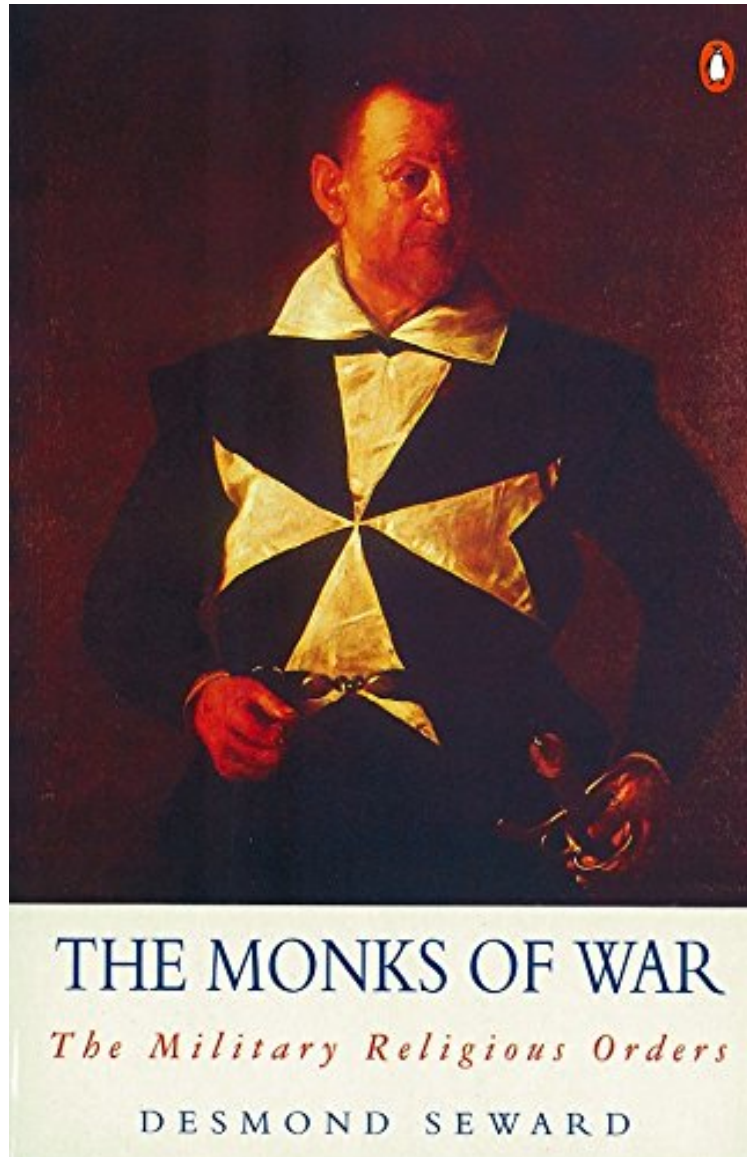


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The Monks of War: The Military Religious Orders (Arkana)

Desmond Seward

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Desmond Seward : The Monks of War: The Military Religious Orders (Arkana) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Monks of War: The Military Religious Orders (Arkana):

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Centuries in the Name of Christianity. This should be read as a precursor to understanding the reformation. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Comprehensive Survey Text. By J. Hauck "The Monks of War, The Military Religious Orders" is a very comprehensive yet succinct survey of the history of the Knights Templars, Knights Hospitallers, Knights of Malta, the Teutonic Knights, and the knights of the Spanish and Portuguese orders. At only 415 pages the sweeping story of these "noblemen vowed to poverty, chastity and obedience, living a monastic life in convents which were at the same time barracks, waging war on the enemies of the Cross" is explained in one concise volume. Appendices and photographs added in the 1995 printing provide a history for more modern events relating to the existing orders. Five stars. JP23 of 24 people found the following review helpful. Tough knights in shining armour By Guillermo Maynez This is a very good introduction to the history of the military religious orders: Templars, Hospitallers of Saint John (today Knights of Malta), Santiago, Calatrava, Alcantara, Teutons and others. The first ones, Templars and Hospitallers, were founded in the XII Century, after the First Crusade, in order to protect pilgrims in the Holy Land and to provide humanitarian and medical services. Soon, these monks became more warriors than anything else, true machines of war which came to be the first organized and properly trained and disciplined professional elite troops in the West since the Roman Empire. The West and Islam lived then (and still do) in a permanent state of threat and holy war. Although these warriors made vows of poverty, obedience and chastity, they soon accumulated enormous riches, fought one another and their discipline, especially in sexual matters, relaxed. The first part of the books tells the two centuries of Christian occupation in the Holy Land, which the Islam had taken by force centuries before, and where, despite some resounding successes, the Christians ended up being totally defeated and expelled, to this day. The second part tells the story of the Crusade in the Baltic, performed by the Teutonic Knights against the pagan Slav Prussians, terrifying cannibals adoring spirits in trees, as well as snakes in the woods. These Teutonics founded what was probably the first "modern" state: Prussia (the German one). This story is practically unknown, in spite of being totally fascinating. The third part is the Reconquest of Spain, where the orders were crucial in defeating the Moors. Then come the stories of the Hospitallers in Rhodes and Malta -also wonderful- and then what became of the existing orders today. One striking common theme during the thousand years covered is the permanent and bloody conflict between the West and Islam. In spite of the torrent of names, places and dates, this book is an incredible collection of adventures and improbable deeds, especially the sieges of Acre, Rhodes and Malta, as well as the Spanish Reconquista and the Prussian episode. The tone of the book is apologetic, the author himself being a Knight of Malta, but it also vividly portrays the terrible atrocities committed by both sides. It fills a huge vacuum in the historical and political education of almost any reader, besides being an impressive saga of courage, dedication, violence, survival, glory, triumph, defeat and corruption at the same time. It really motivates you to read more about this subject.

The military religious orders emerged during the Crusades as Christendom's stormtroopers in the savage conflict with Islam. Some of them still exist today, devoted to charitable works. The Monks of War is the first general history of these orders to have appeared since the eighteenth century. The Templars, the Hospitallers (later Knights of Malta), the Teutonic Knights and the Knights of the Spanish and Portuguese orders were "noblemen vowed to poverty, chastity and obedience, living a monastic life in convents which were at the same time barracks, waging war on the enemies of the Cross." The first properly disciplined Western troops since Roman times, they played a major role in defending the crusader kingdom of Jerusalem, in the "Baltic Crusades" which created Prussia, in the long reconquest of Spain from the Moors, and in fighting the "Infidel" right up to Napoleonic times. This celebrated book tells the whole enthralling story, recreating such epics as the sieges of Rhodes and Malta and the destruction of the Templars by the Inquisition. Acclaimed on publication, it has now been revised and updated, with a concluding chapter to take events into the 1990s.

From Library Journal Seward's 1972 title profiles military religious orders that emerged during the Crusades. This revised edition brings the information up-to-date. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Undeniably the work of someone who knows and accepts the standards of critical history, but who sees the past also as an epic or a colourful spectacle" Professor David Knowles in The Times Literary Supplement "His scholarship is great, his theme both interesting and largely unexplored and his judgment sound" Economist "The book is excellent and firmly based on the primary sources of which Seward has a remarkable grasp." New Society "Compulsive reading, attractively written, and retaining one's fascinated interest throughout" Catholic Herald From the Back Cover The military religious orders emerged during the Crusades as Christendom's stormtroopers in the savage conflict with Islam. Some of them still exist today, devoted to charitable works. The Monks of War is the first general history of these orders to have appeared since the eighteenth century. The Templars, the Hospitallers (later Knights of Malta), the Teutonic Knights, and the Knights of the Spanish and Portuguese orders were 'noblemen vowed to poverty, chastity and obedience, living a monastic life in convents which were at the same time barracks, waging war on the enemies of the Cross'. The first properly disciplined Western troops since Roman times, they played a major role in defending the crusader kingdom of Jerusalem, in the 'Baltic Crusades' which created Prussia, in the long reconquest of Spain from the Moors,

and in fighting the 'Infidel' right up to Napoleonic times. This celebrated book tells the whole enthralling story, recreating such epics as the sieges of Rhodes and Malta and the destruction of the Templars by the Inquisition. Acclaimed on publication, it has now been revised and updated, with a concluding chapter to take events into the 1990s.