

The Real Secret Society Behind *The DaVinci Code*

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As everyone knows who has read Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* the plot revolves around the clandestine activities of an ancient secret society known as the Priory of Sion. The actual existence of this society, claims Brown, is one of the few irrefutable truths woven into his fictional novel. This may have been true when he was writing his manuscript, but recently the authors of *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, the non-fiction book that introduced Brown to the Priory, publicly stated that the organization appears to be a hoax. They confessed to having been led astray by some "Prieuré documents" they discovered in Paris' Bibliothèque Nationale, an admission that for awhile deterred most researchers from further pursuing the legitimacy of the Priory. Then researchers Lynn Picknett and Clive Prince published *The Sion Revelation*, within which they examined all arguments for and against the Priory. Their surprising conclusion was that there has indeed been a secret European organization with an agenda similar to the Priory's, and that the Priory of Sion may have been invented to act as a cover for this legitimate organization. Picknett and Prince were never able to conclusively identify this elusive order, perhaps because the secret society they apprehended is not very secretive anymore. The order they sought is commonly known as the Rosicrucian Order, although it has also been known by other related titles, including the Order of the Rose or Rosy Cross and the Brotherhood of the Rosy and Golden Cross. Although seemingly innocuous today, in the past this organization has preserved many secret rites and passed among its members many heretical secrets that are just as explosive as any information regarding the sacred Bloodline of Jesus and Mary Magdalene.

The Rosicrucian Order, which we can now call the *real* Priory of Sion, first made its presence known in the 17th century through public documents known as the *Fama* and *Confessio*. These manifestos claimed that the Order of the Rosy Cross was moving into a new public cycle although it had already been in existence as a secret society for hundreds of years. Then, in 1785, one of the Order's Paris representatives, Baron de Gleichen, spoke at an international conference of Freemasons, Rosicrucians, Illuminati and Knights Templar claiming that the members of the Order of the Rosy Cross had been the "Superiors and Founders of Freemasonry," while additionally maintaining that its Grand Masters "were designated by the titles John I, II, III, and so onward," thereby ostensibly aligning them with John the Baptist, John the Apostle, or both. These revealed characteristics of the Rosy Cross were later woven into its alter-ego, the Priory of Sion, which was similarly reputed to award its Grand Masters with sequential "John" titles.

Perhaps the most conclusive evidence in favor of the Priory of Sion being a cover name for the Order of the Rosy Cross is simply that the Priory once called itself the L'Order de la Rose-Croix Veritas, the "The True Order of the Rose Cross." Supposedly the Priory once adopted both this epithet and that of "Ormus," a name that also irrefutably ties the Priory to the Rosy Cross because Ormus is the name of the founder of an early Rosy Cross sect that existed in 1st Century Alexandria. The information

regarding Ormus and his sect first originated in the 18th century with the Rosicrucian historian Baron von Westerode, who claimed that Ormus, a disciple of St. Mark and a gnostic priest of the Alexandrian deity Serapis, was the founder of an early Rosy Cross sect that he denominated the “Sages of Light.”

And finally, conclusive proof of the Priory being but a name for the Rosy Cross can be found through a study of their mutual lists of Grand Masters, which in many places are identical. Some of the recognizable Grand Masters they share in common include Nicholas Flamel, Robert Fludd, Johann Valentin Andrea, Robert Boyle and Isaac Newton.

The Order of the Holy Grail

There is, however, one crucial difference between the Order of the Rosy Cross and the Priory of Sion. The Order of the Rosy Cross never designated itself as the guardian of the bloodline of Jesus and Mary Magdalene, which was the sole *raison d'être* of the Priory of Sion (this was, however, the *raison d'être* assigned to the Priory by the authors of *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, NOT the “Priuré documents” that first informed them of its existence). Closer inspection will, however, reveal that the two orders actually mirror each other in their fundamental missions, which for both has been the search and protection of *some form(s)* of the Holy Grail. The members of the Priory of Sion contend that the Holy Grail is solely the body of Mary Magdalene, while the Rosicrucians take a much broader approach. For them the Holy Grail is a subtle power that any human or object can possess. This power has been known by many names worldwide, including the Holy Spirit, Shekinah, Baraka, and Kundalini. A seeker must simply find the right cup, sword, spear, rock, person, etc., that is endowed with this power and then absorb it into themselves, thus initiating a process of alchemical transformation that leads to enlightenment and even immortality. Those human Holy Grails who possess the greatest abundance of this power are most commonly fully enlightened masters, and those objects that are ascribed the power of Holy Grails, such as the Cup of Christ or Spear of Longinus, are normally items that have been in close contact with such masters or held a part of them, such as their blood, and then absorbed their power. This sought after Holy Grail power can also be acquired via the head or relics of a deceased saint, such as John the Baptist, whose head was discovered in Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade and became one of the prized Holy Grails possessed by the Knights Templar. The Knights Templar were, by the way, also linked to the Order of the Rosy Cross. According to Baron von Westerode, they are known in Rosicrucian history as the “Disciples of the Rose Cross.” Their definitive red cross of eight points was an ancient alchemical symbol of the Rosy Cross Order. And similar to other branches of the Rosy Cross, the Templars also entitled their Grand Masters as John I, II, III, etc.

Back to the Garden

Since the Rosicrucians take a more expansive view on what the Holy Grail is, their service of guarding it is also more inclusive. While the goal of the Priory of Sion has been to guard Mary Magdalene and her descendants, that of the Rosicrucians has been to protect a lineage of Holy Grail masters and their alchemical teachings that can be traced all the way back to the Garden of Eden. According to the historian Arthur Edward Waite in *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross*, it was not unusual for certain early European

branches of the Order of the Rosy Cross to maintain that their “Rosy Cross” wisdom was first taught by God to Adam in the fabled Garden. This secret wisdom was then passed down a lineage of enlightened “Sons of Wisdom” that included Moses and Solomon, as well as the alchemist Hermes Trismegistus.

Could the Order of the Rosy Cross have literally originated in the Garden of Eden as Rosicrucian historians maintained? A body of surprising evidence supporting this notion can be found in the archives of the Order of the Garter, Britain’s most prestigious knighted order founded by King Edward III, who synthesized elements of the Templars, the Knights of the Round Table, and the Sufi Order of Al-Khadir to create his 14th century chivalrous organization. The Order of the Garter and its symbols, which include a rose and a rosy cross, was, according to Frances Yates in *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*, initially linked to the Rosicrucians. St. George, the Garter’s patron saint whose symbol is a rosy cross embedded in an eight-pointed star, also links the Order of the Garter to the Rosy Cross, while in addition he also connects both orders to the Garden of Eden. Today, St. George is known as Al-Khadir by the Middle Eastern Sufis who maintain that his true home is Kataragama on Sri Lanka – the island paradise currently recognized by Moslems worldwide as the original site of the Garden of Eden. Thus, St. George ties the Rosy Cross to Eden - but he also does so in a more direct way. According to the Hindus, who also venerate St. George at Kataragama albeit as their deity Skanda-Murugan, in very ancient times St. George was physically incarnate as a great spiritual leader who first taught the knowledge of alchemy to humanity. He was also full of the alchemical power of transformation which he passed to his students, thereby founding lineages of adepts full of Holy Grail power. One of these lineages was taken west by the Nasurai Mandeans, who eventually merged with the Jewish Essenes to produce the sect of the Nasoreans or Nazarenes, the sect that John the Baptist and Jesus were born into. John received the Holy Grail power and wisdom from his Nasorean teachers before passing it to Jesus and other masters who founded gnostic sects, including the founders of the Alexandrian sect that produced Ormus. Jesus eventually passed the power and wisdom to his successors, John the Apostle and Mary Magdalene, who in turn transmitted it down a line of Holy Grail masters that culminated with the Knights Templar. Thus, in the end, the power and secret teachings of the Holy Grail came into the possession of many branches of the Order of the Rosy Cross, the *real* Priory of Sion.

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