

Theses

Motto: Mary of Magdala is a “postcolonial heroine”, one of those people who “look into the night to behold the first signs of dawn to set their community on the path towards daylight.” (paraphrasing Achille Mbembe)

1. We cannot speak of a historical Mary Magdalene, as the reconstruction of her role and story is based on texts that are not intended to be historical. However, the research into the historical Mary Magdalene may enable us to map out the everyday life of the early Christian community and to delimit its literature. This research should, from time to time, engage in dialogue with the history of effect of the Bible, in which the tension between the dominant Church tradition and the interpretation of Biblical texts comes to the surface. The Lutheran principle of *Sola scriptura* obliges us look for the most authentic depiction of Mary Magdalena possible, based on the canon, observing the Church tradition, the dogmas and non-canonical scripts alike.

2. Mary Magdalene is a “postcolonial heroine”, who can set an example even for us, today. Her role was unquestionable for the first Christian generations. However, both canonical and non-canonical (mostly gnostic) texts reveal a conspicuous trend which gradually tried to overshadow Mary Magdalene and her female companions as witnesses of the resurrection and legitimate leaders of the Jesus-movement that emerged in the newly formed house churches. Their marginalization was in part shaped by the dominant idea of patriarchy, already at play during the process of canonization. Even so, it is an integral part of the gospels that the divine message is emancipatory. Mary Magdalene is the apostle of apostles, the messenger of the new life of Easter dawn and the reality of the resurrection, the depositor of faith born out of a personal meeting, who can be looked upon not only by postcolonialist feminists but repressed Christian women all around the globe.

3. Ending the possession of Mary Magdalene (exorcism) may be a paradigm for existence after colonization; postcolonial rehabilitation, which can be read as a “method” of survival, of going on living. Jesus through healing and exorcism put Mary back on the “social landscape”, which gains an additional meaning as a political act in this interpretative framework. Moreover, it was a sign of resistance to the repressive power, a revolt against the *status quo* to a certain extent. One of the apparent goals of this revolt was to liberate the colonized soul and to integrate it into the society. Jesus’ most important sermon is offering table fellowship to the outcast, “colonized” souls; this act helped the course of their integration.

4. There is no factual evidence for or against the idea that Jesus of Nazareth, the God who came down from Heaven and became human, experienced such important aspects of humanity as the bonds of family, spiritual and physical love, all being parts of the miracle of the incarnation. However, it is only a hypothesis and lacks any scientific proof that this should have been realized with Mary Magdalena. Bearing that in mind, soteriology that is in correlation with the incarnation should investigate how “salvation from everything bodily” may also be seen as an aspect of salvation, as “incarnation” (Jn 1,14), too, involves the entire body.

5. Mary Magdalena's quest before daybreak is a perfect example of "seeking out a new place" in a postcolonial system (*hybridity*), where the colonized soul is looking for peace, wishing for a place in the new order. The interconnection between the women in Proverbs 7,6-12, the bride in the Song of Songs (3,1-4) and the search of Mary Magdalene (Jn 20,11-18) is more than obvious. These three texts provide the Biblical foundations of the postcolonial interpretation introduced above.