



The Da Vinci Code (II)

by ATHOS

The second subject is the Grail. We must stress from the beginning that, despite the historicist fantasies, the Holy Grail is not a corporeal vessel, hiding somewhere and covering some tenebrous secret. The Grail is a symbol; its sacred meaning alludes to the primordial Tradition, to the Lost Word, and to the divine Knowledge. Finding the Holy Grail crowns an initiatory quest, that is, a spiritual realization that occurs within the being. In the Christian tradition, “the quest of the Holy Grail,” like in Islam, has two components: an external one, regarding the heroic deeds of the knights (corresponding to the “particular orientation” in Islam), and an inner one, when the quest aims at the Heavenly Kingdom within us, that is, the divine presence in the Heart (*Emmanuel*), *Pax Profunda* in the center of the being.

The loss of the Grail (or of one of its symbolic equivalents), explained René Guénon, represents in fact the loss of the Tradition, or even better, the occultation of it. The legend said that the Grail was handed to Adam in the Earthly Paradise and, when the fall took place, Adam lost the vessel, and from then on man was chained in the temporal sphere, far away from his original center. In other words, the loss of the “sense of eternity” is connected to what all the traditions call “the primordial state,” the restoration of which represents the first stage of any genuine initiation and is the prerequisite condition to the effective realization of the super-individual states. The Earthly Paradise means exactly the Center of the World, the “Holy Land,” and the “land of immortality”; it indicates, Guénon elaborated, that the Grail signifies, at the same time, two things strongly related to each other: the initiate who possesses the integral primordial Tradition, so reaching an effective degree of knowledge that essentially implies this possession, is indeed, at the same time, reintegrated into the plenitude of the “primordial state,” realizing what the fairy-tales name “eternal youth and life without death.”

The legend said that, after Adam fell from Paradise and lost the Grail, Seth was able to come back in the center, finding the holy vessel and restoring somehow the primordial order; from Seth to Christ it is not known by whom and how the Grail was transmitted further, the Celtic influence suggesting that maybe the Druids should be considered among the keepers of the Grail and of primordial Tradition. However, after Jesus’

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crucifixion, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus carried the vessel to Great Britain, where the Knights of the Round Table strove to obtain the Holy Grail and bring it to Armorique. During this “historical” adventure, the Grail no doubt was lost and found many times, at different levels. The legend also said that, eventually, the Holy Grail was carried to the “Realm of Prester John,” symbolically located in *Oriens*; this last element suggests that our modern world lacks any trace of Tradition and divine presence (which have left this profane humankind called *Occidens*). Maybe that is why, today, there is a concerted attempt in the modern world to replace the true symbol of the Grail with a pure materialistic perspective, considering this vessel a very profane and corporeal “secret.” In fact, what the Grail is considered to be by modern mentality is purely and simply the Anti-Grail.

Literature promoted the Anti-Grail with strange stubbornness. Recent works with great public success, best-sellers, have usually combined the two subjects, Christ and Grail, on the one hand, because in the traditional texts the Grail is the Heart of Christ, and on the other hand, because it is more efficient, more devastating, and more shocking to desecrate not only Tradition but also the Lord of the World.

A book which produced a lot of sensation in the last two decades will help us understand how this Anti-Grail campaign operates¹; we are not interested in the authors and the book as such, but only in the “mechanism” regarding the tradition’s desecration. We must observe from the beginning that the book is neither original, nor too well built, and it betrays the authors’ arrogance and ignorance. The work is based, of course, as in the case of Kazantzakis, on the Gnostic couple Jesus – Mary Magdalene, a couple which becomes purely human and profane, lacking any symbolism. The author implies in his hypothesis, in order to create perfect disarray, but also for the sake of an apparent mystery and profoundness, all the usual elements employed in such cases: the Gnostics, Nag Hammadi, Jesus’ kiss given to Mary Magdalene, the Cathars, Rosicrucians, Templars, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the Merovingians, and the Holy Grail. Each element is associated with a “secret.” For example, the supposition is advanced that behind the Order of the Temple there was another secret Order, as if the Templars’ secrets were not enough to captivate the reader.² The serious reader is stunned at the

¹ Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh, Henry Lincoln, **The Holy Blood and The Holy Grail**, Corgi Books, 1983.

² In fact, even this fantasy is not new. In 1803, Zacharias Werner wrote his **Die Söhne des Tales**, containing two dramatic plays, each written in six acts: *The Templars in Cyprus* and *The Brethren of the Cross*, in which he promoted the idea of an invisible kernel of the Templar Order, “the Sons of the Valley.” A. E. Waite, in his almost unknown **Emblematic Freemasonry**, stressed that Werner was a high-grade Mason and a member of the Strict Observance, and he elaborated in his plays the traditional history (the Templar origin) of this organization. The Order of the Temple – suggests the plot of the plays – was dismantled under the invisible influence and command of the Sons of the Valley; the Order had lost its spirituality and became profane and decayed, which forced the Sons to invisibly manipulate the French king, and implicitly the Pope, to destroy the Order. Yet the Templars were not completely abandoned; a small kernel, said Werner and Waite, was hidden in Scotland as Masons. Robert of Heredom, who was initiated by the Sons of the Valley, became the guardian of the Secret Palladium and the Master of the new Temple; after five hundred years, the Temple reappeared as Strict Observance. Interestingly enough, the Valley is described as the depository of all religions and the center of all the initiates, from Horus to Vishnu (where Jesus is identified with Osiris, and Saint Mary with Isis); and the place of Robert’s initiation is a cavern. Zacharias Werner’s Valley looks like Agarththa, and the Sons of

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unembarrassed manner in which the author passes from one “secret” to another, like in a television show; and the question emerges by itself: how it is possible that so many “secrets” (not just one!)³ were carefully kept across the centuries and then suddenly a modern author is able to find and decipher them. As we said, a secret organization, but really secret, does not leave traces, and for example, if a secret Order existed behind the Templars, nobody would have known about it, much less a common author. Obviously, at the end of the book the “secrets” proved to be nothing new. Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene (the wedding at Cana being their wedding!) and they had children. The Holy Grail is in fact “the royal blood” and represents the physical children of Jesus, who were saved by Mary Magdalene and taken to Provence, in the south of France.⁴ Jesus’ heirs became related to the Merovingians and there was a conspiracy to dominate the whole of Europe, including the papacy. And the Crusades represented the revenge of Jesus’ successors; the presence of the Templars in the Holy Land aimed at the recovery of legal documents with respect to Jesus (such as his wedding certificate and his children’s birth certificates⁵). Jesus was an aristocrat, with royal blood, a legitimate pretender to the temporal throne; and, of course, his crucifixion was false. There is no need to add that, in the authors’ opinion, everything related to Christian esotericism is in fact a cover for this tremendous secret with respect to Jesus’ descendants.

Very recently, the same phantasmagorias and absurdities were again considered in a work of fiction that quickly became a best-seller.⁶ As other books, this one is obsessed with codes and ciphers, as Jules Verne was, and the “initiator secret” (of a pure spiritual nature), being something very materialistic, was hidden by anagrams and ciphers with an occult tint. Now, the Catholic Church is attacked directly. The Templars were considered the keepers of a “secret” used to blackmail the Vatican; of course, the name of the “secret” is *Sangreal*, the Holy Grail, representing a pile of compromising documents proving the humanity of Jesus and his lack of divinity.⁷ Leonardo da Vinci’s masterpiece, **The Last Supper**, proves that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene, because there the

the Valley (*Superiores Incogniti*) like the Masters of the subterranean center. Some of the “Guénonians”, such as Jean Tourniac (**Principes et problèmes spirituels du Rite Écossais Rectifié**, Dervy, 1969, p. 97), Jean Robin (**Seth le dieu maudit**, Guy Trédaniel, 1986, p. 172 ff.) and Jean Parvulesco (**La Place Royale**, oct. 1986, p. 52) were very interested in Zacharias Werner.

³ This tendency to multiplication and hyperbole is typical for our modern world; even the modern individuals have noticed this abuse of presenting everything with expressions, such as “extra strong,” “extra large,” “super forte,” etc.

⁴ We observe here how the legend of the Saints Marys was plagiarized. About this legend see **The Three Marys**, Sophia Journal, vol. 10, No. 1, Summer 2004.

⁵ Here absurdity and stupidity surpass all limits.

⁶ Dan Brown, **The Da Vinci Code**, Doubleday, 2003. The fact that such a book could become a best-seller suggests very clearly modern mentality’s flaws.

⁷ It is well-known that modern man cannot imagine an oral tradition, and obeying the “syndrome of the printed word” he thinks that everything, even the most hidden secret, was put into writing to be discovered by modern individuals yearning to find all sorts of past secrets. We note also the language abuse, where for modern man secret is just an empty word, since modern life is so public, nothing is secret anymore, even the most intimate things. That is why the author, even though he talks about “secrets,” does not really think that they are secrets, but some kinds of gossip that you can find in any tabloid.

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“beloved” disciple of Jesus looks like a woman. The person painted there is Mary Magdalene not John, and Mary Magdalene is the real Grail. She is the vessel containing the “royal blood,” that is, Jesus’ children. And, sure, again the Gnostic text regarding Jesus’ kiss is quoted.⁸ Then the legend of the Saints Marys and Sarah is introduced. Mary Magdalene, the book says, took shelter in the south of France where she gave birth to a daughter, Sarah (the gypsies would be amazed by this invention). It is somehow amusing to follow the author’s effort to be credible and the manner in which he is betrayed by his own mentality. He tells how in Jerusalem the Templars found four chests full of ancient documents describing Mary Magdalene’s social status exactly.⁹

We do not think we have to continue. The examples we have given are enough to illustrate the Great Disarray of our modern world: it is the time of the Anti-Grail, when individuals think to be gods, and the gods are brought down and changed into humans; it is the time when Noah should run like crazy among us to find ten “righteous people,” admonishing us with the Wrath of the Gods.

⁸ There is a great error to believe that this kiss alludes to something sexually (even though in the modern world the sex, beside violence, is promoted with an amazing obstinacy; we remind that “sex,” in Latin *sexus*, derives from *seco*, “to cut, to divide”). In the Hindu tradition, the Great Hero, drinks *soma* directly from Apâlâ’s mouth, imitating a kiss; this kind of kiss symbolizes in fact the assimilation of the immortal beverage, *soma* (Coom., **Sacrifice**, pp. 142, 144, 154-5). In the fairy-tales, the hero has to kiss the maiden to start the new cycle of manifestation. The kiss transmitted by Jesus to Mary is “spiritualization.” In the Middle Ages, there was the belief that the lioness brought forth the young, which appeared to be still-born. The lion cubs would give no sign of life, but on the third day, the lion would return and animate them with his breath (Louis Charbonneau-Lassay, **The Bestiary of Christ**, Arkana, Penguin Books, 1992, p. 10); the lion represents the “paternal spirituality,” symbolizing the Sun-Father, and the “sun’s kiss” gives life and spirit. **The Song of Songs** begins with, “Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth”; Saint Gregory of Nyssa, commenting this line, said: “The spring is the Groom’s mouth, from where emerge the eternal life’s words, which fill the mouth that drinks them, similar to the Psalmist who drank the Spirit.” In **The Gospel of Philip** it is said: “The word would be nourished from the mouth and it would become perfect. For it is by a kiss that the perfect conceive and give birth. For this reason we also kiss one another” (Nag Hammadi, p. 145). Eventually, we should add St. Bernard’s words: “I hold for certain that to so great and holy an *arcanum* of divine love not even the angelic creation is admitted. ... See the new Spouse receiving the new kiss, not, however, from the *mouth* but from the KISS of *His mouth*. He breathed on them, it is said. There can be not doubt that Jesus breathed upon the Apostles, that is, upon the primitive Church, and said: *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*. That was, assuredly, a kiss. What? – the physical breath? No, but the invisible Spirit. ... And so it is enough for the bride if she is kissed with the *kiss* of the Bridegroom, even if she is not kissed with *His mouth*. Nor does she think it is a slight thing or a thing to be despised that she is kissed with a *kiss*, which is nothing else than to be filled with the Holy Ghost” (**Love of God**, p. 69).

⁹ Of course, the Dead Sea scrolls and the Gnostic documents found at Nag Hammadi could give the impression that it is a standard procedure, but these documents are rather an accident, generated by a serious crisis and deviation, in the critical moment of the change of cycles. And the documents did not represent in any way some kind of “memoirs.”