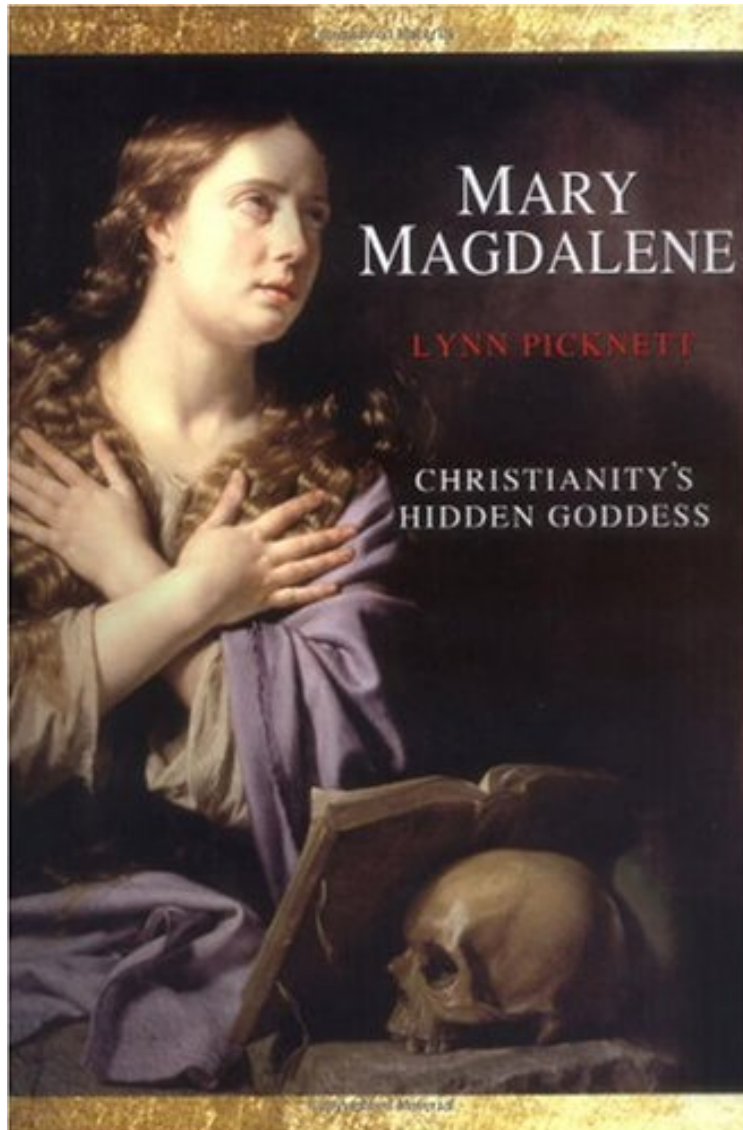


(Library ebook) Mary Magdalene: Christianity's Hidden Goddess

Mary Magdalene: Christianity's Hidden Goddess

Lynn Picknett

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Lynn Picknett : Mary Magdalene: Christianity's Hidden Goddess before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mary Magdalene: Christianity's Hidden Goddess:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars
By Libah Cobb
Very passionate writer. Worth reading, even if you do not agree with writer's conclusions.
3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Good read
By Tabitha @ShoppingWives
I bought this for my husband for his birthday. I found out later that he has another book by Lynn Picknett. I do have to say that my husband is very open minded but has his own opinion about religion.

Nothing in this book offended him, while it might offend someone else that is strictly christian. End result is he enjoyed this book and would suggest it to anyone that likes to read up on history, Mary Magdalene and those types of books. 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. INTERESTING, BUT WAY OUT THERE By Theresa Welsh

Was Mary Magdalene the wife of Jesus? Lynn Picknett thinks so, and she shows us a startling picture of the pair, with Mary Magdalene portrayed as spiritually superior to Jesus. Taking the Bible and the Nag Hamadi scrolls and other recently uncovered documents as her sources, she picks her way through the evidence that Mary Magdalene was a wealthy and learned woman, possibly a black woman and possibly schooled in the Egyptian mysteries. Picknett also draws heavily on the research she and Clive Prince did for their popular book, *The Templar Revelation*, particularly the material showing a connection between Jesus and Egypt. She begins with her own indignation at the way the name of Mary Magdalene has been used to degrade and abuse women, citing the "Magdalene Laundries" in Great Britain where young girls guilty of sexual "sins" were forced to live and work in the oppressive laundries, under the cruel tutelage of nuns. Called "Maggies," these women were wrapped in the shame of Magdalene, the supposed harlot. But Picknett tells us (as any of us who have looked into the subject well know) that there is no evidence that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute. She may have had a sexual side, but there was no shame in it. Picknett concludes that Magdalene and Jesus may have been partners in a spiritual rite that included "sacred sex." Dan Brown, in *The Da Vinci Code*, tells us about a custom called "hieros gamos," ritual sex for the purpose of spiritual enlightenment. Picknett traces this custom to Egypt and suggests Magdalene may have been an Egyptian priestess who practiced such rites. Picknett compares Magdalene to Helen, the beautiful black woman who accompanied Simon Magus on his travels, who performed exotic dances in chains while crowds watched and waited for Simon to perform "miracles." Simon Magus was associated with John the Baptist, leading to questions about whether John and Jesus performed the same magician's tricks as Simon. Other writers have compared Jesus and John the Baptist and cited evidence that the Baptist had a considerable following and may not have been the solitary wildman living on locusts and honey in the desert as he was traditionally portrayed. In fact, he may have been a rival to Jesus, with his own large contingent of followers. It is a fact that there are to this day sects that revere the Baptist and hold Jesus in low regard. The Mandaeans are modern remnants of such a group. In medieval times, the Knights Templar were believed to have revered the Baptist and their members were said to spit on the cross of Jesus as part of their rituals. And further evidence comes from the Cathars, who were wiped out by a papal crusade for their heretical beliefs concerning John the Baptist. The Cathars also believed that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were lovers. But Picknett goes over the top when she tries to unite Mary Magdalene with the practices and beliefs of the Baptist. Working with the fascinating material she and Clive Prince presented in *The Templar Revelation* about the many churches in the south of France (former home to the Cathars) dedicated to Mary Magdalene and John the Baptist, she tries to reconcile why people who loved and honored Magdalene also loved and honored the Baptist. But the connection is simply not clear. Picknett has plenty to say about the Baptist, who was beheaded by Harold -- but not, as the Bible says, because his stepdaughter's dancing so entranced him he offered her anything she wanted. Picknett suggests instead that there may have been a plot to do away with the Baptist. Who would stand to gain? She suggests that Jesus may have wanted to eliminate his rival and may have been involved in John's death. She makes much of the "head on a platter" and ties it in with the allegations that the Templars worshiped a head. Could the head of John the Baptist have been one and the same as the Holy Grail? These are interesting speculations, but what was there about the Baptist that caused followers down to this day to regard him as the true "son of God" instead of Jesus? A lot of Picknett's thoughts derive directly from her feeling that the Church supposedly founded by Peter was led by men who wanted to suppress women. That did not include Jesus, who loved and honored Mary Magdalene. If you accept the Gnostic Gospels as authentic ancient documents, then you must accept that Jesus loved Mary Magdalene and considered her his closest disciple, the one who really understood his teachings. It appears from these writings that Peter hated Magdalene and was jealous of her intimacy with Jesus. Not only did Peter try to downplay her role, but the church he founded asserted male supremacy at every opportunity. Is it surprising that the church fathers would edit out any passages that honored Mary Magdalene? Picknett goes so far as to suggest that there may be more ancient documents that prove that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were sexual partners (married or otherwise) that the church has acquired and suppressed. She debunks the widely-circulated story about the Arab youths who discovered the Nag Hamadi documents, that they took them home to their mother who burned some as cooking fuel, not realizing their value. Picknett suggests this is a cover story for the disappearance of scrolls whose contents were too hot to handle. Her ruminations here reminded me of another highly controversial book, *The Jesus Scroll* by Donovan Joyce, published in the early 1970s, which alleges that Jesus did not die on the cross, but actually perished at Masada as an old man. Supposedly, the excavations of Masada conducted by Yigael Yadin (the same man who acquired the Dead Sea Scrolls for Israel) turned up a scroll written by Jesus. The Jews who held out on the huge rocky summit were all found dead by their own hands when the Romans finally stormed the top. Among the dead was one "Jesus of Genesareth," author of the scroll that Joyce says he saw. The scroll has since disappeared, and among those suspected of concealing it, to keep its explosive contents secret, is the Catholic Church. Joyce's book is long out of print and difficult to find, but I have a copy. Like Picknett who had her own personal emotional angst over religion driving her ideas, Donovan Joyce too had an axe to grind. He

was denied access to Masada by Yigael Yadin who apparently thought Joyce was involved in theft of the scroll. In his book, he writes in an acerbic and sarcastic manner about the life of Jesus. Like Picknett and other writers, he believes Jesus was married and his most likely wife is Mary Magdalene. He provides his own speculations on who she was and, like Picknett, points out that, according to the Bible, Mary Magdalene was wealthy and used her money to support Jesus and his work. Picknett gleefully notes that if Magdalene was a prostitute, then Jesus lived off her sinful earnings! Lynn Picknett has raised some interesting possibilities with her book, but mainly she chases her own demons in painting Mary as a black goddess who practiced exotic sexual rites with her companion, Jesus, who emerges as a clever and not very likable magician. It's a picture that doesn't hold together very well. Picknett is better when she writes with her usual collaborator, Clive Prince. While I share her indignity at the church's brutal and callous disregard for the spiritual power of the female side of humanity, I think we all need to continue the search for the real Mary Magdalene. It's a search that may never end because the sources are so few and our understanding of the nuances of meaning of these ancient documents so subject to adding our own spin. But I hope the search goes on, for many of us will never stop wanting to know the truth.

What is the truth about the "other Mary"-one of the most important female figures of the New Testament, second only to Mary the Mother? Although nearly written out of the Biblical Gospels as merely a redeemed "fallen woman," Mary Magdalene is the secret Gnostic Gospels' major character after Jesus himself. The Gnostic Gospel of Mary, for example, states that after the crucifixion, the apostles were rallied with an impassioned and enlightened sermon given by Mary Magdalene, and the Gospel of Thomas relates that Jesus called her "The Woman Who Knows All." Undoing centuries of confusion and cover-up, *Mary Magdalene: Christianity's Hidden Goddess* will startle even contemporary Christians who have used her example to argue for the ordination of women and New Age believers who hail her as a feminine archetype of the "goddess."

From Publishers Weekly While conventional wisdom sees Mary Magdalene as a trollop-turned-saint, recent scholars and popular biographers (including evangelical funny lady Liz Curtis Higgs) have quite convincingly argued that there's no credible evidence that this close disciple of Jesus was ever a lady of the night. Revisionist history, though, takes a turn for the improbable with *Mary Magdalene: Christianity's Hidden Goddess*, Lynn Picknett's overly speculative account of Mary as the "secret" goddess of the New Testament and early church. Drawing on several Gnostic texts, Picknett offers both well-worn and new arguments about Mary, who Picknett claims Jesus designated as his true successor. Where some Gnostic texts suggest a sexual relationship between Mary and Jesus, Picknett sees full-blown sexual rituals as de rigueur in the esoteric early church, though they were later suppressed. And while some fanciful (and relatively late) church legends have Mary Magdalene fleeing to "France" after Jesus' resurrection, Picknett offers a detailed chapter claiming that this "French connection" was not legend but fact. This reformist take on the much-maligned Mary Magdalene is sometimes fascinating, but conjectural and prone to hasty theorizing. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. "A daring glimpse into the possible life of Mary Magdalene . . . impressive and broad-ranging research raises some thought-provoking questions." About the Author Lynn Picknett is author of *Mary Magdalene: Christianity's Hidden Goddess* and (with Clive Prince) *Turin Shroud: How Leonardo da Vinci Fooled History* and its sequel, *The Templar Revelation*. She is also a lecturer and consultant on UFOs and the paranormal (Meridien/Anglia TV, Talk Radio, LBC, the Museum of Photography and the British UFO Research Association). She lives in London.