

# What is History? Lecture

Who is history for?

- Thinking about how our history projects will benefit the community we work with
- Interaction between objective & subjective history
  - established facts about the community; dates, movements
  - Oral history & memory

Questions to ask community group

- What can I do for you as a historian?
- What aspect of your community history needs to be addressed?
- How can I present my project in a meaningful & accessible way?
- Keeping in mind that my project is for the community

Today I had a "lightbulb moment" during the lecture & decided to approach the Templar Society. My grandfather is a member of the community yet has not until recently engaged with the group. The Templars were ~~are~~ a German religious group who lived in Palestine until 1947ish when they were placed in camps & later fled. As a result their history is a weird mishmash of cultures (by weird I mean unique) in which strong German identity mixes with Palestinian/Arabic culture and now an Australian identity too.

What next?

- Email Irene Bouzo, a community member who recently submitted a PHD on Templar assimilation in Australia
- Address the above questions

Entry Two

6.8.15

## Making Contact

Email: irenebouzo14@gmail.com

Content:

- Introduce myself
- Course overview & aims
- What I can offer
- Why I chose the Templars
- Find out about projects I can work on

Today I emailed Irene (as she is Melbourne-based) about getting involved in community. I spoke of my own historical training & of my work in the book industry and my design & marketing experience. I am really excited to engage with a group that has always been part of my heritage yet know so little about. My grandfather has always reluctantly talked about family history, yet he too is excited about my own engagement & interest.

Irene's response:

- Enthusiastic to work with me
- Little has been done to document the community's history since Germany; scholarship has focused more on their Australian history & present situation
- Would be interested in something visual, interactive & oral

Irene was very open to suggestions so I'd like to draw together history & design & produce a book of some sort, as the community is made up of an aging population.

## Public History Lecture

History is ambiguous, multi-disciplinary & mutable  
Can be done outside the academic realm but does not have  
to be opposed to academic inquiry

I don't think an essay would serve the community well as it would not engage everyone nor would it be able to be read by everyone due to language barriers etc. I'm going to begin my project amongst the community focusing on oral history; gathering stories & ideas. I'm leaning towards a culinary history as it's the most vivid part of my heritage & my only connection to the community has been through food. Both Irene & my grandfather Rolf has confirmed & reiterated the role of food & eating in community identity.

Email from Rolf (excerpt)

"Don't forget that I have a heap of recipes which cover traditions from South Germany to Palestine and lastly to Australia. A story can be made out of these if you like as they show the gradual adjustment of Templars to the cultures they were in contact with."

I think he's been wanting me to do something with the recipes he has accumulated for a while so perhaps I can collect a range of recipes from different families and make a book which includes recipes & history somehow.

Entry Four

15.8.15

## "Research"

I wanted to do some background research before I begin my work with the community as Bruce stressed the importance of really knowing your community & being confident in your ability to help them in a meaningful way. Irene was thrilled by the food/cookbook idea as it was something that had been spoken about before but they weren't sure of how to approach it nor had the training/programs to produce it. As it turns out many members have kept recipe collections.

### My Key Roles in the Community

- Collecting recipes
- Talking to those who give me recipes about their past, memories & experiences
- Linking the food, culture & history
- Producing a collection which is accessible & practical but also historically rich & engaging

I spent my lunch break at work in the cookbook section (a bad idea as it's a dangerous on an empty stomach) looking at titles with a historic focus.

### Cookbook list:

- Jerusalem - Ottolenghi
- My Abuelas Table
- Recipes from my Grandmother's kitchen
- Indochine

Jerusalem (ironically) has a layout which aligns well with my project. It focuses heavily on historical narrative for about 10 pages then

presents a mix of recipes, photos of Jerusalem & food & anecdotes about the origins of the food. I'd like to focus a little more on specific community memories and also on a few key historic figures. Being a very small community with clear family lines, much of their experience is related & similar, but each member & family has its own recipes & stories.

Focus on a collective history & memory with personal anecdotes, highlighting of key figures & food/culinary trends.

I've also been reading academic histories on the Templars. Few have been written & many get bogged down in either the current conflict or the Nazi ties (many Templars were conscripted in WWII). My knowledge of current Israel/Palestinian conflict has never included knowledge of my own ties to the situation (although these ties may have drawn me to it in the first place). It has been interesting reading about the Templars unique relationship with both Palestinian people & pre-partition Jewish communities. I look forward to finding out more when I begin my work with the community.

- Articles focusing on Templar history (that I read today)
- Raffi Berg, 'The Templars: German settlers who left their mark on Palestine' BBC News, Jerusalem (2013).
  - David Kroyanker, 'Nazis in Israel' Strange Side of Jewish History, Jerusalem Institute (2008).

No. Entry Four

Date 15.8.15

### Challenges in Research

- Scarcity of sources
- Heavily biased "anti-Nazi", "anti-Palestine" or "anti-Jewish" articles which spend less time on history & more time on politics
- Confusion with Knights Templar

It appears that from my initial research I'm going to run into a lot of sensitive issues. I am already aware that the community has no affiliation with Nazism & that the majority of members historically were simply caught up in WWII hysteria that all Germans were in fact Nazis (which of course was not the case). I can also see how even suspicion of affiliation in the 1940s was enough to have the Templar community kicked out of Palestine.

- ⊛ Food as a constant, tangible, rich tie between past & present, family, culture, community & heritage
- its evolution
  - the memories which accompany it
  - oral → passed down from parent to child

Entry Six  
21 8 15

## Logistics

Today I emailed Irene about logistics. How would I best engage with the community? She suggested I attend one of their monthly services, meet everyone & go from there. I'd like to focus on history & story before I compile recipes, but I'd like to hear about food etc. if it resonates with people as they tell their history.

### Community Engagement:

- Attend the monthly service & meet people
- Get contacts & talk about meeting times
- Irene has spoken to community elders & so far they are all keen to be involved & talked to
- She also warned me that if I didn't come with a set of questions that I would get caught up in "the long rants of older people", but I'm keen to be open & listen
- Make contact post-interview about obtaining recipes
- Go to Melbourne → archives

photos for the book  
(both to make it look pretty & to connect it to individuals)

→ anything interesting I may discover  
↓  
research for the history to be included in the book

# Local / Community History Lecture

## Local history as a microcosm

- Templar history is so fascinating as it is unique & ~~take~~ largely unlike any other groups history
- However their story does reveal bigger historical events; German religious movements, Israel/Palestine history, WWI history, Australian assimilation policy etc.

## History belongs to the Community - Audience

- Whilst I'm sure I'll use my project (and of course it serves an academic purpose) I chose to do something that could & will belong to everyone
- Recipes are accessible & everyone who wishes to will have an input & I'll strive to include each story to accompany the recipes
- A history for them - serving the community

## Historians as Outsiders

- Louise & Mark both spoke of the importance of establishing connections which show the community that you aren't studying them & that you have a genuine interest
- They both said that their locality (Louise being from a nearby town & Mark moving to the area) helped build trust. In my case the community has welcomed me thus far due to our shared history & family lines (which I assume are quite linked as the community is small & hope to find out more about)

## Humanising Social Experience

- There is something so ordinary & universal about food - we eat cause we have to
- Yet in that sense it is a key part of social



experience & inevitably carries strong historical & cultural ties/links

### Ethics of Analysis & Critique - "Skeletons"

- Nazi history, Palestinian history, Israeli history & White Australia history: there are obvious skeletons in the work I'm doing! + colonial history??
- Reconciling with skeletons - I'll be interested to see how many of these issues come up in my talks with the community
- Within my own family we don't talk about any of them from a personal perspective

### Universality of Your Smaller History

- Mark said that local history can be picked up anywhere in the world & something in it will resonate with everyone
- Chinese cookbooks don't detail my own heritage for example, but they still are accessible & interesting to me - we all eat!
- Food has crossed cultures & easily shapes to cultures (due to resource availability, local cultures etc.) → ie. the Templars German cooking changed as they relocated each time (& now reflects different cultures)

- "Don't tell us that you know our past better than we do"
- This statement stuck with me most
  - Highlights the importance of listening

In listening to everyone's histories & stories it will be difficult not to notice discrepancies & contradictions with what I've read & what I've

No. Entry Eight  
Date 29.8.15

## Planning

### Rough Project Timeline

- Sep 1 - Letter printed in "Templer Talk"
  - Sep 2 - Begin lining up interviews & attending Templer gatherings/meetings (by invitation)
  - Sep 23 - Melbourne → archives & interviews
  - Oct 1 - Compile recipes, stories, essays, photos etc.
  - Mid Oct - Send book to printers
- By interviews & mean conversations with the community members

Over the past week I have met with & spoken to a number of members of the Sydney Templer community. On Wednesday I had breakfast & was served apricot jam on toast with olives & encouraged to embrace a traditional breakfast (which was surprisingly pleasant). I was told that jam was so popular as the fruit in Palestine was seasonal, and preserving meant the fruit could be stored & eaten all year. Its anecdotes like these that I hope to include throughout the book. It was also suggested that I place a letter or notice in the September issue of the community's bulletin magazine. So I quickly drafted a letter explaining my project and asking for volunteers to send me recipes & stories, or to meet with me if convenient. It is important to the society that I include as many families in the project as I can.

A number of Templers now reside in a German nursing home in Melbourne & the archives have been moved there so I have planned a brief trip down & lined up meetings with a number of people and hope to gain access to the archives.

No Entry Ten

Date 31 8 15

## Project Management Lecture

GO MULTIMODAL!

ENTERTAIN AS WELL AS INFORM!

TAP INTO LOCAL KNOWLEDGE!

BE SENSORY!

LOOK FOR GAPS!

IDENTIFY MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL SITUATIONS!

Everything Michaela emphasised got me feeling both excited & nervous about my own project. She had done so many interesting things and had me reevaluating my project (as well as the projects of the group I spoke to). Everyone was overwhelmed by her projects & success I think. I suddenly decided to introduce an online element to my project, as marketing in the field I currently work in. Then I realised my community group was compromised of very few facebook/tech savvy people and a large number of people like my grandparents... Then I realised that I'd already agreed to undertake a huge project which requires collaboration, collecting, archiving, a huge amount of cooking & an even bigger amount of design & layout work. And finally I decided to of course continue with my project as is and perhaps revisit social media in my own time after uni.

I've also realised that you can tick off all of Michaela's key points without necessarily going digital (or so in a way more meaningful to my specific community).

## GO MULTIMODAL ✓

- Book format
- History in text
- History in images
- Recipes
- Food in images
- And I'll make an ebook available as that unfortunately seems to be the thing to do (is more economically viable & accessible to those who can't get a hard copy)

+ INSTAGRAM

## ENTERTAIN AS WELL AS INFORM ✓

- I don't know how many people find cookbooks entertaining but it's ~~re~~ certainly an engaging & interesting means to deliver history
- Histories will be concise & anecdotal at times

## TAP INTO LOCAL KNOWLEDGE ✓

- Interviews & conversations will inform 90% of what I'm doing
- Food is the ultimate community/ethnic/local medium connecting peoples families & heritage - people seem to get very nostalgic about food!

## BE SENSORY ✓

- Sight - words & text
- Taste - food
- Touch - tactile, hard copy of a book
- Smell - I suppose food too
- Sound - unfortunately I haven't engaged with sound yet if we ever start a cooking show...

## IDENTIFY MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL SITUATIONS ✓

- They wanted a cookbook & I'd love to make one for them

# Layout Research

I began to research the more practical/physical aspects of my project as it dawned on me that I actually needed to produce the full book after meeting people & gathering recipes & stories!

Layout Ideas: (drawn from LEON: Fast Vegetarian & Jerusalem)

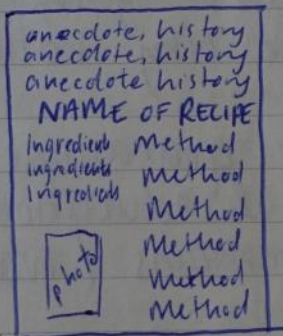
personal element (recipes from family/friends)

incorporates photos & anecdotes

history focus



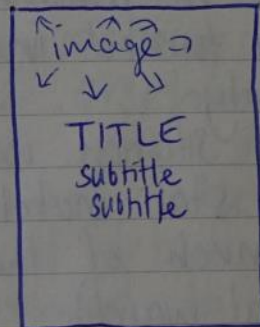
a number of pages (10?) on history & food history  
INTRO PAGES



+ image of dish on adjacent page  
RECIPE PAGE



page border to differentiate page & layout can change  
FOOD HISTORY PAGE



need to find an image for cover & think of a title  
FRONT COVER  
based on meetings & interviews (maybe a type of food)

Also needs; contents, acknowledgements, index, title & section pages

↑  
catergorise food into courses  
courses or something

I need to cook & take photos of food!!!

# Templer Seniors Lunch

2 Hours Involvement

Today I drove out to Blacktown and attended the monthly Templer Seniors lunch. Fourteen community members, all over 60 ~~only~~ and many of whom had been in internment camps, together before coming to Australia, met over a \$13 buffet lunch. After filling up on prawns and "bottomless" soda I spent time speaking to each person at the table; occasionally taking notes, describing the work I was doing and listening to stories. I was given a number of recipes, listened in on a debate about the quality of the radishes available in Aus (the Italian & Chinese radishes available are nothing like the ones available in Germany/Palestine) & overheard a ~~short~~ similarly heated discussion about when to dunk pretzels in soda. I had the whole table talking food! Many people asked for my contact details to send through photos etc. and I was invited to a "cooking class" with the oldest living community member, who is 93 and refused to address me in English - only in either German or Arabic.

## Key Notes from lunch;

- Pretzels - a few recipes, recipe variations etc.
- German supermarkets in Aus - easier access than in Palestine
- Seasonal fruit & veg & the differences between Palestine & Germany - adaptation (less need for preserves but more for fridges)
- Meat - scarcity
- WWII care packages sent to Palestine to feed the Germans there (as if they too faced hunger)
- Easter egg dying
- Impact of regional food laws eg. pork
- Hens were for eggs → rarely ate chicken
- I was given a book that I "have to read if I ever want to understand Templer history" - Alex Carmel's Die Siedlungen der Württembergischen Templer in Palästina 1868-1918

No. Entry Fifteen

Date 13. 9. 15

## The First Cooking Adventure

Project Requirements;

- Cook dishes which will be included in the book
  - make sure they "work"
  - take photos

What I made;

- German potato salad
- Weisswurst (white sausage)

It appears as though I will be ~~living~~ existing on a diet of German Palestinian food for the next month, which is particularly challenging as a pescetarian! Luckily the ~~Arab~~ Arabic influence has meant more lentils etc. and slightly less red meat is present in the recipes.

For dinner tonight I followed two recipes; a traditional German potato salad which remained a staple and Weisswurst; a sausage which has to be boiled and ~~peeled~~ peeled before eating. I also made vegetarian sausages, which are neither authentically German nor will they be included in my project..

I quickly discovered that I lacked food plating skills & food photography skills, which is going to be problematic as I proceed with my project! I dug up a nice glass bowl & a German tablecloth & hopefully pulled it off! Time to head back to the cookbook section at work for tips!

## An Exciting Email!

I was just emailed six photos of Jaffa oranges being exported! They lack dates or any sort of background info but I hope to find out more when I visit the archives! If the working title "Jaffa Orange" ends up being the book title hopefully I can incorporate these images more (cause they are just so cool!)





Entry Twenty  
Date 18 9 15

## Snail Mail

Today I received 4 recipes via snail mail (which was very exciting)! I will need to add a festive category to the book as there seems to be a lot of Christmas specific recipes.

### New Recipes:

- Zwiebelkuchen (onion cake)
- Stollen (Christmas cake)
- Klösse (dumplings)
- Applecake

### What to Cook Next:

- Onioncake
- Applecake
- Lentil Soup

I also started working on the layout (on adjacent page), and cooked Lettuce Soup!

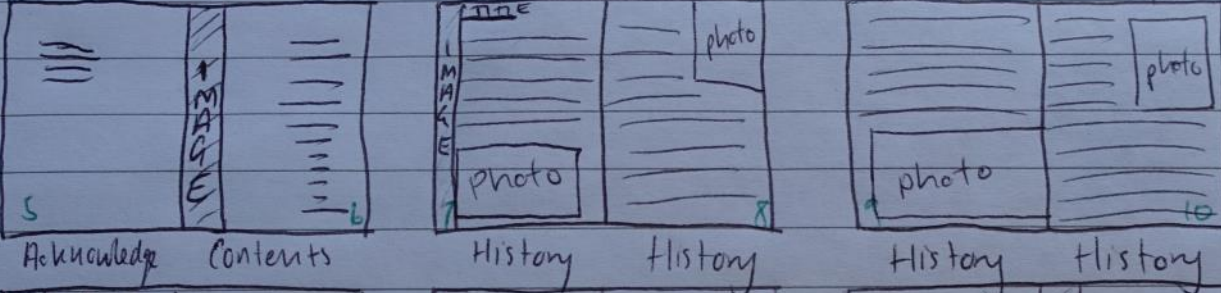
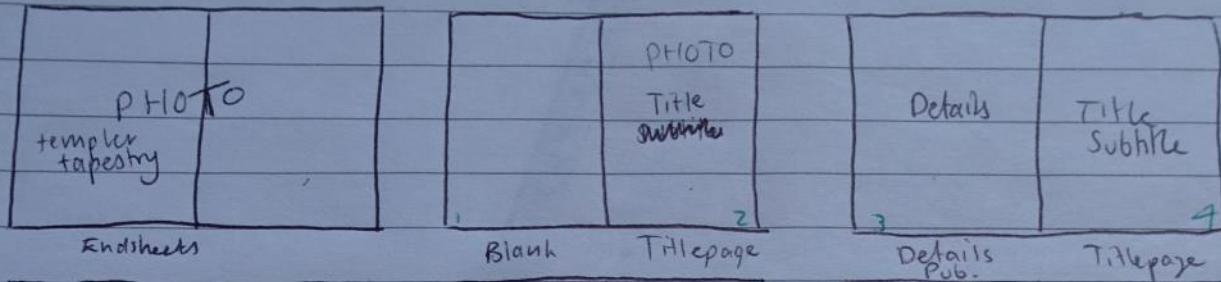


My dear Stephanie,  
I hope these recipes  
will help towards  
your assignment.

Good luck

Brigitte Gockermann

# Layout



# Meeting the Melbourne Community

## Melbourne Trip Day One

Today I flew to Melbourne to visit the Templar Communities in Bayswater & Bentleigh. I was invited to stay with the community leader Mark Herrmann in Bentleigh and spent today in transit & then getting acquainted with the Herrmanns. Marks wife Nanke gave me my first Melbourne recipe (Pretzels) and showed me how to make them. She also gave me her family recipe book to pick recipes from and talked about the origins.

## Today's Food History



Pretzels  
 • A staple which did not change even slightly when the community moved



Cinnamon Stars  
 • A cinnamon heavy gingerbread with icing on top



Lebchiken

• A Christmas gingerbread also used to make gingerbread houses



Lemon hearts  
 • A modern citrus version of cinnamon stars from Doris



I'll definitely need a Christmas section (and drawing lessons)

No. Entry Twenty-Five

Date 25 9 15

- Notes from Dinner with 8 First Gen. Templers; 1st gen. born in Aus.
- ← 1st Gen is what they refer to themselves as - the
- Renate Beilharz, Susi Richter, Mark & Nanne Hemmann, John (from the office) & his wife Maria spoke about their memories over a meal of Mujadara (arabic rice & onions with lentils) & Taboleuh (both of which I got the recipes for)
  - Renate's father ~~the~~ Heinz Vollmer started a company in Australia called Geevee foods with another Templer called Otto Geiselhart
    - produced sauerkraut, pickles etc. and established a successful factory (their logo is on the tapestry)
    - best way to eat sauerkraut is with ~~p~~ smoked pork/kuslor
    - Renate brought one of their advertising pamphlets along for me to photograph

Monica, Mark & Nanne's daughter joined us for dinner and is the same age as me (and also studying education). It was interesting to talk to someone with ~~an~~ the same background as me (grandparents born in Palestine, parents born here) but who had grown up amongst the community. She told me about how they celebrate festivals & about the youth camps & programs. It sounds like such a great community to have grown up in. She also showed me a cookbook she had made for her parents of family recipes when she was young, and gave me an additional bread (weiss brot) recipe to include.

on another note, research trips are so tiring!

# Lunch; Sauerkraut & Orange Cordial

## Melbourne Trip Day Four

### Today's Itinerary:

- Lunch at the Alterziem (old peoples home)
- Tea with Hurst & a visit to his own archive
- More tea with Irene Bouzo, her daughter Tamara & her husband Ahmed Eman Bouzo
- Dinner (farewell dinner) at the Herrman's

I had lunch at the Templer nursing home today, surprisingly in the dementia ward. I was met at the door by a distant cousin of my grandpas, who recalled fondly memories of my great-grandfather who used to play soccer with the kids in Palestine. We sat at a big table with dementia patients & their families, ate nursing home food & talked about better food. They did however serve sauerkraut alongside the mash, veg & orange cordial.

### Notes from lunch:

- How to make sauerkraut; slice cabbage, add salt, press into jar, add bay leaves, lemon & garlic (apparently is really simple to make)
- How to preserve cucumbers (tip: when they start to float ~~they are~~ they are ready)
- Recipes given to me for Braun & potato cakes
- Argument over whether lemon dressing was suitable on potato salad (in place of vinegar)

I then drove to visit Hurst & his wife. Hurst has his own archive which sadly caught on fire a year ago. Yet much of it has been salvaged

## Project Proposal & Resuming my Project

A combination of Melbourne & induced exhaustion, chaos at work & a family health crisis meant that I put my project on the backburner until now, as I have to write my project ~~pro~~ proposal tonight!

### Next steps;

- Make a spreadsheet of recipes, things to cook & corresponding page numbers
- Finalise layout on InDesign
- Type up all the recipes I've received (including translating a number of older recipes from handwritten family cookbooks I was shown at various homes)
- Start writing the food history anecdotes
- WRITE MY PROPOSAL!
- Read The Fabric of Society (a book produced to tell the story of the tapestry)

### Sources to include & annotate;

- Interviews (Sydney & Melbourne)
- Temple Society booklets, pamphlets & records
- Recipe books (historic & new)
- Secondary source books on Palestine - Sauer, Carmel, Hoffman
- Irene's thesis
- BBC article
- Archive? ask about how!
- Valentine's Past & Present (an ~~temptu~~ impulse buy!)

## What Next?

To Do Before the 16<sup>th</sup>:

- Type last recipes in book
- Compile & add stories/anecdotes
- Proof read history & food history pages
- Finalise cover design
- Index & Acknowledgements
- KEEP cooking & taking photos
- Publish ebook / send files to printer

I can't believe the semester is over & the book is due in two weeks! The enormity of the task keeps dawning on me, but I've set aside plenty of time to do the far more tedious compilation work! Next cookbook, I may need a cooking & typing assistant...

Complaints / panic aside; I have enjoyed this project far more than any other I have done at uni! I loved working for someone else (or a whole group of people) - it has come with a unique set of challenges & I'm very nervous about what I give the Templers as a finished product - yet this work feels far more meaningful & fulfilling than essay writing. I have been able to offer myself as a historian, but also as a writer, designer, volunteer, and, apparently, a cook! But I suppose that's what public history is... and I only hope I get to do more of it.