY

The roots of Turkish Masonry go back to the middle of the 19th century. Sources on the subject speak of five phases of Masonry in Turkey, the first of these being the period before 1909. A number of lodges were founded during the Ottoman Empire, but could not get properly organized, since Sultan Abdulhamid systematically prevented this. At this stage, the lodges depended on lodges outside of the Empire, who also provided their management. The second period, between 1909 and 1935, began with the March 31 uprising (April 13, 1909 corresponds to March 31, 1325 in the Muslim calendar) that removed Abdulhamid from the throne and let the Masons become the ruling political power. To reduce opposition from the people, the local lodges, hitherto run from abroad, took on a national identity for the first time in Masonic history. At the beginning of this period, the Committee of Union and Progress (Ittihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti) controlled by Masons came to the forefront. The third period runs between 1935 and 1948. In 1935, president Ataturk ordered the closure of the lodges, on the grounds that they were destructive institutions run from abroad, and so Masonry entered a period of hibernation. But during these 13 years of "sleep," the Masons continued with their activities in the Halkevi Community Centers. In the years between 1948 and 1966, Masonic activities intensified, but in two distinct branches: the Scottish and the French rites. The final period began in 1966 and leads up to the present day, wherein the two branches are increasingly more active and better organized.

The Tanzimat Reforms, Mustafa Reshid Pasha, and August Comte

The Masons' first real impact in the Ottoman Empire was felt in 1839, during the Tanzimat ("reorganization" in Turkish) era (1839-1876). Although there had been lodges founded well before that, they were neither effective nor well organized. All this changed, however, with Mustafa Reshid Pasha, Masonry's shining star and known as the architect of the Reform Edict (Tanzimat Fermani). According to Masonic sources, Mustafa Reshid Pasha made first contact with Masonry in London and was admitted into the order in the 1830s, though which lodge actually admitted him is not known. Of Mustafa Reshid Pasha, the Turkish Masonic journal Mimar Sinan has this to say: "If, on your path, you have to fight forces more powerful than yourself, you must fight their thoughts relentlessly. If you are positive that your path is the true one, you must proceed, even if you are alone. Never hide your deeds." Was this piece of ritual advice not the Great Mustafa Reshid Pasha's and other brothers' leading principle? Did he not heed this advice, when he took the appeal for his own execution to the Sultan or when he read out the Imperial Edict (Hatti Humayun), standing bolt upright, self-confident and self-conscious, knowing what he was doing and wanted to do and prepared to die for this if necessary? We bow before the

memory of the Great Mustafa Pasha, who had been the leading light for the people, and in remembrance of his courageous reading of the Hatti Humayun, 135 years ago in the Gulhane Square.⁷² In another issue of the journal: Great Mustafa Pasha, shaped by Masonry, is a monument of love of country and people. He rests in the loyal bosom of history, content in having received the light of the temple and having lit the way for his homeland.⁷³ But what are the meaning and the consequence of the Reform Edict, of which Mustafa Reshid Pasha was the architect? Its positive as well as negative consequences have been argued over for more than 150 years. True, the Reform Edict's starting point was the Ottoman Empire's desperate need for reform, since in terms of development it had fallen way behind the Western world. The Reform Edict didn't only kick-start the process of reform, but also imported the materialistic world view then dominant in Europe. When this subject is examined closely, we see that the European Masons, via the lodge, were bombarding Mustafa Reshid Pasha and other leaders of the Tanzimat movement with propaganda for the materialistic philosophy. In this respect, the famous atheist philosopher August Comte, who was close to Mustafa Reshid Pasha, played an important role. Comte tried to influence the Pasha with his anti-religious positivism and wrote him countless letters filled with atheist, anti-religious content. At one point, the Sultan sacked Mustafa Reshid Pasha as chief minister because of the relationship between the two. One of Comte's letters reads as follows: Since you have been removed from the office you held so successfully, the free time you now have on hand gives rise to my hope that you will invest time into considering my positivist philosophy, which I present to you in general terms, and the universal positivist political system it will create... For many hundreds of years the West as well as the East have searched for a universal, unifying religion. Faith in one religion engages the human emotions and gets a hold on them, whereas experience and reason prove that such hope is unfounded. While progressing from Islam to Positivism, without any need for a metaphysical transformation period, Muslims will soon understand the real maintainers of such elevated thoughts as peculiar to their great Prophet who will systematize religious faith and humanitarian understanding with universal victory. If the Muslims could be distanced from such an unnecessary sense of political unity, they won't feel sad about the Ottoman Empire's inevitable collapse. On the contrary, they will see that their temporary rule actually limited their society's social development. As for the Ottoman chiefs still engaged with the occupation of their lands by lesser nations and the like—once the inevitable takes place, their imaginary fears will disappear and the people will be freed. The political implication of accepting humanitarianism instead of a universally believed God will bring a sense of unity among the people, which Islam's core philosophy so desires. Once the Ottomans replace their faith in God with Humanism, this goal will quickly be attained.⁷⁴ In his letters to Mustafa Reshid Pasha, Comte recommended that the Ottomans should replace their Islamic religion with the "religion" of positivism and drop their dream of political unity with other Muslim peoples. Comte also recommends replacing God with Humanism—in reality, the same as the Masonic ideology of secular humanism. (For detailed information about secular humanism,

see Global Freemasonry by Harun Yahya, Global Publishing, Istanbul, 2003) It's easy to recognize the irrationality of Comte's advice. God created all people and therefore, they are answerable to Him. The suggestion to drop the Creator in favor of Humanism suggests that people adopt one another

as their life purpose. Throughout history, the prophets have fought misleading, misguided philosophies like this. Shu'ayb (peace be upon him) said to his nation (Qur'an, 11: 92): "... My people! Do you esteem my clan more than you do God? You have made Him into something to cast disdainfully behind your backs! But my Lord encompasses everything that you do!" In reality, Comte and all other leading 19th-century atheists (Darwin, Marx, Freud, Durkheim, etc.) did nothing more than rework old, mistaken beliefs and ideas and present them as new and progressive. To a great extent, Masonry is responsible for the dissemination and acceptance of these beliefs and ideas across Europe and from there, around the globe. Freemasonry has adopted positivism like a religion along with other materialistic philosophies and begun a systematic campaign to impose them first on the intellectual élite, then on the masses in general. Masonry's activities in the Ottoman Empire and later in Turkey must be considered from this perspective. The lodge acted like a propaganda machine, making the fight against religion its mission. When different phases of Masonry's history in Turkey are examined, an interesting picture emerges.

Young Turks, the Committee of Union and Progress, and Freemasons

After the Tanzimat period came the first Constitutional Period (I. Mesrutiyet) (1876-1878). On February 14, 1878, Abdulhamid sacked the Constitutional government and ruled the nation directly until the second constitutional government was declared in 1908. Some historians have therefore chosen to portray this era as a dictatorship. The truth is different, however. Sultan Abdulhamid inherited an Empire at the verge of collapse. With skill and balanced diplomacy, he not only kept the Empire alive, but prevented warfare and bloodshed between 1876 and 1909. He reformed many areas of the Ottoman government, including the institutions of justice, education, and the military. During his reign, the Dar-ulFunun (The House of Sciences) was established and later became the University of Istanbul. His government built the foundations of the railway system and the infrastructure of telegraphy. The generation that was to establish the Republic of Turkey, including Atatürk, received its education in the modern schools Abdulhamid had built. Claims that his regime was "bloody" are baseless and unfair, considering that not even his fiercest enemies were sentenced to death, but instead were exiled. The real reason for the hostile propaganda against him was that he was a devout Muslim, ruling his Empire according to Islamic morality. The opposition facing him during the 40-odd years of his rule was the Young Turks. Theirs was not a united front with a common ideology—some of them actually held religious values. Most Young Turks believed that the way forward for the Ottoman Empire was to adopt Western philosophies and systems. Most were well-meaning and hoped to save the Empire but history was to prove their ideology faulty soon enough. The Young Turks did succeed in bringing down Abdulhamid's government, but their own lasted only ten years, during which time the Empire disintegrated. One fraction within this movement was

the Union and Progress Party. They were in charge from 1910 onwards and became the Empire's ruling party in 1913. But simply opposing Abdulhamid was not sufficient to improve the situation in the Empire. Masonic elements within the Young Turks' movement and the Union party were responsible for their wholesale

adoption of Western philosophies, ideologies and systems. An article in the Paris daily *Le Temps* on August 20, 1908, based on an interview with Mr. Refik and Colonel Niyazi—two Union party members in Thessalonica—reveals the extent of the Masons' influence on the movement: The journalist conducting the interview asked the extent of the aid received from Masonry between 1905 and 1908. Their answer to this question is interesting. "Masonry, especially Italian Masonry, supported us. Many lodges in Thessalonica were active. In practice, the Italian lodges helped the Committee of Union and Progress and protected us. Because most of us were Masons, we met in the lodges, and this was where we were trying to recruit. Istanbul became suspicious and managed to introduce a few agents into the lodges."⁷⁵ After the declaration of the second Mesrutiyet (Parliamentary Monarchy), a British MP and the founder of the Balkans Committee, Roden Buxton visited Istanbul and recorded that the initiation ceremony of the committee of Union and Progress was an identical copy of the Freemasons': Candidates who wanted to be admitted to the Committee of Union and Progress were informed that they were about to be told a great secret. After their trustworthiness was established, they were made to swear an oath. Then the initiation stage began. The candidates were blindfolded and taken to another chamber, where the blindfolds were removed. The candidates found themselves in semi-darkness, facing three hooded strangers. Here they were required to put their hand on a sword and swear an oath of absolute secrecy and to kill anyone who committed treachery against the party, even if it were a friend or relative.⁷⁶ Prominent Turkish journalist İlhami Soysal writes about the relationship between Masonry and the Committee of Union and Progress: The Macedonia Rizorta lodge and the Veritas [Latin for "Truth"] lodge in Thessalonica where the Turks were a minority to begin with, gradually became the meeting and recruiting center of the Committee of Union and Progress, then eventually came under their control. The leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress—Talat Pasha, Mithat Sukru Bleda, Kazim Pasha, Manyasizade Refik, Kazim Nami Duru, Colonel (later MP for Mus) Naki, Drama Gendarmerie Commander Huseyin Muhittin, Financial Controller Ferit Aseo—belonged to the Macedonian Rizorta lodge. Emmanuel Karasu, Cemal Pasha, Faik Suleyman Pasha, Ismail Canbolat, Hodja Fehmi Efendi, Mustafa Dogan, Mustafa Necip (later shot dead during the raid on the Babiali), were all illuminated at the Veritas lodge. Talat Pasha, who was to become Prime Minister, and Colonel Naki were active in both the Veritas and Macedonian Rizorta lodges.⁷⁷ While these activities in Thessalonica continued, Abdulhamid was anticipating great danger from the Masons and tried to contain the Masonic lodges. He had organized a network of informers to report the activities taking place in the lodges. Grand Master Kemalettin Apak relates the events of that period, from his perspective: Sultan Abdulhamid II was afraid of the Masons. He systematically persecuted and tried to contain the Freemasons, nor was he wrong in being afraid of Masonry. Honorary Mason Sultan Murad V passed away in 1904, relieving Abdulhamid of one of his nightmares. A few years later a new movement, in which the Rumelia Masons played an important part, brought freedom and light to the nation's firmament. Those who forced Abdulhamid to accept and declare the Second

Parliamentary Monarchy in 1908 were all Masons ... Abdulhamid wasn't persecuting Masonry in Istanbul and leaving us alone here [in Thessalonica]. His agents were at work here [Rumelia] too. Especially in Thessalonica, the undercover officers were watching the lodges and recording the people's comings and goings. But his influence and might weren't the same here as in Istanbul, because Thessalonica, Kosovo and Manastir were under the foreigners' control.⁷⁸

In short, Masonry played an active role in the last half century of the Ottoman Empire and the conflict between Abdulhamid and the Young Turks. The Masons, siding with the Young Turks, became powerful within the movement. Masonry was a serious influence in politics and, to the detriment of Turkish people, they imposed their European brothers' materialistic philosophies as a lasting influence. We will examine one example to see the extent of Masonry's materialistic philosophy.

Abdullah Cevdet: An Anti-Religious Mason of the Ottoman Era

Abdullah Cevdet, one of the founders of the Committee of Union and Progress, was an early leader of Turkey's anti-religion movement. He had formulated a worldview that he hoped would break the link between society and religion. According to him, any modern society should be founded on an anti-religious culture. Since Islam was preventing progress, it should be excluded from social life. Abdullah Cevdet made his name in the founding of the Union and Progress Committee. He had been greatly influenced by the views of Mason Ibrahim Temo, a fellow founder of the Committee and took his first steps towards materialism by reading the books that Temo gave him: Felix Isnard's *Spiritualism and Materialism* and Louis Büchner's *Force et Matière* (Force and Matter). Later he confronted strong opposition from religious circles for his article on biological materialism.⁷⁹ Darwin's theory of evolution also made a great impact on Cevdet, and he was also influenced by eugenics, popular with European racists of the time. The *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* (Turkish Encyclopedia from the Reform Edict Period to the Republic) writes the following about Cevdet's views: Another aspect of Abdullah Cevdet's biological materialism is its theoretical clarity in the creation of a social élite. Ernest Haeckel's theory on inequality in the evolutionary process and Darwin's natural selection theory, made Abdullah Cevdet believe it was possible for some men to develop to a higher level of intellect by means of education, and that social progress can be achieved only under the leadership of such an élite.⁸⁰ In 1903, Cevdet began *İctihat* magazine, in which he published articles against Islam and the Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace). In February 1909, with the aid of Masonry, he established the *İctihat Evi* Publishing House. But the books Cevdet published were received by the public with such hostility that first the publishing house, then the magazine *İctihat* were forced to close down. His subsequent prosecution and sentencing made the newspapers with words like these: "A warning to the transgressors of our religion: For denigrating the religion of Mohammed in one of his articles, Abdullah Cevdet has been sentenced to two years' imprisonment."⁸¹ Soon after the closure of *İctihat*, he began to publish the *Istihat*, *Ishad* and *Cehd* magazines and also worked as the editor of the *Hak* and *İkdam* newspapers. On numerous occasions, he received warnings from the Sheikh ul-Islam, the the Ottoman Empire's highest religious authority, for his anti-Islamic articles. He aided the process in which Abdulhamid was removed from the throne but, fearing for his safety, didn't return to Turkey for many years. When he finally

did, he was appointed to the office of Director for General Health. But here too, his views managed to offend. When he began to issue certificates permitting prostitution, members of society protested, and he had to be relieved of his post.

Abdullah Cevdet has written and translated 70 books. His strongest anti-religion propaganda is contained in one he translated from the French, full of 19th-century atheist theories and titled Akli Selim (Common Sense). In the foreword to this book, Abdullah Cevdet worships humanist "idols" like freedom and virtue, writing that: Akli Selim (common sense) is a holy rebellion, and the flames of its love are burning in our hearts and can never be extinguished. Prometheus is not on the mountains of the Caucasus, but in our hearts, and his chains are broken. Our god is virtue, but virtue is not possible without freedom. The most valued freedoms are the freedoms of thought and faith. The subject of this translation is service and worship-service and worship to the god of freedom.⁸² Abdullah Cevdet was studying the French materialists and was greatly influenced by Gustave Le Bon. In line with his master's theories, he developed a project titled "Project to the effect of improving the Turkish race by use of breeding males." It is interesting to observe that Cevdet, who came from a devoutly religious family, spent his life fighting religion. He was the most radical representative of a generation poisoned with Masonic teachings and upon his death, he didn't receive the traditional Islamic funeral ceremony. Historian Konyali Ibrahim Hakki recounts Cevdet's funeral: Abdullah Cevdet said that he did not believe in God. He was strongly opposed to the Islamic-Arabic letters [and] was continually writing or speaking against Islamic values. His coffin was brought to the Hagia Sophia Mosque, where the Imams refused to give him an Islamic funeral. Eventually, his coffin was removed by the borough council.⁸³

Halkevi Community Centers, Village Institutes, and the Imposition of Masonic Teachings on the Masses

After the founding of the Turkish Republic, the Masons penetrated the CHP (Republican People's Party) and began to get organized within. In 1935 Ataturk was informed of these activities and ordered the closure of the lodges, but the Masons moved into organizations like the Halkevi Community Centers and the Village Institutes. And their philosophy lived on. The establishment of the Halkevi Community Centers was trusted to Dr. Resit Galip, the Mason chief judge of the Ankara Istiklal Court that had sent many innocent men to the gallows. In one of his speeches before the Turkish parliament (TBMM) about the launching of Halkevi Community Centers, he claimed that Islam could not be the guiding principle for Turkey. As Dr. Anil Cecen, the owner of the Halkevleri journal relates: Dr. Resid Galip said that the national goal of the Turkish nation had now changed, Islamism and Ottomanism would no longer be the national goals, the Turkish nation's new goal was to take the place it deserved towards being a part of the modern civilization; that after the drought in Middle Asia, Turks in all parts of the world were seeking to attain civilization; and that in certain periods of history, the Turks had established the highest levels of science and civilization...⁸⁴ Another immediately recognizable name involved with the Halkevi Centers is Sukru Kaya, a Mason and Minister of the Interior at the time. In the foreword to Behcet Kemal Caglar's book 1935 Halkevi,

Kaya wrote: To understand the Halkevi Centers' cultural, social and economic benefits in such a short time, it is enough to study the statistics recorded in this book. The Halkevi Centers cater to the educational, social

developmental and entertainment needs of society. Every citizen there teaches what he knows and learns what he doesn't. Every Turkish intellectual owes his knowledge to the nation's rather than his own effort. No office, no achievement, and no civil servant can fully repay his debt to the nation.⁸⁵ By 1934, the number of Halkevi Centers had reached 103, and their village subsidiaries (called Halkodalari) 4,322. The members numbered 55,000 and by that time, more than two million had been "educated" in Masonic ideals. In 1935, when Ataturk closed down the lodges, the Masons didn't seem to be too bothered about it. Interior Minister Sukru Kaya, one of the most senior Masons of the era, told members of the press that since the Halkevi Centers were fulfilling the functions of the lodges anyway, he didn't mind this development. In his book *Turkiye'de Masonluk Tarihi* (Masonic History in Turkey), Grand Master Kemalettin Apak phrases it like this: In the meeting of 33rd degree Masons, Brother Sukru Kaya stated that the Halkevi and Halkodasi Centers have practically been carrying out Masonry's social and cultural activities for a long time. The party considered it necessary for the lodges to rest these activities, and the government had to oblige and put this decision into effect.⁸⁶ In other words, according to Sukru Kaya, the lodges and the Halkevîs were representatives of the same philosophy. Over the years, the Halkevi project was developed further with the introduction of the Village Institute, which covered a wider spectrum of activities. Formed by Education Minister and Mason Hasan Ali Yucel, the Village Institute was disseminating the Masonic philosophy among the population just like the Halkevi. This philosophy's real core message became apparent in 1945 when the Hasanoglu Village Institute in Ankara began to publish the magazine *Koy Enstituleri*, which openly attacked the religion of Islam and its values, as well as with "between the lines" articles. In one issue of the magazine, Ismail Hakki Tonguc, an author with Marxist sympathies, writes: Let's hope that tomorrow's world won't have a faith looking to heaven for salvation and living off metaphysical ideas. If we want this new world to rest upon solid foundations, we must give the people a new, comprehensive religion of a humanist, realist and rational nature, free of greed and lies... The Village Institute has tried to save from scholastic dogma the children it has educated.⁸⁷ Hollow terms like humanist, rational, realist, and new are the same ones used by the Masonic philosophy of secular humanism. Among the Village Institute's publications were poems by Nazim Hikmet that defend materialist philosophy and consist of lines intended to lead students to deny God; also stories in which religion and its values were mocked. They even relied on the views of Ethem Nejat and Mustafa Suphi, members of the first steering committee of the secret Communist Party. Peyami Safa, a leading author of the time, wrote an article about the Village Institute's Marxist propaganda: Not one Turkish intellectual isn't aware that the Village Institutes are Communist propaganda centers where children learn the poems of Nazim Hikmet, where Marxist conferences are given, and where Marxist articles are published. Radio Moscow regularly praises graduates of the Village Institute. Only recently, the high school teacher sentenced to imprisonment for being caught in the act of Marxist propaganda in the school, was

not a graduate of Philology—as he had stated on his application form—but was from the Village Institute. If closing the Village Institutes is the victory of the dark forces, does it follow that these institutes, likened to the 30th August victory, were representing the victory of the Red forces? Does it follow that if it's not Red, it must be dark? Are the free nations ... also the dark nations? According to this false logic and the voices from Moscow, the new teacher schools that have replaced the Village Institute are also "dark" teacher schools, because Marx is not praised here, Moscow's agent Nazim Hikmet's records are not played and his poems not read. Villagers who have the same rights and responsibilities as the townspeople are not considered a separate class, and the national unity is not split and rearranged into social classes.⁸⁸ When this systematic Marxist propaganda from the Village Institutes hit the news, the public put great pressure on the TBMM. Criticism could be heard even from the members of the CHP. Education Minister Hasan Ali Yucel was sacked and replaced by R. Semsettin Sirer, who ordered an investigation into this affair. Here are some excerpts from the report his assistants prepared, which became a source of embarrassment: Document 1 - 12: In the years between the founding of the institute and 1947, girls were frequently harassed by their teachers. This document, signed by ministry inspector Ziya Karamuk, disciplines committee members and head teachers, further establishing that girls were forcefully kissed, fondled, molested and in some cases, forced into sexual intercourse. Some teachers had to marry these girls by the force of law. Document 2 - 13: On a number of occasions, boys and girls were caught in the act in the dormitories or on the nearby Kalayci area. Document 3 - 14: A village schoolteacher, himself a graduate from the Village Institute, molested and then raped a girl from his class ... it is proven that students who witness the practices of their teachers, adopt the same unethical practices after their graduation. This report offers still more examples of unacceptable practices. Besides the harassment of girls under the name of sexual freedom, all-night drinking sessions between teachers and students are recorded. Document 47 states that "filthy" propaganda was endemic in word and print, and that The Village Institute Magazine encouraged these unethical sexual practices which in some cases, even led to incest. Ministry of Education chief investigator Fethi Isfendiyaroglu states that: Village Institutes were built in remote areas, away from towns and villages. This separated students and their parents created an environment well suited for the unethical suggestions and practices of teachers devoid of morals and patriotism. More than 40,000 villagers were being conditioned and exposed to left-wing propaganda and suggestions of sexual freedom. Consequently, some of the weaker students were poisoned with this filth. Fortunately, most village students were of solid character and thus endured the Village Institute practices without coming to harm, left with their decency and morality intact, and developed hostility towards the these institutions' practices and propaganda.⁸⁹ Moral degeneration of the people by the atheist, materialistic propaganda was part of the Masons' strategy. For years, Masonic writers and journalists kept protesting the closure of these Village Institutes by writing articles in their support and demanding they be reinstituted. An article in the Mason Dergisi

(Mason Magazine) praises the Village Institute: The education policies required that the curriculum be of a universal, humanist, secular and of positivist nature. Religious education had been abolished. The rural population's education was one of the biggest policy problems facing the Republic of Turkey. There was urgent need to create an effective education system to train

sufficient numbers of teachers aware of the need for development and progress within the village population, for methods and practical solutions to achieve the goals of educating the huge rural population, and also to implant a sense of belonging and patriotism among the rural community. The Village Institute was founded for this purpose and, in my opinion, became the grandest education project in the history of Turkey.⁹⁰ The same article refers to the Halkevis as "the product of a missionary mentality." This "mission" was obviously victory in the ongoing Masonic war against religion since the times of the Templars.

The Masons' War Against Religion

As the preceding chapters established, Masonry has traditionally represented the anti-religious front. The Templars, having left Christianity and adopted deranged teachings, then engaged in their historic war against Christianity. Over the centuries, the war against religion in Europe has been fought under the leadership of Freemasonry, heir to the Templars, operating in Turkey and actively trying to impose positivist and materialistic philosophies on the masses to encourage anti-religious sentiments. We can read the Masons' antagonistic views on religion, including their recommended action plan, in articles printed in their own publications. For instance, one says, "For as long as the Madrasahs [religious schools] and the Minarets are not destroyed and the scholastic ideas and dogmatic beliefs not eliminated, the captivity of thought and suffering in the conscience will continue."⁹¹ From the words of Grand Master Haydar Ali Kermen, Masonry's dislike of religious institutions becomes obvious:: The totally improper screeching calls to prayer from mosques in the vicinity of the Parliament, are nothing but a scream saying, "I'm not dead and I'm not going to die." They should be understood as a wake-up call to all intellectuals of this nation and a call to duty.⁹² The Islamic call to prayer is a "screeching" reminder to the Masons, calling them to duty. To silence the religion that's declaring "I'm not dead" is their greatest duty. In their fight against religion and religious morality, Masons have used a number of different strategies. The Halkevi and the Village Institute were two of these. Yet others were Mason-controlled media and book publishing. Beginning with Abdullah Cevdet, the Masons have continued this tradition in the Republican period with authors like Cemil Sena Ongun and Orhan Hancerlioglu, both master Masons of the highest degree. In Hz. Muhammed'in Felsefesi (Prophet Mohammed's Philosophy), Cemil Sena Ongun writes—indirectly but very insistently—that the Prophet Mohammed (may God bless him and grant him peace) invented Islam. (We absolve Islam of such allegations) In books like Toplumbilim Sozlugu (Dictionary of Social Sciences) and Islam Inancilari Sozlugu (Dictionary of Islamic Beliefs), both used as references at universities, Grand Master Orhan Hancerlioglu slanders religious authorities and makes unfounded allegations against people of religious importance in his quest to further his atheist and anti-religious views. As a result of all these Masonic theories and propaganda, whole generations of atheist intellectuals have arisen. Because

they adopt a materialistic and anti-religionist world view and believe in Darwin's theory of evolution like a religion, they believe themselves to be progressive and science-oriented. But in reality they live in ignorance, and arrogance is their trademark. The Masons' activities to separate the Turkish people from their religion has another dimension: oppression. A little booklet by the lodge says that "Hidden cultural elements of Islamic origin in our society

wish to reintroduce Islamic culture. Their existence must be denied, but we must find methods to crush them."⁹³ Such Masonic "methods" can be found behind the persecution of great Islamic thinkers like Sehbenderzade Filibeli Ahmed Hamdi, Iskilipli Atif Hoca, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi and Suleyman Hilmi Tunahan in the last century. In various parts of his book *Risale-i Nur*, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi refers to the forces opposing Islam: ... the greatest damage to the nation and to Islam has been done by Masonry, Communism and atheism.⁹⁴ ... Masonry, Communism and atheism create anarchy, and the only thing that can stop these forces is Islamic unity and the guidance of the Qur'an.⁹⁵ On another occasion, Bediuzzaman says about the Masons' animosity to religion: A certain group, intent on severing the 1,000-year-old link of the Muslim Turks to their religious values, says; "We no longer believe in God as the purpose. We have created our own purpose. Our purpose is not God, but Mankind."⁹⁶ This quote of Bediuzzaman's can be traced to an article printed in *Mesriki Azam Ictimai Zabıtları* (Grand Lodge Inner Proceedings) in 1923. The "certain group" Bediuzzaman referred to is undoubtedly the Masons, with their belief in secular humanism. In *Risale-i Nur*, this great thinker mentions the personal enmity, injustices and oppression the Masons subjected him to: The sufferings I have to endure here in one day are more than what was done to me in one month while I was in Eskisehir. They have sent a callous Mason who does his best to get me to the point where I can't endure the torture any longer and I say, "Enough," so they can then justify their lies.⁹⁷ In Bediuzzaman's *Son Sahitler* (Last Witnesses) he explains that he was imprisoned unlawfully because of the Masons and tells of the hardship and sufferings they made him endure. In *Fourteenth Ray*, he refutes the allegations made against him by the hostile Masons. The court did not accept the view that Bediuzzaman had secret enemies, but he replied that the court was wrong and that Masons and Communists regarded him as their sworn enemy. He went on to say that his mission in the *Risale-i Nur* Collection had been only to prove the existence of God and to protect Islamic faith against the anti-religion movement. From closer inspection of a letter he wrote, it is evident that the forces behind the campaign against him were Masons and Communists: I took a look at politics three times in recent times. As I said in my defense, two-faced elements in the pay of the Masons and the Communists used bribery and pressure to mete out torture on me in order to crush my resistance. But now I'm feeling a new breeze in society, though I couldn't look any closer, for my profession forbids this.⁹⁸ Bediuzzaman was explaining that his specific mission was to save faith, to fight against Masonry, irreligion, and the anti-religion lobby. With these famous words, he advised his pupils to be positive, because their struggle would be rewarded with success and Islam would be the strongest voice in the land: "Yes, be hopeful! The loudest and strongest voice in the coming upheavals and changes will be that of Islam!"⁹⁹ Since Bediuzzaman's era, the Masons, fearing that Islam would again be "the loudest and strongest voice in the land," have continued their war of propaganda against religion. This war actually began in the 14th

century with the Templars in Europe, and the Masonic organization continues to fight it with oppressive policies around the globe, as well as in Turkey. As examined in previous chapters, the Templar-Masonry organization engages in illegal activities for political and economical gain, and Turkish Masons operate along the same lines as their foreign brothers.

P-2s of Turkey: Secret Lodges

One of Masonry's unchanged, fundamental principles is secrecy, concealing their activities since the times of the Templars, who successfully hid their real activities behind the façade of a religious Christian order, while worshipping an idol named Baphomet; having left Christianity for a self-made faith of a perverse nature, engaging in abnormal sexual practices, and managing to keep secret that they were de facto enemies of Christ. Masonry inherited their tradition of secrecy and created the image of a charitable cultural and ethical organization with no political interests. But the importance Masonry attaches to secrecy contradicts this. Why would an innocent charitable foundation have such a strict policy of secrecy? In an article in Mimar Sinan, Mason Uner Birkan writes that, "Masonry too can take an interest in social affairs, thereby presenting itself as a charitable organization."¹⁰⁰ To some extent, the methods of secrecy Masonry employs to cover up its real activities are explained in Masonic publishing. For example the Anderson's Constitutions (sort of a constitution of Freemasonry), under the subsection "Of Behavior," reads as follows: You shall be cautious in your Words and Carriage, that the most penetrating Stranger shall not be able to discover or find out what is not proper to be intimated.¹⁰¹ The Masonic journal Sakul Gibi (Like a Plummet) explains this rule: Bees cannot work unless in darkness...Your left hand must not know what your right hand does. Symbols are effective in the countless purposes of secrecy, and also in greater things.¹⁰² The Mason Dergisi (Masonic Magazine) for March 1993 states, "it is strictly forbidden to talk about ritualistic activities outside the lodge." In Issue 11 of Buyuk Sark (Grand Orient), another Masonic publication, it says, "It is wholly unethical to reveal the symbols and things done and discussed in the lodge; it is treachery against the cause and oath of Freemasonry." The Masons' "secrecy oath" proves the importance of absolute discretion within the organization. The second-degree apprentice rite goes like this: I promise and swear that I will always hold, ever conceal, and never reveal any of the secret arts, parts or points of the hidden mysteries of Freemasonry, which may have been heretofore, shall be at this time, or any future period communicated to me as such, to any person or persons whomsoever, except it be to a true and lawful brother Mason, or within a regularly constituted Lodge of such, and not unto him or them, until by strict trial, due examination, or legal information, I shall have found him or them as lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself. I furthermore promise and swear that I will not write, print, paint, stamp, stain, cut, carve, mark or engrave them, or cause the same to be done, upon anything movable or immovable, capable of receiving the least

impression of a word, syllable, letter or character, which may become legible or intelligible to any person under the canopy of heaven, and the secrets of Freemasonry thereby unlawfully obtained through my

unworthiness.¹⁰³ What secret are the Masons so sensitive about? The answer to this question was revealed by the P-2 Lodge in Italy. Behind a front of a charitable and ethical organization, they were engaged in illegal activities for political and economical gain. But other lodges doing so are not visible. Again, lodges are separated into two categories: known lodges and the secret ones like the P-2. Unlike the usual lodges, these have no known addresses, and are disguised so that you can't see their existence. For this purpose, the P-2 occupied part of Licio Gelli's villa, which was located in a remote area. Italy's famous politicians, bureaucrats, businessmen and media bosses couldn't have attended the P-2's lodge meetings without secrecy, for otherwise, the organization would soon have been discovered. The secret of Turkey's P-2 lies hidden in this fact: Only a small part of the Freemasonry's activities are known officially and in the public domain. There are a number of officially well-known lodges in Istanbul's Nuru Ziya street and in Tepebasi, but the organizational brain lies hidden in the secret lodges, hidden away where no one would suspect them—in the cellars of mansions belonging to the Grand Masters, in secret bunkers under factories and the headquarters of large holding companies, accessed through entrances concealed behind mirrored glass and wardrobe doors. The secret members of these lodges can thus look as if they were attending a business meeting or simple social gathering among friends without drawing attention. The highest-ranking Turkish Masons belong to these lodges and frequently receive their fellow brothers from Tel-Aviv, Chicago, or Paris to share decisions taken by the international lodges and coordinate future actions with their local brothers in Turkey. If these lodges were investigated, a number of documents would be found confirming their connections and illegal activities. Recently, some of the strange rites taking place in these lodges caught the attention of the media. These rites prove that the forbidden Templars live on in Turkey today and practice the same perverted rituals as they did six centuries ago.

Footage from the Lodge: Templars' Secret Rites on the Screen

1997 was a hard year for the Masons. Footage filmed inside two separate lodges by hidden cameras was shown on Channel 7 of Turkey repeatedly for days. The scenes captured shocked the Turkish people as well as the Grand Masters of Freemasonry. Some footage recorded the Satan-worshipping rite that can be practiced only at the 33rd degree Grand Master level. The Grand Master conducting the ritual was drinking the blood of a goat killed in the middle of the lodge, and ending the ceremony by offering prayers in Hebrew to Satan. In another scene, as part of a Masonic ritual, two new Masons had swords pushed against their chests and were threatened with death. In yet another scene filmed in the same lodge, a Masonic "marriage ceremony" was being conducted—something that Freemasonry had always denied as non-existent. After the airing of this footage, Freemasonry made the center of the news for days. Some newspapers and magazines had also obtained relevant material. Some of the media coverage read: The 7th of January,

Monday. It's the 1900 hours news on Channel 7. The main news stories of the day are listed, one after the other, and then the bomb is dropped: footage of rites showing Masons of the 33rd degree. What the Masons are, who they serve, and what kind of activities they engage in, is known but, because of their policy of total secrecy, cannot be exposed. But that's exactly what is being done on the screen! Shocking scenes of a lodge that only

the highest-ranking bureaucrats and other select personalities can attend. Music playing, Satan worship, white robes, swords, a six-pointed star and a slaughtered goat. The blood of the goat fills a bowl; its head is burned on a spit, to the Hebrew prayers of the Grand Master. These strange scenes took place in the middle of Turkey, in Istanbul. Oaths of a strange and confusing content: "Honorable Kadosh Knights, if you break your oath, may your body be torn to pieces by wild horses [and] turned to ashes, the ashes blown away by winds blowing from the four directions..." Channel 7 had penetrated the most secret of secret societies and, presumably, were expecting to get the credit for achieving this "world's first." But they were stunned at the silence of the mainstream Turkish media. Instead of basking in the glory of this incredible journalistic achievement, they were perplexed by the silence that greeted it. No other channel aired the footage; no newspaper gave it any columns. Total silence. With the practice of getting married by the Imam in the current headlines, the Masonic marriage ritual should have been of interest. The footage shot by Channel 7 with a hidden camera actually explains the reason for this silence: Freemasonry's initiation ceremony is almost like a religious ritual. Candidates are made to wait in a chamber that the camera could not enter, and then have to bend down so as to pass under a bar. While blindfolded, they feel a sword thrust against their chest and are asked to touch it. "If you reveal what you have learned here, you will bear the consequences." The message is clear. When the blindfold is removed, before they do or say anything, all the brothers facing them make the cut-throat sign.¹⁰⁴ For days now, Channel 7 is airing footage of Freemasonry. This is a journalistic first... Via the secret camera, footage of a Masonic lodge's initiation ritual is made public. The Masonic front, despite being asked to respond by the media, keeps total silence. Though scenes from inside the oldest and most secretive sect in European history are being aired by Channel 7, no other TV channel takes up the subject. Despite the incredible scenes in the footage, no reaction, no response, nothing. The media ignores the whole thing... Could the oath of secrecy taken by the new recruits on acceptance into the lodge—who go on to become influential and important personalities—be playing a role in this media blackout?¹⁰⁵ After the Masons' spectacular TV debut, two former Masons who had left the lodge years ago—Mumin Kilic and Onder Aktac—went in front of the cameras to make statements about the dirty practices of Masonry. This issue was also discussed in the Turkish Parliament. Tokat MP Ahmet Fevzi Inceoz requested that the Interior Ministry begin an inquiry into Masonic lodges. Based on the footage shown on TV he reasoned: As seen in the footage, the Masonic Society threatens national security and interests. In these lodges, citizens are threatened, illegal marriage ceremonies are conducted, and monies are collected and spent, and unlicensed weapons kept. They operate outside the control and regulations of the security forces, maintain their operational headquarters outside the country, clearly represent a threat to the state—and must therefore be closed down. But to no avail. The Masons didn't respond in any way, and the media they control kept quiet about the affair. Thus the media moved on to other themes and subjects. Today's

Templars, still addressing each other as "Kadosh Knights" managed once more to remain underground as they had for centuries.

The Templars and the Mafia

To understand the Masonic activities in one country, one can take a look at another and draw comparisons. Since Masonry is an international organization operating everywhere under the same rules and principles, scandals in

one country can provide insights into what might be going on in another. One enlightening example shows the close relationship between the Italian Masons and the Mafia. The P-2 investigation revealed that the two are very much interlinked, and the Italian prosecutors' "Clean Hands" operation of the 1990s, while managing to clear up the Mafia to some extent, proved the links between it and Masonry. The parliamentary commission in charge of the Mafia investigation (Commissione Parlamentare Antimafia) said in its report: The fundamental terrain on which the link between Cosa Nostra [Mafia] with public officials and private professions was created and reinforced is the Massoneria [Freemasonry]. The Massoneria bond serves to keep the relationship continuous and organic. The admission of members of Cosa Nostra, even at high levels, in Massoneria is not an occasional or episodic one, but a strategic choice. . . Massoneria associations offer the mafia a formidable instrument to extend their own power, to obtain favors and privileges in every field: both for the conclusion of big business and "fixing trials", as many collaborators of justice have revealed.¹⁰⁶ So what is the situation like in Turkey, a country with cultural, historical and sociological similarities to Italy? Is the relationship between Mafia and Masonry the same as in Italy? In recent years, Turkish government officials have given some answers to this question while investigating the Susurluk Case, which revealed the country's politician-Mafia-police relationship. After a traffic accident, it was discovered that a deputy, Istanbul's police chief, and a man implicated in various terrorist attacks and sought by the local police and the Interpol for more than a decade were travelling in the same car. Based on the yields of the Turkish Parliament Susurluk Commission's inquiry, MP Hayrettin Dilekcan made this statement: In Italy, they had the P-2 Lodge. We can now say that something similar to the P-2 exists in Turkey ... To call the present case a Mafia scandal would not do it justice. You cannot call the P-2 case a simple Mafia affair. The lodges are ruling in Turkey. If some people want to take a serious position, the decisions about it are made in the lodges. For as long as these lodges cannot be overcome, Turkey will not progress easily... In the P-2 case, the lodge was in effect "appointing" the Prime Minister and the ministers... In Turkey, they have reached the level of power and influence where they determine the leaders of political parties. The rest I leave to your imaginations.¹⁰⁷ MP and spokesman of the Susurluk Commission, Bedri Incetahtaci: We now have in Turkey something we cannot ascribe a name to. But the Gladio affair in Italy—where there was a state within the state and behind that, there was the lodge—will help us find a name for what we have in our own country. We know that this organization exists, and we also know the things they have done. There are similarities between theirs and ours...¹⁰⁸ In short, the investigating commission found strong evidence that the lodge was the organizing force behind these cases and reported this in their conclusive papers. Behind the corruption, injustices and persecution of innocent people in Turkey are the modern day Knights Templars or, if you prefer, the Masons. They are manipulating the country for their political and economical purposes, and in order to achieve their goals they never hesitate to adopt dark and dirty methods. And all the religious voices who oppose Masonry and their philosophy are targeted,

slandered, pressurized and persecuted. For this reason, everyone who believes in the moral values of Islam must make a stand against the activities of the modern Templars. This anti-religion and gain-orientated organization must be combated by the

use of the law, and also on an ideological and philosophical platform. We must be aware of their propaganda. We believe that this ideological struggle will be won and that Turkey will be a strong and modern state in the 21st century with her moral values.

CHAPTER V THE DECEPTION OF EVOLUTION

Darwinism, in other words the theory of evolution, was put forward with the aim of denying the fact of creation, but is in truth nothing but failed, unscientific nonsense. This theory, which claims that life emerged by chance from inanimate matter, was invalidated by the scientific evidence of clear "design" in the universe and in living things. In this way, science confirmed the fact that God created the universe and the living things in it. The propaganda carried out today in order to keep the theory of evolution alive is based solely on the distortion of the scientific facts, biased interpretation, and lies and falsehoods disguised as science. Yet this propaganda cannot conceal the truth. The fact that the theory of evolution is the greatest deception in the history of science has been expressed more and more in the scientific world over the last 20-30 years. Research carried out after the 1980s in particular has revealed that the claims of Darwinism are totally unfounded, something that has been stated by a large number of scientists. In the United States in particular, many scientists from such different fields as biology, biochemistry and paleontology recognize the invalidity of Darwinism and employ the concept of intelligent design to account for the origin of life. This "intelligent design" is a scientific expression of the fact that God created all living things. We have examined the collapse of the theory of evolution and the proofs of creation in great scientific detail in many of our works, and are still continuing to do so. Given the enormous importance of this subject, it will be of great benefit to summarize it here.

The Scientific Collapse of Darwinism

Although this doctrine goes back as far as ancient Greece, the theory of evolution was advanced extensively in the nineteenth century. The most important development that made it the top topic of the world of science was Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, published in 1859. In this book, he denied that God created different living species on Earth separately, for he claimed that all living beings had a common ancestor and had diversified over time through small changes. Darwin's theory was not based on any concrete scientific finding; as he also accepted, it was just an "assumption." Moreover, as Darwin confessed in the long chapter of his book titled "Difficulties of the Theory," the theory failed in the face of many critical questions. Darwin invested all of his hopes in new scientific discoveries, which he expected to solve these difficulties. However, contrary to his expectations, scientific findings expanded the dimensions of these difficulties. The defeat of Darwinism in the face of science can be reviewed under three basic topics: 1) The theory cannot explain how life originated on Earth. 2) No scientific finding shows that the "evolutionary mechanisms" proposed by the theory have any evolutionary power at all. 3) The fossil record proves the exact opposite of what the theory suggests. In this section, we will examine these three basic points in general outlines:

The First Insurmountable Step: The Origin of Life

The theory of evolution posits that all living species evolved from a single living cell that emerged on the primitive Earth 3.8 billion years ago. How a single cell could generate millions of complex living species and, if such an evolution really occurred, why traces of it cannot be observed in the fossil record are some of the questions that the theory cannot answer. However, first and foremost, we need to ask: How did this "first cell" originate? Since the theory of evolution denies creation and any kind of supernatural intervention, it maintains that the "first cell" originated coincidentally within the laws of nature, without any design, plan or arrangement. According to the theory, inanimate matter must have produced a living cell as a result of coincidences. Such a claim, however, is inconsistent with the most unassailable rules of biology.

"Life Comes from Life"

In his book, Darwin never referred to the origin of life. The primitive understanding of science in his time rested on the assumption that living beings had a very simple structure. Since medieval times, spontaneous generation, which asserts that non-living materials came together to form living organisms, had been widely accepted. It was commonly believed that insects came into being from food leftovers, and mice from wheat. Interesting experiments were conducted to prove this theory. Some wheat was placed on a dirty piece of cloth, and it was believed that mice would originate from it after a while. Similarly, maggots developing in rotting meat was assumed to be evidence of spontaneous generation. However, it was later understood that worms did not appear on meat spontaneously, but were carried there by flies in the form of larvae, invisible to the naked eye. Even when Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*, the belief that bacteria could come into existence from non-living matter was widely accepted in the world of science. However, five years after the publication of Darwin's book, Louis Pasteur announced his results after long studies and experiments, that disproved spontaneous generation, a cornerstone of Darwin's theory. In his triumphal lecture at the Sorbonne in 1864, Pasteur said: "Never will the doctrine of spontaneous generation recover from the mortal blow struck by this simple experiment."¹⁰⁹ For a long time, advocates of the theory of evolution resisted these findings. However, as the development of science unraveled the complex structure of the cell of a living being, the idea that life could come into being coincidentally faced an even greater impasse.

Inconclusive Efforts in the Twentieth Century

The first evolutionist who took up the subject of the origin of life in the twentieth century was the renowned Russian biologist Alexander Oparin. With various theses

he advanced in the 1930s, he tried to prove that a living cell could originate by coincidence. These studies, however, were doomed to failure, and Oparin

had to make the following confession: Unfortunately, however, the problem of the origin of the cell is perhaps the most obscure point in the whole study of the evolution of organisms.¹¹⁰ Evolutionist followers of Oparin tried to carry out experiments to solve this problem. The best known experiment was carried out by the American chemist Stanley Miller in 1953. Combining the gases he alleged to have existed in the primordial Earth's atmosphere in an experiment set-up, and adding energy to the mixture, Miller synthesized several organic molecules (amino acids) present in the structure of proteins. Barely a few years had passed before it was revealed that this experiment, which was then presented as an important step in the name of evolution, was invalid, for the atmosphere used in the experiment was very different from the real Earth conditions.¹¹¹ After a long silence, Miller confessed that the atmosphere medium he used was unrealistic.¹¹² All the evolutionists' efforts throughout the twentieth century to explain the origin of life ended in failure. The geochemist Jeffrey Bada, from the San Diego Scripps Institute accepts this fact in an article published in *Earth* magazine in 1998: Today as we leave the twentieth century, we still face the biggest unsolved problem that we had when we entered the twentieth century: How did life originate on Earth?¹¹³

The Complex Structure of Life

The primary reason why the theory of evolution ended up in such a great impasse regarding the origin of life is that even those living organisms deemed to be the simplest have incredibly complex structures. The cell of a living thing is more complex than all of our man-made technological products. Today, even in the most developed laboratories of the world, a living cell cannot be produced by bringing organic chemicals together. The conditions required for the formation of a cell are too great in quantity to be explained away by coincidences. The probability of proteins, the building blocks of a cell, being synthesized coincidentally, is 1 in 10⁹⁵⁰ for an average protein made up of 500 amino acids. In mathematics, a probability smaller than 1 over 10⁵⁰ is considered to be impossible in practical terms. The DNA molecule, which is located in the nucleus of a cell and which stores genetic information, is an incredible databank. If the information coded in DNA were written down, it would make a giant library consisting of an estimated 900 volumes of encyclopedias consisting of 500 pages each. A very interesting dilemma emerges at this point: DNA can replicate itself only with the help of some specialized proteins (enzymes). However, the synthesis of these enzymes can be realized only by the information coded in DNA. As they both depend on each other, they have to exist at the same time for replication. This brings the scenario that life originated by itself to a deadlock. Prof. Leslie Orgel, an evolutionist of repute from the University of San Diego, California, confesses this fact in the September 1994 issue of the *Scientific American* magazine: It is extremely improbable that proteins and nucleic acids, both of which are structurally complex, arose spontaneously in the same place at the same time. Yet it also seems impossible to have one without the other. And so, at

first glance, one might have to conclude that life could never, in fact, have originated by chemical

means.¹¹⁴ No doubt, if it is impossible for life to have originated from natural causes, then it has to be accepted that life was "created" in a supernatural way. This fact explicitly invalidates the theory of evolution, whose main purpose is to deny creation.

Imaginary Mechanisms of Evolution

The second important point that negates Darwin's theory is that both concepts put forward by the theory as "evolutionary mechanisms" were understood to have, in reality, no evolutionary power. Darwin based his evolution allegation entirely on the mechanism of "natural selection." The importance he placed on this mechanism was evident in the name of his book: *The Origin of Species, By Means of Natural Selection*... Natural selection holds that those living things that are stronger and more suited to the natural conditions of their habitats will survive in the struggle for life. For example, in a deer herd under the threat of attack by wild animals, those that can run faster will survive. Therefore, the deer herd will be comprised of faster and stronger individuals. However, unquestionably, this mechanism will not cause deer to evolve and transform themselves into another living species, for instance, horses. Therefore, the mechanism of natural selection has no evolutionary power. Darwin was also aware of this fact and had to state this in his book *The Origin of Species*: Natural selection can do nothing until favourable individual differences or variations occur.¹¹⁵

Lamarck's Impact

So, how could these "favorable variations" occur? Darwin tried to answer this question from the standpoint of the primitive understanding of science at that time. According to the French biologist Chevalier de Lamarck (1744-1829), who lived before Darwin, living creatures passed on the traits they acquired during their lifetime to the next generation. He asserted that these traits, which accumulated from one generation to another, caused new species to be formed. For instance, he claimed that giraffes evolved from antelopes; as they struggled to eat the leaves of high trees, their necks were extended from generation to generation. Darwin also gave similar examples. In his book *The Origin of Species*, for instance, he said that some bears going into water to find food transformed themselves into whales over time.¹¹⁶ However, the laws of inheritance discovered by Gregor Mendel (1822-84) and verified by the science of genetics, which flourished in the twentieth century, utterly demolished the legend that acquired traits were passed on to subsequent generations. Thus, natural selection fell out of favor as an evolutionary mechanism.

Neo-Darwinism and Mutations

In order to find a solution, Darwinists advanced the "Modern Synthetic Theory," or as it is more commonly known, Neo-Darwinism, at the end of the 1930's. Neo-Darwinism added mutations, which are distortions formed in the genes of living beings due to such external factors as radiation or replication errors, as the "cause of favorable variations" in addition to natural mutation. Today, the model that stands for evolution in the world is Neo-Darwinism. The theory maintains that millions of living beings formed as a result of a process whereby numerous complex organs of these organisms (e.g., ears, eyes, lungs, and wings) underwent "mutations," that is, genetic disorders. Yet, there is an outright scientific fact that totally undermines this theory: Mutations do not cause living beings to develop; on the contrary, they are always harmful. The reason for this is very simple: DNA has a very complex structure, and random effects can only harm it. The American geneticist B.G. Ranganathan explains this as follows: First, genuine mutations are very rare in nature. Secondly, most mutations are harmful since they are random, rather than orderly changes in the structure of genes; any random change in a highly ordered system will be for the worse, not for the better. For example, if an earthquake were to shake a highly ordered structure such as a building, there would be a random change in the framework of the building which, in all probability, would not be an improvement.¹¹⁷ Not surprisingly, no mutation example, which is useful, that is, which is observed to develop the genetic code, has been observed so far. All mutations have proved to be harmful. It was understood that mutation, which is presented as an "evolutionary mechanism," is actually a genetic occurrence that harms living things, and leaves them disabled. (The most common effect of mutation on human beings is cancer.) Of course, a destructive mechanism cannot be an "evolutionary mechanism." Natural selection, on the other hand, "can do nothing by itself," as Darwin also accepted. This fact shows us that there is no "evolutionary mechanism" in nature. Since no evolutionary mechanism exists, no such any imaginary process called "evolution" could have taken place.

The Fossil Record: No Sign of Intermediate Forms

The clearest evidence that the scenario suggested by the theory of evolution did not take place is the fossil record. According to this theory, every living species has sprung from a predecessor. A previously existing species turned into something else over time and all species have come into being in this way. In other words, this transformation proceeds gradually over millions of years. Had this been the case, numerous intermediary species should have existed and lived within this long transformation period. For instance, some half-fish/half-reptiles should have lived in the past which had acquired some reptilian traits in addition to the fish traits they already had. Or there should have existed some reptile-birds, which acquired some bird traits in addition to the reptilian traits they already had. Since these would be in

a transitional phase, they should be disabled, defective, crippled living beings. Evolutionists refer to these imaginary creatures, which they believe to

have lived in the past, as "transitional forms." If such animals ever really existed, there should be millions and even billions of them in number and variety. More importantly, the remains of these strange creatures should be present in the fossil record. In *The Origin of Species*, Darwin explained: If my theory be true, numberless intermediate varieties, linking most closely all of the species of the same group together must assuredly have existed.... Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains.¹¹⁸

Darwin's Hopes Shattered

However, although evolutionists have been making strenuous efforts to find fossils since the middle of the nineteenth century all over the world, no transitional forms have yet been uncovered. All of the fossils, contrary to the evolutionists' expectations, show that life appeared on Earth all of a sudden and fully-formed. One famous British paleontologist, Derek V. Ager, admits this fact, even though he is an evolutionist: The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail, whether at the level of orders or of species, we find – over and over again – not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another.¹¹⁹ This means that in the fossil record, all living species suddenly emerge as fully formed, without any intermediate forms in between. This is just the opposite of Darwin's assumptions. Also, this is very strong evidence that all living things are created. The only explanation of a living species emerging suddenly and complete in every detail without any evolutionary ancestor is that it was created. This fact is admitted also by the widely known evolutionist biologist Douglas Futuyma: Creation and evolution, between them, exhaust the possible explanations for the origin of living things. Organisms either appeared on the earth fully developed or they did not. If they did not, they must have developed from pre-existing species by some process of modification. If they did appear in a fully developed state, they must indeed have been created by some omnipotent intelligence.¹²⁰ Fossils show that living beings emerged fully developed and in a perfect state on the earth. That means that "the origin of species," contrary to Darwin's supposition, is not evolution, but creation.

The Tale of Human Evolution

The subject most often brought up by advocates of the theory of evolution is the subject of the origin of man. The Darwinist claim holds that modern man evolved from ape-like creatures. During this alleged evolutionary process, which is supposed to have started 4-5 million years ago, some "transitional forms" between modern man and his ancestors are supposed to have existed. According to this completely imaginary scenario, four basic "categories" are listed: 1. Australopithecus

2. Homo habilis 3. Homo erectus 4. Homo sapiens Evolutionists call man's so-called first ape-like ancestors Australopithecus, which means "South African ape." These living beings are actually nothing but an old ape species that has become extinct. Extensive research done on various Australopithecus specimens by two world famous anatomists from England and the USA, namely, Lord Solly Zuckerman and Prof. Charles Oxnard, shows that these apes belonged to an ordinary ape species that became extinct and bore no resemblance to humans.¹²¹ Evolutionists classify the next stage of human evolution as "homo," that is "man." According to their claim, the living beings in the Homo series are more developed than Australopithecus. Evolutionists devise a fanciful evolution scheme by arranging different fossils of these creatures in a particular order. This scheme is imaginary because it has never been proved that there is an evolutionary relation between these different classes. Ernst Mayr, one of the twentieth century's most important evolutionists, contends in his book *One Long Argument* that "particularly historical [puzzles] such as the origin of life or of Homo sapiens, are extremely difficult and may even resist a final, satisfying explanation."¹²² By outlining the link chain as Australopithecus > Homo habilis > Homo erectus > Homo sapiens, evolutionists imply that each of these species is one another's ancestor. However, recent findings of paleoanthropologists have revealed that Australopithecus, Homo habilis, and Homo erectus lived at different parts of the world at the same time.¹²³ Moreover, a certain segment of humans classified as Homo erectus have lived up until very modern times. Homo sapiens neanderthalensis and Homo sapiens sapiens (modern man) co-existed in the same region.¹²⁴ This situation apparently indicates the invalidity of the claim that they are ancestors of one another. A paleontologist from Harvard University, Stephen Jay Gould, explains this deadlock of the theory of evolution, although he is an evolutionist himself: What has become of our ladder if there are three coexisting lineages of hominids (A. africanus, the robust australopithecines, and H. habilis), none clearly derived from another? Moreover, none of the three display any evolutionary trends during their tenure on earth.¹²⁵ Put briefly, the scenario of human evolution, which is "upheld" with the help of various drawings of some "half ape, half human" creatures appearing in the media and course books, that is, frankly, by means of propaganda, is nothing but a tale with no scientific foundation. Lord Solly Zuckerman, one of the most famous and respected scientists in the U.K., who carried out research on this subject for years and studied Australopithecus fossils for 15 years, finally concluded, despite being an evolutionist himself, that there is, in fact, no such family tree branching out from ape-like creatures to man. Zuckerman also made an interesting "spectrum of science" ranging from those he considered scientific to those he considered unscientific. According to Zuckerman's spectrum, the most "scientific"—that is, depending on concrete data—fields of science are chemistry and physics. After them come the biological sciences and then the social sciences. At the far end of the spectrum, which is the part considered to be most "unscientific," are "extra-sensory perception"—concepts such as telepathy and sixth sense—and finally "human evolution." Zuckerman explains his

reasoning: We then move right off the register of objective truth into those fields of presumed biological science, like extrasensory perception or the interpretation of man's fossil history, where to the faithful [evolutionist] anything is possible – and where the ardent believer [in evolution] is sometimes able to believe several contradictory things at the same time.¹²⁶ The tale of human evolution boils down to nothing but the prejudiced interpretations of some fossils unearthed by certain people, who blindly adhere to their theory.

Technology in the Eye and the Ear

Another subject that remains unanswered by evolutionary theory is the excellent quality of perception in the eye and the ear. Before passing on to the subject of the eye, let us briefly answer the question of how we see. Light rays coming from an object fall oppositely on the eye's retina. Here, these light rays are transmitted into electric signals by cells and reach a tiny spot at the back of the brain, the "center of vision." These electric signals are perceived in this center as an image after a series of processes. With this technical background, let us do some thinking. The brain is insulated from light. That means that its inside is completely dark, and that no light reaches the place where it is located. Thus, the "center of vision" is never touched by light and may even be the darkest place you have ever known. However, you observe a luminous, bright world in this pitch darkness. The image formed in the eye is so sharp and distinct that even the technology of the twentieth century has not been able to attain it. For instance, look at the book you are reading, your hands with which you are holding it, and then lift your head and look around you. Have you ever seen such a sharp and distinct image as this one at any other place? Even the most developed television screen produced by the greatest television producer in the world cannot provide such a sharp image for you. This is a three-dimensional, colored, and extremely sharp image. For more than 100 years, thousands of engineers have been trying to achieve this sharpness. Factories, huge premises were established, much research has been done, plans and designs have been made for this purpose. Again, look at a TV screen and the book you hold in your hands. You will see that there is a big difference in sharpness and distinction. Moreover, the TV screen shows you a two-dimensional image, whereas with your eyes, you watch a three-dimensional perspective with depth. For many years, tens of thousands of engineers have tried to make a three-dimensional TV and achieve the vision quality of the eye. Yes, they have made a three-dimensional television system, but it is not possible to watch it without putting on special 3-D glasses; moreover, it is only an artificial three-dimension. The background is more blurred, the foreground appears like a paper setting. Never has it been possible to produce a sharp and distinct vision like that of the eye. In both the camera and the television, there is a loss of image quality. Evolutionists claim that the mechanism producing this sharp and distinct image has been formed by chance. Now, if somebody told you that the television in your room was formed as a result of chance, that all of its

atoms just happened to come together and make up this device that produces an image, what would you think? How can atoms do what thousands of people cannot? If a device producing a more primitive image than the eye could not have been formed by chance, then it is very

evident that the eye and the image seen by the eye could not have been formed by chance. The same situation applies to the ear. The outer ear picks up the available sounds by the auricle and directs them to the middle ear, the middle ear transmits the sound vibrations by intensifying them, and the inner ear sends these vibrations to the brain by translating them into electric signals. Just as with the eye, the act of hearing finalizes in the center of hearing in the brain. The situation in the eye is also true for the ear. That is, the brain is insulated from sound just as it is from light. It does not let any sound in. Therefore, no matter how noisy is the outside, the inside of the brain is completely silent. Nevertheless, the sharpest sounds are perceived in the brain. In your completely silent brain, you listen to symphonies, and hear all of the noises in a crowded place. However, were the sound level in your brain was measured by a precise device at that moment, complete silence would be found to be prevailing there. As is the case with imagery, decades of effort have been spent in trying to generate and reproduce sound that is faithful to the original. The results of these efforts are sound recorders, high-fidelity systems, and systems for sensing sound. Despite all of this technology and the thousands of engineers and experts who have been working on this endeavor, no sound has yet been obtained that has the same sharpness and clarity as the sound perceived by the ear. Think of the highest-quality hi-fi systems produced by the largest company in the music industry. Even in these devices, when sound is recorded some of it is lost; or when you turn on a hi-fi you always hear a hissing sound before the music starts. However, the sounds that are the products of the human body's technology are extremely sharp and clear. A human ear never perceives a sound accompanied by a hissing sound or with atmospherics as does a hi-fi; rather, it perceives sound exactly as it is, sharp and clear. This is the way it has been since the creation of man. So far, no man-made visual or recording apparatus has been as sensitive and successful in perceiving sensory data as are the eye and the ear. However, as far as seeing and hearing are concerned, a far greater truth lies beyond all this.

To Whom Does the Consciousness That Sees and Hears within the Brain Belong?

Who watches an alluring world in the brain, listens to symphonies and the twittering of birds, and smells the rose? The stimulations coming from a person's eyes, ears, and nose travel to the brain as electro-chemical nerve impulses. In biology, physiology, and biochemistry books, you can find many details about how this image forms in the brain. However, you will never come across the most important fact: Who perceives these electrochemical nerve impulses as images, sounds, odors, and sensory events in the brain? There is a consciousness in the brain that perceives all this without feeling any need for an eye, an ear, and a nose. To whom does this consciousness belong? Of course it does not belong to the nerves, the fat layer, and neurons comprising the brain. This is why Darwinist-materialists, who believe that everything is comprised of matter, cannot answer these questions. For this consciousness is the spirit God created, which needs neither the eye to watch

the images nor the ear to hear the sounds. Furthermore, it does not need the brain to think. Everyone who reads this explicit and scientific fact should ponder on Almighty God, and fear and seek refuge in Him, for He squeezes the entire universe in a pitch-dark place of a few cubic centimeters in a three-

dimensional, colored, shadowy, and luminous form.

A Materialist Faith

The information we have presented so far shows us that the theory of evolution is incompatible with scientific findings. The theory's claim regarding the origin of life is inconsistent with science, the evolutionary mechanisms it proposes have no evolutionary power, and fossils demonstrate that the required intermediate forms have never existed. So, it certainly follows that the theory of evolution should be pushed aside as an unscientific idea. This is how many ideas, such as the Earth-centered universe model, have been taken out of the agenda of science throughout history. However, the theory of evolution is kept on the agenda of science. Some people even try to represent criticisms directed against it as an "attack on science." Why? The reason is that this theory is an indispensable dogmatic belief for some circles. These circles are blindly devoted to materialist philosophy and adopt Darwinism because it is the only materialist explanation that can be put forward to explain the workings of nature. Interestingly enough, they also confess this fact from time to time. A well-known geneticist and an outspoken evolutionist, Richard C. Lewontin from Harvard University, confesses that he is "first and foremost a materialist and then a scientist": It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, so we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.¹²⁷ These are explicit statements that Darwinism is a dogma kept alive just for the sake of adherence to materialism. This dogma maintains that there is no being save matter. Therefore, it argues that inanimate, unconscious matter created life. It insists that millions of different living species (e.g., birds, fish, giraffes, tigers, insects, trees, flowers, whales, and human beings) originated as a result of the interactions between matter such as pouring rain, lightning flashes, and so on, out of inanimate matter. This is a precept contrary both to reason and science. Yet Darwinists continue to defend it just so as "not to allow a Divine Foot in the door." Anyone who does not look at the origin of living beings with a materialist prejudice will see this evident truth: All living beings are works of a Creator, Who is All-Powerful, All-Wise, and All-Knowing. This Creator is God, Who created the whole universe from non-existence, designed it in the most perfect form, and fashioned all living beings.

The Theory of Evolution is the Most Potent Spell in the World

Anyone free of prejudice and the influence of any particular ideology, who uses only his or her reason and logic, will clearly understand that belief in the theory of evolution, which brings to mind the superstitions of societies with no knowledge of science or civilization, is quite impossible. As explained above, those who believe in the theory of evolution think that a few atoms and molecules thrown into a huge vat could produce thinking, reasoning professors and university students; such scientists as

Einstein and Galileo; such artists as Humphrey Bogart, Frank Sinatra and Luciano Pavarotti; as well as antelopes, lemon trees, and carnations. Moreover, as the scientists and professors who believe in this nonsense are educated people, it is quite justifiable to speak of this theory as "the most potent spell in history." Never before has any other belief or idea so taken away peoples' powers of reason, refused to allow them to think intelligently and logically and hidden the truth from them as if they had been blindfolded. This is an even worse and unbelievable blindness than the Egyptians worshipping the Sun God Ra, totem worship in some parts of Africa, the people of Saba worshipping the Sun, the tribe of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) worshipping idols they had made with their own hands, or the people of the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) worshipping the Golden Calf. In fact, God has pointed to this lack of reason in the Qur'an. In many verses, He reveals in many verses that some peoples' minds will be closed and that they will be powerless to see the truth. Some of these verses are as follows: As for those who do not believe, it makes no difference to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe. God has sealed up their hearts and hearing and over their eyes is a blindfold. They will have a terrible punishment. (Qur'an, 2: 6-7) ... They have hearts with which they do not understand. They have eyes with which they do not see. They have ears with which they do not hear. Such people are like cattle. No, they are even further astray! They are the unaware. (Qur'an, 7: 179) Even if We opened up to them a door into heaven, and they spent the day ascending through it, they would only say: "Our eyesight is befuddled! Or rather we have been put under a spell!" (Qur'an, 15: 14-15) Words cannot express just how astonishing it is that this spell should hold such a wide community in thrall, keep people from the truth, and not be broken for 150 years. It is understandable that one or a few people might believe in impossible scenarios and claims full of stupidity and illogicality. However, "magic" is the only possible explanation for people from all over the world believing that unconscious and lifeless atoms suddenly decided to come together and form a universe that functions with a flawless system of organization, discipline, reason, and consciousness; a planet named Earth with all of its features so perfectly suited to life; and living things full of countless complex systems. In fact, the Qur'an relates the incident of Prophet Moses and Pharaoh to show that some people who support atheistic philosophies actually influence others by magic. When Pharaoh was told about the true religion, he told Prophet Moses to meet with his own magicians. When Moses did so, he told them to demonstrate their abilities first. The verses continue: He said: "You throw." And when they threw, they cast a spell on the people's eyes and caused them to feel great fear of them. They produced an extremely powerful magic. (Qur'an, 7: 116) As we have seen, Pharaoh's magicians were able to deceive everyone, apart from Moses and those who

believed in him. However, his evidence broke the spell, or "swallowed up what they had forged," as the verse puts it. We revealed to Moses, "Throw down your staff." And it immediately swallowed up what they had forged. So the Truth took place and what they did was shown to be false. (Qur'an, 7: 117-119) As we can see, when people realized that a spell had been cast upon them and that what they saw was just an illusion, Pharaoh's magicians lost all credibility. In the present day too, unless those who, under the influence of a similar spell, believe in these ridiculous claims under their scientific disguise and spend their lives defending them, abandon their superstitious beliefs, they also will be humiliated when the full truth emerges and the spell is broken. In fact, Malcolm Muggeridge, an atheist philosopher and supporter of evolution, admitted he was worried by just that prospect: I myself am convinced that the theory of evolution, especially the extent to which it's been applied, will be one of the great jokes in the history books in the future. Posterity will marvel that so very flimsy and dubious an hypothesis could be accepted with the incredible credulity that it has.¹²⁸ That future is not far off: On the contrary, people will soon see that "chance" is not a deity, and will look back on the theory of evolution as the worst deceit and the most terrible spell in the world. That spell is already rapidly beginning to be lifted from the shoulders of people all over the world. Many people who see its true face are wondering with amazement how they could ever have been taken in by it.

They said, "Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise." (Qur'an, 2: 32)

NOTES

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COVER

The Templars were a shadowy medieval cult proscribed by a joint decision of the King of France and the Pope. It was originally founded to fight for Christianity, but over time—as the Templars acquired immense power, adopted heretical teachings, and established a capitalist system based on material gain, their order fell afoul of the Church. After being dispersed, the cult survived underground. The Templars developed a fierce opposition to the Church and the divine religions in general, and eventually turned into the organization we know as the Freemasons. The Masons' antireligious philosophy and involvement in revolutions and political movements is a consequence of their Templar ancestry. This book examines the secret history of this Templar/Masonic organization and some of its influences on recent world and Turkish history.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author, who writes under the pen-name Harun Yahya, was born in Ankara in 1956. He studied arts at Istanbul's Mimar Sinan University, and philosophy at Istanbul University. Since the 1980s, the author has published many books on political, faith-related and scientific issues. His main focus has been the refutation of Darwinism and materialism, two modern myths presented under a scientific guise. Harun Yahya's books appeal to all kinds of readers, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, regardless of their age, race, or nationality, for they focus on one objective: to broaden the readers' perspective by encouraging them to think about a number of critical issues, such as the existence of God and His unity, and to display the decrepit foundations and perverted works of godless systems.

