

# The Gnostic Concept of Authority and the Nag Hammadi Documents (Mellen Biblical Press Series, V. 33)

Wayne Seelye Flory



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This volume seeks to demonstrate that the Gnostic authority originated in, and was based upon the spiritual (pneumatic) Gnostic's self-identification as consubstantial with the "highest god". The "divine spark" basic to this self-identification exalted the Gnostic over his contemporaries and even over the Demiurge (the creator-God of the Old Testament) who did not possess it. The Gnostic rejected the orthodox church and the inferior law and world of the Demiurge. Either in asceticism or in libertinism, the superiority of the Gnostic's authority is clearly expressed in the Gnostic writings, and it is uniformly based on his identity with the divine.

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