

By Elisabeth Lunz*

The Madonna Image in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* and Alice Walker's *Meridian*

The madonna is a literary figure which has theological origins and implications. In two novels written by American women, there are characters identified as madonna figures which function in theologically significant ways. A study of these characters will indicate changing concepts of the role of women as madonnas in contemporary society. The women characters in *The Awakening*, written by Kate Chopin, a white woman from St. Louis, Missouri, in 1899, and in *Meridian*, written by Alice Walker, a black woman from Georgia, in 1976, suggest changes in the role of the madonna figure which are paradigmatic for theology as well as for culture.

The development of the madonna image in patriarchal western culture is a well-documented phenomenon.¹ Treatment of that image by feminist writers is emblematic of the on-going transformation of cultural sensibilities. Central to this transformation is woman's rejection of male-prescribed roles such as those of virgin and sacrificial mother. Because of that traditional prescription, the representation of religious values through women characters has usually confined them to madonna roles. In American literature madonnas are valued not only in the work of male writers (Hawthorne, Dreiser, Fitzgerald, Toomer, Faulkner) but also in fiction by women (Mansfield, O'Connor, McCullers).² But a specifically feminist orientation (claimed for Chopin by feminist critics and for Walker by her own acknowledgement and her current position on the staff of *Ms.* magazine) rejects patriarchal naming in literature as in life, resulting in characters who struggle with the emergence of other roles and models than those of madonna and virgin.

The struggle, in both *The Awakening* and *Meridian*, is for nothing less than salvation. Madame Ratignolle fails to function as an adequate model for the struggle of Chopin's heroine Edna Pontellier, while Walker's Meridian Hill is potentially successful in her search for alternatives to the

¹ One recent and extensive study is Marina Warner's *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary* (New York: Knopf, 1976).

² An example is Faulkner's Lena Groves in *Light in August*. Toomer's Fern is an example from black American fiction; a study of specific black madonnas would shed valuable light on this tradition.

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madonna model. An examination of the models of salvation in the two novels raises the theological question of who can function as savior for these women, and for their real life counterparts in contemporary society. In these novels as in life, what has become of the madonna image as bearer of grace? Are there images of a more powerful Christ figure to supplement the madonna as a surer means of salvation? Or do Chopin and Walker, as feminist authors, reject the traditional roles of both Mary and Christ as inadequate for or irrelevant to the salvation of their female characters? These questions will be useful as we proceed to analyze the two novels and to compare the salvation search of the white southern heroine, Edna Pontellier, to the more successful struggle by the black southern heroine, Meridian Hill.

The Awakening

With prophetic feminism, Kate Chopin portrays one of her characters, Adèle Ratignolle, as a traditional madonna who is no longer functional as a means of hope or salvation for the awakened woman who is the central character, Edna Pontellier. In the plot of *The Awakening*, set in nineteenth century white Louisiana Creole society, Edna Pontellier feels at the opening of the novel that she is an alien. Edna's Kentucky Presbyterian background does not prevent her warm acceptance by her husband's friends and family, but her own acceptance of herself is dormant at the beginning of the novel. At the Pontelliers' summer house in Grand Isle, La., Edna is awakened by the attentions of Robert Lebrun in an idyll of leisurely romance broken by Robert's decision to go away to Mexico rather than consummate his illicit love for Edna. Returning to New Orleans from Grand Isle, Edna gives up her accustomed role there as society matron, refusing to be at home to callers, turning to art as her vocation, associating with iconoclast pianist Mlle. Reisz, and ultimately moving out of her husband's house during his absence on business and her children's extended stay with their grandmother. She accepts the promiscuous Alcée Arobin as her lover in lieu of Robert Lebrun, who even after his return to New Orleans refrains from fulfilling the passion he professes to feel for Edna. At the end of the novel, Edna wanders back to Grand Isle and into the sea, in which she drowns.

Adèle Ratignolle, close friend of the Pontelliers, exemplifies a traditional image of the Virgin Mary. Chopin introduces her in a vivid counterpoint to subsequent characterization of Edna:

. . . Mrs. Pontellier was not a mother-woman. The mother-women seemed to prevail that summer at Grand Isle. . . . They were women who idolized their children, worshiped their husbands, and esteemed it a holy privilege to efface themselves as individuals and grow wings as ministering angels.

Many of them were delicious in the role; one of them was the embodiment of every womanly grace and charm. . . . Her name was Adèle Ratignolle. There are no words to describe her save the old ones that have served so often to picture the bygone heroine of romance and the fair lady of our dreams.³

³ Kate Chopin, *The Awakening*, ed. Margaret Culley (New York: Norton, 1976), p. 10.

Madame Ratignolle is much more maternal than virginal; married seven years, solicitous to her omnipresent husband, she has three children and the birth of her fourth becomes the turning point of the novel. But she is Mary-like in her embodiment of perfection, an image of the romanticized madonna ("the fair lady of our dreams"). By Creole standards she fulfills the Marian ideal in her fidelity, her adoration of her children, her queenliness in presiding over her home and its societal functions, and her efforts to intercede for Edna, to provide the model for her redemption.

Edna recognizes her as such a model. As artist, Edna wishes to paint Adèle's portrait:

She had long wished to try herself on Madame Ratignolle. . . . at that moment, seated there like some sensuous Madonna, with the gleam of fading day enriching her splendid color.⁴

As woman searching for her "position in the universe,"⁵ Edna wishes to imitate Adèle's tranquillity and virtue.

In their first extended dialogue at Grand Isle, Mme. Ratignolle's presence stirs in Edna a wistful memory of her childhood in Kentucky, of a day spent walking through the grass. The memory of that sea of grass returns to her later as she drowns. Mme. Ratignolle suggests its significance when Edna confides that the memory seems to be of a Sunday excursion. Edna speculates that she might have been " 'running away from prayers, from the Presbyterian service, read in a spirit of gloom by my father that chills me yet to think of.' 'And have you been running away from prayers ever since, *ma chère?*' asked Madame Ratignolle, amused."⁶ Although Edna hastily denies this, she confesses that in this summer at Grand Isle she does feel "as if I were walking through the green meadow again; idly, aimlessly, unthinking and unguided."⁷

As potential guide Mme. Ratignolle offers Edna comfort and love, and gently intervenes with Robert, whose flirtatious devotion is the cause of Edna's confusion. Ironically, this intervention influences Robert's decision to leave, not to save Edna, but to save himself from the consequences of his passion for her.

In New Orleans Edna begins to recognize the impossibility and undesirability of imitating Mme. Ratignolle. Their friendship continues; they see each other often; Edna still wants to paint Adèle's portrait. But as she awakens to herself as artist and independent woman, Edna outgrows her friend. She tells Mme. Ratignolle of her interest in the formal study of art, but knows "that Madame Ratignolle's opinion in such a matter would be next to valueless, that she herself had not alone decided, but determined. . . ." ⁸ She by now feels pity rather than

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

admiration for Adele's passive domesticity, and believes Adèle deficient for never having tested "life's delirium."⁹ Yet she remains loving and loyal, committing herself to Adèle in the promise to be with her during childbirth, which will become the crucial moment for Edna of giving up her passion and consequently her life.

It is after Robert's return that Edna is summoned to Adèle's bedside, causing her to leave Robert despite his pleas that she stay with him on that first evening visit. Several symbolic actions come together in the childbirth scene at the Ratignolle house. In them we observe Edna's rejection of the madonna as salvific ideal. 1) Edna has chosen in this scene the madonna figure, Mme. Ratignolle, over a potential savior figure, Robert, who might have on that night become her lover but who instead curbs his ardor and leaves again (with the note "Good-bye because I love you") while Edna is with Adèle. 2) Mme. Ratignolle continues to function as madonna in giving birth to her child and in admonishing Edna to accept the same role for her own priority; after the birth, she whispers, "Think of the children, Edna. . . . Remember them!" as if the birth were a sacrament through which Edna can be restored to her role of sacrificial woman. 3) Edna herself becomes a Mary figure briefly in her role as midwife. Although she does not assist in the birth, she waits on Mme. Ratignolle in much the same way that Mary waits in legend on various followers who have prayed for her help in childbirth.¹⁰ 4) In fulfilling her role as madonna, Adèle Ratignolle nevertheless fails to transmit it to Edna, who repudiates the value of the madonna symbol when the harsh reality of it is revealed in Adèle's labor pains. Edna remembers the illusory awakenings of her own experiences in giving birth:

She recalled faintly an ecstasy of pain, the heavy odor of chloroform, a stupor which had deadened sensation, and an awakening to find a new little life to which she had given being, added to the great unnumbered multitude of souls that come and go. . . . With an inward agony, with a flaming, outspoken revolt against the ways of Nature, she witnessed the scene of torture.¹¹

The illusion that childbirth is a means of grace is dispelled; Edna's real awakening, her calling out by Robert's love, has given her a sense of self which is incompatible with the concept of suffering as virtue, or of motherhood as ideal.

Edna finally rejects in this scene, not her friend Adèle, but the madonna model. She here attains as midwife the potential of becoming madonna herself, but chooses to revolt against this potential. She returns to seek her salvation in Robert, but he has gone, and she realizes that their feeling for each other would have gone eventually anyway—that a man's passion has no more efficacy for salvation than does Adèle's passive martyrdom.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

¹⁰ Marina Warner cites legendary instances in which Mary is midwife, showing that "The quickening and obstetric functions of the classical goddesses like Hera and Demeter have been taken over by the Virgin. . . ." (pp. 276-77).

¹¹ Chopin, pp. 108-109.

Having turned away from the madonna, and having rejected Robert (who has rejected her), Edna finds no substitute salvation. Her suicide results from her belief that there is no deliverance from the reality of her solitude and of her estrangement from the rejected societal norms. That her suicide represents a failed quest is indicated by her thought, just before drowning, that Mademoiselle Reisz would have admonished her for not possessing "the courageous soul that dares and defies."¹²

Meridian.

Alice Walker's *Meridian* Hill is similar to Chopin's Edna Pontellier in her repudiation of a madonna role and her refusal to find salvation in a man, but *Meridian*, unlike Edna, emerges from her struggle triumphant and saved. She passes through a potentially suicidal response to her awakening and becomes at the end of the novel a model for the salvation of others. *Meridian* is described at the end in resurrection imagery; as Truman watches her walk away, "His first thought was of Lazarus, but then he tried to recall someone less passive, who had raised himself without help."¹³ The question remaining about Walker's use of this image, and of her other images of Mary and Jesus, is the question of how salvation is to be defined. It is logical to interpret salvation as liberation, which *Meridian* experiences after living through the '60's as a black woman in the south. But in the context of this experience of liberation the traditional models of both Mary and Jesus seem to be superceded.

Meridian as an adolescent in Georgia is innocent not of sex, but of its consequences, and so is a mother at 17, soon married and divorced. Her husband's leaving coincides with her first awareness of the civil rights movement; in a chapter entitled "Awakening," Walker has her join the drive for voter registration which will occupy her for the rest of the novel. In order to go to college she gives up her child permanently. She then falls in love with her co-worker, Truman Held, but also gives him up to the white women in the movement with whom he is enamored (they read the *New York Times*, he says) and one of whom, Lynne, he marries. In the chapters which focus on Lynne and Truman, we see the birth of their daughter, Camara, and her death at the age of six; their separation and Lynne's degeneration. *Meridian* interacts with both their lives, then continues to move about the south sometimes as pilgrim, sometimes as teacher and saint, to be recurrently sought out and joined by Truman. At one point he finds her ill, stays with her as she recovers her health, and at the end of the novel watches her leave him in her place in Chicokema, Georgia.

It is there that the novel opens, also, in the proleptic chapter entitled "The Last Return." In a prefatory definition, Walker lists possible meanings of *Meridian*'s name. Significant among them are references to height ("zenith, apex, culmination") and to astronomical and geographical circles (as of "the celestial sphere passing through the poles of the heavens"). The theological implications of these definitions are

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 114.

immediately developed when Meridian is first seen "standing with the children" (like Jesus) for whom she faces the town's army tank with which Chicokema authorities are threatening them, because it is not the scheduled day for guano plant families (poor and mostly black) to see a visiting mummified woman exhibit.

As Meridian intervenes (like Mary) on behalf of the children, two possible interpretations of her character are proposed by an onlooker who talks with Truman about Meridian's "performance." Either she " . . . thinks *she's* God,' said the old sweeper, 'or else she just ain't all there.'"¹⁴ Meridian suggests her own interpretation in her subsequent explanation to Truman of why she persists in an ascetic activist life when she is obviously ill, having fallen unconscious in paralysis after her confrontation with the tank. Meridian sees herself as helping the townspeople by her fainting "performances":

"They're grateful people," said Meridian. "They *appreciate* it when someone volunteers to suffer. . . . We have an understanding," she said.

"Which is?"

"That if somebody has to go it might as well be the person who's ready."

"And are you ready?"

"Now? No. What you see before you is a woman in the process of changing her mind."¹⁵

As the other sections of the novel chronicle this process of her change, the images of Meridian as suffering servant shift backwards to madonna images of herself at earlier stages and forward to the resurrection image with which the novel ends. At one level, Meridian is always the madonna of folk Mariology who acts as midwife to assist in the birthing of her people. In addition to emphasizing this feminist concept of Mary, Alice Walker's images suggest other significant changes in the traditional configurations of both madonna and Christ.

At times this occurs in direct theological confrontation with the tradition. For example, Meridian's friend Delores goes with her to inform Meridian's mother (a pious churchgoer) that Eddie, Jr., Meridian's baby, will be given up for adoption; Mrs. Hill protests the abandonment on the grounds that "we believe in God in this house." " 'What's that got to do with anything?' asked Delores, whose face expressed belligerence and confusion. 'The last time God had a baby he skipped, too.'"¹⁶

Meridian had been a traditional madonna in that she had conceived Eddie, Jr., in total innocence of how pregnancies occur. But she never accepts the imposition of the child, nor the madonna role of passive submission. Mrs. Hill points out the singularity of Meridian's refusal to be like Mary: "Everyone else that slips up like you did *bears* it. You're the only one that thinks you can just outright refuse. . . ."¹⁷

Meridian's love for Truman Held is much more intense than her love for Eddie, the child's father, had been. Yet she has sex with Truman only

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁵ Walker, p. 12.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

once in the novel. She reminds him later that he had been looking for a virgin. Truman realizes that in Meridian he had thought to have found a virgin, but had turned away from her when he learned that she was a mother. Both his abandonment of Meridian as mother and his thoughts about her delineate her role of Virgin Mary as the reality reshapes the myth:

When he made love to Meridian. . . . although she had not said she was a virgin, he had assumed it. It was only later that he could begin to understand why her vagina had been clenched so tightly against him. She had been spasmodic with fear.¹⁸

Meridian is ironically virgin also in that she is non-orgasmic. The one experience with Truman leaves her pregnant again, and without telling him she has an abortion. To Meridian, it “. . . seemed doubly unfair that after all her sexual ‘experience’ and after one baby and one abortion she had not once been completely fulfilled by sex.”¹⁹ Walker echoes here the traditional patriarchal expectations of the madonna’s sexuality.

In contrast to such expectations, Meridian’s humanity and finitude are underscored by Walker in each allusion to virginal and maternal madonna patterns. The demythologizing of the traditional image firmly replaces the glorified ideal of virgin-mother with the harsh reality of woman’s experience, in juxtapositions similar to that in *The Awakening* childbirth scene. Both Meridian and Edna recognize that in a patriarchal world to be madonna is to be victim and martyr. Meridian does choose for a time (perhaps analogous to time between incarnation and resurrection) both the suffering servant role and her continuing midwifery, but she chooses deliberately and actively, serving the community of the oppressed rather than the more socially acceptable child, man, or family.

The suffering servant pattern of imagery and action might suggest that Walker is claiming Meridian as a Christ-like rather than a Marian figure. But the images of Christ are only suggestive, never definitive, and are usually posited to show their inadequacy for Meridian’s self-actualization. Much of the suffering which she seems to embrace and even induce is transcended when Meridian is finally able to come to terms with herself and her role. The woman in the process of changing her mind is able to move away from victimization into a more powerful, though still ascetic, freedom to be a woman for both herself and others, working for community without being constrained by it.

Soteriological suggestions remain in this choice of “being for” others. The idea that no one took Jesus’ life from him, his claim to have laid it down of his own accord, is defended by Meridian’s insistence on her own freedom to choose. Thus her salvific function could be argued by analogy to an interpretation of the crucifixion as both vicarious and freely chosen, and therefore effective as atonement. But Walker explicitly limits the possibilities for that analogy by her depiction of Meridian’s self-reflection.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

Central to this deliberate limiting is one of the issues about which Meridian "changes her mind," the question of whether or not she can kill for the revolution. Through college and her early years as an activist, she cannot make that commitment. This brings her friendship with the revolutionary woman Anne-Marion to an end, as Anne-Marion decides "Meridian, I cannot afford to love you. Like the idea of suffering itself, you are obsolete."²⁰ Later Meridian comes to share this belief in the obsolescence of suffering. Worn out by her efforts to deal with Lynne and Truman, she says to herself:

"The only new thing now . . . would be the refusal of Christ to accept the crucifixion. King . . . should have refused. Malcolm, too, should have refused. All those characters in all those novels that require death to end the book should refuse. All saints should walk away. Do their bit, then—just walk away. See Europe, visit Hawaii, become agronomists or raise Dalmatians." She didn't care what they did, but they should do it.²¹

Walking away from Truman and Chicokema is the course chosen by Meridian after she has completed the process of changing her mind. The black church is instrumental in bringing her to a decision that killing would be possible for her. Still ambivalent about making her commitment absolute, she decides: "Only in a church surrounded by the righteous guardians of the people's memories could she even approach the concept of retaliatory murder."²² Recognizing that her commitment is thus contextual rather than absolute, she arrives at a redefinition of her role in the communal struggle for liberation:

It was this, Meridian thought, I have not wanted to face, this that has caused me to suffer: I am not to belong to the future. I am to be left, listening to the old music, beside the highway. But then, she thought, perhaps it will be my part to walk behind the real revolutionaries—those who know they must spill blood in order to help the poor and the black and therefore go right ahead—and when they stop to wash off the blood and find their throats too choked with the smell of murdered flesh to sing, I will come forward and sing from memory songs they will need once more to hear. For it is the song of the people, transformed by the experience of each generation, that holds them together, and if any part of it is lost the people suffer and are without soul. If I can only do that, my role will not have been a useless one after all.²³

Meridian vacillates later from this clarified self-concept, but definitively rejects the roles of martyr or savior. Truman might cling to his vision of her as Christ ("someone . . . who had raised himself without help"), but his perception of her is still clouded as it was when he thought of her as madonna. For Walker as a feminist author, the paradigmatic woman is neither a Mary nor a historical Jesus, but an independent woman who does not need to be saved, especially not by a male savior. In one of Meridian's poems, she accepts the solitude which Chopin's Edna had been unable to bear, and announces her capacity to work out her own salvation:

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 205.

²³ *Ibid.*

there is water in the world for us
 brought by our friends
 though the rock of mother and god
 vanishes into sand
 and we, cast out alone
 to heal
 and re-create
 ourselves.²⁴

If the rock of mother and God has vanished, neither Mary nor Jesus can be adequate or even necessary for the salvation of the awakened woman. For Kate Chopin, this leaves Edna with no hope for survival, unless she had had sufficient courage "to dare and defy." For Alice Walker, it is precisely this courage which is available to Meridian, the black woman who has honed her daring and defiance in the context of the struggle for the rights of her people, and who is now free to heal and recreate. Meridian, supported by her people in the black church, can save herself, can sing from memory the songs that others need to hear, and so facilitate their salvation as well.²⁵

Kate Chopin and Alice Walker represent phases of feminist thought in which the search for salvation is seen as unsatisfied by traditional interpretations of Christianity. Chopin foreshadows and Walker reflects this theological direction away from the tradition. But along the spectrum of feminist theologies can be found several positions from which to critique the concepts of Madonna and Christ which are rejected in these two novels. One position, rather than repudiating Mary as model, celebrates the autonomy of the virgin by associating her with cults of the mother-goddess. Mary Daly, Sheila Collins, and others see in madonna figures relics of past matriarchies and images of the earth-mother-goddess who is a primary model for liberation.²⁶ Another type of feminist theology, as old as Dame Julian of Norwich, ascribes validity to the male Christ figure by identifying him with the image of mother. In the fourteenth century Julian understood Christ's role of mother as the paradigm of salvation, alleviating the maleness of the historical Jesus by describing his soteriological act as maternal.²⁷ These interpretations of the autonomy of the madonna and the femininity of Christ counter the

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

²⁵ A part of Edna's and Meridian's search for salvation is suggested in both novels to be a search for coordination of the finite and the infinite. The sea represents for Edna a sensuous, embracing mother-God who will guarantee fulfillment and freedom from solitude. She unites with the sea by drowning in it, choosing its comfort because no human comfort, and no traditional pattern of Christian comfort, could suffice. For Meridian, experiences of ecstasy provide the means for union with God and nature, as in her first ecstatic seizure on her father's farm in the pit of an Indian mound shaped like the coil in a serpent's tail. Subsequently Meridian outgrows ecstasy altogether. While Edna had succumbed to the hope of finding union with God in nature and death, Meridian seems to set aside that hope for her more mature goal of becoming herself in the context of her community.

²⁶ Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon, 1973); Sheila Collins, *A Different Heaven and Earth* (Valley Forge: Judson, 1974); Merlin Stone, *When God Was A Woman* (New York: Dial, 1976).

²⁷ Dame Julian of Norwich, Clifton Wolters *Revelations of Divine Love*, ed. (Baltimore: Penguin, 1966).

conclusions by Chopin and Walker that neither Mary nor Christ is viable as a model for the awakened woman.

The value, however, of the novels as information for any feminist theology is precisely their rejection of these traditional patriarchal patterns. From out of two different cultures, the white southern milieu of the end of the nineteenth century and the black southern ethos of this post-1960's era, women are suggesting that salvation is no longer mediated by traditional images of madonna or Christ. It is the black woman who offers the most hope, in her adaptation of madonna to midwife and in the Christ-like responsibility of Meridian's casting out alone "to heal and recreate." But if the emptiness of the traditional images leads Edna Pontellier to despair and suicide, Meridian's option of taking responsibility for her own and her people's salvation is not completely developed as a viable theological solution to the struggle for liberation.

A central question of both novels is raised by Rosemary Ruether in her 1976 article "Christology and Feminism: Can A Male Savior Help Women?" Ruether addresses the problem presented in the two novels as follows:

Feminists are apt to reject the helpfulness of these [Biblical] traditions on the ground that subjugated peoples, women, and slaves always have been offered the way of salvation through service. But this confuses service with servitude. Service implies autonomy and power used in behalf of others. Jesus calls the male disciples to service, makes Christ the model of service, not women or slaves. . . . On the other hand, women, the poor, are called forth out of their servitude to take positions of equality in discipleship. . . . [In the Magnificat] Luke makes Mary, the cooperator with God in the incarnation, the voice of the New Israel, or the messianic community, in which the mighty are put down from their thrones, the proud are scattered in the imagination of their hearts, and those of low degree are exalted; the rich sent away, the poor filled with good things (Luke 1:50-55).

Thus there is the roots in the Christian tradition of an alterantive Christology.²⁸

Ruether goes on to explicate elements of Mariology which provide an image of woman potentially related to a Christology which can reinterpret incarnation as central, against the male and gnostic model of what she calls "alienated transcendence."²⁹

In this paper I have been concerned primarily with analyzing the images of Madonna and Christ in Chopin's *The Awakening* and Walker's *Meridian*, examining Edna's and Meridian's searches for salvation rather than solutions which the novels do not provide. Tentatively, from a stance of faith rather than of knowledge, I would suggest that solutions (in the form of soteriological models) are there to be discovered within the Biblical framework. Definitely I would support the need delineated by Ruether for theological work which reclaims non-sexist images of Mary and Jesus in order to present them as equally appropriate to and redemptive for all people. Walker's literary characterization of Meridian

²⁸ Occasional Papers issued by the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry, I (1976), 5.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

Hill suggests the theological model which can develop from a study of and involvement with the black woman's struggle for liberation as the content of her salvation.