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Research Article

Church, Cinema, and their Representational Role of Prophet Jesus, With Mary Magdalene: In the Context of Qur'ān, Bible and Historical Facts

Muhammad Asad Latif

PhD Candidate, Department of Islamic Studies, Islamia University of Bahawalpur

Bahawalpur Pakistan; rockybaba091@gmail.com 

 Orcid Id: <http://orcid.org/0009-0006-9378-9953>



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Abstract. Respecting the Prophets is necessary in every religion and desecrating them is punishable. In 1895 Skladanowsky Bros, started the era of filmography, and after two months Lumiere bros as well, but they didn't get the well audience. The dramatic irony continued, and they started the filming of Jesus and showing his miracles on screens and theaters, then they got their goals and aims. Time to time western cinema showed his personality as married, as gay and as nudist Prophet, which is not only against Islamic shari'ah and faith but its Christian religion either. In Islamic point of view, it's offensive pictorial scenario of the past whole history. In this essay will show out those superstitions and figures out.

Keywords: Cinematic Portrait of Jesus (Peace be Upon Him), Mary Magdalene, Hollywood, Islamic point of view

INTRODUCTION

Belief in prophet-hood is one of the basic Islamic facts. And the faith and conviction of a Muslim has the status of an integral part. The Prophets and Messengers are their own example of sacred honor and respect and chastity. Allah Almighty has commanded to honor and glorify him in the holy pages of Holy Qur'ān and each of these prophets is considered superior to the other, as Allah says:

(Holy Qur'ān, 2: 253) **تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ . مِنْهُمْ مَنْ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ .**

“Those are the messengers some of whom we have given excellence over them others. Among them there are ones to whom Allah spoke (directly) and he raised some of them steps higher (in other respects)

Allah Almighty sent about c.one hundred and 1 lacs and twenty-four thousand prophets in the world for the guidance of human beings, who conveyed the unity and commands of God Almighty to the people. In the same way, Adam was the first prophet of God, thanks to whom human existence was provided to this world. Hollywood was the first to make a film on Jesus. They started his agenda, and his religious affairs began to get involved in financial aid, and then in the same way Prophet Moses. From time to time on every prophet (wherever possible) they filmed internationally and nationally. Even producers of Motion Pictures issued a penal code stating that immoral material would not be displayed on any prophet or religion, and that it had the signature of the regular Catholic Church, but later this issue was increasing day by day.

Research Background

As the beginning of films and their relationship is not from the recent past, but its beginning in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century when the era of Silent Feature Films began, the western nations started the agenda of filmmaking on their own prophets. However, the Western nations were popular in general and filmmaking. It is important to explain one thing here, the films that have been used in this season and the following seasons, and the similes of the prophets, has been mentioned, there are some reasons for this. The first reason is that because of his films, Hollywood got a reason to make a name for itself in history, and religious works as well as financial aid were included, and because of his films, the film industry became famous. The second reason is that these films are based on the depictions of the Prophets of their time, which gave the later producers and directors the opportunity to add special features to these films and produce them. The third and most important reason is that the story of these films is often based on Israelism and fabrications, even if some things are from the religious books of the Jews and Christians, then in them a hideous map of the appearance and behavior of the prophets. It is presented to the public, due to which the chaos and disorder among the people, especially the Muslim nations, increases to an abysmal level, and thanks

to the films, disorder and chaos are spreading in the society, which is humanity, it's not suitable for societies. In the words of David and Thompson's:

On 1 November 1895 the German brothers Max and Emil Skladanowsky screened their first short films to a paying public in Berlin, to be followed almost two months later by the Lumière brothers in Paris. And they were not the only ones. In fact, in the same year a number of people showed films without any knowledge that others were doing so as well. In the United States short movies were shown to individual spectators, but all had to be discontinued because of their audience's lack of interest. The Skladanowsky brothers and the Lumière brothers screened their films to larger audiences and were successful in generating interest. The era of film were born. Within two years, in 1897, the filmmakers discovered the possibility of attracting mass audiences through making films about Jesus. The era of the religious film had begun (David and Thomson 401).

In the early years it was the Roman Catholic Church that allowed such religious films, although at first, they were against it (it will be mentioned later) but later he started promoting these parables because that's how Christianity began to develop and expansion of the style that was happening. David Shepherd wrote in his book:

The Silent of Jesus in the Cinema that the world's first film on Jesus was *La Passion Du Christ* (The Passion of Christ) 1897. It was a short five-minute clip produced by La. Bonne Press and belonged to the Roman Catholic Church. The film was made by Albert Kirchner. Another film was made in the same year about Jesus, and in January 1898 Richard Holloman directed a similar film, *The Passion Play of Oberammergau* (Shepherd 28).

Cinema and the Silent Feature Films

From that time onwards financial support was added to religious purposes. A few years later, in 1902, many filmmakers started showing miracles on the cinema screen of Jesus, now adding another important purpose to these films. Gone, as the scenes of Jesus walking on the sea sent a wave of excitement through the audience, and so did Hollywood in these movies. In silent feature films "*Viet ET passion du Christ 1903*" was a base for upcoming pictorial scenes. The film is a 44-minute stand-alone film, produced by France, directed by Alice Guy and produced by Pathe Frères Company. The film became popular for several reasons, one of which is that the image of Jesus in the film, which was shown walking on the sea, was captured by French filmmaker Georges Melies. Was copied from Christ walking on the water, which was released in 1898. And that's what made the film so famous, as David JS writes:

It may have influenced Ferdinand Zeca's 1907 film *la vie et Passion de Notre Seigneur Jesus Christ* which features a similar scene of Christ walking on water (Shepherd 28).

The King of Kings 1927 and Cecil B. Demille

Cecil was the first person to have his own film industry. It would be absurd to say that Hollywood gained fame and popularity in the first place thanks to him. Cecil's father was Henry Churchill de Mille himself a Christian, and he married a Jewish actress Matilda Married to Beatrice, and from whom Cecil was born, this is the reason why his film serials was filmed on Christian, Jewish and a little bit about Islam. DeMille's 1923 film, *The Ten Commandments* is his second film on Jesus was "The King of Kings 1927" since it became a hit and got a salutation in theaters. 155 minutes long, this movie had a business of 1.5 million. In the period of 2008, AFI has made this movie in the list of all the prophets who have made this movie till date; they have put this movie in their top list. (IMDB , 2013) Cecil's film became very popular and made a history. In the 1930s, the producers of Motion Pictures issued a Penal Code stating that no obscene material on God, Jesus or any religion would be shown, and this was confirmed in 1934. The Catholic Church also did it, but with the passage of time, in the 1950s, this law was ignored, and the Church also remained silent in this matter, but in 1958, Pope Pius XII saw a Spanish film, which That was made in 1957, whose main title was (*The Secret of the Rosary*) *Los Mysterious Del Rosario*. There were 15 episodes of this movie, and each episode was 25 minutes long. After watching this movie, the Pope congratulated everyone. The one who saw the film. And in October of that year, just as Pope John XXIII, a free-thinking priest, took office, Cecil died (Bakker 17).

The Last Temptation of Christ 1988 and Relation of Prophet Jesus with Mary Magdalene

Nikos Kazantzakis wrote a novel of the same name in 1952, and Paul Schrader edited the film with some modifications. The film was produced by Cineplex Odeon Films and the company also partnered with Universal Pictures to make it. The film is 163 minutes long, with a cost of 7 million and a business of 8.4 million, the film is directed by Martin Scorsese and produced by Barbara De Fina. (IMDB, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, 2020) The Cast of this movie is:

- William Defoe as Jesus
- Harvey Keitel as Judah Iscariot
- Barbara Hershey as Mary Magdalene

The film manages to provoke a lot of criticism from the Catholic Church, such as portraying Jesus as a follower of psychic desires. Jesus says that he is a liar, that there is a devil in him, and especially that Mary and him are to be seen naked, and that they should marry each other, then hope that they will have children, etc. Roger Ebert wrote that:

"October 22, 1988, the movie was being screened at the Saint-Michel cinema in Paris when Catholics started setting it on fire. Thirteen people were injured in the attack, while four were severely burned and the cinema was badly damaged" (Ebert 100).

When the production of this film became famous, and it came to the notice of all the people that it depicts the Prophet Jesus (Peace be Upon Him) in a morally and religiously defamatory and blasphemous manner. So, Martin received death threats day and night, and for that reason he was publicly surrounded by his bodyguards for many years. Mother Angelica, head of the Eternal Word Television Network stated that:

”Anyone who goes to watch the sacrilegious film will be committing a deliberate of blasphemy and thereby choosing between heaven and hell. America will come under heavenly chastisement” (Trilligio, 2019).

When Martin was ten years old, and the title of his class was to make films on Jesus, then it occurred to him that he too would grow up and make films on Jesus. As time went on and Martin will gradually become famous in the film world. In 1961, John Mabros, a Greek friend, told him about Nikos' novel “The Last Temptation of Christ”, At the time, however, he did not pay much attention to it, in the words of Lloyd Bough's:

”In 1972, Barbara Hershey (who played Al-Magdalene in the film) handed over the novel to Martin; she also said that he would make a film on it, so he got support. Martin went to Universal Pictures in 1982, he said that he wanted to make a film on Jesus within a budget of 7 million, so they said yes and so the film came out to the public” (Baugh 173).

This is the first film to be shot in the style of Peter Philip's Gospel, And under the guise of Gospel, Nikos brought the novel in written form, which caused a negative superstition in the nations of the West.

The Historical background of the relation between Jesus and Mary Magdalene

As mentioned in The First Temptation of Christ, Martin based the film on a novel by Nikos Kazantzakis, and the production of the film met with considerable criticism. In this regard, introductory words are said about Maryam Al-Magdalene. The name Magdalene is not a nickname or title for Mary, but the name of the place where Mary came from, meaning that Magdala is the city of Galilee, one of the northern regions of ancient Palestine. (Katherine 21) (This is now part of Israel)

In literature of Bible, Gospel means "good story." The word is derived from Anglo-Saxon in the fifth century CE. Christians because they consider Jesus to be God or part of God. So, they actually interpret the word as Good + Spell, meaning the message that comes from God and Jesus. In the words of Mills and Wilson:

”In biblical literature: meaning of the term gospel is derived from the Anglo-Saxon (It was tribe in the 5th century) Godsell (Good Story), corresponding to good+spell (Talk, Tail, Story) literally the message of God or Christ (Mills and Watson 15).’

In this regard, the four Gospels are now considered authentic by Christians:

1. Gospel of Mt

2. Gospel of Mk
3. Gospel of Lk
4. Gospel of Jn

Lk is in that:

“Jesus travelled from one town and village to another, preaching and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, as well some women who had been healed of evil spirits infirmities: Mary called Magdalene from whom seven demons had gone out” (Luke, 8:3).

In the four Gospels, the name of the Magdalene appears twice in some and three times in others, but no one confirms that she was married to Jesus, or that she was a sinful woman. As Pope Gregory (591 CE) from Lk. 7.37,38; ,deceived them into believing Maryam Bethany, who is called Sinful Woman (Carr, 2018).

Now in the West, during the first millennium, it was thought that Maryam al-Magdalene was a sinful woman, while in the second millennium; she was identified as a good follower of Jesus. Professor Joan Taylor's answers historical questions about Mary Magdalene at King's College, London. According to him, the Catholic Church confirmed in 1969 that it had mistakenly identified Maryam al-Majdalin as a sex worker (Smith, 2018).

In the last century, however, Saint John Paul II drew the attention of the people of the West to the fact that she was a virtuous woman and a follower of Jesus. And with that in mind, Hollywood released the movie “Maryam Magdalene” in the year 2018, and it tried to make it clear that she was not married to Jesus, nor did she kiss him.

According to outlook of Islam

Disciples of Jesus (peace be upon him) anywhere or anywhere in the text of Holy Qur'an and Hadith, or there is no explanation for Maryam al-Magdalene nor were their names mentioned. Al-Ahzāb(الاحزاب) refers to the disciples in about two places in the Holy Qur'an:

(Holy Qur'an, 19:37) فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ . فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ مَّشْهَدِ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ

“Then the groups among them fell in dispute. So, how evil is the fate of the disbelievers when they have to face great day”.

And another verse is:

(Holy Qur'an, 43:65) فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ . فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمٍ أَلِيمٍ

“Then different groups among out of them fell into disagreement. Woe to wrongdoers because of the punishment of a painful day!”

According to these two verses, probably no commentator has written an explanation about these disciples, nor has they stated whether any of them was

named after Maryam Al-Magdalene or not. Except for one prominent Islamic scholar, and he is Imām Muhammad Tāhir Ibn-E-Ashūr (1879-1973). He was the scholar of Tunisia, and he wrote a commentary on the Holy Qur'an, in thirty volumes called "Tafsīr Tahrīr Ul Tanvīr" (التحرير التنوير). In this commentary, under verse number two, he writes that "Al-Ahzāb-الاحزاب" means the twelve disciples of Jesus, and one of them was named Maryam Al-Magdalene:

فمنهم من صدق عيسى وهم: يحيى بن زكريا ومريم ام عيسى الحواريون الاثنا عشر وبعض نساء مثل
مريم المجدلين ونفر قليل به وكفر جمهور اليهود (Tahir 25:249)

"Among those who confirmed Jesus were Yahya bin Zakariya, Maryam, mother of Jesus, the Twelve Disciples and some women like Maryam Al-Majdalin and some people ran away and the Jews denied Jesus".

Now, in the context of Jesus' kissing and marrying Maryam al-Magdalene, where did these superstitious superstitions originate? So, Martha Lee Turner writes in her book "The Gospel according to Philip" that:

In the 1945, Nag Hammadi Library in the United States claimed to have found the Gospel of Philip on a bottle, a piece of antique paper, many of whose phrases correspond to the Gospel of Thomas. And it was claimed that it was buried underground during the fourth century (Turner 2-9).

The root of all the mischiefs, started from this manuscript, so far the nations of the West have published many translations in different ways, and in the same Gospel they had written the words from which all the writers had the opportunity to pick up their pens, that Jesus kissed Mary Magdalene, the actual words are that:

"And for the wisdom who is called the barren, she is the mother of angles. And the companion of the Mary Magdalen, loved had more than all the disciples and used to kiss her often in her mouth" (Robin 105).

Now after that, as mentioned in the previous pages, Nikos got a chance in 1952, and he tried to prove that Jesus married her, as filmed in The Last Temptation of Christ. And moreover, she loved Jesus, and she loved him, a sentence is presented for complete argument:

"After Magdalene unexpectedly dies, Jesus' happiness continues with his new wife and more children" (Kazantakiz 459).

In the recent past, Dan Brown has published a complete series of such novels, in which the same thing was encouraged, and he started his novels with Leonardo the Vinci's painting The Last Supper that showing as figure 1.



Figure 1: The Last Supper by Leonardo the Vinci, c1498, Santa Maria delle Geazie, Italy.

Through the figure 1, Dan says that the man in the middle is Jesus, and the woman sitting on the right is the Magdalene, and his style of sitting (in the specific language of the paintings) says that they are married to each other. Dan began his novels with *Angles and Demons*, followed by *The da Vinci Code* in 2004, *The Lost Symbol* in 2009 and the last novel in the series, *Inferno* wrote in 2016, And from that, Tom Hanks film series are come out and got the salutations:

- The da Vinci Code 2006
- Angles and Demons 2009
- Inferno 2016

Dan writes in his novel *The Da Vinci Code*:

The marriage of Jesus and Mary Magdalene is part of historical record. Moreover, Jesus as a married man makes infinitely more sense than our standard biblical view of Jesus as a bachelor. If Jesus were not married at least one of the Bible's gospels would have mentioned it and offered some explanation for his unnatural state of bachelorhood (Brown 244-45).

Few Christians have given many answers to this question, that if it is not proven, then neither in history nor in any Gospel is it proved that this marriage was expected, the Catholic Church and Bart D. Ehrman, all of them Has been rejected his theory. Speaking of Gospel Philip, in all the cases where the people of the West did not reject him, they did not even adopt him; he presented this kiss to the people spiritually. And he said that Jesus gave his knowledge to the believers through this kiss, or that the kiss was for consolation and contentment of heart, now even if that kiss was for consolation, it is on the forehead and not on the lips. And nowhere in history has it been proven that a prophet kissed his followers like that. Now the situation of the people of the West is that they did not hesitate to affix such a nasty thing on Jesus in order to save their unknown manuscripts. Bart defended the issue, adding that such kisses are practiced in the church today by both the pope and the clergy. It would have been better if the root cause of the riots had been eradicated, but they did not do so, and the new translations were handed over to the people and things got worse. Bart's Wrote:

When Jesus kisses Mary, it's not preludes to sex. It's a symbolic statement that she received the revelation of truth that he conveyed that to his disciple. This notion was symbolically portrayed in the Christian ritual of the kiss of peace which was practiced throughout the early church (Ehramen 216).

After all these novels and critiques, the movie of Rooney Mara and Joaquin Phoenix's (Oscar winning by Joker 2019) came to Magdalene in 2018. When movie came, she was filmed in the style of the four Gospels, and they were photographed in such a way that Mary's father wanted to marry her to a vagabond, so she ran away from home and found Jesus and became his follower. Now, even after this movie, the point is still the same, that America brings to the fore such actors who have already thrown mud on their honor. Rooney Mara's 2012 film *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* filmed with Daniel Craig (James Bond 2005-2022). In which nude scenes of her are presented, and women and men of similar character are portrayed as the main characters in the films of the United Nations in their films on the lives of great personalities like the Prophets and their followers. Which is synonymous with morality in general and religion in particular. Whoever Roger Ebert has given 4.4 stars to a film like this, and also said that this is the first time such a film has been made about Magdalene (Allen, 2019).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

When the Hollywood film industry began, they were the first of the prophets to mention religious things in filmmaking on Jesus, but at the same time made it their livelihood. However, in the 1930's, Motion Pictures banned filmmaking on prophets as religiously, morally and historically. In which the Catholic Church in general and the Pope in particular were prominent, but when they saw their religion being broadcast through the media, they refrained from doing any practical and paper work on it. The pamphlets, books that were published in the West on Jesus (peace be upon him), although these theological data were not accepted by the people of the West, were nevertheless rejected. Further, presented by filmmakers as ornaments in their cinemas. The people of the West sometimes criticize the followers of Jesus (peace be upon him), while in the second instance they treat him as their leader. In these films, people are cast who are ashamed to describe their characters and negative traits.

- The media should be required to refrain from publicizing and broadcasting these parables, and in case of violation, punishment should be imposed in the light of Islamic and Christian theological Laws.
- If this issue is not stopped and the film industry continues to engage in vain filmmaking, the situation will continue to get worse.
- The government should use such policies to eradicate this heinous act.

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