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**Jesus and the Gnostic Cathars**

**By Robert Bruce Baird**

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"Historical Jesus research is becoming something of a scholarly bad joke. There were always historians who said it could not be done because of historical problems. There were always theologians who said it should not be done because of theological objections. And there were always scholars who said the former when they meant the latter." (1) These words from De Paul University's John Dominic Crossan might not make headline news but they are important insights to the 'historical problems' and 'theological objections' which still cause war and conflict or prejudices to the present day. Those things are the stuff of headlines still emanating from the land so full of holes due to things like the Holy of the Holies in that disgusting Holy Land! We must discover why little is done to elucidate the arts of social engineers known as 'experts' in history, theology and journalism. Pardon my passion - but it disturbs me greatly to see all human and other sentient life so enslaved by this Holy conflagration. We can be so much more - if we would DO as Jesus and other desposyni did. There are despots in these groups of the Merovingian or family of Jesus however.

I hope my positive portrayal of the knowledge systems historically represented herein will allow people to understand the uses and abuses of the life of Jesus by those who continue to empower themselves rather than enable the soul 'within'. Collectively the soul of good people can overthrow the 'radical aristocratic' or Neo-Platonic top-down oligarchy. We must create! What we create is the work of the Creator.

Leo Strauss and his students still run the US policy of our present day. Lincoln was another of the 'beneficent paternalists' who thought we could not understand what really was best for us. Here are a few words from Thomas J. Di Lorenzo in an article titled 'Leo Lincoln'. "Lincoln's cynical political manipulation of religion was the perfect Straussian subterfuge. It was the perfect propaganda tool for sugarcoating a bloody and imperialistic war of conquest. Little wonder that contemporary Straussian neocons think of Lincoln as 'the greatest statesman in world history': He was an extreme nationalist; an enemy of constitutionally limited government and genuine natural rights; a skilled political conniver, manipulator and deceiver; and a phony religionist. Perfect."

## Jesus and the Gnostic Cathars

I hope I am not guilty of projecting my own life or beliefs (if I have any) onto the Cathari Gnostics and far more ancient peoples of shamanic background, who developed the disciplines which Jesus and his kin learned for many millennia. Will HIS - story play a role in `his' - story? I refer to this 5,000 year `nightmare' which Joseph Campbell quotes James Joyce talking about when he did the foreword to Marija Gimbutas' Language of the Goddess.

The War on Women is a large part of what must be addressed. History is a poor teacher if you do not study to separate the motives and means from the lives lost in often aggrandized hero worship or cultish national - `isms'. I guess it would be hard for me or anyone not to have a bias of some sort but I think I am more `open' than most.

Crossan is a well established or connected academic with a lot of support from top Bible scholars and the mainstream theological community. But don't expect them to start encouraging actual education of what Jesus studied any time soon. I think you will see that I come from the Tradition which the family of

Jesus and Solomon were part of, for a long and illustrious history.

My purpose is not to justify or simply revise our image of the ancients and what knowledge has been lost. The peasant or plebe must become aware enough to see we are able to fight City Hall. WE must learn to make history and change the ethic of our leaders. If not - history will repeat, like cucumbers on a sour stomach. Thomas Carney or Marshall McLuhan and many others have made it clear that we are `managed'; but McLuhan was unable to get the truth out when he wrote his books according to his recent biographer who says McLuhan knew the secret societies that are `behind the scenes' and own the media. Plato is just one of many who observed that the advent of the writing alphabet which the Phoenicians gave their colonies or trading partners actually led to a decrease in knowledge and disciplined wisdom. So whether or not Jesus was a writer has little to do with his wisdom. Whether he was a peasant or a prince, he was not going to learn wisdom without effort and introspection. Here is an entry from my Heroes and Villains Volume in an Encyclopedia:

"PLATO: – This man is as important to you as Jesus, and both of them have the same legend of Immaculate Conception associated with them. I can prove the Greek's Danaus colonizers are the DN or DNN of Homer. They became the Semites in Anatolia too; and it is acknowledged that Plato is the descendant of Solon. I can show Ptolemy trying to make himself historically part of the De Danaan hero family of Hercules through the works of Manetho and it may be true - who knows? The study of these two men whose noble lineage seems related through more than just the legend of Immaculate Conception; as Moses and Sargon the Great (a millennium earlier than Moses/Akhenaten) are related with the baby in the basket amongst the bulrushes, is of utmost importance. History may in fact be the most powerful tool to form the actions of the masses or society as a whole.

Throughout the many books I have written about the Hyksos Phoenician Kelts or the esoteric Mystery Schools associated with them, there is documentation of the growth of hierarchy and power or greed. The conflicts may have been part of the Jesus story. Who knows if the sage or alchemist named Plato really believed everything he wrote. How much was he advised or instructed to write? I am near to certain he knew his Atlantis story was a pure fiction designed to cover up the earlier model culture based upon egalitarian ethics with women in an equal if not preferred position. Jesus was probably named after (though his given name Yeshua is not) the concept of Brotherhood called Iesa, as linguists

can demonstrate.

There certainly was a Brotherhood of Man ethic but it may have never achieved the kind of harmony in society which is now necessary to overcome the inequities and hierarchial threats posed by excessive Neo-Platonic manipulation. Clearly there were some attempts by the wise Solon to protect the rights of women and yet by Plato's time this ethic had not a shred of support left to be seen. Why did this insecure macho ethic evolve in the Mediterranean world to this degree? Just five centuries before Plato we see his fellow nobles in Tyre are allowing a favored descendant of Jezebel to found Carthage in 814 BCE. How much can we blame poor Plato for all the hierarchy anyway? He just wrote the rationale for what all these nobles or elites saw as the proper way to structure this society.

Jesus may have been a zealot seeking to establish a country or kingdom like David (his ancestor) or he may have harkened back to a time when Brotherhood existed, as most Cynics really saw must happen. Seneca and all the other rich or poor Cynics clearly saw man must think and learn for himself, or else things would continue to grow ever more class and racially differentiated. I think Jesus had the Gnostic training of ecumenism and was not into the Kingdom of Israel zealotry as much as he was against Rome and Empire in general, even if he was a zealot at some point in his life. I also think Plato was no where near as elitist or Fascist as his succeeding philosophic school up to Hegel and

Fukayama today have become. In fact I think Plato would have preferred universal education and enablement of citizens as the foundation for his Republic. But let's be real! Even today it is hard to find interested and open-minded `thinkers'."

Easy answers sought to explain what humanity has feared or regarded through superstition as gods are not the kind of things that allowed adepts to know themselves and their soul. The structures of power and priestly prevarications are rife even in the halls of supposed fair and academic institutions. Pardon me for disagreeing with the likes of Fukayama and others who would have us believe in `absolute' religions of any form. As a human with the ability to consciously apprehend his or her environment; we must all eschew these black and white answers that our education has expected us to regurgitate in order to get better grades.

I have attempted to open a window to view what is called PRE-history. Just before the era I focus upon in this book there was a city in Anatolia or present day Turkey before the Black Sea was created. Jacquetta Hawkes called it `precociously' modern or advanced in her Atlas of Archaeology. This might easily be less advanced than the cities that were inundated in 5500 BC alongside the freshwater lake that we are now able to reach under the Black Sea. That area is central to what became the Iberian corporate ventures or the Phoenician Brotherhood. There is a great deal we do not know and may never know about the things known to ancient people and where we came from. Hopefully you will find your own creative juices flow as you travel this high road of speculative Imagineering based on current archaeology rather than accept the tenured propaganda of past history as written by and for Empire-builders.

Whether or not there was a town with a well, and that town was called Nazareth in the time Yeshua bar Joseph lived on earth, is really less material or important than the people and the things they may have learned. I do believe the family of Jesus has made a great deal of good inputs to humanity over

time. I think he and they deserve our respect as well as our genuine fear of elitism or the power motives they have exhibited. There are no 'easy' answers and the most we can do is hope to improve our lot by learning from our shared past or history. Learning about more than mere dates and names is required. I do honor the memory of those burned at the stake and there will be times you might find my invective a little over the top - please excuse me if I offend any of your gentler sensitivities. Just remember the genocide of the Cathar 'parfaits' as they walked arm in arm with their children into the fires set for them by the Dominican 'Hounds of Hell'.

We can (!) re-distribute the ego's needs for honor that lead to the structures of Mediterranean patronage or cronyism. We do not need to read good anthropologists like John Davis in order to know what still runs everything around us. Please do not simply respond to my effort as if I am a mere and simple 'conspiracy theorist'. Those who call me that kind of thing are often weak-willed sycophants or just the thing people see when they look in the mirror; if they have not studied what is possible and why things are the way they are. Put another way - in the words of the scholar Peristiany: "The punctiliousness of honour must be referred to the code of an exclusive and agonistic micro-society; that of honesty to an inclusive, egalitarian macro-society." Let us work together and end this ideology of gloom that insists humans can be no more than the 'beast with red cheeks' or some other object Machiavellians and politicians merely 'manage' as if we are 'money-trees'.

It should be obvious that the 'spin' I will put to the facts exists just as it does with any other writer. You may consider me a Utopian in the typology of Bryan Wilson or as one who "... 'presumes' some divinely given principles 'of reconstruction,... more radical than the reformist alternative, but unlike the revolutionist option, insists much more on the role human beings must take in the process'..." (2)

From an interview by Bill Moyers with the scholar Paul Woodruff of the University of Texas on NOW, we have a little of the ancient understanding of 'representative deities' and the forces in reality they knew they could not fully capture, and were in awe of the beauty therein.

"PAUL WOODRUFF: Yeah. When people are powerful, they— they tend to fall into habits of acting as if they were divine. The— the cliché, of course, is power corrupts. But what— what the Greeks are noticing is that it corrupts in a very particular way. You think that you can't go wrong. You think that you can't be mistaken. You think that because you are not likely to be mistaken, you don't have to listen to other people. And those are all signs of tyranny and they're all signs of hubris. They all indicate a lack of— of — of respect for the difference between human beings and— and gods, which is the essence of reverence.

BILL MOYERS: So reverence is something other than the worship of God.

PAUL WOODRUFF: On my view, yes. And this came to me as a surprise, actually, because I had always been taught that for ancient peoples, reverence was sacrificing the appropriate number of goats or sheep or cattle or chickens or whatever so that the plague will be averted or we won't have an earthquake next year or whatever. What people have called "do a deus," "I give to the god, the god will give back to me."

Then I— but as I— as I tried to translate this term and understand what it meant and why it was so important to the tragic poets like Sophocles, I realized that had nothing to do with it. Oedipus and the other tyrants are not in trouble because they didn't sacrifice enough chickens. It didn't have anything to do with that. It was about their attitude towards themselves and their— their failure to realize that they

were not truly godlike." (3)

I have not read a lot of Alan Watts, because people have always told me I sound like him. I promise that even if you think that someone sounds like you or thinks as you do - this is one book that will challenge many things that we all must question. Here is one of many things said by Watts which I agree with.

"Faith is an openness and trusting attitude to truth and reality, whatever it may turn out to be. This is a risky and adventurous state of mind. Belief in the religious sense, is the opposite of faith – because it is a fervent wishing or hope, a compulsive clinging to the idea that the universe is arranged and governed in such and such a way. Belief is holding to a rock; faith is learning how to swim – and this whole universe swims in boundless space." – Alan Watts

I am an activist for ecumenicism in the mode of Yeshua or Appolonius. This is the letter to the reader from one of my books which can be found at [World-Mysteries.com](http://World-Mysteries.com).

## **Against Gnosticism: Why the Gnostic Christians were not Christian**

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In early Christianity there were many alternative views that claimed to have authority over one another. Hundreds of rival teachers all claimed to teach the "true doctrine of Christ" and denounced all others as frauds. All claimed to represent "the authentic tradition". Jesus himself was the only authority they all recognized.<sup>1</sup> One of these alternative views was Gnostic Christianity, which gained popularity in the second century.

The term Gnosticism comes from the Greek word *gnosis*, meaning 'knowledge'. This knowledge is knowledge of participation, knowledge of union and salvation. It is existential knowledge in contrast to scientific knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Gnosticism was influenced by Oriental dualism and Greek philosophies. In this dualism the Gnostics believed that the creation of the world was bad and that its creator, Yahweh, the Old Testament God of the Jews, was an evil being. The God of Gnostic Christianity was a benevolent and loving being, superior over Yahweh.<sup>3</sup> This God was God the Father, Jesus' Father, the "real" God. Paul Tillich said that *Gnosis* is used in three ways: as knowledge in general terms; as mystical communion; as sexual intercourse.<sup>4</sup> This article will be concerned with the second as it applies to the Resurrection.

The theory that Jesus rose from the dead is the fundamental element of the Christian faith. The idea that this event occurred in one unique historical moment is a central theme to the orthodox position. What makes this so ordinary is not the claim that Jesus' friends had seen him after his death, but that they saw a human being. The orthodox position states that as Christ rose bodily from the grave, so every believer should anticipate the resurrection of the flesh. <sup>4</sup> Some New Testament accounts insist on this literal view of the resurrection and the orthodoxy of the second century insisted on it as well, rejecting all others as heretical. Luke 24:34 states that "the Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to

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Simon Peter!" Whatever the truth of this claim, in all honesty we can't verify or disprove it on simply historical grounds - we were not there to see it happen. All we can say is that Peter claimed that the resurrection happened and generations after him continued to believe him, and still do.

For the Gnostic Christian, however, the person who experiences the resurrection does not meet Jesus raised back to life in physical form. He encounters Christ on a spiritual level, such as dreams, ecstatic trances, visions, and spiritual illumination. <sup>5</sup> The Gnostic Christian rejected Luke's theory. According to them, the literal view of the resurrection was argued to have occurred in the past and because of this it was called the "faith of fools". <sup>6</sup> The Gnostics insisted that the resurrection symbolized how Christ's presence could be experienced in the present. To them, it was not literal seeing that mattered; rather, it was spiritual vision. This spiritual vision of the resurrection, in whatever form it took, was the moment of enlightenment - a person could be "resurrected from the dead" right now. Christians could "receive the resurrection while they live". <sup>7</sup> Gnostics believed that taking the literal view was ignorant.

What interested these Gnostics far more than past events attributed to the "historical Jesus" was the possibility of encountering the risen Christ in the present. They alleged that the risen Christ continued to reveal himself to certain disciples, representing how Christ's presence could be experienced individually in the present moment. For Christians who wanted to know and experience Christ now, in

there own individual present moment, this belief probably seemed like a quick fix. But I beg to differ.

It may be true that Christ's resurrection is central to Christianity, but I want to take it further and say, putting our faith in the occurrence of the resurrection is actually more central than simply stating it happened. Anyone is capable of saying it happened; not everyone is capable of believing it happened. There is significant difference between the two. One requires faith, the other doesn't. Here is where I believe the Gnostics should not be considered Christian. In truth, we were not there two thousand years ago to see the resurrected Christ; the reality of the issue says that we honestly do not know if the event occurred or not. But isn't this what our faith is all about, believing in something not seen? This is why the Christian faith is so beautiful. The mystery of it gives us hope of salvation and eternal paradise. The Gnostic Christians were adamant about experiencing Christ's resurrection in the present moment, as opposed to relying on the belief that it happened in the past, a belief that requires the central theme of Christianity: Faith. If a person experiences something in the present moment, they don't need to have faith that it happened because they were there to experience it. If the Gnostics did not need faith, then I argue against their Christianity, for they did not find use for the essential driving force behind a Christian's whole existence. I believe that the proof of their heresy lies in the fact that Christian Orthodoxy, despite its evolution into many different denominations and doctrines, is still practiced by millions of people, whereas Gnosticism died out long ago. Although people in the modern world did not witness Christ's bodily resurrection they still, two thousand years later, put their faith in the hope that it did. And sometimes, a simple hope is all a person needs.

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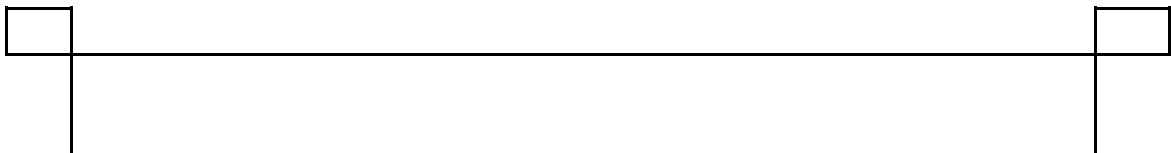
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