

THE MARY MAGDALENE CONFERENCE – ST MARY MAGDALENE’S DAY – JULY 22-26, 2018



2ND CONFERENCE OF MARY MAGDALENE STUDIES ASSOCIATION

On July 22nd 2018, IIPSGP will be holding the 2nd Annual Mary Magdalene Conference at the European Peace Museum in Central France. Among other things we shall explore what role she has in today's churches, and among modern Gnostics. What does contemporary scholarship say about the actual person hiding behind the legends? Was Mary Magdalene really a pagan from an ancient Goddess tradition who initiated and anointed Jesus as their Holy Osiris figure? As the first person to bear witness to the risen Jesus after the resurrection, she convinced the other disciples to take seriously what she had seen. Without Mary Magdalene, perhaps no Christian church would ever have come into being. Did she then perhaps have the knowledge of real secrets of Christianity and act as its guardian? It is for this reason that IIPSGP brought the Mary Magdalene Studies Association into being at our conference in 2017. This will be our second annual conference, and we are holding it on her Saints feast Day, July 22 (and also on July 24).

SPEAKERS AT 2ND CONFERENCE ON MARY MAGDALENE 2018

Joan Clark: *AN EXPERIENTIAL OVERVIEW OF THE GODDESS MYSTERY SCHOOL TEACHINGS OF MARY MAGDALENE* (GMS)[™] (a body of channeled work taught by Joan Clark). Joan Clark (aka JoanAroma) is an internationally known Natural Perfumer, Aromatherapist, Teacher, Seeker, Mystic, Intuitive Energy Alchemist, Artist, Writer, Dance Therapist, and Kundalini Yoga Practitioner. She is the creatrix of Present-Moment Yoga[™]; the originator of the Goddess Mystery School Teachings[™], a body of channeled Mary Magdalene work; and founder of Joan Clark's Palais Aromatica-- a temple of creative alchemy, which showcases her signature aromatic luxuries and products. More details on: www.joanclark.com. She is certified in the following practices Reflexology, Kundalini Yoga, Dance Movement Therapy, Reiki Master, Shamanic Healing and has developed her own Intuitive Energy/Emotional Release healing practice. She also founded the original women's groups- "Women of Essence" - women who work with plant spirit medicines in the US and "Powerful Passionate Women of Peace" - women working to create a more peaceful planet through nurturing self love and care. Several years ago, during a pilgrimage to France, Joan Clark received seven sacred teachings from Mary Magdalene. With those teachings, Joan was inspired to create the curriculum for her Goddess Mystery School. Mary Magdalene's seven sacred Goddess Mystery School TM teachings of: *Humility, *Forgiveness, *Compassion, *Trust, *Love, *Ecstatic Joy and *Oneness. Joan currently lives in the USA and travels widely worldwide.

Rev Dr. Bruce Chilton: *MARY'S SCIENCE OF JESUS' RESURRECTION*. Rev Bruce Chilton is an Episcopalian Priest and author of *Mary Magdalene: A Biography*, *The Way of Jesus* and *Rabbi Jesus*. He is the Vicar Emeritus at St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church, Barrytown, New York, USA. He is currently the Bernard Iddings Bell Professor of Philosophy and Religion, executive director of the Institute of Advanced Theology, coordinator of Theology, and senior pastor of Bard College. He is a scholar of early Christianity and Judaism, and the author of the first critical translation of the Aramaic version of Isaiah (The Isaiah Targum, 1987). He received his B.A. from Bard College, M.Div. and ordination from General Theological Seminary, and Ph.D. from Cambridge University. He is the author of more than a dozen books. He is the editor in chief of the Bulletin for Biblical Research and the founding editor of the Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Studying the Historical Jesus series. He has written academic studies that put Jesus in his Jewish context (Rabbi Jesus: An Intimate Biography, Pure Kingdom, The Temple of Jesus, and A Galilean Rabbi and His Bible). His recent books include Abraham's Curse: The Roots of Violence in Judaism, Christianity and Islam; The Cambridge Companion to the Bible; Religious Tolerance in World Religions (coeditor). Chilton has taught in Europe at the universities of Cambridge, Sheffield, and Münster, and in the United States at Yale University (as the first Lillian Claus Professor of New Testament) and Bard College. Throughout his career, he has been active in the pastoral ministry of the Anglican Church.

Dr. Siobhan Houston: *INVOKING MARY MAGDALENE'S ENERGY FOR TODAY - GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING IN THE MAGDALENE MOVEMENT.* She is the author of *Invoking Mary Magdalene: Accessing the Wisdom of the Divine Feminine* (2006), *Gnostic Healing* (with Tau Malachi, 2010) and *Priests, Gnostics and Magicians* (2009) and *Priests, Gnostics and Magicians: European Roots of Esoteric Independent Catholicism* (2014) She graduated summa cum laude with an honors BA in religion from California State University, Chico, and holds a master's degree from Harvard Divinity School. She pursued doctoral work in Western esoteric traditions under the late Dr. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke at the University of Exeter (UK), and received her doctorate from the Graduate Theological Foundation in 2008. She has taught at Naropa University (Colorado), and lead retreats throughout the United States as well as in the UK and Ireland. She currently lives in Denver, Colorado. A long time practitioner of the Western mysteries, her work has been published in numerous national magazines, including *Parabola*, *GNOSIS Magazine*, *Intuition Magazine* and others. She is a practicing Jew (her mother's religious tradition) and was ordained as an independent Catholic priest in 2003.

Dr. Jeff Merrifield: *MARY MAGDALENE AND CATHAR CHRISTIANITY.* Jeff is the author of *The Perfect Heretics: Cathars and Catharism.* He took part in the first British Conference on The Cathars, in 1995 at Glastonbury, and has been fascinated studying the Mary Magdalene and Cathar traditions for many years. He is a member of the Saunier Society and knew the authors of the *Holy Blood and Holy Grail* very well. He has moved in theatrical circles and was a close friend of Ken Campbell (1941 –2008) who was known for his work in experimental theatre and achieved notoriety in the 1970s for his nine-hour adaptation of the science-fiction trilogy *Illuminatus!* and his 22-hour staging of Neil Oram's play cycle *The Warp.* Jeff became the official chronicler of the Science Fiction Theatre of Liverpool, work which eventually resulted in the award of a Doctorate on the work of Ken Campbell for the University of Liverpool (2001). A producer and presenter of *CLOSE UP.* a wide-ranging arts programme on BBC Radio Blackburn (now BBC Radio Lancashire), Jeff also ran the Monkeys Jazz Club at the Hermit Centre in Brentwood, Essex for almost a decade. This legendary club attracted some of the brightest and best jazz musicians in the country, including Ronnie Scott, Kevin Ayers and Django Bates. Jeff's wide-spanning career in the Arts has included projects which have weaved together theatre and jazz, organising mammoth festivals, Board Director of Theatre Recourse, a company specialising in art with and for the disabled and disadvantaged, and writing and editing books ranging from children's poetry to a book on *Damanhur*, about the artistic spiritual community who have produced award-winning artworks inside a mountain in Northern Italy, founded as a modern Hermetic renaissance community. Jeff lives on the Shetland Islands off the North Coast of Scotland and will be flying down from there to join us at this event.

Dr Thomas Clough Daffern: *AN OVERVIEW OF MARY MAGDALENE STUDIES: WHAT DON'T WE KNOW ?*

Thomas is a philosopher, historian, teacher, poet, author, lecturer, musician, thinker, educator, consultant and peace studies specialist. His academic background includes degrees in European and world history (with political philosophy) and religious education, plus a long period of intense personal study in philosophy, religion and the history of ideas – together with over 30 years teaching experience in the same fields. He was awarded his PhD from the University of London for a thesis which explores the *History Of The Search For Peace From 1945-2001* and which proposes a new field of historiography, Transpersonal History, as the best way to establish a rigorous discourse on peace among rival and contending spiritual and intellectual traditions, currently battling for hegemony on the planet. He is an expert in research techniques and methodologies on all aspects of history, religious studies, the history of world philosophy and transpersonal psychology. He has lectured in peace studies, philosophy and religious studies for many years at the Universities of London and Oxford, and founded the International Institute of Peace Studies and Global Philosophy (IIPSGP) in 1991 at the University of London. He is a founder and coordinator of International Philosophers and Historians for Peace and has worked with philosophers and intellectuals from many countries worldwide to help establish intellectual and spiritual networks for peace and goodwill. He is also a trained and experienced teacher in secondary schools, specialising in philosophy, religious education, history and citizenship studies. In 2017 he helped establish the World Intellectual Forum, a new global body based in India to bring together advanced peace thinking and global unity consciousness explorers. He founded the Mary Magdalene Studies Association with Amanda Caza Radcliffe in 2017 having moved to France from Scotland in late 2016. He has written a detailed commentary on the Quran, the 3 Books of Enoch, and the 6 Gospels (including Thomas and Mary Magdalene) and published over 35 books on esoteric and peace history.

On July 23rd we shall go on pilgrimage to the Pyrenees, for the second part of the overall event. This area was a stronghold of the Cathar church, in whose environs are many traditions associated with Mary Magdalene. We shall arrive in the evening of 23 July and have a quiet evening exploring the area and getting to know some of the locals. On the third day, July 24th, we shall gather in Alets les Bains and have a local programme of events whose purpose will be both to celebrate the life and work of Mary and Jesus, and to examine the local evidence that Mary may well have ended up living in this region, including an academic seminar with the participation of those who have come down from Betete as well as some local speakers who have been studying Mary Magdalene for years, including hopefully Amanda Caza Radcliffe. The next day, 25th July will be free for explorations and private visits to local sacred sites. We hope to have a guided tour of the sacred sites of the area around Montsegur led by Richard Stanley, and Rennes le Chateau and Rennes les Bains. 26th July those of us who want to can return to Betete, or plan their own onward journeys.

There is no registration charge for speakers, but donations are welcome from attenders. Please fill in the registration form if you want to come / speak / attend, either in Betete or Alets les Bains. To confirm your attendance at this event

please email thomasdaffern@gmail.com or call +33 (0)5 8756 5489. Camping is available in Alets les Bains or guests are encouraged to book to stay on July 23, 24 and 25th at the venue of the conference on July 24, namely <http://www.les-marguerites.fr>

If Mary Magdalene were alive today she would want surely scientists, artists, philosophers and academics to be able to bring our minds and hearts together to make peace between not just all the branches of the Christian Church, but also between all faiths worldwide. This is precisely why IIPSGP Director, Dr Thomas Daffern, has recently completed a 6 years project to record a Commentary on talking book on all 6 Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Thomas, Mary) searching out their innermost peace meanings of universal significance. Books like the Da Vinci Code and the Holy Blood and the Holy Grail have popularised the idea that Mary Magdalene gave birth to a lineage of descendants who continue to live on and influence European history behind the scenes. What are the truths behind these legends and traditions? Where did they arise? Certain texts do point to tensions within the church in its first years between the Petrine/Pauline assumption of authority and the Magdalene's more Gnostic and fluid approach to spirituality. This conflict has persisted throughout the history of Christianity. Is there any chance of reconciling them or must they forever be at loggerheads? What do the various denominations of Christianity, such as Anglican, Protestant, Methodist, Catholic, Gnostic, Rosicrucian etc make of the Mary Magdalene traditions? What about sexuality and Christianity – does the Magdalene tradition point to some kind of knowledge about sacred sexuality? Our purpose is to raise these important questions, not to propose dogmatic answers. Our academic protocol (based on epoche, suspension of judgment) means that we will require strong evidence for claims to have “solved” the Mary Magdalene Mystery, but we are also open to insights from “transpersonal history”.

TOPICS TO BE RESEARCHED BY THE MARY MAGDALENE STUDIES ASSOCIATION

- Mary Magdalene in modern scholarship
- Gnostic traditions about Mary Magdalene
- How might the teachings of a Mary Magdalene church differ from conventional Christian theologies?
- Jewish understandings and attitudes to Mary Magdalene: was she Lilith reborn? Was she a proto-Kabbalist?
- The church's teachings on sacred sexuality and Jesus and Mary as a “wisdom affair” – is Gnosticism a kind of Christian Tantra? ?
- Tracing Mary's image in the history of Christian art: painting and sculpture
- Researching the changing images of Mary Magdalene's image in literature, poetry, drama and fiction
- Is it possible to publish a new comprehensive edition of the Judaeo-Christian Bible with all the lost gnostic texts included in it, including the Books of Enoch and the Gospels of Mary and Thomas and the Pistis Sophia?
- Mary Magdalene has a long tradition of being honoured among French and European occult and esoteric groups – what is the history and context of this? ?
- Which PhD students worldwide are currently focusing on Mary Magdalene for their researches? ?
- What is the role of Mary Magdalene in the canonical New Testament? What does St Paul say of her? ?
- Mary Magdalene in the Nag Hammadi Corpus: what do we learn here about her role and teachings? ?
- Islamic teachings on Mary Magdalene: why is she not mentioned once in the whole Quran - and what does this tell us about the differences between Christian and Islamic theology and history? ?
- What is the history and provenance of the sites associated with Mary Magdalene in France? ?
- How important is Mary Magdalene to Romani (Gypsy) culture and spirituality, what is the history of this tradition on the South of France? ?
- Among the self-identified contemporary Mary Magdalene churches, what is their history and provenance? ?
- Among the churches of Africa (Ethiopia, Coptic, Sub Saharan Africa, African diaspora churches, Rastafarian) what is and was the status of Mary Magdalene? ?
- What was the status of Mary Magdalene among Arian, Nestorian, Gnostic and other forms of Christianity? ?
- Did the Cathar church have special teachings about Mary Magdalene and if so, what was it? ?
- Was the equal status given to women in Cathar Christianity connected to its persecution by the mainstream church? ?
- Mary Magdalene, Gnosticism Cathars and reincarnation: what facts can we establish regarding reincarnation theory and transpersonal history? ?
- Does Mary present the possibility of reconciliation between exoteric and esoteric forms of Christianity? ?

- Mary Magdalene and films and documentaries that tell part of her story
- Mary Magdalene and pagan teachings – was she a secret pagan and if so, of what lineage ?
- Mary Magdalene and the churches teachings on peace: what does the Magdalen tradition say on peace ?

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The study day is taking place on July 22, 2018, at the European Peace Museum, 13 Grande Rue, Betete, La Creuse, France, 23270, and also at Alets les Bains, Pyrenees.. There is no set registration fee to attend the conference – we ask instead for generous donations at the level you can afford. A suggested donation of £30 euros per day will cover basic accommodation, food and registration costs in Betete. Accommodation in Alets les Bains costs extra and needs to be booked directly with <http://www.les-marguerites.fr> Tours in Montesegur cost extra, and there are additional travel costs to Alets les Bains from Betete (and back). Speakers will be given first choice of accommodation in the Museum itself. Each speaker will have 30 – 1 hour minutes plus extra question/discussion time. Powerpoints can be shown as part of your talk. On July 23 we will set off on a pilgrimage to the Pyrenees r by car or minibus. We will leave at 11am in the morning after breakfast and arrive to Alets les Bains at about 6pm. Lifts may be provided for this expedition otherwise please arrange your own transport. 24 July will be a full programme in Alets les Bains. 25 July will be free for private explorations. 26 July we return to Betete via Limoges and Gueret. Please fill in the enclosed form if you wish to attend this THE MARY MAGDALENE CONFERENCE. The event is taking place in English and French both depending on attendees and translation will be provided. Accommodation in Alets les Bains is extra, for those coming down.

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Name:

Address and full contact details (email, mobile, landline):

Profession and scholarly accomplishments:

Arrival date and time / departure time and date:

How are you getting here ?

Do you need to be collected from an airport / train station ?

Do you need accommodation at IIPSGP and for how many nights ?

Do you need accommodation at Alets les Bains, and if so, for how many nights ?

Do you wish to return with us to Betete from Alets les Bains on 26 July ?

Do you wish to join the Mary Magdalene Studies Association (please send CV)

Do you wish to give a presentation – if so, What is the title and subject of your proposed presentation ?

This Mary Magdalene Conference is being organised by IIPSGP, the International Institute for Peace Studies and Global Philosophy, for and on behalf of the Mary Magdalene Studies Association, as a contribution towards spiritual peacemaking, and will be chaired by IIPSGP Director, Dr Thomas C Daffern. The proceedings may be filmed for educational purposes. Please complete the registration form and return it to either iipsgp@educationaid.net or ThomasDaffern@gmail.com. Or you can send it to us by post to: IIPSGP, European Peace Museum, 13 Grande Rue, Betete, La Creuse, 23270, France.