

THE
DA VINCI
CODE
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The Da Vinci Code
Fact or Fable?

By Bruce Woolard

Introduction

The 21st century has been marked by a profound loss of faith. Speeding technology has laid waste to traditional belief systems and shallow Christian claims through the mass media and has made the “born again” experience look cheap. So called Christian leaders have been found guilty of emotional abuse and obsessed with material wealth in the name of prosperity claiming that they are entitled to live as the “king’s kids.” We are warned in Scripture that the day will come when the truth will be evil spoken of. Those of us who carry the title Christian must depart from evil and live Godly exemplary lives that will make the world sit-up and take note that we are indeed the children of the Living God.

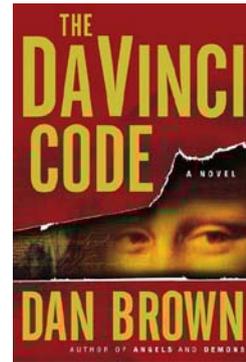
The world has been destabilized through globalisation, terrorism, avian flu, the Aids epidemic, global warming, nuclear threats, weak world leaders, the war in Iraq and the potential of a third world war brought on by the rhetoric of Ahmadinejad the Iranian President and megalomaniac. The litany of ills goes on and on. The progress that mankind has made in the last 100 years has not contributed to the standard of morality. The converse is true. We are technological giants but moral midgets.

The world is ready now more than ever for a religious shake-up, unprecedented in human history. For some time, Bible scholars and astute Christian teachers have warned that a spiritual tsunami will usher in a one world religion. Traditional Christianity that subscribes to the inerrancy of Scripture and embraces sound theology that makes Christian truth exclusive and spiritually liberating is under attack. The reason for books such as The Holy Grail, The Last Temptation of Christ, The DaVinci Code and others is to sow seeds of doubt as to the reliability of Christian truth and as the world becomes more open to change the less influence Christian history will have on the collective mind of man. I do not believe that the DaVinci Code is a threat to the truth of Christianity, it is another fable that the Christian church rejected in the first century. It is equal to a fishing boat attacking a naval frigate. However, I believe we should see the DaVinci Code as a catalyst to help us share God’s Truth with as many people who are willing to listen. Let’s strike while the iron is hot.

The concept of a one world religion is a dream of the Ecumenical Movement which hopes to unite Christianity under one umbrella and negotiate a further step towards global oneness with other religions until a harmonic convergence occurs (this means all opposing forces galvanized into oneness). A one world government is on the cards and a one world economic system will be embraced because the haves and the have-nots will come to a common agreement in their quest for survival.

Popularity of the book

The DaVinci Code consists of over 600 pages and 105 chapters. It was written by Dan Brown and more than 40 million copies have been sold. Recently a movie has been made by Director Ron Howard on the DaVinci Code featuring Tom Hanks in the lead role.



The author promotes the book as a mere novel, however, he makes outrageous claims in terms of the historical record of the life of Jesus. The book is filled with treachery, religious fanaticism, murder, ancient conspiracy, secret societies, feminine deities, erotic spirituality, legends and myth. These elements form the plot that has helped popularize the book.

Overview of the book

It opens with the last 15 minutes in the life of Jacques Sauniere the curator of the Louvre Art Gallery who has been mortally wounded by an albino monk, Silas, who has been sent as an assassin to silence Sauniere. Sauniere manages to construct a series of complicated clues to lead his granddaughter,



Sophie, to the secret of the holy grail, which he had been protecting. He suggests she calls in Robert Langdon, a cryptologist and a professor in religious symbology. They are then pursued by the French police, who believe they are implicated in the murder. Up to this point the book sounds like an ordinary novel of

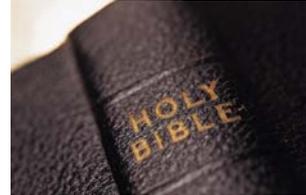
mystery and intrigue. Then the thriller zones in on the purported claim that Jesus married Mary Magdalene and their bloodline survives in modern France. The book mischievously seeks to undermine the Catholic church, claiming that the church has suppressed the truth about Jesus throughout the centuries. As a matter of fact, the attack is not merely against the Catholic church, it is a subtle attempt to erode the faith of every believer who names Christ as Saviour. It is also an attack on the truth of history. The book continues with a fascination in the works of Leonardo DaVinci, a member of a society called "The Priory Sion." This society guards and protects the real holy grail and is waiting until the time is right to reveal it to the world. The book seeks to unravel the DaVinci Code suggesting that his art is an expression of secrets he wished to keep from the authorities.

Fables and Blasphemy

Dan Brown and his retinue can be thankful that true Christians do not behave in the same way as Islamic fundamentalists who violently reacted to a caricature of Mohammed published in a Swedish newspaper. However, this does not negate the fact that the book's content is blasphemous and believers worldwide are repulsed by the suggestion that Christ's life and claim to equality with His Father was and is a lie. Let's examine the truth behind the DaVinci Code.

The Reliability of the Bible

The book we call the Bible was not put together by a council or men as purported by Dan Brown in the DVC. To the contrary the 27 books of the New Testament, which included the four Gospels, were meticulously considered as the inspired Word of God by first century Christians. The apostles were alive when these books were circulated and the content was authenticated by Apostolic authority. What Constantine, the Roman Emperor, did in 325AD was to endorse the books of the New Testament, which had already been accepted as authoritative in the preceding centuries. The true nature of Jesus Christ is that He was divine and human, and therefore, He could bring together the deity of God and the humanity of man, through an act of reconciliation performed through the atoning work on the cross. The DVC promotes a common Gnostic view which was dismissed by the early Christians as heresy. The Gnostics also propagated a false concept of revelation from God which put them on a collision course with Apostolic authority. The book also challenges the origin and development of Christian beliefs and suggests that Jesus appointed Mary Magdalene as the head of the church. But because of the strong patriarchal role in society this "truth" was suppressed. The Gnostics were intrigued with feminism and worshipped the dual nature of the divine and therefore, the feminine goddess role which is rooted in paganism became an object of worship. From the Gnostic point of view Mary Magdalene was the ideal candidate for being the carrier of the seed of Christ the Messiah. Therefore, DVC claims to draw from extra-biblical books such as the Gnostic writings that were considered fables and heresy.



Definition of a Fable

A fable is a story or account especially a fictitious narrative invented to instruct or amuse, a tale devised to enforce or introduce indirectly some opinion in which imaginary persons are represented. Fables were the legends, myths and falsehoods developed by popular demand and superstition. Such stories have been fabricated to deceive.

A Biblical Exposé

“Preach the Word (the Bible). Be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine, for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine (teaching) but after their own lusts (desire) shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions (persecution), do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.” 2 Timothy 4:2-5

Factual Inaccuracies

Michele Magwood in her article on the DaVinci Code published on the 21 May 2006 in the Sunday Times says that the inaccuracies of Dan Brown’s book, The DVC, diminishes its value. For instance one can’t travel in Paris past the Opera House en route from the Ritz to the Louvre as Langdon does in the novel. Also, Dan Brown claims it is a fact of history that 5 million women were executed as witches in Europe. This is inaccurate, as she points out, history confirms that there were 50 000. Many other inaccuracies stated by Dan Brown are exposed. What makes the book dangerous is that Brown himself states *“All descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents and secret rituals in this novel are accurate.”* The astute reader who examines these claims will soon discover that they lack any credibility or authenticity.

Misrepresenting History

The DVC is not only about making money and entertaining readers, but it goes a lot deeper in that there is a religious viewpoint that is sown as a seed that produces weeds, thorns and thistles. The issue is that it misrepresents Christian theology and the faith that hundreds of millions of people believe and hold dear. This is not even a Christian issue, the issue is fact versus fiction, truth versus lies, accuracy versus inaccuracy. In other words the DVC would still be as offensive if its misrepresentation of historical facts were used to attack Islam, Buddhism or any other religion. Dan Brown is entitled to an opinion but to warp the facts in order to disagree with it to the point of rewriting a vast number of historical events, is dishonest to say the least.

Historical Facts

The so-called cover-up of “original Christianity” purported by DVC is laughable. The truth is that Christianity is based on a variety of historical documents known as the New Testament. These texts plainly tell the story of Jesus whose followers changed the world. At times in history certain individuals and leaders have used Christianity for their own goals. The ever present reality is that those who are faithful to the teachings of our faith have consistently shown the qualities that marked His life of love, compassion, self sacrifice and integrity. Christianity



is not anti-women and the beliefs and teachings of the Christian faith pre-date the Council of Nicaea. Constantine, the Roman Emperor, certainly did not collate the 27 books of the New Testament. In the First Century these writings were endorsed as “God breathed”, divinely inspired and authoritative. The books that make up the New Testament were not determined by a council of bishops as suggested by Brown and others, but rather were books accepted on the basis of their content and the fact that they carried the names of those who wrote them under God’s inspiration. These writers were alive at the time and could validate the content and therefore authenticate its message.

Homily

A homily is a speech or story and I want to share with you a historical story that is found in the Old Testament.

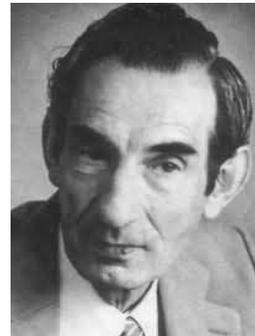
Abraham stood out as an icon of faith. He rejected the false pagan views about God or gods. He believed in the only true God, Creator of Heaven and Earth. This belief is known as Monotheism. However, there were other belief systems in ancient times that were pagan and known as Polytheism (belief in many gods), one Pantheism (the belief that all is god). When the offspring of Abraham was led out of Egypt with a promise by Moses that God would give them the promised land they camped in the desert and God gave them a form of worship that was distinct from all the nations around them. He told them to build a tabernacle. Inside this tent the Ark of the Covenant was covered by the Mercy Seat and often God would manifest His presence in a section of the tent. For the Jews, worship consisted of two things – sacrifice and praise. When they moved into the land of Palestine they found that their form of worship was different from the Canaanites. The other nations worshipped all kinds of gods. These were Agrarian societies. These cultures were primarily concerned with gods who controlled their crops. So around the Middle East, at that time, the shrines and temples were constructed to the male fertility god who often went by the name Baal and the female fertility god who went by a variety of related names from Ashtorath to Ishtar to Isis to Artemis to Diana. In order to convince these fertility gods to fertilize their lands ancient Middle East pagans would engage in fertility exercises themselves. Every temple to Baal or Ashtorath had a group of female temple prostitutes. The gods in the heavens would be aroused by this prostitution and would cause the fertilization of the land. The Israelites were repulsed and condemned these practices.

Heresy

The Gnostic movement was a mixture of these old pagan practices and Christian beliefs. They believed that matter was evil and God is good and that the physical universe came into existence through a chain of lesser gods called “Aeons”. These lesser gods created gods of less power than themselves until finally one of these lesser spirits created the world of matter and people. The word Gnostic is derived from the word “gnosis” and simply

means those who know. This knowledge was esoteric and was believed to have come from a divine source (over the last 100 years there has been a revival of these ancient beliefs and even churches have sprung up embracing these false dogmas). A problem arose for the Gnostics of the Second Century as they tried to blend their gnosis with Christianity. They reasoned that if Jesus was God and came to earth that He couldn't be God anymore because He took on flesh and all matter is sinful. So the Gnostic solution to Jesus was to conclude that He was not material, He was completely spiritual, He only appeared to be material. They believed His presence never cast a shadow and that He could walk through walls after His resurrection, which was an indication that He wasn't material but immaterial. An alternative solution was to claim that Jesus was a mere man and therefore like all Gnostics needed an initiation to enter into the realm of "knowledge". The DVC promotes a Gnostic view of Christ.

The book suggests that the Roman Catholic Church under Constantine suppressed the belief embraced by the Gnostics. The Gnostics taught that Jesus was a divine man (a lesser god), and could not have been single because the main purpose of the Gnostics was to know and enter into the world of wisdom. Part of this passage to knowledge was the interaction between male and female in order to satisfy the dual gods of ancient paganism of which the Gnostics were an offspring. He needed to have a wife. Mary Magdalene was the ideal candidate because she was a companion of Christ (incidentally all His disciples were also called companions). DVC mischievously promotes the view that Constantine, along with the Catholic Bishops, rewrote the Biblical record and destroyed the "original faith" which was Gnostic and for centuries they have kept this truth from the masses. DVC then claims that the Holy Grail was not a chalice from which Jesus drank in the Last Supper with His disciples, but that as the chalice is shaped like a womb so Mary Magdalene's womb is the actual Holy Grail. Furthermore, Mary Magdalene carried the seed of Christ and the descendents of this bloodline reside in France and a certain Pierre Plantard (1920-2000), a Frenchman, is a descendent of Christ with rights to the royal throne of France.

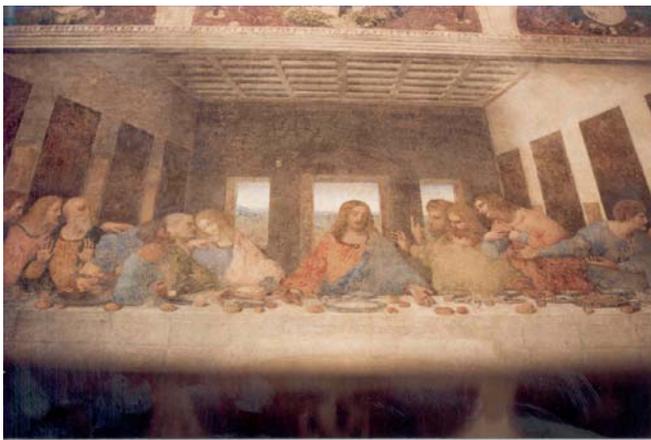


Parchments containing the lineage of the Holy Grail were purportedly kept as a secret by the Knight's Templar (these knights were initially sent to protect pilgrims to the Holy Land and secure relics from Jerusalem). DVC subtly claims that the Knight's Templar discovered these parchments and the Holy Grail which the Catholic Church wanted to destroy and the power of the Knight's Templar became such a threat to the Church that the Order was eventually dismantled. The DVC creates the impression that this secret of the Holy Grail was kept by a group known as the "Priory of Sion" a secret organization that subscribed to the beliefs of the Gnostics and who worshipped the feminine goddess of fertility.



Leonardo da Vinci was a genius, he was brilliant, talented, contemplative, an architect, engineer, natural scientist and above all an artist of note. He was also enigmatic and concealed his true self in cryptic images of art. DVC is all about the secret codes that Leonardo left to hide the truth about the Holy Grail, the life of Mary Magdalene, including, his own orientation. To add more intrigue to the narrative Leonardo da Vinci was a member of the Priory of Sion, the secret organization, that kept the record of the genealogy of Christ and Mary

Magdalene. The painting of the Mona Lisa cryptically conceals the true ancient origin of two Egyptian deities, the god Amon and the goddess Isis whose ancient pictogram was once called Lisa. Mona Lisa is an anagram of the divine union of male and female. (The truth is that Leonardo himself did not name the painting. He never titled any of his works. This name for the painting was given by Giorgio Vasari and depicts a portrait of a Florentine lady).



His painting of the Last Supper has caused quite a stir, because according to the DVC the disciple sitting to the right of Jesus looks like a female and this was Leonardo's way of concealing the presence of Mary Magdalene. Traditionally the disciple sitting to the right of Jesus is the young teenage John, the beloved, but from the code of da Vinci this was

Mary Magdalene. In the book this so called secret is veiled in the painting to demonstrate that the authority of the Church was not vested in Peter but rather in Mary Magdalene. This, DVC claims, resulted in the Catholic Church destroying the ancient records because it was a threat to their beliefs.

History

History reveals that the early church was faced with many heresies. The New Testament is filled with warnings about false teachers and misleading doctrines. Constantine, a pagan Roman Emperor, embraced Christianity in 312AD. Later in 325AD the Council Nicaea affirmed the belief and teachings of the 27 books of the New Testament. Although reputable historians embrace these facts, our faith is rooted not in mere historical evidence (although this gives credence to our beliefs) but to the claims made in the New Testament that Jesus Christ paid an atoning sacrifice for all mankind and that His main mission was to reveal Himself as the Messiah to the Nation of Israel and to sacrifice His life for the salvation of all people.



Faith in Him secures our salvation. We either believe this truth or believe the lie. We are reminded in 1 John 4:1 that we must test the spirits and in Romans 10:9 we are called upon to confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus Christ and believe in our heart that God has raised Him from the dead. It is upon this confession that we secure eternal life. May the Lord help us to defend our beliefs with enthusiasm, courage and faith. Truth brings freedom, a lie, bondage.

DaVinci Code	The Truth behind the code
<p><i>Pagan symbolism.</i> It is “hidden” in the Chartres Cathedral in Paris.</p> <p><i>The pentacle.</i> This symbol, a five-pointed star within a circle, represents “the female half of all things – a concept religious historians call the sacred feminine or the divine goddess.</p> <p><i>Sunday.</i> Christianity’s weekly holy day was stolen from the pagans. Christianity honoured the Jewish Sabbath of Saturday, but Constantine shifted it to coincide with the pagan’s veneration day of the sun.</p> <p><i>Ritual copulation.</i> Early Jewish tradition involved ritualistic sex. <i>In the Temple, no less.</i> Early Jews believed that the Holy of Holies in Solomon’s Temple housed not only God but also His powerful female equal, Shekinah.</p>	<p>There is nothing “hidden” about pagan symbols at Chartres – which includes a labyrinth, and the great Rose Window. The Church openly used these symbols to attract pagans.</p> <p>Today the pentacle is used mostly by neopagans to indicate the priority of spirituality over materialism. And to them it usually symbolizes Earth, not Venus. Satanists also use the symbol, but they draw it upside down to show, among other things, rebellion.</p> <p>Observance of Sunday as “the Lord’s day” is recorded even earlier – in the Bible (Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2). Sunday was easily accepted by Christians because it coincided with the Lord’s resurrection (Matthew 28:1), His post-resurrection appearances (John 20:26), and the descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1). Moreover, references to Sunday as “the Lord’s day” appear long before Constantine, in writings of Justin Martyr (about 100 to 165) and Melito to Sardis (late 100’s).</p> <p>There is no historical records showing <i>any</i> era in Israel when ritualistic sex was sanctioned in the temple. As for <i>Shekinah</i>, this is not the name of a goddess, but a combination of Hebrew words that, when linked</p>

God's original name. "The Jewish Tetragrammaton YHWH – the sacred name of God – in fact derived from Jehovah, an androgynous physical union between the masculine *Jah* and the pre-Hebraic name for Eve, *Havah*.

Constantine's beliefs. The Bible, as we know it today, was collated by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine ... He was a lifelong pagan who was baptized on his deathbed, too weak to protest. He was the "head priest" of the official Roman religion of sun worship – "the cult of *Sol Invictus*.

No definitive Bible. The Christian Scriptures evolved through countless translations, additions and revisions. History has never had a definitive version of the book.

Rewriting the Scriptures. Constantine commissioned and financed the new Bible, which omitted those gospels that spoke of Christ's *human* traits and embellished those gospels that made Him godlike. The earlier gospels were outlawed, gathered up and burned.

together, mean "dwelling." The word is not contained in the Bible, although a similar name (*Shecaniah*) is found in 1 Chronicles 3:21. It means "Yahweh dwelling," and it refers to God's presence in the temple.

In fact, the term "Jah" is not even a Hebrew word. Hebrew, however, does include *Yah*, a contracted form of YHWH. And throughout the Hebrew scriptures, "Yah" is indeed coupled with a masculine verb. In Psalm 106:1, for example, *halal Yah* means "Praise the Lord."

Constantine (about 274 or 280 to 337) was not a lifelong pagan. According to Kenneth Scott Latourette (1884 – 1975), Yale professor of Oriental history, Constantine converted to Christianity. This conclusion is accepted by many non-Christian historians and scholars, including those openly critical of Christianity.

As for the Bible's reliability, both the Old and New Testaments are well supported by copies that have been extensively compared and contrasted. The New Testament is especially well-established by existing manuscripts.

There is no historical evidence showing that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were "embellished" by Constantine, Eusebius or any of Eusebius's scribes. Moreover, the Gospels hardly ignore Christ's "*human traits*." Christians believe that Jesus was 100% divine and 100% human. Therefore, erasing the elements of His humanity would have been contrary to what the church was teaching in Constantine's days. Aspects of Jesus' humanity recorded in the Gospels include His amazement (Matthew 8:10), His

Defining "heretic." "Anyone who chose the forbidden gospels over Constantine's version was deemed a heretic. The word *heretic* derives from that moment in history. The Latin word *haereticus* means 'choice.' Those who 'chose' the original history of Christ [those gospels rejected by Constantine] were the world's first *heretics*.

Finding the scrolls. Some of the gospels Constantine tried to destroy managed to survive. The Dead Sea Scrolls were found in the 1950s ... And, of course, the Coptic Scrolls in 1945 at Nag Hammadi. Further, the Vatican, in keeping with their tradition of misinformation, tried very hard to suppress the release of these scrolls ... These are the earliest Christian records.

Misrepresentation of divine symbols. "As part of the campaign to eradicate pagan religions and convert the masses to Christianity, the Church launched a smear campaign against the pagan gods and goddesses, recasting their divine symbols as evil .. Venus's pentacle became the sign of the devil.

anger (Mark 11:16), His hunger and fatigue (Luke 4:2, 8:23), and His sorrow (John 11:33-36).

Once again the *Code* falsely attributes Eusebius's work –his list of accepted gospels – to Constantine. Moreover, it erroneously claims that the word *heretic* is derived "from that moment in history". In reality, the word appears much earlier – in the New Testament book of Titus, which was written by the Apostle Paul about A.D. 63-64. Paul's admonition was to reject anyone who was heretical (*hairetikos*, Titus 3:10). The Greek word for heresy (*haireisis*) shows up even earlier, in 1 Corinthians 11:19 (about 54).

Why the Dead Sea Scrolls are mentioned here is a mystery since they contain no "gospels" of any kind. The manuscripts, which are *pre-Christian Jewish*, include portions of every Old Testament book. As for the Nag Hammadi collection, it does indeed contain several gospels that are Gnostic in origin. But the assertion that "the Vatican" tried to suppress their publication is unfounded. Finally, it should be noted that the gospels found at Nag Hammadi, contrary to the *Code*, are not the "earliest Christian records."

The most striking aspect of this statement is its inconsistency with a later remark in the *Code*. To see the inconsistency, we need only compare the quote from pages 37-232 in the book. The Church is excoriated for recasting paganism's "divine symbols" as evil. But then on page 232 the complaint suddenly changes. Here the Church is condemned for accepting pagan symbols and reassigning Christian beliefs to them. According to Brown, this proves that Christianity is but a poor copy of older

<p><i>The campaign against the goddess.</i> Constantine and his successors converted the world from matriarchal paganism to patriarchal Christianity by waging a campaign of propaganda that demonized the sacred feminine, obliterating the modern goddess from religion.</p> <p><i>A vote on Jesus' 'divinity.'</i> It was at the Council of Nicaea in 325 that Church leaders decided by vote to make Jesus divine. "Until that moment in history Jesus was viewed by His followers as a mortal prophet.</p> <p><i>Jesus marriage.</i> One particularly troubling theme kept recurring in the Gnostic gospels. Mary Madalene More specifically, her marriage to Jesus Christ.</p> <p><i>The documentation of Jesus lineage.'</i> The royal bloodline of Jesus Christ has been chronicled in exhaustive detail by scores of historians.</p> <p><i>The Grail's most ancient meaning.</i> Although the term for Holy Grail has usually been written <i>San Greal</i> (from Old French), in its most ancient form it was divided as "<i>Sang Real ... Royal Blood.</i>"</p>	<p>and far richer systems of spirituality.</p> <p>Ancient paganism was neither matriarchal nor patriarchal. It was not even close to being a unified belief system. Those adhering to various <i>forms</i> of paganism often revered dozens or hundreds of gods, goddesses, spirits and less easily defined supernatural entities.</p> <p>The Council of Nicaea had nothing to do with <i>deciding</i> Jesus' divinity. The most pressing issue before it involved a man named Arius who was teaching that Jesus was a created being.</p> <p>None of the Gnostic gospels within the Nag Hammadi library – <i>the Gospel of Truth, the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Philip</i> – contain any reference to a marriage between Mary Magdalene and Jesus. The <i>Gospel of Mary</i> is also silent on the issue.</p> <p>Dan Brown clearly hopes to add scholarly weight and an air of credibility to his assertion about Jesus' bloodline by using the word "historians" The following four books are listed – <i>Holy Blood, Holy Grail</i> (Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh, Henry Lincoln), <i>The Woman with the Alabaster jar</i> (Margaret Starbird), <i>The Goddess in the Gospels</i> (Margaret Starbird) and <i>The Templar Revelation</i> (Lynne Picknett and Clive Prince). But none of these authors are historians.</p> <p>The earliest reference to the Holy Grail is simply <i>Graal</i> ("<i>Grail</i>"), <i>not Sang Real</i> ("<i>royal blood</i>"). The latter form originated in the late Middle Ages (1400s – 1500s), when Christians believed that the Grail (the cup used by Christ at the Last</p>
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<p><i>The nature of the Priory of Sion.</i> Currently headquartered in France, the organization is one of the oldest surviving secret societies on earth.</p> <p><i>The documentation preserved.</i> The hidden documents that detail the truth about Mary Magdalene, Jesus and their lineage were long ago entrusted to the Priory of Sion.</p> <p><i>The origins of the Knights Templar.</i> The order was founded by the Priory of Sion.</p> <p><i>The Knights true mission.</i> It is a misconception that the Knights Templar were created to protect the Holy Land. Their public function of guarding pilgrims “was a guise” under which the Templars ran their mission ... to retrieve the documents (proving Jesus’ bloodline and his relationship with Magdalene) from beneath the ruins of the temple.</p>	<p>Supper) had been used by Joseph of Arimathea at the crucifixion to catch the “holy blood” of Jesus.</p> <p>The history of the second and third Priors of Sion can be traced to the Frenchman Pierre Plantard (1920-2000), who in 1942 founded an anti-Jewish group known as Alpha Galates. Little more is known about Plantard until 1943, when he received a six month prison term for fraud and embezzlement.</p> <p>The Priory of Sion was founded by Pierre Plantard in the early 1960s. His link to “hidden documents” and the Saunière saga goes back to the late 1950s and 1960s.</p> <p>The Knights Templar was founded as a military religious order in about 1118, by Hugh des Payens, a knight from Burgunday, and Godfrey St Omer, a knight from Northern France.</p> <p>No historical evidence supports or even suggests this assertion.</p>
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