



The Real History Behind the Templars

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The medieval historian who revealed *The Real History Behind the Da Vinci Code* uncloaks the Templars.

In the year 1119, these noblemen found their calling as protectors of the faithful on a dangerous pilgrimage to newly conquered Jerusalem. Now, historian Sharan Newman elucidates the mysteries and misconceptions of the Templars, from their true first founding and role in the Crusades to more modern intrigues, including:

- Were they devout knights or secret heretics?
- Did they leave behind a fantastic treasure-hidden to this day?
- How did they come to be associated with the Holy Grail?
- Did they come to America before the time of Columbus?
- Does the order still exist?

The Real History Behind the Templars Details

Date : Published September 4th 2007 by Berkley (first published 2007)

ISBN : 9780425215333

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Format : Paperback 448 pages

Genre : History, Nonfiction, Historical, Medieval

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From Reader Review The Real History Behind the Templars for online ebook

Daniel Casey says

less interesting and scholarly than I had hoped & more History Channel's Ancient Aliens-esque

Igor says

The book is a series of more or less disconnected short chapters with no chronological or probably any other order; as such, it reads as a poorly written high school textbook. It could still be valuable though if it were a trustworthy, well-researched work - but is it? I have my doubts. Sharan Newman stresses throughout the work the importance of footnotes and critical reading. Well so she gets it.

She claims, for instance, that:

recently some imaginative writers have decided that "Holy Grail"—San Greal—is simply a misprint for Sang Real, "Royal Blood," and that medieval writers were using it as a code for a hidden secret. This is cute but there are a number of problems in the theory, the most important being that this only works in modern Spanish. Old French, the language of the first Grail poems, would write it Saint Graal, Grel, or even Gresal

Completely wrong. This "works" in Medieval French, spoken if not written, and this false etymology is not a recent invention. The Catholic Encyclopedia of 1913 is well aware thereof, as are several books. OTOH, this "misprint" does **not** work in modern Spanish, the Spanish word for blood is *sangre* and not *sang* as she seems to assume.

Granted, this still is a *false etymology*, and it wasn't probably invented (at least no earlier evidence survived) until very late in the Middle Ages, but still, it does work in Medieval French, it does not work in modern Spanish, and it is far from being a modern invention by conspiracy theorists, who are simply parroting (or perhaps reinventing) this centuries old mistake.

But this is not even the worst blunder she had made in the book.

The following is, quoted verbatim, the footnote 23 from the 48th chapter:

<http://www.templariusze.org/artykuly....> "Moguncji zrobi? to osobi?cie preceptor z Grumbach, Hugo von Salm wraz z dwudziestoma uzbrojonymi rycerzami." Okay, my Polish is rough. He might have been the preceptor of Grumbach, but I think it says that Moguncji was preceptor. For more see chapter 35, The Trials outside of France.

Rough? Well, no, not rough, completely nonexistent (I am a native speaker, btw). I don't believe that she had taken as much as a lesson of Polish. And not just that, she has failed to comprehend the text so miserably that she has started the quotation worse than in midsentence. Now for a more complete quotation (the article is now found here):

W Niemczech na ??danie papie?a zwo?ano w kilku prowincjach synody maj?ce s?dzi? templariuszy. Na niektórych z nich jednak w obronie zakonu stan?li ?yczliwi mu biskupi, w *Moguncji robi? to osobi?cie preceptor z Grumbach, Hugo von Salm wraz z dwudziestoma uzbrojonymi rycerzami*. Przybyli ostro zaprotestowali przeciwko oskar?eniu zakonu o herezj?, a przera?ony arcybiskup zawiesi? prace synodu na okres dwóch miesi?cy.

and my translation (a rough one, I admit):

In Germany, at the pope's request, in several provinces councils were convened to try the Templars. In some of them friendly bishops stood in the order's defence, in *Mainz the preceptor from Grumbach, Hugo von Salm did it himself, with twenty armed knights*. They contested strongly the charges of heresy against the order, and the terrified archbishop suspended the council for two month's time.

(Both in the quote and the translation, the fragment quoted by Newman is in italic)

As can be seen, she completely misunderstood the text, so much so that she thought *Moguncji* to be a personal name (*I think it says that Moguncji was preceptor*) when it is the Polish name of the German city of Mainz (more precisely, *Moguncja* is the name; Polish nouns are inflected), and the fragment means that Hugo von Salm, who was preceptor from Grumbach, appeared in person at the council in Mainz to defend the order, accompanied by 20 armed knights. She's so incompetent in the Polish language that she inadvertently split the city name from the preposition - w *Moguncji* meaning exactly *in Mainz*.

Obviously, she doesn't need to know Polish, and no book is free from mistakes, so it may feel like I'm making much ado about nothing. But I don't think so. I would not be writing this if I thought this to have been a simple mistake. But, frankly, it doesn't look as one. It looks as if she googled the name Hugo von Salm, copied the offending fragment (perhaps directly from search results, or else how did she manage not to notice that she was splitting a name from a preposition?!) and without so much as trying to ask someone with even a passing knowledge of Polish she inferred that the mysterious Mr. Moguncji was a preceptor in Grumbach, and - since it's written on a Polish website - von Salm must have been in Poland to defend the order.

In short, it appears that she completely made this one up on the basis of one badly misunderstood fragment of a sentence from a Polish website.

This might look as gratuitous nitpicking, but I don't think it is. I am not an expert in Templar History, and I wanted to read a book by one. But, now aware of the reckless abandon Sharan Newman treats her sources with, I am sure this is not a book I can trust.

Mephistia says

Awesome. Just. Awesome. I love a good history book, as people who know me at all know. Even more than that, I love a well-written, engaging, yet thoroughly researched and reliable history book. She had footnotes throughout the entire thing. The last two pages of every chapter were nothing but footnotes. I have a four-page list of to-read books gleaned from this book alone. I am in heaven.

Oh, and the book? Interesting, informative and well-written. I love how she presented the information in a

well-structured, cohesive manner. She didn't jump around too much in the timeline. I was impressed with her ability to move onward from the inception of the Knights Templar to their dissolution without tangentializing too much on the individual events that led up to the dissolution. She still covered the individual events in depth, don't get me wrong -- but each of those individual events (obviously) has other events that tie into them, with others that tie into them and so on and so forth. Ms. Newman has quite the ability to stay on topic.

I also enjoyed the last few chapters, where she addresses some of the myths and pseudo-histories that have arisen around the Knights Templar. I have to admit to some flabbergasted curiosity at some of the things she hinted at.

Because of this book, I want to learn more about The Hospitallers, the Inquisition and the various Crusades. I was absolutely fascinated at the wealth of information that glimmered on the edges of this book, tangential to the topic at hand but still oh-so-alluring.

Pam says

I took my time with this one. Rich in history, it educates on The Crusades and the battles to control the Holy Land as well as how public perception of the Knights Templar differed from reality. From inception to downfall, myth to reality, Newman has written an informative, readable history. Recommended.

Anton Zolotarjov says

Provides a well documented and fact-based overview of the history of the Knights of the Temple. This book may lack action and drama, but is a worthwhile read for anyone interested in what really happened to the Order of the Temple.

Melisende d'Outremer says

This is a very basic coverage of the Templars, their history, their fate, their mythology.

But just one tiny annoyance for me: Adela of Blois was the daughter of William the Conqueror. King Henry I of England was her brother!

Laura says

As the title states, this is the real history behind the Templars. It is well researched and cites many primary sources. The chapters are nice and short too, so you won't get bogged down!

Elizabeth says

Absolutely brilliant. It's well set out and cuts through absolute mountains of dubious information about the

Templars (and helicopters :-)!) to bring the reader the straightforward no frills history. It's clear and simple. But easy to read doesn't mean under-researched or basic, not one bit. It has detailed references and understanding in depth which is distilled for the reader into handy chapter subjects. There's a chapter on the assassins for example, one on the grand masters with biographies. Another on the Templars in Paris, in London, on banking etc. There's a brilliant piece at the end which tells the reader how to know if they are studying 'pseudohistory'. Each chapter contains detailed footnotes, identifying just where Sharan Newman got her information. There's one historical error as another reviewer pointed out, but it's a nit-pick concerning the ID of Adela of Blois that got past the copy editing stage and not worth knotting one's knickers about in an otherwise fabulous work. It's going straight on my keeper shelf. Bravo Sharan Newman!

Michael says

I have never really looked into the Templars and thought I should find a book that helps give a good introduction to the Templars. After reading this book, it fulfilled my needs and then some. It not only gave historical references, but it also discussed the myths about the Templars and whether there was any accuracy to the myths. Sharan Newman was not afraid to dispel events that weren't accurate based on historical data, but she also knew when to leave events "open" that didn't have any historical data backing them up but could have potentially happened due to other facts about that time period. A good mix for a good beginning source on the Templars.

Derek Baker says

Fascinating. The history is pieced together as historian should do it -- and written in a way that you can see how historians have to evaluate sources when piecing together what really happened. Since you've 'heard' about the Knights from popular fictional sources ... this is a good read.

Susan says

A superb, detailed account of the Templars, cutting sharply through the copious mire that is written about an organisation that really does not need the fantastical embellishments it sadly receives in pseudo history... Newman manages to cleverly combine academic analysis of the sources with a style that reaches both amateur enthusiasts and academic historians.

Wayne says

Really good introduction.
Quick history of origin of templars.
Crusades in the East.
Names can get a bit confusing but the author always makes it an easy an entertaining read.
Numerous references.
Sticks up for the templars.
Dismisses modern legends.

A funny piece on pseudo history.
All in all very enjoyable.

Velvetink says

tuebl

Sharon says

"This book is an attempt to give the known facts about the Knights Templar, from their beginnings in 1119 or 1120 to the dissolution in 1312 and beyond." The order's purpose was to "defend the poor and the churches" of the Holy Land from the Saracens or Moslems of the Arab peninsula. They believed that by fighting the infidel and protecting the pilgrims visiting the holy sites they would gain remission of their sins and have the hope of heaven. Over the years legends have swirled around the Templars and they have been admired and reviled. Sharon Newman brings all of this to light by relating the facts that are known about members of the Templars and their activities. I found it a really interesting read.

Dana Stabenow says

Really useful collection, expertly vetted and written in contemporary prose of all the extent information on the Templars. The chapter on the Assassins is going to greatly inform the assassin character in Silk and Song.
