

Ordo Antichristianus Illuminati®

The Magdalene Legacy

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Sexuality and religiosity are the greatest magical forces in nature, and in the human condition. An impulse acts in sex, which suggests the mystery of God, when in the union between man and woman exults in a primal condition that annexes the differences between lust and love. Sexuality reciprocates an act of divine manifestation, be it creation or destruction. The reciprocity of sexuality and religion in history brings to the forefront threads of theological allegory between divine providence and the human condition. The metaphysical *hieros gamos* is a preeminent ritual extensively practiced in oriental and Græco-Roman antiquity. Nevertheless, the subject of metaphysical matrimony remains shrouded in mystery as diverse cultures of antiquity reciprocated the myth in which male and female deity, as well as deity and Mankind celebrate this rite of eld.

The *hieros gamos* mimics variations of themes of the Christian Fall of Mankind in the gardens of Eden {Kush}. The Book of Genesis speaks of the hermaphroditic nature of the primordial being, created in the image of "G.O.D." Sexual love and coitus manifests the change from a loss of being, as illustrated in the expulsions of Mankind from the gardens of Eden and Lucifer from the empyrean abodes, to a reunification of what Hindu scriptures refer to as *ātman*. In its most profound facet the *hieros gamos* embodies the primal impulse to overcome the consequences of this original "Fall," to restore the state of primordial sexuality, broken and condition by the metaphysical 'other.' Sexual love embodied by the *hieros gamos* is the most multiversal form of our obscure search to annex the duality between Lust and Love, the boundaries between psyche and ego.

The motive of pathos must be stripped in all forms of sexual magic with the metaphysical marriage, emulated by the Christ and the Magdalene, must be eliminated. Such carnal energies of sex and desire could be aroused within emotional and psychic bondage to the orgasm. An intoxicated state of *amor insatiabilis* brings naught to satiate the sexual desire of the soul under a tyrannical ache for the elementary forces. In the metaphysics of sex contained in *hieros gamos*, obsessive gratification leads to an abyss where tyrannical lust and mania absorb the soul into a violent swoon. On the annexation between Lust and Love which purifies the metaphysical matrimony, the "Gospel of the Ægyptians reads: "When ye have trampled on the garment of shame, and when the two become one and the male with the female is neither male nor female."

The ordained gnosis of the metaphysical matrimony fulfills the human soul as the bride whom receives the divine seed of light through *hieros gamos*. Praxis of the ancient rite of *mysterium coniunctionis*, divine

betrothal, in the mystery traditions of Seraphis and Eleusis, inseminated in the human soul a new breed of spiritual being in flesh and psyche.

Concerning the nature of sexual renunciation in the mystical marriage, we have several Gnostic references, the first from the apocryphal Gospel of Thomas: *“Jesus says: “Many stand outside at the door, but it is only the solitaries who will enter into the bridal chamber.”* {Thomas v. 75}

Secondly, according to the ‘Acts of Phillip,’ the ordained redemption of Mankind rests in executing the sacrament of the bridal chamber: *“The Baptism is the holy vestibule, the Atonement is the holy of the holiness, the holy of the holinesses is the Bridal-Chamber. The Baptism has the resurrection with the Atonement entering into the Bridal-Chamber. Yet the Bridal-Chamber is more exalted than those are. Thou will find nothing that compares with it. {Phillip 82}* In the bridal chamber, this ordained gnosis occurs through sexual praxis wherein the seeds of light guarantee the eternal fertility of Mankind. The rites of the bridal chamber metaphorically reciprocated matrimony in the seven planetary powers of the Valentinian system, hence the Hermetic axiom, *“as above, so it is below.”* All things disseminate from the mysteries of sexuality; redemption, baptism, the black Eucharist all goes forth from the primeval bridal chamber. The concluding passage of the Gospel of Phillip thusly states the gnostic Eucharist of the bridal chamber:

“If someone becomes a Son of the Bridal-Chamber, he shall receive the Light. If one does not receive it in these places, he will not be able to obtain it in the other place. He who has received that Light shall not be seen, nor shall they be able to seize him; nor shall anyone be able to disturb this one of this nature, even if he socializes in the world. And furthermore, when he leaves the world he has already received the truth via the imagery. The world has become eternity, because the fullness is for him the eternal. And it is thus revealed to him individually, not hidden in the darkness or the night, but rather hidden in a Perfect Day and a Holy Light.”

Religious and sexual yearning between King Solomon and the Shulamite bride in the Song of Songs, and between the Christ and Magdalene in John 20 represents the "intolerable ache" and "incurable wound" of the soul {Crowley Liber 418; 14th æthyr}. The Song of Solomon ends with the call to the Beloved: *“Flee my love, make yourself like a gazelle, or like a young stag on the mountains of spices!”* {Songs 8; 14} In John 20, the Christ anointed with spices retracts himself from the touch of the Magdalene with a dynamic of bodily renunciation and intimacy of the resurrection. The Church identified the Magdalene as the sinful woman whom cleaved to the resurrected Logos, hindering him from the Ascension. In this way, the proto-orthodoxy creates a persona of a sinful Mary from the Marian figures in Luke 7 and 8, and John 20 that fit into the gender dichotomy of Woman as virgin or harlot.

Though many Hebraic hygienic and marital laws vilified sexually sovereign women, the Song of Songs exults eroticism. New Testament scriptures foresee the Christian Church as the virginal bride of the Christ {II Corinthians 11; 2, Ephesians 5; 23-32} or the New Jerusalem of the apocalypse {Revelations 21} as the virginal bride of the Hebrew Messiah. A puritan Christianity modeling its religious infidelity to a jealous God exploits the *passion of the Magdalene*. The *passion of the Magdalene* models the Imperial Love that the Johannine Christ bade all of his disciples to testify. Thus, as eroticism is ascribed primarily to the dichotomy of the Virgin-Whore in Woman, Mankind self-imprisons our sexuality in its religious applications leading to ruin, often transformed into the most deplorable evil by perverted souls lost in the mire of insanity. Eroticism intimated at between the mystical marriage of the Christ and Magdalene should be mimicked by the Lover-Hermits of the Brotherhoods.

G.O.D.'s destruction of the Whore Babylon in the apocalypse texts {Revelations 17} adverse to the marriage of the Lamb with the New Jerusalem {Rev 19} is reminiscent of the call of the Lover in the Song of Songs. In Revelations there exists a yearning for the "second" coming of the Christ with the Whore of Babylon "*holding her hand in a golden cup full of abominations and impurities of her fornication*" {Revelations 19; 5} and before the Lamb will she be made desolate and shamed, "burned with fire" {Revelations 17; 16}. Hence will the "righteous" shepherds of the Lamb continue to vilify the Whore of Babylon so the "daughters of Eve" will continue to shame themselves with the lies of sin.

The puritan Christian acts of theological hatred unto sexuality and eroticism embodies Tertullian's "*foemina janua diabuli*" and the commandment in Proverbs 31:3 to "*give not power over thy soul unto woman.*" Debauch in the metaphysics of sexual catharsis often is embodied by such goddesses of destruction, lechery, domination, and incitement. The *hieros gamos* with the Christ {Osiris slain and risen} initiated by the Magdalene foreshadows a sexual knowledge and conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel so often invoked in Hermeticism. For Mankind seeking to emulate this catharsis, the true abode of the soul is in ethereal bridal chamber, the Holy Light. The mystic death of the *hieros gamos* abolishes the mad thirst from bottomless ponds of lower lust. The *hieros gamos* initiated by the passion of the Magdalene affirms the soul as a dropt petal of the Rose, the source of the sexual catharsis of the Holy Guardian Angel, and the comical "instructions" of the IX^{tho} practiced by the *Ordo Templi Orientis*[®] and further cowans of sexual catharsis.

The metaphysical betrothal of the Magdalene to Christ thus represents a polyvalence of sexual imagery. Erotic metaphors of ancient cultures sustained different meanings at once. This mystical sacrum as a reaction to sexual Puritanism is spoken of in *Agape Liber C vel Liber Azoth*: "... this Wedding is of the Soul with Our Lord Jesus Christ; and thou must be adorned, as it is written, the King's Daughter is all glorious within; her raiment is of

wrought gold.” The indwelling catharsis intimated at in *Agape Liber C vel Azoth* again is reminiscent of the bridal chamber mystery veiled in the ascetic glory of Shechinah-Malchut, the "holy of holies" cited in the Gospel of Phillip: “*Yet the mysteries of the truth are revealed, composed in symbolic imagery. But the Bedroom is hidden, it is the holy within the holiness.*” {Phillip 136}. The veil that is torn in Phillip v. 137 represents the veils of the bridal chamber, and the Ark of Salvation {Phillip v.138} is the gnosis birthed in the womb of the Magdalene.

A dichotomy of Will and Love unite within the bonds of light in the bridal chamber. The passion of the Magdalene belongs not to Love under Will, but to sexual Love, for sacrifice, the sacrifice of blood and sex elixirs, of the Christ, only arrogates a false embrace of the Holy Guardian Angel. The Virgin Mother ordained her Holy Guardian Angel to the fiat she uttered, giving consent for the redemption of Man to again birth the rites of Meithras and Osiris, and to hide them. The Magdalene’s gnosis was invoked by her world-encompassing sorrows during the Crucifixion, a prototype of the soul perfected in Love and Lust. The mysteries of the bridal chamber and Rose Croix represent an archetypal unity replayed now and again in the ancient cultures of the human spiritual epoch. Theologians leave open much speculation to the religious significance of the *hieros gamos* and its initiatic thread to the mysteries of the Gnostic bridal chamber.

The virtue of religion to the human condition is prevalent. The motive is that all men and women perceive to a certain degree, the everlasting wail of the ‘First Noble Truth,’ that everything is sorrow and religion consoles them by either an authoritative denial or perpetuation of this truth. This psychological ply is done via transgression of the situation itself, or by promising amends in other states of existence. A fundamental problem is that religions, without exception, often fail and become decrepit at the first tests of history and culture. The claim of religion is to excel, and incidentally, make obsolete the judgments of reason by reconciling mysticism and science. In this formula, a direct experience and more importantly expression of intelligences superior in kind to any incarnate human occur. Preconceptions of religion and the arts and sciences of the occult by the initiated scholar breed spiritual materialism and secular demonization.

Esoteric religion presupposes ideals of a discarnate intelligence or experience of ultimate reality, regardless of whatever linguistic intrusion humanity places upon it. This is exactly what no religion has proven scientifically, trapping the human condition in its finitude and trance of sorrow. Through the intercession, dedication, and discipline of the woman referred to as the Magdalene, Christ Jesus reached beyond the limits of faith and prophecy to redeem the human condition from original transgression. It is Mary Magdalene alone whom laments and mourns beneath the cross after Jesus Christ dies {John 20: 11, 15}. Christian theology borrowing the dying-resurrection myth from Mithraism, Egyptian and Eleusian theology,

emphasizes that God's love was manifest through the bodily incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of the historical Jesus.

The metaphysical marriage depicted in obscure Biblical references and Christian Apocrypha between the historical Jesus Christ and the woman Miriam ha'Migdal reciprocates the mystical marriage between God and Mankind depicted in cultures of antiquity. Evocatory reproductions of the mystical matrimony beyond the finitude of time and space are paralleled by the Garden texts of the Holy Bible, the Judaic Covenant with the God of Israel, the Serapis mysteries of Isis wed to Osiris, and the Christ Bridegroom metaphysically wed with the Magdalene. *The metaphysical matrimony between the Christ and the Magdalene epitomizes the Hieros Gamos.*

Christian Apocrypha indicates a fascination between Church and individual relationship, and the mystical marriage betwixt signified by the marriage of Christ and the apostolic Church. The Apocryphal Gospel of Phillip states: "*If anyone becomes a son of the bridal chamber, he will receive the light. If anyone does not receive it while he is in these places, he will not be able to receive it in the other place. He who will receive the light will not be seen, nor can he be detained.*"

This verse refers to a primal projection of human sexuality upon the divine, an apotheosis of human sexuality intimated at in the mystical marriage between Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene. Judging from the readings and from the religio-psychological works of Wilhelm Reich, and Carl G. Jung, there exists a metaphysical war between the sexes that perpetuate in theurgic philosophy. Thus rather than a marriage of religiosity and the human condition, psychologists like Jung, and Dr. Krafft-Ebing, see in all love a patterns of theistic fetishism. The Magdalene in Christian Apocrypha act as sacred intermediary between the human and divine, and yet the early apostolic Churches espoused the ideal of renunciation, a distinct separation of sexuality and religiosity.

Boundaries that defined sacral and secular love in ancient cultures are ambivalent, as matrimony reflected marriage between the human and divine as well husband and wife. Women in cultures such as Akkadian, Sumerian, and Mesopotamian often were the recipients of incantations, and love sonnets that engendered male fantasy and focused on fertility. Even in patriarchal cultures, much incantation and prayer were committed to woman in hopes of fertility, at least in the latter cultures; the goddess had a place other than consort to solar-phallic deities. In ancient Israel, this was not the case, as the Song of Solomon reflects eroticism shared between lovers: a rare text in a society that doctrinalized women and sex.

The Song of Solomon reflects the theme of Woman as fertile garden to 'tame' and 'reap' in ancient cultures. The psalm affirms eroticism often ignored and even objectified. Eroticism in the Song of Solomon is elusive, allegorical, yet blatant in display of sexual love, likely misunderstood by our contemporary hedonistic society. Solomon as seen by his lover in the Psalm is essentially 'pure,' anointed with oils and spices; Solomon to his lover is

the idealized man and vice versa. The gardens of love often are tainted in Biblical lore, only renewed by eroticism of the mystic, leading to the pain of division as if a metaphysical war between the sexes.

The sexual references throughout the canticle refer to the yearning of the mystic, of Yahweh for Israel's spiritual love and vice versa, with the latter divided for love's sake and for the chance of union. The reference to each other by Solomon and his concubine lover in the text as "brother" and "sister" propose an incestuous longing. Incest was a common practice to secure the bloodline in ancient cultures that included Egypt, Mesopotamia, Sumer, and Akkad.

The proto-orthodox communities and scriptures of early Christianity depicted sexuality as an antispiritual force. Such attitudes certainly were not innate to proto-Christian orthodoxy, but imitate early Greek Pythagorean philosophy that encouraged disassociation from sex, Jewish hygiene, and marital laws in the Book of Leviticus, and the Stoic movement with its cultivation of *apatheia*, disassociate emotion. Theologian David Carr illustrates the parallels of metaphysical marriage between the Church and God's people by uncovering the context of the "*Song of Solomon*" as indicative, reflective of the holy matrimony between Christ and the Magdalene.

Origen of Alexandria {^{A.D.} c.185-254} equated Mary Magdalene figuratively with the royal bride and object of King Solomon's fancy in the Song of Solomon, also referred to as the *Song of Songs*. The iconography explored in the Song of Solomon best is described as a polemic on orthodox Jewish, and Christian, conceptions of erotic behavior in a culture conditioned to inhibition. Perhaps the subordination of women, obscuration of early traditions deemed as heretic by officiators of early Christendom, has invoked a spirit only glimpsed at in the garden themes of religious texts. For Origen, the Song concerns a journey where the soul "suffers want and privation." Origen places the canticle third in a series of what he calls 'wisdom books,' after the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. Origen's contemplative interpretation of the Song suggests a divine stimulation of all human senses that would be used to experience the vineyards and spices described. Origen seemingly only touches the exoteric themes of the Song of Solomon. The Song clearly invokes the senses; it is sensual and erotic rather than spiritual. It is a tendency of early patriarchal theologians to divide eroticism from spirituality.

A spiritual love for god is all very well and good, though in a Judeo-Christian schema, "god" usually is referred to in the masculine. The woman must be the vehicle through which "virtuous" men discover a greater sense of love. Myth and symbol create a language understood only by the soul, and the iconography in the Song points to a sensual religiosity rather than a doctrinal one. At times, the want and yearning experienced in love is the fortunate absence of reason. The yearning the maiden feels for Solomon transcends the shadows of ego and should be approached from a metaphysical rather than contextual basis.

The lovers in the canticle possess a yearning to transcend the limits of finite individuality, as all lovers do, they experience in one another. Eroticism outside of Church doctrine is able to overthrow, undermine, and subordinate reason in lieu of a simple interpretation that tepidly asks us to see such eros as contemplation upon a Semitic deity. The quietude of heart contemplative mystics seek and experience, such as Bernard, Augustine, Dante just as easily invokes erotic-sexual epiphany for mystics. Sexual pride, jealousy, and agape as themes in the Song of Solomon reflect the jealous Yahweh exhibits upon the peoples of Israel. In the spiritual matrimony between Jesus Christ and Mary the Magdalene, in addition to the Song of Solomon, there is no sexual love that fails to invoke an immortal quality, an "always" as if division would fail to make one appreciate the experiences of unity.

The Song of Solomon exposes the reader to an erotic epithalamium, a passionate nuptial song between lovers. This Song reflects the mystical marriage-covenant between the House of Israel and Yahweh. Moreover, it reflects the Christ's position in the Church as bridegroom, and the Church as the bride, or the wife of the Lamb. The Song of Songs reflects the spiritual and sexual dimensions of religiosity coupled with married love as reflected between Mary the Magdalene and Jesus Christ in apocryphal Gospel of Phillip and Gospel of Mary. The Book of Ecclesiastes narrates a man's search throughout Palestine for something to quell an intolerable ache of his heart. Ecclesiastes reveals that if a man gains the world, he will lose it as humanity lost paradise. The Song of Solomon offers the perspective that love is the banner that should rule over marriage, and all forms of sexuality. Thus the Hieros Gamos remains a piece of theological popularity in the Apocrypha.

The birthplace of Mary Magdalene generally is identified as the site of *Migdal* at the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, north of Tiberias. This site possibly was the hamlet called *Migdal Nunya*, or *Nunnayah*, literally Heb. "Tower of Fish." The historic city flourished during the end of the Second Jerusalem Temple era, one of the sites fortified by Yosef Ben Matityahu {Flavius Josephus} during the revolt of Jews against the Roman Imperium. According to historians, the ancient town had a reputation for opulence and decadence. So sensationalized is the popular legend of Magdalene, it is feasible "Mary the Magdalene" could be the equivalent of "Mary the Harlot."

In addition to fishery, Migdal Nunya also was noted for weaving and dyeing. Matthew 15; 39 mentioned the site as *Magadan*, and in the older Gospel of Mark, 8; 10, the name of *Dalmanutha* is used. The impoverished town in contemporary history is known as el'Medjel. Marian theologians zealously counter the ecclesiastic correlation of the Magdalene with harlotry for what it is, a "piece of theological fiction." Yet another etymological theory ascribing harlotry to the Magdalene posits the origin of the town's name with the Aramaic term for 'hairdresser,' *megaddela*, a possible pun linking the city to the world's oldest profession.

It was from the Gnostic connection with the *Pistis Sophia* that proto-orthodox bishops ascribed prostitution to Mary Magdalene and not from the absence of scriptural references in the Holy Bible. To the Roman curia, decadence was commonly associated with Greek culture, as the Greek philosophers were much maligned. The derogatory term Romans associated with Greek goddesses was *porne*, which was a term indicating prostitution and lechery. The theological distortion of the origins of Mary Magdalene's association with prostitution and lechery, indeed her portrayal by proto-orthodoxy as the "repentant whore," amounts to pathology. Such pathology stems from malignant notions of separating sexuality with religiosity.

Sessions and theses on Mary the Magdalene in canonical and apocryphal literature have been presented at the Society of Biblical Literature and the American Academy of Religion for decades. The Biblical denigration of Mary the Magdalene traces to the Gospel of Luke, chapter 7 which discusses an unnamed woman, a "sinner" whom visited Jesus Christ at Capernaum and anointed him with oil from an Alabaster box {Luke 7; 37-38, 44}. The references to Mary the Magdalene as a "sinner" replete with evil is found in the following chapter in the Gospel of Luke; "*And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils*" {KJV Luke 8; 2}.

Sexual iconography in Biblical scripture represents the human search for textual truth, invoking feelings of mystery with sexuality. Early Christian puritanical and ascetic stances on sexuality and eroticism were merely concessions to marital and hygiene laws. The search for textual authority in understanding sexuality and religion is similar to the realization of mystical experience with religious icons, i.e. the Virgin Mary, Christ, feminization of the Torah, and Holy Grail. Christian theologians should look to the spirit of the scriptures rather than the context of them. Taking the theme of Genesis, women are often blamed for a mythic fall or contamination of religion with sexuality, though as discussed in other essays, the sacred feminine is only petitioned when fertility matters are rife in the land. Perhaps this relates to a Biblical belief in the inadequacy of women to fully realize and understand the divine through their sexuality.

The sacred feminine, often represented by the base materiality of creation is effectively eliminated from equations of sexuality and spirituality, eroticism and religion. It is only texts such as the garden text of Isaiah, of Genesis, the Song of Solomon and the apocryphal indications of metaphysical matrimony between Christ and Magdalene that touch upon the celebration of sexual love in religion. Woman, according to the goal of many contemplative traditions, is subordinated and blamed for Man/Adam's lose of virtue and consciousness. The elimination of woman in the sacral role altogether would make it necessary for the male no longer to require a partner, thus utilizing his sexual-creative-regenerative force at will, without a woman.

Sexuality and gender in Christianity should transcend doctrinal belief in lieu of intimate religiosity. Orthodox faith need not be abandoned, or elegantly reformed, but referred to as a starting point in understanding the sacred feminine. The process of eroticism and experiences with the sacred feminine in religion has been made taboo, or so sublimated into Judeo-Christian iconography that it is no longer approachable or overshadowed by phallo-centrism and ecclesiastic patriarchy. Sexuality in a doctrinal stance only invokes social misunderstanding, and arrogation of the female will in matrimony already arranged in century's old myth. Rather than marginalize and obscure Woman as the sacred feminine manifest, Mary the Magdalene reached equilibrium between her Womanhood and the divinity of God as her Lover.

Christian iconography of erotic mysticism intentionally subordinates and obscures the role of women in mysticism and sexuality. Marital symbolism in Christian context excludes woman as compliment to the Holy in favor of woman as mere consort and bridge to masculine experience of salvation and redemption from sin. The garden texts in the Song of Solomon, Book of Isaiah, and Book of Genesis are presumptuous in making a necessary condition for the woman to experience the mercy and erotic power of the often-jealous god-husband. Such is the posture conscripted by proto-orthodoxy in reference to Mary the Magdalene as the true spiritual inheritor of Christ's apostolic gospels.

Sexuality in apocryphal sources must be admitted in terms of its coalescence with religiosity, and not rejected by doctrinal prejudice and academic contention. Emancipation in the feminine and feminist literature comes as a recovery of sexual initiative. In a cultural context, the de-sacralization of sexuality by marriage initiates a subordination of women. Religiosity must not desecrate and de-eroticize sexuality, condemning eroticism to the confines of marriage in a way contemporary popular religion suggests a worldly marriage between Jesus Christ and Mary the Magdalene. Prior to Vatican Council II, the central emphasis of morality and sexuality in the Roman Catholic Church was to perceive sexuality as "the procreative goal of the act of sexual intercourse." Vatican Council II began an introverted reformation toward the ideal of a more personal dynamic of sexuality in the human condition.

Thomas Aquinas, a later patristic theologian who's *Summa Theologia* became the foundation of Roman Catholic doctrine, states about women: "As regards the individual nature, woman is defective and misbegotten..." Themes of marginalization were inherited, not native to a patriarchal consolidation of Christian canon. Such ideals of the Christ's favoritism toward the disciple Mary proved intolerable to the Roman Curia. I Timothy 2:12-15 {KJV} reads: "*I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet woman will be saved through childbearing, if she continues in faith and*

love and holiness, with modesty.” Sympathetic to the disenfranchised and despondent woman, championed by Mary the Magdalene, such a verse is not.

Modesty and chastity are best left to the woman who aligns herself in the graces of God, not with patriarchal doctrine. It is important in arguments against the feminist nature of this thesis to note that women held pastoral roles before the evangelism of Paul. Women such as Aquila, and Priscilla were prominent ministers before the arrival of Paul in Corinth. In his address to the devout at Corinth, Paul supports the role of matrimony in regards to questions of sexual asceticism. The tradition and obligation of marriage was carried over from Jewish expectations of lineage and childbearing, the lack of which was often deemed as a failure of impure women. In the Song of Solomon, the conflated royal bride represents the Covenant of Israel, cleaving to her lover as the Israelites cleaved to Yahweh and the Magdalene was chastised for being kissed upon the mouth by the Christ. Mary the Magdalene confirms the redemption and resurrection of Jesus Christ, merging her immaculacy and role with the iconography of Eve in the primordial Gardens.

The church patriarchs Tertullian, Irenæus, Hippolytus, and Origen of Alexandria were the only theologians in the second and third centuries to completely discourse on the role of Mary the Magdalene and sexuality in a nascent Christianity. In the fourth century there are minimal references to Mary the Magdalene by Saint Ambrose, Saint Jerome, the Cappadocians, John Chrysostom, and Saint Augustine, all direct citations to John 20:16-17 in which Christ tells Mary “*noli mi tangere,*” literally, *do not cleave to me.* In these references, the development of the legend of the Magdalene evolves with Saint Jerome’s criticism of faith and intelligence, and a merging of her theological position with Eve. Gregory of Nyssa in a homily equates the Magdalene with Eve, not her antithesis:

“*She is the first witness of the resurrection, that she might set straight again by her faith in the resurrection, what was turned over by her transgression?*” {Against Eunomius 3; 10:16} Notice the reference to the Magdalene as a “transgressor,” instrumental in the redemption of fallen woman.

Translations of apocryphal texts in the Nag Hammadi library into Coptic from original Greek ascribe to Mary the Magdalene the startling title of *Apostola Apostolorum*. The apocryphal scriptures that cast the Magdalene in a preeminent role are the Gospel of Thomas, Dialogue of the Savior, First Apocalypse of James, Pistis Sophia, and the Gospel of Phillip. The apocryphal Gospel of Mary, discovered by happenstance in 1896 in Cairo by a Bavarian connoisseur of manuscripts, Carl Reinhardt. Unfortunately for literati, the majority of the Gospel of Mary remains “lost.” Mary the Magdalene by name is directly addressed by Jesus Christ in the apocryphal scriptures, a contrast to Christ’s repetitive address to women in the Synoptic Gospels, merely as “Woman” {Mat. 15:28, Luke 13:12, Luke 22:57, John 2:4, John 4:21, John 8:10}. Jesus Christ carrying the Cross spies the Virgin Mary and even refers to his own mother as ‘Woman’ {John 19:26}.

Jesus Christ refers to Mary directly by name in the Gospel of Phillip and the Pistis Sophia, thus indicating a revered role as disciple, visionary, mediatrix, and intercessor of esoteric revelation by the early Christian Gnostics. Mary the Magdalene in the Pistis Sophia is the interlocutrix of the Gospel of Christ, the inheritor of the Light absorbed in the *Sophia*, the ordained wisdom of God. Mary the Magdalene, referred to sometimes as *Mariham*, {Aramaic, ‘net-catcher’} and *Maria* in the Pistis Sophia I-III is the only woman named of the seven who followed Jesus Christ the Redeemer into Galilee after his resurrection.⁵ The seven women are gathered with the twelve apostles to hear his gospel before the ascension. In this scripture, Mary the Magdalene is the only apostle whom asks questions of the Redeemer, other apostles mentioned by name in text are Phillip, Matthew, Thomas, and Bartholomew.

Sophia in the apocrypha is never regarded as transgressor, fallen as Eve, nor as a manifestation of sexual impurity. Mary in the Pistis Sophia is regarded as the Tower of the Flock, the feminine complement to the figure of Christ the savior. Pistis Sophia II; 96 speaks of a throne in heaven for Mary, as she is praised as a “woman who understood fully” in the Dialogue of the Savior 139; 12-13. In the Gospel of Phillip, the metaphysical marriage is a metaphor for the reunion of Christ and the Church, which occurs in the “bridal chamber” {Phillip verse 126 & 127; Ehrman 2003}. The Gospel of Phillip uses the bridal chamber as a metaphor for the Hieros Gamos, a metaphysical matrimony betwixt the Christ and Magdalene representing a metaphysical marriage in the bonds of perfect love. The polemic of sexuality and religiosity in Gnostic apocrypha proved malignant to proto-orthodox fathers. In the Gospel of Phillip, the Magdalene is addressed in the Greek, *koinonōs*, rendered as ‘consort,’ or ‘partner,’ indicating a woman whom shares intimacy be it sexual or otherwise, with a man.

Epiphanius writes indignantly of a libertine Gnostic treatise called “The Great Questions of Mary” where the Christ gave Mary the Magdalene a revelation on a mountain Epiphanius cites as *aisxrouriga*, {*Panarion* 26:8, 1-3} meaning “the obscenity.” Epiphanius write of Christ producing forth a woman from his side, akin to the generation of Eve in the Garden of Genesis. Christ has sex with the new woman produced from his flesh and blood, and then is alleged (according to Epiphanius’ resentful accounts) to consume his own semen. Some apocryphal scriptures relate the consumption of menstrual blood and semen to the Eucharist of Christ {*Panarion* 26:8:5 and 26:4:1-8}. It is debatable whether the “Great Questions of Mary” is a description of gnostic ritualism, or a misperception of sexual metaphor.

Subsequent to the Ecumenical Councils of Nicea (325), Laodicea (363-364), Nîmes (394-396), and Orange (441) apostolic continence in the Roman Catholic Church became embedded in the Christian theological lens of the fourth century. It was against the background of sexual renunciation, and asceticism that the role of Mary the Magdalene as “Apostle to the Apostles” changed to a merely anachronistic significance. {Haskins 1993;

pg. 89}. Hence with firm patriarchal dominance in ecclesia, the preeminence of Mary the Magdalene was discontinued by the emergent proto-orthodoxy. It was inevitable under patriarchy and exclusion from Gnostic scriptures from canon, that the sin of Mary the Magdalene became that of her sexuality, a transgression reciprocated by Eve. The Gnostics and Manichaeans celebrated Mary the Magdalene as mediatrix between the Gospel and the Church in their arcane scriptures. The transgressions, so called, of Mary the Magdalene became interlaced with her role as the second Eve, a perfect ideal of repentance, and with the Virgin Mary, a complete rejection of the Hieros Gamos, of sexuality that Christian orthodoxy zealously to this day abhors.

The Gospel of Mary breeds the metaphysical nuptial between the Magdalene and Jesus Christ by confirming Mary in a position parallel to Christ. The post-resurrection dialogues between Christ and the Magdalene speak of the Son of Man as the immaculate child of true humanity, the holy light innate within the soul of every man and every woman. The antagonism beset upon Mary by Andrew and Peter {Mary 10:1-4} mimics the theological debates between the "lost Christianities" {Ehrman 2003} during the second century. Contemporary scholars Karen King and Elaine Pagels question the antagonism between the apostle Peter and Mary the Magdalene. Is this a tangible historical conflict, or a metaphorical adversity besought by Church misperception of the Hieros Gamos, of sexuality and religion?

King more intriguingly posits the theological position of the Gospel of Mary, what is the nature of the Gnostic veneration of the Magdalene in her Gospel? Challenges to the Magdalene represent proto-orthodox rejection of Gnostic teachings as those in the Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of Phillip, Gospel of Mary, and Pistis Sophia as privatized religiosity, personal prophecy, and sexuality. Irenæus charged heretics with attempting to reveal hidden mysteries received by the apostles in private, and preaching theological fiction. Levi defends Mary's Gospel by censuring Peter's disdainful treatment of Mary. Secondly, Levi reaffirms to the apostles that Christ indeed knew and loved Mary foremost, confirming her preeminent relationship with Christ. Peter says to Mary, "*We know the savior loved you more than the rest of the women.*" {Mary 6:1}.

Desposyni is a term first coined by Father Malachi Martin {d. 1999}, a Vatican theologian who served alongside H.H. Pope John XXIII from ^{A.D.} 1958-1964. The Greek term refers to the Heirs of the Magdalene bloodline through the historical Yeshua of Nazareth. The second-century chronicler Hegesippus of Palestine writes in his *Hypomnematata* {Memoirs} of Roman Emperor Vespasian ordered death upon the family of David and Jews of royal stock. Hegesippus reports in his chronicles Emperor Domitian succeeding Titus, Son of Vespasian in ^{A.D.} 81 and ordering mass executions upon the inheritors of the Davidian bloodline.

The epoptic legacies of the Magdalene and *desposyni* inheritors have been defamed by puritan propaganda and theological fiction. The historical Christ was segregated from sexuality while the Virgin Mary depreciated into

a sexless prodigy. Immaculate Mary as the matrilineal initiator of the Magdalene legacy has been substantially demeaned by Protestantism as a sexless New Eve. In 1969, the Holy See canonized Marie the Magdalene, and inaudibly retracted the hypothesis upheld by Pope Saint Gregory the Great's *Homily XXXIII* issued in A.D. 591 associating the Magdalene with Mary of Bethany {John 11:2}, the woman "taken in adultery" of John 8:1-11 and Mary of Bethany {Luke 7: 37-49}. The April 1969 canonization of the Magdalene and revision of the Roman Catholic missal was based on the belief of her penitence. This retraction proved to be exegetically tenable, bringing the Roman Church into line with the Byzantine Orthodox Church that maintains the separation of Mary of Bethany, Mary Jacoba wife of Cleophas {John 19:25}, and Mary of Magdal. In the 1988 Apostolic Epistle, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, H.H. Pope John Paul II refers to the Magdalene as *apostola apostolorum*, Apostle to the Apostles. H.H. Pope John Paul states on the sins of woman that behind transgressions of Woman lurks a man equally responsible for the rot of Light, destitute of Love.

We must ask whether the Gospel of Mary and the legacy of the Magdalene is justly *Gnostic*, for in lost Christianities there were competing theologies and canon was absent during the formation of a nascent proto-orthodoxy. The *Hieros Gamos* betwixt the Christ and Magdalene reciprocate metaphysical matrimony in ancient cultures such as Mesopotamia and Sumer, to the erotic Song of Solomon in the New Testament and Song of Inanna in Babylonian religion. The *sanga-lugal* was the priest-king in ancient Sumer, from whence comes the French *Sangréal*, the 'blood royal.' Thus the legendary Holy Grail, popularly ascribed to be the metaphysical "womb" of the Magdalene, existed contextually long before Jesus Christ.

In context of antiquated rites of mystical marriage, the *hierodule* {Greek, *hierodoulos*} served as a female acolyte, often in connotation with religious prostitution.⁸ This sacred prostitute referred to as the Scarlet Woman, allegorized as the Whore of Babylon in Revelations, was the holy aspect of ancient bridal rituals of the orient. Her sacred hieroglyph was the Rosi-Crucis, a cross within a circle found in many ancient religious sites and Roman coins.

The ceremonial robes of the *heirodulai*, the sacred prostitutes were scarlet red, and in lieu of the Magdalene's sacerdotal role, many medieval artists such as Luca Signorelli and Caravaggio portray Mary in red garments. The Song of Inanna reciprocated by the New Testament Song of Solomon indicates an antiquated ritual of mystical marriage. The Christ and Magdalene epitomize the *Hieros Gamos*, a mystical marriage that often reconciles and obscures the borders between sexuality and religiosity. Mary the Magdalene's metaphysical matrimony to Jesus Christ abides in the power to illuminate spiritual darkness in the "holy light of the bridal chamber" {{Phillip verse 126 & 127; Ehrman 2003} and Rose Cross.

