

PROJECT PROPOSAL

JAFFA ORANGE

The German Palestinian Australian Cookbook of the Temple Society

Community Work

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The Temple Society is a community group with religious foundations which was founded in Germany in 1861. The group moved from Germany to Palestine at its founding, splitting from the Lutheran church. Settled in Palestine from 1868-1941, the Templers predominately lived in Haifa, Jaffa, Saron and Jerusalem. During the world wars, the community was interned under the British as their ties to Germany had remained strong. In 1941 a large number of Templers were deported to Australia, and finally in 1948 the remaining members faced persecution and were expelled, joining the others in both Sydney and Melbourne. By 1956 there were 1,300 Templers in Australia; however this number is declining steadily as older generations pass away.

Today the Temple Society is a particularly active community. Their religious obligations and services have declined in importance, however they hold a monthly mass in their Sydney and Melbourne chapels and celebrate festivals at both venues and the adjoining community halls including Sommerfest and Octoberfest. They have a kids club, run retreats and camps, host Sunday school, have a preschool and own a fairly large retirement village and nursing home. Ties to Germany are as strong as ever, with a number of members moving back to Germany and establishing a branch of the community there.

I have been asked to make a cookbook for the Templers; documenting not only the recipes which have been passed down through families in Germany, Palestine and

Australia, but also exploring the food history which has shaped these recipes. Food has revealed itself to be an interesting and telling method of tracing Templer history as you can see the cultural and social history influence changing food habits and methods. My work has involved talking to numerous community members in both states, collecting, translating and documenting recipes and stories, exploring the archives in Melbourne and designing and producing the book. I intend to do my best to ensure that as many members as possible are able to get involved, contribute their recipes and later own a copy of the cookbook.

Major Project

The project itself will be the cookbook, which currently has the working title *Jaffa Orange* (a variety of orange cultivated by the Templers in Palestine and one of their main exports). The question I aim to address through the project asks how we can trace social, cultural and even political history through food, and how a group's identity can be shaped and changed through cooking. I will argue their German tradition and culture merged with and was changed by their new environment (Palestine), which will be shown implicitly through the recipes and explicitly in history sections of the book. I hope to produce a functional and aesthetic cookbook that will reach the whole community (and even other people interested in the cuisine) and highlight the historical development of a wholly unique blend of German and Arabic food, as well as the exploring the historical significance of food to the group.

The recipes I have collected have come from a range of sources. I have been given handwritten family cookbooks and original Templer recipe collections, as well as writing down a number of recipes people have provided orally at meetings. The history



The Temple Society Tapestry

sections of the book will be drawn from personal stories and a few secondary sources (many which are published by the society itself). Finally the Templer tapestry (a

physical tapestry made by the society which I photographed for the book) and other photos from the archives will decorate the book and provide historical context. I have also looked at a few cookbooks for layout ideas. I will organize my information (recipes and history) into salad, soup, mains, desserts etc. with pages for food history throughout relating to specific foods or traditions. There will also be an introduction at the start which looks at the history of the society in general to contextualize the book.

My intention is for this work to serve the entire Templer community, of which there are 800 remaining members. They are an aging community however, with the majority of members either having migrated from Palestine or being first generation Australians. Therefore the work will be presented as a hard copy, bound book (although I will make an eBook version available) so that is accessible for people of all generations. I will present it as a fairly standard cookbook, using InDesign to compile it. To ensure that it does not read as “just a cookbook” and make the history element clear, each recipe will be accompanied by an anecdote and entire pages will present photos and food histories (in a similar manner to Ottolenghi’s *Jerusalem* cookbook). I have a few options to get it printed, however this will take further research.

Finally, I have two main concerns in terms of the work I am doing and the project I am developing; time and audience. It is a fairly large project, and whilst I am a fair way into completing it and have undertaken the community work aspect of it (although my contact with the group is ongoing), I am still nervous about the time restraints. More so I am concerned about how the project will be received by the community. Food often sparks debate; whose recipe is best, whose quantities are accurate, whether caustic soda should be warmed or cooled when making pretzels. It will be impossible to include everything I have received (I have been sent six apple cake recipes for example) so will try my best to represent everyone who has been involved and also on occasion add recipe variations. Otherwise, I am very much looking forward to completing my major project.

Annotated Working Bibliography

Primary Sources

Interviews with community members, 11 September 2015 – 27 September 2015.

Interviews form the basis of the food history; providing recipes and anecdotes orally. They were informal and conversational, both in groups over lunch and individually over cake (note: food was always present). We spoke about cooking and memories of food, as well as specific dishes and cooking techniques. All community members involved, both in Sydney and Melbourne, will be acknowledged individually throughout the book.

Temple Society Australia, *A Collection of Understandings from a Religious Perspective*, (Victoria: Temple Society, 2013).

Although religion was rarely spoken about and celebrated, it underpins the community and remains pivotal in the lives of many members. It was important to understand this before I spoke to people, and the book provided an overview.

Temple Society Australia, *Fabric of Society: The Templer Journey*, (Victoria: Temple Society, 2009).

This publication documents the making of the tapestry, which itself chronicles the journey of the society across countries, terrains and environments. It explains each detail on the tapestry, many of which are food related. As I intend to use the tapestry as the main motif in the book, it was good to explore it in depth.

Temple Society Australia, *Templer Record: TS150 Jubilee Edition*, (Victoria: Temple Society, 2011).

The Templer Record (now called the Templer Talk) is a monthly publication put out by the community. This particular Jubilee edition focuses on personal stories and histories.

Various family recipe books, Untitled.

I have been loaned and sent copies of a number of personal recipes collections from Templer families. The earliest dates back to 1908 and many of the hand written books have travelled from Palestine to Australia. They are extremely difficult to read and translate, but they also have the most fascinating recipes and history behind them. Again, each recipe from them will be properly attributed in the book.

Secondary Sources

Baxter, Jane & Dimbleby Henry, *Leon: Fast Vegetarian*, (London: Hachette UK, 2014).

This cookbook has a clever layout of recipes and personal anecdotes and photos.

Carmel, Alex, *Die Siedlungen der Wurttembergischen Templer in Palastina 1868-1918*, (Stuttgart: W Kohlhammer Verlag, 1973).

Although I was unable to make out parts of this text; excerpts and photos were extremely useful in painting a picture of the Palestinian settlements and it will inform the general history I intend to include.

Hoffmann, Christopher, *Jerusalem Journey*, (Stuttgart: Maria-Paulus Foundation, 1968).

Jerusalem Journey is the autobiography one of the two founding community members and it details his journey from Stuttgart, Germany to Jerusalem. Besides being an interesting read, Hoffman's first-hand experience and insight helps contextualise and personalise the broader Templer history.

Ottolenghi, Yotam (with Tamimi, Sami), *Jerusalem*, (Italy: Ebury Press, 2012).

This cookbook formed the basis of my own layout.

Sauer, Paul, *The Holy Land Called: The Story of the Temple Society*, (Victoria: Temple Society, 1991).

Every Templar household has a copy (or three in one instance) of this book, and it is considered to be the definitive Templar history book.

Valentine, L. *Palestine Past and Present: Pictorial and Descriptive*, (London: Frederick Warne and Co., 1893).

This book is a more general history of Palestine; however it was interesting to leaf through it (carefully!) and find mention of the Templars and their contributions to building Palestinian cities, particularly in Haifa.