THE VISUAL PORTRAYAL OF MARY MAGDALENE:
A CASE STUDY IN FEMINIST ETHICAL ISSUES

by

DIANA MARY CORMICK

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SUPERVISOR: PROF L D HULLEY
JOINT SUPERVISOR: PROF C LANDMAN

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Mary Magdalene
detail from *'Noli me tangere'*
Giotto di Bondone [1267-1337]
Church of S. Francesco, Assisi.
(Eimerl 1973:frontispiece)

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(The unreferenced pictures have come from picture postcards and Catholic repository 'holy cards', which have been collected over the years).

Frontispiece:*Mary Magdalene*
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(Duperray 1988:54).

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by D. M. Cormick
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Promoter: Prof. L. D. Hulley
Joint promoter: Prof. C Landman

Summary

Historically, the Roman Catholic Church has used visual imagery as a powerful didactic tool to support and validate the patriarchal structure of the Christian faith. This study focuses on the prevalent visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene as a penitent prostitute. This visual conceptualisation is exposed as an unjust condemnation of a biblical woman whose apostolic calling is validated by the Gospel accounts.

A critical examination of the Christian iconography within a representative selection of Mary Magdalene imagery further identifies a bias of condemnation towards women's sexuality. Thus, Mary Magdalene is epitomised as the archetypal immoral woman, and unfavourably contrasted to the chaste purity of the Virgin Mary.

The study evaluates the ethical implications of this mis-representation, and proposes, as a corrective to the imbalance, the creative actualisation of positive woman-affirming imagery.
An extended chronological index of Mary Magdalene imagery is appended to the study as Appendix A.

PREFACE

In a sense, the journey towards the 'real' Mary Magdalene began a long time ago. I remember, in one of my many disciplinary encounters at the Convent High School I attended in Harare, the 'sister-in-charge' of the boarders admonishing me, saying I was "as bold as Mary Magdalene". Later, when I became a religious myself, I was surprised and moved to be named, Sister Magdalene of Jesus Crucified. It was from those 'early days' that I began a collection of visual imagery of the saint.

When I began considering a Masters Dissertation, I wanted to somehow combine my two interests of art and theology. A logical solution seemed to be what I termed a "visual theology". I received some financial sponsorship in 1985, and travelled overseas in my search for the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene. I planned to visit Europe, the United States, and even the then Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

As an initial starting point, I secured a Euro-rail ticket, and for three weeks, I literally jumped off and on the trains, running to every museum, church, or religious institute in search of Mary Magdalene imagery. Through chatting to as many people who would listen, I learnt about artworks that were not listed in any brochures or art books.

In France, I made a pilgrimage to Provence, the legendary 'stamping ground' of the missionary Mary Magdalene. There, I travelled in buses and taxis to the beautiful *Pays de Sainte-Baume*, a vast area of protected natural forests. The name *Sainte-Baume*, meaning holy balm, refers to the exhilarating freshness of the combined forest and mountain air. There is also a popular tradition that the name refers to the sanctity of the presence of Mary Magdalene. I hiked through the scented forest to climb the mountain, in which the legends tell, Mary Magdalene's rocky hermitage is situated. There, high up, nestling into the side of the rocky mountain, I sat for a while on a rock, where she might have sat, and gazed out towards the distant Alps. And I drank from the crystal clear mountain stream that still seeps through the rock in the hermitage. Returning back to the nearby town of St Maximin-a-Ste-Baume, I went down into the crypt where her body is allegedly buried. On the crypt altar, her skull is mounted in an effigy-shaped reliquary with golden locks of hair flowing around her 'face'. It was there that I had the opportunity to 'speak' to Mary Magdalene, as the lights all went out just as I had descended down into the dark crypt!

In the United States, I spent time at the Princeton University Library going through

their Index of Christian Art. I visited and spoke with several feminist theologians at Harvard University, in particular, I felt privileged to discuss my topic with Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, and briefly with Margaret Miles. I travelled fairly widely in the United States visiting art museums and meeting religious artists.

In England, I participated in a visual art workshop in Leicester, in which artists and theologians discussed the mutual interdependence of the two disciplines. There again, I had the opportunity to discuss my research with a Catholic Church historian and a psycho analyst who had both engaged on a study of Mary Magdalene. In London, I spent time at the British Museum researching for extra evidence of the cult of Mary Magdalene.

I remember one evening, late into the night at a restaurant in Stuttgart, talking to an Art Historian, and his words echoed for many months afterwards, "You will really have to go to the desert sands of Syria if you want to find Mary Magdalene". This dissertation is a beginning of my digging. I feel that the bones have begun to be exposed, there is still a lot of careful dusting off to be done....

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation will emphasise the importance and value of art in theology, and will examine the manner in which women have been imaged in Christian art. In particular I will look at the way the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene has been used by the patriarchal Catholic Church to legitimize a culture of male superiority.

I will argue that the visual representation of Mary Magdalene is the central model which has been responsible for the fashioning of women's identity and religious self-development within the Christian Church. Furthermore, by focusing on the way Mary Magdalene has been portrayed in Christian art, and seen in conjunction with the imagery applied to the Virgin Mary, particularly in the latter's role as the 'second' Eve, this research proposes to identify and expose the patriarchal bias inherent in the way the two women have been visually imaged. My intention is not only to evaluate the ethical implications of this mis-representation, but to propose, as a corrective to the imbalance, the creative actualisation of positive woman-affirming imagery.

Throughout this dissertation, my response to the questions which I have posed will be from my own personal standpoint, as a woman, an artist and an ethicist. As a woman, I am outraged that the biblical heroine, Mary Magdalene has been deliberately distorted by patriarchal prejudice and injustice. From an artist's perspective, aware of the importance and value of visual imagery in a religious context, I feel a responsibility and concern for the ways the visual dimension has been used to foster patriarchal misogyny. And writing as a theological ethicist, I am committed to questioning the motives and moral implications behind the visual representation of Mary Magdalene, which has been traditionally favoured by the Christian Church. Above all, I will argue as a Roman Catholic, committed to my belief in Jesus Christ, and at the same time critically concerned at the androcentric structure of Catholic doctrine.

To what extent has the Roman Catholic church relied on imagery and symbol-making in the presentation of its theology of the Christian faith? In the first chapter, some attempt will be made to answer this question and to explore other aspects of the visual culture within the Catholic tradition. How, for example, do these symbols work? Is it possible to exclude signs and symbolism from theology? In addressing these questions, I will begin by looking at the written words of Scripture, which include the imagery in the teachings of Jesus that have been recorded. I will then move into a discussion of how the various Christian signs and emblems, which

have been conceptualised from the spoken word of Scripture, have developed doctrinal value through their usage in liturgical celebrations and rituals.

This examination of the visual imagery prevalent in Christian theology will serve to introduce the dominant argument of the dissertation. This concerns the ethical evaluation of how women have been visually portrayed in Christian artworks, how this imagery has been interpreted, and how it has influenced the believers. For when the perception of a specific image is coloured by a theological ethical perception, viewers will become conditioned to see them in association with each other. Thus, the visual impact serves to intensify and uphold the theological doctrine.

After this reflection on the importance and value of imagery in the Christian religion, the second chapter will begin by discussing the problem of how women have been imaged within this tradition. Here, I will introduce into the discussion the two women most commonly imaged in Christian art, namely the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene. To assess the significance of the Virgin Mary imagery in the Roman Catholic Church, it will be necessary to first explore the Virgin's title and role as the 'second Eve' as designated in Mariology. The characterisation of Mary Magdalene will then be presented, in which I will argue that she has been conceptualised as a combination of the Virgin Mary and Eve.

This discussion will be followed in the third chapter by a more in-depth search for the historical character of Mary Magdalene through a study of the historical texts about her from scriptural and legendary sources. With these verbally conceived images of Mary Magdalene in mind, the 'exhibition' of a selected number of artworks will be presented in the fourth chapter.

These illustrated examples will form the basis of the critical analysis in the fifth chapter. In particular, the critique will evaluate how effectively the artworks have served as the root cause of women's negative self-identity within the Roman Catholic church. Using a four-pronged hermeneutical model, advocated by Schüssler Fiorenza, it will be possible to assess the feminist, ethical implications of this visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene for Christian women.

Within this model, I will argue, first, that the Mary Magdalene imagery must be viewed from a basic hermeneutic of suspicion. Therefore, it must be recognized as the product of a patriarchal perspective. Once this bias has been acknowledged it becomes easier to discard the negative misogynous texts and to search for and proclaim the affirmative texts. This is the purpose of the second hermeneutical tool, that of proclamation, of recovering 'the lost coin', the feminist key to liberation.

This joyous discovery must, however, ensure the third stage, the hermeneutical tool of remembrance. Whereby no story of a biblical woman is forgotten or unclaimed.

Finally, the fourth hermeneutical tool, that of creative actualisation, will speak about the need for positive woman-affirmative imagery. The chapter will conclude with an appraisal of the value of the feminist theological perspective as a liberating hermeneutic tool. A perspective through which the visual evidence will declare the terms of the injustice historically meted out to Mary Magdalene.

In the concluding sixth chapter, some thoughts will be offered about the future possibilities of effecting a fundamental change in the Catholic Church's attitude towards women.

CHAPTER ONE: AN EXAMINATION OF THE VISUAL TRADITION IN CHRISTIANITY IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Introduction

It would be difficult to express a religious concept without using some form of imagery. To what extent, however, has art influenced theological thought? How much emphasis has the Roman Catholic Church placed in the value and importance of disseminating religious doctrine through Christian art?

In response to these questions I will argue, in this first chapter, that using visual imagery to present theological doctrine is not only traditionally and theologically acceptable, it has been the main vehicle for Christian doctrine. The Christian artist is able to express in a more accessible form, the theories that Christian theologians explore and try to encapsulate through words. I will cite the example of Jesus himself, who used the natural visual imagery of the countryside with which to proclaim his message.

Through the centuries the Catholic Church has continued to utilize visual imagery in the propagation and celebration of the Christian faith. From the simplest drawn crucifix to an elaborate painting covering the entire ceiling of a basilica, the visual impact of Christian art works have contributed more to the spreading of the message of the Christian Gospel than any spoken word. Furthermore, Christian art has developed a whole range of visual symbols and colours conveying particular ideas. Symbolical imagery has been classified into liturgical and hagiographical use, whereby concepts of Christian doctrine can be visually understood without the need of any spoken word.

1. Written texts and aural imagery

Religion has been used to interpret experience, and to understand the connectedness between an externalised world and an internalised world (Miles 1985:4). In this sense religion shapes and is shaped by the culture of a people. Therefore, it is only within the culture of a group of people, that a religious tradition can evolve and produce a written, spoken and imaged media by which it is transmitted. This articulation and formulation of an effective imagery of the sacred unknown will also function as one of the ways in which believers come to appreciate the significance of their existence (Miles 1985:36).

Christianity, as a religious tradition, is proclaimed not only through the spoken and written word, but even more emphatically through visual imagery. The original scriptural texts used by the Christians to validate their faith were all compiled, albeit at different historical periods, by a small select group of educated leaders of the day (Miles 1985:41). I suggest that the Christian religion would not have been as successfully communicated, without the impact of a visual tradition.

The first followers of Jesus Christ regarded themselves initially as a revival movement within Judaism, and they adhered to the Scriptures already in existence. Jesus himself said he had not come to change the Scriptures, but rather to fulfill the promises therein (Mt 5:17). The original Hebrew texts of the Old Testament, were not, however, accessible to the majority of the newly baptised people for several reasons, mainly because few people were able to read. Literacy was usually restricted to the powerful elite group of religious leaders because writing materials were cumbersome and expensive and made the private ownership of scrolls rare and class based.

The religious education of the people, of necessity, took place through the aural transmission of ideas. This, too, was the initial means of communication for the new religious movement, as the earliest texts of the New Testament date only from the middle of the first century onwards. However, the essential impact of the teaching of Jesus Christ came through the visual imagery of his words. This is affirmed by the reaction of the people after the sermon on the mount, "his teaching made a deep impression on the people because he taught them with authority, and not like the scribes" (Mt 7:29). Jesus demonstrated the 'Good News' of his message using the imagery of everyday life.

As already indicated, one of the main tasks of any religion is to provide the individual believer with an effective means of 'coping' with the concerns of life (Miles 1985:3). In this sense, symbolic imagery can facilitate the communication of profound theological statements. Thus, the Christian religious tradition has consistently presented its message of salvation through symbolic imagery.

The full implication of the use of visual imagery necessitates some understanding of the language of signs and symbols. Studies have shown how our present written language evolved from signs and symbols. One of the first means of communication between humans was through sign language, and significantly its use has continued down to the present century. Communication is primarily sensuous, and suffers when it is separated from the strength of other senses. In

the written or spoken word there is always a danger that the message to be communicated will be received out of context. Thus, a visual image or sign which engages an emotional response will not only have a greater impact than a written or spoken word, but it will lessen the possibility of ambiguity.

1.1. Parables in the teaching example of Jesus

There is in the Gospels, for example, an apt illustration of how effectively Jesus himself uses visual imagery in his teachings. When the Pharisees attempt to ensnare Jesus into a betrayal of allegiance, he uses an image found on a coin to thwart their malice.

> 'Let me see the money you pay the tax with.' They handed him a denarius, and he said, 'Whose image is this? Whose head?' 'Caesar's' they replied. He then said to them, 'Very well, give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar - and to God what belongs to God'.
>
> (Mt 22:19-21).

Throughout the Gospels, there is evidence of Jesus' use of imagery by Jesus in his teaching. When he is asked by his disciples why he speaks to the people in parables, Jesus replies by quoting the prophet Isaiah:

> ....for the heart of this nation has grown coarse, their ears are dull of hearing, and they have shut their eyes, for fear that they should see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart, and be converted and be healed by me.
>
> (Mt.13:15).

This exemplifies a basic tenet in Jesus' usage of symbolic imagery. It is only the obstinate who refuse to open their eyes and ears and who fail to understand. A teaching, which demonstrates how recognised and familiar objects are transformed into symbolic keys to unlock further dimensions of comprehension. This use of everyday imagery makes Jesus' teaching particularly relevant and meaningful to the ordinary people. In the towns and villages that he visits, Jesus points to the nature around him as evidence of the bountiful love of God:

> Look at the birds in the sky, they do not sow or reap or gather into barns yet your heavenly father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they are? ... think of the flowers growing in the fields....
>
> (Mt 6:26-29).

He likens the kingdom of heaven to "a treasure hidden in a field" (Mt 13:44), to "the yeast" a woman must use to leaven her bread dough (Mt 13:33), and to the tiny mustard seed which grows into the "biggest shrub of all" (Mt 13:32).

The way that Jesus uses imagery and parables in his teaching is not new to the people who flock to listen to him. There are many instances in the Hebrew Scriptures where imagery is used to communicate theological ideas. The Psalmist, for example, uses the natural imagery of the universe to express the glory and wonder of God:

> The heavens declare the glory of God
> the vault of heaven proclaims his handiwork;
> day discourses of it to day, night to night hands on the knowledge.
>
> (Ps 19:1-2).
>
> *(see also Psalms 65; 96; 97; 104; 144; 148)*

Thus, Jesus teaches theology through imagery and the people easily identify the theological message within the symbolic language. Illustrations of the need for an appropriate response to the mercy and love of God abound in his parables. For example, God is likened to the king who prepares a splendid banquet, but is forced to search in the byways for partakers, because the invited guests refuse to attend (Mt 22:1-14). In another sense, God is compared to a loving father who waits anxiously for his wayward son to return home (Lk 15:11-32), or again, to a farmer who pays all the labourers generously, regardless of their merit (Mt 20:1-16). In many of the parables, the people are urged to follow the example of the "good and faithful servant" who used what had been given him to the best advantage (Mt 25:14-30).

Jesus also emphasises the necessity of remaining vigilant to the call of this response, as the "five sensible bridesmaids" who kept their oil lamps burning in readiness though their wait was long (Mt 25:1-13). The story of the Samaritan stranger demonstrates the fruits of this loving response to God's mercy. The stranger breaks his own journey to look after the unfortunate Jewish traveller (Lk 10:30-37). There are also clear examples of the fate awaiting the negligent, in the stories of the complacent "rich landowner" (Lk 12:16-21), the "barren fig tree" (Mt 21:18-20) and the "dishonest servant" (Mt 24:49-51).

A remarkable aspect of the teaching of Jesus, found in the Gospels, was that he speaks to the people only in parables, and they "marvel at his words". Thus, his audience responded to the visual spectacle, they perceived his message. Christian ministers have also continued to make extensive use of this visual imagery in their

preaching as a fundamental way of communicating profound theological ideas.

1.2. Christian symbolism

There are realities that are sometimes difficult to describe through language, but can be expressed through outward and visible signs. When a certain sign is commonly understood to convey a particular meaning, it becomes a symbol, for example a 'heart' sign is interpreted as 'love'. A sign indicates or points to something. A symbol takes the place of something it identifies, and in some way resembles that which it replaces. In this way, a symbol becomes a powerful concentrated form of expression.

One obvious example of a significant symbol is the Christian cross. The cross has become the universally recognized sign of the Christian faith. It symbolises the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, which Christians believe to be the greatest manifestation of God's love for the world. Furthermore, it enables the believer to recall passages of the biblical texts on the passion and death of Christ. And finally it points to the triumph over death, to the resurrection which is the ultimate hope for all Christians.

In religion, symbols have a particular potency. It is possible to evoke a strong emotional response from a symbol because it recalls to mind one's deepest hope in life. Some emotions are best expressed in symbolic form and gesture. For example, it is often extremely difficult to speak adequately to someone about sorrow or love, yet with the touch of a hand, an embrace, or a glint in the eyes, one can express profound depths of compassion. Here, again, sensuousness of communication involves more than mere words, especially in an attempt to express one's innermost feelings or the inward reality of our being.

The early Christian symbols found on the walls of the Roman Catacombs and "house churches" of the second and third century were theological statements in visual form. These elementary visual images were not only the most effective means of communicating, to the Christian community under threat of persecution, but essential, because many of the followers were illiterate. The value of those early symbols has not diminished through the centuries, although the full complement of their meaning is not always remembered.

A few examples of the earliest and still contemporary symbols of Christianity will serve to illustrate the significance and value of this concise form of visual theology. These symbols, as emblems, marked the faith of the Christians.

1.2.1. Emblems

CHI-RHO MONOGRAM

formed by Greek letters X (Chi) and P (rho) was the first symbol used by the early Christians. It was found in primitive Christian art from the third century on sarcophagi, eucharistic vessels and lamps (Hall 1974:66).
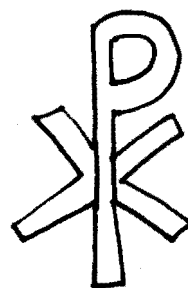
FISH

A very early symbol of Christian baptism, believers were called *pisciculi*, little fishes, and the baptismal font, a *piscina*, meaning a fish-pond. The initial letters of the Greek words: (Jesus) I ΕϹΟΥϹ
(Christ) ΧΡΙϹΤΟϹ
(of God) ΤΗΕΟΥ
(the Son) ΥΙΘϹ
(Saviour) ϹΟΤΕΡ
formed the acrostic ΙΧΘΥϹ
meaning 'fish' in English (Cross 1978:514; Hall 1974:122).
In Latin the word, *piscina*, means 'basin' and referred to the niche in the sanctuary wall, where the cruets and drain (*sacrarium*) were located (Cross 1978:1092).
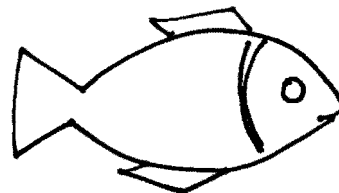
ANCHOR

An early Christian symbol of hope (Heb 6:18-19) found in the catacombs (Hall 1974:15). In medieval times an 'anchorite' was a person who withdrew from society to live a penitential life in silence and prayer. Oftentimes, the hermit's small room was actually bricked into the exterior walls of the church, 'anchored' to the church (Cross 1978:50).
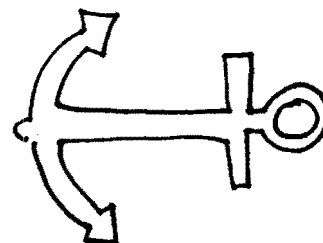
CROSS

The symbol of Christ's sacrifice and in general of the Christian religion. The cross replaced the Chi-rho monogram after the fifth century with the recognition of Christianity by Constantine the Great (Hall 1974:77-78).

The symbols found painted on the walls of the catacombs conveyed messages of encouragement to the threatened believers, in the face of the real imminence of persecution and death. In the first few centuries after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, the subject matter of the earliest known Christian images found on these walls and those of 'house churches' varied quite considerably. The range of biblical scenes depicted included Adam and Eve, David and Goliath, Moses, the Patriarchs, Jacob's vision, Lot's escape from Sodom, Samson killing the lion, The Good Shepherd, Women at the tomb, and the

miracles. There are no known depictions of the crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, eucharist, no portraits of Jesus and no scenes of the last judgement (Dillenberger 1987:17).

1.3. Liturgical symbolism.

The manner of celebrating the public service of worship in the Roman Catholic Churches is commonly called the Liturgy. There are specific prescriptions governing its proper order which cover not only the texts, but also the full range of artifacts and accessories appropriate to particular aspects of the worship service. Through the years the ceremonial aspects of the services have been modified, and various symbolic actions and signs have been incorporated to retain the essential components of the liturgy.

The use of colour is carefully coded in liturgical practice. Indeed, the use of colour in general has always played a major role in imagery and symbolism. Some colours are said to express moods and emotions, for example, red for passion, and yellow for treason and cowardice. Two of the most universally recognised symbolic colours are red for 'stop or danger' and green for 'go'. Colour symbolism is used for many purposes and thus a single colour may be said to have a variety of meanings depending on its application. Certain combinations of colours are used to convey specific messages, and various cultures have utilised this. Consider the European heraldic use of colour as well as the African tribal use of colour in bead work.

In religious art there is a mystical significance in colour application. In medieval Christian art the colours of the clothing were a symbolic means of identifying a particular saint, a factor in the iconography of Mary Magdalene which will be examined in chapter four.

I will now concentrate particularly on the use of colour in imagery and symbolism. Throughout the liturgical year, the Roman Catholic Church places great emphasis on the visual presentation of the worship. The use of colour in particular has assumed symbolic dimensions. The colour of the clothing or vestments of the main officials in the service is a meaningful part of the ceremony. In the days of the Latin Mass, it was oftentimes the only way of ascertaining whether the service taking place was in honour of a particular saint, an ordinary celebration, or a requiem, as the colour of the officiating priest's chasuble varied according to the occasion.

Certain colours in religious symbolism are through association assigned by the Church to represent specific liturgical themes. Red, the colour of blood, is always considered symbolic of love and passion. In the Roman Catholic context, the officiating minister wears red vestments when the service is in honour of the martyred saints. White is the symbol of light, of holiness, innocence, and purity. In the early church the ministers usually wore white vestments to symbolise their rebirth into the new life. The custom of brides dressing in white still retains this image of purity or virginity.

Violet or purple is the liturgical colour used in the Church's seasons of Advent and Lent. Purple symbolises grief and suffering, and is thus suitable to the penitential rites and days of mourning. Green, the colour of the earth and its vegetation, also represents the triumph of spring over winter, or life over death (Ferguson 1954:273). Green vestments are worn during ordinary *(ferial)* worship days.

Black signifies the darkness that comes in death, hence it is a sign of mourning and negation. In early Christian symbolism, and particularly in the Middle Ages, black was associated with evil and the unknown (Ferguson 1954:272), and contrasted to white, the brightness which accompanied the vision of the godhead. Heaven was above, and Hell somewhere below the surface of the earth in the underworld. The devil, as an inhabitant of the dark underworld, was personified as a black person. This symbolic connotation permitted a form of racist practice to become acceptable in religious behaviour.

When colour associations become culturally inscribed, they cultivate the ground for prejudice and bias. In chapter four, it will be shown how a particular perception of Mary Magdalene has been widely proclaimed through the indoctrination of colour associations.

There have, however, always been varied interpretations concerning the symbolism of certain colours. Perception of meaning is not only dependent upon one's receptivity, a variety of situational perspectives such as social and political traditions can obscure theme, or cause conflict and a polarity of interests. These different perceptions should merely be considered as a necessary part of growth. There are several colours which can have both positive and negative associations. For example, the brightness of yellow or gold is used to symbolize the glory of the sun and the goodness of God. Yet Judas, in Christian artworks, is most often clothed in yellow as a mark of his treachery. and the Jews during the Nazi persecution were obliged to wear yellow stars of David.

1.3.1. Liturgical worship

The traditional Roman Catholic worship service consists of a series of rituals with specific symbolic components based on visual imagery. The liturgy centres around the celebration of the eucharist. The basic format of the service, that of offertory, consecration and communion has not changed since the apostolic age (Virtues 1965:668). The style of liturgical clothing worn by the priest also dates from the first century of Christianity (Virtues 1965:342).

The eucharistic ritual was only considered sacred when these particular aspects were strictly adhered to, a factor which contributed to schisms within the Christian Church. Various Protestant Churches broke away from traditional Catholic orthodoxy, because they not only rejected the notion of trans-substantiation of the bread and wine, but also placed more emphasis on the liturgy of the word. Since the second Vatican Council, there have been changes in the Catholic liturgical worship. It is now permissible for a priest to celebrate the eucharist (Holy Mass) in a private home, without wearing the traditional clothing, the alb and chasuble. However, there are several elements of symbolic imagery which are still obligatory for the worship service.

The first essential element is the altar of sacrifice. The altar symbolises or recalls to the memory of the congregation the history of ancient people's worship to Yahweh. In the Hebrew-Christian Scriptures, the altar marked the place of Jahweh's presence. Wherever there was mention of Jahweh speaking or appearing to anyone, an altar was built to mark the sacred spot. Thus, the altar came to symbolise the place of meeting with God. Various other symbolic references apply to a wooden altar, especially in the context of Christ's death on a wooden cross.

In the Catholic tradition, there is a lengthy ritual in which a newly built altar is consecrated, and rendered 'holy' for the sacred rituals in the worship service to take place. This ceremony, as with many other Christian ceremonies, originated from the so-called heathen or pagan worship cults. Thus, the Christians recognized the value and significance of the symbolic rituals in the cultural inheritance of paganism and simply 'Christianised' them. For example, in the Easter services the blessing of the water and the fire originated in some of the early pagan fertility rites.

Candles, too, are commonly used in all religious services. Historically, the practical purpose of the candle was to provide some light in the secret darkened rooms,

where the worship service was held clandestinely during the times of Christian persecution. Today, when candles are lit and even carried outdoors on a bright sunny day in procession, the significance of the lighted candle is recognised as a symbol of the presence of Christ as the light.

In times past fire was worshipped as a god, and a flickering flame of fire continues to evoke a sense of the sacred. In the Roman Catholic Church during Holy Week, whilst the chanting of the office of Matins and Lauds *(Tenebrae)* is taking place, candles on a triangular candelabrum are extinguished one by one, leaving the one top candle alight. This is a symbolic allusion to the apostles' desertion of Jesus during his passion (Hall 1974:57).

Another element of symbolic value in Christian worship is the use of music to evoke an emotional response or to sharpen one's awareness of the presence of God. Music appeals to the senses, and in many cultures is a natural expression of joy or sorrow. The liturgical use of music forms a part of many religious services of worship.

In Southern Africa, a common sight on Sundays are the cluster groups of Zionists chanting their prayers to the accompaniment of drums. In the Hindu faith, the atmosphere of sacredness is maintained throughout the service with the continuous drone from the tambura.

Within the context of the symbolic value of musical sounds it is relevant to comment on the liturgical use of bells. The clear sharp intonation of a single note repeatedly sounded is still the most effective instrument used to attract attention. Bell ringing was introduced into the Christian service to signal the stages in the liturgy. In the cavernous cathedrals of Europe, where the medieval worshippers could not always see the ministers or hear the Latin text, the tinkling sound of the sanctuary bells was a valuable aid recalling the attention of the congregation, enabling them to maintain a devout participation in the service.

The contemporary Roman Catholic use of the sanctuary bell is often limited to the announcement of the most solemn stage in the liturgical celebration, the moment after the consecration of the sacred species of bread and wine. As evidence, once again of the general religious value attached to symbolic sound, this use of a bell to recall the attention of the worshipping Christian community, is echoed in the striking of a gong during Buddhist meditation.

Smoke, too, is used by a number of religions as a symbol of prayers being offered

to God. The smoke is produced by sprinkling incense, a particular gum and spice preparation, onto hot coals. The Christian use probably dates back to the first century:

> Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood by the altar. A large quantity of incense was given to him to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar that stood in front of the throne; and so from the angel's hand the smoke of the incense went up in the presence of God and with it the prayers of the saints.
>
> (Rv.8:3-5).

During solemn celebrations in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches, it is still a cherished custom to cense the altar, the Bible, the priests and the participating congregation. This is usually done very ceremoniously in a procession, with an acolyte carefully swinging the thurible containing the incensed hot coals. The resultant clouds of smoke issuing from the thurible create an exhilarating sense of mystery and wonder.

1.3.2. Symbolic movement

All prayers in the Roman Catholic Church begin with 'the sign of the cross'. This gesture of symbolically marking a cross on one's body by touching the forehead, the heart and right and left shoulders is universally recognised as a symbol of Christianity. The sign probably originated as a smaller cross traced on the forehead with the thumb, as it came into use during the first centuries of the Christian faith, and as a secret sign of communication between the persecuted believers. It is now a traditionally accepted gesture of blessing used in Christian ceremonies.

Body movement is another form of communication which has been incorporated into the worship service. Within the Roman Catholic Church, where the language used was oftentimes not the vernacular, the audience could follow the liturgical gestures, and thus understand the significance of the spoken Latin words of the celebrant. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Christian preachers were instructed in body movements, which complemented the gestures of the scriptural paintings adorning the walls.

By the same token, the actors in the 'mystery plays' used body language to dramatise aspects of the liturgy. The thirteenth and fourteenth century congregation and audience, who had become accustomed to seeing this corporeal

symbolism used in the liturgical celebration, were more easily able to appreciate the visual imagery on the church walls as it recalled the ritual postures of Christian worship. Margaret Miles, professor of historical theology at the Harvard Divinity School, makes the point:

> But no fourteenth century person imaginatively entered the sacred world of a religious painting without an extensive visual training, stimulated by paintings and reinforced by sermons, religious drama, and popular devotional meditations.
>
> (Miles 1985:67).

This form of ritualistic communication is found in the Hindu prayer dances where careful attention must be paid to the gestures and movements of the dancers. In the Christian Churches today, liturgical dance is once again becoming a popular form in worship celebrations.

Within the Christian tradition there are many symbolic body movements which have become natural expressions of worship. For example, when the Roman Catholic priest prays at the altar, a very common symbolic movement is for him to extend his arms outwards with the palms of the hands open. This movement is recognised immediately as an attitude of supplication and prayer. This same gesture or prayer stance dates from the beginning of Christianity as the earliest known wall paintings verify (Miles 1985:81).

In the Roman Catholic liturgy the minister is instructed to raise his eyes upwards at the beginning of some of the prayers. When the eyes are raised upwards, this is seen to be a prayer in the sense that God resides in the heavens above, and a petitioner seeks to look at the face of the person addressed.

We express our respect or homage by bowing our head to important dignitaries. As a sign of greater respect and homage to God, we bend our knees and sometimes touch the ground with our forehead as an act of total submission. The Scriptures refer to Daniel kneeling before the Lord (Dn 6:10) as a public gesture of worship, and Isaiah quotes Yahweh as confirming that "before me every knee shall bow" (Is 45:23). When a believer enters a Greek Orthodox or Roman Catholic Church it is usual to acknowledge the sanctity of the 'presence of God' by genuflecting or bending the knees.

As a final example of how body movement has been symbolically used in the Christian tradition, the Roman Catholic penitential rite requires the participants to signify their acknowledgment of repentance by striking their breasts with a

clenched hand. The impact of this symbolic gesture is further intensified by the required verbal intonation of guilt, '*mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa*' [translated as 'through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault'].

1.4. Additional religious signs

Two further visual signs symbolically marking Christian worship are worthy of mention. First, ministers of religion usually wear distinctive clothing or carry an emblem which indicates their religious tradition. The "religious habit" worn by members of Roman Catholic religious congregations was traditionally a sign of the penitential life of commitment to a Christian ideal (Cross 1978:611). The different congregations were recognised by the colour of their habit, for example, Franciscans wore brown, Dominicans wore white with a black cloak and the Augustinians wore black. The white clothing traditionally worn by the Roman Catholic pontiff dates back to Pope Pius V [1566-1572], who, as a Dominican, continued to wear his religious habit during his pontificate (Virtues 1965:466).

Second, leaves or flowers strung together in a ring, as a wreath, express grief as well as joy and make up another aspect of imagery which has a symbolic religious significance in the Christian Church. In ancient Greece and Rome, triumphant warriors, poets, and athletes were crowned with a wreath as a symbol of honour and glory (Hall 1989:79). This visual imagery of excellence of achievement accounts for the frequent inclusion of the symbolic wreath in the ornamentation in academic institutional buildings. Public statues today are sometimes garlanded as a sign of respect and homage, and visitors to countries, such as Hawaii, are welcomed by being adorned with a garland of flowers placed over their shoulders.

In some religious rites garlands mark an important note of celebration. Greek and Russian Orthodox marriage rites crown the bride and groom with flower wreaths in celebration of their commitment to each other.

Lastly, the funereal wreath of victory, placed on the coffin or grave of a deceased Christian, as a tribute of the triumph of Christian love and dignity, symbolises the doctrinal idea of death defeated by the soul's reunion with its creator. This is the promise made by Jesus to Martha that "whosoever believes in me, though they die, yet shall they live" (Jn 11:26). And it is proclaimed in triumph at a Christian funeral service by the minister using the words of Paul:

1. *The Holy Trinity* (c.1411)
Andrei Rublev [c.1370-1430]
Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

Death is swallowed up in victory. Death, where is your victory? Death,
where is your sting?

(1 Cor 15:55).

1.5. Religious Images

The term 'image' is used in this dissertation to include only the aesthetic expression
of thought and emotion through form, colour, and line. The focus is on the visual,
on that which can be appreciated through seeing and imagining. Artists, whether
they be painters, sculptors, or poets, have used and still use images to express
their feelings and beliefs. There has been a long tradition of visual theologising
through Christian Art.

Icons may be seen as a primary form of religious Image. The icon is an image of
Jesus Christ, the Madonna, or one of the Christian saints, painted usually on a
portable wooden panels. The panel is sometimes protected by an engraved metal
shield which allows only the face and hands of the painting to be seen. The icon
still forms an important part in Christian worship and prayer in the belief that it
epitomises an immediate link with the divine (Dillenberger 1987:32).

In the Byzantine tradition the painting of the icon was regarded as a sacred task.
The various parts of each painting, the head, the hands, or the clothing, were
executed by a different artist after long extended periods of prayer (Rice 1963:24).
A particular aspect of the icon is the variation in symbolic gestures of the sacred
figures. The hands of Jesus Christ or of the saints are always carefully positioned
to convey a particular message, either in an attitude of blessing, or teaching or of
invitation. Sometimes Jesus holds an opened book of the gospels. Other times
the book is closed.

Sometimes the icon is an invitation to prayer, as in Andrei Rublev's famous icon of
The Holy Trinity, <ILL 1>, sometimes called the Icon of the three angels, which
has been interpreted to symbolise the Trinitarian Godhead. In it, the three angels,
representing the Trinity, sit around an altar table on which a chalice of wine is
placed. One angel holds a scroll. The central figure blesses the chalice, and the
third angel points towards an opening in the tablecloth. This has been interpreted
by worshippers as a symbolic invitation to enter the picture, into the presence of
the angelic communion table.

1.5.1. Historical use of images in Christianity

The veneration of images in the Christian Church dates back to the fifth and sixth century with respect paid to the symbol of the cross (Hall 1984:77-8). In the eighth and ninth century, a reaction to iconoclasm in the Greek Church caused the destruction of many images and the persecution of their defenders. Despite successive Church Councils vindicating the veneration of images, namely at Nicaea in 787, Constantinople in 869, Florence in 1438 and Trent in 1563 (Cross 1978:687), the abiding opposition of the Protestant Church to the worship of images has remained one of the chief complaints against Roman Catholicism. The Catholic tradition or practice of adorning Churches and homes with representations of God and the saints is maligned by several Christian denominations, who have seen it not only as a direct rejection of the divine commandment,"You shall not make any graven image" (Ex 20:4), but also as a diminishment of the intangibility of divinity.

The Roman Catholic Church refutes any hint of idolatry, maintaining that the sacred images in the Catholic Church serve as a recognised means of communicating with the divine. However, although the Catholic Church has consistently cautioned against a dependence on miraculous interventions attributed to mere 'graven images', and any belief that the veneration of certain images results in extraordinary benefits. Yet, this has not lessened the apprehension of other Christian Churches. The Catholic Code of Canon Law permits 'sacred images' for veneration of the faithful but specifies:

> these images are to be displayed in moderate numbers and in suitable fashion, so that the Christian people are not disturbed, nor is occasion given for less than appropriate devotion.
>
> (Can.1188 in Canon Law Society 1983:209).

The historical misuse of sacred images has been one of the main contentions of Protestantism against religious imagery, In other religious traditions, for example in Islam, images are still forbidden. The concern has been that the artist's ability to create an image, which re-presented a living being encroaches on the divine prerogative to creation. For some primitive tribes this artistic skill signalled demoniac possession, in their fearful disbelief that a human being could reproduce the likeness of people and animals.

There is a sense of the extraordinary in the creation of a visual image, and particularly so in a three dimensional representational image. In the word

'represent', from the Latin *repraesentare*, meaning to "bring [back] into one's presence; bring before the mind; display to the eye" (Hoad 1986:399), there is a concept of producing again something which already exists, and appears to suggest supernatural powers. However, to forbid any utilisation of this artistic skill as the prerogative only of the Almighty is a denial of creative potential of the person as image of God. It may be argued all the intellectual, scientific and artistic activities of humankind are but an extension and continuation of the creative activity of God.

Within a religious context the essential purpose of the presence of sacred images is directed towards divine worship. The images placed in churches and shrines are intended for devotional inspiration. With the Catholic Church's traditional use of the visual as a vehicle through which theology is communicated, various instructions and recommendations have always been applied to the commissioning and approval of the artworks. Thus, specific rubrics on sacred imagery have been formulated in the Roman Catholic Code of Canon Law. This is in the understanding that generations of people have imbibed their understanding of their Christian faith primarily from the sacred imagery in the Church.

There is a visible manifestation of the need of millions to give concrete symbolic testimony to their religious faith, to mention only the spires and steeples of Christian Churches, the minarets of Islam, and the domes of Hindu temples, which dot the horizon of the world today. Whether the building is a church, mosque, or a temple, it has to be clearly identified as the house dedicated to the worship of God, as a visual image of the people's devotion and faith.

One example of how effectively the visual has communicated the Christian religion is in the art of the Gothic Cathedrals, their statuary, the interiors and exteriors and the stained glass windows. Some of the most beautiful Gothic Christian Churches, such as the Cathedrals of Cologne and Ulm with their high floating buttresses, appear to soar upwards in prayer in an attempt to reach up and link earth with heaven. Roman Catholics have always regarded their churches as sanctuaries filled with the divine presence in the reserved sacrament of the Eucharist. Therefore, great care and devotion has been applied to embellish and beautify, what is believed to be God's dwelling place on earth.

Many churches built in the Middle Ages have images which serve to compound the doctrine of an omnipotent, omniscient God by the magnitude of scale of the figure. Miles reminds us that the religious images were to be seen within the context of

worship and piety. Thus, their positioning within the Church was significant to the whole religious life of the community:

> The Christ in Majesty, depicted in the half-dome of the apse and in the typanium of the main portal of a Romanesque Church informed the worshipper as she entered that the same Christ who presides over the cosmos is the 'door' by which worshippers enter the liturgical gatherings of the faithful.
>
> (Miles 1985:9).

It would be difficult to convey the transcendence, the majesty and the silence of God without the visual imagery of the medieval churches. As Miles has argued, these qualities of God are primarily sensory experiences, not intellectual concepts to be conveyed through theological propositions:

> God's majesty is more easily and accurately expressed by the gold leaf and rich strong colours, the unapproachable gaze, the position in the heights of the dome, of a Byzantine Christos Pantocrator than by verbal descriptions. God's impenetrable silence becomes an event and an experience in the contemplation of an image.
>
> (Miles 1985:32).

When Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, attempted to describe the splendour of a new cathedral in Palestine, he wrote, "the evidence of our eyes makes instruction through the ears unnecessary" (Dillenberger 1987:8). The Bishop went on to compare the cathedral with the people of God, metaphorically listing the architectural roles of the different members of the congregation, "some are doors, some 'under-props', some columns, some benches" (Miles 1985:50). This demonstrates how useful a didactic tool visual imagery has been in communicating theological concepts, as well as reinforcing scriptural teaching like the mystical body of Christ (1 Cor 12:14-30).

The art treasures of the Vatican museums testify to the number of famous artists of the day commissioned by successive popes to decorate and embellish Roman Catholic Churches. This wealth of imagery provided a daily pictorial homily by means of the paintings, murals, carved reliefs and statues. These images still reiterate to the viewer the splendour and glory of the chosen virtuous, and the threatened punishments for those who persist in evil-doings.

1.6. Value of images in theology

> Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognises before it can
> speak.
>
> (Berger 1972:7).

How many of us first conceived of God as an old man with a long flowing white beard? Though the Christian Church has never officially come to a decision on how to image God, it has traditionally sanctioned this representation. The images in the picture prayer books still used today in the Roman Catholic Church have engraved onto the minds of believers symbols which are difficult to eradicate. One of the hazardous aspects of presenting children with stereotyped symbols of life and reality is that the potency of a first experienced image stultifies further questioning. As Berger reiterates, "the way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe" (1972:8).

One of the values of the creative arts is to imbue the imagination of the audience, to encourage an appreciation of new ways of seeing and understanding. In art that has a religious and Christian context, this value expands to a new visual dimension of experiencing and theologising. Theology and art have been linked from the beginning of the Christian Era. It has been to the glory of Christianity that the Christian religion has been a motivating factor for some of the greatest works of art. The glory lies in the challenge which inspired so many artists to reach their utmost potential in creativity.

Although much of the artwork is still located inside the church, a large proportion of the most famous Christian sacred art is now displayed in art museums. This has affected the implicit theological value of some works of art as the image's interaction with a worshipper will be different to that of a critical art viewer. In evaluating the image from a Christian theological perspective, it is essential to be aware of this discrepancy. However, placed within a religious setting, the Christian visual image's value is unquestionably theological:

> because of its power to move, to focus the senses and the mind, and to
> offer a mnemonic aid that gathers the worshipper's strongest and most
> fundamental ideas, emotions and memories in an enriched present.
>
> (Miles 1985:10).

The human imagination has created incredible visions and suppositions about the unknown, even though the verity of any of them might never be ascertained. God

as spirit cannot be seen, yet this has not hindered artistic conceptualising of the divine image. For it is only through imagery that we can even begin to imagine how to express the spiritual dimension of God. For example, Gerald Manley Hopkins captures some of the essence of God through nature-imagery in his poem entitled The Windhover, in which we can marvel at the beauty expressed in the nuances of rhythm and word:

> I caught this morning morning's minion, king-
> dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn
> Falcon, in his riding...

(Gardner 1953:30).

While it might be argued that the impact of this kind of imagery used in poetry is limited to a select audience, it cannot be denied that the spoken word is capable of awakening an immense reservoir of imagery in the imagination. For how could God be known or expressed without imagery? Yet, through the centuries of the existence of life on this planet Earth, innumerable theories have been proffered about the nature of God.

Of all attempts to conceptualize the unfathomable divinity, the most successful have been through imagery and symbolism. Through their multiple variations of depicting God, the ancient Greek sculptors sought to find the appropriate form, capable of receiving some portion of the divine presence. Although this symbolic imagery is utilised by other world religions, such as Hinduism. Christianity has perhaps exploited to the maximum the didactic possibilities of symbolic imagery to express and propagate the Christian faith. The Roman Catholic Church, in particular, demonstrates a continued and extensive usage of visual presentation. As Miles has argued, the imagery made the divine presence real in the liturgical worship and "awakened and focused the worshipper's desire to imitate the spiritual characteristics presented by images" (1985:143).

Given the extent of religious imagery available in most Catholic Churches, and often duplicated in Catholic homes, these images have become a functional part of everyday life for many Catholics. The interaction between the user and the object, which occurs through a daily visual contact with any kind of image, will eventually affect some form of transformation, without the viewer even being aware of its intrinsic value. Miles cautions against interpreting the effects of an image too quickly. It is only after an extended period of looking at an image that "the personal message of the image can be articulated" (1985:137).

However, as Miles verifies in her own experience, a believer who continually uses a

sacred image in her devotional meditations is being formed and changed by this use (Miles 1985:136-7). Through a passive acceptance of all that the image represents, the believer allows that conception to penetrate and transform her vision. Further understanding will follow of the relevance of the image for her own personal life. This can be an enriching perspective but it might also be a stultifying process if the image presents a restrictive or subversive concept. For example, if the imagery presented women as contented and joyous wives and mothers, this would appear to persuade a receptive woman that her highest goal and source of happiness lay in wedlock. It would then be very difficult for that woman to contemplate any other life pursuit. The extent to which the imagery of women in the Catholic Church has and does evoke a particular view of woman will be explored in the following chapter.

The Roman Catholic Church has continued to utilize visual imagery. It is an essential component that has enabled the Christian religion to evolve, and it remains central to any elucidation of Christian doctrine and evangelisation:

> The function of art is to identify and articulate a range of subjective patterns of feeling and to give objective form to feeling....Religion needs art to orient individuals and communities, not only conceptually but also effectively, to the reality that creates and nourishes, in solitude and in community, human life. Religion, as we have seen, is a complex of concepts about the self, the world and God; it is also an altered perception of the meaning and value of the sensible world, a different way of seeing. Both are cognitive functions; both involve an organization of experience, but they are different in content and they train different capacities in human beings....for the untrained eye, eyesight is not insight, just as for the untrained mind, religious concepts make no sense. Because religion irreducibly involves both concepts and altered perceptions, the training of both eye and mind is fundamental to the quickening of religious sensibility.
>
> (Miles 1985:4).

In this sense art is used to objectify an idea and communicate a message on the cognitive and emotive levels. Accepting that visual art communicates a message, I contend that the religious depiction of women has been distorted by artistic representations. Paul Tillich said the church has used the artistic realm in order to "express the meaning of its life in artistic symbols....given by the original revelatory experiences and by the traditions based on them" (1964:210). Tillich asserted in the introduction to his third volume of <u>Systematic theology</u> that it had been his life-long search to try to "penetrate the meaning of the Christian symbols which have become increasingly problematic within the cultural context of our time" (1964:5). The meaning that has been communicated by the church in its artistic symbols about women will be examined now in the following chapter.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have described some of the main aspects of Christian imagery and symbolism. I began by asking 'to what extent does the Roman Catholic Church rely on imagery and symbol-making in the presentation of its theology of the Christian faith?' In response, I presented an overview of the features of the visual and symbolic landscape of Roman Catholic worship and indicated how central this visual presentation is to the worship and celebration rituals of the Roman Catholic Church. Moreover, the visual imagery has communicated the Christian message far more effectively than the written and spoken word.

Finally, I expressed concern that the Catholic Church has used this powerful didactic tool as a lever to support and validate a patriarchal structure. How far this lever has enabled a prejudiced and erroneous conception of womanhood to be maintained will now be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: AN EXPLORATION OF THE TWO MOST POPULAR VISUAL
IMAGES OF WOMEN FROM A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE: THE VIRGIN MARY
AND MARY MAGDALENE

> We never look at just one thing; we are looking at the relation between
> things and ourselves.
>
> (Berger 1972:9).

Introduction

In the previous chapter, it was established that all Christian art has a theological
content and thereby makes statements about the Christian faith. Some
implications of the way women have been imaged in the Christian art up to the
present day will be explored now from a feminist ethical perspective. The focus of
this perspective raises questions about women in Christian visual art. How, for
example, does the imaging of women affect Christian women's self perception?
What moral judgement has been passed on women by this Christian art form?

In order to respond to these questions, this chapter will introduce the two women
most commonly imaged in Christian art, namely the Virgin Mary and Mary
Magdalene. The visual imagery which has emerged concerning these two women
epitomises the two conceptions of womanhood traditionally upheld by the Catholic
Church doctrine. Women are either virgins or non-virgins [harlots]. The Catholic
Church has elevated the Virgin Mary as the ideal role model for women, thereby
negating the worth of all 'non-virgins'. In contrast, Mary Magdalene has been cast
in an unfavourable, even detrimental role.

I believe it is important to assess the significance of the Virgin Mary imagery in the
Roman Catholic Church. To do so, it will be necessary first to explore the Virgin's
title and role as the 'second Eve', as designated in Mariology. Against this
background, the character of Mary Magdalene will then be presented and I will
argue that she has been conceptualised as a combination of the Virgin Mary and
Eve. This will lead in the next chapter to a detailed discussion of the historical texts
pertaining to Mary Magdalene.

2. Woman as imaged in Christian Art

It is time to expose and unshroud the biased views about women that have been communicated through Christian visual imagery. The most commonly recognised symbol of a woman is the exposure of her breasts and genitalia. Surviving art remnants of the most ancient of religious cultures clearly identify women through these sexual attributes. Yet, in the earliest Christian imagery there is little evidence of a differentiation between the sexes. However, when imagery is used to express the dangers of sin and vice, it is the naked body of a woman that is most often incorporated into the artwork. Conversely, when imagery is used to depict modesty in women, the only means of identification is through the clothing and beardless face.

Christian artworks through the centuries have persistently dichotomised woman imagery. Women are depicted as either idealised, virginal models of the Madonna, or more suggestively as the object of men's sexual weaknesses. The medieval paintings, which depicted Eve eagerly accepting the apple from the serpent, initiated a flood of imagery depicting woman as temptress and seductress of man. It is this entrenched notion that women constitute 'sin' and immorality, that is still the motivating force preventing the Catholic Church from opening the ministerial offices to women.

As recently as 1965, prior to the Second Vatican Council, women were neither allowed to enter the sanctuary of the church, nor to serve as acolytes in Roman Catholic liturgical celebrations (Henning 1974:274 on Canon 813). Among the reasons given by the Catholic hierarchy for this exclusion, two statements bordered on the offensive. The first concerned the issue that women might be a cause of sexual temptation and distraction to the priest (Paper published by Laity Commission of England and Wales on Women and the Society 1980:10-11). The second reason was more hurtful, in that women were to be regarded as 'unclean' through menstruation (Henning 1974:273; Mclaughlin 1974:229). This exclusion of women from the sanctuary during public religious worship has helped to enshrine a perception of women as unsuitable visual examples of Christian piety. Furthermore, this negative connotation of women as unworthy celebrants in worship is not only contrasted to the approved suitability of men, women are indicted as sexual objects, and as possible tainters of the presumed inherent purity of man. Thus, the prevalent Christian imagery of women has simply mirrored a reality of lifestyle experienced by many women.

The theological content of Christian artworks clearly originated from various interpretations of the Scripture, and doctrines of the Christian faith. The authority and authenticity of the textual base for this visual interpretation of ecclesial doctrine is arguable, however. Although many of the artworks were specifically commissioned by church hierarchy for the edification of the Christian people, there has always been a certain amount of 'artistic licence' tolerated. One often quoted example of an artist's ultimate independence is Michelangelo's mischievous depiction of his over-bearing sponsor, Pope Julius II in the Last Judgement, located in the Sistine Chapel. The pontiff is shown as the sloughed-off skin of a man, which Saint Bartholomew holds up questioningly to Christ the judge. A gesture which is intended to suggest that the pontiff's fate is as yet undecided.

The issue of how closely the artworks actually followed Christian doctrine revolves around the final assessment and impact of the work. For certainly, the Christians who frequented the churches would have assumed that the artworks were not in discord with the church dogma. It would be reasonable to postulate that most of the worshippers believed that the artworks authentically expressed the doctrines of Christianity. Passive acceptance of the content within the artworks has been evidenced by an almost universal belief that God, the creator of heaven and earth, is a bearded, old, white man.

This dissertation is concerned with the ethical implications of the depiction of women in Christian art. Of particular concern is the overtly negative attitude towards female sexuality present in the visual imagery. The Roman Catholic Church is apparently obsessed with the sinfulness of the flesh. The early Church Fathers were at pains to stress the evil significance of nakedness in the story of Adam and Eve. Some of the vehement discourses which they directed against women as sexually insatiable creatures will be discussed later. A Catholic 'catechism book' still available in church book stores, urges Catholics to "fight against all the days of our lives....the flesh [as] our own corrupt inclinations and passions which are the most dangerous of all our enemies" (Q.348 & Q.352 The Explanatory Catechism of Christian Doctrine. London: Burns & Oates. No date but *Imprimatur* 1921:65-66).

The Catholic Church also places great theological emphasis on the Virgin Mary, portraying her as the epitome of the ideal woman. In an effort to affirm the uniqueness of Mary, the mother of Jesus, the Catholic Church has insisted that she was a virgin to the end of her life. The New Testament references to Jesus' "brothers and sisters" (Mk 6:3; Lk 8:20) are explained away as cousins. This

insistence on Mary's virginity throughout her marriage, formed part of a thoroughly negative view of sexual intercourse, to the point that the church censored purely sensual pleasure in marital sex. The traditional Catholic doctrine, prior to Vatican II, taught that marital sexuality was only for the purpose of procreation, and that any "sexual expression that frustrated procreation....was regarded as intrinsically evil and a serious violation of moral law" (quoted in Kosnik 1977:105). Although Vatican II's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, [*Gaudium et Spes*], removed the stigma of purely sexual pleasure in marital love, the document emphasised that:

> marriage and conjugal love are by their nature ordained toward the begetting and educating of children....and that the couple should be ready with stout hearts to cooperate with the love of the Creator and Saviour who through them will enlarge and enrich his own family day by day.
> (Abbott 1966:254).

The accusations against the female sex made by many of the influential Church Fathers presents an ethical contradiction. For woman was condemned as the cause of sin, yet women are only the receptacles, the passive partners in sexual intercourse. The great thirteenth century philosopher and theologian, Thomas Aquinas [1225-1274], followed Augustine in the view that only the male possesses the image of God fully (Mclaughlin 1974:218). Aquinas actually taught that whereas man has a rational soul, woman is incomplete. She, as a defective male, lacking the penis, can only be regarded as the result of an accident in the transmission of male sperm (Mclaughlin 1974:217). Apart from the female's use in reproduction of the species, Aquinas argued that man would have been served better by a male helpmate (Mclaughlin 1974:220). Since, for any other activity the quality and finality of the female body inevitably disqualified her.

This negative view of women filtered into the imagery in the traditional representation of women in Christian art and it has had consequences for women's self perception. Although, it is not possible to ascertain how effectively the artworks influenced the sensibilities and values of the women in earlier periods. However, by analysis of some comparative conclusions on how this art has affected twentieth century women, the assumption is that women throughout the ages have certain common susceptibilities.

The work of feminist historians such as Professor Miles has revealed how the writings and records of men, upon which our history has been based, display a blatant historical misogyny, as well as a deliberate exclusion of women's writings and activities. Miles proposes the use of different source materials to explore the

history of the role of women in Christianity. In particular, she favours using visual images for an appreciation of women's history (Miles 1985:10). With the understanding that a proportional account of verbal and visual evidence is needed, Miles' suggestion is to throw into sharp relief the discrepancies in the patriarchal historical voice, and construct a new history of Christianity based solely on visual images.

By cutting out the written accounts and focusing on the visual accounts, the advantage may be to force us to find and develop alternative skills as interpreters of history. Indeed, from this new history of Christianity it could be seen how women and their experiences were always included in the earliest dated visual images. It might even be possible to extract from these depictions some "understanding of the quantity and quality of self-esteem and the community's esteem for women" (Miles 1985:11).

This alternative perspective is particularly appropriate as so much of the visual imagery has been focused on aspects of everyday life. And women's lives are specific for their 'dailyness', their sense of cycle, routine and repetitiveness. Miles makes the point:

> Male physical experience, unless interrupted by serious illness or accident, features continuity, as women's physical experience does not. For women, the continuity of physical existence is secondary to the interruptions of that continuity caused by different physical conditions, which in turn carry different social identities and personal relationships. First menstruation, first sexual intercourse, childbearing, menopause - all these events are primarily irreversible alterations in a woman's body and secondarily changes in social identity.
>
> (Miles 1985:25).

The visual expression of these physical realities of life also relate closely to the earthy immediacy in Jesus' Gospel stories. There is, therefore, a sense of tangible accessibility in visual imagery which pure theory is incapable of emulating. Miles criticises the "implicit model of the history of ideas" which has allowed male historians to disregard the "absolute dependence of human beings on the body"(1985:36). She calls for a more balanced perspective of the development of intellectual knowledge, as she urges:

> an analogous juggling of texts and images in the method of historical hermeneutics, a balance based on a respect for an interest in not only historical language users but also historical image users....when we have developed the requisite skills in the interpretation of images and texts, perhaps we will recognize the validity and beauty of a perspective other than that of identification with subjective consciousness. We will become

fascinated by the singular effectiveness with which human life, the life of the body, has been represented, expressed and interpreted by visual images, just as language formulates, articulates, and communicates human life as the life of the mind.

(Miles 1985:38).

Both the visual and the textual evidence of the history of Christianity must be examined to see how they complement each other (Miles 1985:12).

2.1. The most popular images of women: the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene

How has the Christian Church's imagery of women shaped our theological anthropology? To answer this question, it is necessary to arrive at a basic representation of the church's views on women. This should be possible by isolating certain popular images of women in Christian art.

In the first centuries of Christianity only a few examples of images of women have been recorded. Remnants of the earliest imagery in the catacombs and 'house-churches' have sometimes depicted various women, for example the "seated woman holding an infant"(Miles 1985:47), in the catacomb of Priscilla in Rome. Frescoes on the wall of the baptistery in Dura Europos, Syria dating back to 230 A.D. depict the three Marys at the tomb on Easter morning (Dillenberger 1985:118), as well as "Adam and Eve hiding their nakedness" (Miles 1985:47). From the fourth century onwards, with the support of the Roman emperor Constantine, from whom a degree of toleration and the Imperial favour was given to Christianity (Cross 1978:338), a steady stream of imagery began to flow from Christian artists. "Fourth-century Christians wanted to make the accessibility of their faith apparent in the churches that sprang up across the empire" (Miles 1985:42).

As Christian imagery replaced pagan imagery, temples were converted into churches, and the sculptured relief work on tombs and caskets depicted biblical scenes in place of the scenes from Roman and Greek mythology. The resurrection scene was particularly favoured as an appropriate Christian theme with the depiction of the three women at the tomb. Mary Magdalene as the main figure of that scene, can usually be identified in some way. One example is found on an ivory panel of a fourth century casket, where Mary Magdalene's arm is outstretched towards the resurrected figure of Jesus (Malvern 1975:24). She is thus identified as the woman to whom Jesus cautions "do not cling to me" (Jn 20:17). The various ways in which Mary Magdalene has been portrayed will be

described in greater detail in chapter four.

By the twelfth century, devotional cults of Mary Magdalene and the Virgin Mary had developed and engendered a substantial amount of both visual and written imagery about each figure (Miles 1985:76). Devotion to the Virgin Mary was proclaimed in hymns composed to extol her virtues, and through the number of famous medieval basilicas dedicated in her honour. She was often depicted as Queen of Heaven, seated at the right side of her son, Jesus Christ, in the glory of the heavens (Miles 1985:76). In the same period the legends surrounding the life of Mary Magdalene, the penitent, multiplied (Dillenberger 1985:120).

During the fourteenth century, churches and chapels were lavishly decorated with frescoes and carvings. This is a phenomenon which Miles attributes to the enormous bequests to the Christian Church from victims of the Plague (1985:65). This was also a period when images of the two Marys abound, as Miles stresses in her study of the function and meaning of visual imagery in Western Christianity (Miles 1985:76-80).

In an effort to assess the significance of the popularity of these two women, a virgin mother and a penitent 'whore', Miles poses some complex questions:

> What relationship to actual women of the fourteenth-century did these images of women have? How were women affected, both in their self-images and in their treatment and esteem by medieval communities, by the images of women that played so continuous a part in secular and religious community life?
>
> (Miles 1985:76).

Perhaps one significant aspect of the Christian art works is that they were all created by men. I have found no evidence of any women artists who were commissioned by the medieval church. The imagery has therefore to be considered as a male conception of what womanhood was and should be. Neither the concept of the 'virgin mother' nor the 'penitent whore' actually presented any potential threat to the position of men in the Christian Church. Nor on the other hand, did the imagery actually enhance womanhood. It could be said, therefore. that the imagery was imposed upon the women of the period, as it had not emerged through any woman's perception of women.

It is not possible to assess accurately how seriously medieval Christian women accepted the submissive role assigned to them. Certainly there were many women who were unaffected by the restraining imagery, women like Hildegard of Bingen

[1098-1179], Gertrude the Great [1256-1301], Catherine of Siena [1347-1380] and Margaret Beaufort [1441-1509], who were all renowned for their intellectual and artistic capability. However, for the majority of women, the Christian imagery has not inspired, encouraged or promoted any self affirmation.

In what way has the continued depiction of two contrasting images of the Virgin Mary and of the 'harlot', Mary Magdalene béen instrumental in hindering the positive affirmation of women? The answer to this question will be sought through a closer examination of how these women have been interpreted together. For, as Miles has reiterated "their iconography consistently presents them together, juxtaposing and sometimes contrasting their lives, their personalities and their actions" (Miles 1985:80-81).

The rest of this chapter will be concerned, therefore, with these two women and the manner in which they have continued to interest image-makers. I will begin by looking at the Virgin Mary as the pivotal role model promoted by the Roman Catholic Church for women. The significance of this position will be presented through a comparative analysis of Mary's portrayal as the second Eve. When Mary Magdalene is then introduced, the symbolic imagery, through which the Catholic Church has elevated the Virgin Mary, will be critically evaluated in conjunction with the imagery applied to Mary Magdalene.

2.1.1. Introducing the Virgin Mary

Undoubtedly, the most widely imaged woman of the Christian tradition has been the Virgin Mary. Let us consider what ethic of 'woman' emerges from the visual presentation of this woman.

Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus, did not play a large role in the New Testament. The significance of her role in salvation history grew largely as a result of a devotional cult to a mother-figure. The birth from Mary's womb was the guarantee of Christ's humanity. Yet the concept of a virgin birth was, and is, a subject which is still highly contentious among many Christian theologians (Cross 1978:692). Although as late as 1644, the Roman Catholic Holy Office forbade the use of the expression "Immaculate Conception" (Bouyer 1960:103). The work of successive Catholic theologians on the Virgin Mary's sinlessness was spiritualised and finally promulgated as a Roman Catholic dogma of faith in 1854. The bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, declared:

> The Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of Almighty God....was preserved immune from every stain of original guilt.
>
> (Mascall 1969:167).

Why was there such a need for one woman to be regarded as sinless? Perhaps the answer lies in one of the titles given to Mary. One of the important premises of Mariology is the teaching that the Virgin Mary is the 'second Eve', an idea expressed as early as the second century by Justin Martyr, [c.100-165], and Irenaeus, [c.130-200] (Bouyer 1960:3). Catholic biblical theology taught that:

> St. Paul had already expounded a whole theology of Christ as the second Adam. St. Luke's Gospel itself describes our Lady's part in the beginning of the work of salvation in a way that recalls, at every point, Eve's part in bringing about the fall.
>
> (Bouyer 1960:3).

Humanity, and specifically womanhood, had been given a second chance with another woman and another man.

2.1.1.1. The second Eve

In order to comprehend the full implications of this title, we must briefly go back to the first book of the Scriptures, to Genesis, to find the first Eve:

> The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and pleasing to the eye, and that it was desirable for the knowledge that it could give. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She gave some also to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised that they were naked....But Yahweh God called to the man....'Who told you that you were naked?'....'Have you been eating of the tree I forbade you to eat?'
>
> Gn 3:6-7,9,11).

This text has been interpreted as evidence that it was Eve, the first woman, who caused the downfall of the human race. Thus, right from the very beginning of creation woman is imaged negatively. Catechism teachers and ministers of the Christian tradition have continually emphasised this aspect of the faith. In essence, that it was a woman who brought sin, evil and death into the world. This statement has been accepted because Christians believe that the Scriptures contain the inspired words of God. The knowledge that the first woman and mother of humanity was morally weak, has encouraged quite inordinate assumptions of moral superiority in many Christian men. A New Testament teaching, attributed to

Paul, states that:

> women are to remain quiet at meetings since they have no permission to speak; they must keep in the background as the Law itself lays it down. If they have any questions to ask, they should ask their husbands at home: it does not seem right for a woman to raise her voice at meetings.
>
> (1 Cor 14:34-35).

This teaching was quickly elaborated into full scale gender prejudice. By the third and fourth century, the Church Fathers, notably Origen [c.185-254], claimed, "It is not proper [to] a woman to speak in church, however admirable or holy what she says may be, merely because it comes from female lips" (Origen quoted in Tavard Women in Christian tradition:38, quoted in Swidler 1979:342). Epiphanus [c.315-403] went further in his condemnation: "for the female sex is easily seduced, weak, and without much understanding....we wish to apply masculine reasoning and destroy the folly of these women" (Epiphanius, Adversus Collyridianos, Migne, Patrilogia Graeca, vol 42, cols 704f, quoted in Swidler 1979:343). And Pope Gregory I, [circa 591], popularly surnamed 'the Great', is reputed to have said:

> Woman is slow in understanding and her unstable and naive mind renders her by way of natural weakness to the necessity of a strong hand in her husband. Her use is two-fold: animal sex and motherhood.
>
> (Patrilogia Graeca 59:268 quoted in Keane 1987:7).

Before examining the visual image of the Virgin Mary, it is worthwhile studying the aspects of womanhood portrayed in the Eve story. In the commonly quoted and known biblical creation story, the woman was a secondary thought of God, initiated by the man's appeal for a helpmate (Gn 1:21). Eve was then created out of a part of Adam. She could be understood, then, as only an appendage of Adam, hence the name wo-man, meaning 'out of' man. The bias of this account has been determined by the translation of 'helpmate'. If it were even read as 'counterpart', the meaning of the incompleteness of Adam without Eve would be far more acceptable to feminist ethics. Despite the clarity in the second biblical creation narrative, that in God's initiative to create humankind, "male and female" (Gn 1:27) were created, the teaching of some of the early Patriarchs was clearly in favour of a lesser view of woman. Ambrose [c.342-420] wrote:

> the woman is inferior to man, for she is part of him, because the man is the origin of woman....The man is created in the image of God, but not the woman....
>
> (Ambrosiaster, Migne, Patrologia Latina, vol 17, col 253, quoted in Swidler 1979:347).

2. *Lilith* (c.1892)
   Kenyon Cox [1856-1919]
   (Dijkstra 1986:309)

3. *"The fall of man"* (c.1508)
   Michelangelo Buonarroti [1475-1564]
   Sistine Chapel, Vatican.

The Adam and Eve story forms part of the Hebrew Creation myth. According to Christian exegetes, the story was written during the Babylonian exile as an affirmative statement of the supremacy of the Hebrew God (Maly 1968:I:4n17). Although this account of the creation of human life was unconditionally accepted by many Christians until recently. Its implicit message, that created first, man is superior in intelligence is no longer acceptable to many contemporary Christians.

However, a more contentious issue in the biblical account is the inherent condemnation of woman. The story, is centred around the fruit of "a tree of knowledge of good and evil" (Gn 2:10). It purports to offer a reasonable explanation of the meaning of the hardships of this life. In this narrative, several statements are made about Eve as 'woman'. She is an independent thinker. She acts without consulting her partner. Her decision to eat of the forbidden fruit is a deliberate and conscious act against the wishes of God, and she easily persuades her partner to follow her example. All these elements have been construed as wilfulness, disobedience, and bringing disgrace and shame on the human race.

This story of Adam and Eve has probably done the most to perpetuate the notion of the supremacy of man over woman. For, despite the general agreement today of the mythical nature of this story, there is still a basic acceptance of the underlying concept which links woman to evil, as the tempter of man.

An early rabbinical story provides a further confirmation of the story's use as a patriarchal device to discredit women. This legend tells of Adam's first wife, a woman called Lilith who "flies away and becomes a demon" (Douglas 1977:740). This alternative myth captured the imagination of various artists, who depicted Lilith as the original snake-woman. In Dante Gabriel Rosetti's poem, Eden Bower, Lilith is described as "the fairest snake in Eden" where "not a drop of her blood was human, but she was made like a soft sweet woman" (Dijkstra 1986:306). A number of paintings and sculptures of women intertwined with snakes have been specifically titled 'Lilith', to associate the notion of the female snake charmer with "the generic depiction of Woman, the eternal Eve" (Dijkstra 1986:307). For example, the painting by Kenyon Cox [1856-1919] <ILL 2> , which could have been inspired by Michelangelo's depiction of the serpent in his Fall of Man<ILL 3> in the Sistine Chapel.

In an attempt to restore a vision of organic wholeness, feminists have "reclaimed the use of myth as one of the nonrational ways in which truth is appropriated" (Collins 1974:213). During a 1973 conference on "Women doing theology, at

Grailville, Ohio, a group of Jewish and Christian feminists remythologised the figures of Lilith and Eve to express a truth about their own lives" (Collins 1974:215). In the new Garden of Eden myth called 'Applesource', Lilith and Eve take on strong affirmative roles. Adam, on the other hand is depicted as an arrogant, insecure chauvinist.

The biblical story is sometimes used to support an argument which identifies distinct psychological discrepancies in the morality of men and women. However, feminist scholars have begun pointing to other aspects within the story which have been disregarded, and which convey an intriguingly damaging image of the man. Eve's action, for example, could be interpreted as an positive initiative to increase her knowledge. Indeed, her decision to taste the fruit is induced by the promise of intellectual gains.

There is a short discussion between the woman and serpent, in Genesis, about the consequences of taking the 'apple'. However, when the man is offered the fruit, he asks no questions but simply accepts and eats (Gn.3:7). The indictment of the guilt of both man and woman follows immediately. The story continues that as soon as they have eaten the fruit, "their eyes were opened and they saw they were naked" (Gn 3:7). Yet, this incident is used as the basis of a moral judgement of woman alone.

The story has been approbated by the Church Fathers as a condemnation, the connotation of which seeks to correlate sexual awareness with immorality. The implication is that up to that moment Adam and Eve were unaware of their human sexuality. Eve is then figuratively accused of opening Adam's eyes to eroticism. In an extraordinary synopsis of misogynism, Eve has been blamed as the main cause of all sin coming into the world. And as the female archetype is implicated, so is every woman. In an oft-quoted passage by the judgemental patriarch Tertullian [160-225], he harshly reprimands women:

> and do you not know that you are (each) an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age: the guilt must of necessity live too. You are the devil's gateway; you are the unsealer of that (forbidden) tree: you are the first deserter of the divine law: you are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God's image, man. On account of your desert -that is, death- even the Son of God had to die.
>
> (*De culte feminarum*,I:1, quoted in Swidler 1979:346).

Visual representations of Eve in the Genesis 'Garden of Eden' have her sensuously naked. She is recognised by the apple in her hand, the snake coiled around her

belly. She is the temptress. In his panel depicting The fall of man <*ILL 3*> in the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo confirms the Christian Church's conception aligning female with sin.

The sexual implications of this sensual combination of woman and snake were particularly popular in the nineteenth century in the theatre and circus. Both venues from which current cultural attitudes are commonly expressed. As one of the functions of drama, both tragic and comic, is to absorb ideas from the cultural consciousness and present them back in different forms, oftentimes provocatively, this is a powerful means of shaping the consciousness of the society.

It is also an opportunity to inject into the collective consciousness an inheritance of gender prejudice. For among the terms used to describe a woman's appearance, those often used during the late nineteenth century were "serpentine", "sinuous" and "snake-like" (Dijkstra 1986:305). Eve has become the symbol of a negative image of woman, a scape-goat to be blamed. From this, we have also inherited idiomatic expressions such as 'cherchez la femme' or 'Adam must have his Eve'.

The extension of woman into snake and even the inclusion of the snake in the Eve myth has a much deeper symbolic content as a root bias against women in the Hebrew Scriptures. In When God Was A Woman, Merlin Stone, an American art historian and sculptor, describes how significant the degradation of both the woman and snake was to the patriarchal religion of the Israelites. The different elements in the Hebrew paradise myth, Stone argues, have a remarkably close link with the worship of the Sumerian Serpent Goddess. Stone draws attention to several of the ancient cultures of the Middle East where the serpent was revered as a symbol of deity and wisdom (Stone 1976:199).

In Sumeria, the Goddess was called Great Mother Serpent of Heaven and early deity figurines dating from 4000 BC show a snake's head on a female body. In Egypt, the hieroglyphic sign for goddess was the cobra. The Cobra Goddess was known as *Ua Zit* and the cobra called *uzait* meaning the 'eye', symbolized wisdom and mystic insight (Stone 1976:201). Worship of the Cobra Goddess began in Crete around 3000 B.C. and numerous sculptures have been unearthed depicting priestesses with snakes. One of the ancient Greek shrines of the Serpent Goddess was Delphi, where the priestess sat on a high stool encircled by the Python (Stone 1976:203). Sacred snakes were kept in the temples, where through their bite, the priestesses could enter a trance and utter the oracles of the Divinity.

Evidence of the existence of the cult of the Serpent Goddess has been found in

most of the lands which bordered the Mediterranean, whose inhabitants included the biblical adversaries of the Israelites, the Philistines, Phoenicians and Canaanites. Stone writes of archaeological findings of the Goddess and her Serpent in Gezer, Beth Shemesh, Sechem and Tell Beit Mersim. She reminds us of the bronze snake in Jerusalem which was said to date back to Moses, and which was treasured as a sacred idol in the temple until about 700 B.C.(Stone 1976:209).

The other significant link between the identification of the female deity and her serpent with Eve is the tree of knowledge of good and evil. References to a sacred tree whose fruits impart immortality appear in Egyptian writings as well as in ancient Greek mythology. The Serpent Goddess, Hathor of Egypt, was also known as the Lady of the Sycamore, and to eat of this tree was to eat the flesh and fluid of the Goddess (Stone 1976:216). The species of tree was variously recorded as a sycamore or fig or mulberry. Stone notes the tree was probably the Near Eastern *Ficus sicomorus* - the sycamore fig, sometimes called a black mulberry. It has been suggested that the "despised pillars and poles which the Hebrews were continually ordered to destroy" (Stone 1976:216) were in fact planted sycamore saplings. Stone pertinently reminds us that when Adam and Eve make aprons to cover their nakedness, they use fig leaves.

However, the significant thrust of the condemnation of Eve comes from the sexual overtones in the myth. The Serpent Goddess was worshipped as the Wise One from whom all life emanated and who controlled the destinies of these lives. It was the Goddess who was revered as "the provider of sexual consciousness" (Stone 1976:217), by teaching people how to procreate. Her devotees "celebrated this aspect of Her being" through sexual intercourse with her temple priestesses (Stone 1976:217). Thus, in the Hebrew story, the knowledge promised by the serpent to Eve and Adam is understood to be that of sexual consciousness. This is verified by their sudden realisation of nakedness when they have tasted the fruit of the sacred tree.

As Merlin Stone reiterates, the Hebrew paradise myth is a direct attack against the Female Deity, and, I would add, against the power of female sexuality. In their compilation of the Scriptures, the Hebrew priests were concerned to prove that male supremacy had been preordained from the very dawn of existence (Stone 1976:217), but in their efforts to rewrite the existing world's history, they were not content with merely destroying the shrines of the other deities. They perverted and twisted the meaning of sexuality by declaring it immoral. As Merlin Stone writes:

> The Hebrew creation myth, which blamed the female of the species for initial

sexual consciousness in order to suppress the worship of the Queen of Heaven, her sacred women and matrilineal customs, from that time on assigned to women the role of sexual temptress. It cast her as the cunning and contriving arouser of the physical desires of men, she who offers the appealing but dangerous fruit. In the male religions, sexual drive was not to be regarded as the natural biological desires of women and men that encouraged the species to reproduce itself but was viewed as woman's fault.

(Stone 1976:222).

As a miniature painting in a medieval Salzburg Missal by Berthold Furtmeyr [c.1481] <*ILL 4*> illustrates, the role of Eve and her successor has been imaged as a paradigm of the dualistic attitude of the Christian Church towards women. The first contrast is made between the completely naked Eve, who accepts the apple from the serpent's mouth and gives it to a kneeling supplicant, to the completely clothed, crowned and nimbed Virgin Mary who takes a host from the tree and gives it to her kneeling supplicant. As a second contrast, Eve's side of the tree has a skull, poised as one of the fruits, to symbolise the ominous consequences of eating Eve's apple, whereas Mary's has a crucifix, to remind the viewer of the salvation gained by Christ's death.

Third, ushering forward his cluster of supplicants, the anonymous artist has painted on Eve's side a dark skinned, naked demon, whose smiling face is almost identical to the skull in the tree. A scroll curls upward beside his head as he points to the group of waiting supplicants. In contrast, behind Mary's supplicants, among whom are three nuns, a sombre-faced, winged angel stands, pointing to the scroll which he [or she] holds in the left hand.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to read the words on either scroll, nor on the other scrolls positioned around the main picture. As a further identification of Eve's active role as the sole purveyor of death through sin, Adam is depicted fast asleep at the base of the tree, unaware of either of the women's activities. Although the miniature offers no outright condemnation, it presents two options to the viewer. The depiction of Eve clearly aligns death with unashamed nakedness, and Mary's modesty with salvation. Yet there is a confusion of didactic interests in the smiles of contentment the artist has depicted in the faces of Eve, the demon and even in the skull. Whereas Mary, the angel, and presumably Christ on the cross, show more sombre faces.

This little painting also represents a paradigm on the church's relationship with both the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene. For the Catholic Church Mary Magdalene represents a modern Eve, not as the 'death-bringer' but as the

accessible mediator for sinners. She is presented to Christians who feel they could identify more with a 'woman of the world', a woman who understands what sin is.

2.1.2. Images of the Virgin Mary in Christian Art

In contrast to the sensual Eve, the Virgin Mary is imaged in the Christian Church as the spiritual woman who remains a virgin and has no interest in sexual experience. "How can this come about, because I know not man" (Lk 1:34), the Virgin Mary asks upon discovering that she is pregnant.

With the Church Fathers' vehement deprecations against women and the evils of sexuality, a doctrine of virginal spirituality and asceticism soon developed in the first few centuries of Christianity with the advent of Religious Orders and Congregations of virgins and widows. By the fourth century, these teachings had flowered into a Mariology which elevated the Virgin Mary as the model of the perfect woman.

The significance of her role in the work of the redemption of the world was scripturally validated. Thus, great emphasis was placed in the prophetic text from Isaiah, in which one of the signs promised to herald the Redeemer, was that a young maiden or virgin would give birth (Is 7:14). As the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary has been revered and venerated even outside the life of the Christian Church. Known affectionately as 'Our Lady', a designation which comes from the Italian '*Madonna*' meaning 'My lady', the title has been used particularly with reference to statues and paintings, as the image of Mary has captured the imagination of artists, poets, preachers and writers.

Rosemary Radford Ruether, Professor of Applied Theology at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, and a well-known feminist theologian, points out an intriguing correlation which emerged in the cult of Marian devotion. Mary, in effect, became the new Serpent Goddess. She was given the ancient title of the Mediterranean Earth Goddess, as 'Queen of Heaven', and the ancient temples of the Goddess were re-dedicated in her honour. Images of Mary crowned with the moon and stars holding the divine child on her lap were adapted from the iconography of Isis and Horus (Ruether 1974:179). The only major difference was that Mary, as archetypal Christian Woman, was crushing the head of the serpent under her feet symbolising her triumph over the sexual impulse.

In the Roman Catholic Church, the cherished memory of the Virgin Mary is that of the ideal woman, the sinless one, who has never been 'defiled' by sexual

encounter. She is the lowly handmaid of the Lord, ready to serve. She is the obedient and docile woman, the model for daughters, wives and mothers. Mary's message to humankind is, "do whatsoever he tells you" (Jn 2:5). As mother of the redeemer, the source of life, she gives birth to purity and grace in the person of her son. The church held it to be unacceptable that Mary, as the one predestined to be the mother of the redeemer, could have been tainted in any way by the 'moral weaknesses' of humanity. The human mother of God must be sinless, meaning she must have no sexual experience.

Although there has been controversy over the accuracy of translating Isaiah's term, *alma*, as 'virgin' rather than a 'young maiden of marriageable age', Catholic exegetes have tended to favour the connotation of sexual innocence by choosing 'virgin'. The verity of their claim is affirmed by Mary's assertion to the angel, "I know not man" (Lk 1:35) and by her cousin Elizabeth's greeting "Blessed art thou amongst women" (Lk 1:42).

In the Catholic Church, Marian devotion has been extended to extraordinary lengths in the effort to maintain the ideal image of virginity. When Mary is presented as the role model of the perfect wife and mother, her husband, Joseph, is traditionally reduced to an old man. This effort to imply that their marriage remained platonic, effectively denies Joseph and Mary their symbolic status as the ideal 'Holy Family'.

As a further endorsement of the uniqueness and extraordinary grace bestowed on the Virgin Mary, Catholic theology insisted that Mary herself had been miraculously conceived. She was thus regarded as sinless and undefiled by the stigma of the disobedience of Eve, the doctrine of 'original sin'. This doctrine, as mentioned earlier, was promulgated as the dogma of the Immaculate Conception (Cross 1978:692). In this decree, Pope Pius IX declared that it was imminently fitting that she who had been divinely chosen to carry the son of God in her womb should have been preserved immune from every stain of original guilt (Maskall 1969:166).

The earliest theological interpretation of the significance of the Virgin Mary was her role as the new Eve. Mary's complete submission and obedience to God, was said to have regained Paradise for fallen humanity. Through her chaste virginity, she was said to have redeemed women from Eve's wantonness, as Irenaeus wrote in his treatise, <u>Against the heresies</u>:

> It was through a woman that the enemy gained control over man....Just as Eve, seduced by an angel's message, turned away from God in betraying

his word, so Mary, welcoming an angel's message, bore God within her in obeying his word. Eve had been led to disobey God, but Mary consented to obey him.

(Sacred Congregation 1974:92).

In art, the Virgin Mary, is always modestly clothed as the chaste mother. Even when she is depicted breast-feeding her child, the artists suppress any suggestion of impropriety by symbolically placing the one bared breast on the outside of her clothing. She is recognised by the child in her arms, and the snake crushed under her feet. This is understood as symbolic of her role as the new Eve, but also, as Ruether has commented, as a new version of the Serpent Goddess.

Ironically, the Catholic Church in its efforts to idealize Mary and present her as the perfect model for women has robbed her of her natural womanhood by taking away her sexuality, and thus produced a negative image and an unattainable model. She is the mother who remains a virgin. The Litany of the Virgin Mary, a Marian devotion approved by Pope Sixtus V in 1587 with a 7 years indulgence lists the praise-worthy attributes of Mary (Virtues 1965:629). The litany presents a limited range of models for any ordinary woman to follow. For example, Mary is acclaimed as 'Vessel of honour', 'Tower of David', 'House of Gold', 'Seat of wisdom', 'Mirror of justice', all attributes referring to her role as the Christ-Child bearer.

Blessed Isaac of Stella, in his Sermon 51, coupled Mary with the church:

Each is mother, each is virgin; both conceive in holiness from the same spirit; both bring forth a child *without sin* for God the Father. Mary gave birth to the absolutely sinless Head for the Body.

(Sacred Congregation 1974:95).

In many Roman Catholic Churches, women are encouraged by priests to model themselves on the image of the Virgin Mary as the Christian ideal for woman. Yet, while the Litany appears to elevate the position of Mary by praising her chastity and purity. With titles such as 'Mother inviolate' and 'Mother undefiled', other women are judged by a denial of their womanhood, their sex.

Thus, the Catholic Church has in fact manipulated the image of Mary. She has been reduced to a womb, an empty vessel waiting to be filled. She is valued only for her utilitarian capacity. Despite all the accolades and protestations of devotion to the 'Mother of God' the Catholic Church has in effect maligned the image of Mary by denying her a natural womanly sexuality. In the church's insistent concern

to validate the 'role' of Mary, even the most recent title of 'Mother of the Church' bestowed by the second Vatican Council (Abbott 1966:90-96), emphasises only her symbolic value to the church.

This is not to dismiss Mary as irrelevant, but rather to show there are basic limitations to positing the Virgin Mother as the role-model for all women from henceforth. The imagery is inconsistent. Women are urged to remain chaste, yet, be submissive to their menfolk. Such a model immediately disadvantages women, and disregards the contribution of the other women who appear in the Scriptures as irrelevant. Indeed, this is what has happened. Mary has been singled out of the group of biblical women, and elevated to a point within Christian teaching where considerable license has been given to mere hagiographical details.

Even the most innocent of motivations behind this deliberate indifference cannot ignore the absolute success of this manoeuvre to the significance of the other women who followed Jesus Notwithstanding the contribution of Martha and Mary Magdalene, it is the Virgin Mary, who has remained the ideal for Christian women. Realistically, the most feasible possibility of presenting Mary as a role model would be to allow her the human sexuality of a more authentic 'mother'. But this, the Catholic Church refuses to do.

The Catholic Church has failed to broaden its narrow vision of woman's potential. A woman in the Catholic Church is still caught in a dichotomy of virgin or harlot, sinner or saint, the death-bringer or life-giver. In the official register of Christian martyrs which dates from the fourth century, women were classified as virgins or non-virgins. Similarly, in the breviary and Mass missals used in the Catholic Church, the official prayers for women saints were either in the 'Common of Virgins' or the 'Common for non-Virgins'. This classification was only modified to the 'Common of holy men and women' after the Second Vatican Council in the 1960's. A similar sexual connotation has never been used to differentiate between men saints.

Finally, the idealisation of woman as represented by the mother (madonna) child dyad can have no contextual meaning for the reality of contemporary women's lived experience. In the serene gaze of the mother in the Madonna images, where is the reality and the mundanity of women's lives? The model itself becomes a myth, created by those who have the power in a patriarchal dispensation to order, organise and create a reality which does not exist. The 'Madonna and Child' model has placed too exclusive a focus on the 'mother-child dyad, and isolated it from the

cultural, social and economic context. Where are the pictures of the father-child dyad?

This idealisation in imagery of the mother has devalued woman, and also man, as co-creators, as parents, as human soul mates with integrity. What do women have invested in the myth that they remain tied to it? When women can no longer stay tied to the myth, what is there to guide them? Women are left with an ever present residue of guilt and anxiety, when motherhood is so exclusively idealized. The power of images and myths in creating a non-existent reality is extraordinary. The effect of the myth has therefore been to extend and maintain a powerful form of social control.

2.1.2.1. The ethic of woman which developed from the influence of the imagery of the Virgin Mary and Eve

The dualism of patristic theology which separated the soul from the body, and male spirituality from female carnality, has conditioned the visual imagery of woman. Woman is caught between two axioms, that of the carnal sexuality in the disobedience and wantonness of Eve, and of the docile humility in the obedience and submissiveness of Mary. A double image emerges, which implies that women are basically evil unless their sexuality is controlled.

Seeking a spiritual role-model therefore presented Christian women with a problem. The early Christian tradition suggested three solutions for it. Either a woman could 'renounce' her sexuality, become a consecrated virgin and thus hope for salvation. Or, if she was not capable of this sacrifice, she should marry and be controlled by her husband. If, she rejected these possibilities she would fall back into what was regarded as 'natural' to woman, a life of 'whoredom'. This was the view of patristic Fathers such as Tertullian and Jerome, and there remain vestiges of this extreme condemnation of woman as a sexual object in our contemporary imagery. Thus, for woman in Christianity the highest moral option available was virginity. This option was never regarded as of optimum importance for men.

When Church Fathers regarded marriage as the control of the "filthy" carnal appetite, and described the procreation of children as "disgusting" (Ruether 1974:173), it was not surprising to find immense value heaped on ascetic virginity and on the renouncement of all carnal pleasure. Augustine taught that any such pleasure could only be forgiven in a married couple, if it was "totally involuntary,

unintentional and despised, their only conscious intent being procreation (Ruether 1974:165).

The elevation of the virginity of Mary as the ethical ideal for women was a natural consequence of this teaching. Virginity was the best way to sanctity, and many of the Fathers urged women to renounce or avoid marriage for this higher ideal. Jerome, for example, wrote long treatises counselling women to abhor marriage and sexuality, and admonishing widows not to enter again into the pollution (Ruether 1974:174).

In the Roman Catholic Church, this ideal of virginity has been preserved and sanctified in the vow of celibacy. This vow is still considered the highest model for women, and the requirement for men as priests. Thus, there persists today within the Catholic Church a negative connotation to sexual intercourse. Happily though, there have been positive church pronouncements on the beauty and sanctity of marriage too. However, the hallowed emphasis on the grace given to those who answer 'the call' [vocation] to choose 'the better part' of celibacy underlies the Catholic Church's latent resistance to sex.

If the Catholic Church continues to idealise the virgin-mother image, is the virgin, as the obedient handmaid the only 'suitable' role model offered to women in the church? A far more serious revision of the church's attitude towards women is needed to remove the last vestiges of patriarchal bias. The positive aspects of the scriptural accounts need to be reclaimed, the affirming qualities of creativity, initiative, dignity, intuition, gentleness, confidence. A wholistic, positive perspective of womanhood needs to be reconstituted.

2.2. Introducing Mary Magdalene

Mary Magdalene is first mentioned in the Gospel stories as one of the women who followed Jesus on his journeying through Galilee and Judea. She is singled out as having being healed or released from demoniac possession. Her name is usually mentioned first, which indicates a certain prominence for Mary Magdalene amongst the other women. Of greater import, she is the first person to see and speak with the risen Christ.

Although there are considerable textual references to her in the Gnostic and Apocryphal literature, no further mention is found in the canonical writings. However, a substantial tradition and cult about her has developed through the

centuries, with little historical certainty, and heavy with sentimental piety. Basic to the cult is the hypothetical notion that Mary Magdalene is "the woman who was a sinner" (Lk 7:37).

Thus, traditionally, Mary Magdalene is represented in art as a penitent sinner. The woman in Luke's Gospel text, who was erroneously identified as Mary Magdalene, has been remembered as a sinner despite Jesus' forgiveness and her conversion. Similarly, the church has manipulated Mary Magdalene's image when her past pre-conversion life is emphasised.

Mary Magdalene is often clearly identified in paintings as 'the woman with a sinful past', the prostitute. The imagery traps Mary Magdalene into 'her sinfulness'. She is not allowed to forget or to be freed of her past, despite her complete healing and conversion. This raises a serious question of heretical doctrine on Jesus' forgiveness if it is taught that Mary Magdalene has in fact never been forgiven. Approached from an ethical perspective the question arises whether this judgement is moral, and from a feminist perspective, whether it is just.

2.2.1. The composite figure of Mary Magdalene

The Mary Magdalene who has survived through the centuries of Christianity has emerged as a woman with the personae of both an Eve and a Virgin Mary. As Eve, she fits into the stereo-typed image of the 'femme fatale' who, through her female wiles, causes the fall of the upright man. This is the image of Mary Magdalene the prostitute, or seductress who is converted, which persisted through the legends and mystery plays into the contemporary musical show, Jesus Christ Superstar.

As an alternative persona, Mary Magdalene is transformed into a perfect model of the Virgin Mary, when after her conversion she becomes the chaste and dedicated companion to Jesus. In the Gnostic texts, which will be examined in detail in the following chapter, Mary Magdalene is singled out by Jesus as the 'pure spiritual one'. In the hagiography which followed the post-ascension period, Mary Magdalene becomes the ultimate virginal model, subduing all vestiges of her sexuality in penitential asceticism.

Caught between these two extreme images of the seductress and virginal saint, the visual theology that has been presented about Mary Magdalene has not communicated a positive image. In fact the moral judgement that has been passed on her through many visual representations denigrates her virtue.

Mary Magdalene has been traditionally depicted in one of two ways. She is either portrayed as a beautiful, voluptuous prostitute or as a distraught penitent wrapped in sackcloth or covered by her hair. Both interpretations are derogatory. If Mary Magdalene is to be honoured as a saint, why present her as a sinner? In effect, by equating her to the Virgin Mary persona, Mary Magdalene could appear a more likely candidate for a role model for Christian women.

A small statue, presently located in the Musee des Thermes et de l'Hotel de Cluny, Paris, depicts Mary Magdalene holding the dead body of Christ in her lap in the traditional *Pietà* attitude. This <*ILL 5*> small wooden sculpture by an anonymous fifteenth century artist is the only example I have found, in which Mary Magdalene is visually portrayed in a pose traditionally associated with the Virgin Mary. The reasonable assumption may be made that the woman, on whose lap the dead Christ reclines, is intended to be Mary Magdalene. The extravagantly elegant clothing and head-attire belies any resemblance to the traditionally, modestly dressed Virgin Mary. There is a serene tenderness in the downcast face of Mary Magdalene. Her right hand supports the dead Christ's head, but unfortunately her left hand has been destroyed. The artwork is an important testimony to a cherished tradition of the prominent position of Mary Magdalene in the early Christian tradition.

This raises another aspect of the possible combination of Mary Magdalene with the Virgin Mary. A question, posed by some exegetes, asks whether the Virgin Mary was present at Calvary, or whether Mary Magdalene and the other Galilean women were the only companions present. A probability that Mary Magdalene was the wife of Jesus has also been argued. The suggestion is that the title *Notre Dame*, 'Our Lady' conferred on many well known French cathedrals, would then also refer to Mary Magdalene (Baigent 1982:73).

In the comparison between these two images of women, the traditional imagery of Mary Magdalene presents a much broader emotional repertoire than the Virgin's. In this sense, Mary Magdalene is a more accessible role model for women than is the Virgin Mary. For the artists, however, Mary Magdalene was depicted in a flamboyant, uninhibited and sensual manner whether she is saint or sinner.

The art that adorned the interiors and exteriors of the Christian Churches down the centuries was intentionally didactic. It was directed towards the illiterate congregation, adding emphasis and clarification to the spoken sermons. Thus, the communicated visual message about Mary Magdalene is more serious and morally

reprehensible. Mary Magdalene, portrayed as a legendary cult figure has been visually demoralised as a sexual concept. In the sense that Eve was said to symbolise woman's natural propensity to sin, so Mary Magdalene was epitomised as the archetype of sinful woman.

In this dissertation, the church's treatment of Mary Magdalene is found to be an example of blatant Christian misogyny. Other women in the Scriptures have also been victims of this patriarchal bias. One tactical method used by preachers to discredit biblical women has been through selective interpretation. For example, in the biblical story of Martha and Mary, a biased emphasis is placed on Jesus's praise of Mary's docility (Lk 7:38-42). Thereby, Martha is contrasted unfavourably as the one who fails to understand the role required of her. Preachers have preferred the image of Martha in the kitchen, above the image of Martha whose powerful declaration of faith challenges Jesus to resurrect her brother Lazarus from the grave (Jn 11:27).

Similarly, Mary Magdalene has been epitomised as the woman with a sinful past. Christians have not been allowed to forget her sin, despite Paul's recommendation that our sinful past is forgotten when we are reborn into the new life of the spirit (Eph 4:22-24). The weakness of Peter, the chosen leader of the twelve, who betrayed his leadership by denying vehemently his commitment to Christ, has been forgiven. Yet Mary Magdalene whose whole career as a follower of Christ was irreproachable is left to languish in sin.

In its attempt to seek a balance between an Eve and a Virgin Mary persona, the Christian Church has weighted Mary Magdalene down into the Eve category.

2.2.2. A fascination with Mary Magdalene

Two groups of image-makers, artists and theologians, have historically been fascinated with the person of Mary Magdalene. These image-makers have been ultimately responsible for much of the visual and verbal imagery of the saint. In this imagery, and in various artistic media and form, there has been more concern with the depiction of 'a woman with a past', than with the portrayal of a specific scriptural character. Instead of focusing their search on the 'real identity' of Mary Magdalene, she has been used as an opportunity to explore the alleged exigencies of female immorality. Thus, this visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene has provided an unusual collusion of interests for celibate Catholic theologians and commissioned artists.

In a church which censures sexual pleasures it is reasonable to question the motivation and the tolerance of the erotic portrayal of Mary Magdalene. In the following section, several reasons are posited concerning the popular fascination which has surrounded the image of Mary Magdalene.

First, Mary Magdalene was a favourite character in the medieval Mystery plays. She had become the equivalent of a 'cult heroine' for sinners. The notion of Mary Magdalene's conversion from multiple demoniac possession could engage the rapt attention of all who felt their lives teetering dangerously close to the abyss of damnation. Thus, Mary Magdalene's story offered hope to even the most depraved of sinners. This was further elaborated by the legendary association of Mary Magalene with the words of Jesus, that "her many sins must have been forgiven her, or she would not have shown such great love" (Lk 7:47). Even though there is no exegetical justification to associate those words with Mary Magdalene, they still continue to form the basis for much of the devotion and popularity of her cult.

Second, Mary Magdalene was a character who appealed to ordinary Christians in her example of repentance. Out of remorse, Magdalene goes into the wilderness to lead a life of mortification. In this sense she vicariously enacts the drama of repentance, forgiveness and penance for ordinary Christians. The patriarchal teaching against the evils of sensuality and sex had encouraged and initiated a stream of men and women to renounce all worldly pleasures as evil. Some, in a surge of remorse, went out into the desert to fast and pray. The legendary account of Mary of Egypt is markedly similar to the Mary Magdalene story. After Mary of Egypt's conversion from a life of prostitution, she had also gone into the desert to lead a life of extreme austerity in remorse for her sinful past. The various incidents related in the legendary accounts of both women follow a similar pattern.

As a final reason, it could be argued that Mary Magdalene provided a subversive opportunity to introduce human sexuality into religious art. There is a certain paradoxical legitimacy in the sexuality of Mary Magdalene. While on the one hand, she is the target for scorn and degradation in a tradition which holds sexuality in contempt, on the other, she is the embodiment of human eroticism. In other words, one might tentatively suggest that for the ordinary Christian person, the image of Mary Magdalene as a sensual, sexual woman made allowances for both a rejection and an acknowledgement of the flesh.

2.2.3. Mary Magdalene becomes 'archetypal'

The Mary Magdalene fostered and cherished by the Christian Church has incorporated a whole range of personae. There are diverse opinions surrounding the identity of the several Marys in the Gospel accounts. However, a certain unanimity was achieved by Pope Gregory I, surnamed the Great, [pope from 590-604] who declared three of the Marys should be considered as the one Mary Magdalene (Mycoff 1985:6). These were the unidentified woman who had washed the feet of Jesus with her tears, the Mary who was named as sister to Martha and Lazarus, and the woman who was brought before Jesus to be stoned for adultery. This concept of multiple personae, which became the traditional orthodox teaching on Mary Magdalene, remained unquestioned until the sixteenth century.

The importance the church attached to this image of Mary Magdalene became evident when Jacques Lefevre d'Etaples dared to suggest that Mary Magdalene had been wrongly defined as a prostitute. Lefevre's De Maria Magdalena et triduo Christi Disceptatio, published in 1517, was declared dangerous teaching by the theology faculty of the University of Paris in 1521. Why did the Catholic Church react so strongly to a Lefevre's criticism of the composite image and suggestion that Mary Magdalene might not have been a prostitute? Was it so important to maintain a symbol of the sinfulness of womanhood? The church's "extreme reluctance to relinquish a tradition of such devotional vigor, even when demonstrated as inaccurate" (Miles 1985:177,n.64), calls into question the motivation contained within Gregory the Great's dictum. Only the personal intervention of the Emperor Francis I saved Lefevre from condemnation as a heretic (Miles 1985:177,n.64).

The patriarchal Roman Catholic Church has permitted, even encouraged, the negative depiction of Mary Magdalene. The image of Mary Magdalene continues to be used to represent symbolically the natural depravity of woman. How far this negative imagery of Mary Magdalene reflects the intransigence of the Roman Catholic Church's attitude against women ministers will be addressed in the next chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene as the two women most commonly imaged in Christian art. The exploration has shown how these two women have been used by the Catholic Church to prescribe two conceptions of womanhood, namely virgins or harlots.

Both these images reflect the lingering mistrust by the patriarchal church of the 'daughters of Eve'. In the Christian Church's condemnation of Eve, women's sexuality was judged to be sinful and evil. Therefore, in their presentation of the Virgin Mary as the new, sinless, ideal for Christian women, great emphasis has been placed on Mary as a symbol of chastity and purity. However her image has been so idealised as a "virgin who conceives without sin" that the Virgin Mother is in effect an impossible role model for ordinary Christian women.

A matter of more serious concern is the ethic which has developed out of this imagery of Eve and of the Virgin Mary, namely, that the ideal woman is a submissive, docile handmaid. Significantly, in the book of Genesis, this 'ideal' is the 'punishment' meted out to Eve for her wanton disobedience. For, Eve is warned, "your yearning will be for your husband but he will lord it over you" (Gn 3:16), for, from henceforth, she, and all women are condemned to servitude under their husbands. Alternatively, Mary's value lies in her submission, "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let what you have said be done to me" (Lk 1:38). As Mary later proclaims, "from this day forward all generations will call me blessed" (Lk 1:48).

In contrast, Mary Magdalene is presented as the penitent Eve. With Mary Magdalene, the church has focussed attention on her primarily as "a woman out of whom seven demons have been cast" (Lk 8:2). From this biblical text, Mary Magdalene has been illogically presented as a penitent prostitute. The implication must be seen in the light of the patriarchal ethic of women's value residing solely in their docility. Any diversion to this role is judged to be sexually motivated. Thus, Mary Magdalene's image has been manipulated as a foil to the desired ideal of the spotless virgin. Mary Magdalene's image demonstrates the validity of the Catholic Church's exhortation that women need to be controlled, that women are fundamentally weak and prone to evil. And it is upon the basis of this unsubstantiated, unethical judgement that a condemnation on other women has been passed.

In the final analysis, an image of woman that has been created and defined by a patriarchal authority such as the Roman Catholic Church can only be viewed with grave suspicion. For it is this imagery which has served to influence Catholic women's self-perception. How far the Catholic Church has manipulated Mary Magdalene's image away from its historical and biblical authenticity will be addressed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE :
AN EXAMINATION OF THE CULT OF MARY MAGDALENE BASED ON
HISTORICAL AND HAGIOGRAPHICAL LEGENDARY TRADITIONS

Introduction

In this chapter, I will examine the written documents which give testimony to the biblical figure of Mary Magdalene. It is on the basis of these written accounts that a cult of devotion began and has been maintained through the centuries.

I have located three sources from which the cult of Mary Magdalene has emerged and been nourished. Although there is a certain amount of intermingling and cross-fertilisation of the stories, these three sources should be identified individually, to assess the significance of their later historical impact. First, the story of Mary Magdalene begins in the canonical Gospels of the New Testament. These writings have been historically accepted as a valid testimony to the start of the 'Jesus Movement'. Therefore, Mary Magdalene's important position in the early Christian movement is historically authenticated. Second, in the Gnostic writings, which date from the same historical period as the New Testament. Mary Magdalene's significant role is again historically affirmed. Finally, as a manifestation of Mary Magdalene's popular historical appeal, a rich heritage of legends and hagiography developed during the Middle Ages. These popular accounts of her life served to further what I have called the 'cult of Mary Magdalene', which in turn inspired and influenced the visual portrayal of the saint.

3. Mary Magdalene

The name of Mary Magdalene has become synonymous with the term, 'the fallen woman' and 'the penitent'. The word 'magdalene' in the Concise Oxford Dictionary (1982 7th ed, 1988 repr) is defined as a repentant prostitute. There is a Catholic Religious Order of women so named whose particular concern is the care of repentant prostitutes. In 1324, the first 'Magdalene House' was founded to care for women who had "fallen into sinful ways". There is, however, no scriptural text which explicitly refers to Mary Magdalene as a prostitute, and no theological justification for this definition of the historical woman. Historical judgments of the person of Mary Magdalene have been influenced by the Christian Church's acceptance of the hagiographical accounts of her life. The hagiography not only includes unsubstantiated myths and legends, but it is based on a combination of certain scriptural texts with extreme hermeneutic license.

The basic thrust of this chapter focuses on the historical tradition of the biblical woman called Mary Magdalene and the hagiographical, legendary tradition which has developed around the biblical Mary Magdalene. The biblical exegesis offered in this analysis is an attempt to examine what she stands for, how she is portrayed in Christian doctrine, and the extent to which this portrait corresponds with the Gospel accounts.

3.1. Historical tradition

The historical records have come from two main sources, the orthodox Christian Scriptures and the Gnostic or so-called heretical scriptures. A basic distinction between the two sources is the tendency within the orthodox group to minimise Mary Magdalene's role. Whereas, the various Gnostic sects acclaim Mary Magdalene as the one uniquely favoured by God's revelations.

The Roman Catholic Church has tended to rely solely on an exclusive set of documents, the canonical texts of the Bible, to verify its religious history. I have considered it is necessary to research all the available documents of the particular period before reaching conclusions on the character and personality of Mary Magdalene.

3.1.1. Canonical texts

As Christianity was initially regarded as a revival movement within Judaism, the first disciples of Jesus Christ adhered to the scriptural writings already in existence. These included the Hebrew Scriptures which had been translated into Greek through the initiative of Ptolemy Philadelphus [c.285-246 B.C.], to augment his library in Alexandria (Cross 1978:1260). It was this translation known as the Septuagint, after the seventy-two translators involved, that the early Christian Church adopted, and until the fourth century, regarded as the standard version of the Old Testament. The four Gospels and thirteen Letters of Paul were canonically accepted as the first official Christian writings between 170-220 A.D. By 382 A.D., Pope Damasus had promulgated a complete list of the books from both the Old and New Testament to be the official Canon of Scripture (Cross 1978:232).

3.1.1.1. Orthodox scriptural figure

Mary Magdalene is mentioned specifically fourteen times in the Scriptures: three times by Matthew, four times by Mark, twice by Luke, and five times by John. Apart from the passion and resurrection narratives, the only other reference to her occurs in Luke (8:2).

Mary Magdalene appears, therefore, to be a significant figure in the New Testament stories. She is named as one of the disciples who accompanied Jesus through the towns and villages in Luke (8:2), and from whom seven demons had been cast. According to most biblical exegetes, this demoniac possession refers to either a mental or emotional malady with some form of physical expression, the number seven emphasising only the severity of the illness. Mary Magdalene is mentioned by Matthew (27:56), Mark (15:40), and John (19:25) as one of the women standing by the cross. Further, all the evangelists note that Mary Magdalene went to the tomb, as soon as the Sabbath was over to anoint the body of Jesus (Mt.28:1; Mk 16:1; Lk 24:1-2,10; Jn 20:1). She is also acknowledged to be the first disciple to see and speak with the risen Jesus, and she is sent by Jesus to tell the other disciples of his resurrection (Mt.28:10; Mk 16:9-10; Lk 24:10; Jn 20:11-18).

[a] Biblical exegesis of Mary Magdalene in the New Testament

> With him went the twelve, as well as certain women who had been cured of evil spirits and ailments: Mary, surnamed the Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, Joanna the wife of Herod's steward, Chuza, Susanna, and several others who provided for them out of their means.
> (Lk 8:2-3).

To characterise Mary Magdalene as a prostitute because she was possessed by seven demons is to suggest that mental disorder is sexual depravity. There is no textual evidence in the Scriptures which could justify this characterization. The phenomenon of demoniacs, or people possessed by evil spirits, occurs frequently in the Gospel miracle stories. The victims are usually distinguished from the ordinary sick by their symptoms which suggest serious psychological disturbances. In the Gospel of Mark, for example, we read:

> In their synagogue just then there was a man possessed by an unclean spirit and it shouted, 'What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are: the holy One of God'. But Jesus said sharply, 'Be quiet! Come out of him!' And the unclean spirit

threw the person into convulsions and with a loud cry went out of him. The people were so astonished that they started asking each other what it all meant.

(Mk 1:23-27).

As in other instances, when the demoniacs are struck dumb (Mt 9:32) or deaf and dumb (Mk 9:25), Jesus usually effects a cure or release by ordering the evil/unclean spirit or spirits to leave the person. There is no record of what took place when Mary Magdalene was cured or released from the hold of her particular demons. Even the number seven holds no clues. In one of the accounts of demoniac possession, when Jesus asks the name of the spirit, it replies, "My name is legion, for there are many of us" (Mk 5:9). However, the number seven was considered by the Hebrews and other Semites to have sacred connotations. We read, for example, that:

On the seventh day God ended the work which he had made: and he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had done. And he blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.

(Gn 2:2).

Furthermore, there were seven locks in Samson's hair (Jdg 16:13), seven pillars in the house of wisdom (Pr 9:1); seven lambs were required as testimony (Gn 21:28), seven victims to atone for a broken oath (2 Sm 21:6), and sevenfold was the vengeance against Cain (Gn 4:24). The number in scriptural terms could thus be understood to convey a comprehensive capacity. When Peter asks Jesus if seven was the limit to the number of times one had to forgive people. Jesus replies, "not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times" (Mt 18:22). When it is written that Mary Magdalene was possessed by seven demons, the simplest indication is that she had all the demons possible!

It is curious there is no record of Mary Magdalene's healing. The impact of conversion or release from 'unlimited' demoniac possession must have been impressive for the bystanders. Certainly, very little has been made of this healing in comparison with the other multiple demoniac incidents. Mary Magdalene's possession could have been likened to the incident when the spirits were called 'legion' and when they begged to be allowed to enter the herd of swine (Mk 5:1-20). Or at least it might have been a situation where there was some manifest display of resistance from the evil spirits to their expulsion, as with the young boy who was thrown to the ground by the spirits (Mk 9:14-29). Mary Magdalene has been erroneously linked to several other incidents in the Gospels. It is perhaps remarkable that it has never been suggested that she was one of the unnamed demoniacs whose healings have been recounted in so much detail.

If Luke had intended the story of the unnamed "woman who was a sinner" (7:37) to be identified as Mary Magdalene, whom he introduces a few lines further on (8:2-3), surely he would have made the connection more obvious? There is nothing about demoniac possession in the supper party incident with the unnamed woman, and no grounds to assume any sinful link in an exorcism of demons. Mary Magdalene is simply presented to Luke's readers as a woman who had been liberated from a particularly powerful possession.

The town of Magdala, from which Mary received her name, is possibly the modern Mejdel (Brown 1969: Gospel of Luke:138), situated on the western coast of the Sea of Galilee, halfway between Tiberias and Capernaum, but which is never again mentioned in the Scriptures. Mary Magdalene, as Mary of Magdala, is identified as one of the group of Galilean women followers who ministered to Jesus out of their means.

It is difficult to connect this liberated Galilean woman who forms part of the entourage of the wandering preacher with the quiet 'home-body' Judean, Mary of Bethany. Yet, traditionally, Christians, and Catholics in particular, have identified the two women as the same person. Victor Saxer, who has conducted an extensive study on the cult of Mary Magdalene, mentions that as early as the fourth century, Ambrose [c.339-97] and John Cassian [c.360-435] used Mary Magdalene as an example of the contemplative life and Martha, her sister, as one of the active life (Mycoff 1985:153).

Many people today still associate Mary Magdalene with the story about a woman who anoints Jesus at a supper party. Although all four evangelists relate such a story, there is considerable variation in the accounts to suggest that they refer to more than one incident. In Luke (7:36-50), the incident takes place up north in Galilee, at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Mark (14:3-9), Matthew (26:6-13) and John (12:1-8) all locate it in Judea at Bethany in the last few days before Jesus' final Passover. Luke writes about an unnamed woman who was recognised by everyone at the supper as a sinner, but in Mark and Matthew there is no inference of sin. She is simply an unnamed woman.

It is only John who names the woman, "Mary" and links her to Martha and Lazarus (Jn 12:3). In three of these versions Jesus calls his host, "Simon". Matthew and Mark further identify Simon as "the leper" (Mt 26:6, Mk 14:3). Luke calls Simon a "Pharisee" (7:36). John locates the supper in a house in Bethany where Martha serves and Lazarus, her brother, reclines at the table. In Luke and John, the

woman anoints Jesus's feet and in Mark and Matthew, she anoints Jesus' head. The disciples complain about the waste of expensive oil in Matthew, Mark and John, but Jesus responds in defence of the woman that the anointing is for his burial. on the other hand, in the Lukan anointing, the incident indicates a touching display of gratitude and love rather than a prophetic sign. Since any story repeated more than once changes in the transmission, it could still be probable that all four Gospels refer to only one incident, but in none of the versions is there any evidence that the woman was Mary Magdalene.

The Gospels next mention Mary Magdalene outside the walls of Jerusalem at the place called Golgotha. There, she is among the group of women followers who stay and watch until Jesus dies on the Cross.(Mt 27:56; Mk 15:40; Jn 19:25). Mary Magdalene and the women follow the burial of Jesus' body and carefully observe the position of the grave:

> And many women were there, watching from a distance, the same women who had followed Jesus from Galilee and looked after him. Among them were Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of Zebedee's sons....He [Joseph of Arimathaea] then rolled a large stone across the entrance of the tomb and went away. Now Mary of Magdala and the other Mary were there sitting opposite the sepulchre.
> (Mt 27:55-56, 60-61. see also Mk 15:47).

As soon as the Passover restrictions are over, Mary Magdalene and the women carry spices to the tomb to anoint and embalm his body properly (Jn 20:1; Mt 28:1; Mk 16:1):

> When the Sabbath was over, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, brought spices with which to go and anoint him. And very early in the morning on the first day of the week they went to the tomb, just as the sun was rising.
> (Mk 16:1-2).

Finally, it is Mary Magdalene and the women who are told by angels at the empty tomb that the Christ has risen from the dead (Mt 28:9; Mk 16:9; Lk 24:10), and Jesus speaks and reveals himself to Mary Magdalene (Jn 20:11-18):

> Having risen in the morning on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary of Magdala from whom he had cast seven devils. She then went to those who had been his companions, and who were mourning and in tears, and told them. But they did not believe her when they heard her say that he was alive and that she had seen him.
> (Mk 16:9-10).

The important point is that the women immediately believe. They accept that Jesus

has risen just as he had said. On the other hand, the men refuse to believe the women. They visit the empty tomb, but even that does not convince them. Only John declares that he believes (Jn 20:9). Later, the disciples on the road to Emmaus are depressed that Jesus, the "prophet mighty in deed and word before God and the people in whom they had hoped as the one to redeem Israel" had instead been crucified by the authorities (Lk 24:21). It is only when Thomas can actually "test" Jesus by touching his wounds (Jn 20:27) and by watching him eat (Lk 24:41) that he can accept that it must be true.

In contrast, the women had followed Jesus to the foot of the cross. They were not frightened to be recognised as friends and followers of the condemned man. They were determined that the body of Jesus should be buried with all the honour and dignity customary. The hasty burial of Jesus's body by Joseph of Arimathaea is only in accord with the prescriptions in Deuteronomy:

> And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is accursed by God: you shall not defile your land which the Lord your God gives you for an inheritance.
>
> (Dt 21:22-23).

The accounts of the burial differ. In the synoptic Gospels, only spices are used, the anointing had taken place before Jesus's death by the woman whom John names Mary. Furthermore, John presents a more elaborate anointing with spices by Nicodemus and Joseph before Jesus's body is wrapped in the shroud. John's inclusion of these two men could be interpreted as an attempt to make up for the desertion by the "twelve" (Vawter 1968:462).

The women had watched the hasty burial and had gone home to prepare the spices for a proper embalming. If we accept John's account that Jesus's body had been anointed in the proper way, there would have been no reason to return and to re-bury the corpse. Why then did Mary Magdalene come back to the tomb on that third morning? It is John, again, who gives us the most telling account of the resurrection. He says that Mary Magdalene returned to the tomb early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark. John does not mention her carrying any spices. She just wanted to be physically near to Jesus again. John implies that she came because it was the third day, and she remembered what Jesus had promised. We must not forget that the Chief Priests and Pharisees remembered those words also and took the precaution of requesting Pilate to place a guard at the tomb:

Your Excellency, we recall that this impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I shall rise again'. Therefore give the order to have the sepulchre kept secure until the third day, for fear his disciples come to steal him away, and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead'. This last piece of fraud would be worse than what went before.

(Mt 27:63-64).

It is hard to believe that the enemies of Jesus would remember those words and that his own followers did not. Thus, while the disciples might indeed have been wondering if anything had happened, it was the women who not only ventured out, but actually were there at first light. Were the women more prepared for the possibility? Was it Mary Magdalene's faith or her grief that brought her to the tomb? When one has to rely on differing accounts to put together a story, there are certain facts that correlate.

Several women went that morning to the sepulchre. They saw it was empty. They said they saw angels who told them Jesus had risen, and they all ran off, except Mary Magdalene. The different accounts tell how the women were at first frightened by the discovery (Mt 28:5; Mk 16:6; Lk 24:5). Yet, the "angels" reassure them, and the women are filled with "great joy" (Mt 28:8). Mary Magdalene remained there, weeping, after her initial astonishment and joy. If he had risen, where was he? If this was what they had all been promised, surely he would be there for them to see. Was she perhaps in this frame of mind when she became aware of someone standing there? Jesus has only to say her name, and she knows. Mary Magdalene is then commissioned with the "Good News" - "Go, tell my brothers that I am risen!"(Jn 20:17).

The reaction of the "brothers" to the news is a deliberate disregard of the women's contribution and relevance as apostles. The incident is played down, found to be inconsequential, and dismissed as idle women-talk:

The other women with them also told the apostles, but this story of theirs seemed pure nonsense, and they did not believe them.

(Lk 24:11).

On the other hand, the Chief Priests and Pharisees believe the story immediately, and endeavour to prevent the news from spreading. Comparing the reaction of the Chief Priests and the Pharisees to that of the disciples, one becomes more conscious of how unprepared the disciples were for the culmination of Jesus's work, the resurrection. Later, it takes considerable effort on the part of Jesus himself, before the disciples are ready to believe:

> After this he [Jesus] showed himself under another form to two of them as they were on their way into the country. These went back and told the others who did not believe them either. Lastly, he showed himself to the eleven themselves while they were at table. He reproached them for their incredulity and obstinacy because they had refused to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.
>
> (Mk 16:12-15).

John attempts to excuse the disciples' lack of faith in the parenthetical verse, "as yet they did not understand the Scripture that he must rise from the dead" (Jn.20:9).

From a theological perspective what role does Mary Magdalene play in the scripture? She is explicitly mentioned as an important key witness in the resurrection account. Thus, one assumes that she is regarded as a prominent companion of Jesus. In the Roman Catholic Church doctrine, however, Mary Magdalene has been cast disparagingly as the converted prostitute. Yet the scriptural evidence presents Mary Magdalene as a faithful, ardent and fearless follower of Jesus. After her healing she is named as one of the women who followed Jesus throughout Galilee and Judea. Courageously she stays on the execution hill to witness the crucifixion. Afterwards, she forms part of the burial group, and later, returns, still unafraid, to the tomb with spices to anoint the body of Jesus. All this time, the men remain hidden, fearful and unwilling to be recognised as disciples of Jesus.

Mary Magdalene's loyal commitment is 'rewarded' by the first appearance of Jesus, and she is sent by Jesus to announce his resurrection to the hiding disciples.

At this point her stature is negated. The disciples question her credibility; they edit her commission to read as "one of the women had come with idle gossip" (Mk 16:11; Lk 24:22-24). Finally, when the men disciples are convinced that Jesus has risen from the dead, they fail to recognise the importance of her role as witness.

Both Luke and John record that Peter, at first, does not understand the import of the empty tomb (Lk 24:12; Jn 20:10). John, who had stood near the women on Calvary, is the only one of the "twelve" who claims to have believed when he saw the empty tomb with his own eyes (Jn 20:9). Peter is only convinced after he receives a special personal revelation (Lk 24:34). Yet, it is Peter whom the early Christian community acclaim as their leader. The question should be asked why Mary Magdalene was not chosen?

Only Matthew records the incident when Peter is praised by Jesus (Mt 16:13-19). Yet this passage has been magnified into a proclamation of male election, which the Catholic Church has espoused in its affirmation of patriarchy. Paul, who had declared that if Christ had died and not risen again, our faith would have been in vain, never once mentions Mary Magdalene in his writings. In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul cites Cephas [Peter] as the first to whom risen Jesus appeared (1 Cor 15:5). Paul's failure to acknowledge the women disciples' witness betrays a disturbing attitude of fickle indifference to the manifest faithful dedication of the women disciples. Can it really be possible that the "tradition" which Paul received had already expunged Mary Magdalene from memory?

Why was emphasis placed on the men's testimony to the validity of the Resurrection? It is remarkable that the substance of Mary Magdalene's contribution was not even recognised by the Jerusalem Church. When, after the resurrection, the Christian community decide to elect a replacement for Judas. Peter announces that the criterion of a true disciple is:

> someone who has been with us the whole time that the Lord Jesus was travelling with us....and can act with us as a witness to his resurrection.
> (Acts 1:22).

Mary Magdalene met these criteria. As key witness to the resurrection, she was the most suitable for such a position. Yet, the choice fell on a hitherto unmentioned man who is not mentioned again in the Scriptures. One may surmise that Mary Magdalene was not chosen because she was a woman. With that post-ascension election, the men disciples directly manifested a choice for a patriarchal church. For even though the composition of followers who had accompanied Jesus throughout his ministry included women and men, not one woman was chosen.

Mary Magdalene is recognisably a prominent figure amongst Jesus' group of followers, and the Gospels bear witness to other Galilean women who also made significant contributions during Jesus' ministry. Yet, in the Acts of the Apostles, which mentions the twelve men disciples, there is no mention of any of the Galilean women. In the first official post-ascension gathering of the Jesus' followers (Lk 2:44), the positions of leadership are placed securely in the hands of the men. Women were excluded from the ministerial offices. The Catholic Church has consistently held to this 'tradition' in its refusal to acknowledge or consider the possibility of women participating in any position of authority.

3.1.2. Non-canonical, Apocryphal, Gnostic texts

The main focus of this dissertation is on the biblical person, Mary Magdalene. In order to arrive at a well-rounded argument, it is important to look at all the scriptural writings on Mary Magdalene dating from the early centuries. It is particularly relevant to look at those texts which have hitherto been condemned as heretical within the Catholic Church. This study questions the ethical norms that have been applied in the Christian teaching on Mary Magdalene. It questions the reasons and motives behind the church's condemnation of other scriptural books from the first few centuries of Christian history. For, Mary Magdalene is favourably mentioned in some of these non-canonical texts.

These books came to be known as the 'Apochrypha', meaning "hidden writings" (Concise Oxford Dictionary:43). As the name implies, the texts were regarded as sacred and secret, intended only for the use of a select group of believers. The Apocryphal writings are useful to this study because they provide a popular historical background to the early Christian community. The texts describe some of the hopes and fears of the "unlearned Christians" of that period (Malvern 1969:54). The popular influence of the texts apparently alarmed the early Church Fathers who condemned the writings as heretical Gnostic falsehoods (Malvern 1969:54).

The Gnostic Scriptures make up a far larger collection of books than the official New Testament. They include many Gospels, Acts of the apostles, Letters and various Apocalypses. All the texts of the Hebrew or Christian Canon were edited by men, whereas several of the Gnostic texts were co-edited by women and men. Thus, they reveal a joint discipleship of both women and men which was not found in the official canon.

The existence of the Gnostic texts had been verified by the condemnatory passages in the writings of Church Fathers, such as Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria [150-215], Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus [170-236] and Origen,(Hennecke 1963:34-5,60; 1964:323; Cross 1978:573; Walker 1983:23-25), although the manuscripts themselves had apparently been lost or destroyed.

However, in 1769, a Coptic manuscript, which claimed to record conversations between Jesus and his male and female disciples, was discovered near Luxor in Egypt. This began a cycle of further discoveries of fragments of Apocryphal and Gnostic texts. Among them the Pistis Sophia, the Gospel of Philip, the Gospel of

Thomas, and, in 1896, an ancient manuscript of the Gospel of Mary was found in Cairo (Walker 1983:26).

Probably the most amazing discovery came in 1945, in a cave near Nag Hammadi, when an Egyptian herdsman found a clay jar stuffed with old papyrus codices. Although it was feared that many of the texts had been burned as fuel by the herdsman's family, the remaining material salvaged from Nag Hammadi consisted of fragments of fifty-three texts. It is suggested that the documents might have belonged to an ancient Christian monastery in the area called Chenoboskion. (Information collated from Hennecke 1963; 1964; Robertson 1977:1-25; Cross 1978:573-574; Pagels 1981:xi-xxxiii; Walker 1983:26-27).

The texts, which will be examined in this chapter, include the Nag Hammadi Library (NHL) as well as the various writings which date from the first few centuries and mention Mary Magdalene. These writings have been considered important because they throw light on the period of early Christianity. They reveal additional background information which had been disregarded and lost, due to the church's emphatic insistence that only certain writings could be deemed divinely inspired and thus credible.

It is difficult to dismiss a sense of bias in the Catholic Church's toleration of certain sections in what was officially deemed heretical writing. These are the Gnostic texts which dealt with the infancy and family life of Jesus, for example the Protevangelium of James. James' text is in praise and honour of Mary, as the original title of the work, "Birth of Mary. Revelation of James" indicated. This text proved to be an important influence in the development of the Marian devotion (Hennecke 1963:371,374).

Some of the Gnostic fragments are said to date back to the first century. Is it not possible that these writings also give us useful information of the teachings of Jesus? Surely the writers of these texts relied on the same traditions as the canonical writers.

3.1.3. The significance of the findings

Today there are various schools of thought regarding the authenticity of the different texts. The official Roman Catholic viewpoint has been to uphold the canonical texts as the only valid and divinely inspired documents. The final decree, *De Canonicis Scripturis*, which named the forty-five Old Testament and

twenty seven New Testament books as the Canon of scripture, was promulgated, under threat of anathema, at the Council of Trent in 1546 (Fitzmyer 1968:517). Thus, the discovery of the Apocryphal and Gnostic texts has been considered by the Catholic Church only as evidence of the existence of heretical sects at the time.

In view of the extent of controversy among some of early patriarchs and bishops that accompanied the selection of texts to be defined as divinely inspired, the resultant Canon made up fewer books (Cross 1978:70). The Council of Trent in 1546 decreed that only the books of the Vulgate were to be recognised as Scripture (Cross 1978:70), and the Protestant reformers limited their list to the original Hebrew Canon. The twenty-seven books of the New Testament Canon do not tell a full story of the life and teaching of Jesus. As John verifies in his comment, at the end of his Gospel, that many things had not been written (Jn 21:25).

When one considers the brevity of the information in the New Testament in comparison to the mass of fragments of different manuscripts which have been discovered to date, it is unfortunate that the texts have been lost to scholarship for so many years. The neglect and spurious condemnation of any divergent viewpoint greatly diminished the possible benefits of the teaching in the Apocryphal texts. The manuscripts and documents do offer some positive confirmation of women participating in the ministerial life of the early Christian Church. In the light of the Catholic Church's obdurate refusal to acknowledge or accept any evidence of this role, the rejection of these texts has proved conveniently useful to the patriarchal hierarchy. One other possible reason for the unpopularity of the Apochrypha was its encouragement of female social independence. Valerie Abrahamsen, in referring to "The Acts of Paul, suggests that like some of the other Apocryphal Acts....it is significant for its encouragement of female asceticism....and hostility toward men" (1987:19).

The Gospels mention that, on occasion, Jesus spoke secretly to his disciples (Mk 4:11, 34). The idea that some of these secret teachings might be misinterpreted or misused is a plausible reason to keep them privy to a chosen few. One suggestion is that some of the findings which have been analysed, indicate there was material available which could have undermined the patriarchal emphasis inherent in the orthodox canon. In particular a closer look at the scriptural material on Mary Magdalene is in order.

An examination will now be made of the two different scriptural testaments of Mary

Magdalene's role in salvation history. The consideration of whether her position should be interpreted as a minor role, as suggested by the Christian theologians, will be compared to the doctrine taught by the Gnostic tradition in which Mary Magdalene plays a prominent role in salvation history.

3.1.3.1. The orthodox teaching: Mary Magdalene as an ordinary woman, plays a minor role in salvation history

There is a wide range of opinions among the Church Fathers on the importance or significance of the biblical Mary Magdalene. Hippolytus of Rome [c.170-236], considered the most important third century theologian of the Roman Church (Cross 1978:652), saw Mary Magdalene as the new Eve reinstated through her encounter with Christ, the tree of life, in the garden. Hippolytus also gives Mary Magdalene the status of 'evangelist', clearly emphasising the significance of the resurrection account to women in the early orthodox Christian Church:

> Christ himself sent [Mary Magdalene], so that even women become the apostles of Christ and the deficiency of the first Eve's disobedience was made evident by this justifying obedience. O wondrous adviser, Eve becomes an apostle! Already recognizing the cunning of the serpent, henceforth the tree of knowledge did not seduce her, but having accepted the tree of promise, she partook of being judged worthy to be a part of Christ....Now Eve is a helpmate through the Gospel! Therefore too the women proclaimed the Gospel....
>
> [The differences in the Armenian translation are as follows:]
> Therefore women too proclaimed the Gospel to the disciples. Therefore, however, they believed them mistaken....What kind of a new thing is it for you, O women, to tell of the resurrection? But that they might not be mistaken again, but speaking in truth, Christ appeared to them and said: Peace be with you. Wherewith he showed it as true: As I appeared to the women, sending them to you, I have desired to send them as apostles.
>
> Hippolytus, in <u>Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte</u>, 1,1,pp.354f.; Berlin,1897.
>
> (Swidler 1979:210).

Following the Hippolytus interpretation, Rabanus Maurus [c.776 or 784-856], Abbot of Fulda and Archbishop of Mainz, wrote <u>A Life of Mary Magdalene</u> and in it he frequently refers to her as an "apostle" (Swidler 1979:209). Rabanus and another Latin Father, Christianus Druthmarus, are quoted by David Mycoff, in his commentary and explanatory notes on the text of Caxton's <u>Golden Legend</u>, as defenders of Mary Magdalene's status as evangelist (1985:165). However, the penchant for allegorical interpretation of the scriptural text, which the early Church

Fathers so revelled in, often times endorsed the misogynistic culture of the times. As Mycoff writes:

> Whatever kind of interpretation the latins put on Mary Magdalene's conduct - ecclesiological, typological or moral, they feel obliged to justify Christ's choice of her as the first witness of the Resurrection. One of the most complete listing of reasons is that of Druthmarus in <u>Expositio in Matthaeum Evangelistem</u> (PL 106:1499) Christ chose Mary and her companions for the following reasons: (1) Even though they were fragile women they stayed at Christ's side during his trial and execution while the male disciples, who were supposedly stronger, fled. Therefore it is appropriate that the women be the messengers to the men. (2) Since Peter was made to deny Christ through a woman's accusation and since by that woman he became estranged from the other disciples, it was fitting that he be reconciled to Christ and to his fellows through a woman. (3) By a woman death was announced to man, so by a woman life should be proclaimed to man (this is the Eve-Magdalene comparison discussed above) (4) The care the women took in first coming to the tomb and their obedience to the command to announce the Resurrection entitled them to receive Christ's first greeting 'Avete' which revoked the curse of Eve.
>
> (Mycoff 1985:168-9).

On the other hand, John Chrysostom [c.347-407] attempted to denigrate Mary Magdalene, as a typical feeble-minded woman because she did not immediately recognise Christ:

> Commenting on the Magdalen's weeping in Homily 86 (II,446-449), Chrysostom says that women are 'by nature very easily discouraged and she did not understand the doctrine of the Resurrection as the others did'. Christ appears to her in disguise because 'it was not desirable to lead so lowly a person as this woman suddenly to lofty contemplation'. Christ shows great tenderness for her, but her mind is not fixed on sublime things, so he must check her enthusiastic response to his mere corporal presence with the '<u>noli me tangere</u>' [do not touch me] until she understands more fully.
>
> (Mycoff 1985:165).

Chrysostom fails to move beyond his narrow conception of womanhood. The stoical stance of the women on Calvary, their attendance at the tomb and subsequent privileged encounter with the risen Christ, still do not convince him of their courage. Thus, he can give only a patronising acknowledgment to the unique commissioning of Mary Magdalene by Christ. This attitude that women are "by nature" weak, unstable and "lowly" indicates their unsuitability to apostleship and leadership.

It was probably the Alexandrian biblical exegete and theologian, Origen [c.185-254] who, albeit unwittingly, initiated the eroticising of Mary Magdalene. In his commentary on the <u>Song of Songs</u>, he linked the Bride searching for her lover with

Mary Magdalene. Mary Magdalene is the distraught lover, weeping in the garden over the death of Jesus, who is seen as her Bridegroom (Malvern 1969:94). Malvern comments, that Origen has been remembered more for the erotic imagery in this commentary, than for any other of his writings. For such is the abiding human interest in sensuality, despite the vigorous Christian warnings against the temptations of the flesh.

The Christian patriarch's attitude towards Mary Magdalene's role in salvation history, that has emerged from these interpretations is undoubtedly confused and unfinished. Mary Magdalene is commended by one theologian only to be disparaged by another. There is nothing, however, in their orthodox doctrinal interpretation that reaches the ultimate praise bestowed on Mary Magdalene by the Gnostic writers. For this reason, I have relied heavily on quoted passages from the Gnostic texts in the next section. These texts convey the quality of the Gnostic appreciation of Mary Magdalene's spiritual authority, as she is recognised by Christ as a knower of the truth.

3.1.3.2. The Gnostic teaching: Mary Magdalene has prominent role in salvation history

Mary Magdalene features as a prominent figure in the Gnostic and Apocryphal writings, and is identified variously as Mary, Miriam, Mariham, Mariamme and Mary Magdalene. In this, I have followed the verifications of my sources. There is also a wide range of opinions about her position within the community, from evangelist to consort of Jesus. She is even likened to the divine Sophia. She is credited with unique special revelations from Jesus and surpasses all the apostles in knowledge and wisdom. In contrast to the sensual innuendoes implicit in the patriarchal writings, her relationship with Jesus in the Gnostic texts is always elevated and spiritual.

In one of the documents from a so-called heretical Gnostic Christian group, the Manichaens, Mary Magdalene is sent by Jesus as an evangelist to the scared "wandering orphans", meaning the eleven male apostles whom, Jesus surmises, might have lost their wits:

> Mariam, Mariam, know me: do not touch me. Stem the tears of thy eyes
> and know me that I am thy master. Only touch me not, for I have not yet
> seen the face of my Father....Cast this sadness away from thee and do this
> service (*leitourgia*): be a messenger (*angelos*) for me to these wandering
> orphans *(orphanos)*. Make haste rejoicing, and go unto the Eleven. Thou

shalt find them gathered together on the bank of the Jordan. The traitor persuaded them to be fishermen as they were at first and to lay down their nets with which they caught men unto life. Say to them: 'Arise, let us go, it is your brother that calls you.' If they scorn my brotherhood, say to them: 'It is your Master'. If they scorn my mastership, say to them: 'It is your Lord'. Use all skill *(techné)* and advice until thou hast brought the sheep to the shepherd. If thou seest that their wits are gone, draw Simon Peter unto thee; say to him, 'Remember what I uttered between thee and me....in the Mount of Olives: I have something to say, I have none to whom to say it'. (Gospel of Mani, *New Testament Apocrypha,* Vol.I, pap.353-354).

(quoted in Swidler 1979:207).

According to many of the Gnostic writers, Mary Magdalene is more than just an ordinary follower. She is mentioned specifically in several texts as the consort or companion of the Saviour. For example, in the <u>Gospel of Philip</u>:

There were three who walked with the Lord at all times, Mary his mother and her sister and Magdalene whom they called his consort [*koinonos*]. For his sister and his mother and his companion were each a Mary.

(NHL 59:6-12 in Robinson 1977:135-6).

Another frequently repeated idea among the Gnostics is that Jesus loved Mary Magdalene more than the other disciples, and certain texts hint of an erotic relationship between them. In the Nag Hammadi <u>Gospel of Philip</u>, Jesus often kissed Mary Magdalene on the mouth:

And the consort of the [Saviour is] Mary Magdalene. [But Christ loved] her more than [all] the disciples [and used to] kiss her [often] on her [mouth]. The rest of [the disciples were offended] by it [and expressed disapproval]. They said to him, 'Why do you love her more than all of us?' The Saviour answered and said to them, 'Why do I not love you like her?'

(NHL: 63:30-35,64:1-10 in Robinson 1977:138).

This offended the disciples so much, that on one occasion Peter asked Jesus, "let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of Life" <u>(Gospel of Thomas</u> 51.19-20, in Robinson 1977:130).

In another Nag Hammadi text, <u>Dialogue of the Saviour</u>, Mary Magdalene is selected with Matthew and Judas from the other disciples to be taken away to receive certain revelations. Within the <u>Dialogue</u>, Christ praises Mary Magdalene as excelling all the other disciples and being favoured with an insight far surpassing theirs. "....This word she spoke as a woman who knew the All" (Robinson 1977:235).

In Pistis Sophia, one of the largest extant Nag Hammadi manuscripts, Mary Magdalene is one of the main speakers, asking questions of Jesus and being praised for her "excellent" understanding of the truth:

> It happened now when Jesus finished speaking these words to his disciples, Maria, the beautiful in her speech, came forward. The blessed one prostrated herself at the feet of Jesus and said: 'My Lord, suffer me to speak in your presence, and be not angry with me because I trouble thee many times, questioning thee'. The Saviour answered compassionately, he said to Maria: 'Speak the discourse which thou dost wish, and I will reveal it to thee openly'.
>
> (Bkl.4:24 in Schmidt 1978:33).

On many occasions, when Jesus addresses the group of disciples to ask if they understand his words, it is Mary Magdalene who comes forward to respond:

> It happened, when Jesus finished saying these words to his disciples, he said to them: 'Do you understand in what manner I have spoken to you?' Maria said: 'Yes, O Lord, I have understood the word now which thou didst say....'
> Jesus said to her: 'Excellent, Maria'.
>
> (Bkl.45:10 in Schmidt 1978:78).

> When he had said these things, he said to them: 'Do you understand in what manner I am speaking with you?'
> Mariam sprang up again, she said: 'Yes O Lord. This is what thou didst say to us....'
> Jesus said to her: 'Excellent, Mariam'
>
> (Bkl.52:2 in Schmidt 1978:98).

> It happened when Jesus heard these words which Maria Magdalene spoke, he, Jesus, answered moreover and said to her: 'Question that which thou dost wish to question, and I will reveal it with assurance and certainty. Truly, truly, I say to you: rejoice with great joy, and be exceedingly glad because you question everything with assurance, and you ask about the manner in which one should inquire. Now at this time question that which thou dost question, and I will reveal it with joy'.
> Now it happened when Maria heard these words which the Saviour said she rejoiced with great joy, and she was exceedingly glad. She said to Jesus: 'My Lord and my Saviour, of what kind are....'
>
> (Bkl.83:20 in Schmidt 1978:185).

> Now it happened when she had finished speaking these words the Saviour marvelled greatly at the answers to the words which she gave, because she had completely become pure spirit. Jesus answered and said to her: 'Excellent, thou pure spiritual one, Maria. This is the interpretation of the discourse'.
>
> (BkII.87:10 in Schmidt 1978:200).

Mary Magdalene's questions apparently began to irritate Peter somewhat:

> Peter said: 'My Lord, let the women cease to question, that we may also question'.

> Jesus said to Mariam and the women: 'Give way to your male brothers, that they may question also'.
>
> (BkIV.146:1 in Schmidt 1978:377).

There is evidence too of the antagonism Mary Magdalene feels from Peter:

> Now it happened when the First Mystery finished saying these words to the disciples, Maria came forward. She said: 'My Lord, my mind is understanding at all times that I should come forward at any time and give the interpretation of the words she spoke, but I am afraid of Peter, for he threatens me and he hates our race'.
>
> (BkII.72:3 in Schmidt 1978:162).

The Gospel of Mary, is considered by some exegetes to be the oldest Gnostic text dating from the second century (McLaren Wilson 1956:237) and is popularly attributed to Mary Magdalene herself (Schüssler Fiorenza 1979:53). In this Gospel, Mary Magdalene is described as the "supreme initiate into Christ's mysteries" (Walker 1983:93). The extant text begins with some last words of the Saviour before he departs. The disciples remain grieving over their loss of Jesus and terrified for their own lives. Then, Mary Magdalene stands up to encourage them, recalling Christ's continual presence with them:

> Do not weep and do not grieve nor be irresolute, for his grace will be entirely with you, and will protect you.
>
> (NHL 9:15-20 in Robinson 1977:472).

Peter, then, asks Mary Magdalene to share with them some memories of Jesus which they might not have heard:

> Peter said to Mary, 'Sister, we know that the Saviour loved you more than the rest of women. Tell us the words of the Saviour which you remember - which you know [but] we do not nor have we heard them'.
>
> (NHL 10:1-5 in Robinson 1977:472).

Mary Magdalene then speaks about the vision she had just had and tells them what Jesus had revealed to her. Unfortunately, several pages of the script are badly damaged at this point, so no details of this teaching are preserved. The extant narrative records, that the disciples found the teaching unlike anything they remembered Jesus having taught. Finally, Mary Magdalene finishes:

> She fell silent, since it was to this point that the Saviour had spoken with her. But Andrew answered and said to the brethren, 'Say what you [will] about what she has said. I, at least, do not believe that the Saviour said this. For certainly these teachings are strange things' Peter answering and spoke

concerning these same things. He questioned them about the Saviour: 'Did he really speak privately with a woman [and] not openly to us? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did he prefer her to us?
(NHL 17:5-20 in Robinson 1977:473).

This antagonism from the apostles Peter and Andrew, in which they ridicule the idea that Mary Magdalene actually saw the Lord in her vision, distresses her:

Mary wept and said to Peter, 'My brother Peter, what do you think? Do you think that I thought this up myself in my heart? Do you think I am lying about the Savior?' Levi answered and said to Peter, 'Peter, you have always been hot-tempered ... If the Savior made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her? Surely the Saviour knows her well. That is why he loved her more than us'.
(NHL 18:1-15, in Robinson 1977:473).

However, Mary Magdalene was rejected from the mainstream of the apostolic church. Elaine Pagels (1981:12) speaks of the political strategy inherent in the selection of the official leaders. Only those disciples who physically had been in contact with the resurrected Jesus were deemed to be legitimate apostles. Mary Magdalene's encounter with Jesus in the garden is specifically dubious because she was enjoined "not to touch" his body (Jn 20:17). This meant that she need not have actually seen Jesus' physical body, it could have been merely a vision. Thus, more emphasis was placed on Jesus' appearance to the Eleven with Thomas when the men physically touch Jesus. This was stressed later in a Letter of Ignatius (98-117 AD) to the Smyrnaens III:2-3:

And when he came to those with Peter, he said to them: 'take, handle me and see that I am not a phantom without a body'. And they immediately touched him and believed, being mingled both with his flesh and spirit.
(Loeb Classical Library:255).

The "first" appearance to Peter is mentioned by Luke (24:34), and later corroborated by Paul (1 Cor 15:5), when it is implied that he is specifically appointed by Jesus to be his successor. This emphasis on the reality of Jesus' human body resurrected from death, became the fundamental element of Christian belief (Pagels 1981:10). It was essential to be able to speak with first-hand knowledge that Jesus had risen from the grave. Only those disciples who had experienced the closeness of Christ during his lifetime, and for forty days after his death, were 'qualified' to be the official "Twelve". This theory has had significant consequences with reference to the official authority said to be vested in the "Twelve". What the "'Twelve" decreed was to be accepted and obeyed. Thus, the present Catholic pontiff traces his primacy back through an unbroken line of succession to Peter. This is Peter, certainly the first pope, but erroneously

declared by Paul to have been the "first witness of the resurrection" (1 Cor 15:5).

However, the Gnostic Christians rejected the literal view of the resurrection, maintaining that greater emphasis should be placed on the spiritual vision. They suggested that it was possible to be a true disciple without any bodily experience of the earthly Jesus. They justified this view by using the example of Paul, who had never known the earthly Christ, yet was acclaimed as a true disciple by the "twelve". Nevertheless, the orthodox position was unwilling to concede any validity in the Gnostic position (Pagels 1981:13).

In the Gnostic texts there is also the suggestion or theory that Mary Magdalene and the Holy Spirit of Wisdom, 'Sophia', are correlated. This concept of a divine spirit of wisdom is linked to the ancient goddess religion, vestiges of which remained in the Hebrew tradition. The Alexandrian Jewish scholar, Philo [20 B.C.-A.D.50], even spoke of Sophia as "God's wife" (Swidler 1979:51-52). In the Gospel of Philip, the three female names, Mary, Sophia and Pneuma overlap. As Karen Buckley pointed out, the names "represent one reality with interchangeable figures playing their roles on earth" (King 1988:232).

The final eschatological hope for the Gnostic writers was the heavenly wedding feast, when all would be united in spirit. The Gospel of Philip, in particular, is laden with references to the mystical bridal chamber. It is in this sense that the Gnosticism associated [God] the Father with his virgin Sophia, and Jesus Christ with his consort, Mary Magdalene (King 1988:238). Mycoff (1985:44) identifies the significant passage in The Gospel of Philip which appears to link Mary Magdalene to the Sophia myth:

> As for the Wisdom who is called 'the barren' she is the mother [of the] angels. And the companion of the [Savior is] Mary Magdalene. [But Christ loved] her more than [all] the disciples [and used to] kiss her [often] on her [mouth]. The rest of [the disciples] were offended by it [and expressed disapproval]. They said to him, 'Why do you love her more than all of us?' The Saviour answered and said to them, 'Why do I not love you like her? When a blind man and one who sees are both together in darkness, they are no different from one another. When light comes, then he who sees will see the light, and he who is blind will remain in darkness.
>
> (NHL 1981:138).

Mary Magdalene had recognised Christ as the light. However, as Mycoff notes, not all the Gnostic writers were prepared to accord Mary Magdalene a status as high as that of the divine Sophia (Mycoff 1985:6). Yet, the Gnostic texts do affirm Mary Magdalene as a spiritual leader "specially favoured with a unique revelation of God" (Mycoff 1985:6), and confirm her prominent role in salvation history.

Perhaps as evidence of her perceived prominent position in salvation history, a third tradition about Mary Magdalene emerged from the early Christian community. An apparent need developed to explore the hagiographical details of her personal life, which had not been included in the scriptural testaments of the faith.

3.2. Hagiographical legendary tradition

Mary Magdalene's legendary tradition is said to date from as early as the third century. During the tenth century, and particularly after the announcement in 1279, made to "the Christian world of the discovery at St-Maximin [in Provence] of the Magdalene's body" (Male 1978:217), hagiography about Mary Magdalene multiplied. A devotional cult, based on this hagiographical tradition with visual and textual amplification reached its highest point in the fourteenth century before the Reformation. Thereafter, the cult continued to a lesser degree into the eighteenth century. From thence, a scholarly interest in the Magdalene legends has also furthered the tradition. I am indebted to textual evidence from two contemporary studies on the legends:

David Mycoff's 1985 study, A Critical Edition of the Legend of Mary Magdalena from Caxton's Golden Legende of 1483 and Marjorie Malvern's 1969 doctoral dissertation, The Magdalene: An exploration of the shaping of myths around the Mary Magdalene of the New Testament canonical gospels and an examination of the effects of the myths on the literary figure, particularly on the heroine of the Digby play, Mary Magdalene, which she subsequently had published as a book, Venus in Sackcloth.

In the presentation that will follow of some of the more prominent legends in the hagiography, it will be shown that the compilers of the various legends relied on resources from both the orthodox teaching as well as from the Gnostic texts. This has resulted sometimes in a conflicting and confusing synopsis of characterisation. At times, the legendary figure of Mary Magdalene is shown as a composite personage incorporating several scriptural characters. Mycoff refers to this composition of women as a "theory of unity" (1985:10). At other times, Mary Magdalene remains as an individual character, differentiated from the other biblical women, and positively identified by her name.

It is a sign of the patriarchal attitude of indifference that the Scripture texts have so often failed to identify the women. Few of the women mentioned in the Gospel accounts are named, and of those few it is remarkable how many had the same

name of Mary. Whether this was the popular name of the day or whether it was a convenient *nom-de-plume*, it has presented considerable difficulties in any attempt to identify the characters in the stories.

There must have been serious conflicting opinions on the question of texts relating to Mary Magdalene in the Christian Church for Pope Gregory I [590-604] to have considered it necessary to make a doctrinal pronouncement on the proper identification of Mary Magdalene (Mycoff 1985:6). According to the Pope, Mary Magdalene, was the sister of Martha and Lazarus. She was the woman caught in the act of adultery. She was the woman out of whom Jesus had cast seven demons, as well as being the woman who had anointed his feet at Simon's house and the woman to whom the resurrected Jesus appeared.

The identification most tenaciously clung to by the Roman Catholic Church is the notion that Mary Magdalene was the sister of Martha and Lazarus. Martha's sister was named Mary, but so were many of the New Testament women. Even the Virgin Mary's sister is named Mary (Jn 19:25). The anointing took place in Bethany, the home-town of Martha, Mary and Lazarus, so if Mary Magdalene was to be identified as Martha's sister then it could follow that she would be the anointer. However, the act of anointing in Luke's account was supposedly by a public sinner, recognised with distaste by the host of the supper, who felt that no respectable man would have welcomed her touch. This description hardly fits Martha's quiet sister, Mary, who had sat at Jesus' feet listening to every word (Lk 11:39).

The act of anointing has been specifically associated with Mary Magdalene. Particularly, as it was on that occasion, that Jesus commended the woman as one " whose many sins must have been forgiven her, or she would not have shown such great love" (Lk 7:47). The allusion of the extent of the woman's sinful life was glibly interpreted as Mary Magdalene's sevenfold demoniac possession. Neither of these incidents, however, can be positively associated with Mary Magdalene for there is no *actual* mention of her name in the texts. Besides, the sister of Martha is portrayed as rather a shy, retiring disposition, which is seldom associated with prostitution.

Within the Gnostic and non-canonical literature, the legendary character varies. Some legends have merged only Mary of Bethany with Mary Magdalene. Others have her as the public sinner as well, and others still, keep all women as separate individuals. The Gnostic tradition sometimes even adds to Mary Magdalene's personae other identities. For example, the woman in Luke's Gospel who called

out after Jesus "Blessed are the paps from which you sucked" (11:28).

There is also a certain amount of confusion in the Gnostic texts due to the situation of the one woman being given so many variations of the same name. She is named "Magdalene" or "Mary Magdalene" in the Gospel of Philip (59:8; 63:33); and then as "Mary" in the Gospel of Mary (9:12,21; 10:1,7; 17:7; 18:1; 19:5), the Gospel of Thomas (36:34; 51:19),the Gospel of Philip (55:23,27; 59:7,11), the Second Apocalypse of James (44:(22)), and in the Testimony of Truth (45:11). She is "Miriamme" in The Sophia of Jesus Christ (98:9; 114:8), and "Mariam" in the Dialogue of the Saviour (126:17; 131:19; 134:25; 137:3; 139:8; 140:14,19,23; 141:12; 142:20; 143:6; 144:5,22) as well as in the First Apocalypse of James (40:25). Indeed, even if all the names refer to Mary Magdalene, the legendary tradition still cannot be determined as incontestable.

The parameters of this study, however, are confined to identifying the extensive popularity of the figure of Mary Magdalene. So, there will be no attempt to compare the merits or accuracies of the various accounts. My intention is simply to note that the many variations of the legendary tradition bear witness to the widespread and sustained interest in Mary Magdalene. In the next section, a brief survey of four variations of the legendary tradition will be outlined. This will be followed by a discussion of the extent to which these legends have influenced the visual imagery of Mary Magdalene, with a detailed description of three examples of how this tradition has been portrayed.

3.2.1. The Mary Magdalene Legends

David Mycoff identifies four main versions of Mary Magdalene's "post ascension career" (1985:7). These versions are differentiated from each other by the varying locality of her death, whether she died in Palestine, Ephesus, the Camargue, or in Provence near Marseilles and Aix.

The first version, the Palestinian Legend, recounts how after the ascension of Jesus, Mary Magdalene remained in Palestine and was buried in Jerusalem. Her relics were later taken to France. The ninth century text by Baudric of Cambrai, the

Gesta episcoporum camaracensis, locates her relics in Vézelay.

The second, the <u>Ephesian Legend</u>, popularised in the West by Gregory of Tours in *De Gloria Martyrum,* links Mary Magdalene with John the evangelist. The setting is in Ephesus where Mary Magdalene, the Virgin Mary and John are exiled. Mary Magdalene is subsequently buried there.

Third, in the <u>Legend of Sea-borne-Marys</u>, Mary Magdalene, accompanied by Mary Jacobi and Mary Salome, travels with James to evangelise Spain. On their return to Jerusalem, James is beheaded by Herod. The three Marys are exiled from Judea. They sail to France, landing in the Camargue, a short distance west of Marseilles. The present town has been named after them, '*Saintes Maries de la Mer'.* In the town, a church marks the spot of their arrival and claims to have the relics of Mary Jacobi and Mary Salome.

Lastly, in the <u>Provençal Legend</u>, Mary Magdalene, Lazarus, Martha, Marcella [Martha's servant], and Maximin are exiled from Jerusalem in a rudderless boat. They land at Marseilles and begin evangelising the inhabitants. Mary Magdalene performs various miracles, among which is the conversion of the prince of Marseilles. She then goes into the wilderness at Sainte-Baume, remaining thirty years as a hermit, fed by the angels. Before her death, she is transported miraculously to an oratory in the town near Sainte-Baume, [now named after Maximin] where Maximin is Bishop for viaticum. The crypt of the Cathedral at St Maximin-de-Provence claims to contain the relics of Mary Magdalene. After the twelfth century, the Provençal legend had the greatest influence on the Magdalene cult.

As traditions, the legends themselves have suffered from the usual problems of subsequent embellishments and transmission errors. According to Mycoff, who relies on Victor Saxer's 1959 research, <u>La Culte de Marie Madeleine en Occident, des origines à le fin du moyen âge</u>, there are at least fifteen principal Latin source texts which refer to the legends (1985:13). The earliest known text, <u>Life of Mary Magdalene</u>, was by Rabanus Maurus. From these source texts, various other writers wove their own versions of the legends.(*See appendix 1 for a brief summary of Mycoff's presentation of principal texts).*

Probably the most influential texts was Jacobus de Voragine's <u>Legenda aurea</u> [Golden Legend], composed between 1255 and 1266 (Cross 1978:579). Initially called <u>Legenda Sanctorum</u>, the name had been changed through popular acclaim by the end of the thirteenth century. De Voragine used many sources, including

Vita Eremitica, Vita Apostolica-Eremitica, Translationis Narratio Posterior, Postquam Dominus N.I.C. and Speculum Historiale and possibly even other unknown Magdalene legends.

The Legenda aurea was the main source for the many later Magdalene legends from the thirteenth century on (Mycoff 1985:19). Caxton's Golden Legend, printed in 1483, was a translation of Legenda aurea. The Golden Legend was reprinted by Dent in London in 1900, and Marina Warner reports two further editions, The Golden Legend as Englished by William Caxton in London in 1922, and another translation and adaptation from Voragine's original Latin. This was by Granger Ryan and Helmut Ripperger, published by Arno Press in New York in 1941 and reprinted in 1969 (Warner 1983:382,398).

Mycoff also notes a significant list of verse and prose legends, all of which contributed towards sustaining the historical interest in the cult of Mary Magdalene (see Appendix B). In time, the various details of the different versions were subsumed into a more composite form. One popular fifteenth-century mystery drama of the saint was the Digby Play of Mary Magdalene, which presented her life story with considerable artistic license. This continuing popular appeal of the legendary Mary Magdalene has been extended into the twentieth century musical production, Jesus Christ Superstar, in which, as the converted prostitute, she plays a major role.

A significant example of the importance and value the Catholic Church attached to the legendary stories of saints, was the introduction of chapels dedicated to their memory and honour. One of the earliest examples of a chapel, still well preserved, is the Mary Magdalene Chapel in the Basilica of St Francis in Assisi. Most of the wall paintings (frescoes) have been attributed to Giotto di Bondone [1267-1337], famous for his innovative depiction of movement in a pictorial space, in contrast to the static formalism of the Byzantine period (Piper 1988:216).

The frescoes in the chapel depict both biblical and legendary scenes traditionally associated with Mary Magdalene. The Gospel scenes include the supper at the home of the pharisee with Mary Magdalene, as the 'sinner', weeping and kissing the feet of Jesus. Other scenes depicted show the resurrection of Lazarus with Martha and Mary Magdalene, and the resurrection scene, 'Noli me tangere'.

The scene, which depicts the 'post-ascension' legendary life of Mary Magdalene, has been considered as a collaborated effort between Giotto and "the Master of St Nicola". This is the voyage in the rudderless boat to Marseilles with the various

details of the miraculous arrival. The remaining frescoes depict Mary Magdalene in ecstasy with the angels, Mary Magdalene receiving her heavenly robe, the last communion of Mary Magdalene, and her transportation by the angels into heaven. The chapel also has a separate votive painting which depicts one of Giotto's patrons, Cardinal Pietro di Barro, kneeling before St Mary Magdalene in supplication.

Although a considerable proportion of the medieval church art was destroyed by the Protestant iconoclasts, a few excellent examples of altarpieces have survived which depict the hagiographic life of Mary Magdalene. For example, the "St Mary Magdalene Altarpiece" by Lucas Moser in the Pfarrkirche of Tiefenbronn dates from 1431. Here, the entire retable is covered in paintings depicting the legendary scenes of the penitent Mary Magdalene.

Moser has incorporated all the major ideas of the Provençal legend in the artwork. In the apex section of the retable the artist has painted the supper at Bethany with Martha serving and Mary Magdalene, as 'the sinner', weeping and drying his feet with her hair. The main panels below the apex show the journey in the rudderless boat, and the arrival at Marseilles. Here, locked outside the city gates, Mary Magdalene is shown performing her first miracle. Mary Magdalene was miraculously transported into the bedroom of the prince of Marseilles to ask for the key.

The other main panel depicts the last communion of the saint, when she was again miraculously transported by angels from her hermitage to the church. When the main shutters of the retable are opened, the centre panel is revealed to show a large representation of Mary Magdalene as the penitent hermit, transported in esctasy to heaven by seven angels. The inside panels of the shutter doors depict Martha on one side and Bishop Maximin on the other. The impact of Mary Magdalene's life as a hermit is starkly depicted by her naked body covered in hair.

Several art museums have remnants of other retables depicting the legendary life of Mary Magdalene. Some of these visual images will be examined in greater detail in the following chapter.

With the popular appeal of folklore, the legendary tradition proved to be the most influential propagator of the Mary Magdalene cult. The many visual representations of the legendary life of Mary Magdalene bear witness to the historical impact of this tradition. However, the visual imagery has also been responsible for sustaining an erotic interest in the conceptualisation of Mary Magdalene as the 'repentant whore'.

Again this suggests a patriarchal bias of approval. For, despite the questionable accuracy of the legendary tradition, the orthodox teachers have never condemned the stories, nor branded them, with the Gnostic tradition, as heresy.

3.3. The demotion of Mary Magdalene

The Gospel stories have clearly established that, in his life time, Jesus had men and women disciples [followers]. Even after the resurrection, the texts refer to women and men working together to spread the Gospel message. Yet, somehow a gradual and imperceptible evolution shifted the egalitarianism away from that first Christian community and entrenched patriarchalism into the religious practice. This can be surmised from the markedly lessened appearance of women in the post-ascension apostolic writings. Certainly, the lack of any mention of the Galilean women, who had accompanied Jesus throughout his missions, appears to suggest some form of marginalisation.

Most notably, Mary Magdalene, as one of the foremost Galileans, is never referred to in the Acts. Luke mentions only that the women find the tomb empty and are told by angels that Jesus is risen. Mark says that Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene. Matthew has Mary Magdalene and the "other Mary" meeting Jesus together. Thus, all four evangelists agree that it was the women, and prominently, Mary Magdalene, who are the first witnesses to the resurrection. Yet, almost as a conspiracy of silence, no further mention of these women occurs.

The dating of the Gospel texts has been placed between twenty or thirty years after the death of Jesus. As the women had been so prominent during Jesus's ministry, it does not appear logical that they would return to a narrow domestic occupation. Particularly as Jesus had enjoined all his followers to go out into the world to make disciples of all nations. However, there is no canonically affirmed record of the ministerial or missionary activities of the women disciples.

The singularly most contested aspect of Jesus' choice of disciples has been the inclusion of women within the apostolic ministry. Mary Magdalene in several of the Gnostic texts is closely identified with "the twelve". This would imply she participated in all their activities. However, in one of the Apocryphal texts, Apostolic Church Order, which purports to contain the first attempts to establish an ordered structure within the early Christian community, there is a discussion on the question of "women priests". John is quoted as saying:

When the Master blessed the bread and the cup and signed them with the words, 'This is my body and blood', he did not offer it to the women who are with us. Martha said, 'He did not offer it to Mary [sic], because he saw her laugh'. Mary [sic] said, 'I no longer laugh; he said to us before, as he taught, 'your weakness is redeemed through strength'.

(Pagels 1981:78).

This text is an obvious rebuttal of Mary Magdalene's priestly ministry as a disciple. The grossness of the dismissal is highlighted by the pettiness in the charge attributed to Martha. In effect, not only Mary Magdalene, but Martha and all women are thus discredited and excluded forever after from the presiding side of the Catholic communion table.

In the Roman Catholic Church's refusal to allow women to be ordained to the priesthood, the Vatican has insisted that the very "nature of woman" precludes them from this privilege. One of its most dogmatic and judgmental statements has been to declare that, sacramentally it would not be suitable for a woman to represent Christ, a man, at the altar. The Catholic Church's claim of continuity in the historical and traditional character of the priesthood is contradicted by this text from the third book of Clement on the teaching of the twelve apostles. This text confirms that the question of allowing women to preside at the table is one of long standing extended controversy. The following translation from the Coptic text of the Apostolic Church Order reads:

Andrew said: [It would be] very good, my brethren, if we established ministries for the women.
Peter said: Having given commandment and directions concerning all these things, we have come thus far. Now we will give careful teaching concerning the Sacrifice of the Body and Blood.
John said: Ye have forgotten, my brethren, that our teacher, when He asked for the bread and the cup, and blessed them, saying: 'This is My Body and My Blood,' did not permit these [the women] to remain with us.
Martha said [concerning Mary]: I saw her laughing between her teeth exultingly.
Mary: I did not really laugh, only I remembered the words of our Lord and I exulted; for ye know that He told us before, when he was teaching: 'The weak shall be saved through the strong'.
Cephas said: We ought to remember several things, for it does not beseem women that they should approach the Sacrifice with heads uncovered, but with heads covered.
James said: How then with regard to the women can we fix any ministry, except they strengthen and keep vigil for those women who are in want.

(Apostolic Church Order:24-28).

Mary Magdalene's marginalisation and demotion from the recognised group of disciples of Jesus had a significant impact on the role of women. The texts from the apostolic period of the early Christian Church reveal the gradual exclusion of

women from any authoritative position in the community. Some of the extant texts in the Nag Hammadi Library provide the semblance of a logical sequence of events after the ascension of Jesus.

In the legends Mary Magdalene leaves Jerusalem soon after the ascension. Some of the versions give Provence her destination, and others send her to Ephesus with John the evangelist and Mary the Mother of Jesus. Significantly, she is always represented as a strong saintly disciple of Jesus.

In the ensuing years after the ascension of Jesus, the Christian Church soon began to realise that the *parousia* was not to be as imminent as they had at first hoped. As the community structures of the church began to develop into the shape of the surrounding patriarchal social climate, so began the gradual diminishment of the radical egalitarian society envisaged by Jesus.

3.3.1. Misogyny in the Christian Church

Although the Christian religion was initially communicated verbally, and sometimes visually, the fundamental basis of the teaching came from the historical texts written by the early Church Fathers. The misogyny evident in the patristic writings is impossible to reconcile with any aspect of Christian teaching, yet the importance of the influence of these Church Fathers has endured through the centuries.

These patriarchs blamed women 'en masse' for sin. They saw the woman as a "hideous tape worm," (John Damascene), as the "devil's gateway" (Tertullian,*De Cultu Fem. 1,1*), definitely not made in the image of God (Augustine,*De Trinitate 7.7,10*), but something of a mistake, a defective male (Thomas Aquinas), too stupid to teach (Pope Gregory the Great), and only acceptable if she would become a eunuch and subdue her sexual appetite (Clement of Alexandria,*Paedagogus 3,3*). The only salvific opportunity for a woman was to either renounce her sexuality and become a nun, or harness it through marriage. However, as previously discussed, even sex in marriage was seen to be defiling. Within the bonds of marriage for the purpose of procreation as ordained by God, the act of sexual intercourse was regarded with distaste and as a defilement of one's body (Jerome). Although most of these Church Fathers had committed themselves to celibacy, they still imposed severe and detailed restrictions over marital sexual behaviour. Augustine, by his own confession, had been unable to control his sexual appetite until his conversion, at which point he condemned sex as sinful. Yet, in his condemnation of sexual weakness he saw women as the innate cause for sin: "the flesh" (Swidler

1979:350).

Twentieth century documents issued from the Vatican never fail to include numerous references and quotations from the writings of the apostolic fathers. In the infamous 1976 Declaration on the Question of the Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood, the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith admits to the misogyny prevalent in the writings of the Fathers. Yet, still maintains that "these prejudices had hardly any influence on their pastoral activity, and still less on their spiritual direction" (CTS:5).

Pope John Paul II's 1991 apostolic letter, Mulieris Dignitatem, on the Dignity and Vocation of Women, has a footnote to the problem of discrimination in social life. Here, reference is made to Jerome, Gregory of Nazianus, Ambrose and Augustine, as "Fathers of the fourth century [who] strongly react[ed] against the discrimination still in effect with regard to women in the customs and the civil legislation of their time" (10 fn.33).

In view of these patriarchal Fathers' offensive and derogatory statements on the status of women, which belie any concern for the social status of women. It seems that the Vatican reliance for moral justification from such writers is ill-placed. This is confirmed by Ruether's contention that the Christian treatment of women "even fell below those legal rights to personal and economic autonomy which the married woman had been winning in the late antique society" (1974:165). Far from attaining the freedom of spirit promised by the 'good news', the women who 'embraced Christianity' had to forgo their hard-earned economic and social independence.

If the only acceptable or suitable role for Christian women is bound within the patriarchal family structure, what is then to become of women who insist on maintaining their independence? Therein lies the church's problem with Mary Magdalene. As a woman acknowledged by both Christian and Gnostic texts to be the prime witness to the resurrection of Christ, she could not simply erased from history. However, a far more effective erasure can be achieved through a re-telling of the history. The legendary tradition which emerged as a median of the historical tradition proclaimed Mary Magdalene as the penitent Magdalene.

3.3.2. The penitent Mary Magdalene

One of the ways in which a misogynistic emphasis has been maintained within

Christian doctrine has been through the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene as a penitent prostitute. This hermeneutical bias was particularly prevalent during the Counter Reformation, a period of revival for the Roman Catholic Church in the wake of the virulent surge of iconoclastic destruction by the Protestant Reformers. As an almost defiant affirmation of their dependency on sacred imagery, the Catholic Church responded by developing its predeliction of saintly role-models, even further.

In the Catholic Church's renewed emphasis on the value and significance of the doctrine of sacramental grace, particular emphasis was placed on the sacrament of penance, an issue about which the Reformers had taken strong exception. Hence, there was an increase in popularity in the sixteenth century of artistic representations of the 'great penitents', such as Mary Magdalene, Anthony of Egypt and Jerome.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined some of the textual evidence which has formed the basis for the cult of Mary Magdalene. With the historical and legendary tradition clearly in focus, the following chapter will lead into an illustrated consideration of how the visual representation of Mary Magdalene has been influenced by the patriarchal bias prevalent within the Christian Church. And how this has also played a formative role in the subsequent misinterpretation of the portrait of Mary Magdalene.

CHAPTER FOUR:
THE VISUAL PORTRAYAL OF MARY MAGDALENE AS REPRESENTED
WITHIN THREE CLASSIFICATIONS: PENITENT, PROSTITUTE AND 'BEATA'

Introduction

In this chapter, I will examine and discuss some of the ways in which Mary
Magdalene has been visually represented in artworks. One of my contentions
concerning the available imagery is that an imbalance of patriarchal bias is implicitly
expressed about the biblical person of Mary Magdalene. Moreover, this bias has
been accepted into our historical understanding of Mary Magdalene due to the
many visual representations of the saint currently in popular devotional usage. The
inherent danger is that when an imbalanced idea has been conceptualised into
various art forms, it becomes internalised by the viewer and may be difficult to
eradicate. It is necessary, therefore, to rectify this imbalance, by promoting
corrective imagery that will portray Mary Magdalene in her merited historical
position.

In the previous chapters, mention has been made of the different personae which
tradition and sentiment have accorded Mary Magdalene. She has been identified
as the sister of Martha and Lazarus of Bethany, the unnamed person who anointed
Jesus' feet, as well as the woman caught in act of adultery. It is the evangelist,
Luke, who identifies her by name as the woman from whom seven demons were
exorcised. Mary Magdalene is named as present at the crucifixion and
accompanying the two other Marys to the tomb. She is the first witness of the risen
Christ on that Easter morning. All of these scriptural scenes have been reproduced
in various art works in the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene.

The visual imagery of Mary Magdalene will be examined within a schema of context
and specified modes of characterisation. This will be followed by a detailed
discussion of the iconographic symbols used to identify and categorise Mary
Magdalene. Finally, an illustrated description of a diverse selection of the artworks
will be presented to provide visual evidence of the prevalent patriarchal bias against
Mary Magdalene. The specific concern of this chapter is to expose the extent of
the problem, created by this visual mis-representation of the biblical Mary
Magdalene. An estimation of the damage, specifically to Christian women's self-
perception, caused by this imagery will be critically analysed from a theological
ethical feminist perspective in the next chapter.

4. The tri-partite imagic representation of Mary Magdalene: scriptural, hagiographic and beatific

In an attempt to facilitate an accurate assessment of the various contexts in which Mary Magdalene has been represented, I have arranged the artworks within a tri-partite contextual schema, namely, within a scriptural context; within a hagiographic legendary context; and within what I have termed a 'beata' context. The 'beata' context will cover the instances when Mary Magdalene is visually portrayed simply as a holy woman, as in icons or 'donor portraits'. By 'donor portraits', I refer to commissioned artworks in which the donor, or benefactor of the painting, is depicted in the company of one or more 'favourite' saints.

Within these three contexts, there are certain recurring scenes from the Scripture and from Mary Magdalene's hagiography.

[a] Scriptural imagery

I will begin with the imagery related to the scriptural context. As this dissertation is concerned to reclaim the true character of Mary Magdalene submerged beneath the composite identity imposed on her through patriarchal decree, I have limited the visually imaged Scripture scenes to those which have been specifically entitled with her name.

Thus, there will be few examples of the 'Supper at Bethany', which traditionally but erroneously associates Mary Magdalene with the "woman who was a sinner". I also do not include any examples of the 'Raising of Lazarus'. The only illustrated example which directly links Mary Magdalene with Martha has direct iconographical links with the image of Mary Magdalene as prostitute. However, in some illustrations where the panel or painting is divided into smaller depicted scenes, all of these scenes are often represented as verification of the saint. In these instances, it is the larger, central image that remains the focus of critical discussion.

I have highlighted the visual depictions of Scripture scenes which were specifically painted to include Mary Magdalene. The first and most important visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene is the scriptural scene which has become known simply as 'Noli me tangere', meaning 'do not touch me', or as the Jerusalem Bible translates: "do not cling to me" (Jn 20:17). As this resurrection scene of her encounter with the risen Jesus depicts the 'high point' of Mary Magdalene's scriptural career, I have researched a wide and varied selection of visual imagery of this scene.

A second version of this scene includes all the women who go to the tomb. Here, in contrast to the personal portraiture of the 'Noli me tangere' scenes, Mary Magdalene is scarcely differentiated from the other women in these artworks entitled, The three Marys at the tomb. However, as the earliest known depiction of this scene dates back to the third century (Dillenberger 1985:117), this visual image verifies the early Christian community's high regard for the role of Mary Magdalene and the other women in this event.

The other important scriptural scenes in which Mary Magdalene is usually included are the Deposition, and the Entombment. Both of these visual representations bear witness again to the dedicated discipleship of Mary Magdalene, that she remained steadfast to Jesus in his passion and death.

Finally, Mary Magdalene is nearly always included in paintings of the Crucifixion. As this scene, from the sixth century onwards, is undoubtedly the most commonly imaged scene in Christian art (Hall 1974:81), it is well nigh impossible to research such a vast quantity of artworks. Therefore, I have limited my examples of crucifixion scenes to a small selection of works by well-known artists, only to show the prevalent manner in which Mary Magdalene is conceptualised. This focus is justifiable given that it is the works of these better known artists which are publicly accessible.

It is significant to note that in three crucial points in Christian history, namely the crucifixion, deposition and resurrection, Mary Magdalene's presence forms an integral aspect of the depicted scene. Her visual portrayal is used as an important theatrical device in Christian art as her dramatic display of grief in the crucifixion and deposition scenes prepare the viewer for the overwhelming joy in the resurrection scenes.

This theatrical element is part of the didactic importance of Christian art, wherein the viewers are shown the emotions they are expected to feel. for example, in the Isenheim Altar at Kolmar painted by Mathis Gothardt-Neithardt [c.1470/80-1528], better known as Grünewald, <ILL 6>, Mary Magdalene is dramatically posed praying at the foot of the cross. In a visual sense, she is more important than the Virgin Mary, because in these scenes, Mary Magdalene occupies a position into which most Christians project themselves. She is there beside the cross, she follows the body to the tomb, and she is the first to see and greet the risen Christ. Thus, the viewer can easily identify with her biblical representation.

[b] Hagiographic imagery

The second contextual frame, in which Mary Magdalene is imaged, is drawn from hagiography. The illustrated examples which I have included represent the central themes of Mary Magdalene's legendary eremitical and penitential life.

The first and most commonly illustrated scene is <u>The penitent Mary Magdalene praying in her hermitage</u>. In the different artistic renderings of this scene, Mary Magdalene is sometimes depicted weeping, or in tears before a crucifix. She is often reading or meditating, holding either the opened book or a skull.

The second important hagiographic scene refers to Mary Magdalene's legendary ecstatic elevation in prayer. Wherein she is usually supported by angels, either in the clouds or above a Marseilles landscape. These depictions are titled simply <u>The elevation of Mary Magdalene</u>. Sometimes, the elevation scene refers to another legendary incident, <u>The last communion of Mary Magdalene</u>. Here Mary Magdalene is depicted again carried by angels, as they miraculously transport her from her mountain wilderness to the Bishop in the cathedral.

Within the hagiographical context, there are certain recurring modes within which Mary Magdalene is erotically depicted. The examples, which will be presented, will also show the occurrence of variations and overlaps into the scriptural context.

In the hagiographical accounts of Mary Magdalene, the under-girding emphasis is always upon the notion that she was the woman about whom Jesus says "her sins, her many sins, must have been forgiven her, or she would not have shown such great love" (Lk 7:47). Her visual portrayal, therefore, is required to remind the viewer, even symbolically, that the saint had a sinful past. Whereas other women saints are more often depicted modestly dressed with wholesome good looks, Mary Magdalene can usually be quickly identified as a stereo-typed immoral woman.

Whether Mary Magdalene is extravagantly dressed and bejewelled, or naked and covered only with her hair, she is usually beautiful and her figure sensuously comely in form. In a sense, this 'glamorous' portrayal could be the manner in which most people would want to admire and emulate Mary Magdalene. Whereas, an emaciated, aesthetic appearance would discomfort the viewers rather than encourage emulation. Indeed, in my research I have encountered few depictions of Mary Magdalene as haggard, ugly and emaciated. Examples of these images will be discussed later in the chapter [Donatello <*ILL 45*> & Massys <*ILL 23*>].

[c] Beatific imagery

The third context, which I have termed, 'beatific', meaning 'blessed', refers to artworks which do not always attempt to situate Mary Magdalene within either the scriptural or legendary context. Thus, I have included a diverse selection of illustrated examples to cover this wider context.

First, when artworks were commissioned as votive offerings by wealthy donors, Mary Magdalene was sometimes included as one of the donor's spiritual patrons. In these instances, as mentioned before, Mary Magdalene is depicted with the donor of the artwork. The image is often simply titled with her name, Mary Magdalene. Occasionally, I have found single portraits of the saint in icon form, again suggesting their use in private devotional practice.

Second, as it is not possible to isolate Mary Magdalene from her biblical and historical validity, I have included within this group imagery from the scriptural and hagiographic context which comes closest to presenting Mary Magdalene respectably as a disciple of Jesus. I have done this specifically in my search for positive, woman-affirming imagery of Mary Magdalene. These instances occur sometimes in the Deposition and Entombment, and more frequently in the *noli me tangere* or Resurrection scenes, and very occasionally in Crucifixion scenes, where Mary Magdalene is shown as the main strong character supporting the grief-stricken figure of the Virgin Mary in her arms.

As a specific example, I have highlighted one of the hagiograhic scenes, namely, Mary Magdalene preaching. This scene is a positive affirmation of the apostleship of Mary Magdalene, which illustrates the artist's intention to portray Mary Magdalene as 'saintly' or beatific.

The final examples I have included represent an alternative iconography. When Mary Magdalene is identified with the symbols of the resurrection rather than the symbols of penance and mortification. Again, in these the titles are not clearly differentiated, the artwork is usually simply titled, Mary Magdalene.

Having situated Mary Magdalene within a contextual framework of either Scripture or legend, or simply as a beata, I have identified three distinct modes of characterisation. These manifest whether she is portrayed as a penitent, as a

prostitute or as a saint. The criteria applied in the formulation of these modes will be described in the following section.

4.1. The three modes of characterisation: penitent, prostitute or saint

Traditionally and historically, Mary Magdalene has become stereotyped as the 'penitent prostitute'. I have separated the two terms, as I have found significant emphases in the visual representations of each which appear to be irreconcilable. When Mary Magdalene is imaged as a beautiful naked woman lying languorously in a forest, this presents a marked contrast to an image of the haggard, gaunt figure of a woman praying on her knees. The third mode of characterisation, that of the 'saint', will be used to describe imagery in which there is no reference to the 'penitent-prostitute' typology.

To date, I have systematically collected information on approximately three hundred and eighty images of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene. These are listed in Appendix A. The list has been annotated and arranged chronologically with notes on most of the entries concerning the mode of characterisation as well as with indicators to the context reference. In other words, I have 'tagged' whether the artist presented Mary Magdalene as penitent, prostitute or saint.

[a] Mary Magdalene as penitent

I begin with the classic image of Mary Magdalene as 'penitent' which developed rapidly in Christian art from the Middle Ages onwards (Miles 1985:80), particularly from the Counter-Reformation Period. In this later period, notable for the Roman Catholic Church's emphasis on the Sacraments (Hall 1984:202-204), Mary Magdalene was visually presented as the ideal model for repentant sinners. In some paintings she carries a scroll on which is written an exhortation to sinners to follow her example and return to God (see <ILL 43>). Another possible visual image of 'sinner-saint' dating from the Counter-Reformation period was 'The denial of Peter'. However, there has been significantly less interest in visually portraying Peter's weakness compared to the numerous depictions of Mary Magdalene's 'weakness'.

As a further variation of 'penitent', Mary Magdalene is sometimes presented as an emaciated and haggard ascetic covered in hair. Alternatively, she is modestly dressed in plain brown cloth, as the earnest apostle preaching to the people of Provence (see <ILL 62>).

[b] Mary Magdalene as prostitute

In the second mode of characterisation, the 'prostitute', there are variations of intensity, ranging from suggestively wanton nudity to elaborate worldliness of attire. When the images depict a Scripture text, such as in the crucifixion or resurrection, Mary Magdalene is often presented as the converted prostitute. This is indicated by her luxurious, elaborate clothing which is usually in stark contrast to the modest appearance of the Virgin Mother. Similarly, there is a suggestive lack of sobriety and respectability in the contrast between Mary Magdalene's uncovered, often disheveled hair, and the pensive, veiled Virgin Mary.

Again, in scenes as the woman "who had a bad name in the town" and who weeps over Christ's feet in deep remorse, Mary Magdalene is clearly intended to represent a penitent prostitute. Often, the biased emphasis is heightened by the presence of a modestly clothed, severe Martha who frowns at the ornate, beautiful, softer face of Mary.

Although the iconography in the artistic representation varies according to the historical period of the artist, the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene as a penitent prostitute remains constant. The various details of penitential or eremitical symbolism in the visual imagery have been drawn from the legends and hagiography of the saint. For example, Mary Magdalene is sometimes depicted in the act of ridding herself of her vanities. The scene serves to remind the viewer of the hagiographical account of her conversion. She is shown pulling off her jewels and expensive clothing in front of a mirror. Other scenes, which I have classified as 'prostitute mode', show her as a sensuously beautiful, half naked woman in ecstasy and supported by young male angels.

These pictures represent an intricate artistic device of *voyeurism*, in that a woman's nude body is displayed to appeal to the spectator, although it is purports to convey an aura of mystical significance (Berger 1972:54). When the woman was depicted gazing into a mirror, her morality was condemned and the *voyeur*'s sexual pleasure exonerated (Berger 1972:51). This *voyeuristic* device was particularly suitable to images of a woman reading or dressing, when she can be 'peeped at', without her being aware of the onlooker's gaze. Edouard Manet [1832-1883] caused a scandalous uproar in 1863 at the Salon de Refusés in Paris, when he exposed this *voyeurism* by depicting his naked women gazing directly into the onlooker's eyes (Piper 1988:327).

However, the characterisation becomes somewhat complex in that in a different historical period, for example, the sixteenth century <*ILL 41*>, when Mary Magdalene is sometimes represented in a dignified 'saintly' posture, devoutly reading a book. This manner of portraiture would appear to present a positive woman-affirming image. Yet, the same scene depicted by a different artist in a different period <*ILL 42*>, who dresses her more comfortably, and enhances the impact of her beauty by allowing the dress to slide a little from her shoulders to reveal more of her delicately tinted flesh, creates a completely different impression of this saintliness.

There are also scenes of a beautiful, half-clothed Mary Magdalene lying on the floor reading, with her naked breasts pressed against the pages of the book. It is extremely difficult to determine sometimes whether the particular image should be listed as 'penitent' or 'prostitute'. There is often such a minimal spiritual impact in the artwork that one can only identify the woman as Mary Magdalene from the artist's title or from the Christian iconographical details associated with her.

Thus, without the explicitly stated intention of the artist, in the naming of some of these artworks, it would be easy for a viewer to dismiss many of them as unlikely examples of traditional Christian art. This is not to deny their value and contribution to European culture as great works of art. It is merely to question the motives behind the Church's sanctioning of the imagery. This imagery is difficult to reconcile in a tradition which even today frowns on women entering churches with their upper arms naked, or in 'shorts'. The imagery also contrasts notably with the idealised image of Christian woman, the Virgin Mary, always modestly clothed from head to foot.

What message is being conveyed, then, with the image of a naked or semi-naked Mary Magdalene? One could associate the impact of coming across such an image in the confines of a Catholic Church, adorned with the usual statues of the Sacred Heart, the Virgin mother and Child Jesus, St Theresa, St Anthony of Padua, the Infant Child of Prague, to the impact of finding a centre-fold nude in an academic journal.

Was the artist emphasising that a beautiful woman could also be a ardent disciple? Was the intention to prove that beautiful women are in greater need of conversion? Is the beauty of Mary Magdalene an asset or a hindrance? Can beautiful women be apostles or do holy women have to be homely or plain? These feminist questions arise from the confusing message manifested in this church art and are

of particular concern to feminist theologians. They will be addressed critically in chapter five.

[c] Mary Magdalene as saint

Finally, I have delineated a third mode of characterisation, in which Mary Magdalene is imaged simply as a 'holy' woman. These are the instances when Mary Magdalene is shown 'normally', without any erotic or bestialisation of her body. This mode occurs in the scriptural scenes and sometimes in the hagiographical scenes. It is these art works that suggest a fairer interpretation of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene. Artworks which do not rely on erotic sensuality connotation to characterise a human being. Such artworks can only benefit the Christian community.

Yet, I have searched widely for artworks which present Mary Magdalene unequivocally in a positive, woman-affirmative vein which would correspond to this mode of characterisation. There appears to have been no historical period where this mode of visual characterisation was a general practice. However, I have found here and there throughout the centuries occasional artworks which allows one to step back and say, 'Ah -here she is!'

Traditionally, the portrait paintings and sculptures of the different saints, found in Roman Catholic Churches and homes, can be identified by symbolic attributes of their sanctity. The intended purpose of this Christian imagery is to depict wholesome upright models for Christians to aspire to and to emulate. The symbols in the iconography associated with Mary Magdalene have, conversely, confirmed her as a cautionary example rather than as a symbol of hope.

4.2. Iconography of Mary Magdalene

Possibly one of the main 'problems' for Christian artists in painting 'saints' is how to ensure that they can be identified for their particular virtues. The practical purpose of displaying statues and other representations of saints is to encourage the congregation of believers. And hopefully, to inspire them by presenting these role models of Christianity. This, again, is where the value of the sign and symbol enters Christian art.

For example, Saint Dorothy of Cappadocia carries a basket of roses and apples,

reminding the viewer of the miracle associated with her martyrdom, wherein she converted one of her executioners. He had mockingly asked her to send him some flowers and fruit from her heavenly paradise. Directly after Dorothy's death, it was said, a young boy came up to the soldier with a basket of apples and roses. As it was winter at that time, with the trees covered in frost, the soldier was immediately convinced by the miracle and converted to Christianity (Ferguson 1955:205-6).

As another example, Saint Clare of Assisi is easily identified by a symbolic pyx in her hand. This symbol reminds the viewer of the legend in which she is credited with saving Assisi from Saracen invaders. According to the legend, Claire had placed the pyx containing the consecrated host on the threshold of her convent in Assisi, and at the sight of the pyx the Saracen infidels had fled in terror (Ferguson 1955:200-1).

Many of the Christian martyrs are depicted bearing the instruments of their martyrdom. For example, Saint Catherine of Alexandria carries the wheel on which she was mortally tortured (Hall 1974:58). And the third century martyr, Saint Agatha of Catania, carries a platter on which her two severed breasts are placed (Hall 1974:9).

However, Mary Magdalene's iconography, considerably more extensive than the other saints, stems from the diverse renderings of her biblical and legendary history. In the paintings and sculptures of Mary Magdalene as a biblical saint, she is depicted often as a beautiful, fashionably dressed, young woman with long red hair carrying an ointment jar. Illustrations, based on her legendary history, depict her naked, more or less covered with her long hair, and accompanied by various items of penitential significance, including an ointment jar. A list of the various symbolic attributes with which she is identified will be examined in detail in the course of this chapter.

One of the symbols used to identify Mary Magdalene most consistently, is the ointment jar. This traditionally associates her with the sinful woman who anoints Jesus' feet in Luke's Gospel:

> One of the Pharisees invited him to a meal. When he arrived at the Pharisee's house and took his place at table, a woman came in, who had a bad name in the town. She had heard he was dining with the Pharisee and had brought with her an alabaster jar of ointment. She waited behind him at his feet, weeping, and her tears fell on his feet, and she wiped them away with her hair; then she covered his feet with kisses and anointed them with the ointment.
>
> Lk 7:36-38.

This biblical text does not name the woman yet the Christian Church has, for its own purposes, traditionally assumed the link. Certainly this dramatic association with Mary Magdalene as a sinful woman who is subsequently forgiven, would have appealed to women, in different periods, who considered themselves sinners. It is not surprising, therefore, that because of this official tradition, the ointment jar is almost always included as a necessary iconographical detail in visual representations of Mary Magdalene.

According to the art historian, Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, a basic iconography of Mary Magdalene is of "a young woman with long flowing hair who holds an ointment or unction jar"(1983:111). I would add, that within a variety of scenes, scriptural and legendary, Mary Magdalene is further identified as a beautiful woman who prays with intense emotion. She is usually gazing at a crucifix, with oftentimes a skull and scourge prominently displayed in the foreground of the painting or engraving.

Another variation of the prayerful mode is the naked woman clothed only with her flowing hair in an attitude of ecstatic prayer. Both of these versions originate from the legendary context with the underlying premise that Mary Magdalene was a converted and penitent prostitute. Her main distinguishing attribute is always the ointment jar. Further, even when Mary Magdalene is depicted as a more or less naked penitent ascetic, it is her pretty face which is said to distinguish her clearly from the other famous penitent prostitute, Mary of Egypt.

The various visual representations of Mary Magdalene have been loosely based on scriptural texts. Many of the scenes depicted originated from devotional hagiography, intended to fill in the missing links of the Scripture narratives. When Mary Magdalene is depicted alone as a single votive image, or without direct reference to either the Scripture or the legendary scenes, she is sometimes identified through a specifically symbolical reference, for example, holding an egg. This is an ancient near Eastern symbol of the creation, used in the "spring festivals of revival and rebirth, and hence later with Easter" (Hall 1974:110). The medieval Church Christianised it into a symbol of the resurrection.

Sometimes the Christian artworks have also included texts from the Scripture as a further elucidation of the visual image. I have found three inscriptions traditionally associated with Mary Magdalene, which have subsequently helped to establish her official image. These inscriptions are usually in Latin, as, prior to Vatican II, this was the common language used in Roman Catholic liturgical celebrations.

First, the inscription,"*Optimam partem elegit*" ["she has chosen the better part"] (Lk 10:42), refers specifically to the legendary association of Mary Magdalene as the sister of Martha and Lazarus. As this dissertation contests this unauthenticated association, I have avoided including any visual imagery of Mary Magdalene in this pose.

The second inscription, '*Ne desperitis vos, qui peccare soletis. Exemploque meo vos reparate Deo!*' translated as 'Do not despair you who have sinned. Follow my example and return to God', is not a biblical text, but would probably have originated from one of the liturgical mystery plays performed in the medieval Churches. Although it, too, refers to an unauthenticated association of Mary Magdalene with a prostitute, its inclusion forms part of the case against the traditional imagery applied to Mary Magdalene.

Finally, the biblical text, "*Noli me tangere*" [do not touch me] (Jn 20:17), which, as a phrase taken out of the resurrection encounter context, has been open to visually ambiguous interpretations. Whereas, the complete biblical text, of that significant meeting with the risen Christ, singles out Mary Magdalene as the first disciple to witness and believe in the resurrection. The text also testifies to her ardent faith, and the love that drew her back to the tomb, in readiness for this miraculous discovery. Still, the significance of this faithful discipleship is often diminished, by the ambiguous way her physical appearance has been visually portrayed by various artists. This is more often suggestive of eroticism than of the pure spirituality of a holy woman disciple.

As an example of how this association of Mary Magdalene with eroticism has even tainted some scriptural scenes with sexual overtones is Titian's famous painting <*ILL 7*> c.1512, hanging in the National Gallery in London, of the resurrection scene, "*Noli me tangere*". This artwork can easily be interpreted to meet the prostitute mode of portrayal. The beautiful landscape scene has been artistically rendered mystical with the inclusion of the walled city of Jerusalem in the background. In the foreground, the resurrected Christ stands poised, naked save for the burial cloth which swirls around his body neatly covering only his genitals. He holds a gardening tool in one hand, which reminds the viewer of Mary Magdalene's confused mistake (Jn 20:15), and with his other hand pulls his cloth out of Mary Magdalene's reach. She, kneeling on the ground, gazes enraptured upwards at Christ, joyously reaching out her hand to touch his body.

The impact of the contrast between the fully clothed, and voluptuously beautiful

Mary Magdalene is heightened by the nakedness of Christ. Further, in consideration of the historical period in which this was painted, the scene poses no demands upon the lifestyle of the wealthy patrons of the time, who might easily have identified with the healthy plumpness of the two figures.

In the numerous versions of this biblical scene, the visual style of the paintings of Mary Magdalene is as varied as the different artists, and depends on the historic period. The Christian artists, however, could not vary the basic iconographical presentation of Mary Magdalene and Christ. The religious message had to be clearly identified through certain prescribed details. For example, a complete 'resurrection scene' would require a restored physical body of Christ, an empty tomb, two angels, a few sleeping or frightened soldiers and Mary Magdalene. All these details, however, could be depicted in the style and manner of the artist. Indeed, in the different historical paintings and sculptures depicting Mary Magdalene, one would expect her to be visually portrayed in a manner acceptable to the patrons and viewers of the time.

This dissertation raises questions, however, about the extent to which these historically-bound visual images continue to be regarded by Roman Catholics today as acceptable and definitive visual examples of Mary Magdalene. For, due to a dearth of suitable contemporary imagery, they still serve the devotional and liturgical needs of the Catholic Church.

What now follows is a brief description of the main iconographic details applicable to a visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene. The selection of these artworks have been chosen on the simple criterion of public accessibility, as the pictures have been obtained from art museums and art books. The visual images will not be evaluated for their technical excellence or aesthetic appeal, but only for what they clearly represent.

I am taking the liberty of drawing explicit attention to certain features of these pictures, because I believe that certain themes emerge and are developed consistently. Although the index of artworks listed in the appendix spans the entire historical period of Christianity, I make no claims to presenting a comprehensive collection of Mary Magdalene imagery. The wide time span serves only as an expansive historical sample.

4.2.1. Symbolism used in images of Mary Magdalene

At the start of this chapter I mentioned how numerous visual representations of Mary Magdalene reveal the patriarchal bias which demoted Mary Magdalene into the image of penitent prostitute. The basis of this negative imagery stems from the choice of symbolic imagery. Many of the 'accessories' which accompany representations of Mary Magdalene are recognisable symbols, which were traditionally associated with a Christian context with either penance and conversion or 'the vanities of the world'. A selection of illustrations will accompany the following discussion of the symbolism most commonly used.

[1] Colour symbolism

In the first chapter, I spoke of the symbolic use of colour, and touched on the colour red as associated with blood, fire and passion. In liturgical celebrations, red vestments are worn in honour of the blood of the martyrs who gave their blood in their love of the faith. Christ is often depicted robed in a red mantle over his white tunic to symbolise his own shed blood. When Mary Magdalene is clothed in red, the colour serves to remind the viewer of her ardent love for Jesus. Traditionally, Mary Magdalene has been identified as the one who had "shown such great love" (Lk 7:47). Though the unnamed woman in Luke's story was probably not Mary Magdalene, nevertheless, Mary Magdalene's passionate love for Jesus was manifested clearly at the tomb on the morning of the resurrection.

In a secular sense, the colour red is commonly associated with prostitution. In contemporary usage a 'red-light district' indicates an area known for illicit sexual transactions. When Mary Magdalene is depicted in a red robe it has also been interpreted as a reminder of her legendary 'sinful life' as a 'scarlet woman', that is, as a prostitute. It is significant to note that the traditional blue colour of the Virgin Mary's robes symbolises the heavenly untouchable aspect of her body in stark contrast to the earthy quality of the colour red.

Mary Magdalene is sometimes dressed in violet, the colour which traditionally signifies penitence. Yet, I have found more visual depictions of her in which the colour of her clothing is predominantly red. Apostolos-Cappadona maintains the symbolism, of the colours which have been specifically chosen, to be an important means of identifying the different personae attributed to Mary Magdalene (1983:111). Again, I have found the colour and her clothing vary too widely to specify deep symbolic significance. However, Mary Magdalene is usually very richly

dressed compared to the Virgin Mary. In the following illustrated examples, the colour red has clearly been used to convey a particular understanding of the person of Mary Magdalene.

This fresco by Giotto Di Bondone [c.1290] <*ILL 8*>, in the Basilica of St Francis, Assisi, depicts Mary Magdalene, swathed in a brilliant red robe. She is crouched on her knees with her hands stretched out towards the resurrected Christ, who holds out his left hand in restraint. Behind Mary Magdalene, seated on the empty tomb are two angels, one of whom points towards Mary Magdalene and the risen Christ. The intense redness of her robe accentuates the passion of her longing, as the viewer"s eyes are led to follow the thrust of the angle of her body and outstretched arms. The vibrancy of the colour adds an air of immediacy into the scene.

Another example is by Sandro Botticelli [1445-1510] <*ILL 9*>, one of the popular Renaissance artists. Here again, the illustration shows how the colour red has been used to intensify the ardour the artist wished to express in Mary Magdalene The artwork, located in the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge [USA], is entitled <u>Mystic Crucifixion</u>, and dated 1501 in Florence. In this painting, Botticelli has captured an intensely emotional portrayal of the passionate love of Mary Magdalene for Christ, through his extravagant use of the colour red. Mary Magdalene, clothed in a flaming red-coloured gown and cloak, lies on the ground clinging to the base of the cross on which Jesus hangs crucified. An angel, standing on the left side of the cross, is beating a fox, a medieval symbol of vice. The swirling clouds in the background accentuate the dramatic scene.

There is some historical and literary evidence for the symbolical association of the tone [colour] 'white' with Mary Magdalene.

For some of the early Church Fathers, Mary Magdalene exemplified the conversion of the black bride in the <u>Song of Songs</u>, who wandered about the city streets in search of her loved one. For example, Origen [c.185-254], in his <u>Commentary and Homilies on the Song of Songs</u>, urged his congregation to learn from the Bride who, though she is black, through her penitence, becomes white (Malvern 1969:93).

In the Bible, 'white' symbolises purity, as, for example, in the Book of Daniel, where some "will be purged, purified and made white" (11:35). When Isaiah pleaded with the people of Israel to wash themselves clean of their wickedness, he promised that "though your sins are like scarlet, they shall as white as snow" (1:18). Angels

and saints were believed to be clothed in shining white garments (Rv 4:4), thus to put on a white garment could be taken to put on purity. White, as light, conceptualised goodness and purity. On the other hand, black, the absence of light, conceptualised the darkness of evil and sin. However, this comparison has become unacceptable today in the light of its association with racial prejudice.

As a public manifestation of their entry into a life of sinlessness, the women who entered the Order of Penitent Magdalenes wore distinctive white dresses. The religious order, founded to harbour reformed prostitutes, was given ecclesiastical sanction in 1227 by Pope Gregory IX. The nuns were popularly known as the Magdalenes or White Ladies, called in Germany, *Weissfrauen*, and in France, *Dames Blanches*. Malvern has suggested that the choice of colour might have been influenced by the sermons of the twelfth-century mystic, Bernard of Clairvaux, on the Song of Songs. Bernard contrasts the 'black' heart of sin to a 'white' heart filled with humility and meekness (Malvern 1969:115). In Malvern's dissertation on the Digby Play, Mary Magdalene, she comments on the amusing situation of angels clothed in white which the audience would also have identified with the garb of penitent prostitutes:

> ...the Digby playwright, as well as some of the audience, knew that penitent prostitutes, of whom the Magdalen was the patron saint, had been from the thirteenth century on, called *Dames Blanches, Weissfrauen*, White Ladies. The Magdalen's exclamation, when she sees the angels clothed in white, held, then, a particular delight for the "sensible folk" in the fifteenth century audience.
>
> (Malvern 1969:115).

There is no evidence of how widely Mary Magdalene came to be identified with white, for I have found, as yet, no visual representation of her dressed only in white, dating from the Middle Ages. It might simply be coincidental that the nineteenth century French artist, Jean Beraud [c.1891] <*ILL 10*>, clothed Mary Magdalene in an evening gown as white as a bridal gown. In the painting, Mary Magdalene, with braided red hair, lies dramatically full length on the floor with her hands clasped on Jesus's feet. Beraud has presented the biblical scene as a contemporary period dinner party, with all the 'apostles' dressed in formal, black evening suits. Even Jesus wears a black robe over his traditional white tunic. The painting, located in the Musee d'Orsay in Paris and entitled, The Magdalene at the house of the Pharisee, also shows how the conception of Mary Magdalene as a harlot has been sustained through the centuries.

For a certain period, it was fashionable to name various things after Mary

Magdalene because they were white. Malvern refers to white roses in Germany called *Magdalenrosen*, a small rich French *gateau* "madeleine". An English "white peach also bears her name, as the Oxford English Dictionary states (1933 ed.,VI, ii, 23) and illustrates with a quotation from a 1706 issue of the Retir'd Gardn'r: 'The white Magdalen has a sugar'd winy taste....'" (Malvern 1969:2).

[2] Jar of ointment

The most commonly identified emblem of Mary Magdalene is the jar of perfumed ointment. The jar symbolically recalls the intended anointing of the dead body of Jesus by the three women on the Easter morning. In some paintings all three women are depicted carrying jars (Hall 1989:202).

However, Mary Magdalene's jar is also traditionally understood to refer in particular to the pre-crucifixion anointing at the house in Bethany (Mt 26:9; Mk 14:5;& Jn 12:5). Then, the apostles criticised the waste of the expensive oil. This is the scene in which the woman, whom John names 'Mary', but who remains unnamed by the other three evangelists, is commended by Jesus for her contrition and her love. It is also the scene which, as many scholars have verified, has been erroneously identified with Mary Magdalene. The jar of perfumed ointment was interpreted as a symbol of the life of vanity and loose morals, a life from which Mary Magdalene was redeemed by Christ's forgiveness.

Mary Magdalene is often imaged simply as saint -'beata', and again mostly identified by the jar. This thirteenth century portrait by the Maestro di Palazzo Venetia <*ILL 11*>, now located in the National Gallery, London, depicts a nimbed Mary Magdalene wearing a bright red robe and veil and holding her ointment jar with both hands as she gazes meditatively at the viewer.

According to the legends of Mary Magdalene's eremitical life, she spent some thirty years in the wilderness of Provence, in an area known as Sainte-Baume. Translated from the French as "holy balm" (Warner 1985:257), the name suggests an association with the legendary Mary Magdalene who anointed the feet of Jesus with "costly ointment, pure nard" and "the house was full of the scent of the ointment" (Jn 12:3).

There were also other symbolic associations attached to an ointment jar or a jar-like container. Warner, in Monuments and Maidens, comments on the painting by Jacoba del Sellaio, Triumph of Chastity which depicts the vestal virgin Tuccia

proving her chastity by carrying the waters of the Tiber intact in a sieve (Warner 1985:242). Tuccia and her sieve become an allegory of chastity, thus, Queen Elizabeth I was sometimes depicted with a sieve (Warner 1985:244). A virtuous body must appear a sound watertight container, like the jar of precious ointment that is Mary Magdalene's attribute (Warner 1985:257).

During the Middle Ages, with the decline of the church's property and wealth, the wealthy bankers became the main patrons of the arts. A popular custom amongst these patrons was the commissioning of fashionable portraits of the saints. The number of such portraits of Mary Magdalene, which date from the Middle Ages, would certainly indicate she was a favourite saint of the wealthy bankers (Piper 1988:419).

When, for example, Mary Magdalene is visually portrayed dressed in very fashionable and ornate clothing, this would be considered a desirable attribute for a wealthy patron. The next picture by Stefan Lochner's [c.1451] <*ILL 12*> in the Alte Pinakothek, München is a detail of a larger painting. Here a nimbed and rather coquettish Mary Magdalene is identified by the ointment jar in her hands. She is dressed in fashionable period clothes with a large jewelled brooch clasp on her cape. Her tightly curled reddish hair is visible beneath a frilled white veil which covers the lace *coif* over her head. Mary Magdalene's hair is usually auburn in colour which has cultural rather than symbolic significance. As many medieval representations of the Virgin Mother and other women saints also have red hair, it suggests that this colour epitomised the ideal of beauty.

Sometimes, there is a mysterious connotation in that she is in the act of opening the jar while she gazes at the onlooker, although the significance of this gesture is not clear. In Jan van Scorel's [c.1495-1562] <*ILL 13*> painting in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Mary Magdalene is seated outside, dressed in beautiful brocades with her hair fashionably styled. She holds an ornamented ointment jar on her lap with her left hand and is about to lift the lid off with her right hand as she gazes meditatively at the viewer.

Another example is in a painting by Moretto da Brescia [1498-1554] <*ILL 14*> in the Art Institute of Chicago. Here, Mary Magdalene stands poised with her back to the viewer holding the ointment jar with both hands as she half-turns her head back towards the viewer. She is beautifully dressed in clothes of the period with her long hair, fashionably styled in two plaits, braided on the top of her head, but hanging loosely down her back. She appears to have momentarily paused in deep reflection. The closed ointment jar which she clasps in front of her becomes the

focal point in the picture, as the viewer's eyes follow the line of Mary Magdalene's arms and eyes. Even the folds of her clothing lead the viewer's gaze back to the ointment jar, adding emphasis onto its significance.

And again, in Bernardino Luini's [c.1512-1532] <ILL 15> painting in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, Mary Magdalene is depicted gazing at the viewer as she begins to open the ointment jar. She has an enigmatic and serene 'Mona Lisa' smile on her face which seems linked to the significance of the opened ointment jar.

[3] Long flowing hair

Long hair was and is still considered a woman's glory. Paul cautioned against the vanity of women by insisting that they should not be allowed to pray in a public place without first covering up their hair (1 Cor.13-14). Yet, it was customary for unmarried women and virgins in the ancient world to leave their long hair unbound, hanging loosely around their shoulders. Whereas, courtesans braided or piled their hair high on their heads (Hall 1974:144).

Although fashions and customs vary from country to country, the manner and care with which a woman arranges her hair is often a clear indication of how she is to be treated. Indeed, as recently as the last fifty years, our grandmothers, as 'respectable' women, kept their hair pinned up in public, only loosening it in the privacy of the bedroom. Here, in the Zulu tradition, a woman's status in the family was identified by the way in which she wore her hair.

The legendary tradition which identifies Mary Magdalene as the biblical woman who wipes the feet of Christ with her hair would require the presence of long, flowing hair. In Christian iconography, when the hair is long enough to cover the body, it sometimes becomes symbolic of penitence. In the hermit scenes, the long flowing hair is frequently Mary Magdalene's only 'covering'. This served to emphasise the penitential austerity of the desert, as it was a common symbol used for many of the desert hermits (Hall 1974:143). However, in many of the visual representations of Mary Magdalene, her hair reveals more than it covers and assumes a new erotic symbolism (see below <ILL 21>). Certainly, in some contemporary cinema imagery, when a woman loosens her long hair, it signifies an invitation that she is relaxed and ready for love-making.

Could Mary Magdalene's long flowing hair be seen as symbolically referring to her

conversion to the Christian way of life, the triumph of agape over Eros? For, in the Litany of the Saints, said to originate from the fourth century, Mary Magdalene is even invoked as a 'virgin'. The long hair could present a dual significance in the portrayal of her nakedness. She is either depicted asexually, with her long, thick hair protectively covering her whole body, or her long hair becomes seductively sexual, accentuating an awareness of her exposed flesh. Thus, on the one hand, the hair could relate to a spiritualised immortal existence. Or on the other hand, it could specifically denote her mortal frailty and sinful eroticism. In the western artistic tradition, hair is associated with sexual passion and power (Berger 1972:55), which would perhaps explain why the Virgin Mary's hair is carefully bound and hidden.

It was mentioned above how Mary Magdalene can often be identified in visual representations of the crucifixion and deposition as the woman with extravagant emotional demeanour. This is usually in sharp and dramatic contrast to the coiffed and modestly veiled Virgin Mary. For example, in Moretto da Brescia's Pietà, <*ILL 16*> Mary Magdalene kneels on the ground, tightly clasping the dead Christ's legs. Her anguished face is half hidden by her long hair hanging loosely over her shoulders and back.

Or, in David Jones'[1895-1974] <*ILL 17*> pencil sketch of the Crucifixion Mary Magdalene kneels on the ground at the base of cross, with her arms clasped around the crucified Jesus' waist. The linear treatment of Christ's hair is linked with Mary Magdalene's head resting almost on his lap. Her long, untied hair flows down like a river towards the ground. The Virgin Mary, standing, head veiled, places her arm under Jesus' arm, apparently in an attempt to ease the weight and pain of his suffering. Whereas Mary Magdalene's eyes are closed in grief, the mother and son gaze into each other's eyes earnestly.

The visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene forms an important device in Christian art as exemplified in these two illustrations, <*ILL 16*> and <*ILL 17*>, where she dramatically epitomises a very human grief. Mary Magdalene's position at the feet of Jesus is intended to be reminiscent of the sinful woman's position, under the table weeping at the feet of Jesus. The duplicated position provides an important didactic device of visual association. Thus, any visual image of a woman kneeling at the foot of the cross, or even crouched in prayer on the ground, will be associated with the penitent Mary Magdalene.

[4] Nakedness

In the visual representation of the legends about Mary Magdalene and Mary of Egypt, great emphasis was placed on the need for their absolute rejection of the world and its vanities. So, they took off their luxurious apparel to go naked like the beasts in the desert. This renounciation of clothing and any form of physical ornamentation was regarded as a virtuous act. It showed their remorse and desire to mortify their bodies in penance for the sinful lives of decadence.

Through the centuries there have been different attitudes to, and concepts about, nakedness. Essentially, human beings are naked creatures in that, unlike most other creatures, we have no natural, protective, covering for our bodies. In the creation story, this nakedness of man and woman was not a problem until they disobeyed God. From that moment of self-awareness, a whole range of aspects about their nakedness suddenly began to develop. In particular, their nude bodies became specifically associated with sinfulness. Warner outlines the medieval Christian Church's classification of four different aspects of nudity:

> nuditas criminalis, or the nakedness of a sinner, a sign of vice; nuditas naturalis, the human condition of animal nakedness...no bark, feathers, fur or scales; nuditas temporalis, the figurative shedding of all worldly goods and wealth and status, voluntary or involuntary; and nuditas virtualis, symbolising innocence, the raiment of the soul cleansed by confession, the blessed company of the redeemed in heaven and of Truth herself.
> (Warner 1985:295).

This wide interpretation of nakedness, which allows for virtuous as well as sinful nudity, has sometimes confused the interpretation of Christian artworks. Christian artists, like Giotto, Hieronymous Bosch and Pieter Breugel, were noted for their depictions of sinful pleasures and the punishments of hell. They were clearly portraying the nuditas criminalis by their emphasis on tortures applied to the genitals of the naked men and women. The sinfulness of nakedness is also implicit in the medieval imagery of the naked Eve, when she is depicted as the archetype of sexual perversity and corruption. Warner mentions the church sculptures in France of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries which depict "lust....as a naked woman undergoing horrors of suffering in the very parts tainted by her sin" (1985:295).

The imagery of the two 'penitent prostitutes', Mary Magdalene and Mary of Egypt, suggests a voluntary nakedness, [nuditas temporalis], in that they divest themselves of earthly goods and comforts. However, the manner in which these women's nakedness has been depicted cannot be easily interpreted as a

nakedness of absolute innocence [*nuditas virtualis*], such as epitomised by the naked bodies of the virtues in Michelangelo's frescoes on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

The concept of virtuous nakedness is also affirmed by other religions. There is, for example, a Hindu sect which believes that the pure ones do not need clothes (Nicholls 1975:166).

Nakedness in Christian artworks must also be historically contextualised. What is considered acceptable in certain historic periods would not be condoned in another period. There are certain criteria also in the extent of nakedness permissible. For example, in visual representations of the Crucifixion, it has never been regarded as suitable or necessary to depict a naked Jesus. Although the Bible recounts that Jesus was stripped of his clothing, Christian artists have always been required to add a cloth, albeit artistically, to cover his genitals. Similarly, in *"Noli me tangere"* scenes when Christ's newly restored body is displayed, the burial cloth always covers his lower regions adequately.

Thus, Mary Magdalene's nakedness must be recognised as bound by certain historical conventions. The scenes of her complete nakedness are usually in the privacy of her hermitage. When angels are present in the hermitage, the conceptualisation of her nudity may vary depending on historical criteria of suitability. It is arguable though, whether any of Mary Magdalene's nakedness adequately meets the criteria of the medieval Church's classification of *nuditas virtualis*.

In this example, a detail from the Altarpiece of the Apocalypse <*ILL 18*> dated 1400 from Hamburg, now in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, a completely naked and nimbed Mary Magdalene is depicted, kneeling receiving communion from a Bishop. Her hands are clasped together and her eyes downcast in prayer, but there is a strange lack of decorum about her nudity in the presence of the fully clothed Bishop and his male acolytes. Is it possible that the minute, strategically placed fern leaf in front of Mary Magdalene's genital area was regarded as sufficient covering for a saint?

The artists have on occasion stretched the limits of the Church's restrictions in their presentation of a spiritual experience. As in this painting by Simon Vouet [c. 1590-1649] <*ILL 19*> which depicts Mary Magdalene in ecstasy, her angelic supporters appear more like strong young virile men than as immortal spirits. An added

consideration of the content of these historical depictions is that they were executed by male artists for a predominantly male clientele.

Mary Magdalene has been portrayed in at least three aspects of nakedness. Possibly the most damaging image to her womanhood is within the *nuditas naturalis* in which

> Saints like Mary Magdalene and Mary of Egypt have refused the life of sexuality by embracing full degradation and so by inversion remain identified with the biology of women. Their bestial hairiness, while clothing them, sets the seal on their humbleness too, and intensifies their outsider state, first as prostitutes, then as recluses.
>
> (Warner 1985:303)

The only depictions of Mary Magdalene as a hermit with her body covered in hair like an animal's fur that I have found have been located in isolated remnants of altar-pieces dating from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It is therefore plausible to assume that during those periods this rather extraordinary conceptualisation of saintly mortification reflected a fashionable view of the Church.

The artistic bestialisation of her body is especially obvious as her face remains delicately beautiful. An example of this bestialisation can be seen in this illustration of Lucas Moser's Mary Magdalene triptych [c.1431] <*ILL 20*> in the Pfarrkirche at Tiefenbronn. The large central figure of Mary Magdalene is supported by seven clothed and winged angels, two of which hold a draped veil in front of her pubic area. With her long hair hanging down her shoulders, her body hair has grown over her whole body, leaving only her face and neck, hands, elbows, breasts, knees and feet bare. Two further visual images of this extraordinary phenomenon can be seen on the Münnerstädt altar [c.1490/92] <*ILL 21*> in the National Museum of München, in which, once again, only her neck and face, hands and elbows, knees and feet are exposed.

Happily, the more frequent artistic interpretation of Mary Magdalene's eremetical nakedness is the *nuditas temporalis*, where she is invariably 'blessed' with phenomenally long hair which more or less covers her nakedness. This long hair is most often shown in the depictions of Mary Magdalene's legendary ecstatic elevation supported by angels, prior to the moment of her death. In Giotto's portrayal [circa 1290] <*ILL 22*> of this event, a nimbed, kneeling Mary Magdalene is supported on a veil held by two clothed, nimbed and winged angels. On the left side of the picture, another angel hovers over Mary Magdalene, while on the other side, facing her, a fourth angel extends his right hand in blessing over her. Mary

Magdalene is naked but her body is almost entirely covered by her long, loosely flowing hair. Her hands are clasped and extended in prayer and her face gazes ecstatically up in prayer.

The visual depiction of the naked <u>Mary Magdalene praying in the wilderness</u> by Quentin Massys [1464-1530] <*ILL 23*>, located in the Philadelphia Museum, could also be considered a more realistic understanding of a penitential eremetical life. In another painting, <u>Mary of Egypt praying in the wilderness</u>, Massys depicted a similar portrayal of the 'penitent prostitute', as a naked woman, kneeling with hands clasped in prayer, with her long, flowing hair just covering her breasts and pubic area. Mary of Egypt is symbolically differentiated from Mary Magdalene by the traditional inclusion of three loaves, based on her own iconography.

In contrast, Albrecht Dürer [1471-1528] portrayed Mary Magdalene's elevation far more sensuously in keeping with the traditional penitent-prostitute mode. Dürer's woodcut, <*ILL 24*>, in the École Nationale Supérieure de Beaux-Arts, Paris, depicts a nimbed Mary Magdalene supported by six clothed and winged little boy angels, poised above Marseilles. Her hands are clasped together in prayer, her face turned to the side and her eyes gaze downwards. Her long flowing hair covers her pubic area and one breast, leaving her right breast exposed.

Again, another artistic rendering of Mary Magdalene's elevation in prayer has ensured that her long hair truly serves as a covering. This illumination in the Sforza Book of Hours <*ILL 25*>, located now in the British Museum, London, by an unknown artist, shows a nimbed Mary Magdalene supported by four clothed and winged angels hovering over the Marseilles harbour. Her body is covered by thick tresses of long curly hair. Her hands are clasped together in prayer and she gazes at the viewer serenely.

From a different perspective, Gregor Erhart's wooden sculpture <*ILL 26*>, presents a completely naked Mary Magdalene standing with her hands clasped in prayer. One might expect the saint in religious ecstasy or bliss to be clothed rather than posed like a Venus. Although this visual depiction of Mary Magdalene has, with hands clasped in prayer, an almost identical standing pose, to Donatello's haggard penitent (<*ILL 45*>) there is nothing else to suggest a penitential life-style.

The artists appear to have focussed more on a dramatical notion of a beautiful woman, Mary Magdalene, going out into the wilderness to pray. The legendary reason for her eremetical desire, namely, to mortify her flesh and atone for her sins, is often visually neglected. In the resultant artworks, the depiction of the naked

body of a woman often supercedes the spiritual significance of her life of mortification.

Later, in the seventeenth century, Raphael Schiaminosi's etching <*ILL 27*> in Bibliothèque Les Fontaines, Chantilly, shows a voluptuously full figure supported by four naked boy cherubs, more reminiscent of Dürer's sensuous portrayal. In Schiaminosi's etching, Mary Magdalene's hands are clasped together in prayer and her eyes gaze upwards in ecstasy. Her long hair flying in the wind just covers her breasts and pubic area.

Some of the artistic representations of Mary Magdalene like <*ILL 24*>, <*ILL 26*> and <*ILL 27*> appear to concentrate more on the voluptuous curves of a female body, rather than on the austerities imposed by a penitential life of renunciation. In comparison to the other-worldliness and sexlessness of the Virgin Mary imagery, this imagery of the naked Mary Magdalene never allowed viewers to forget her sexuality.

[5] Rich clothing

Mary Magdalene's elegant clothing, indicative of wealth and prosperity, is usually in marked contrast to the other women's attire in the depicted scene. This would suggest that 'rich clothing' is in someway specifically symbolic to Mary Magdalene. It could be associated with Mary Magdalene's legendary decadent life, in which she could earn such clothing through her 'profession'. This theory is vindicated by some of the visual imagery, shown below, of her dramatic rejection of this rich apparel.

In the portrait of Mary Magdalene by Rogier van der Weyden [1399-1464] <*ILL 28*>, and a century later, in a painting by by Lucas Cranach <*ILL 29*> [1472-1553], the artists have presented Mary Magdalene simply as a beautiful saint. On the other hand, in this Crucifixion scene by Jerg Ratgeb [c.1519] <*ILL 30*>, the artist has used Mary Magdalene's fashionably elaborate clothing to contrast her with the Virgin Mary and the other women.

[6] Over-turned casket of jewels

Jewels, as symbols of the transience of earthly possessions, in contrast to the durable eternal virtues (Hall 1974:169), are sometimes included in the Mary Magdalene iconography. Here, they are shown as evidence of her past life of sensual, worldly pleasures. The dramatic renunciation of her jewellery and rich clothing forms part of her legendary conversion from harlotry into a life of penitential fervour. Conversely, the renunciation of her rich clothing, would probably not be regarded as a necessary or desirable attribute by the wealthy patrons of the artworks. This painting by Merisa da Caravaggio [1571-1610] <*ILL 31*>, has been aptly described by Friedlaender:

> Magdalene sits forlorn in dreamy repentance. The somnolent and sluggish posture of her body expresses her humble submission. Her plump young figure seems unsuitably garbed in the over-lavish dress with its rich damask pattern; the precious gems are scattered over the floor as thrown in disgust. It is the moment after her conversion, and the consuming effect of this experience is shown by her exhaustion and by the painful frown which disturbs her brow. This display of physical humility as the result of religious emotion creates a new type of Magdalene which not only diverges from the prim spirit of Northern prototypes, but also from such openly demonstrative and excited Magdalene figures as that by Titian.
>
> (Friedlaender 1969:95).

In another example, Fabrizio Boschi [c.1570-1642], <*ILL 32*>, depicts Mary Magdalene smitten with remorse after reading from the Bible. In the painting she has begun to pull, with both hands, her jewellery off her neck, and to loosen the ornaments in her hair. To emphasise the Christian dimension of this renunciation, the foreground of this scene shows a human skull beside the Bible and a pretty perfume bottle.

The same theme is continued a century later, in this etching by Gerard Edelinck [c.1640-1707] <*ILL 33*>, based on a popular painting by Charles Le Brun. Here, Mary Magdalene is depicted in her lavishly furnished boudoir, her face turned away from the mirror, and gazing imploringly upwards in prayer. Her bejewelled hair tumbling loose, she is frenziedly pulling off her 'rich', beautiful clothing. An overturned casket of jewels lies at her feet.

As a final example of the visual portrayal of this rejection of worldly feminine pleasures, André Boisson, [c. 1680] <*ILL 34*>, whose paintings adorn the main sanctuary of the basilica of Ste-Marie-Madeleine at St-Maximin-de-Provence, has

sanctuary of the basilica of Ste-Marie-Madeleine at St-Maximin-de-Provence, has depicted Mary Magdalene, half-undressed, rising from her chair in her boudoir. With her face gazing earnestly upwards, her right hand begins to pull at her necklace. Other items of her other clothing lie strewn around the room.

[7] Skull and crucifix

The skull is a common symbol signifying death. It was introduced into Christian art during the medieval period, as a Christian symbol of the transitoriness of life. Later, "saints at prayer [were] often depicted, particularly from the end of the sixteenth century, gazing at a skull, perhaps held in their hand" (Hall 1974:284). The salutary practice of looking at a skull while praying was first recommended by the Roman Catholic Society of Jesus, founded in 1534 (Hall 1974:284). It is still a common custom in monastic refectories to place a model of a human skull on the main table, as a constant reminder to the community of the virtue of mortifying the appetite.

The crucifix is the image of Jesus Christ on the cross. As the classic devotional symbol of the Christian faith, it is often used in Christian iconography to emphasise a saint's awareness of sin and desire for vicarious suffering. Saint Thérèse of Lisieux is symbolically identified by the crucifix she carries, covered in roses, in her arms. In most of the visual imagery of Mary Magdalene in the wilderness, the symbols of penance arranged around Mary Magdalene are the skull, crucifix and the Bible. The austerity of Mary Magdalene's life style is sometimes signified by the reed matting used to cover her nakedness. When the crucifix and skull are placed together, they symbolise a desire for mortification in emulation of Jesus Christ's suffering.

A poignant example of this manner of visual depiction of Mary Magdalene is by Raphael Sadeler [c.1560-1628] <ILL 35>, in which she is depicted kneeling in her hermitage, wrapped in plaited grass matting. With her hands clasped together in prayer, her eyes gaze remorsefully upwards. The artist has arranged carefully, on the rocky ledge on which Mary Magdalene leans, the traditional symbols of her penitence, namely her unction jar, the skull, crucifix, Bible, an opened prayer book, 'holy water', and some thorn bush, reminiscent of Christ's crown of thorns.

Sadeler's portrayal of Mary Magdalene, said to be based on a painting by Tintoretto, presents a realistic image of an emaciated aesthetic. Whereas Christofano Allori [1577-1621] <ILL 36>, manifests no intention of portraying any

austerity or mortification other than the presence of the skull and crucifix. Allori's Mary Magdalene [in Palatina Gallery, Florence] is clearly still the beautiful seductive prostitute with her naked breasts pressed against the opened pages of the Bible. Thus, the viewer's attention is diverted away from any expression of remorse, which the skull and crucifix would otherwise evoke.

In Georges de la Tour's [1593-1652] <*ILL 37*>, well-known visual image of Mary Magdalene, she is seated in front of a mirror. This reflects to the viewer the human skull which she touches with her left hand. The artist has ingeniously used the flame from the lighted candle behind the skull to capture Mary Magdalene's rapt contemplation. However, the skull, with the combination of mirror and perfume bottle, is perhaps more suggestive of a beautiful woman's remorseful consideration of the approach of age and death, rather than of her sorrow for a sinful life.

In a second rendering of the same scene, de la Tour changed this regret to penitential remorse. Mary Magdalene holding the skull on her lap has a whip on the ground beside her, as she gazes into the flame of the candle on the table. The whip, coupled with the sackcloth tied around her waist, and her naked shoulders, are clearly intended to suggest the self-flagellation associated with penitential remorse for grievous sins.

A happy omission, in many of these visual representations of Mary Magdalene's life as a penitent hermit, would seem to be these examples of torture instruments. Whips and thorn bushes according to the some hagiographical accounts were traditionally associated with medieval penitents. The vicarious suffering of Christ, through which he redeemed the sinful world, motivated many devout believers to acts of penitential remorse for their supposed complicity in Christ's death. The practice of extreme mortification, which included self-imposed tortures with the wearing of hair-shirts against the bare skin, the whipping of bare thighs and backs with knotted thongs, or rolling naked in nettle and thorn bushes, was particularly popular during the medieval period.

[8] Tear-filled eyes

The depiction of tears emphasised and reminded the viewer of the saint's contrition for her guilty past. Malvern (1969:3) mentions how Mary Magdalene has also the "dubious honour of contributing a new word to the English language. A word used to express a sentimental tearfulness, "maudlin" derived from the old French Maudelayne. This imagery was also the inspiration for Richard Crashaw's poem,

The Weeper,

> Loe where a wounded heart, with bleeding eyes conspire;
> Is she a flaming fountaine, or a weeping fire?
> ... Still spending, never spent; I meane
> Thy faire eyes, sweet Magdalen.

<div style="text-align: right">(Gardner 1957:196).</div>

In the painting of Mary Magdalene by Titian [c. 1531] <*ILL 38*>, in Pitti Palace, Florence, the only element which could suggest the life of penitential fervour are Mary Magdalene's swollen tearful eyes. There is little else reminiscent of a penitent in the beautiful naked woman with long, soft, golden red hair which she presses against her body, as she gazes upwards, in prayerful contemplation.

Nearly two hundred years later and Teresa del Po's etching [c.1716]<*ILL 39*> continues the erotic theme. Mary Magdalene, the 'prostitute' is transfixed in a situation from which she cannot escape to real penance and redemption. Del Po's Mary Magdalene is seated in a rocky hermitage, wiping tears from her eyes as she gazes at the three nails from Jesus's crucifixion. Her robe is loosely wrapped around her waist. Her long hair hangs down her plump naked shoulders and pretty breasts.

[9] Reading the scriptures

As it has been shown, several of the above visual representations have included a selection of the iconographic symbols associated with Mary Magdalene, thereby facilitating her identification. When only one symbol is used, therefore, it is sometimes necessary to refer to other artworks in which these same symbols are depicted in order to assess their significance. In many of the visual images of Mary Magdalene as a hermit, the Bible, either opened or closed, is included as a prerequisite feature of eremitical life.

The following are examples of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene which have excluded the austerities of the hermit life, but retained the devout meditation of Scripture. At first sight the imagery appears to be affirmative, in the sense that there is no immediately obvious reference to the 'sins of the flesh'. However, the prominent inclusion of the ointment jar with all its inherent iconographic symbolism belies any positive affirmation of Mary Magdalene's discipleship.

Rogier van der Weyden's [c.1450] <*ILL 40*> painting, a fragment of an altarpiece,

depicts Mary Magdalene beautifully dressed in fifteenth century robes and seated on a cushion. With her hair modestly covered in a lace-edged veil, she is reading from a gilt-edged, clasped book. Her jar of ointment is prominently positioned on the floor beside her, as a linking device to remind the viewer of Mary Magdalene's usage of the ointment on the feet of Jesus. Thus, the woman reading can be recognised as the converted prostitute.

Similarly, Ambrosius Benson's [1519-1550] <*ILL 41*> portrait depicts Mary Magdalene, dressed in an elegant sixteenth century dress and head-covering, seated and reading from an illuminated book. A very prettily decorated, period perfume bottle is prominently placed on the table in front of her. From a hagiographical aspect, it would be easy for viewers to identify with either of these portraits.

In striking contrast to van der Weyden's and Benson's interior setting for their interpretation of The Magdalene reading, Charles Pechwell's [1742-1789] engraving <*ILL 42*> demonstrates a different perception of her contemplative life.

Pechwell's portrayal was inspired by a painting by Pompeo Batoni, a successful Roman artist, patronised by three popes (Piper 1988:42). Although this artwork, located now in the Bibliothèque Les Fontaines, Chantilly, is entitled The penitent Mary Magdalene, there is little evidence to suggest any austerity or self-mortification. Pechwell depicts a young beautiful woman, lying reading in a pretty wooded cave. The viewer will immediately notice, however, that her robe has slipped off one of her shoulders exposing her breast. Not all the eremetical visual representations have Mary Magdalene naked with long hair. Often, as in this example, a single aspect of undress adds more erotic emphasis than her whole body, exposed and naked.

A composite selection of pictures has been shown thus far in this chapter to illustrate how the iconography of Mary Magdalene has been utilised by various artists. A detailed descriptive comparison of a selection of artworks, illustrating the three modes of characterisation, will now follow. The iconography of each example will be explored to expose the prevalent bias inherent in this visual image of Mary Magdalene. The question posed at the conclusion of this presentation will concern the moral impact these images have on the viewer. How are women in the latter part of the twentieth century expected to relate to or react to these images?

4.3. Comparative analysis of a selected group of artworks

Three groups of artworks will be illustrated. Each group will represent one of the three modes of characterisation in which Mary Magdalene has been visually represented. The imagery has been drawn from an expansive historical sample of artists. My intention in comparing these different artworks is to arrive at some conclusive evidence of the consistency in the patriarchal statement about Mary Magdalene throughout the Christian Era.

Reference will also be made to further examples of this evidence. The criteria employed in the selection of these artworks for consideration is two-fold. First, my intention has been simply to present an inclusive variety of the scope of imagery researched in this dissertation. As this dissertation makes no claims to present an exhaustive and comprehensive collection of Mary Magdalene imagery, the selection will be limited, but it will be representative. There has been no deliberate exclusion of any visual imagery of Mary Magdalene.

Second, because it is important to correct the imbalance of negative imagery, the selection will not only comprise artworks that expose the misogynist prejudice inherent in numerous images of Mary Magdalene, currently in popular devotional usage, but it will also attempt to show positive, affirming portrayals of the saint in her discipleship. The analysis will thus allow for the possibility of presenting 'corrective images' to the previously 'bad press' inflicted upon Mary Magdalene.

4.3.1. Images depicting Mary Magdalene as "penitent"

Many of the artworks depicting Mary Magdalene are entitled, The penitent Magdalene. This invites the viewer to find, or at least search for, some visual evidence of remorse or sorrowful self-recrimination in the representation. The images selected here all depict Mary Magdalene as a hermit. They are based upon the hagiography which recounts her post-ascension life in Provence. Mary Magdalene was believed to have retreated into the mountain wilderness of southern France to spend the rest of her life in penance and austerity, mortifying her body for its past sins. As mentioned earlier, one of the identifying symbols of 'a penitent' is her naked body, more or less covered by long hair.

EXAMPLE A

The thirteenth century artist of this visual depiction of the penitent Mary Magdalene has been named simply the Magdalene Master <*ILL 43*>. The artwork can be seen in the Galleria Accademia, in Florence. Mary Magdalene is depicted naked, but her long, dark hair serves as a complete robe, leaving only her face, arms and feet exposed. She stands holding an opened scroll with her right hand. Her left hand, raised in warning to the viewer, emphasises the text of her scroll, which reads in translation, 'Do not despair you who have sinned. Follow my example and return to God'. This artwork encapsulates the way the Catholic Church has used Mary Magdalene. She is presented as the model to all sinners in need of redemption.

This central image of the altarpiece panel is surrounded by eight smaller pictures, in which the details of the legendary and biblical life of Mary Magdalene are depicted. It is clear from the assortment of depicted scenes that the artist believed Mary Magdalene to be the sinful woman who washed Jesus' feet with her tears (Lk 7:37), as well as the sister of Martha and Lazarus (Jn 12:3). The remainder of the small pictures depict scenes from the legendary, post-ascension life of Mary Magdalene in the rocky wilderness of Provence.

The artwork illustrates a formal appreciation of the saintly fervour of the Mary Magdalene as a penitent. The artist has not encouraged any sensual or sexual titillation in the viewer. Instead, in all the depicted scenes, Mary Magdalene is always chastely covered in a thick mantle of hair, or dressed in a long red robe. Thus, besides the inherently negative significance of this visual image of Mary Magdalene, the various pictures could be regarded as an affirmation of a heroic life of austerity and fervour.

However, any image of a woman clothed only in her hair and surrounded by images of penance cannot be considered affirmative. Moreover, although her scroll encourages sinners to return to God, there is no visual evidence of her own forgiveness. The woman is manifestly still involved in an arduous process of reparation. The imagery raises serious questions about the Church's understanding of forgiveness which will be addressed in chapter five.

EXAMPLE B

This detail of a larger painting by the Master of the Magdalene Legend <*ILL 44*>, dated from the fourteenth century, is located in Hautecombe Abbey in Savoy. A kneeling, nimbed Mary Magdalene, with her long hair covering her body like a dress is caught up in ecstatic contemplation. She is supported by two angels holding her legs. Four other angels, hovering at the top of the painting, play various musical instruments to accompany her heavenly contemplation. Mary Magdalene is poised in contemplation with her arms raised in prayer.

Again, the imagery presents a traditionally accepted example of an early Christian desert hermit. Further, the iconography symbolises the veneration such an aesthetic life inspires. This is shown by the respectful attendance of angels as well as Mary Magdalene concentrated expression of prayer.

EXAMPLE C

Donatello, [1386-1466] <*ILL 45*>, is regarded as "one of the founding fathers of the Renaissance" (Piper 1988:156). This gilded and painted wooden sculpture of Mary Magdalene was initially situated in the Baptistery, but now located in Museo dell'opera del Duomo in Florence. The illustration shows Donatello's extraordinary ability to charge his sculptures with intense emotional expression. This sculpture is also the most striking example of Mary Magdalene imagery that I have found. A portrayal that depicts the devastating rigours of a life of self-mortification and penance.

Mary Magdalene's body is gaunt, her naked body covered with thick, heavy tresses of uncombed hair. This is not the soft comeliness of a courtesan but rather the strong self-disciplined face of an aesthetic mystic. Despite her anguished haggard appearance, Mary Magdalene's whole being is charged with an intensity of prayerfulness. She stands absorbed in contemplation.

A century later, Mary Magdalene's image has scarcely changed in this version by Alessandro Filipepi called Il Botticelli [1444-1510] <*ILL 46*>, entitled The Trinity with Mary Magdalene and John the Baptist, the Archangel Raphael and Tobias and dated c.1491-94. Mary Magdalene stands on the right side of the Trinity. This visual representation of God the Father, Son and Spirit, known as "The Throne of Mercy", was not unusual in Florentine art of the period (Farr 1987:26). The painting formed the main panel of the high altarpiece of an early fourteenth century

convent, *St Elisbetta dell Convertite* in Florence, founded to house penitent prostitutes (Farr 1987:26). This would explain the prominence in the picture of the gaunt, penitent Mary Magdalene, her naked body covered by the thick tresses of her long hair. She holds both her hands up, in a gesture of pleading adoration, to the Trinitarian group.

On the other side of the Trinity is a smaller figure of John the Baptist, holding an ornate cross. John, clothed in an animal skin and a swathe of ornamented red silk, engages the viewers' attention by pointing to the central figures. The barren and desolate landscape is an appropriate setting for both the penitent Mary Magdalene and John the Baptist as the "voice crying in the wilderness" (Jn 1:23). Indeed, the main central grouping of the Trinity initiates this formidable picture of pain and suffering with the sorrowful face of God the Father surrounded by little mourning cherubs. The picture is completed with the two tiny figures of Tobias and the Archangel Raphael furtively hurrying along in their journey.

EXAMPLE D

As the previous examples represent an extremely harsh interpretation of her eremitical post-ascension life, I now include an alternative example of the penitent Mary Magdalene. This picture, dated 1530, is by a Bruges artist known only as The Master of the Female Half-lengths <*ILL 47*>. It is located at the Indiana University Art Museum in Bloomington. In this painting, Mary Magdalene is portrayed seated in a large carved chair reading from the Bible. A chalice-shaped ointment jar is opened on the table. She is richly bejewelled and dressed in clothes of the period with her hair neatly styled in a period bonnet. She stares meditatively into the near distance. Compared to the previous examples, this portrait is easily acceptable because it makes no demands on the viewer.

However, in another painting by an Anonymous seventeenth century French artist <*ILL 48*>, there is an added dimension which presents a more classic example of Christian sorrow. The work, simply titled, <u>The tears of Mary Magdalene</u> portrays her weeping before a crucifix. The artist includes in the engraving a selection of symbolic features intended to express the sorrow of any beautiful woman. Thus, on the table, with the crucifix is a small prayerbook and a pearl necklace, intended to give the impression that it has just been removed from her neck. When these items are clustered around the ointment jar and the woman's long hair and beautiful tearful face, the imagery fulfils completely the iconography of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene, the penitent.

The significant link between these two portraits are the iconographic details. The Bruges artist has presented a beautiful, young woman who, in her reading of the Scriptures, is lost in meditation. The large ointment jar, prominently positioned in the foreground of the painting, provides the key to her reverie. In the presentation of the Mary Magdalene iconography, it was established that this jar symbolises the moment of her conversion from sin. As the jar is imaged opened and apparently emptied, it would suggest the viewer is invited to engage in some response.

EXAMPLE E

As a final example of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene as a penitent, I have selected two 'modern' paintings.

The first, dated between 1866-68, is a very early work by the French Impressionist, Paul Cezanne [1839-1906] <*ILL 49*>. Cezanne, at the start of his career was engaged in his own passionate search for feeling, and artistic expression. The portrait is significantly entitled The Magdalene or Grief. It can be viewed in the Jeu de Paume, in Paris. Cezanne's portrayal is particularly significant because it represents a departure from the traditional portrayal of Mary Magdalene supported by the Church. In this portrayal, Cezanne moved away from the stereo-typed format and presented a very personal impression, which could even be considered a self-portrait.

In the picture, Mary Magdalene is depicted kneeling, huddled on the ground, leaning her forehead and right hand against a tree trunk [or possibly a wall?]. She is dressed in a blue skirt with white chemise and gazes in abject sorrow at what appears to be a head in her left hand. The intensity of anguished grief, which the artist has captured in this powerful impression of grief, shows Cezanne's personalised interpretation of the saint. His title of the painting suggests to the viewer that any dramatic experience of grief can thus be associated with Mary Magdalene, the epitome of remorse and sorrow.

Francis Bacon [1909-91] <*ILL 50*> was perhaps inspired by Cezanne's portrayal for his painting, Figure study II, The penitent Magdalene, dated between 1945-46. The artwork is located in the Huddersfield Art Gallery, West Yorkshire (Das Münster, heft 4, 1987:325). Bacon was renowned for his ability to transform figures into horrific fantasies of twisted, contorted forms. He was also regarded as being more concerned with physical and psychological pain, than with spirituality. In this sense, his visual depiction, too, represents a departure from the traditional view.

Bacon has managed to convey, through the screaming face of Mary Magdalene's bent body, a sense of the desolation and degradation a prostitute could experience.

The essential purpose of my inclusion of these two paintings is to present a statement of the wide range of interpretations, some even to the point of debasement, to which the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene has been reduced, precisely because she has been labeled unjustly a 'penitent'.

4.3.2. Images depicting Mary Magdalene as 'prostitute'

In these illustrations, the artists have identified Mary Magdalene as the "woman who had a bad name in the town" (Lk 7:37), in the understanding that "bad name" must mean 'prostitution'. A painting of a beautiful, naked woman easily lends itself to a certain degree of misinterpretation dependent upon the viewer's concept of nudity. In a context of Christian religious art, where nakedness is traditionally condoned only as an artistic illustration of purity and innocence, the legitimacy of this interpretation is questionable.

Although nudity abounds in Michelangelo's frescoes on the vault of the Sistine Chapel [painted 1508-12], the nakedness of the figures is understood to epitomise the spiritual perfection of human beauty. Part of Michelangelo's genius lay in his powerful, yet sensitive, use of the human form to express his religious faith. Conversely, in the present twentieth century, though there are few limitations on secular imagery, religious imagery is bound by strict codes of modesty. A naked Christ on the cross, even were it a drawing by Michelangelo, would be unacceptably offensive in a Catholic Church today. It is within this context of suitable religious imagery that the nakedness of Mary Magdalene will be interpreted.

EXAMPLE A

In this painting, titled "The Magdalene" by Antonio Allegri Corregio [d.1534] <*ILL 51*>, the artist has portrayed an undoubtedly suggestive rendering of Mary Magdalene as a hermit. Mary Magdalene is seated or leaning against a rock, resting her right arm across the opened Bible. She holds a large unction jar with both hands as she gazes wide-eyed at the viewer. Her clothing has fallen away from her shoulders exposing her breasts. This pose, combined with the showing her shapely legs, the picture has all the trappings of an erotic pin-up model. The 'come hither' look in Mary Magdalene's eyes is accented by the quiet smile on her face. All these details combined with the lush growth of flowers and ferns in the grassy knoll allows no hint of penitential mortification or abstinence into the atmosphere. Even the large presence of the ointment jar is not enough to take the viewer's attention away from those inviting eyes and breasts.

EXAMPLE B

This artwork is attributed to an unknown pupil of Michelangelo Merisa da Caravaggio [1571-1610] <*ILL 52*>. Caravaggio was considered the greatest Italian painter of the seventeenth century (Piper 1988:99). He is particularly known for his religious works and was "often criticised for his supposed lack of decorum in showing biblical characters as ordinary people" (Piper 1988:100). This comment is further verified by Friedlaender:

> But among the younger generation quite a few were delighted by the audacity and... Caravaggio's lowering of saints from their pedestals, with a slight vulgarity, was not displeasing, even to certain members of the clergy and their adherents who had heard coarse and jocular expressions in the conversations and religious lectures of San Filippo Neri.
> (Friedlaender 1969:94).

In this painting, Mary Magdalene is seated with her face cast downwards meditatively. She is a beautiful young woman dressed in fashionable contemporary clothes with a low-cut bodice which reveals her full cleavage. Her ointment jar is open without a lid, and placed on the table beside her book.

In a painting by Carlo Saraceni [1580-1620] <*ILL 53*>, an admirer of Caravaggio's style, there is an almost identical pose of Mary Magdalene. She wears the similar low-cut bodice, which reveals her cleavage, and her right hand is again clasped against her breast. A small, glass perfume jar is by her left hand, and a larger

ointment jar is on the table by a vase of flowers. Only, here Martha is seated at her right side admonishing her. Martha is also beautifully, though more modestly dressed, her robe covers her shoulders and bodice. Mary Magdalene gazes expressively into the near distance as she listens to Martha's admonishment. Viewed together with Caravaggio's painting Mary Magdalene is again identified with the "woman with a past".

EXAMPLE C

The painting entitled Saint Mary Magdalene in ecstasy in the country by Lubin Baugin, [1610-1663] <*ILL 54*>, is a copy of a painting by Guido Reni, a popular sixteenth century Bolognese artist. This particular visual depiction proved to be so in demand, there are said to be at least twelve copies of Guido Reni's original, executed by various artists.

Mary Magdalene, naked from waist up, is seated leaning back, long red hair cascades loosely over her shoulders and around her waist, leaving her breasts uncovered. She gazes up quizzically into the sky with tear-filled eyes and mouth half-opened, leaning languidly against her right elbow. Her left hand is gently placed on top of a skull which in turn rests on a book. Two naked cherubs gaze down at her. The artist has posed Mary Magdalene very comfortably, and carefully arranged the flowing locks of hair to enhance her full and rounded breasts. The sensuous handling of the flesh tones in both Mary Magdalene and her rapt little *voyeurs* creates a very tactile and erotic anticipation for an enraptured aesthetic's contemplation.

EXAMPLE D

The Dutch painter, Adriaen van der Werff [1659-1722] <*ILL 55*>, renowned for his mythological and religious subjects, has visually portrayed Mary Magdalene as a beautiful woman seated, reading, outside in a rocky landscape. She has removed her clothes, covering only her pubic area with a fold of her robe. The whole essence of the traditional and legendary story of Mary Magdalene's retreat into the wilderness to live a life of remorseful repentance is contradicted by this painting. She is depicted blatantly as a desirable and sexual woman, manifesting no shame or remorse. The painting is more reminiscent of a prostitute 'showing her wares' to the passing public. Thus, Mary Magdalene, far from being visually represented as the converted, redeemed disciple, has been manipulated by the artist to remain locked into her 'sin'.

Yet, it could be argued that this sexual interpretation of Mary Magdalene had been initiated by the Church itself. In the liturgical readings, prescribed by the Roman Catholic Church for the feast day celebrations of Saint Mary Magdalene, there is a passage from the Song of Songs, wherein the bride runs through the streets and squares in search of her lover. It is within this context that a less than spiritual interpretation of the love between Mary Magdalene and Christ, has been nurtured. In van der Werff's painting her naked beautiful body shows full firm breasts and nipples well fitting Origen's description of the Bride in the Song of Songs:

> The Bride who is black, is, Origen says, becoming white; he urges his congregation 'to practice penitence too' so that they may have 'white souls'... 'The breasts of the chaste are not bruised', Origen emphasises, 'but the paps of harlots are wrinkled with folds of loose skin. The breasts of the chaste are firm and round and rosy with virginity. Such receive the Bridegroom-Word'.
>
> (Malvern 1969:93).

Certainly such erotic imagery preached by the Church Father could not have failed to titillate the imagination of the congregation and church artists of the period.

EXAMPLE E

Francesco Hayez [1791-1882] <*ILL 56*>, an Italian painter noted for his religious, historical and mythological works, was a great proponent of Romanticism, a reactionary movement searching for an unobtainable ideal in art against Classicism. This painting, dated 1833, is a fair reflection of Hayez' romantic identification with nature and nostalgia, with the spirit of religious remorse suggested by the title, The penitent Magdalene. An alternative title could easily be 'Her sorrow is her beauty'. If untitled, however, the viewer might see only a beautiful, naked, young woman resting on the heap of clothes she has removed.

The scene is again, like van der Werff, set outside, on the mountain wilderness. She supports herself with her right arm, her left hand, resting on her legs holds a crucifix while she gazes sorrowfully, pouting her lips, towards the viewer. Her loosened hair falls softly around her body just covering her pubic hair. The message is confusing from a religious context. A beautiful woman has taken her clothes off and begun to weep as she holds the crucifix. The imagery suggests the wanton abandon of naked human bodies amidst the wild vegetation of the earth rather than an expression of Christian sorrow and remorse. However, if the picture is to be viewed in relation to the title, than it becomes clear that Mary Magdalene's beautiful, naked body is to associated with her tears. If the sexual overtones are so blatantly suggested, if a woman's body is to be regarded as her sin, she will be

seen to be a promiscuous 'whore'.

Hayez' portrayal was repeated almost identically in a painting by Baudry <*ILL 57*>, from the Salon of 1859, although the latter's Penitent Magdalene still has her pubic area covered by the fallen robe. Mary Magdalene is again a beautifully shaped young woman with softly rounded breasts, stomach and hips. Her long hair hangs loosely over her shoulders. She is seated on the ground, relaxed, leaning on her left arm. Her right hand rests on a book with a crucifix lying on the ground nearby. The scene is a rocky cave with a wooded landscape in the distance.

Finally, in a rough sketch, the nineteenth century French artist Honoré Daumier [1808-1879] <*ILL 58*> has depicted a voluptuously beautiful Mary Magdalene the prostitute. Daumier's The Magdalene at prayer [c.1849] is a monumental, sculptural, half naked woman kneeling before a crucifix. Her face gazes imploringly upwards with her arms raised and hands clasped in prayer. Her robe has fallen away from her body, exposing her full breasts and well-rounded stomach. The scene, set in the rocky wilderness, suggests a passionate display of penitential fervour.

Conclusively, this visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene identifies her with an erotic image. In that sense that any image of a beautiful, naked woman praying can be likened to her.

4.3.3. Images depicting Mary Magdalene as 'beata'

The concern of this dissertation has been to find sufficient examples of a positive, unambiguous, woman-affirming portrayal of Mary Magdalene. Ideally, this would be in the form of a corrective image from which women and men would benefit and women be freed. There are several instances in which there has been an unequivocal honour inherent in the portrayal. This has been evident sometimes in images with deep mystical significance. For example, William Blake's symbolic interpretation of Mary Magdalene at the Sepulcher *(not illustrated)* shows her seated at the entrance to the tomb, her long hair touching the floor. She is leaning backwards, with both hands balanced on the floor, looking upwards at a vision of the resurrected Christ standing above her on high ledge. Or, Robert Lentz's painting <*ILL 64*>, which will be described later, in which Mary Magdalene symbolically holds up an egg.

Alternatively, when Mary Magdalene has been imaged in votive paintings, she is represented usually as a saintly figure. Votive paintings were historically regarded as symbolic affirmation of fulfilled promises and favours gained through the intercession of a saint. It is still a Catholic custom to commission a votive artwork depicting the supplicant and saint together.

EXAMPLE A

An example of a votive artwork is this visual imagery, dated 1330, of Mary Magdalene by Giotto di Bondone [1267-1337] <ILL 59>. Giotto has visually represented a sensitive, personalised interpretation of a holy woman, which is realistically appropriate to her position as an ardent disciple of Jesus. Mary Magdalene is here depicted as a beautiful, matronly figure standing serene and composed. A cowled supplicant-donor kneels holding her right hand in petition. Mary Magdalene is dressed in a long red gown and cape and stands at the entrance to an open doorway. The fresco forms part of a cycle of frescoes which Giotto painted in the Mary Magdalene Chapel of the basilica of St Francis at Assisi. As with all of Giotto's work, there is no hint of erotica or sexual licence in Mary Magdalene's demeanour. She is consistently depicted in a manner which could be declared affirmative and positive.

EXAMPLE B

The Italian artist, Andrea di Cione Orcagna, [1343-1368] <ILL 60>, is said to have combined the talents of respected church administrator and sculptor with his success as an important Florentine painters of the fourteenth century. He executed several major cycles of frescoes and panel paintings, but so many artists were influenced by him or worked in a similar style, there is considerable uncertainty today in determining his authentic artworks. It is with this hesitancy that this picture, "Noli me tangere", dated 1400, has been attributed to Orcagna.

In this visual image of Mary Magdalene, the artist has captured the climatic moment when she recognises the risen Christ. The two protagonists stand out strikingly from the flat gold background so nothing can distract attention from the dramatic encounter. It is Mary Magdalene's expressively outstretched arms and Christ's swift response, which gives the scene much of its tension. The stiffness of the figures was a common feature in the painting of the time, and it contrasts dramatically with Giotto's naturalism and graceful informality. This contrast shows how the needs in different historic periods dictated the interpretations and visual style of the pictures. Naturalism was considered undesirable in the early Church in that it pertained too closely to the flesh.

EXAMPLE C

A strikingly positive, visual image of Mary Magdalene is by the great Michelangelo Buonarroti [1475-1564] <*ILL 61*>. In this unfinished painting of the The Entombment, in the National Gallery, London, Michelangelo depicts a strong young woman. As the art historian Denis Thomas says, "Mary Magdalene, traditionally shown in a grief-stricken huddle at the victim's feet, becomes under Michelangelo's brush a veritable goddess in presence and stature" (Thomas 1979:111).

The scene depicts Mary Magdalene and two other disciples preparing to lower Christ's body into the open tomb. Mary Magdalene, with long red hair hanging loosely down her back, wears a striking red dress which has fallen open, exposing her left shoulder. The slant of her body, emphasised by the brilliant red cloth serves to focus the viewer's eyes on the lowering of the body into the grave. Mary Magdalene, as the dominant figure, appears to carry the full weight of the dead body.

EXAMPLE D

The instances when Mary Magdalene has been imaged preaching as an ardent disciple sometimes present a confused message with the inclusion of iconographic symbols associated with her 'penitent prostitute mode'. It is disappointing too, that, although the legends of her post-ascension life confirm Mary Magdalene's actions as an evangelist, there are few visual representations of these incidents.

This painting by an anonymous artist in the fifteenth century Swiss school <*ILL 62*>, is on view in the Musée du Vieux Marseille. There is an historical authenticity to the Provençal Legend with the clearly recognisable mountain landscape of Marseilles. Mary Magdalene, dressed in a simple brown robe is earnestly preaching to the city's inhabitants. The scene is based on the legendary apostolate of Mary Magdalene in Provence which was later followed by her retreat into the wilderness for the remaining years of her life.

Another visual example of her preaching can be seen in this second illustration, this time by the Master of the Göttinger Altarpiece <*ILL 63*>. The artwork dates from the sixteenth century and is located in the Staatsgalerie in Stüttgart. Once again, there is a sense of pure spirituality in the simple depiction of Mary Magdalene. The setting is in the middle of a forest, suggesting that the artist intended to portray Sainte Baume, where Mary Magdalene, according to the legend, built her hermitage.

EXAMPLE E

The final artwork is a contemporary twentieth century visual image of Mary Magdalene. The North American artist, Robert Lentz, <*ILL* 65>, was commissioned to paint this 1991 icon entitled, Mary Magdalene proclaimed the Resurrection to the Disciples, by the Rev. Kitty Lehman. The commission coincided with the celebration of the first anniversary of Barbara Harris, as Bishop in the Episcopal Church. Lentz' Mary Magdalene, dressed in a deep blood-red robe, is depicted holding up the ancient Christian symbol of resurrection and life, the egg. As Lentz was particularly concerned to present a relevant affirmative statement for women, he portrayed Mary Magdalene "brown-skinned, as are people from that area" (New Church May/October 1991).

I have located only one other example of Mary Magdalene imagery in which she is depicted holding this symbol of the resurrection. The following visual representation <*ILL* 64> bears a strong similarity to Lentz' conception and could therefore have been part of his inspiration.

The photograph of this illustration was purchased at the Russian Orthodox Church of Saint Mary Magdalene in Jerusalem in 1978. The church official spoke no English and was singularly unhelpful in offering information about the artist, or where the original painting was located. As I recall, the Russian orthodox nun was offended by my slacks, and concerned only in persuading me to leave the holy premises.

4.4. Practical reaction to the visual imagery

As indicated at the start of the presentation of these examples of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene, I have intentionally analysed the artworks from an illustrative perspective. Thus, I have described their compositional content without applying any emphasis on an analysis of their aesthetic excellence. From my experience as a church artist, I have found that the most Catholic worshippers view religious artworks with little critical concern for the artistic merit involved. They concentrate rather on the emotional and didactical value of the artwork as it impacts their personal spiritual progress. However, the Catholic worshipper has learned or acquired his or her devotional taste through habit. The habit of utilising the imagery available in the churches. The visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene has been established according to the requirements of the Church and not according

to how the individual artists might have wanted to depict her. Nor how the individual worshipper might have wanted to reverence her.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined the principle aspects of iconography found in the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene with illustrated examples. This was followed by a more detailed comparative analysis of a selection of Mary Magdalene imagery drawn from a variety of artist's perspectives. The main purpose of this detailed, description of examples of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene has been to 'exhibit' and expose these publicly available perceptions of the saint.

The results of this 'exhibition' raises questions from a critical feminist perspective. How has this imagery influenced Catholic women's self perception? What ethical judgement has been embodied in the visual presentation? How are women affected by this moral judgement of Mary Magdalene? These are questions which will be addressed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE:
A CRITICAL FEMINIST EVALUATION OF THE VISUAL PORTRAYAL OF MARY MAGDALENE AS PREDETERMINED AND MEDIATED BY THE PATRIARCHAL CHURCH

Introduction

At the outset of this study, I stated that my main and specific concern is with the manner in which the position and role of the biblical heroine, Mary Magdalene, has been visually represented. I have argued that the visual imagery of Mary Magdalene, which has its origins in the doctrine taught by the Christian Church, has not only been unjust, but it has served as the vehicle by which the Catholic Church has sought to control and discredit Mary Magdalene's position in the Church. The ultimate concern of this investigation is, however, the process by which all women have been-affected by the visual theology contained within these images.

In the two preceding chapters, I have examined the scriptural concepts and visual imagery which the Catholic Church has used to identify the woman Mary Magdalene. In chapter three, I argued that several of the ecclesiastically approved descriptions and concepts of Mary Magdalene have no scriptural foundation. Yet Christian preachers and artists have continued to promote a composite and uncollaborated legend of her life, such as that favoured by Pope Gregory I.

The influence of this legend has created a scriptural tradition which has offered a distorted view of the person and work of Mary Magdalene. She has been commemorated through the centuries as the repentant prostitute, and, as such, in many Christian artworks, Mary Magdalene is easily identified and contrasted to the Virgin Mother. In chapter four, the description of the iconographic details in the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene revealed an inherently degrading portrait of a biblical woman. This poses serious questions about the moral accountability of the Church in its acceptance and even promotion of this imagery. These are questions which must be considered in relation to the moral impact these visual images have had on Christian men and women.

5. The judgement of Mary Magdalene's character: towards a feminist ethical understanding

A moral judgement on Mary Magdalene's character, which has been expressed through this imagery, has influenced Catholic thought on the visual portrayal of paradigmatic feminine figures. I will now focus attention on the accuracy with which the imagery reflects the Catholic Church's prevalent attitude towards women, and how this attitude has affected the seriousness with which the Church has treated the divine image in women.

A problem of particular relevance for women in the Catholic Church is the question of the motivation for this negative imagery of a biblical woman. Why has this image of Mary Magdalene been promoted so vigorously by the Church? To refer to questions posed in chapter two: Why was Jacques Lefevre's De Maria Magdalena et triduo Christi Disceptatio, published in 1517, declared dangerous teaching by the theology faculty of the University of Paris in 1521? Why did the Catholic Church react so strongly to Lefevre's suggestion that Mary Magdalene might not have been a prostitute? Why was it so important to maintain Mary Magdalene as a symbol of the sinfulness of womanhood? These questions will be addressed in this chapter.

For indeed, this visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene has affected the Church's cognisance of her stature as the first disciple to witness to the resurrected Christ. Thus, her position as a primary role model, which would show the vigorously independent and affirmative position of biblical women disciples, has been negated, leaving only the submissive, humble and obedient model of the Virgin Mary to be emulated. These are ethical issues which are of specific concern to feminist theology.

5.1. Presentation of a feminist critical hermeneutics

The focal point of this dissertation is concerned with the normative question of what is right and appropriate to the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene. The theological ethic of justice, from a feminist perspective, stresses the acuteness of the gender-related problem. The ethical questions which have been raised by this visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene involve a judgement of immorality on the nature of women in general. In other words, women are deemed to be promiscuous.

Therefore, the critical evaluation of the evidence, uncovered in this dissertation, will be tempered by a feminist theological understanding of what Christianity, and specifically, Catholicism, has 'said' to women. In the sense that feminist theology seeks to liberate the Word from the patriarchal Bible, it calls on Christian women to rethink and re-interpret their committment to the Scriptures.

In the presentation of a feminist critical hermeneutics of our biblical heritage, I have taken as my guide the feminist biblical scholar, Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. Schüssler Fiorenza suggests that instead of trying to analyse how women can be affirmed by the Scripture, we need to learn how to read the Scripture from our own perspective. We need to reinterpret the Scriptures (1984a:46). Further, she advocates a paradigm shift in the facilitation of this new perspective. Thus, the Bible could be viewed more as a resource book than as an authoritative book commanding obedience. Only then, she maintains, will it be possible to start a feminist critical rereading of the Scriptures, which will begin from women's experience in the struggle for liberation and wholeness. For, as she explains:

> A feminist paradigm of critical interpretation is not based on faithful adherence or obedient submission to biblical authority, but on solidarity with women of the past and present whose lives have been touched by the role of the Bible in Western culture.
>
> Schüssler Fiorenza 1984a:14).

Feminist theology, thus, reserves the right for women to articulate a women's spirituality and to determine a women's theological understanding. A feminist critical hermeneutic model enables women to assess what function the scriptural texts have for us in our wholeness as women. At the base of this connection will be our solidarity with the biblical women of the past. Schüssler Fiorenza outlines four essential structural elements in this model:

> Since all biblical texts are formulated in androcentric language and reflect patriarchal societal structures, a feminist critical interpretation begins with a *hermeneutics of suspicion* rather than with a hermeneutics of consent and affirmation. It develops a *hermeneutics of proclamation* rather than a hermeneutics of historical factuality because the Bible still functions as holy scripture in Christian communities today. Rather than reduce the liberating impulse of the Bible to a feminist principle or one feminist biblical tradition, it develops a *hermeneutics of remembrance* that moves away from biblical texts about women to the reconstruction of women's history. Finally, a feminist model of critical interpretation moves away from a hermeneutics of disinterested distance to a *hermeneutics of creative* actualization that involves the church of women in the imaginative articulation of women's biblical story and its ongoing history and community.
>
> (Schüssler Fiorenza 1984b:47).

Although Schüssler Fiorenza's hermeneutical model was initially devised for biblical textual evidence, I believe it has a particularly useful application to this analysis of visual imagery. For, as I have shown, the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene originated in the biblical textual material. In the presentation of the evidence gathered thus far, I have already partially adapted two of the outlined structural elements. In the examination of scriptural texts and the description of visual images of Mary Magdalene, my stance has been consistently one of suspicion, and I continue to suspect a patriarchal motivation behind the texts and visual imagery. Second, rather than simply to accept the historical facts, I have been concerned to find Christian imagery which will proclaim whole-heartedly the truly 'good' news: "that there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female" (Gal 3:27-28).

The two remaining elements within this model will complete the main argument of this chapter, as they both constitute a process of healing and restitution which is essential to the future participation of women in the church. Thus, Schüssler Fiorenza's third structural element, the hermeneutic of remembrance, will address the injustice engendered through the neglect or misinterpretation of texts. In this way it will be possible to reconstruct the history and reclaim the heroism, not only attached to the memory of Mary Magdalene, but revealed in the oppression suffered by other biblio-historical women. Fourth and last, the hermeneutic tool of creative actualisation will seek to find corrective, positive and affirmative imagery towards a celebration of women's biblical history, and of the future of the Christian community. The results of this analysis will lead into a final analysis of the Catholic Church's attitude towards women, which has been exposed through this visual evidence.

In the following sections, Schüssler Fiorenza's hermeneutical model will be utilised as a tool in a critical analysis of the ethical implications of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene. I have classified the visual imagery in chapter four into three main characterisations, and adapted my use of the critical analysis to correspond with these groups. So, I have applied the hermeneutical tool of suspicion primarily to the overtly negative aspects found in the first two categories of imagery, namely the 'penitent' and that of the 'prostitute'. In this way I hope to uncover evidence of the moral judgements latent within each.

The second hermeneutical tool of proclamation will address the third quota of artworks, those classified as 'beata'. Here, the tool will be used to reassess the moral values that have been proclaimed about Mary Magdalene through these apparently positive images.

5.1.1. A hermeneutic of suspicion

One of the basic contentions of feminist theology is that the Bible was written by men, to accord divine confirmation on the patriarchal structure of the Hebrew Christian religion. While accepting this point of departure, this dissertation contends further that the visual imagery of Christian doctrine should be seen also as a patriarchal device, by which this alleged divine confirmation of the Church's structure has been extended. Under these circumstances, is it possible for women to feel affirmed by these patriarchally-motivated images? This question marks the point from which the hermeneutical tool of suspicion will facilitate the search for woman-affirmative material. The search will aim to discover whether the 'unveiling' of the Church's 'visual theology' can initiate any meaningful engagement for Catholic women.

My attitude of suspicion has already been made manifest through the previous chapters, in that I have called into question the motivation behind certain forms of church-approved imagery. There are disturbing theological and moral implications in this visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene, which have been maintained within the Christian Church as a devotional incentive to other women.

As my assessment and description of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene in chapter four has shown, I suspect the motives behind this visual representation to be misogynist. It is now time to explore how this attitude of suspicion can be utilised as a hermeneutic carving tool. A tool which will be used to cut away the extraneous and suffocating patriarchal bias, and reveal what should be regarded as the centre of the scriptural truth. Schüssler Fiorenza maintains that "The hermeneutics of suspicion does not presuppose the feminist authority and truth of the Bible" (1984b:47), but instead begins only with the premise that the scriptural texts were all written by men. Moreover, the Catholic Church has historically preferred an official doctrinal interpretation of the texts.

A logical supposition then would follow that the main function of the biblical texts is to uphold a patriarchal *status quo*. On the basis of this assumption, I contend that the artworks, with few exceptions, have been created by male artists, and express a male conception of 'a sinful woman'. This patriarchal perspective is compounded by the socio-historical reality, that with very few exceptions, women artists have been disregarded and disdained. Unfortunately, the few known artworks of Mary Magdalene by women artists do not reflect any dynamic variant of the patriarchal perspective. For example, <*ILL 39*>, Teresa del Po's engraving has eroticised

Mary Magdalene's penitential tears by emphasising her naked breasts.

This could in part be an indication of how deeply entrenched into society this patriarchal portrayal has become. Alternatively, it could be due to the hostility encountered by women artists entering a field that has been regarded as a male preserve. As women artists would then be required to prove their capability in a male-dominated cultural environment, they could not attempt innovative and controversial art forms under those terms. Thus, even in the initial stages of this critical interpretation of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene, there is a significant correlation to the male-only biblical tradition of authorship.

5.1.1.1. A feminist "lost coin"

In order to engage the hermeneutical tool of suspicion effectively into an analysis of the artworks, the actual content of the visual representation needs to be critically re-examined. As Schüssler Fiorenza illustrates so pertinently, with her analogy of the woman in the biblical parable searching for the lost coin, a feminist critical interpretation searches for lost "feminist coins" (1984b:48) in the inheritance of texts and interpretations. And in this instance, the search will be in the iconography or visual imagery. Taking my lead from one of Schüssler Fiorenza's own biblical examples, the recovery of the 'lost coin' of Miriam's leadership in the Old Testament, I have highlighted as one of the 'lost coins' in the New Testament, the apostleship of Mary Magdalene.

The story of Mary Magdalene's 'role' of apostle, [apostolos meaning "one sent forth" (Hoad 1986:19)] to the other disciples is included in all four Gospel accounts of the resurrection. Yet this role has been 'lost' in the post-resurrection texts, an exclusion which has consequently been reflected in the visual representation of the resurrection scene.

In the biblical parable of the lost drachma, the woman sweeps carefully through her entire house until she finds her lost coin (Lk 15:8-9). So, one way of finding the lost 'role' of Mary Magdalene, is to look underneath every element of iconography by which she has been conceptualised in patriarchal imagery. To return to the basic essentials of the iconography of Mary Magdalene in chapter four, she is usually identified as a young, beautiful woman, who has long, untied hair. Furthermore, she is either fashionably dressed or in various stages of undress, and is usually 'accompanied' by a jar of ointment. This can be even further condensed to two fundamental components in the visual image, sufficient for a viewer to recognise

'Mary Magdalene', namely, her long hair and the ointment jar. The following critical analysis will question the significance of these two symbols in the patriarchal structure of the Church.

The one common element to all of the illustrated examples in chapter four is Mary Magdalene's long hair. This, in itself, is not significant, as long hair is today still regarded as a woman's glory and beauty. However, in the biblical and hagiographical context, Mary Magdalene's long hair has been associated with remorse and a penitential life. Her long hair has attained a symbolic meaning which has been 'coloured' by the various artistic renderings.

There are few instances when her hair is covered up completely, for example, in some of the 'beata' imagery <ILL 62>, <ILL 63> and <ILL 64>. Alternatively, in the overall selection of illustrations in chapter four, when the artist is perhaps following the patron's tastes and demands for a portrait of a 'beautiful' saint, her hair is often styled according to the historical period. In these instances, Mary Magdalene is depicted wearing a fashionable 'bonnet' or head-dress as in <ILL 28>, <ILL 29>, <ILL 40> and <ILL 47>. When the visual portrayal is clearly intended to represent a biblical or hagiographical figure, then Mary Magdalene's hair is often partially covered by a veil as in <ILL 6>, <ILL 11>, <ILL 12> or <ILL 13>. Otherwise, her hair 'hangs loosely' around her body.

In the discussion of the iconographic aspects of long hair, it was noted that the depiction of long, untied hair embodies a certain relaxed posture, a sense of freedom from constraint, or even of a 'liberated' unconventionality. Even today there is a sense of informality and ease in a woman who allows her long hair to hang loosely around her shoulders and face. In the context in which Mary Magdalene is visually imaged with her untied hair, there are certain suggestive elements. A striking collusion with the long hair is the exposure of her naked body. In all eight of the examples illustrated in the 'prostitute mode', Mary Magdalene is erotically portrayed with her long hair more or less covering her body. In five out of the eight examples in the 'penitent' mode, her only covering is her long hair. Two of the remaining examples, <ILL 49> and <ILL 50>, depict Mary Magdalene as 'penitent' with long dishevelled hair. The final painting <ILL 47> is of a wealthy bejewelled lady with braided hair. This would have been condemned by Paul, who declares in his letter to Timothy,

I direct women are to wear suitable clothes and to be dressed quietly and modestly, without braided hair or gold and jewellery or expensive clothes.

(1 Tm 2:9)

The visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene's long, uncovered and untied hair must be evaluated in the light of the Christian ideal. Here again, it is Paul's harsh warnings to the Corinthian women, which has been largely responsible for the subsequent negative connotation of women's hair in the Christian Church:

A woman who will not wear a veil ought to have her hair cut off....Ask yourselves if it is fitting for a woman to pray to God without a veil....to anyone who might still want to argue: it is not the custom with us.

(1 Cor 11:6).

This moral indictment of women was maintained in the Christian Churches in the requirement that women worshippers wear a hat or mantilla. It is only since Vatican II that a Catholic woman can pray in her church with her hair uncovered, without incurring a condemnation of her virtue. This value judgement on the nature of women cannot have failed to influence women's self-evaluation. One example of how this devaluation of women has entered into the culture of a people is here in South Africa. When the Christian missionaries insisted that the newly baptised Christian women should cover their hair, they initiated what is now regarded as a traditional African custom. There are still many black Christian women who do not feel 'respectable' unless their hair is covered.

The Catholic imagery of the modestly veiled Virgin Mary further encourages respectable, pious women to cover their hair. Therefore, in this setting, the depiction of Mary Magdalene's uncovered, untied, often dishevelled, long hair, can only be construed to be a statement that she is to be judged unrespectable, and morally questionable. This judgement is confirmed by the visual imagery of Mary Magdalene in which her nakedness is erotically emphasised by her long hair (see <ILL 38>, <ILL 27>, and <ILL 36>). As Berger has confirmed, "hair is associated with sexual power, with passion" (1972:55). Thus, when the artists depict a naked Mary Magdalene with her long hair seductively curling around her breasts, and only just covering her pubis, the saint is reduced to a sexual object. To the male viewer, whose sexual interest is more likely to be aroused, rather than his spiritual devotion, Mary Magdalene, in these instances, remains a prostitute.

Alternatively, when the artists depict Mary Magdalene covered by thick trusses of hair, as in <ILL 25>, <ILL 45>, and <ILL 46>,> or when her body-hair grows like an animal's fur <ILL 20> and <ILL 21>, the viewer will possibly feel more

revulsion than fervour for this purportedly 'Christian' manifestation of extreme asceticism. This is a bestialisation of Mary Magdalene's visual image' which minimises and ridicules her sanctity.

In conclusion, whether Mary Magdalene's long hair is depicted as the symbol of her remorseful conversion, or whether the artist has eroticised her penitential fervour, the evaluation is still offensively unjust. These visual images diminish Mary Magdalene's stature by implying that as a woman, she is to be regarded only within a sexual context. This is morally reprehensible within a religious framework, particularly because there is insufficient historical evidence. These images reveal an attitude of condemnation not only of Mary Magdalene, but of women in general. And the repercussions of this visual injustice continue to reverberate in the Roman Catholic Church's adamant refusal to admit women into any official ministerial position.

One other important and recurrent symbol in the visual portrayal is the jar of perfumed ointment. This has been used to support a negativisation of Mary Magdalene's contribution to the Christian movement. As a symbol, which is so frequently included in the composition of the artwork, it has attained an intrinsic significance to Mary Magdalene imagery. In effect, if the perfumed ointment jar were removed from the imagery, as in <*ILL 13*> or <*ILL 28*>, there would be little to suggest a Christian contextual reference, and the biblical 'Mary Magdalene' would be unrecognised.

From the post-resurrection biblical evidence, this disappearance would appear to be what the patriarchal church might have wanted. Yet in the visual representations of the biblical texts, the image of Mary Magdalene has been perpetuated with the symbolic jar, reminiscent of precious, expensive, perfumed oil. I suspect, therefore, that the presence of this jar fulfills a requirement of a patriarchal mediation of the role played by Mary Magdalene in the events surrounding the resurrection.

According to the Gnostic texts discussed in chapter three, the male apostles were unhappy about the affinity between Mary Magdalene and Jesus, almost to the point of jealousy. Peter suggests that Jesus dismiss the women from their company, "let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of Life" (Gospel of Thomas 51.19-20, in Robinson 1977:130). There is, therefore, possibly some significance in the implications of this close relationship and the prostitute image.

Whether the jar is closed <*ILL 11*>, opened <*ILL 47*>, or in process of being opened <*ILL 15*>, whether it is in her hands <*ILL 12*>, at her feet <*ILL 31*>, or nearby <*ILL 32*>, the viewer is asked to identify the woman as Mary Magdalene. I have chosen to describe the container as a'jar', temporarily, although I feel this word does not adequately describe the potential of this imaged container. The English vocabulary is perhaps too rich, allowing too many subtle nuances or shades of interpretation. If one calls it an urn, the word conjures up a funerary container, which could be used to hold the ashes of a departed loved-one. If one says bottle, then one is caught up in the perfume world with exotic handles and sealed corks. Alternatively a jar can indicate the certainty of being emptied. Again, to refer to the object as 'pot' would reduce the container to some form of domestic utility, and is not an adequate description for most of the visual representations. My hope is that the word 'jar' elicits a common understanding of 'container' without a definitive image, allowing for individual imaginative interpretation.

The presence of the jar of ointment symbolically endorses Mary Magdalene's legendary history of prostitute, penitent and anointer of Jesus' body. Thereafter, all the other elements in the visual representation can be recognised as elaborations of a theme, as stage-dressing is to a play and the background is to the portrait. The iconographical details in <*ILL 28*> or <*ILL 37*> act as interrelated lines in a drawing all leading back to the ointment jar as the focal point of perspective. Thus, for example, Mary Magdalene's long flowing hair will remind the Christian viewer of the woman's anointing of Jesus's feet only if the perfumed ointment jar is in focus. Similarly, her tear-filled eyes in <*ILL 38*>, intended to suggest remorseful grief, can only be so interpreted if related to the ointment jar. Further examples of this essential point of correlation are in the hagiographical scenes of hermetical life. In these, Mary Magdalene is shown casting off her worldly finery in an extravagant gesture of remorse <*ILL 32*>. Alternatively, when she is depicted in various degrees of nakedness, having already cast aside the jewellery and clothing, the presence of the ointment jar maintains the biblical association with the 'sinful woman'(Lk 7:37), *see* <*ILL 35*> *and* <*ILL 51*>.

Some of the depictions of Mary Magdalene's nakedness would be difficult to justify in any contemporary church. Yet in an extraordinary tolerance of artistic licence, the Catholic Church has historically continued to accept this visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene. The criteria of authentic sacred imagery are the inclusion of the correct iconographic attributes, such as Mary Magdalene's symbolic ointment jar. Yet, even the presence of a strategically positioned crucifix and skull, is sometimes not enough to override the overtly erotic depiction of Mary Magdalene,(*see* <*ILL 36*> *and* <*ILL 55*>).

As a result of the consistent inclusion of this ointment jar, Mary Magdalene is characterised as a 'sinful woman', and morally condemned. Even apart from the biblical text, there is a correlation between ointment, prostitution and massage parlours which is still common in most big cities. The moral indictment against Mary Magdalene is acutely serious, because it is the ointment jar which substantiates her identity in a considerable proportion of her imagery. With the Christian Church's inordinate emphasis on human sinfulness, Mary Magdalene, portrayed as a beautiful woman who 'sinned greatly' and yet was forgiven, provides the Church with an appealing role-model of humble contrition. However, this, in essence, is ultimately a moral judgement imposed visually on beautiful women.

As the Appendix A will confirm, the visual representation of Mary Magdalene appears to have been tirelessly reproduced in practically every artistic medium, down the centuries of Christianity. This dissertation has asserted that the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene as a penitent prostitute has been created by male artists for predominantly male patrons, and has served to kindle male fantasies.

Furthermore, Mary Magdalene's 'didactic Christian role' has been established in the imagery presented. She is depicted either as a haggard, spent/used, penitent prostitute, or as a woman whose voluptuous beauty could still promise erotic visual pleasure to the male viewer. Though a third visual mode of representation, that of 'beata', has been detected, the pernicious recurrent thread of 'penitent prostitute' still predominates in the Catholic Church's presentation of Mary Magdalene. Thus, for example, in Giotto's fresco in Assisi <*ILL 59*>, the Catholic viewer quickly recognises the woman clothed in red as the 'great penitent Magdalene', as easily as he or she would so recognise the woman clinging to the dead body of Jesus in <*ILL 16*>.

The iconographical devices used to reinforce into the minds of the viewers the image of the penitent prostitute are repeated through the consecutive historical periods. One such device which recurs is the particular pose in which the artist depicts Mary Magdalene in the biblical scenes, namely, kneeling and holding the feet of Jesus. This posture is reminiscent of the sinful woman who weeps over the feet of Jesus at the supper party (Lk 7:38). Thus when it is repeated almost exactly in any other visual setting, the Christian viewer will not fail to recognise the biblical significance and association. These two examples, <*ILL 16*> and <*ILL 17*>, separated by five centuries, demonstrate how the compositional elements remain the same through the different periods, and the only things that are upgraded are incidental.

Without the recognition of these elements of 'Mary Magdalene iconography', the Church's interpretation of her history would remain relatively unspecified, and could be open to other interpretations. Herein lies an opportunity to re-cover the so-named 'lost coin'. Is it possible to restore what was lost by reconstituting these elements of Mary Magdalene's iconography to proclaim a potent image of feminine biblical affirmation? In the instance of the ointment jar, for example, would it be appropriate even to hold onto the container aspect of this symbol? These questions will be considered in the next stage of this critical exploration.

As the visual evidence is re-evaluated to estimate the positive potential of this 'container' symbol, it is relevant to be reminded that many urns and bottles are shaped like women's bodies. Besides their bodies being the potential receptacle for new life, historically, emotionally, and physically, women 'carry' things. It is written in the Bible that the Virgin Mary 'stored' all these things in her heart (Lk 2:19). In the Rock Art of the San people, who are regarded as the earliest tribe to inhabit southern Africa, women are often depicted carrying large sacks as evidence of their role as the gatherers of food.

The fact that Mary Magdalene is depicted so often with a container could be the strongest affirmation of her personhood as the 'bearer', the apostle who was the first to proclaim the good news. On that first Resurrection morning Mary Magdalene was given the most important message in Christendom: 'Go tell my disciples, I am risen! She became not just the messenger, but the bearer of glad tidings, about whom Isaiah 'sings':

> How beautiful on the mountains,
> are the feet of one who brings good news,
> who heralds peace, brings happiness,
> proclaims salvation....

(Is 52:7).

As the first step, the hermeneutical tool of suspicion has initiated a clearing process by which the patriarchal image of Mary Magdalene is to be de-absolutised. I have specifically treated with grave suspicion the 'penitent' and 'prostitute' elements within the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene. My stance has been to criticise suspiciously, rather than to accept with the devotional acquiescence usually applied to religious artworks. In view of the misleading manner in which Mary Magdalene has been imaged, there has not been sufficient opportunity for any affirmation of her courageous and virtuous life as an apostle. A critical evaluation of the remaining quota of artworks, which I classified in chapter four as 'beata' will

now be processed through what Schüssler Fiorenza terms, the hermeneutics of proclamation.

5.1.2. A hermeneutic of proclamation

In this feminist hermeneutic model, all biblical texts must be theologically evaluated for racial, sexual and class prejudice. As Schüssler Fiorenza insists, "oppressive patriarchal texts and sexist traditions cannot claim the authority of divine revelation" (1984b:50). The Bible has been used to legitimate patriarchal values and traditions. For example, in women's life experience they are constrained by historical biblical values that do not accord with contemporary culture. This patriarchal bias needs to be uncovered and set aside. Schüssler Fiorenza cites an example of a blatant enforcement of the submission expected of contemporary women bound within a culture of biblical patriarchy. This is the situation of a battered woman, who is told by the Church to take up her cross and suffer as Jesus did to save her marriage (1984b:50).

In a feminist hermeneutics of proclamation, all texts that are recognised as oppressive must be rejected. Only those texts that can transcend their patriarchal context and provide "a liberating vision of human freedom and wholeness" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1984b:51) should be proclaimed within the Church.

Thus, in my application of this interpretative tool of proclamation to the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene, I evaluate what theological significance and influence the visual imagery has exercised on the "contemporary community of faith" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1984b:50). Has the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene provided any "liberating vision of human freedom and wholeness" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1984b:51)? It is clear from the above analysis that neither the 'penitent' nor the 'prostitute' visual representations could possibly engender any positive self-affirmation for Christian women. In the critical analysis of the visual imagery of Mary Magdalene as 'beata' which follows, the above question will be addressed.

The 'beata' mode was used to describe the images which portray Mary Magdalene simply as a 'holy' or good woman who could be considered 'woman-affirmative'. For example, <ILL 59> presents her as a serene, gracious, motherly figure who helps people in need. In <ILL 62>, she is depicted as a missionary preacher, demonstrating that the women disciples of Jesus had an active role in the early Church. The classification of 'beata' refers to the artist's personal interpretation of Mary Magdalene, rather than of the particular scene. For example, in the visual

representations of the Deposition, she has been depicted more often as a 'penitent'<*ILL 16*>, and in the resurrection scene, commonly called '*noli me tangere*', sometimes close to a 'prostitute'<*ILL 7*>, and sometimes as the 'beata'<*ILL 60*>.

Although the visual depiction of the resurrection scene would present the most obvious opportunity for a powerful, visual affirmation of Mary Magdalene's loyal and ardent discipleship, artists have concentrated more often on a devotional and sometimes sentimental rendering of the *noli me tangere* scene. The composition of many of the *noli me tangere* visual portrayals is too similar to <*ILL 60*> and <*ILL 7*> to warrant specific commentary.

In the light of contemporary attitudes towards sexism, these 'beata' images need to be evaluated for their subjective proclamation. Where an ambiguous patriarchal emphasis, based on historical and social cultures, presents Mary Magdalene's position as demeaning or of dubious moral integrity, these images must be disregarded or discredited of any theological significance.

5.1.2.1. Condemnation not proclamation

In the search for affirmative imagery of Mary Magdalene, my main aim was to find a visual image which would, in some manner, reveal a positive, affirmative woman-image. An image which would clearly differentiate from the overtly sexual or erotic imagery so prevalent in the 'prostitute mode', and move away from the harsh austerity of self-mortification, inherent to the 'penitent mode'. With these delimiting criteria applied, it was hoped that any remaining imagery would provide the viewer with at least one aspect of the strong discipleship of Mary Magdalene. When I began to discover the paintings entitled, The Magdalene reading <*ILL 47*>, or The sermon of Mary Magdalene <*ILL 62*>, it seemed as though these images would fulfill the criterion. There, Mary Magdalene was portrayed as a chaste, well-dressed, serene woman either seated, devoutly reading her prayers or, standing, calmly preaching to the 'pagans'. However, subsequent imagery of Mary Magdalene reading <*ILL 36*>, revealed an almost naked Mary Magdalene reading in her rocky hermitage with her bare breasts pressed against the Bible. Or, in Pechwell's Penitent Magdalene <*ILL 42*>, reading, the emphasis is more on her state of undress than her biblical meditations, which effectively minimises any positive potential. These seductive intrusions into a supposedly spiritual setting made me realise the complexity of classification.

When the act of reading from a book is depicted in multiple ways, with Mary Magdalene in various states of undress, as for example, naked <*ILL 55*> and <*ILL 36*>, semi-naked <*ILL 51*>, weeping <*ILL 35*> or languorously lying on the ground holding a book <*ILL 42*>, there are at least two possible interpretations of this image. Either she is studying the Scriptures as a devout young Jewish woman, or she is using the Scriptures to stimulate remorse for her life of sin. The latter conceptualisation is a common interpretation of an image of someone weeping as they read from the Scriptures. So, this visual image of Mary Magdalene could be construed as positive or negative.

Again, in the scenes of her preaching, whether it be outside the church or in the pulpit, there are two alternative possibilities. She is either an ardent missionary disciple preaching the good news to the pagan foreigners <*ILL 62*> and <*ILL 63*>. Or, as a converted prostitute, she is anxious to preach and warn others not to fall into the same sins from which she was redeemed <*ILL 43*>. The latter interpretation would appear more probable as the 'preaching scenes' form part of the hagiography imagery, in which the preaching is but a prelude to Mary Magdalene's eremitical life of penance in the wilderness. The inclusion, then, of the ointment jar in these 'preaching scenes' would serve to corroborate the negative, penitential interpretation.

The work of several music scholars has raised further evidence to suggest that even within these apparently positive, visual depictions there is evidence of the eroticising of Mary Magdalene. Colin Slim, writing in the October 1980 journal, Early Music, comments on the significance of several paintings, which depict Mary Magdalene playing a lute. These paintings are all the work of the same artist, namely, the Flemish Master of the female half-lengths <*ILL 47*>. Slim quotes several academic sources, who interpret the presence of the musical instruments in the Mary Magdalene imagery, as symbolic allusions to her delight in "worldly pleasures" (1980:464). In particular, Slim notes that the lute, "because of its hollow rounded shape had widely understood erotic connotations" to the society in which the Flemish Master lived (1980:465). He continues, quoting from one of his sources, Daniel Heartz, who "mentions a pun which Rabelais made in 1534 on the popular expression, 'jouer de luc', the pun meaning to play with the female private parts" (Slim 1980:465). The illustrated example in this dissertation of the Flemish Master of the Female half-lengths, The Magdalene reading <*ILL 45*>, closely resembles the illustration shown in Slim's paper. The only difference is the inclusion of Mary Magdalene's lute and case on the table. In my research I have found several versions of this identical scene, 'Mary Magdalene reading', with either a lute or an ointment jar as her identifying symbol.

I have found only one instance when Mary Magdalene's preaching could be unequivocally recognised as a positive proclamation of her apostleship. This occurs when she is depicted announcing the 'Good News' of the resurrection to the male disciples. However, this particular scene has not proven to be as popular a choice of patrons or artists in their visual imagery of Mary Magdalene. Indeed, a visual depiction of a woman teaching or preaching to men is not found often, even in twentieth century Christian art.

As I have emphasised, in the examination of the biblical texts in chapter three, Mary Magdalene's proclamation of the resurrection must be considered her most important contribution to the early Christian community. The visual depiction of this biblical text was depicted frequently in the early medieval period as shown by the extant artworks of this time. Yet the scene faded from the repertoire of Christian didactic art. Was the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene as an apostle considered to be an undesirable archetypal model by the Christian Church?

By way of responding to this question, I offer this comment from Schüssler Fiorenza on a patriarchal aspersion she personally experienced. That even today, academic women are counselled against the "use of difficult theological terms" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1984a:xviii). Thus, in contrast to the general and public accessibility of visual imagery, the use of theological academic language has been historically restricted to male intellectuals. This is the climate in which women image-makers and thinkers, that is, women artists and scholars, have continued to be largely ignored or discredited.

To go further towards assessing the ethical significance of visually reducing the foremost, woman apostle, Mary Magdalene, to a 'penitent prostitute', it will be necessary to examine the Christian doctrine concerning women's position in the Church.

At the beginning of this chapter questions were raised about the vehemence of the Catholic Church's reaction to Jacques Lefevre's suggestion in 1517, that Mary Magdalene might not have been a prostitute. In the following critical look at the Church's historical attitude about women preaching and teaching, it should be possible to evaluate the motivation for this change of emphasis.

5.1.2.2. "Women are not to teach"

Although the "early Christian community understood themselves as freed by the Spirit to a new life of egalitarian discipleship" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1979:31), by the second century, the Christian patriarchs were serious about excluding women from all positions of authority. As a sequel to the defamation of women as the initiators of sin, the Church Fathers continued their assault on women by insisting that women were naturally inferior and therefore unsuitable for any office of authority. Sometimes they attempted to justify their arguments with scripture, as Origen did in his commentary on Pauls' first letter to the Corinthians:

> Certainly women should also 'teach what is good,' but men should not sit and listen to a woman, as if there were no men capable of communicating the word of God....It seems to me that the expression 'their husbands' does not only refer to husbands; for if that were the case, either virgins would speak in the assembly, or they would have nobody to teach them, and the same is true for widows. But could 'their husbands' not also mean a brother, a relative, or a son? In short, let a woman learn from the man who is her own, taking 'man' in its generic sense, as a counterpart of 'woman'. 'For it is improper for a woman to speak in an assembly', no matter what she says, even if she says admirable things, or even saintly things>, that is of little consequence, since they come from the mouth of a woman. 'A woman in an assembly': clearly this abuse is denounced as improper - an abuse for which the entire assembly is responsible.
>
> (Gryson 1976:28).

Other times, the ordinances of prohibition and constraint that were imposed on women were constituted by the patriarchal hierarchy. Even baptism, one of the purest and basic of Christian rituals, which Jesus had enjoined on all his followers, became a temptation to sin if performed by a woman. In a fourth century document, Apostolic Constitutions, there were stern warnings against women performing any baptisms:

> Now as to women's baptizing, we let you know that there is no small peril to those that undertake it. Therefore we do not advise you to it; for it is dangerous, or rather wicked and impious ... For he says, "He shall rule over you." For the principle part of the woman is the man, as being her head. But in the foregoing constitutions we have not permitted them to teach, how will anyone allow them, contrary to nature, to perform the office of a priest?
>
> (Gryson 1976:57).

The Patriarchs' conception of women as inherently immoral is still further shown in the wide range of qualities a woman needed to be even appointed to the rank of 'widow'. First, she had to have been without a husband for a long time, and "she must have been frequently asked in marriage and refused for reasons of faith". She had to have been seen to be:

> pious, humble, meek, purified, perfect in all things, ardent in spirit, with the eyes of her heart opened to all things, working in joy and without ostentation.
> (Gryson 1976:67).

Second, she had to be examined on how she treated her children, strangers, the afflicted and whether she had neglected 'the saints'. In some texts, there were stipulations on whether she had been wife to more than one man and questions on her age:

> indicating that there were widows under sixty years of age, the Testamentum prescribes that a widow who was menstruating could not receive Holy Communion nor approach the altar.
> (Gryson 1976:67).

Finally, the widow was required to live a totally ascetic life. She should be able to "possess nothing but the cross, to pray without ceasing and be "attentive night and day by the altar" (Gryson 1976:67).

The legal stipulations of age are a clear indication of the patriarchal prejudice against women. Whereas the minimum age for a presbyter was thirty, a male deacon needed be only twenty-five years old. Yet, the ordination to the female diaconate in the Theodosian Code was fixed at sixty years. Later, Justinian reduced this to fifty years, and finally to forty years. In similar vein, the female candidates had to be virgins or widows, and "a special inquiry also had to be made to ensure that their life had always been above suspicion in regard to chastity". But, the male clerics could be married (Gryson 1976:72).

The research of an Italian historian, Professor Giorgio Otranto of the Institute of Classical and Christian Studies at the University of Bari in 1982, into the evidence of women priests in the early apostolic period, has recently been translated into English by an American scholar, Mary Ann Rossi. Otranto has challenged the Roman Catholic Church's claim that only heretical sects allowed women priests. The twenty-sixth decree of the circular letter sent by Pope Gelasius on March 11, 494 to the bishops of southern Italy, states:

> Nevertheless, we have heard to our annoyance that divine affairs have come to such a low state that women are encouraged to officiate at the sacred altars, and to take part in all matters imputed to the offices of the male sex, to which they do not belong.
>
> (quoted in New Women, New Church Vol 15, No.1 Feb 1992:1; also in Gryson 1976:105).

Otranto is acclaimed as the first scholar to have "paid attention to what the text actually says, "not what is assumed by historians (Osiek 1992:1). During a six day lecture tour of the United States, Otranto illustrated his talk with photographs from newly excavated or restored archaeological sites. These photographs clearly showed frescoes of women officiating as priests (New Women, New Church Vol 15, No 1 July 1991- February 1992:12).

In the light of the above research it becomes manifestly clear that the Christian Church authorities deliberately did not want to portray Mary Magdalene in a manner which might justify her biblical apostleship. Thus, as a logical sequence to this attitude, it may be concluded that Jacques Lefevre was silenced by the Catholic Church because his dissertation suggested Mary Magdalene's rightful status as apostle. The Catholic Church preferred to maintain a symbol of the sinfulness of womanhood rather than promote a symbol to honour women's disciplehood. In none of the visual images of Mary Magdalene as 'beata' is this apostleship unequivocally proclaimed. On the contrary, with remarkably few exceptions (for example: <ILL 62> <ILL 63>), the visual portrayal, by the careful inclusion of certain iconographical details, proclaims Mary Magdalene as a prime example of a penitent prostitute. This visual injustice to Mary Magdalene has been maintained consistently up to the present century.

The Christian Church has acrimoniously heaped condemnation upon women who, willingly or unwillingly, allow their bodies to be abused by men.
However, it is the Bible which suggests that women are to be sexually subservient to men; yet the Church has hypocritically transferred the guilt and sin away from the abusers and onto the victims. The writers of Genesis, in blaming Eve for sin, decree that women will yearn for their husbands "yet he will lord it over you" (Gn 3:16). Thus, the male biblical writers evince little concern over the fate of women who behave differently to their men or who are victimised by men.

The following examples illustrate how often in the biblical stories women are treated as commodities to be disposed at will by their male 'owners'. Abram instructs his wife Sarai to 'please' the Pharaoh (Gn 12 12-19), and Lot offers his virgin daughters to strangers to be raped (Gn 19 6-9). Vashti, on the other hand, is banished

because she refuses to display her body to her husband's friends, and the men of the city fear that other women might follow her example (Es 1:9-20). Women's bodies are used as symbols in the history of Israel. For example, Gomer is married and divorced and married again by Hosea to illustrate the harlotry of Israel (Hs 1:2-3:3). Again, when calamities befall the returned Israelite exiles, they sacrifice their "foreign wives and their children" to regain God's favour (Ezr 10:3-4).

The ingenuity of this defamation has become one of the root causes of women's sexual oppression and subjugation. And the continued presentation of this erotic portrayal of Mary Magdalene has helped to further the traditional, though misconceived, Christian notion of women's latent immorality.

This dissertation has been concerned throughout with the reconstitution of the heroic memory of Mary Magdalene, and has strongly contested her set title of 'penitent prostitute'. However, in view of the depths to which this hagiographical association of Mary Magdalene with prostitution has been embedded, and the fact there have been and still are many women trapped into a life of prostitution, I wish to use this interpretive tool of remembrance to focus briefly on the Church's spurious attitude towards prostitutes.

Ethically, the patriarchal Church has acted unjustly by promoting a less than honourable legend about Mary Magdalene. There is a parallel in the duplicity from which both Mary Magdalene and prostitutes have suffered. As men sexually solicit women, only to later despise them, so too has the image of Mary Magdalene been used and abused by the patriarchal Church. To redress this negative perception, it is necessary to move into the focal point of this critical hermeneutic of remembrance, that of remembering and re-calling the positive aspects of Mary Magdalene's life as a dedicated apostle.

5.1.3. A hermeneutic of remembrance

One of the dangers Schüssler Fiorenza cautions against in the critical evaluative aspect of this biblical hermeneutic model, is a blanket rejection of all texts deemed to be 'oppressive'. For, she argues, women cannot redeem or reclaim a biblical heritage at the expense of the historical biblical women who form part of that heritage. She emphasises that the example of these women, who, despite their restrictive and oppressive environments, still managed to speak with the power of the spirit, must never be forgotten. Furthermore, it becomes essential to "keep alive" their heroism as a motivating challenge to women of all times. In this way, a

hermeneutics of remembrance will "reclaim their sufferings and struggles in and through the subversive power of the 'remembered past'(Schüssler Fiorenza 1984b:51).

This hermeneutical tool of remembrance has been used to search through patriarchal texts to reaffirm "the struggle, life and leadership of biblical women who spoke and acted in the power of the spirit" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1984b:52). Therefore, it should be possible to reconstitute a positive image of Mary Magdalene. Two facilities in this hermeneutic of remembrance will be utilised. First, in order to reach the affirmative reclamation process, an evaluative 'clearing out' of the negative areas, exposed through an exhibition of visual imagery of Mary Magdalene, will be analysed. Thereafter, the second all-important restoration and reconstitution of the memory of Mary Magdalene, the apostle will be affirmed.

5.1.3.1. The problem with Mary Magdalene's past:
a prejudiced editing of texts

The name 'Mary Magdalene' has come to be associated with an aspect of female depravity. The visual evidence of this association of Mary Magdalene with sexual eroticism is a prejudiced mis-interpretation of the biblical texts. Yet, although this association has been officially acknowledged as hagiographical fiction, this mischievously perverted tradition has continued as a source of inspiration to artists and their patrons.

In the visual and textual evidence which has been examined in this dissertation concerning Mary Magdalene, two conflicting viewpoints have recurred. Either Mary Magdalene was a woman who was known to have participated in an extraordinary [seven-fold] life of harlotry, and, in a moment of great courage and grace, had converted through the ministry of Jesus. Or, she had been severely, psychologically damaged and had been restored to her senses through Jesus Christ's healing powers. The artistic challenge of visually portraying Mary Magdalene's dramatic release from the so-called demoniac powers has apparently failed to inspire Christian artists or patrons' attention.

Conversely, a 'holy' woman 'with a sinful past' has manifestly attracted greater imaginative interest, particularly as this model offers potential support to the patriarchal myth of women's inherent promiscuity. Moreover, the Catholic Church has often sanctioned penance and mortification as a recommended and justifiable form of moral and behavioural control. However, mental infirmity is not as easily

subject to control. There is, besides, a sense of impropriety attached to the condemnation of mental infirmity. Conclusively, it has been the sexual perception of Mary Magdalene which has been nurtured by the Catholic Church. As this 'sin' has empowered the Church to maintain a degree of constraint over Catholic women.

This unjust emphasis has exposed an ethical imbalance in the portrayal of Mary Magdalene. The disturbing preponderance of visual imagery bordering on the erotic was illustrated in the 'exhibition' of artworks in chapter four. The analysis which has resulted from this mis-reading of the Bible requires some pointed critical comments.

To refer to an observation made in chapter four, that the church patrons who commissioned the artworks would almost certainly have been men, Berger makes a few significant observations on the manner in which oil paintings are visually experienced. First, he notes how there is "an analogy between *possessing* and the way of seeing which is incorporated in oil painting" (Berger 1972:83). This element of possession becomes very significant in terms of what is visually portrayed. In other words, if it depicts a lusciously beautiful, naked woman, the owner of the painting is able to 'feel' consciously that he owns that woman. The second observation has bearing on the first, namely that:

> what distinguished oil painting from any other form of painting is its special ability to render the tangibility, the texture, the lustre, the solidity of what it depicts.
>
> (Berger 1972:88).

Thus, the owner of the painting not only has a sense of complete possession, but has an added pleasure of experiencing a sensual, tactile power, whenever he gazes at his picture of the beautiful naked woman. The third and last observation from Berger, relevant to this dissertation, concerns one of the problems encountered by artists in general. This is the difficulty of trying to image the supernatural, for as Berger writes:

> When metaphysical symbols are introduced their symbolism is usually made unconvincing or unnatural by the unequivocal, static materialism of the painting-method.
>
> (Berger 1972:91).

It is this contradiction that makes so many of the artists' depictions of Mary Magdalene's penitential post-ascension life appear so hypocritical. Moreover, as the following list demonstrates, many of the titles of the illustrations in chapter four

have penitential connotations, for example, The beautiful sinner <*ILL 26*>, Mary Magdalene renounces her vanity <*ILL 32*>, Saint Magdalene meditating on the three nails of the crucifixion <*ILL 39*>, The tears of the Magdalene <*ILL 48*>, The penitent Magdalene <*ILL 57*>, and The weeping Magdalene <*ILL 56*>. These names have either been given by the artist or named by subsequent art critics, but all give evidence to a common theme of repentance associated with the imagery of Mary Magdalene. As Berger continues, "the claim of the theme is made empty by the way the subject is painted" (1972:92).

There are other issues at stake, however, in this choice of religious subject-matter. It appears that Mary Magdalene was a convenient 'scape-goat' for the portrayal of sinful pleasures. This could explain why she was such a popular choice amongst artists. It would also indicate why patrons commissioned artists to portray Saint Mary Magdalene as a 'penitent prostitute'. As the patrons would be assured of owning a 'religious' painting which would also be sensuously pleasurable to their eyes.

In the examination of the symbolic imagery used in the previous chapter, Mary Magdalene's extravagant clothing and jewellery was mentioned as one of her identifying attributes. Some commentators have counted her wealthy attire as evidence of Mary Magdalene's life style of easy virtue and ill-gotten gains. However, a note from Schüssler Fiorenza should be taken as an important corrective to the ease with which such spurious statements are made. Schüssler Fiorenza observes that in the time of Jesus, as much as today:

> most prostitutes were impoverished unskilled women. Found mostly in the cities, they often lived in brothels or houses connected with a temple. Prostitutes usually were slaves, daughters who had been sold or rented out by their parents, wives who were rented out by their husbands, poor women, exposed girls, the divorced and widowed, single mothers, captives of war or piracy, women bought by soldiers -in short women who could not derive a livelihood from their position in the patriarchal family or those who had to work for a living but could not engage in 'middle'- or 'upper' class professions. In Palestine, torn by war, colonial taxation, and famine, the number of such women must have been great.
>
> (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983:128).

So, the picture of the prostitute was of a woman who was socially outcast, economically disadvantaged and the moral scourge of the fabric of society. The Mary Magdalene, mentioned by Luke as one of the Galilean women who supported Jesus, hardly fits into this group of women. The most disturbing aspect of the impact of this false accusation is the tenacious association of eroticism with her image. Mary Magdalene has been likened to Mari-Ishtar, the Mesopotamian

goddess of fertility and love. As Mari-Ishtar, too, is always depicted as beautiful and richly adorned with jewels, who descends into underworld in search of her lover, Tammuz or Christ in Taoism (Redgrove 1987:125-6).

In another tradition, symbolically associated with Christ's resurrection, Mary Magdalene has been linked to the Egyptian goddess, Isis, the consort of Osiris, who was venerated and later worshipped all over the Roman world. A review by Robert Irwin in <u>Pittsburgh Gazette</u> July 9,1989, (A book review of Clystra Kinstler 1989 <u>The Moon under her feet</u>. San Francisco: Harper & Row.), shows how easily 'Mary Magdalene' can be subsumed into the "Great Whore of biblical prophecy and a goddess, both Ishtar and Isis". The relevant iconographical link here is that Isis was often depicted with a phial of ointment, and was credited with restoring her dead husband back to life through her anointing of his body. Again, Mary Magdalene, coming to anoint her beloved's dead body on Easter morning, is said to recall Gilgamesh's lament for Enkidu, "The harlot who anointed you with fragrant ointment laments for you now" (Baring 1991:592). Finally, an association has been made by at least one author, between Mary Magdalene and Mary Lucifer, the Black Goddess, who is named as the Madonna, wife and lover of Jesus (Redgrove 1987:135).

The results of this biased proclamation in the visual portrayal of Magdalene have a wider implication for the treatment of all Christian women. In the sense that all women have been affected by the patriarchal myth, that Eve's disobedience brought sin into the world, all women have been affected by the myth that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute. Both of these myths have a common purpose, that of a deliberate diminishment of the nature of womanhood. The illustrated examples have shown in chapter four, how Mary Magdalene has been visually conceptualised as a woman still trapped by her sexuality. As Berger commented, the manner in which Mary Magdalene has been visually portrayed contradicts the essence of her alleged renunciation of sin. For, "she is painted as being, before she is anything else, a takeable and desirable woman" (Berger 1972:92).

In view of the Catholic Church's severe condemnation of prostitutes, it is valid to question the motivation behind the Church's association of Mary Magdalene with this 'sin'. In the Gospels Jesus does not condemn prostitutes. He even on a few occasions confronts the priests by declaring that the prostitutes will enter heaven sooner than them (Mt 21:31). As Dorothy Sayre comments, it is no wonder there was a special relationship between Jesus and women. There has never been a man like Jesus, who:

> never nagged at them, never flattered or coaxed or patronized....There is no act, no sermon, no parable in the whole Gospel that borrows its pungency from female perversity.
> (Russell 1974:34, quoting from <u>Are Women Human</u> Sayre 1971:47).

This verse epitomises the feminist's fiery crucible in which the patriarchal Catholic Church's doctrine must be tested. The Jesus of the Gospels is a wholistic person, who shares a respectful mutuality equally with the women and men he gathers around him. Yet the Catholic Church has resisted this mutuality even to the point of denying certain fundamental aspects of biblical history. It appears inconceivable that the Church would be prepared to sacrifice the foundational elements of Jesus' message, in order to uphold a mis-guided notion of masculine superiority. Yet the denial, or even neglect of the biblical women's, and specifically, Mary Magdalene's apostleship involves serious ethical implications. The following section will address these feminist ethical issues.

5.1.3.2. Women's experience of oppression and sin

Historically, women have been dominated, ruled, and governed by men. A further problem for women is that their history has been written from a male perspective. This has extended a biased orientation to, and interpretation of, most aspects of human existence.

In whatever ways oppression has been described, women, from all stratas of society, from the affluent West to the underdeveloped two-thirds of the world, "lack social, economic and legal recognition" (Moltmann-Wendel 1986:69). This has had serious consequences, particularly when they are church-going Catholics. As Catholics, women and men are encouraged through the sacrament of penance to internalise their suffering, by considering how their own sins offend God. It is considered an opportunity of great grace for penitents to take responsibility for sins committed against them. For, in their subsequent absolution, their confessors emphasise that suffering will keep them humble, and more sensitive to others. This has perpetuated a Christian concept of "the ideal of the lovable, passive, patient woman" (Moltmann-Wendel 1986:69).

In religion, the concept of 'sin' is subject to inequitable misinterpretations. Although many would accept that sin is a social and political reality, it has traditionally been reduced to individual sexual misdemeanors. In biblical terms, one of the words used to express salvation, is *yeshu'ah*, meaning "to be broad,

spacious"(Russell 1974:112). The denial of that space, that openness and liberty is regarded as the 'sin' (Russell 1974:112). This has bearing on the social reality of sharing space with other people. Liberation theologians like Gutiérrez have emphasised this social aspect of "sin as the refusal to give others room to breathe and live as human beings" (Russell 1974:112).

This reinterpretation of the meaning of sin could have immensely positive connotations for women. For, it is by the sexual and personal emphasis placed on sin by the Catholic Church authorities that women have been oppressed. We have seen that from a patriarchal perspective, women have been identified as the cause and temptation to sin. Yet women do not commonly identify men as their prime occasion of sin. Women are far more inclined to fault their own inadequacies and the negation of their social responsibility as occasions of sin.

As a theology of liberation, a feminist critical hermeneutics is concerned to regain a broader, more wholistic perspective of social responsibility and accountability. A vision where "liberation is understood as a gift of God, at once personal and social, which is ours as it is constantly shared with others" (Russell 1974:113).

Mary Magdalene is identified in the pre-Lukan tradition as a woman 'from whom he has cast out seven demons' (Mk 16:9 & Lk 8:2). Ethically then, she should not be "characterised as a 'sinner', but rather as someone who has experienced the unlimited seven-fold liberating power of the kingdom [basileia] in her own life" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983:124).

The biblical fact that Mary Magdalene suffered from some kind of a mental illness and was healed by her encounter with Jesus, proclaims a significant message to all oppressed people who share a universal hope of liberation. For Mary Magdalene, freed from the demoniac possession was 'resurrected' into a new life of disciplehood. In this way her healing became her call. Whereas the men apostles, who left a profession or a family to follow Jesus, still retained their professional and family links. For example, the Gospels mention Jesus eating at Peter's home and being served by Peter's mother-in-law (Lk 4:38).

When Mary Magdalene was liberated by the healing touch of Jesus from a life of oppression, her call affected the whole of her existence. She was raised up into a completely new way of life. Indeed, by focusing on Mary Magdalene's liberating call to disciplehood in this hermeneutic of remembrance, the way is opened to redress the injustice of the patriarchal misrepresentation of this saint. The

neglected history of Mary Magdalene's release from bondage will serve to raise the expectation and hopes of anyone trapped in a situation of enslavement. The implications of this 'resurrection' will now be explored.

5.1.3.3. Mary Magdalene as the 'resurrected woman'

The starting point which gives feminist theology its distinctiveness is the experience of oppression encountered by many women in society (Moltmann-Wendel 1986:66). Mary Magdalene is identified in the Gospels as one who has experienced a seven-fold oppression. Luke's Gospel gives no details beyond the basic fact that Mary Magdalene's meeting with Jesus resulted in a radically, liberating experience (Lk 8:2). Thus, by the reclaiming and re-telling of her story of liberation, all oppressed women will be encouraged in the struggle for their own personal liberation. Moreover, in Mary Magdalene's transformation from oppression to liberation, from 'death' to a spiritual rebirth, there is a noteworthy connecting link within the whole biblical tradition.

For, in the Bible when God singles out someone for a specific task, the chosen person always undergoes a profound personal transformation as a prerequisite to the covenantal call. For example, in the covenant between God and Abram, God says, "You shall no longer be called Abram, your name will be Abraham, for I have made you father of a multitude of nations" (Gn 17:5). And Moses, through his encounter with God, is transformed from a shepherd "not able to speak well" (Gn 4:10) to be the leader who will free the Israelite from the bondage of Pharaoh (Ex 3:1-12).

Again, in the commissioning of the prophets, there is often a physical transformation required. Isaiah's lips are scorched with a fiery coal to purify him for his prophetic calling (Is 6:6-8). Similarly, Jeremiah's lips are touched by Yahweh to enable him to prophesy (Jr 1:9).

In the New Testament, when Saul, as arch-persecutor of the early Christian community, is singled out by God, he is struck blind from the divine encounter until his whole life is transformed into that of the ardent disciple of Jesus (Ac 9:3-12).

However, none of the vocational callings of either the patriarchs or the prophets were as ultimately significant as the covenantal 'call' of Mary Magdalene.

Abram was called to father a nation, Moses was called to lead that nation into the

promised land. And successive prophets were called to guide the people through the various vicissitudes of their spiritual journey towards God. However, Mary Magdalene's call and commissioning involves the proclamation of the keynote phrase in the whole Christian mystery, "He is risen".

Yet the 'chosen disciple' to whom this message was entrusted has been undervalued, her image distorted and her apostleship discredited. The patriarchal Church has not allowed Christians to remember Mary Magdalene's transformed 'glory'. Instead, a manifestly unethical judgement has been allowed to emerge, and undermine Mary Magdalene's covenantal calling.

Is this not, indeed, the 'lost coin' of Mary Magdalene's apostleship? For, if this covenant between Mary Magdalene and Jesus is recovered and placed in its historical biblical perspective, there can be no doubt about the 'call' of Mary Magdalene. If, on the other hand, it remains hidden, the covenantal dimension of the resurrection morning encounter remains lost. This is apparently what the patriarchal Church would prefer. Moreover, judging from the evidence uncovered in chapter four, there has been considerable distortion of her image to ensure that Mary Magdalene's 'call' remained lost. However, having recovered this forgotten feminist 'coin' in the critical hermeneutic of remembrance, it is important to begin in earnest a process of reconstitution and reclamation of Mary Magdalene's disciplehood.

Mark's descriptive identification, of Mary Magdalene at the empty tomb, highlights the dramatic significance of Christ's first risen appearance to her (Mk 16:9). There are two important, affirmative aspects to this meeting. First, Jesus chose to show his newly resurrected body initially to a woman. A disciple who had herself undergone a transformation, a *metanoia*, into a new life. Jesus chose a woman to proclaim the resurrection to the world. And without this proclamation, Paul declares "our faith would be in vain" (1 Cor 15:14).

In her dramatic commissioning by the risen Christ, Mary Magdalene demonstrates a praxis of feminist theology. She is able to explore the meaning of her own experience in a new kind of consciousness, a new view of reality. In this sense, Mary Magdalene's voice finds an echo in Maya Angelou's powerful poem, <u>And still I rise</u>:

> You may write me down in history
> with your bitter twisted lies
> You may trod me down in the very dirt, but still like dust, I'll rise -
> Out of the huts of history's shame, I rise.

Up from a past that's rooted in pain, I rise -
Leaving behind nights of terror, centuries of fear, I rise.
Into a daybreak miraculously clear, I rise. Bringing the gifts that my
ancestors gave -
<div align="right">(quoted by Curt Davis in Jeffrey Elliot (ed) 1989</div>
<u>Conversations with Maya Angelou</u> London: Virago:p.68).

Mary Magdalene's dramatic participation in the exultation and triumph of the resurrection, invalidates the prejudicial, patriarchal interpretations of her ethical value for other women. For indeed, when the ethical significance of Mary Magdalene's liberation experience is critically evaluated, it can be interpreted as the harbinger of the Good News that Jesus is present equally for women and men. Her story proclaims that divisions and degrees of discipleship within the Christian Church are untenable.

The biblical narrative, of Mary Magdalene's transformation through her meeting with Jesus, stands as an ethical judgement on the Catholic Church. For Jesus 'exorcised' and released Mary Magdalene from whatever constituted her so-called "seven demons" (Lk 8:2), yet the Church has continued to bond her in guilty penitence. Even were Mary Magdalene correctly identified as "the woman who had a bad name in the town" (Lk 7:37). There could be no moral justice in the Church's characterisation of her as 'penitent prostitute', after the forgiveness pronounced by Jesus. For, to maintain a condemnation after absolution has been given, is tantamount to a negation of the forgiveness.

The ethical value of this hermeneutic tool of remembrance has served to cut through the full weight of this injustice. It allows the resurrected spirit of Mary Magdalene to rise up, (as in Maya Angelou's poem quoted above), "out of the huts of history's shame, up from a past that's rooted in pain".

Second, when Mary Magdalene was chosen by Jesus to be the harbinger of the Good News, she completed a cycle of key points in the life of Jesus in which women played a dominant role. For as the crucial incarnation of Jesus Christ could not have taken place had not God entered into a covenant with a woman. So too, in the climatic proclamation of Christ's vindication over death, God chose a woman to herald the news. In a critical exploration of the Scriptures, it becomes apparent how women occupy the strategically important positions in the Jesus story. More emphasis will be placed on the contribution of the other women in a later discussion.

At this point, it is important to mention only the logical significance in Mary Magdalene's presence at the foot of the cross, at the entombment and then as the first to witness the resurrection. The importance of remembering these biblical scenes is that they represent a feminist perspective of Christianity that has not been adequately highlighted and measured against the doctrinal patriarchalism.

The Bible itself witnesses to instances when the women were in effect, far more active and sensitive as disciples. For example, during Jesus's passion and death the women remain awake beside him to alleviate his physical pain. Whereas, in the garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus takes only three men, requesting their support in his mental anguish. "Keep awake with me" (Mt 26:38) he urges, the men keep falling asleep, despite being woken three times (Mt 26:45). It is important to maximise these biblical affirmations of the women, so they may act as buffers to the unjust and seditious attitude proclaimed against women by the Church.

In conclusion, the hermeneutic of remembrance has revealed a marked contrast between the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene, and these remnants recovered about the biblical Mary Magdalene. The divergency and variety of the themes, which emanated from an initially prejudiced editing of the biblical texts, has resulted in two elemental visual images. On the one hand, Mary Magdalene has been venerated in mysticism as the bride of Christ. On the other hand, in secular morality, she is the archetype of the 'fallen woman'. In fact, in the Gnostic writings examined in the second chapter, Mary Magdalene is simultaneously named as sister, consort, and beloved of Christ.

Mary Magdalene has also been named as, or likened to, Sophia, the archetypal Spirit of Wisdom in Gnostic mythology. Schüssler Fiorenza referred to the divine Sophia as "Israel's God in the language and form of the goddess....Sophia is called sister, wife, mother, beloved, and teacher....she is an initiate [mystis] of God's knowledge" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983:133). It is this sense that Mary Magdalene is likened to Sophia in the Gnostic writings. Specifically, in Pistis Sophia, she appears as "the most spiritual of the disciples and is described as'the woman who knew the All' ((Bk.II.87:10 in Schmidt 1978:200). In the Gospel of Mary [Magdalene], she is the supreme initiate into Christ's mysteries" (Walker 1983:93). This study also shows how in striking contrast to the early Christian Church patriarchs' animosity towards women, the Gnostic's image of Mary Magdalene is one of an intelligent mystic, with an inquiring mind, far more capable of grasping Jesus's teachings than the fishermen.

The aim of this hermeneutic of remembrance is to "keep alive" the heroic memory of "struggle, life and leadership of biblical women who spoke and acted in the power of the spirit" (1984b:52). Schüssler Fiorenza cautioned against unilaterally rejecting all oppressive and negative texts of the Scriptures. So too, in this evaluation of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene, I have sought to reclaim and restore to memory the essentials of her life and leadership. At the same time, I have sought not to forget the suffering of the 'sinful' women with whom Mary Magdalene has been historically confused. It is appropriate therefore, to include an analysis of how a visual portrayal can be in itself a subversive tool to compound the oppression of women.

Within this hermeneutic of remembrance, the negative aspects of Mary Magdalene's visual portrayal have been discredited. Furthermore, together with the visual imagery exhibited in chapter four, they have provided conclusive evidence of the Catholic Church's obdurate retention of an ethically unjust image of Mary Magdalene. In the light of Paul's confirmation, "From now onwards, therefore, we do not judge anyone by the standards of the flesh" (2 Cor 5:16), an image of a penitent prostitute can no longer be regarded as the legitimate visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene. There can be no purpose in retaining any negative imagery, which detracts from and minimises Mary Magdalene's stature. Instead, this hermeneutic seeks to apply a criterion of selective memory, in order to reconstruct a wholistic image of Mary Magdalene as the archetypal, liberated woman of the resurrection. As this model has established, the patriarchal Church's selection of texts about Mary Magdalene has been largely responsible for the subsequent negative imagery. Further, a feminist ethical perspective requires that this imbalance be rectified and justice restored.

In the following, final section of this analysis, suggestions will be offered towards a creative actualisation of a new vision of the role of women in the Christian Church.

5.1.4. A hermeneutic of creative actualisation

How will it be possible to restore a new vision of wholeness in the Church? The historical reconstitution of a liberating vision of Mary Magdalene will be important in forming a new revitalised archetype for Christian women. It is essential to express the active engagement of the sisterhood of women in the biblical story of liberation. This must not only be critical but constructive, not only looking at the past but more

especially looking towards the future. As a completing definition of one way in which to achieve this vision, Schüssler Fiorenza suggests what she terms, "a hermeneutics of creative actualisation" (1984b:47):

> [The] historical reconstructions of women's biblical history need to be supplemented by a hermeneutics of creative actualization that expresses the active engagement of women in the ongoing biblical story of liberation...such a hermeneutics of creative actualization seeks to retell biblical stories from a feminist perspéctive, to reformulate biblical visions and injunction in the perspective of the discipleship of equals, and to create midrashic amplifications of the feminist remnants that have survived in patriarchal texts.
>
> (Schüssler Fiorenza 1984b:53).

In this way, Schüssler Fiorenza urges women to challenge the historically silent acceptance of patriarchal bias. The balance needs to be shifted away from a male-centred perspective to an inclusive perspective, and to an understanding of the world, human experience and history.

5.1.4.1. Towards reclaiming Mary Magdalene through the creation of positive imagery

A hermeneutic of creative actualisation provides the impetus for a celebration of sisterhood in the reclaiming of the heroines of the past. In it, women are encouraged to explore ways in which to give expression to this new creative consciousness. As Schüssler Fiorenza confirms in her own experience, women are increasingly entering:

> the biblical story with the help of historical imagination, artistic recreation and liturgical ritualization ... not only oriented toward the past but also toward the future of women-church ... [for it is] only by reclaiming our religious imagination and our sacred powers of naming that women-church can 'dream new dreams and see new visions'.
>
> (Schüssler Fiorenza 1984b:53-4).

In this way, wholistic foundations will be laid for future generations to develop and expand further in even more creative ways. However, there is a cautionary element in the conclusion of Schüssler Fiorenza's proposal of this feminist model of biblical interpretation. Namely that:

such creative participation in the biblical story must be won in and through a
feminist critical process of interpretation that repents of the structural sin and
internalized values of patriarchal sexism.

(Schüssler Fiorenza 1984b:54).

This initial acknowledgement of the injustice that has prevailed through the
patriarchal vision of Christianity must first be accepted. Further, Schüssler
Fiorenza emphasises that the necessary change will come through the "religious
creativity and feminist power of re-creation actualized in the church of women"
(1984b:54).

The visual evidence illustrated in chapter four has provided ample proof of the need
for a feminist visual theology. Visual imagery has proven to be a successful
method of presenting theology. Therefore, this is a clear indication of how
effectively an alternative feminist imagery could be applied. Thus, the creation of
positive, affirmative, liberating imagery will enable an appropriate search for a
renewed wholistic vision of Christian theology.

The option for a paradigm shift in biblical interpretation is vindicated with the
realisation of how much has been left unclaimed within the biblical text. As
Schüssler Fiorenza stresses, the Church's emphasis on the divine nature of the
inspired 'word' of Scripture has in effect reduced the 'word' "into an ideological
statement" (1983:152). However, as Schüssler Fiorenza counters, the real
importance lies in reading the Gospel texts as "narrative" (1983:152), in order to
contextualise the impact of these stories within the socio-historical world of the
time:

> Only when we place the Jesus stories about women into the overall story of
> Jesus and his movement in Palestine are we able to recognise their
> subversive character. In the discipleship of equals the 'role' of women is not
> peripheral or trivial, but at the center, and thus of utmost importance to the
> praxis of 'solidarity from below'.
>
> (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983:152).

For example, in the biblical accounts of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the
mention of the presence of Mary Magdalene and the women is profoundly
important. It places the women at the centre of the Christian story, as witnesses
and proclaimers. It exposes the absence of the men-disciples at these crucial
events. There is a sense in which these women could identify with Jesus' anguish
and suffering because they had been victims of pain and suffering.

After her transforming liberation, Mary Magdalene is always mentioned in relation

to this sisterhood of the women disciples of Jesus. Pertinent to this dissertation is the fact that, in the post-resurrection grouping of the sisterhood, the liberated Mary Magdalene is always named first.

Schüssler Fiorenza's point is that the texts need to be understood within their socio-political history. The early Christian community understood the significance of the women's presence in the narrative. Indeed, the 'role' of women is mentioned at strategically prophetic moments in Jesus's life and ministry. For example, Jesus' first miracle at Cana (Jn 2:4), was in response to his mother's request. And, it was to two women, an unnamed Samaritan and Martha, that he declared his messianic role (Jn 4:26;11:26).

The actualisation of a feminist, wholistic Christian Church depends upon the just reconstitution of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene. This will, in turn, open the way for a creative restoration of the 'heroic memory' of the sisterhood of women. For the way the 'role' of Mary Magdalene has been minimised and visually degraded, must be regarded as the paradigm of the negative treatment of so many women in the Scriptures.

This minimisation of women is in direct opposition to the liberating vision of Jesus, whom Schüssler Fiorenza has described so pertinently as "woman-identified man" (1983:154). For it is Jesus who "empowers us to walk upright", and who frees us "from the double oppression of societal and religious sexism and prejudice" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983 153-4). Moreover, in this creative actualisation of a positive imagery it is important to reclaim the contribution of all the biblical women. These contributions, like a 'source bank', will enable women to have access to a "repertoire of images" (Miles 1985:146). The images will not only affirm women, but offer help to a new self-discovery of a liberated womanhood.

The following section will look at some examples of this 'repertoire' of biblical women. Women, who formed with Mary Magdalene, the sisterhood of disciples of Jesus.

5.1.4.2. The contribution of women to the Jesus movement

One striking aspect of Jesus's ministry is that both women and men travelled around with him. If it was an unusual situation for women of that historical period to leave their domestic duties, and follow a rabbi. Then, even more unusual was the wide variety of backgrounds of some of these women. In Luke's account, for example, there is Mary Magdalene, who came from a small village, and was

possibly a social outcast because of her multiple demoniac possession. However, there is also Joanna, the wife of Cusa, King Herod's steward, and thus, a respected woman of some social standing.

Using Schüssler Fiorenza's criterion of the importance of the narrative behind the 'word', the significance of identifying some of the women in the group is surely to manifest the relevance of women to Jesus' movement. Luke's text proves that the constant companions of Jesus were a mixed egalitarian group. This opens the strong probability, that it was not only the men disciples who were sent to spread the good news around the countryside.

In Mark's story of the woman who anoints Jesus (14:1-9), Schüssler Fiorenza finds confirmation that the early Christian community sought to remember Jesus' promise of continued presence amongst and solidarity with the poor. But the powerful impact of this prophetic action of the woman, is later diminished by Luke into a story of a repentant sinner. Luke, according to Schüssler Fiorenza, no longer understands the 'solidarity from below' that inspired Jesus and his first followers:

> The poor have become an object of alms giving and charity, while poverty is seen as an ascetic challenge and 'practice for special religious people'. Although the eucharistic formula 'in remembrance of me' (1 Cor 11:24,25) is verbally similar to the gospel proclamation 'in remembrance of her,' the later church has not ritualized this story of the woman prophet, using it instead to assert as God's will that poverty cannot be eliminated. The 'church of the poor' and the 'church of women' must be recovered at the same time, if 'solidarity from below' is to become a reality for the whole community of Jesus again. As a feminist vision, the *basileia* vision of Jesus calls all women without exception to wholeness and selfhood, as well as to solidarity with those women who are the impoverished, the maimed, and outcasts of our society and church. It knows of the deadly violence such a vision and commitment will encounter. It enables us not to despair or to relinquish the struggle in the face of such violence. It empowers us to walk upright, freed from the double oppression of societal and religious sexism and prejudice. The woman-identified man, Jesus, called forth a discipleship of equals that still needs to be discovered and realized by women and men today.
> (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983:153-54).

Yet, as Schüssler Fiorenza notes, it was the women of Galilee who were "decisive for the very continuation of the Jesus movement after Jesus' arrest and execution"(1983:138). When the Galilean women disciples are mentioned in the Bible, it has already been noted that the list usually begins with Mary Magdalene. This is an indication of her distinction in the group, particularly as she was the first one to see the resurrected Christ. The Galilean women did not flee after Jesus was arrested but, rather, stayed in Jerusalem and were present at the foot of the Cross

and at the burial. Then, as Schüssler Fiorenza suggests, because the women had remained in the capital and had been witness to the extraordinary events, they would have been convinced:

> that God had vindicated Jesus and his ministry. They therefore were empowered to continue the movement and work of Jesus, the risen Lord. They probably sought to gather together the dispersed disciples and friends of Jesus who lived in and around Jerusalem - women like Mary of Bethany, the woman who anointed Jesus, the mother of John Mark who had a house in Jerusalem, or Mary, mother of Jesus, as well as such male disciples as Lazarus, Nicodemus, or the 'beloved' disciple. Some of these women probably also moved back, very soon, to Galilee, their native country.
> (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983:139).

This illustrative reconstruction of events is "historically plausible" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983:139), because the women of the Jesus movement would be socially disregarded by both the religious and civic patriarchal authorities.

In Luke's Gospel there is a clear supposition that the women who supported Jesus' ministry in Galilee, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna "and many others who were assisting them out of their means" (Lk 8:1-3), continued to be among his disciples in Jerusalem. As we read in Luke, the "women who had accompanied him from Galilee"(23:49) were all witnesses to the events of crucifixion. Therefore, if Jesus' final meal had any connection with the Jewish Passover, it would have been unlikely that it would have been limited to 'the twelve'. Especially as there is no other example of such a restricted meal practice in Jesus' ministry. This caveat illustrates an important principle in the study of a minority group.

When the women are not mentioned, it need not mean they were not present. Such a presumed limitation is unlikely in the post-resurrection atmosphere of exhilaration. Besides, the risen Jesus' subsequent commissioning of the disciples on the mountain in Galilee (Mt 28:16-17) is dependent upon the women being in close interaction with the male disciples, throughout the events of Easter (Mt 28:9-10). There is no certainty that the evangelists intended to exclude the women from the revelation at the meal. Only the combination of this tradition, with the patriarchal interpretation that Jesus commissioned only "the eleven" in an appearance in Galilee founds such a claim. There are, however, unnamed "companions" around (Lk 24:34) who might, as easily, be presumed to be the women.

The women who experienced the healing power of Jesus, particularly the foreign women, also played an important role in the spreading of the good news

(Schüssler Fiorenza 1983:138). For example, it was to the foreigner, at the well near the town of Sychar, that Jesus first acknowledged his messiahship. As Schüssler Fiorenza comments, "women were the first 'non-Jews' to become members of the Jesus movement" (1985:138), and to insist on their inclusion like the 'Syrophoenician woman' and the 'Canaanite woman'. She continues:

> This historical development was of utmost significance for the beginnings of Christianity. Women who had experienced the gracious goodness of Jesus' God were leaders in expanding the Jesus movement in Galilee and in developing a theological argument from the Jesus traditions for why pagans should have access to the power of Jesus' God and a share in the superabundance of the messianic table community. By challenging the Galilean Jesus movement to extend its table sharing and make the *basileia*'s power and future experientially available to gentiles, these women safeguarded the inclusive discipleship of equals called forth by Jesus. The Syrophoenician woman whose adroit argument opened up a future of freedom and wholeness for her daughter has also become the historically-still-visible advocate for such a future for gentiles. She has become the apostolic 'foremother' for all gentile Christians.
>
> (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983:138).

The patriarchal Church's efforts to marginalise the contribution of the women disciples could have begun early in the first century after the ascension of Jesus. There were several women who contributed to the missionary work of Paul, whom Paul always took care to acknowledge by name. Yet, these women have been so disregarded by the Church that little factual information about them exists besides their recorded names.

In fact, Paul specifically names several women who appear as leaders in the local churches, as they host the services in their homes. In the letter to the Roman Church, greetings are sent to several named women. For example, "Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae" (Rm 16:1-2), and to other women named as "Mary, Tryphaena and Tryphosa and Julia" (Rm 16). Paul also mentions by name, several times, a married couple, Priscilla and Aquila, with whom he shared a common profession (Ac 18:2,18,26; Rm 16:3; 1 Cor 16:19; & 2 Tm 4:19).

In the <u>Acts of the Apostles</u>, a moving narrative is recounted about the 'resurrection' in Jaffa of one of the women community leaders, " a woman disciple called Tabitha or Dorcas in Greek" (Ac 9:36). In a later chapter, Luke refers to "the house of Mary the mother of John Mark, where a number of people had assembled and were praying" (Ac 12:12). Finally, there was the enterprising seller of purple dye, "Lydia" from Thyatira" (Ac 16:14) whose house also became a meeting place (Ac 16:40).

Sometimes, the women's names were masculinised to read as male names like Prisca (Rm 16:13 & 1 Cor 16:19) instead of Priscilla (Ac 18:2), and Junia, whom Paul commended as an "outstanding apostle" (Rm 16:6-8). Swidler comments how several of the patristic Fathers did not hesitate to belittle women, if they considered it necessary. Although the same Fathers had also confirmed the apostleship and praised the contribution of these women (1979:298). John Chyrsostom, for example, who had on occasion accused beautiful women of being "full of filth" (Swidler 1979:343), had also proclaimed of Junia, that "she should be counted worthy of the appellation of apostle" (Swidler 1979:299). On another occasion, Chrysostom favourably interpreted the precedence of Priscilla's name over that of her husband as a confirmation of Priscilla's apostleship:

> It is worth examining Paul's motive, when he greets them, for putting Priscilla before her husband....He did not do so without reason: the wife must have had, I think, greater piety than her husband. This is not a simple conjecture; its confirmation is evident in the Acts. Apollos was an eloquent man, well versed in scripture, but he knew only the baptism of John; this woman took him, instructed him in the way of God, and made of him an accomplished teacher.
>
> (quoted in Swidler 1979:298).

Radford Ruether has drawn attention to the stories of several fourth century female spiritual leaders, like "Macrina, sister of the Cappadocians, Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa" (1979:94), Paula, Melania, and Marcella, all noblewomen who renounced their wealth and sexuality in pursuit of holiness and asceticism. However, Radford Ruether bemoans the fact that despite their renown as:

> writers, thinkers, Scripture scholars, and innovators in the formation of monastic life....they were women that could have no public voice in the teaching Church here on earth.
>
> (Ruether 1979:94).

Unfortunately, this lamentable situation has continued to be echoed in the present century in the Roman Catholic Church's minimisation of women's intellectual contribution to theology. When, after nineteen centuries in Christendom only two women, Catherine of Siena [c.1347-1380] and Teresa of Avila [1515-1582], have been honoured with the title of 'Doctor of the Church'. This affirmation of the value of their teaching contribution was declared in 1970 by Pope Paul VI (Cross 1978:254,1350). However, with the building up of a source bank of affirmative images of biblical women, the hope is there can no longer be justification for so narrow a vision of women's potential.

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One of the first questions raised by this dissertation concerned how women themselves related to this symbolic imagery of their personhood. A further question was posed asking whether it was, in effect, possible for women to identify with an image that has been created largely by male artists? This, in turn, raises a psycho-social issue concerning how women value themselves, and how they image themselves. To respond to this issue, it will be useful to consider the imagery that is readily accessible to women. Berger has argued that we are formed by what we see, because "we are looking at the relation between things and ourselves" (Berger 1972:9). So, it becomes apparent how important the quality of the available imagery should be to the constitution of the self.

In the Middle Ages, a period free of magazines and picture books, the artworks in the churches provided the accessible visual 'role models' for women's and of men's aspirations. The didactic nature of Christian art encouraged the viewers to reflect on the comparison between the visually represented Gospel scene and the reality of their human life experience.

From a twentieth century reaction to these artworks, women today can only surmise that the women of past centuries might have experienced some similar feelings of inadequacy. For the ideally proportioned, beautiful, figures of the saints are intentionally imaged as super-human, super-natural when they are presented as perfect role-models. It is impossible to determine accurately how these historical artworks affected people of past ages. However, today, in the twentieth century, when these same artworks are presented for the same devotional purposes, it is possible to rate their impact on contemporary Catholic women.

There is a sense in which women and men have an instinctual appreciation of beauty as a symbol of perfection. For example, everyone admires a good complexion, or lovely hair, even when they do not share these attributes. When symbols become idealised, however, self-identification becomes more whimsical. For example, in a consumer culture where women's bodies are the commodities, most contemporary women want to look as good as the magazine models and celluloid stars appear to look.

There is a similar connotation in the perception of religious art. For example, images of saints like the Virgin Mary are idealised to present Christian role models. For, within a Catholic context it is widely believed that most women would like to be as beautiful, as pure and as holy as the Virgin Mother of God. In chapter two, it was suggested that this notion, was a patriarchal fallacy. However, this

standardised version of woman-image in religious art, which Paul Tillich has criticised as "stylistic idealism", has not only grossly distorted our perception of the real life. Unhappily, it has also furthered a false perception of what good women should look like:

> An ideal without realistic foundation is set up against the encountered reality, which is beautified and corrected to conform with the ideal in a manner which combines sentimentality and dishonesty.
>
> (Tillich 1964:77).

A significant extension of Tillich's criticism of this stylised, religious woman-image is in the twentieth century Catholic consumer culture. Here is the development of a celluloid religious art, in which cheap, plastic figurines depict with bland sentimentality a 'sugary-sweet', unchallenging Christianity. These artifacts can be found in abundance in Catholic Church repositories. There is a contradiction in the Catholic Church's persistence in sanctioning the distribution of reproductions of this stylised ideal of womanhood. For this trite 'repository art' has become a parody of religious faith, destroying the moral fibre of the Christian social reality.

Yet, religion, "to fulfil its formative role in human life", needs visual imagery (Miles 1985:150). In chapter one, I demonstrated, with examples, how historically, the Catholic Church has relied on visual imagery in its doctrinal presentation. Amongst the clutter of these twentieth century mass-produced plastic imitations, there is a real danger that the "ancient function of images - that of cumulatively drawing the worshiper to imitate and participate in the qualities and way of life formulated by the image - has been neglected" (Miles 1985:150).

There is a serious void in a contemporary Catholic visual imagery today. This plastic 'kitsch' cannot be considered adequate towards fostering any authentic committment to Christian values. Yet, for Catholic women seeking affirmative imagery, the alternative historical imagery predominantly available is equally ineffectual, since it represents a patriarchal vision of Christianity. There is therefore an urgent need to reclaim what has been established in chapter one as the "major facet of Christian tradition" (Cook 1989:329). As Miles has reiterated, without this visual 'language' of images not only will the Christian community suffer but the social development of human beings is disadvantaged. Miles continues:

> Images belong to worship. Religion needs images to accomplish its task of formation by attraction; art also needs an essentially religious vision if it is to present human life in its most profound and comprehensive scope. Religion without artistic images is qualitatively impoverished; art without religion is in

danger of triviality, superficiality, or subservience to commercial or political interests.

<div align="right">(Miles 1985:151).</div>

The medieval Christian Church realised the power of the visual image, and thus their richly ornamented church interiors fulfilled the visual needs of the medieval people. Today, in the twentieth century, the Protestant renunciation of imagery has continued, and many modern Roman Catholic Churches have reacted against the poor quality of available religious art. This in effect has meant that for many contemporary Christians, their "life-orientating" imagery, their archetypal role models have come from the secular world around them. The Christian Church is no longer the formative basis of their life-orientation. Furthermore, Miles has cautioned that secular imagery does not place life at its broadest and deepest context, but tends rather to perpetuate a consumer culture and thus becomes idolatrous (Miles 1985:152).

On a personal note, the concern that Catholic women's visual needs have not been adequately addressed by the contemporary Catholic Church art was an initial motivating force for this dissertation. This has been part of the creative impulse that prompted me to image, and visually reclaim what I called 'The Heroic Women of the Bible Series'. This impulse grew out the initial stages of this research. I wished to add emphasis to the essential aspect of reclaiming for Christianity, and women in particular, a visual theology which would present the biblical sisterhood in the most positive light possible. As an exploration of the possibilities within this hermeneutical model of interpretation, some of the womens's stories will be retold from a new perspective. In this way a new realisation of their ethical significance to the Christian story will be explored.

5.1.4.3. Cherishing the women's stories through positive imagery: The "Heroic Women Series"

The evidence of the women's contribution in the roles of discipleship, as witnesses and in worship, can be found in all four Gospels. The preservation of this material testifies to the integral part that the women played in the Gospel tradition, but the significance of their powerful contribution is rarely emphasised in church preaching.

One of the maligned women in the Gospel stories is Martha, sister to Mary and Lazarus of Bethany. There are three scriptural texts about the sisters, Martha and

Mary of Bethany. One is found in Luke's account (10:38-42) and the other two are in John's Gospel, (11:1-44; 12:3-8). The image of Martha of Bethany, commonly stressed in Christian preaching, is one of a bossy, self-righteous, over-bearing woman. In this role she is unfavourably contrasted to the supposedly more suitable role of her docile, contemplative sister, Mary. The strongly passionate Martha who declares her absolute faith in Jesus, and in his power to resurrect her brother Lazarus is undermined and negated. As Elizabeth Moltmann-Wendel has so aptly expressed it:

> Martha is not 'a woman' who 'keeps silence' in the community. She does not leave theology to the theologians. She carries on a vigorous debate....She charges Jesus with failure....She does not give up.
> (Moltmann-Wendel 1982:24).

Although Martha is rewarded in the Gospel, by the magnificent declaration from Jesus, "I am the resurrection" (Jn 11:26). She has been 'pushed aside' by the Church, possibly because she does not manifest any of the traditional feminine Christian virtues of obedience, tranquility, subservience. Worse, Martha has suffered an acrimonious attack by Christian preachers on her character as a bossy grumbler. While her sister Mary, who never says a word, is usually praised by the same preachers as the perfect symbol of womanhood. The thirteenth century mystic, Meister Eckhart, is one of the few scholars who has attempted to overturn this imagery, by severely criticising Mary and praising Martha as the true, mature, fulfilled person (Moltmann-Wendel 1982:28).

The Gospel accounts refer to a number of nameless women who are acclaimed and praised by Jesus for their faith. Yet, due to the evangelists' omission of their names, they have been left faceless by the Church. If, on the other hand, the women are not Jews, they are frequently categorised by their nationality. Possibly one of the most well-known, unnamed, characters in the Bible is "a Samaritan woman" who came, one day, to draw water at the well near Sychar (Jn 4:7). However, although this woman was the first person to whom Jesus announced his messianic role, no evangelist was concerned enough to record her name.

This negligence in women-naming is specifically noticeable, when contrasted with the care taken by evangelists in their identification of the men. A case in point is the careful identification of Simon of Cyrene, who is forced to carry Jesus' cross to Calvary (Mk 15:21). It becomes logical to surmise, that had it been a man so graced to recognise the Christ at the well near Sycar, it would have been unthinkable not to have mentioned his name.

Other lacunae in the texts might have been avoided had there been a similar concern to proclaim the disciplehood of the women as that of the men. For example, in the garden called "Gethsemane" (Mk 14:32), when the three male apostles were asleep, it is recorded that Jesus sweated blood, prayed aloud, and angels appeared to comfort him (Lk 22:43-44). Who saw and heard these things? Is it unreasonable that the women who had followed him to Jerusalem, and later to Calvary were also there in the garden? Thoughts similar to these must have inspired the fifteenth century Florentine artist, Fra Angelico, for his fresco depicting Gethsemane, located in the monastery of San Marco in Florence. Moltmann-Wendel uses this artwork as an example of a powerful positive affirmation of women-disciplehood. In the fresco, the two sisters, Martha and Mary, are depicted keeping watch with Jesus like true disciples, while the men disciples lie dead asleep (Moltmann-Wendel 1982:38).

Schüssler Fiorenza, too, confirms in her own experience, that women are increasingly entering "the biblical story with the help of historical imagination, artistic recreation and liturgical ritualization" (1984:53).

Thus, when, in the course of my studies towards this dissertation, I was asked by the Anglican Women's Movement for Ordination to contribute some visual input into their pre-Synod workshop, I was moved to begin "reclaiming our religious imagination and our sacred powers of naming....new dreams and see new visions" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1984:54).

The resultant fifty watercolour paintings, which I titled, 'The Heroic Women Series' were in praise and celebration of holy women in the Scriptures and depicted the biblical women of both the Hebrew and Christian heritage. I regarded the request as a significant opportunity to contribute artistically towards visually broadening the Christian Church's horizons. As this dissertation asserts, women and men need to see positive affirmative imagery about themselves, and about the wholistic experience of the Christian religion.

The selection of 'Heroic Women' was a personal one. My concern was and is primarily to present a visual celebration of some of the biblical women, whose stories have touched me. Thus, in honour of the 'celebration', all the heroines are dressed in gold, and the paintings brightly ornamented with decorative patterning. I wanted the pictures to sparkle like jewels. The emotional emphasis in the paintings is often conveyed in a very natural woman's response. For example, Sarah stands laughing under a tree while she eavesdrops Abraham and his two visitors discussing her future pregnancy (Gn 18:12). Or, Rachel shows a

mischievous humour, as she sits demurely on the camel bag in which she has hidden her family's household gods, pretending to be 'womanly indisposed'(Gn 31:35). Or again, 'Claudia', based on the Matthew's brief account of Pontius Pilate's wife (Mt 27:19), is depicted waking up from a nightmare with crosses floating in the ceiling, and fishes swimming under her bed.

As part of the motivation for these affirmative images was to reclaim and empower Christian women, I was particularly concerned that all the 'heroines' should be named. These new names were chosen with specific concern for their didactic relevance. Thus, the Samaritan woman became 'Mehetabel' meaning "whom God makes happy" (Lockyer 1991:108). "The Canaanite woman" (Mt 15:22), or "the Syro-Phoenician woman" (Mk 7:26), whose faith was praised by Jesus, became 'Jessica' meaning "Yahweh is looking" (Geddie 1965:1354). This symbolic christening is appropriate where some of the titles meted out to the unnamed women are particularly unfortunate. For example, "a woman suffering from a haemorrhage" (Lk 8:43), became 'Johanna' meaning "Jehovah has shown favor" (Lockyer 1991:78). 'Amelia', one who has "struggled", (Geddie 1965:1349) was the name given to "a woman who for eighteen years....had been bent double and quite unable to stand upright", whom Jesus cured one Sabbath day (Lk 13:10).

I took particular interest in the re-naming of one of the biblical women long associated in hagiography with Mary Magdalene. The woman had been caught, the evangelist writes, in the very act of "committing adultery" (Jn 8:3). Despite the suggested enthusiasm by the Pharisees that she should be stoned to death, Jesus says nothing but simply bends down to write in the sand. I called her 'Dina', meaning "justice" (Lockyer 1991:45), because, in the Gospel text, when Jesus looks up again, he merely asks her where her accusers have gone (Jn 8:11). Sometimes, the nameless women in the Scriptures are identified in patriarchal terms, for example, "Simon's mother-in-law" (Mk 1:30), or "the mother of Zebedee's sons" (Mt 20:20), "the wife of Lot" (Gn 19:26), "the wife of Phinehas (1 Sm 4:19), or simply as "an only daughter about twelve years old, who was dying"(Lk 8:42). Finally, "the daughter of Jephthah" (Jdg 11:40), whose life was sacrificed in fulfilment of an oath, I named 'Elisheba' meaning "God's oath" (Lockyer 1991:51).

Another aspect in the reaffirmation of the life experiences of these women was to recall, from the forgotten past, women like "Vashti", Queen of Persia (Est 1:17). Vashti was banished from her kingdom, because she refused to allow her husband to display her beautiful body to his drunken guests. Or there is the dedicated devotion of "Rizpah" of Horah (2 Sam 21:10). A woman, who physically protected from the wild beasts, her slain sons' bodies, which King David had refused to bury.

Rizpah's heroic vigil lasted through the summer, "from the beginning of the barley season until the rain fell" (2 Sam 21:10), when David was shamed into granting a proper burial.

This is the spirit of the hermeneutic of remembrance in which Schüssler Fiorenza has asserted the importance of remembering the suffering and hopes of the oppressed women in the Scriptures. I consider that the primary task of these paintings is to keep alive the reality of the pain and injustices suffered by these women, who are our foremothers and sisters. This is not just to hold on to grievances. It becomes in the spirit of the Jewish Holocaust museums, a banner that reminds women what happens when the balance of equality is disregarded. History books are written mostly about the heroic deeds of men. I suggest there were at least as many unsung heroic women in the history of humankind.

Throughout the presentation of this hermeneutical model, ethical issues have been raised and evaluative questions have been posed about the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene. These issues have a specific importance in the light of the questionable attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards women. I have used Schüssler Fiorenza's interpretative model to highlight the visual imagery which has historically played so significant a role in Catholic Church doctrine. In this final phase of the analysis, the evidence collected for the feminist ethical case of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene will be appraised.

The central issue at stake is a question of injustice. The way Mary Magdalene has been visually portrayed has been revealed to be a patriarchal device to discredit her biblical status as an apostle. The effectiveness of this strategy will now be determined, with counter proposals made towards an effective reconstitution of justice towards women in the Catholic Church.

5.2. Appraisal of the value of a feminist theological perspective as a liberating hermeneutic tool.

As a model for a feminist, critical rethinking of the imagery, this four-tiered hermeneutical process has facilitated the evaluation of the different aspects of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene. From a hermeneutic of suspicion, it was found that the imagery served to promote the patriarchal Catholic Church's biased perspective of the biblical figure of Mary Magdalene. This was shown through the devastating ambivalence of the imagery classified under 'penitent' and 'prostitute'.

Second, the hermeneutic of proclamation revealed that the only proclamation that the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene faithfully rendered was an erroneous judgement of her character. This, in turn revealed a tendency to discredit the biblical figure.

Through the visual evidence brought forward, classified as 'beata', it was found that the iconography utilised by the artists to identify the figure of Mary Magdalene did not provide an adequate, just portrayal of the person and work of Mary Magdalene. Further, the available imagery could not be ethically justified, and thus on all accounts, Mary Magdalene has been misrepresented by the visual portrayal traditionally accepted by the Catholic Church.

However, through the third hermeneutic of remembrance, whereby the negative, debilitating perspectives were disregarded and pushed aside, the positive aspect of Mary Magdalene's liberation from a sevenfold oppression was recalled and enthusiastically remembered. For, with the recovery of this 'lost coin' of Mary Magdalene's biblical image, she stands as the archetype for all women who reach out for liberation from oppression. With this reclaimed affirmation, the 'authentic' visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene can be restored.

Finally, in a hermeneutic of creative actualisation, the way has been opened to correct, from a feminist perspective, all subsequent visual imagery, not only of Mary Magdalene, but of biblical women, whose lives were spirit-filled enough to have been recorded in the Scriptures.

In the final analysis, in a visual portrayal of an archetypal Christian model, certain essential theological ethical reflections concerning the depiction of 'human worth' must be evident. These will now be addressed.

5.2.1. The centre of theological ethical reflection is 'human worth'

The purpose of theological ethical reflection centres in the value of being a person in a just order of society (Moltmann-Wendel 1986:66). In traditional Christian theology, the centre of the Christian experience lies in the encounter between God as Saviour and the individual as sinner. Feminist theology, however, emphasises another aspect of Salvation, namely, the process of liberation, and specifically, a liberation from social and patriarchal alienation. The focus of this liberating process

for women is centred on the wholeness of "human worth" (Moltmann-Wendall 1986:66).

Anne Carr, professor of theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School, has posed certain basic requirements for a feminist theological assessment of the value of religious symbols. In the sense that Carr's theories relate easily to Schüssler Fiorenza's model, they provide an added dimension to this feminist analysis. First, Carr emphasises the need to re-evaluate the textual material from a contemporary position. Carr argues, "a text must be related to the interpreter's situation if it is to be adequately understood" (Carr 1982:283). For example, the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene will be viewed from the onlooker's contemporary perspective. However, with the understanding that an image seen from a different historical socio-political dimension might present an ambiguous message, a critical feminist hermeneutic will seek to expose "the distortions of the past" to the "emancipation" of the future (Carr 1982:285).

The second requirement for an adequate feminist theory requires a sound critique of the value of religious symbols (Carr 1982:285). Carr defends Tillich's use of symbols as tools to open "dimensions of transcendent reality" (Carr 1982:285), and enable us to enter easily into an understanding of a complex reality. She goes further, however, and refers to the idolatrous tendency of religion to substitute the symbol for the divine reality (Carr 1982:285). Here Carr strikes the core of the patriarchal Catholic Church's bias, by pointing to the Church's elevation of "something finite [maleness, sexuality]....to the level of the infinite" (Carr 1982:285). This is imminently the task of a feminist critique. To uncover the "ideological aspects of symbols which denigrate the humanity of women", while seeking "to retrieve the affirmative transcendent meaning of symbols" (Carr 1982:286).

From this dialectical approach a third requirement emerges, that of a "double critique" (Carr 1982:286). Here, a critical feminist theory evaluates the social and religious oppression experienced by women against the patriarchal use of symbolism (Carr 1982:293). This use of a critical interpretative model of analysis in feminist theology clearly offers the possibility of not only exposing the distortions of the past, but also of providing an opportunity to reveal a new perception of reality. The questions raised from the feminist ethical perspective ensure that a narrow vision of human potential can no longer be permitted to dominate our cultural and religious imagery of human worth (Carr 1982:285).

5.3. Conclusion: The visual theology that has been presented about Mary Magdalene through Christian art has not communicated a fair image

In the final notion of Christian morality, the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene has not accorded justice to her biblical character.

The Church has utilised the visual imagery of Mary Magdalene to diminish her role as a most favoured disciple of Christ. Her missionary role has been undermined, her covenantal call disregarded. Instead, the patriarchal Church has nourished and promoted the portrayal of Mary Magdalene as the repentant sinner.

Further, there is a negative bias against women's sexuality reflected in the Catholic Church's continued support for the devotional use of this image of the penitent Mary Magdalene. The imagery proclaims an unfair notion that women are inherently sinful and in continuous need of repentance. This interpretation of a woman solely within a sexual context is a narrow viewpoint. For it ignores the wholistic perception of her worth and experience as a thinking, feeling human being. It is also a disturbing indictment to emerge out of a religious context.

The theological implications of this visual imagery lend support to the negative attitude the Catholic Church has towards women. It reveals how a generalised judgement has been placed on women, based solely on their sexuality and in so doing, has seriously damaged Catholic women's perception of themselves.

We have seen that the Gospels bear witness to Mary Magdalene's covenantal call (Jn 10:17). It is Mary Magdalene who remains at the foot of the cross. It was she who returns to the tomb at the break of the following day. It was she alone, who first recognises the risen Christ. Chosen from among the disciples, Mary Magdalene is commissioned by Jesus to proclaim the keynote phrase in the whole Christian mystery, "He is risen".

Yet the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene in Christian art has failed to do her justice. The underlying message of this visual portrayal is that women are not fit to be direct disciples of Christ in the Catholic Church.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

This case study of the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene from a feminist ethical perspective has revealed that she has been the victim of patriarchal injustice.

There is sufficient proof that the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene has not only been incorrect in terms of scriptural validity, but the visual image of Mary Magdalene has been distorted to the extent of presenting an immoral version of a great woman. This misrepresentation of Mary Magdalene has been used by the Church to maintain a subversive notion of women's inherent promiscuity.

Further, owing to the Church's inordinate emphasis on the sinlessness of the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene has been portrayed in contrast as the epitome of women's sinfulness. The Catholic Church's promotion of the image of Mary Magdalene as a primary model of a penitent prostitute has served to accentuate this imbalance in the patriarchal attitude towards women.

This dissertation has focused on one biblical 'foremother', Mary Magdalene, whose image has been distorted through the patriarchal Church. I have suggested that the arguments in defence of Mary Magdalene can be adapted to fit other women who have been visually misrepresented by the Church. In this sense, Mary Magdalene has been interpreted as a archetype of woman in the Catholic Church.

I have focused specifically on Mary Magdalene in this dissertation and have arrived at certain ethical conclusions. There are other biblical 'foremothers' whose undervalued significance compels us to engage in further research. Indeed, this is an ethical task of utmost importance. Researchers need to reveal the extent of moral injustice facilitated by the Church's patriarchal bias, and to 'resurrect' the women disciples of Jesus Christ, so that women today may be rooted, informed, energised and inspired. In the awakening of our biblical foremothers, a feminist, wholistic vision of Christianity will impact upon the patriarchal Church, and demand not only moral restitution, but a renewed vision of creative actualisation for women and men in the Catholic Church.

This dissertation has uncovered an aspect of the injustice and moral accountability within the patriarchal Roman Catholic Church. There is an open agenda extended to further research towards a total reconstitution of the Catholic Church's image of women. In time, the Christian concept of woman will be realised by the Roman Catholic Church.

APPENDIX A

INDEX OF ARTWORKS DEPICTING MARY MAGDALENE

KEY TO SYMBOLS USED IN THE INDEX:

\#   References found at Princeton University: Index of
    Christian Art. Reference abbreviations of the Index
    format have been retained here.
[]   square brackets enclose reference details.
()   brackets enclose iconographic description.
*   Photograph or Illustration of work obtained.
" " Title of work designated by reference source.
When no reference source is designated, artworks has been seen and verified.

Analysis of abbreviations:

bea   - Beata, 'saint', holy woman mode.
Bta   - Christian, historical, traditional origin.
b/w   - black and white illustration reference.
circa - *'around'* -approximate dating available.
Coll. - present location of artwork.
c/p   - colour plate reference.
cruc - Crucifixion scene.
leg   - Hagiographical scene.
Lgd   - Legendary origin.
pen   - Penitent mode.
pro   - Prostitute mode.
resur - Resurrection scene.
Scrpt - Scriptural origin.

A brief listing of the scenes visually represented in which Mary Magdalene has been identified through iconographic symbolism.

The Scriptural scenes :

   (a) At the Crucifixion (Jn 19:25; Mt 27:56; & Mk 15:40).
   (b) The Deposition (Mt 27:61 & Mk 15:47).
   (c) The burial scene (Jn 19:42).

(d) As one of the three Marys at the sepulcher (Mt 28:1; Mk 16:1-1).

(e) The encounter with the angels ((Mt 28:5; Mk 16:8;
Lk 24:9-10; & Jn 20:1-2).

(f) The Resurrection (Jn 20 11-18; Mt 28:9-10; &
Mk 16:9-11).

The Legendary scenes include:

(a) The voyage to Marseilles in rudderless boat with
Martha et al (Provençal Legend).

(b) Preaching in Provence.

(c) Mary Magdalene carried to Heaven by angels.

(d) Her last communion.

(e) Mary Magdalene praying in ecstasy.

(f) Mary Magdalene's alleged life as a courtesan, richly
dressed with jewels, sometimes in musical setting,
and sometimes being reproached by Martha.

(g) Mary Magdalene remorsefully casting off her rich
clothes and jewels in front of mirror and crucifix.

The Beata scenes include:

(a) 'Donor' portraits in which Mary Magdalene is
depicted with the donor/s kneeling before her
asking for her mediation to God.

(b) 'Devotional paintings' in which saints are imaged to evoke particular Catholic
devotions. As a model of a converted sinner, Mary Magdalene is
traditionally held in great honour by several Roman Catholic religious
orders, for example, the Order of St Dominic, where she is frequently
included in paintings in Dominican Churches. Sometimes Mary
Magdalene, in the company of the Virgin Mary and St Catherine, is
depicted presenting a portrait of St Dominic to a Dominican priest.
Othertimes she is depicted with other 'penitents', for example, with St
John the Baptist.

SCHEMATA:

Index listing number, date of artwork

Artist (always in upper case)

Title of work

Medium

Place of location

Reference to illustration

Descriptive analysis

Tab-designation.

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF ARTWORKS DEPICTING MARY MAGDALENE

1. circa 230 A.D.

ANONYMOUS

"The Marys at the tomb"

Wall fresco

Formerly Christian Baptistery, Dura Europos coll.

Coll. Yale University Art Gallery.

*[b/w Dillenberger 1985:118 pl.1].

(Earliest known representation of the Magdalene was in a remote
frontier town of Dura Europos, Syria. There in 1931-32, three
buildings were excavated, an early Christian baptistery, a synagogue
and a Mithridates temple...all decorated with works of art with
religious imagery. As the earliest datable Christian art, these
paintings from about 230 A.D. ..of these, the Magdalene and another
Mary, are all that remain out of a group of five women in the original;
they are depicted with each holding a torch in her right hand and a
bowl in her left; the corner of the tomb is visible just ahead of them.
We can discern little information beyond noting the possibly elegant
dresses and long veils of these two clearly remaining Marys and their
postures.

(Dillenberger 1985:117).

Scrpt resur bea

2. circa 400

ANONYMOUS
a: "The crucifixion"
b: "The women at the tomb"
ivory panels on casket
Coll. British Museum, London.
*[b/w Malvern 1975:24-5, pl. 3,4].

(a: Christ nailed to cross, Judas hanging from tree,   with Mary Magdalene
and the Virgin Mary looking on, photo shows only one, text refers to two,
with bearded disciple on one side of cross, soldier with raised fist on other
side, possibly missing spear from hand.

b: Mary Magdalene and other Mary standing looking at opened tomb,
scaled down to show two floors, soldiers seated asleep looking away. Tomb
door, with lion's head knocker, is itself carved with two scenes, of possibly
Christ raising Lazarus from the dead, above, and a weeping Mary of
Bethany below).

Scrp resurr

3. circa 600-700

ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
stone sculpture
Sarcophagus
Coll. Museum Terme, Rome.
#[Xt Index ref.20 R74].

4. circa 800

ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
relief sculpture
back of Ruthwell Cross.
[Meyer Schapiro 1979. Late Antique, Early Christian and Medieval Art.
p.164].

(This free-standing cross was carved in seventh century England and has

on it a number of reliefs and inscriptions. The two largest of these are on the front and back respectively, and are of Christ standing on the beasts and Mary Magdalene wiping the feet of Jesus with her hair.

Dillenberger 1985:119)

Scrpt cruc pen

5. circa 970

ANONYMOUS

"Holy women at the sepulchre"

illustrated Gospel manuscript page

executed in Reichenau, formerly in Abbey of Poussey

Coll. Bibliothèque Nationale, lat.10514, fol.50.

*[b/w John Beckworth 1963.The Basilewsky Situla London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office. p.13-14,fig.13].

(Nimbed and winged angel seated on edge of empty tomb, holding staff with left hand, gestures, blesses approaching women. Two women both nimbed and veiled. Mary Magdalene in front?, holding ointment jar with left hand and swinging thurible in right hand).

Scrp bea

6. circa 980

ANONYMOUS

"Christ appears to the two Maries"

carved ivory panel

section of ivory *situla* -bucket for holy water

"The Basilewsky Situla"

Coll. Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

*[b/w John Beckworth 1963.The Basilewsky Situla London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office. pl XII].

(Christ standing fully robed, holding scroll in left hand, right hand points to kneeling Maries, who both gaze up. Possibly Mary Magdalene in foreground, holding cloths).

7. circa 980-993

ANONYMOUS

"Erscheinung Christi vor Maria Magdalena"

manuscript illustration painting

Ostermotiv des Codex Egberti

Coll. Stadtbibliothek Trier/Reichenau.
*[c/p Weltbild 1990:16].

(Mary Magdalene modestly dressed, hair covered, bowing low before Christ).
Scrp resur bea

8. circa Echternach um 1030
ANONYMOUS
"Der Auferstandene und Maria Magdalenae"
manuscript illustration
Codex Aureus
Coll. Germanisches Museum, Nürnberg.
*[c/p ars liturgica postcard printed by Kunstverlag Maria Laach, Germany Nr.5784].

(Iconography similar to no.7, above, in style and pose).
Scrp resur bea

9. circa1050
ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
terra-cotta ampulla
Coll. Louvre, Paris.
#[Xt Index ref. 22P 23].

10. circa 1100
ANONYMOUS
"Noli me tangere"
Bas-relief ivory sculpture
Coll. Metropolitan Museum, New York.

(Spanish ivory panel, two resurrection scenes; upper panel shows road to Emmaus; Christ unrecognised by two disciples).

11. circa 1100
ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene at sepulcher"
manuscript illustration, lectionary
Coll. Mon.,Dionysiu, 587 (740)fol.172vo

#*[b/w :Xt Index ref <u>Mount Athos, Treasures</u>, I,1974, fig 276].

(In landscape Mary Magdalene stands, dark long veil covering hair, hands crossed before sarcophagus on which two winged angels, each with a staff in one hand, the other raised, are seated, outside open tomb in which grave cloth is hanging).
Scrp resur bea

12.

ANONYMOUS
"Holy women at sepulcher"
manuscript illustration
Farfa Bible fol.370ro
Coll. Vatican library, Rome.
*#[b/w :Xt Index ref 32, R76 Bibl.Vaticana lat.5729
pic. no 071554].

(Whole page of resurrection illustrations arranged on five levels, separated by divisions.
Level 1: starting from left side: four veiled women, each carrying jar of ointment, approach tomb building, winged angel seated on tomb stone greets them, standing at entrance of tomb another angel points to empty cloth inside. On roof of tomb nimbed Christ, supported by two winged angels is about to fly up? Also on roof,on either side of two sleepy soldiers rubbing eyes look on in disbelief.
next scene shows nimbed Christ appearing behind two disciples en route to Emmaus.
Level 2: Nimbed Christ appears to disciples in room showing his wounds, then seated is offered fish to eat. Next section shows nimbed Christ calling out to disciples in fishing boat.
Level 3: Nimbed Christ seated with disciples, at large table , on which chalice placed with fish and hosts. A disciple bringing fishing net, another with cloth?. Next scene shows veiled woman, or Mary Magdalene? looking into empty tomb, two winged angels seated on either side of tomb. To right of woman looking into tomb, Mary Magdalene standing with outstretched arms greets nimbed Christ.
Level 4: Peter and John running to see empty tomb. Next scene shows nimbed Christ showing his wounds to Thomas and disciples in room.
Level 5: Nimbed Christ ascending in orb, supported by two winged angels, disciples and mother Mary? watch below. Next scene: Pentecost twelve

disciples in semi-circle, underneath in smaller room? three women? Final scene: dormition of mother Mary).

scrp resur bea

13. circa 1154

ANONYMOUS

"Mary Magdalene"

manuscript illustration

Guta-Sintram

Coll. Grande Seminaire, Strasbourg Library.

*#[b/w :Xt index ref 32 S89 Strausbourg:Lib.,Grande Seminaire,78. pic. no 035831].

(veiled Mary Magdalene stands as orante within capitol letter H).

Bta bea

14. circa 1200

ANONYMOUS

"Beate Marie Magdalene" or "Le repas chez Simon le Pharisien"

manuscript illustration

Missel Prémontré, fol 203r

Coll. Bibliothèque Nationale, ms lat.883. Paris.

*[c/p Duperray 1988:65, p.16].

(within initial G (or B?) tiny Mary Magdalene lying under the table with her cheek against Christ's feet, dressed in red robe with blue cloak, no head covering).

Scrp leg pen

15. circa 1200

ANONYMOUS

"Les Saintes Femmes au tombeau"

manuscript illustration

Missel Prémontré, fol 107r

Coll. Bibliothèque Nationale, ms lat.883. Paris.

*[c/p Duperray 1980:18, 65].

(within initial R, upper circle shows nimbed Mary Magdalene and 2 other women being shown by winged angel the empty tomb beneath them. lower section shows 3 soldiers pointing at tomb. Mary Magdalene veiled and

dressed in blue. Design in reds and blues).
Scrp resur bea

16. circa 1200

    ANONYMOUS

    "Mary Magdalene"

    sculpture

    capital exterior/ west from St.Lazare, Autun, Saône-et-Loire.

    Coll. Musée Rolin, Autun.

    *[b/w Male 1978: fig 173].

    #[Xtn Index ref 20, A94, listed under Mary Magdalene].

17. circa 1200

    ANONYMOUS

    "Mary Magdalene or Mary of Bethany"?

    stone sculpture,detail of decoration on capital

    Coll. Rieux-Minervois Church, France.

    #[Xtn Index ref 20, R4474].

18. circa 1200

    ANONYMOUS

    "Mary Magdalene"

    Stone sculpture, det-capital

    Formerly in the cloisters of Pamplona cathedral, Spain.

    Coll. Metropolitan Museum, New York?

    *[cf Heather Child and Dorothy Colles Christian Symbols:Ancient &
    Modern].

    (Four faces of the capital show:

    a: "Mary Magdalene announcing the Resurrection to Peter"

    b: "Burial",

    c: "Resurrection",

    d: "Three Marys at the tomb").

    Scrp resur bea

19. circa 1200

ANONYMOUS -France
"Mary Magdalene"
stone sculpture
Coll. Chapel of Modena, Italy.
*[b/w Émile Mâle, L'Art Religieux du XIIe Sièle p.137, fig.116, Paris.1922].

(The Magdalene in the sculpture has... fainted on the sepulchre itself. Her head lies on the tomb, her hands caress the tomb. The two Marys stand on either side of her, trying to comfort her. Mary Salome's hand rests gently on the Magdalene's shoulder and seems to be tenderly patting the grief-stricken Magdalene. Although the Magdalene's face is not individualized in this twelfth century iconographic representation of her, her face exhausted by grief, centers the artist's work.   Malvern 1975:103).

Scrp leg bea

20. circa 1200

ANONYMOUS -France
"Mary Magdalene"
stone sculpture
Coll. Chapel of Modena, Italy.
*[b/w Émile Mâle, L'Art Religieux du XIIe Sièle, p 136, fig.115. Paris.1922].

("In the sculpture, three grieving Marys stand beside the merchant's counter" (Malvern 1975:104), depicting a popular scene from the medieval Easter play by a Tours playwrite, in which the three Marys are persuaded to buy special balm from the merchant.
Mâle & Malvern believe same Provençal artist as above- Malvern 1975:198).
Lgd leg bea

21. circa 1200

ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
manuscript illustration
Hortis Delic., fol 118 vo
Herradis of Landsberg
Coll. Lib.Bibl de la Ville, Strasbourg, France.
#[Xtn Index ref 32 S89].

22. circa 1200

ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene proclaims the Resurrection to the Disciples"
manuscript illustration
Albani Psalter, Hildesheim.
*[b/w Moltmann-Wendel 1982:73].

(Nimbed Mary Magdalene veiled and beautifully dressed, with shoes, stands speaking to eleven barefoot disciples).
Scrp resur bea

23. circa 1260

ANONYMOUS
"The Anointing"
manuscript illustration
Psalter of a Cistercian Convent in Basel
Coll. Municipal Library, Besançon.
*[b/w Moltmann-Wendel 1982:92].

(Nimbed Christ seated at table with nimbed disciples?. A veiled and coiffed woman stands behind Christ pouring ointment over his head. Under the table, another woman crouches wiping Christ's feet with her loosened uncovered hair).
Scrp bea; leg pen

24. circa 1270-1280

THE MAGDALEN MASTER

"St Mary Magdalene Altarpiece"

Painted panel

Coll. Gall. Accademia, Florence.

#[Xtn Index ref 30 F63,panel 8466, pic. no 017268].

*[c/p :Sarel Eimerl 1973 The World of Giotto:23].

(Panel dominated by large central figure of penitent Mary Magdalene, her body modestly and totally covered by her long hair, holding scroll on which is written, 'Ne despetis uos qui peccare soletis. exemplo oe meo. uosreparatedeo'. Behind main figure 8 scenes from her life are depicted.

a: As penitent woman kissing feet of Christ at supper party.

b: At the raising of Lazarus

c: Kneeling before the Risen Christ in the Garden

d: Preaching to the inhabitants of Marseilles

   *b/w :nimbed Mary Magdalene, standing preaching
with left hand holding ointment jar, right hand
extended.in [Xtn Index ref. 30, F63, pic.no
018283]

e: Supported by 4 angels in ecstatic prayer

f: In hermitage, fed bread by winged angel

g: Receiving communion from Bishop Maximin

h: Lying in tomb,being blessed by two bishops with
  acolytes).

Bta Lgd pen

25. circa 1277-1296

ANONYMOUS

"Crucifixion"

hanging dossal, in Treasury

textile

Coll.Cathedral of St Peter, Regensburg.

*#[bw :Xtn Index ref 80, R261, pic.no 011497. cf H.Swarzenski, 1936., Hss.XIII, Rhein Plate 68.,391a., clearer outline drawing in Z.Christl.K., I.,1888, pl.XVIII].

(On left side of crucified Christ, Mary Magdalene stands holding up swooned Virgin Mother, who has sword piercing her heart. Peter holding huge key stands to left of women, John on other side of cross).

Scrp cruc bea

26. circa 1280-1300
    ANONYMOUS
    "Mary Magdalene"
    Fresco,
    Coll. Chapel of Holy Sepulcher, Winchester Cathedral.
    #[Xtn Index ref 31, W7].

27. circa 1280?
    ANONYMOUS
    --"Christ anointed by woman"
    manuscript illustrations
    Gospel Book fol 91ro
    Coll.Bib.Laurenziana, Plut.VI 23, Florence.
    *#[b/w :Xtn Index ref:32, F63,pic.2194].

    (Included only on basis of Index assessment of Mary Magdalene, I find it
    difficult to see any anointing scene).
    Scrp leg

28. circa 1280

    --"Joseph of Arimathea"
    Gospel Book fol.96ro
    #*[b/w :Xtn Index ref:32,F63,pic.no 2197].

    (Three scenes depicted,
    a: Joseph & Jesus talking.
    b: Deposition of body of Jesus, Virgin Mary supporting released right arm,
    Mary Magdalene clinging to body, man, Joseph? taking nail out of left hand
    of Jesus.
    c: Burial scene with Mary Magdalene and Virgin Mary? clinging to feet,
    Joseph beside head, body on pall about to enter tomb).
    Scrp cruc pen

29-30. ----------

--"Noli me tangere"

Gospel Book fol 97ro.

a: Mary Magdalene prostrated before risen Christ's feet.

b: Mary Magdalene standing preaching? to the disciples

#*[b/w :Xtn Index ref 32,F63, pic.no 030031].

Scrp resur

31. circa 1280

OBERHEIN um 1280

"Mary Magdalene"

wood statue, painted

Coll. Kloster Adelhausen, Freiburg.

*[b/w Das Münster 1987:233 heft 3].

(Mary Magdalene standing, veiled but hair showing, holding urn in left hand, right hand pointing to herself).

Bta bea

32. circa 1280-1285

CIMABUE -Cenni di Pepi c.1270-1302

"Crucifixion"

fresco

Coll. Basilica S Francesco, Siena.

*[ill:Sarel Eimerl 1973 The World of Giotto :70/71].

(Mary Magdalene in left centre under cross,throwing up her arms in uncontrollable anguish, St Francis is in Mary Magdalene's usual position, clinging to the base of the cross).

Scrp cruc pen

33-36. circa 1300

GIOTTO DI BONDONE circa1266/7-1337

-a: "Resurrection of Lazarus"

-b: "Crucifixion"

-c: "Lamentation"

-d: "Noli me tangere"

Frescoes

Coll. Scrovegni Chapel, Padua.

is this the "Arena Chapel" at Padua?

*[b/w Miles 1985: pl.12, pl.14].

*[c/p in Giotto e i Giotteschi in Assisi, pl.93b].

(-- b: Mary Magdalene is kneeling at the foot of the cross, her right hand gently touching Jesus's foot.

--- c: Mary Magdalene sits holding the feet of Jesus on her lap, as his head is clasped by mother, and two other women crouch on either side of his body).

--- d: Nimbed Mary Magdalene kneeling with both arms out-stretched towards resurrected nimbed Christ, who stands fully robed holding a flag on a pole. Mary Magdalene is dressed in brilliant red robe, her hair covered with veil. Four soldiers lie sleeping behind her, and two winged,nimbed angels sit on edge of the empty tomb).

Scrp resur bea

37-8. circa 1300

GIOTTO DI BONDONE -1266/7-1337

--a: "The Appearance of the Risen Christ to Mary
      Magdalene"

--b: "The Crucifixion"

Frescoes

Coll. Basilica of S Francesco, Assisi.

*[in Giotto e i Giotteschi in Assisi].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling left side of cross, kissing the feet of Jesus. St. Francis on right side).

Scrp cruc pen

39-47. circa 1300

GIOTTO DI BONDONE -1266-1337

--a: "The supper at the home of the Pharisee"

--b: "The resurrection of Lazarus"

--c: "Noli me tangere"

--d: "Journey to Marseilles of Mary Magdalene"

--e: "Mary Magdalene communes with the angels"

--f: "Mary Magdalene receives her robe"

--g: "Mary Magdalene receives communion, ascends into heaven"

--h: "St Mary Magdalene and Cardinal Pietro di Barro"

--i: "St Mary Magdalene, *part rovesciato*

frescoes

Coll. Chapel of St Mary Magdalene, Basilica of S Francesco, Assisi.

*[b/w & c/p in Giotto e i Giotteschi, C.E.F.A.

pl. 92,93a,XIV,XV,94,95a,96,97,98,99,100,101,102,

XVI,103a,103c].

(--c: Nimbed Mary Magdalene kneeling with arms outstretched towards the resurrected nimbed Christ, who is fully robed and enclosed in aulus of light. Mary Magdalene is dressed in brilliant red robe, her hair covered with thin transparent veil. Two nimbed and winged angels seated on edge of empty tomb point to Christ).

(--h: The cardinal kneeling before the saint in supplication).

Bta leg pen

48. circa 1300

GIOTTO DI BONDONE -1266-1337

"The Appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene"

Fresco

Coll. Subiaco.

*[c/p postcard from Subiaco].

Scrp resur bea

49. circa 1300

    PUCCIO CAPANNA

    "Crucifixion"

    fresco

    Coll.Sala Capitolare, S.Francesco, Assisi.

    *[b/w :in Giotto e i Giotteschi in Assisi, pl. 251].

    (Mary Magdalene kneeling right side of cross, palms together in prayer, St. Francis on left side).

    Scrp cruc pen

50. circa 1300

    PUCCIO CAPANNA

    "Crucifixion"

    painting

    Coll. Museo di S.Rufino, Assisi.

    *[b/w in :Giotto e i Giotteschi in Assisi. pl. 261].

    (Mary Magdalene kneeling left side of cross, clasping feet of Jesus, St. Francis on right side).

    Scrp cruc pen

51. circa 1300

    Collaboratore di PUCCIO CAPANNA

    "Crucifixion"

    painting

    Pulpit, Lower Church,

    coll. Basilica of S.Francesco, Assisi.

    * [b/w in Giotto e i Giotteschi in Assisi. pl.268].

    (Mary Magdalene standing on right side of cross, hands clasped together under chin, Virgin Mary, stands at left side).

    Scrp cruc pen

52. circa 1300

    Collaboratore di PUCCIO CAPANNA
    "The Deposition"
    painting
    Coll. Museo di San Rufino, Assisi.
    *[b/w in Giotto e i Giotteschi. pl. 270].

    (Mary Magdalene, hands held above in grief behind the Virgin Mary who
    clasps Christ's face to her own).
    Scrp cruc pen

53. circa 1300?

    ANONYMOUS
    "Mary Magdalene"
    Mosaic, Apses
    Coll. Capella Palinia, Palerma.

54. circa 1300

    ANONYMOUS
    "Mary Magdalene"
    Sculpture
    Coll. Church of M. Madeleine, Vezelay, France.
    #[Xt Index ref:20 V 6494].
    *[b/w Malvern 1985:83].

    (Mary Magdalene standing in wall niche below small rep of Christ?, as beata,
    fully clothed, holding jar of ointment -"torch in her right hand" Malvern
    1985:82).

55. circa 1300

ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
wax stamp (mandorla shape)
from Lanercost Priory
Coll. British Museum, London.
#[Xtn Index ref 23, L84.pic.no 101719].

(Veiled Mary Magdalene standing on pedestal, palm branch in right hand,
ointment jar in left hand,"flanked by crescent moon? star or sun and
flowering branches.border inscrip:
s'capitl'i:sce:marie:magdalene:de:lanercost',Index notes).
Bta bea

56. circa 1300

ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
Sculpture
North porch
Coll. Cathedral Notre Dame, Chartres, Paris.
#[Xtn index ref:20 C48].

57. circa 1300

ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
Sculpture, portal
Coll.Museum Hieron, Paray-le-Monial, France.
#[Xtn Index ref 20, P10].

58. circa 1300

DUCCIO DI BUONINSEGNA circa1260?-1319?
"Three Marys at the Tomb"
painting
Coll. Opera del Duomo, Siena.
[Thomas Craven 1939. Treasury of Art Masterpieces New York: Simon &
Shuster p 22-23].

(Mary Magdalene wearing "canonical red mantle" and holding jar of
ointment, stands first of the three women listening to the seated angel who
points to the empty tomb).
scrp resur bea

59. circa 1300

MAESTRO DELLA CAPPELLA DI SAN GIORGIO
"The Descent from the Cross"
fresco
Chapel of S.George, S.Clare, Assisi.
*[b/w in Giotto e i Giotteschi in Assisi. pl.275].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling clutching the base of the cross, whilst Joseph of
Arimathea carries body of Christ down, Virgin Mary standing, kissing one of
the hands of Christ).
Scrp cruc pen

60. circa 1300

MAESTRO DELLA FINE DEL TRECENTO
"Gonfalone della Confraternita delle Stimmate"
fresco painting
Coll. Museo di San Rufino, Assisi.
*[b/w in Giotto e iGiotteschi in Assisi. pl.280].

(fresco divided into two scenes. Above: Crucifixion scene with Mary
Magdalene, long hair hanging loose kneeling on right side of crucified
Christ, hands raised in prayer and anguish. On other side St Francis
kneeling in similar pose).
Scrp pen

61. circa 1300

GIOVANNI DI CORRADUCCIO

"Crucifixion"

fresco

Coll. Oratory of St. Leonard of S.Francescuccio, Assisi.

*[b/w in Giotto e i Giotteschi,pl. 278].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling/sitting? at right side of cross, looking up,hands clasping the lower part of the cross. two women support the swooning Virgin Mary behind Mary Magdalene. St John? standing on left side, Francis behind him).

Scrp cruc pen

62. circa 1300

ARTE MONGOLA

"Uomo e donna"

nel Manoscritto sugli animali di Ibn Faktishu

Coll. Morgan Library, New York.

*[Sele Arte 1960:45 pl. 70].

(Although this has not been entitled as a resurrection scene, it seems to me a strong probability that it represents Mary Magdalene with the risen Christ, as both figures are haloed. The setting is in a garden, Christ, naked body clothed in cloak which he holds in one hand at same time pointing in a direction away from the two of them. He leans with his right hand on a long stick, garden implement?. Mary Magdalene bejewelled and wearing eastern punjabi, her long head veil wrapped around her waist. Her long braided hair hangs down to ground. They are in conversation in garden with birds. This need not necessarily have any scriptural nor spiritual connotations but it seems to me to have some extenuating similarities to the traditional iconography of the resurrection scenes with Mary Magdalene).

Scrp resur

63. circa 1300

AMBROGIO LORENZETTI circa1319?-1348

"The Deposition from the Cross"

Fresco

Coll. Basilica of S. Francesco, Assisi.

*[b/w in Giotto e i Giotteschi].

Scrp cruc pen

64. circa 1300

"Mary Magdalene:scene"

painting

panel

Coll. Hautecombe Abbey Church, Savoy.

*#[b/w :Xtn Index ref 30,R297, pic.no 114018. cf Art Bulletin.,XLV(1963),fig 6 facing page 46].

(Nimbed Mary Magdalene clothed in her flowing hair with medallion of Christ around her neck, hands extended in prayer, kneeling. Two winged,nimbed angels carry her above tree tops. Above in each corner two angels play musical instruments, on left side,mandorla and horn, right side, violin and trumpet horn).

65. circa 1300

MAESTRO DI PALAZZO VENEZIA

"Magdalene"

Coll. National Gallery, London.

*[c/p 1953. Sienese Painting from the XIII to the XVI Century, pl. xliii, issued by the Monte dei Paschi of Siena, Introd. Enzo Carli, Electa editrice, Milan].

(Portrait of Mary Magdalene dressed in bright red with red veil covering head, wisp of red hair shown, hands holding phallic-shaped urn)

Bta pen/bea

66. circa 1320

ANONYMOUS

"Mary Magdalene"

painting, polytych

Coll.Museo Civico, Pisa.

#[Xtn Index ref 30, P67].

67. circa 1300

SCHOOL OF ANDREA DI CIONE ORCAGNA -active 1343-1368
"Noli me tangere"
painting
Coll. National Gallery, London.
*[gallery postcard].

68. circa 1365

ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene scene"
Fresco
South wall of Rinuccini Chapel
Coll. Church of the Cross, Florence.
*#[b/w :Xtn Index ref 31, F63, pic.no 053604, see: Joachim,offerings rejected].
Lgd leg

69. circa 1370

SPINELLO ARETINO
"Saint Mary Magdalene enthroned with music-making Angels and kneeling Flagellants"
cloth banner
Coll. Metropolitan Museum, New York.
*[b/w Colin Slim 1980. Mary Magdalene, musician and dancer in Early Music Oct.1980:462].

(Spinello's Magdalene was the patron saint of a flagellant order at Gubbio known as the Brotherhood of San Sepolcro. The ointment jar she holds is also embroidered on the shoulders of the kneeling hooded flagellants.
Four angels on either side of seated figure are each playing different musical instrument. Format is almost identical to 1300, 1400 pictures of the Coronation or Assumption of Virgin Mary, indicating how popular Mary Magdalene was during that historical period).
Lgd bea

70. circa 1370-1427

   GENTILE DA FABRIANO
   panel in the Quaratese polyptch,
   Coll. Uffizi, Florence.
   [Winefride Pruden in letter].

   (Mary Magdalene, beautiful,with vase).
   Bta bea

71. circa late 1300

   GENTILE DA FABRIANO,
   panel of a polyptch from Val Romita
   Coll. Brera, Milan.
   [Winifride Pruden].

   (More simply dressed and apparently holding between her fingers a pear?
   or jewel -not uncommon in paintings from the Manceles).
   Bta pen

72. circa 1377

   ANONYMOUS
   "Mary Magdalene"
   painting, triptych
   Coll. Museo Civico, Pisa.
   #[Xtn Index ref 30, P67].

73. circa 1387

   ANONYMOUS
   -a: "Mary Magdalene:scene
   manuscript ilustrations
   antiphonary I .fol.138vo
   Coll. Lib.Stadtbibl, M.1243-44, Breslau.
   *#[b/w :Xtn Index ref 32, B842,pic.no 080503].

   (Within initial letter D decorated with foliate ornament enclosing Mary
   Magdalene nimbed, clothed in her hair, kneeling, hands joined, supported
   by two nimbed angels on either side and third angel with hands joined
   beneath)Lgd pen

74. ------

    -b: "Christ:Resurrection"

    *[b/w :Xtn Index ref 32, B842,pic.no 080329].

    (Within Initial letter U. Christ in resurrection garden, unclear whether soldiers or Mary Magdalene at his feet).

    Scrp resur bea

75. circa 1380-1390

    ANONYMOUS

    "Mary Magdalene"

    manuscript illustration

    Gradual.fol 204 ro

    Coll. Mus German.Nat.Bibl 21897, Nuremberg.

    #*[b/w :Xtn Index ref 32, N97,pic.no 011842].

    (Within initial letter G. nimbed Mary Magdalene, clothed in long dress, long curly hair loosely hanging, supported by two nimbed and winged angels receiving communion from Bishop Maximus of Provence mitered, nimbed holding wafer and paten, standing before draped altar on which are chalice and two candlesticks burning).

    Lgd leg pen

76-83.circa late 1300

    ANONYMOUS

    "Mary Magdalene: scenes"

    manuscript illustrations

    Passional lat 8541

    Coll. Lib.Bibl.Vaticana, Rome

    *#[b/w :Xtn Index ref 32,R 76. p.104.pic.no 083744]

    *#[Xtn Index ref 32,R 76.p.105.pic.no 083568].

    *#[Xtn Index ref 32,R 76.p.105. pic.no 083569].

    (--Nimbed Mary Magdalene, long hair covering body, yet dressed underneath?, supported, held in nimbus by three angels?, receiving communion from Bishop Maximus.

    --Mary Magdalene dying in bed surrounded by Bishop & friars.

--Nimbed Mary Magdalene veiled, kneeling before altar, hand raised, left hand on decorated tomb. pedestals and columns breaking around her, little friar in corner.

-Nimbed Mary Magdalene supported in nimbus by two angels, looks down and blesses?, tonsured friar kneeling, hands clasped in prayer, gazing up to her. winter landscape.

--Nimbed Mary Magdalene, veiled, wearing long dress, raising man in short tunic to life, or calling man out of house/prison.

--Nimbed Mary Magdalene giving communion/food over ornamented table/desk/altar? to kneeling tonsured friar.

--Tonsured friar standing giving communion?, to Mary Magdalene? or soldier, covered with wounds, hands joined,sitting up in bed/bier beneath decorated bedding/pall. Tree behind friar priest wearing cross-enscribed stole,chalice in l.hand,r.hand extending wafer to soldier,flanked by man and group of men,one with hand extended.

--Half fig of Nimbed Mary Magdalene, veiled, leaning down from above draped altar, with right arm extended in teaching gesture, before kneeling friar holding opened scroll).

Lgd bea pen

84. circa late 1300
    ANONYMOUS
    "Mary Magdalene":scenes
    manuscript illustrations
    Queen Mary Psalter.fol 299vo
    Coll. British Museum, Royal.2B.VII, London.
    *#[b/w :Xtn Index ref 32, L84. pic.no 032288].
    *[b/w G.Warner 1912 Queen Mary's Psalter,pl.295].
    *#[b/w :Xtn Index ref 32,R 76. p.104. pic.no 083743].

    (Two women, Mary Magdalene & Salome?, speak to three men, apostles/ angels?).
    Scrp resur bea

85. ---------

"Christ anointed by woman"
Queen Mary Psalter fol 300ro
Coll. British Museum, London.
*#[b/w :Xtn Index ref.pic.no 032289].

(Nimbed Christ seated at table. Woman lying under table with loose hair and ointment jar, wiping Christ's feet).
Scrp leg pen

86. ----------

"Noli me tangere"
Queen Mary Psalter fol 300ro
Coll. British Museum, London.
*#[b/w :Xtn Index ref.pic.no 032290].

(Mary Magdalene with hair hidden in veil, kneeling with outstretched arms, right hand holding closed ointment jar, toward standing nimbed risen Christ. Composition balanced by tree in middle. Christ holds banner on long stick).
Scrp resur bea

87. -----------

"Mary Magdalene goes to tell disciples"
Queen Mary Psalter fol 301ro
Coll. British Museum, London.
*#[b/w :Xtn Index ref.pic.no 032291].

(Mary Magdalene, hair covered with veil, left hand holding unopened ointment jar, right hand extended to disciples, pointing upwards, as she walks towards seated five disciples.)

Scrp resur bea

88. ---------

"Mary Magdalene at prayer"
Queen Mary Psalter fol 301ro
Coll.British Museum, London.
*#[b/w :Xtn Index ref.pic. no 032292].

(Nimbed Mary Magdalene kneeling with hands clasped together in prayer carried in cloth supported by two winged angels. Two other winged angels issuing from clouds playing a mandorla and violen. Priest? wearing cap, arms raised, looking upwards at spectacle).
Lgd leg pen

89. ----------
"Mary Magdalene's burial"
Queen Mary Psalter fol 302ro
Coll.British Museum, London.
*#[b/w :Xtn Index ref.pic.no 032292].

(Inside cross-surmounted Church, Mary Magdalene's shrouded body being placed in tomb by two capped men. Hand of God issuing from cloud above. Mary Magdalene's head uncovered showing hair).
Lgd leg pen

90. circa late 1300
ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
manuscript illustration
Hymnal fol 55ro
Coll. Library Bibl Naz.Centrale,II,I 212, Florence.
#[b/w :Xtn Index ref 32, F63, cf R.Florentine Painting,III,7.1956,p.66 pl XXIIg].

(Donor? kneeling outside initial P,decorated with foliate ornament, enclosing Mary Magdalene, scene:receiving communion, or Mary of Egypt?, nimbed, tonsured cleric, possibly Maximus of Province, or Zozimus of Egypt, chalice in l.hand with r.hand giving host to Mary Magdalene or Mary of Egypt, kneeling, nimbed, wrapped in hair, rocks
Lgd leg pen

91. circa late 1300
ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
Altar Frontal
textile -mutiliated
Coll. Museo Kunstgewerbe, Cologne.
*#[b/w :Xtn Index ref 80, C71, pic.no 027198].

(Zone I, 1. Mary Magdalene holding pyx

　　　　2. Bishop's crozier turned out

　　　　3. John Baptist holding Lamb of God

　　　　4. Christ,entombment? angel,Christ in tomb,
　　　　　 John, Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene
　　　　　 behind tomb, soldiers sleeping, ladder
　　　　　 against cross

　　　　5. James Elder,pilgrim's hat and wallet

　　　　6. Mary Magdalene holding pyx

　　　　7. Bishop's crozier turned out

Zone II, 1. Mary Magdalene

　　　　2. Bishop's crozier turned out

　　　　3. unidentified saints

　　　　4. ?

　　　　5. Michael holding cross,staff, weighing
　　　　　 souls

　　　　6. Virgin Mary-Annunciation, Gabriel holding
　　　　　 scrolls kneeling, Virgin Mary seated

　　　　7. Bishop's crozier turned out

　　　　8. unidentified saints all nimbed,gothic
　　　　　 setting).

　　Scrp bea

92. circa late 1300

　　ANONYMOUS

　　"Martha of Bethany"

　　painting

　　retable

　　Coll. Church in Iravals.

　　*#[b/w :Xtn Index ref 30, Ir118, pic.no 130488].

(Centre panel is of Martha of Bethany. Scenes from her life show supper at
Bethany with Jesus and Mary, raising of Lazarus, unidentified scenes
possibly relating to legends of Martha life in Provence - another supper
scene, arrival at a castle
and a death scene of Martha herself. Illustration is catalogue-linked in
Princeton Library to Mary Magdalene, two women are always shown, and
the second woman often carries the ointment jar, symbol of Mary
Magdalene).

Scrp leg pen

93. circa late 1300
ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
painting
panel
Coll. Mus.Vat.Pinocoteca, Rome.
#*[b/w :Xtn Index ref 30,R76].

(nos of scenes:43,52,15,3,28,29,56,60,80,
94,64,87,98,95,102,38).

CIRCA 1400 TO 1500

94 circa 1400
ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
wax stamp
Monk Bretton Priory
Coll. British Museum, London.
*#[b/w :Xtn Index ref 23 L84. pic.no 060472. cf Archaelogia, LXXVIII,1928,
pl.VI,5].

(Image mutiliated. Mary Magdalene standing holding ointment jar and book.
Border inscription fragment only. Index states- stamp attached to
Harl.Chart.84.B.28 of date 1420).
Bta bea

95. circa 1400 Florentine School
TAMMASO DI STERANO known as GIOTTINO
"Pieta"
painted panel
Coll. Uffizi, Room IV, Florence.
*[c/p 1979 Complete guide to visiting the Uffizi p 35].

(Mary Magdalene's long golden hair uncovered and loose, wearing bright
red robe, her right hand held up to her face, sits disconsolately on ground
behind Christ's dead body. veiled Virgin Mary holds Christ's head, another
veiled woman kissing Christ's left hand, unveiled woman kissing Christ's

right hand. Donor picture ? showing young woman blessed by croziered bishop, other saints surround scene, behind Virgin Mary, a live Christ is handing church and keys to Peter ?).
Scrp pen

96. circa 1400
    SEGNA DI BUONAVENTURA
    "Die Heilige Magdalena"
    Oil on canvas?
    Coll. Alte Pinakothek, München.
    [Museum cat.no.9075].

97. circa 1400
    ANONYMOUS
    "Mary Magdalene receiving communion"
    painting
    detail from the Altarpiece of the Apocalypse, Hamburg
    Coll. Victoria & Albert Museum, London.
    *[b/w Warner 1985: pl.88].

    (Mary Magdalene naked, leaf from garden cleverly covers her pubic hair, kneeling with hands together receiving communion from fully enrobed bishop and acolytes, two angels swing incense thurible above Mary Magdalene's head).
    Lgd pen

98. circa 1400?
    SCHOOL OF ARAGON
    "Mary Magdalene"
    painting
    Coll. Maten, Barcelona.
    *[b/w in Bruckberger 1953:112].

    (Mary Magdalene, pretty, ornately dressed in rich brocade robe and cape with large jewel brooch, even halo is very ornamented. She holds closed book [with clasp] in her left hand and with face turned to look at viewer she holds up her ciborium shaped ointment jar. Long hair underneath veil. in background two winged and nimbed angels hold up ornamented backdrop). Lgd bta

99. circa 1400?

SCHOOL OF ARAGON
"Christ and Mary Magdalene"
painting
detail of retable dedicated to saint
Coll. Saragossa Museum.
*[b/w in Bruckberger 1953:146].

(Mary Magdalene pretty, long hair loose, kneeling, flowing robes cover her modestly, reaches out right hand to touch bare knee of Christ. Christ naked, but covered strategically with robe held together by brooch, holds out left hand to restrain her enthusiasm, his right hand holds a large spade, Christ wears a period hat "the gardener", ground appears to be carpeted with roses or are they real plants?).
Scrp.bta

100. circa 1400

ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
#[Xtn Index ref 30, P 34.,Ga PiV,.P18,10].

101. circa 1400

ANONYMOUS
"St Mary Magdalene"
illumination from Sforza Book of Hours
Coll. British Museum, London.
*[b/w Malvern 1975:97].

(Mary Magdalene nimbed, covered in long flowing hair, is being carried to heaven, supported by 4 fluttering angels. landscape scene below is Marseilles harbour with ship coming in, people on ship gazing up at Mary Magdalene, kneeling Maximum? seen on ground behind mountain-picture cut off by photo- base-inscription incomplete: BEAT...).
Lgd pen

102. circa 1400

> ANONYMOUS
> "Mary Magdalene"
> manuscript illustration
> Livre de la Passion fol 3ro
> Coll. Lib. Vatican, Reg Lat 473, Rome.
> *#[b/w :Xtn Index ref 32, R76. pic.no 112733].
>
> (Mary Magdalene standing, using large garden shears/scissors, to cut her hair).
> Lgd pen

103. circa 1400

> ANONYMOUS
> "Apparizione di Gesù ala Maddalena"
> sacra speco
> Coll. Monastery, Subiaco.
> *[c/p postcard].
>
> (Mary Magdalene kneeling, black dress with white cloak, arms stretched out towards Jesus, head uncovered, long red hair hanging loose).
> Scrp resur pen

104. circa 1400

> SCUOLA SENESE
> "The Crucifixion"
> Fresco
> Coll. Monastery, Subiaco.
> *[c/p postcard].
>
> (Mary Magdalene standing, head uncovered, long auburn hair hanging loosely, her arms held up to body of Christ hanging high above her).
> Scrp cruc pen

105. circa 1400

> FRA ANGELICO [1387-1455]
> "Noli me tangere"
> Coll. Church of San Marco, Venice.
> [Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:114].

(Nimbed Christ standing fully robed with garden pick over his shoulder, turning towards Mary Magdalene).
Scrp resur bea?

106. circa 1400
FRA ANGELICO
"The Entombment"
painting
Coll. National Gallery of Art, Washington.
*[c/p Ferguson 1955: pl.40].

(Nimbed Mary Magdalene sitting on ground weeping with her face in her hands, whilst body of Christ carried into tomb by disciples. Virgin Mary comforted by two other women, fourth woman kneels about to kiss dead Christ's feet. Beautiful landscape picture with Jerusalem and Calvary in distance).

107. circa 1400
FRA ANGELICO
"Deposition"
Coll. San Marco, Firenze.
[Winifride Pruden].

(Mary Magdalene kissing Christ's feet in quite a restrained manner).
Scrp leg pen

108. circa 1416?-92
PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA,
"Mary Magdalene"
painting
Coll. Arezzo Cathedral.
[Winefride Pruden].

(Monumental single figure of Mary Magdalene with flowing hair and vase).
Bta pen

109. circa 1400

KONRAD WITZ [1400-1446]
"St Catherine and St Mary Magdalene"
Oil on canvas?
Coll. Musee de l'Oeuvre Notre-Dame
Bta bea

110. circa 1424-1428

OPERA DI UN MAESTRO RUSSO SEGUACE DI RUBIJOW
"Apparizione dell'Angelo alle Marie"
icon
dall'Iconostasi della Cattedrale della Trinità nel chiostro di San Sergio
Coll. Sagorsk Museo, Russia.
*[b/w Sele Arte 1960:46 p.70].

(Three women standing gazing down at empty tomb. Only faces and hands
uncovered. Beautiful icon pose).
Scrp resur bea

111. circa 1426

TOMMASO MASSACCIO
"Crucifixion from the summit of the Pisa"
panel, 30¼ x 25¼
Coll. Museo di Capodimonte, Naples.
*[c/p Frederick Hartt 1987 History of Italian renaissance art. London:
Thames & Hudson].
*[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:120].

(Mary Magdalene dramatically positioned at foot of cross, kneeling with
outstretched arms, long flowing red hair, bright red robe totally covers her
body. Compositionally links the picture together).
Scrp cruc pen

112-120. circa 1431

LUCAS MOSER

"St Mary Magdalene Altarpiece"

Nine scenes painted on sheets of parchment applied to panels

approximate size of whole work: left panel 149 x 59cm

Coll. Tiefenbronn Pfarrkirche, near Pforzheim.

*[b/w postcards obtained from Pfarrkirche].

(The Altarpiece has nine panels depicting scenes from a popular legend of the lives of Saint Martha, Mary Magdalene and Lazarus.

--- Top panel,apse, depicts the supper at Bethany, Mary Magdalene washes the feet of Jesus with her tears, Martha serves the meal, Jesus seated next to Simon, two other men seated. Mary Magdalene's one side of hair braided, other side loosened to wipe feet, modestly clothed.

--- Right side shows the sea voyage from Israel to France, with the boat shown four times becoming larger as it approaches the French shore. In the final boat, Mary Magdalene, Martha, Bishop Lazarus, second Bishop and a monk.

---- Centre two panels, doors closed shows the arrival in Marseilles, Mary Magdalene has been miraculously transported upstairs to awaken the King and Queen, whilst Martha, Lazarus and Maximinus wait sleepily outside in the street.

---- Left side shows Mary Magdalene the penitent, clothed only in her flowing hair, transported by angels, receiving her last Communion from the Bishop, outside the church.

---- Underneath, supporting bracket/panel, depicts a line of women saints, five on either side of a resurrected Christ?

---- Centrepiece, doors opened, two dimensional figure carved in wood, Mary Magdalene, covered in her body hair, transported up to Heaven? by seven angels

---- Right inside door panel shows St Martha,left hand holding vase or candle

---- Left inside door panel shows St Lazarus as Bishop, right hand with crozier,left hand holding white glove). Lgd leg pen

122. circa 1400

HUBERT VAN EYCK, died 1426?

"Mary Magdalene and the other Maries at the sepulcher"

painting

Coll. Boymans van Beuirungen Museum, Rotterdam.

[Winefride Pruden].

(Mary Magdalene is kneeling and resting her vase against the edge of the tomb, The other two Maries are standing).

Scrp resur bea

123. circa 1427-1467

MEISTER DER STERZINGER ALTARFLUGEL

"Grablegung Christi"

Oil on Wood?

Coll. Staatsgalerie Stüttgart.

*[postcard].

(Two women with urns. Mary Magdalene is probably the one with fancy head attire, weaing green dress, kneeling close to Christ's feet).

Scrp cruc pen

124. circa late 1400

GIOVANNI BELLINI [1430?-1516]

"Mary Magdalene"

painting

Coll. Accademia, Venice.

[Winefride Pruden].

(Mary Magdalene, very pretty and bejewelled with the Virgin & Child & St Catherine).

Bta pro

125. circa late 1400
   GIOVANNI BELLINI
   "Mary Magdalene"
   painting
   Coll: Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome.
   *[b/w :Andreoli, Paolo & Cartocci, Sergio 1973. Rome 2/3/4. Rome: Art
   Publishers. Planned guide book].

126. circa late 1400
   GIOVANNI BELLINI
   "Pieta"
   painting
   Coll. Museo Civici, Pisano.
   [Winefride Pruden].

   (Mary Magdalene holding the dead Christ's hand).
   Scrp cruc pen

127. circa 1432
   ROGIER VAN DER WEYDEN
   "The Deposition"
   painting
   Coll. Prado, Madrid.
   *[b/w Thomas 1979:98].

   (Mary Magdalene to far right,standing near Christ's feet, hands clasped
   together but one arm tilted against head to give concept of uncontrolled
   grief- in contrast to fainted Virgin Mary and 2 other women on other side of
   dead Christ, shoulders bare, unclear whether hair covered).
   Scrp cruc pen

128. circa 1450

ROGIER VAN DER WEYDEN [1399-1464]
"The Magdalene reading"
painting
Coll. National Gallery, London.
*[c/p gallery postcard].
*[b/w Das Münster,heft 4, 1987].
*[b/w Malvern 1975:174].

(Mary Magdalene seated, beautifully dressed in contemp.period mode.
Head covered in lace-edged veil. She holds, with cloth, a beautifully detailed
book bound with special clasps, Mary Magdalene's face beautiful, delicate,
urn on ground beside her. Scene interior with second figure, hand clasping
rosary beads, standing looking out window onto ornate garden -possibly
even third figure seated in front of Mary Magdalene -photo cuts off other
figures).
Bta pen

129. circa 1450-52

ROGIER VAN DER WEYDEN
"Mary Magdalene"
painting 16 1/8" x 53 1/2"
right wing of Braque Triptych
Coll. Louvre, Paris.
*[Courthion 1963:58].

(Mary Magdalene grandly dressed and coiffed, bearing vase).
Bta pro/pen

130. circa 1435-1495

CARLO CRIVELLI
"Mary Magdalene"
detail from triptych
Coll. Church of Santa Lucia, Montefiore dell'Aso.
[Winefride Pruden].

(Mary Magdalene with abundant flowing hair, richly brocaded dress, holding
vase in typically Fanbrese spikey fingers).
Bta pro

131. circa late 1400
CARLO CRIVELLI
"Mary Magdalene"
Coll. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:119].

132. circa late 1400
CARLO CRIVELLI
"Mary Magdalene"
Coll.Staatliche Museun, Berlin.
[Winifride Pruden].

133. circa late 1400
CARLO CRIVELLI
"Pieta"
Coll.Brera, Milan.
[Winefride Pruden].

(Mary Magdalene is holding the hand of the dead Christ. She has abundant
flowing hair and is richly dressed).
Scrp cruc pen

134. circa late 1400
FILIPPINO LIPPI 1457-1504
"Christ and the Madeleine"
Coll. Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.
*[b/w Thomas 1979:15].
Scrp resur

135. circa 1450
MEISTER DES GOTTINGER BARFUSSERALTARES
"Christus ersheint Maria Magdalen am Ostermorgen, Noli
me tangere"
Oil on Wood?
Coll. Staatsgalerie, Stüttgard.
*[c/p gallery postcard & slide].
Scrp resur

136. circa 1451

     STEFAN LOCHNER [1400-1451]
     "Holy Mary Magdalene"
     Ausschnitt aus dem linken Flugel des Weltgerichtsaltares -Oil on Wood?
     Coll. Alte Pinakothek, München.
     *[c/p gallery postcard].

     (Detail shows Mary Magdalene richly dressed with jewels, head covered in
     fancy cloth but showing red hair, hands clasping urn. Her face is almost
     coquettish).
     Scrp pro

137. circa 1452

     STEFAN LOCHNER
     "Mary Magdalene"
     painting
     Coll.German National Museum, Nuremberg.
     *[b/w in Bruckberger 1953: frontspiece].

     (Detail of larger picture, Mary Magdalene holding ointment jar with both
     hands, face turned to her right, richly dressed with brooch clasp. large halo,
     brocaded background).
     Lgd bta

138. circa late 1400

     LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452-1519)
     sketches
     Collection. Prince's Gate Collection, Courtauld Gallery, London.
     [Winefride Pruden].

     ("Two studies by Leonardo, quite sketchy and not as far as I know related to
     any major work in which Mary Magdalene is lifting the lid of the vase." in
     letter).

139. circa late 1400

SANDRO BOTTICELLI [1445-1510]

"Die Beweinung Christ"

or "Pieta"

panel 110 x 207cm

Coll. Alte Pinakothek, München, cat.no.1079.

or Coll. Direktion der Bayerischen Staatsgemäldesammlungen, München.

*[b/w Dillenberger 1985:fig 4].

*[c/p my photo 1986].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling on ground, by Virgin Mary's feet, holding dead Christ's face against her own face, hair loose under thin veil, dressed in blue dress with red robe).

Scrp cruc pen

140. circa 1501

SANDRO BOTTICELLI

"Magdalene at the Foot of the Cross"

or "Mystic Crucifixion"

oil on canvas, 73 x 51cm

Coll. Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge Mass.

*[c/p Wadia 1968: pl.48]; *[c/p Great Masters of World Painting. Botticelli, Canaletto, Watteau, Cezanne & Titian pl.48]; also *[b/w Dillenberger 1985:fig.5].

(Botticelli's only painting that is probably connected with Savonarola. Fulminations aganist the abuses of the Church, the evil ways of Florence, the call to repentence and prophesies of a great disaster that would purge and punish were common themes in his [Savonarola] sermons.

Wadia 1969:38. The landscape scene is recognisably Florence, Mary Magdalene would thus represent the repentent inhabitants. The angel is beating either a fox, a symbol of vice, or a lion, the emblem of Florence).

141. circa late 1400

SANDRO BOTTICELLI and assistants

"The Holy Trinity with Saints John the Baptist and Mary Magdalene and Tobias and the Angel"

tempera on panel 214.9 x 191.2

Coll. Lee, Courtauld Institute Galleries, London.

*[c/p Farr 1987:26].

*[b/w ill: Marjorie Malvern 1975 <u>Venus in Sackcloth</u> pp.86-87].

(Mary Magdalene stands on the right side of the Trinity. This visual representation of God the Father, Son and Spirit was known as "The Throne of Mercy" (Farr 1987:26) and was not unusual in Florentine art of the period. The painting formed the main panel of the high altarpiece of an early fourteenth century convent, St 'Elisbetta dell Convertite in Florence, founded to house penitent prostitutes (Farr 1987:26). This would explain the prominence in the picture of the gaunt, penitent Mary Magdalene, her naked body covered by the thick tresses of her long hair. She holds both her hands up, in a gesture of pleading adoration, to the Trinitarian group. On the other side of the Trinity, the smaller figure of John the Baptist, clothed in an animal skin and a swath of ornamented red silk, and holding an ornate cross, engages the viewers' attention by pointing to the central figures. A tiny Tobias & angel near Mary Magdalene's feet

> This picture is almost certainly the main panel of the high altarpiece of the Augustinian convent of St 'Elisbetta dell Convertite in Florence, which was founded in 1329 to house penitent prostitutes. The work's destination explains the prominence of Mary Magdalene on the right hand of the Trinity and it is her legend that forms part of the predella, now in the John G.Johnson Collection at the Philadelphia Museum of Art...the church and its altars were completed by Christmas 1494. Botticelli probably painted his picture around this time.
>
> (Farr 1987: 26).

142. circa late 1400

    SANDRO BOTTICELLI

    "Life of the Magdalene"

    predella panels with illustrations of the life

    Coll. Philadelphia Museum of Art, John Johnson.

    *[b/w Dillenberger 1985: fig 6].

    (one panel illustrated, "The last moments of the Magdalene". Dillenberger
    comments that Botticelli was reported as being a follower of Savonarola).
    Lgd leg pen

143. circa late 1400

    PIETRO PERUGINO [1445-1523]

    "Mary Magdalene"

    Coll. Palazzo Pitti, Firenze.

144. circa 1482

    PIETRO PERUGINO

    "Crucifixion with Virgin Mary, St John, St Jerome & St Mary Magdalene"

    Triptych

    Coll. National Gallery, Washington D.C.

    (Side panels show both Jerome and Mary Magdalene as hermits, on left and
    right respectedly of main panel. Mary Magdalene clothed).
    Lgd.bea

145. circa late 1400

    attrib.ANDREA DI CIONE/ ORCAGNA

    "Noli me tangere"

    tempera and gold on wood.

    Coll. National Gallery, London.

    *[b/w Malvern 1975:168].

    (pos.part of panel under Altarpiece, or a part of a series of sacred images.
    There is a panel wh.resembles it in style in the Strozzi altarpiece at Sancta
    Maria Novella,one of the only two masterpieces by Orcagna which survive,
    the other is the tabernacle in Or San Michele. Documents show that
    Orcagna,who combined the talents of respected church adminstrator,

sculptor and leading painter, executed several major cycles of frescoes and panel paintings. Many artists were influenced by him or worked in a similar style,but these,like the creator of "noli me tangere",cannot be identified.

In this picture,the moment when M.M.recognises the Risen Christ, it is her gesture,and Christ's swift response,which gives the scene much of it's tension. The stiffness of the figures is a common feature in the painting of the time,wh had reacted against Giotto' greater naturalism and graceful informality.The two protagonists stand out strikingly from the flat gold background so that nothing can distract attention from the dramatic encounter).

Scrp resur bea

146. circa late 1400

ADRIAEN ISENBRANDT or YSENBRANDT -d.1551

"The Magdalene reading"

Coll. National Gallery, London.

[Winefride Pruden].

Bta bea

147. circa 1453/55

DONATELLO [1386-1466]

"La Maddelena" or "Penitent Magdalene"

wood with polychromy and gilding, h.188 cm.

Coll. Battistero di San Giovanni,

or Museo dell'opera del Duomo, Firenze.

*[c/p postcard].

*[b/w details in Bonnie A Bennett & David G Wilkins 1984. Donatello. Oxford: Phaidon. pl 132].

(A haggard emaciated figure of Mary Magdalene, naked, only covered by her long unkempt hair).

Lgd pen

148. circa late 1400

DESIDERIO DA SETTIGNANO [1430-1464]

"The Magdalene"

marble

Coll. Santa Trinità, Firenze.

*[b/w :in 1929 Studies in the history and criticism of sculpture, Vol VI.
Northhampton:Mass. The Magdalen and sculptures in relief plates 33-46.
Photographs by Clarence Kennedy].

*[b/w Malvern 1969:146].

(...like the Magdalen carved by Desidero's teacher, Donatello, the
work represents the Magdalen as a hermit clothed in her long hair.
Unlike Donatello's suffering shrunken penitent, however, the Sancta
Trinità Magdalen radiates a joyious beauty. Although her face is lined
with age, her eyes sparkle as if they held a secret wisdom. With her
lips slightly parted she smiles. She holds in one hand her ointment jar.
Her bare legs and arms are those of a graceful Venus, and a broad
shining ribbon belts her long hair against her waist.

Malvern 1969:146).

(As Desiderio trained under Donatello, comparison reveals both haggard
thin figure of Mary Magdalene naked only covered by her long unkempt hair.
Difference lies in pose: Mary Magdalene head slightly bowed, eyes gazing
meditatively downwards, her right hand holds up the ointment jar, her long
hair is tied around her waist with a strip of material).

Lgd pen

149. circa 1460

SUOLA PADOVANA

"Deposizione"

miniatura singola

Coll Walter.

*[b/w Sele Arte 1960:45 p 77].

(Dead Christ half seated on edge of tomb, supported by Mary Magdalene
holding right arm, Virgin Mary holding torso against her body, John holding
left arm, another woman and man stand on either side of Virgin Mary. Mary
Magdalene is the only woman with uncovered head, hair hanging loosely,
modestly clothed in long traditional dress, gazing upwards and away from

scene with mouth open in grief).
Scrp resur

150. circa 1460

EUGUEUAUD QUARTON, SCHOOL OF AVIGNON
in "Pietà of Villenueve-les-Avignon"
altar screen
Coll. Louvre, Paris.
*[b/w Thomas 1979:89].
*[Dillenberger 1985:fig 2].

(Mary Magdalene holding urn).
Scrp cruc pen

151. circa late 1400

GERARD DAVID c 1460-1523
"Lamentation"
Coll. Art Institute of Chicago.
[Winifride Pruden].

(Mary Magdalene, quiet and restrained and merely seems to be
surreptitiously wiping a tear from her eye with one finger. She is also
beautiful but simply dressed).
Scrp pen

152. circa 1475

MARTIN SCHONGAUER (1430-1491)
"Christ appears to Mary Magdalene"
Oil on Wood?
Coll. Musee d'Unterlinden, Colmar.
*[postcard].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling, dressed in yellow robe with white cloak trimmed
in red, head uncovered, red loose hair, urn on ground beside knees, hands
reaching out to touch Christ).
Scrp resur pro

153. circa 1467-82

HUGO VAN DER GOES

"Mary Magdalene"

detail in right wing of gigantic Portinari Altarpiece

Coll. Uffizi, Florence.

*[b/w detail in Kenneth Clark 1956.Landscape into Art Harmondsworth, Middlesex:Penguin. p.26].

(Mary Magdalene, beautiful, grandly dressed in luscious cloth, with hair elaborately styled, holding urn. Beside her Martha ?, beautiful, clothing muted, hair hanging loosely! holds an opened book and small crucifix, coiffed).

Bta leg pro

154. circa late 1400

CIMA DA CONEGLIANO [1460-1518]

"Maria mit dem Kind,den H.Maria Mag. und Hieronymous"

Oil on canvas?

Coll. Alte Pinakothek, München, cat.no.992.

Bta bea

155. circa late 1400

QUENTIN MASSYS -MATSYS ?, METSYS ? [1464/5-1530]

"Mary Magdalene"

oil on canvas

Coll. Philadelphia Museum, John G. Johnson.

*[b/w Malvern 1976:78].

(Penitent Mary Magdalene clothed only in long hair, balanced by similar image of Mary of Egypt).

pen +nkd

156. circa late 1400

HANS STüB [1465/75-1528]

"Die Heiligen Maria und Maria Magdalena

Oil on canvas?

from Kloster Reggensburg bei Ulm

Coll. Staatsgalerie, Stüttgard.

Bta pen

157. circa 1515

MATHIS GOTHARDT-NEITHARDT GRüNEWALD [1470/80-1528]

"Mary Magdalene"

detail in Issenheim Altarpiece.

Coll.Musee d'Unterlinden, Cologne.

*[b/w Bruckberger 1953:138].

(Mary Magdalene, veil covering eyes, very long hair hanging loosely down her back, theatrically holding arms upwards in prayer, large ointment jar at her feet, luscious robes with ornamenta and tasselled belt. NB?- puts the Isenheim Altar in Kolmar?).

Scrp cruc pen

158. circa late 1400

MATHIS G-N GRüNEWALD

"Crucifixion"

Coll. Museum Colmar, Alsace.

*[b/w Treasury of Art Masterpieces].

(Mary Magdalene dramatically wringing her hands, her face twisted with grief).

Scrp cruc pen

159. circa late 1400

*MATHIAS G-N GRüNEWALD

"Klage am Kreuz"

painting (kopie)

Donaueshingen

*[b/w Das Münster 1987:236 ,heft 3].

(kneeling, hands clasped together, face contorted with grief looking up at crucified body, hair covered, modestly dressed).

Scrp cruc pen

160. circa 1480
ANONYMOUS
"The Sermon of Magdalena"
Oil on Wood h.69cm x l.81cm
Coll. Musee du Vieux Marseilles.
*(c/p museum postcard].

(First painted representation of Marseilles harbour. The Saint
preached in front of the last Earl of Provence,Charles III of Maine.
When he died in 1481,Provence entered the Kingdom of France
under Louis XI:

Museum pamphlet.

Mary Magdalene clothed in plain brown dress with white coif-no hair
showing-preaching to citizens of Marseilles).
Lgd bea/pen

161-2. circa 1490/92
ANONYMOUS
"Münnerstadt Mary Magdalen Altar"
wood
Coll. Bayer.Nationalmuseum, München.
*[b/w Das Münster 1987:326 ,heft 4].
(pictures illustrated in magasine show:
- a: middle section of altar:the ascension of Magdalene supported by six
angels: carvings.
- b: bas-relief panel: the last communion of Magdalene).
Lgd leg pen

163. circa 1495-1562
JAN VAN SCOREL
"Mary Magdalene"
painting
Coll. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:118].
*[b/w Warner 1985: pl.71].

(Mary Magdalene richly dressed seated under tree with urn on lap, hair
coifed, her face gazing at viewer).Bta pro

164. circa 1500

ALBRECHT DüRER [1471-1528]

"Beweinung Christi"

Coll. Alte Pinakothek, München, cat.no.704.

165. circa 1500

ALBRECHT DüRER

"The Ecstacy of Saint Mary Magdalene"

woodcut No.199

[Malvern 1969: cf Willi Kurt,(ed) Albrecht Dürer.Complete Woodcuts New York,1963].

(possibly the same as below?).

Lgd leg pen

166. circa 1503/4

ALBRECHT DüRER -Nuremberg

"L'élévation de la Madeleine"

wood engraving, 234 x 163mm

Coll. Ecole nationale superieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris

*[b/w Das Münster 1987:326, heft 4].

*[b/w Duperray 1988:63].

(Mary Magdalene, naked, supported high in sky by cherubs, long hair flowing freely, hands clasped together in prayer).

Lgd pen nkd

167. circa 1500

MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI [1475-1564]

"The Entombment"

oil on panel, unfinished 161 x 149cm

Coll. National Gallery, London.

*[c/p Thomas 1979:113].

(An early work -Mary Magdalene dressed in red robe which has torn open exposing her left shoulder. Her long hair hanging loosely behind her back. Her body is as strongly muscled as Christ. With the bands held firmly in her hands, she is still supporting the weight of his body

Mary Magdalene, traditionally shown in a grief-stricken huddle at the victim's feet, becomes under Michelangelo's brush a veritable goddess in presence and stature, a dominant figure in the composition.

(Thomas 1979:111).

Scrp cruc bea

168. circa 1500

SIMON BENING [1483/4-1561]

"Crucifixion"

*[b/w Sele Arte 1960:76,vol 45].

miniatura proveniente, insieme ad una Preghiera nell'orto, da un libro di preghiere scritto in spagnolo a Bruges per il mercato iberico, già nella collezione di Grete Ring, nota critica d'arte; in vendita il 1 febbraio [1960] presso Sotheby di Londra

(figure of Virgin Mary swooning in foreground of cross, supported by John. Mary Magdalene in very elaborate headgear and beautiful long dress stands at foot of cross looking up at the naked Christ, with her hands held above her head in attitude of anguish. Other women have their heads covered in veils. On other side of cross two elaborately dressed men astride horses seemingly disregarding scene are chatting to each other - in stark contrast to the grief and anguish of the mourning disciples).

Scrp cruc

169. circa 1500

RAPHAEL SANTI -RAFFAELLO SANZIO -[1483-1520]

"The Entombment"

panel 184 x 176cm, signed and dated on the stone step to the left:

RAPHAEL /VRBINAS MD VII.

Coll. Villa Borghese, Rome.

*[c/p Leopold & Helen Ettlinger 1987. Raphael. Phaidon: Oxford, pl.16].

(Mary Magdalene standing bending over and clasping the hand of the dead Christ who is being carried towards the tomb, Virgin Mary swooning, supported by three women, Mary Magdalene, strong figure of anguish form integral link in the compositional arc).

170. circa 1500

> BERNART VAN ORLEY [1488-1541]
> "Christ appearing to the Magdalene"
> painting
> Coll. Newhouse Galleries, New York.
> *[b/w Sele Arte 1959:79, vol 43].
>
> (Christ wearing Napoleonic-looking gardening hat(!) and holding a spade
> with his left hand, his naked body covered with robe, stands looking down at
> Mary Magdalene, stopping her with his hand from coming closer. Mary
> Magdalene ornately dressed and bejeweled, kneeling, looking up surprised
> but not at Christ, hands in attitude of surprise, chalice-shaped urn on
> ground).
> Scrp resur

171. circa 1490/2

> ANONYMOUS
> "Magdalenas Erhebung"
> wood
> mittelstück des Münnerstädter Altars.
> Coll. Bayer. Nationalmuseum, München.

172. circa 1490/2

> ANONYMOUS -same as above?
> "Letzte Kommunion der Hl Magdalena"
> wood
> Relief vom Münnerstädter Altar
> Coll. Nationalmuseum, München.

173. circa 1496

AGNOLO DI POLO
"St Mary Magdalene"
terracotta sculpture
for Orspedale della morte, Pistoia
Coll. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Washington.
*[b/w John Goldsmith Phillips 1971. A sculpture by Agnolo di Polo in
Bulletin Oct/Nov 1971. Metropolitan Museum of Art vol. XXX, no 2., fig 1 p
80].

(Graceful beautiful figure holding book against her).

174. circa 1496

GIOVANNI DELLA ROBBIA [1469-1529]
"St Mary Magdalene"
terracotta sculpture
Coll. Sante Croce, Firenze.
*[b/w John Goldsmith Phillips 1971. A sculpture by Agnolo di Polo in
Bulletin Oct/Nov 1971. Metropolitan Museum of Art vol. XXX, no 2., fig 7 p
87].

(Mary Magdalene, long hair, loose around shoulders, holds ointment jar,
book. Beautiful figure).

175. circa 1500

ANONYMOUS: FLEMISH SCHOOL
"Mary Magdalene"
painting
Coll.Chatsworth, Trustees of the Chatsworth Settlement
coll.Duke of Devonshire.
*[b/w Colin Slim 1980. Mary Magdalene, musician and dancer in Early
Music Oct.1980:460 - Slim's paper is concerned with musicological
significance].

(Mary Magdalene, pretty, long hair ringletted, as "a richly dressed lady
intently reading her prayerbook". Ornamented unction jar beside her. An
"intabulation of a Flemish song partly obscured by a lute case" on table in
front of her).

176. circa 1500

ANONYMOUS:FLEMISH-NEAPOLITAN SCHOOL
"Mary Magdalene and Joseph of Arimathea" (detail)
painting
Coll. National Museum, Naples.
*[b/w in Bruckberger 1953:130].

(Mary Magdalene, nimbed, pretty, very fashionably dressed, hair tied up underneath period bonnet, kneeling facing tomb, she holds in her right hand an opened ointment jar, her left handheld up in gesture of surprise. This surprise is echoed by Joseph who stands behind her).
Scrp.bta

177. circa 1500

ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
book illustration
Eustache Marcade Mystère de la Passion
*[b/w Malvern 1969:140 in Gustave Cohen Le Théâtre en France au Moyen-Agee en France au Moyen-Age,I,pl XXVII].

(A representation of the Magdalen elegantly gowned and wearing a diadem atop her head with her long hair flowing on her shoulders... Her gallant lover converses animatedly with her, as the two of them move dancingly toward the bed in her chamber.
Malvern 1969:140).

Lgd pro

178.circa 1500?

FLEMISH MASTER OF THE MAGDALENE LEGEND
"Mary Magdalene Preaching"
painting
Coll. Philadelphia Art Museum, John G. Johnson.
*[b/w Malvern 1975:129].

(Mary Magdalene standing preaching in woody setting, Two trees shaped to form 'pulpit', inhabitants of Marseilles seated on grass around her. Landscape of Marseilles with mountain and ship anchored in bay seen in background behind trees. Mary Magdalene, beautiful, delicate, wearing

brocade dress under cape, hair covered with headcloth. her congregation
all in contemp. Flemish dress?).
Lgd bta

179.

EARLY 15TH CENTURY FRENCH SCHOOL
"Christ appears to Mary Magdalene after his Resurrection"
painting [transferred to masonite 102,5 x 49,5 cm]
Coll. Samuel Cress in M.H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco.
*[c/p 1961 Art Treasures for America. The Samuel Kress Collection.
Phaidon. pl. 14].

(Nimbed Mary Magdalene kneeling with outstretched hands gazing
rapturously at near naked Christ -still bleeding!-. Mary Magdalene fully
dressed in long red robe, her long red hair uncovered but held in place
behind her with her shawl, the closed urn on the ground at her feet. pretty
ornamental garden with flowers and fruit).
Bta resur

180. circa 1500

ANONYMOUS
"St Maria Maddalena"
wooden statue
Coll. Chiesa Santuario di S.Maria Maddelena, Rome.
*[cf publicity brochure of church].

(Mary Magdalene standing holding chalice-shaped urn in left hand, right
hand destroyed, hair uncovered and loose).

Bta pen

181. circa 1511-12

ANTONIA ALLEGRI CORREGGIO (1490-1534)
"Noli me Tangere"
Coll. National Gallery, London.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:120].
Scrp resur

182. circa mid 1500

BERNARDINO LUINI -active 1512-1532

"The Magdalene"

painting

Coll. Samuel H. Kress, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

*[c/p The Samuel H. Kress collection: National Gallery of Art, Washington pl.33].

*[b/w Malvern 1875:175].

(portrait bust of Mary Magdalene half-opening urn and turning to viewer with typical Luini-smile in style of Leonardo's Mona Lisa).

Scrp resurr?

183. circa 1518

LAVINIA FONTANA

"Noli me Tangere"

Coll. Uffizi Gallery, Room XXIX, Florence.

[Claudio Pescio 1979. Complete guide for visiting the Uffizi. Firenze:Bonechi editioni "Il turismo", p.112, cat no 383].

Scrp resur

184. circa 1519-1550

STUDIO OF AMBROSIUS BENSON

"The Magdalene Reading"

painting

Coll. National Gallery, London.

*[b/w Berger 1987:92].

(Portrait scene. Mary Magdalene beautifully dressed, modest -no cleavage-her braided hair covered with transparent veil. She holds leather bound book with metal locks, the opened page has a picture, a delicate perfume bottle rests on the table near her book).

Bta pen

185. circa 1517-1520

ANTOINE RONZEN (VENETIAN SCHOOL)

"Retable du Crucifix"

painting on wood

Centre panel of Crucifixion showing Mary Magdalene

Coll. La Basilica of St Mary Magdalene, Saint-Maximin-de-Provence.

*[c/p publicity brochure on church].

(Mary Magdalene is kneeling arms clasped around cross near J's feet, her face nearly touching feet, head uncovered, loose flowing red hair. Clothed in rich red cloak).

Scrp cruc pro

186. circa mid 1500

ANTONIA ALLEGRI CORREGGIO

"Noli me tangere"

oil painting 130 x 103cm

Coll. Prado, Madrid.

*[b/w Howard Daniel 1971 Encyclopedia of Themes and Subjects in Painting London: Thames & Hudson].

Scrp. resurr

187. circa mid 1500

ANTONIO ALLEGRI CORREGGIO

"Deposition" or "Pieta"

oil painting

Coll. Gallery, Parma.

*[b/w Friedlaender 1969:65, fig 64].

(natural sorrowful spirit...Magdalene participates in the action of the mourning over the dead body of Christ and shows her grief and desperation in her face and gesture.

Friedlaender 1969:96).

188. circa mid 1500

ANTONIA ALLEGRI CORREGGIO

"The Magdalene"

oil painting

Coll. The National Gallery, London.

*[b/w Malvern 1875:134].

(Mary Magdalene sitting/leaning? on rock, her right arm leaning on opened book, left hand supporting urn. A wisp of cloth around her body, but breasts and shoulders naked. Mary Magdalene's beautiful face turned to onlooker. landscape/hermitage scene).

Lgd pro

189. circa mid 1500

ANTONIA ALLEGRI CORREGIO

"Madonna and Child with Saints Jerome and Mary Magdalene"

panel 7'8½" x 4'7¼"

Coll. Pinacoteca, Parma.

*[b/w Frederick Hartt 1970. History of Italian renaissance art. London:
Thames & Hudson. pl 649].

(Mary Magdalene half seated/kneeling beside Virgin Mary, gently resting
her cheek against the Child's body and holding the little foot up with her
hand. The Child has his hand gently touching Mary Magdalene's hair. Mary
Magdalene beautiful face, dressed modestly in beautiful robe, barefoot.
Country/ hermitage scene, Jerome as hermit, in loin-cloth holding scroll of paper,
his emblem: the lion, seated behind at his feet. Touching, sympathetic picture).

190. circa 1519

LUCAS VAN LEYDEN

"Dance of Mary Magdalene"

engraving

Coll. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

*[b/w Colin Slim 1980. Mary Magdalene, musician and dancer. in Early
Music Oct 1980:463].

(Slim describes iconography of scene: with background landscape of Sainte
Baume showing four angels lifting up saint to the right of the mountain's
peak, the foreground shows Mary Magdalene, haloed, long flowing period
dress, head covering similar to other women in scene. Mary Magdalene
walking towards waiting group of couples to preach, she is accompanied by
young man. To extreme right a jester points to the folly of both love-making
and music-making. Slim refers to confusing interpretation ، some say Mary
Magdalene is dancing with man, noting the feet and hand positions, and
attitudes of all couples as amorous = the pre-penitential life of Mary
Magdalene- entitling the work "The worldly pleasures of Mary Magdalene".
Two musicians are seemingly accompaning Mary Magdelene and her
companion).

Lgd pen

191. circa late 1500

   ALESSANDRO BONVICINO MORETTO c.1498-1554
   "Pietà"
   painting
   Coll. Samuel H. Kress, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.
   *[b/w G Ferguson 1954. Signs and Symbols in Christian Art. Zwemmer:
   London. ill.47].
   *[b/w Malvern 1975:171].

   (Tomb scene in rocky landscape. Dead Christ supported by young man and
   standing grieving haggard Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene, long hair hanging
   loosely around shoulders, urn beside her, crouched on ground hugging or
   is it supporting/lifting? Christ's legs).
   Scrp cruc pen

192. circa late 1500

   ALLESSANDRO BONVICINO MORETTO -DA BRESCIA
   "Mary Magdalene"
   painting,
   Coll. Art Institute of Chicago.
   *[b/w Malvern 1975:138].

   (Mary Magdalene, standing with back to viewer, head turned looking back
   but not at viewer. both hands holding urn before her. Stylishly dressed in
   contemp. C15 mode?, long red ? hair half-braided on top of head with rest
   hanging loosely down her back. landscape scene).
   Scrp resurr/pen

193. circa 1590

   MASTER OF THE LEGEND OF MAGDALENE
   "The life of Mary Magdalene"
   altarpiece
   Coll: dispersed in Budapest, Copenhagen,
   Berlin-destroyed, Philadelpia and Schwerin.
   *[b/w Slim 1980:461].

   (Central panel of Mary Magdalene with ointment jar, left wing scenes include
   Mary Magdalene hunting near her castle, listening to Christ, preaching to
   pagans, elevation from Sainte Baume).
   Lgd pen

194. circa late 1500

    MANNERIST OF ANTWERP

    "Mary Magdalene"

    painting

    Coll. Manuel de Yrureta, Seville.

    *[b/w Bruckberger 1953:14].

    (Mary Magdalene, pretty, very fashionably dressed and bejewelled-including tiny delicate crucifix around her neck-. pretty long curls with ornate head band. She holds richly ornate urn in her left hand, right hand holds top and she gazes inside).

195. circa 1531

    TITIAN -TIZIANO VECELLIO -1487-1576

    "Mary Magdalene" or "La Bella"

    Coll. Palazzo Pitti, Sala di Apollo, Firenze.

    oil on panel *39 and half inches x 28*

    *[b/w Das Münster 1987:324,heft 4].

    *[c/p holy card].

    (Mary Magdalene naked holding her long red hair about her, looking upwards in prayer).

    Lgd pen nkd

196. circa late 1500

    TITIAN

    "Mary Magdalene"

    painting

    Coll. Palazzo Pitti, Firenze.

    [Malvern 1975:173].

        (Titian painted two versions of the contemplative Magdalen, both of which are in the Pitti Palace in Florence. The later version, picturing a seductive figure whose tearful eyes look heavenward, anticipates the Magdalen whose name becomes in seventeenth-century England a synonym for a sentimental weeper. Titian's earlier painting of the Magdalen alone in her hermit retreat, however, reveals no sign of the maudlin in the illuminated face whose eyes also look toward the heavens. And beside the figure stands a small round ointment jar

whose rim bears the signature of the artist).

Malvern 1975:173).

197. circa 1560?

TITIAN

"Mary Magdalene in penitence"

painting 187 x 120 cm

Coll. The Hermitage Museum, Leningrad.

[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:118].

*[b/w Howard Daniel 1971 Encyclopaedia of Themes and Subjects in Painting. London: Thames & Hudson].

(Similar pose to above, except Mary Magdalene dressed, only blouse fallen from one shoulder, naked breasts covered by right arm which holds her red hair. An opened book rests on skull in front of her. Rocky and woody landscape, urn behind her on ground. Signed).

Lgd pen

198. circa late 1500

TITIAN

"Noli me tangere"

oil on canvas. 109 x 91 cm

Coll. National Gallery, London.

*[c/p Thomas 1979:130].

*[b/w Malvern 1975:166-7].

[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:120].

(A beautiful landscape scene with walled city in background. Christ naked with cloth swathed around and covering groin, holds up gardening tool in one hand, and with other hand holds cloth away from Mary Magdalene, who, kneeling on ground looking up expectantly and joyiously reaches out hand to touch. Mary Magdalene fully clothed, long hair hanging loose).

Scrp resur

199. circa late 1500

PALMA VECCHIO UM

"Maria mit Kind,den H.Rochus und Magdalena"

Oil on canvas

Coll. Alte Pinakothek,München. cat.no.505.

Bta bea

200. circa 1550

JAN VAN SCOREL

"Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene"

Coll. City Museums and Art Gallery, Birmingham.

[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:120].

*[b/w Thomas 1979:127].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling looking up at Christ, who is dressed as gardener with hat, both arms reaching out, hair braided uncovered, modestly clothed).

Scrp resur bea

201. circa 1500

GREGOR ERHART

"La bella tedesca"

scultura policroma della fine del sec 1500

*[c/p Sele Arte].

(Mary Magdalene standing naked with painted golden hair which covers her pubic area, hands clasped in prayer, eyes cast down).

Lgd pen nkd

202. circa 1500

JACOB ACKER -Ulm

"Mary Magdalene and Martha"

painting

Coll.Georg Goerlipp, Donaueshingen.

*[b/w Moltmann-Wendel 1982:145].

(Full length portraits of the two women standing together holding their symbolic attributes in front of wall. Paved floor and highly ornamented background suggest this is a section of a larger artwork, possibly an altar-piece panel. A small heraldic crest at the base of the picture possibly denotes the patronage of the work. Both women are nimbed, beautifully dressed with hair coiffed. Beneath Martha's feet is the crushed dragon. Her eyes downcast, she holds a holy water thurible in her left hand and the reed/brush in her right. Mary Magdalene looking to the right meditatively,

holds the opened ointment jar with her left hand and the lid in her right).
Bta pen/bea

203. circa late 1500

NEROCCIO DI BARTOLOMEO -Siena 1500
"Madonna with the Child, the Baptist and Magdalene"
Painting
Coll. Pinacoteca, Siena.
*[c/p 1953. Sienese Painting from the XIII to the XVI Century, pl. lxxxix,
issued by the Monte dei Paschi of Siena, Introd. Enzo Carli, Electa editrice,
Milan].

(Only the head and shoulders of Mary Magdalene shown behind child
Jesus, short cut red hair uncovered).
Bta bea

204. circa 1500

LIVRE DE PRIERES
"L'onction à Béthanie"
illuminated manuscript
Coll. Bibliothèque Municipale, ms 2. Nîmes.
*[c/p Duperray 1988:18].

(In initial D, Mary Magdalene standing to left of seated and crowned Christ
empties out bottle of oil over his head. Mary Magdalene dressed in blue with
maroon cloak and blue head cap showing red hair).
Scrp leg pen

205. circa 1500

ANONYMOUS
"Mary Magdalene"
painted panels
Coll. Convent Consert.di Elizabetta, Barga.
*#[b/w :Xtn Index info,ref lost].

(Mary Magdalene clothed in hair,inscribed scroll in right hand,left hand on
her breast).
Lgd pen nkd

206. circa 1500

NIEDERDEUTSCHER MEISTER
"Christus als Gärtner"
Angf
Coll. Art Museum, Stüttgart.
Scrp resur

207. circa 1500

MEISTER DES GOTTINGERBARFUSSER ALTARES auch MEISTER DER
HILDERSCHEIMER
"Magdalenerlegende"
aus Hildersheim und Gottinger
Coll. Staatsgalerie, Stüttgart.
*[c/p postcard].
*[b/w Das Münster 1987:237, heft 3].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling hands clasped together, head coifed, modestly
dressed. Scene is pretty fenced in flower garden with Christ holding spade
in left hand and turned with right hand raised in blessing over Mary
Magdalene. Both heads are haloed and enscribed).
Scrp resur bea

208. circa 1506

MAESTRO M.S.
"Particolare della Resurrezione"
uno della serie di sei panelli dipinti nel 1506 per l'altar Maggiore di
Selmecbranya Esztergom
Coll. Museum Cristiano.
*[c/p Sele Arte].

(Mary Magdalene dressed in pink kneeling holding Christ's feet with opened
urn on ground. Virgin Mary holding naked dead Christ on her lap).
Scrp cruc pen

209. circa 1540

GIAN GIROLAMO SAVOLDO -active 1508 after 1548
"Mary Magdalene approaching the sepulchre"
painting
Coll. National Gallery. London.
*[b/w Friedlaender 1969:95].

(Mary Magdalene identified by diminutive ointment jar in the lower left corner, otherwise she could be "a romantically veiled beauty whom one could have seen in the streets of Venice...Mary Magdalene's shimmering mantle is a virtuoso piece of painting.

Friedlaender 1969:94).

Scrp cruc

210. circa 1519
MARTIN SCHAFFNER c.1478-1546/9
"Die Grableging Christi
Oil on canvas
Coll. Staatsgalerie, Stüttgart.

211-2. circa 1519
ANONYMOUS
--"Mary Magdalene nominates Lazarus Bishop of Marseilles"
--"The Preaching Mary Magdalene in France"
Oil on wood?
Portable Altar, Lübeck
Coll. St Annen-Museum, Lübeck.
*[b/w Moltmann-Wendel 1986:12].

(Mary Magdalene elaborately dressed, standing blessing Bishop who kneels at her feet).
Lgd pen

213. circa 1519
JERG RATGEB c.1480-1527
"Kreuzigung Christi"
Rechter Innenflugel des Herrenberger Altars
Oil on Wood?
Coll. Staatsgalerie, Stüttgart.
*[c/p gallery postcard].

(Mary Magdalene elaborately dressed kneeling at base of cross passionately clinging to it. hair coifed in contemporary headgear).
Scrp cruc pro

214. circa 1520

HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER

"Noli me tangere"

Coll. Queen Elizabeth II, London.

*(c/p Thomas 1979:130].

[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:120].

(Mary Magdalene standing, left hand holding urn, right arm reaching out towards Christ head turned with , hair coifed, elaborately dressed, sandaled feet).

Scrp resur pro

215. circa 1520

HANS L. SCHäUFELIN

altarpiece

Coll. Stiftskirche St Georg, Tübingen.

216. circa mid 1500

GRABLEGUNG

"Magdalena"

sculpture -painted wood

Coll. Museum, Essen.

*[b/w Das Münster 1987:234, heft 3].

(Mary Magdalene opening urn, hair coifed, elaborately dressed).

Bta pro

217. circa 1520-1570

JEROME COCK

after PETER BREUGEL THE ELDER(c.1525/1530-Brussels 1569)

"Paysage avec sainte Madeleine"

in the margin "Magdalena Poenitens"

engraving mm 300 x 428; inscription: Breughel Inven / h. cock excud.,

Coll. Bibliotheque Les Fontaines, Chantilly.

Bta bea

218. circa 1580

ANONYMOUS after PIETER BREUGEL THE ELDER
"The worldly joys of Mary Magdalene"
painting
Coll. formerly Galerie Ehrhardt, Berlin.
*[b/w Slim 1980:464].

(Slim describes scene- Mary Magdalene, beautiful period clothing, with
companion dancing basse dance?, scene includes singers,
instrumentalists).
Lgd pro

219. circa 1520

attributed to ANTOINE RONZEN,VENETIAN SCHOOL
"Crucifixion"
Retable du Crucifix -detail showing Mary Magdalene
Oil on Canvas?
Coll. La Basilica Sainte-Marie Madeleine,
St Maximin-de-Province, Ste-Baume.
*[c/p holy card].
Scrp cruc pen

220. circa 1525

LUCAS CRANACH
"Magdalena"
painting
Coll. Museum, Cologne.
*[b/w Das Münster 1987:234, heft 3].

(Mary Magdalene holding urn, hair uncovered, elaborately dressed).
Bta pro

221. circa 1530

MASTER OF THE FEMALE HALF-LENGTHS ACTIVE BRUGES
"The Magdalen Reading"
oil on canvas, 52 x 42cm.
Coll. Indiana University Art Museum, Bloomington, Indiana.
*[b/w photo courtesy gallery].

(Mary Magdalene seated at table with open book, eyes meditatively cast

away, opened urn on table, hair modestly coifed,half covered, modestly
dressed -period piece).
Bta pen/bea

222-6. circa 1520

   MASTER OF THE FEMALE HALF-LENGTHS
   "Mary Magdalene, Lutenist"
   5 paintings
   [Slim 1980:463].

   (Slim refers to Daniel Heartz 1972 Mary Magdalene, Lutenist, in JLSA 5
   (1972):58, pl.B. Hearst studied the five paintings for their musicological
   significance -the scores depicted, Heartz comments though she plays the
   music, she never sings.
        - the lute because of its hollow rounded shape had widely understood
        erotic connotations in this society. In this regard, Heartz mentions a
        pun which Rabelais made in 1532 on the popular expression, 'jouer
        de luc', the pun meaning to play with the female private parts
                                                              Slim 1980:472).
   Lgd bea

227. circa 1539

   HANS BALDUNG GRIEN
   "Christus als Gärtner"
   painting
   Coll. Darmstadt.
   *[b/w Das Münster 1987:237,heft 3].

   (Mary Magdalene kneeling staring at resurrected near naked body of Christ,
   who stares at viewer with slight frown on face, both Mary Magdalene's arms
   reaching out, coifed head-gear blowing in breeze, modestly though
   somewhat elaborately dressed).
   Scrp resur pen

228. circa late 1500

   MAîTRE L.D. -LéON DAVENT ? -active in France from 1540-1556.
   "Le Ravissement de sainte Madeleine"
   engraving, 320 x 269mm
   Coll. Musée Pétrarque, Fontaines-de-Vaucluse.
   *[Duperray 1988:61].

(Mary Magdalene naked, long flowing hair, supported on clouds by cherubs).
Lgd pen nkd

229. circa 1541
ANONYMOUS
"The Crucifixion of Christ"
Stained glass window
The East Window, King's College Chapel, Cambridge.
*[c/p postcard].
Scrp cruc pen

230. circa 1540
HENRIK DOUVERMANN
"Magdalena"
carving:centrepiece? on altar
Coll. Museum, Kalkar.
*[b/w Das Münster 1987:234,heft 3].

(Mary Magdalene opening urn, hair coifed, elaborately dressed).
Bta pro

231. circa 1550 to 1580
LUCA BERTELLI after painting? by LE CORREGE?
"Deposition"
engraving, 393 x 530mm
Coll. Musée Pétrarque, Fontaine-de-Vaucluse.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:34].

(Detail: Mary Magdalene ornately dressed, left hand holding ornate urn, right hand held in attitude of dismay, hair half braided and hanging loose).
Scrp cruc pro

232. circa late 1500
EL GRECO -DOMENIKOS THEOTOKOPOULOS c.1541-1614
"Mary Magdalene"
painting
Coll. William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo.

*[b/w Bruckberger 1953:106].

(Mary Magdalene pretty, long loose hair, seated in rocky wilderness gazing upwards in prayer, hands clasped resting on rock, near book, little perfume bottle, and skull. Dramatic skies behind her, possibly thorn bushes near-photo dark).

233. circa 1550
JACOPO ROBUSTI TINTORETTO c.1518-1594
"Christ with Mary and Martha"
Oil on Canvas?
Coll. Bayerische Staatsgemaldesammlunger, München.
*[c/p postcard- detail of Mary].

(Mary Magdalene elaborately dressed and bejeweled, red hair showing through thin veil, seated on floor with Martha pointing at her).
Lgd pro

234. circa late 1500
TINTORETTO
"The Magdalene"
Oil on canvas?
Coll. Scuola Grande di San Rocco, Venezia.

235. circa late 1500
TINTORETTO
"Magdalene in the Wilderness"
Coll. Detroit Institute of Art, Detroit.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:118].
Lgd pen

236. circa late 1500
LO SCARSELLINO c.1551-1620
"Noli me tangere"
*[b/w Howard Daniel 1971.Encyclopaedia of Themes and Subjects in Painting. London: Thames & Hudson. Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale, Roma].

Scrp pen ·

237. circa late 1500

HIERONYMUS WIERIX -Amvers 1553-1619
"Sainte Madeleine au tombeau du Christ"
aquatint engraving, 228 x 164mm
Bibliothèque Nationale, Cab des Est., Paris.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:49].

(Mary Magdalene weeping, ornately dressed, long hair hanging loosely,
seated on ground gazing at tombstone, chalice-shaped urn behind her).
Scrp resur pro

238. circa late 1500

CHRISTOFFEL VAN SICHEM -Amsterdam 1554-1624.
"Les Saintes Femmes au Tombeau"
woodcut, 130 x 90mm
Coll. Musée Pétrarque, Fontaines-de-Vaucluse.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:48].

(Three women all ornately dressed greeted at tomb by shining seated
angel).
Scrp resur bea

239. circa late 1500

ADRIAN COLLAERT -towards 1560- Anvers, 1618.
"La vie de Sainte Marie-Madeleine"
Vita Sancta Mariae Magdalenae
Adrian Collaert Excudit
engraving, 267 x 197mm; inscription:under the central figure "quia toluerant
dominum meum. Latin texts under the twelve scenes".
Coll. Bibliotheque Nationale, Cab des Estampes.
Est. Rd 3 et Rd mat. 3 H.169083.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:31].

(Different scenes based on legendary life of Mary Magdalene, as woman
who anoints his feet, as Martha's sister, as missionary in Province. including
half naked Mary Magdalene receiving communion, half naked Mary
Magdalene lying praying in cave with completely naked Mary Magdalene
supported by angels in background. Centre drawing shows Mary

Magdalene fully clothed seated gazing meditatively into empty tomb).
Lgd pen +nkd

240. circa late 1500

RAPHAEL SADELER -Anvers 1560- Munich 1628 or 1632
after painting by PETER PAUL RUBENS -Siegen 1577- Anvers 1640.
"Marie-Madeleine en extase"
engraving 305 x 270mm
aquatint slow impression? *tirage tardif*
Coll. Bibliothèque Les Fontaines, Chantilly.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:46].

(Mary Magdalene half-naked, outside hermitage, swooning, supported by
two strong manly angels, skull and opened urn lying on ground).
Lgd pen +nkd

241. circa late 1500

RAPHAEL SADELER
after JOOS VAN WINGHE -Brussels 1542-44-Frankfurt-sur-le-Main 1603.
"Sainte Madeleine au tombeau avec Sts Jean et Pierre"
engraving, 204 x 140mm
Coll. Bibliothèque Nationale -Cab des Est., Paris.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:48].

(Mary Magdalene ornately dressed, daintily holding glass bottle with
perfume/oil crouches kneeling looking at empty coffin, hair half covered with
veil, robe fallen exposing left shoulder, left hand holding rose to her breast).
Scrp pro +nkd

242. circa late 1500

RAPHAEL SADELER
after DOMENICO TINTORETTO -Venice 1560-1635.
"Sainte Madeleine pénitente"
engraving, 248 x 190mm
Coll. Bibliothèque Nationale -Cab des Est., Paris.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:54].

(Mary Magdalene naked covered with straw matting, sack cloth?, tied
around waist, kneeling in hermitage, hands clasped together in prayer, eyes
turned upwards, skull, opened urn, crucifix, open book, bowl of liquid, thorn

bush, long hair hanging unkempt).
Lgd pen +nkd

243. circa late 1500
ANNIBAL CARRACHE -Bologna 1560- Rome 1609.
"Sainte Madeleine en prière"
engraving, 220 x 163mm
Coll. Bibliothèque Les Fontaines, Chantilly.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:55].

(Mary Magdalene naked covered with sack cloth seated on rocks, head
turned towrads little crucifix tied to tree stump, open book and closed urn on
ground by her feet).
Lgd pen +nkd

244. circa late 1500
GUIDO RENI c.1575-1642
"Mary Magdalene"
oil painting
Coll. Galleria di Palazzo Reale, Genoa.

245. circa 1580
ANONYMOUS -Brussels
"Saint Magdalene"
Sculpture in Wood
Coll. Musee des Thermes et de l'Hotel de Cluny, Paris.
Lgd pen

246. circa late 1500
BOETIUS ADAMS BOLSWERT -BOLSWARD, 1580-ANVERS,-1633.
after Abraham Bloemaert -Dordrecgt 1564- Utrecht, 1651.
"Sainte Marie Égyptienne"
engraving, 143 x 88mm
Coll. Avignon, Bibliothèque Municipale.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:36].

(Mary Magdalene half naked kneeling in rocky hermitage, holding crucifix in
both hands, face turned looking down on ground where skull lies. closed

book on rock near crucifix, long hair loose).

Lgd pen +nkd

247. circa 1581

LATVINIA FONTANA c.1552-1644

"Noli Me Tangere"

Coll. Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:120].

248. circa 1596

MICHAELANGELO MERISI DA CARRAVAGGIO [1573-1610]

"St Mary Magdalene"

Oil on canvas, 106 x 97 cm

Coll. Galleria Doria Pamphili, Rome. no 380.

*[b/w Fiedlaender 1969: pl. 15,15a,15b].

(...The young girl is pictured seated on a chair with her hands on her lap in the act of drying her hair. He painted her in a room and placed on the floor an ungent-jar, necklaces and jewels and disguised her as a Magdalene. The face is turned slightly to the side, and the cheek, throat and chest are rendered in pure, light and natural hues. All this is accompanied by the simplicity of the figure in the white sleeved blouse and yellow tunic pulled up to her knees revealing the white skirt of flowered damask.

Friedlaender 1969:156, quoting Bellori,203)

...Bellori in describing this work expresses his disapproval of letting a girl who is obviously doing nothing but sitting and waiting for her hair to dry *in atto di asciugarsi li cappelli* stand for Mary Magdalene simply by virtue of an oil flask and jewels.

Friedlaender 1969:96).

Friedlaender himself, however, describes the work:

Magdalene sits forlorn in dreamy repentence. The somnolent and sluggish posture of her body expresses her humble submission. Her plump young figure seems unsuitably garbed in the over-lavish dress with its rich damask pattern; the precious gems are scattered over thr floor as thrown in disgust. It is the moment after her conversion, and the consuming effect of this experience is shown by her

exhaustion and by the painful frown which disturbs her brow. This display of physical humility as the result of religious emotion creates a new type of Magdalene which not diverges from the prim spirit of Nothern prototypes, but also from such openly demonstrative and excited Magdalene figures as that by Titian.

Friedlaender 1969:95).

249. circa 1602

MICHAELANGELO MERISI DA CARAVAGGIO
"Deposition"
Coll. Vatican, Vatican City.

(Mary Magdalene has raised hands in traditional gesture of mourning extravagantly).
Scrp cruc pen

250. circa 1606

MICHAELANGELO DA CARAVAGGIO
"Fainting Magdalene"
*[b/w Friedlaender 1969: *Cat. Raisonne, no 32*].

(painted -during his refuge in Sabine Mts, original painting lost, known only from copies, pl 46, 47).

251. circa 1612

FINSON -Flanders- after CARAVAGGIO
"Fainting Magdalene"
oil painting 126 x 100 cm
Coll. Museum of Marseilles.
*[b/w Friedlaender 1969: pl.47].

(Mary Magdalene seated leaning back, hands clasped together in prayer, eyes tightly closed. long hair loose, dress fallen exposing left shoulder).
Lgd pen

252. circa 1620

WYBRAND DER GEEST -Laenwerden- after CARAVAGGIO
"Fainting Magdalene"
oil painting 87 x 110 cm
Coll. Don Santiago Alorda in Barcelona.
*[b/w Friedlaender 1969: pl.46].

(-Geest gives full credit to: :Imitando Michaelem Angelum
Carrava...Mediolan., Wibrandus de Geest, Friesius, Ao 1620-
Mary Magdalene seated head fallen back, more relaxed than Finson's copy,
hands clasped together in prayer, left hand resting on skull - not clearly
visible in Finson).
Lgd pro

253. circa late 1500

PUPIL OF CARAVAGGIO c.1573-1610   ·
"Mary Magdalene"
Oil on canvas
Coll. Christ Church College, Oxford.
*[b/w Moltmann-Wendel 1982:60].

(Mary Magdalene richly dressed with low cut bodice, one hand clasped to
breast other leaning on sofa? open urn on table).
Lgd pro

254. circa late 1500

JACOPO DA MONTAGNANA
"La Deposizione"
Oil on canvas
printed by E.A.Silberman Galleries, New York.
*[b/w Sele Arte 1963:75, vol 65].

(Mary Magdalene, the only woman in picture with head uncovered and long
hair flowing loosely. Dead Christ supported on lap of Virgin Mary, two other
women clustered around in attitudes of controlled grief, Mary Magdalene
with both arms wrung above her head, has her face looking upwards as she
cries out in anguish. photo in b/w so unceratin re colours).
scrp cruc

255. circa 1590
    FEDERICO BAROCCI c.1526-1612
    "Christus und Magdalena"
    Oil on canvas
    Coll. Alte Pinakothek München, cat.no.494.
    Scrp resur bea

256. circa 1528-1612?
    FEDERICO BAROCCI
    "Noli me Tangere"
    Coll. Uffizi Gallery, Florence.
    [Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:120].

257. circa late 1500
    GUERCINO c.1591-1666
    "Penitent Magdalen"
    Leg pen

258. circa late 1500
    LODOVICO REDOLFI -from Brescia
    "S. Maria Maddelena"
    painted wooden statue in interior of church
    Coll. Chiesa di S.Maria Maddelena in Desenzano d/Garda.
    *[c/p publicity brochure of church].

    (Mary Magdalene clothed only in long golden hair clasping wooden cross to
    her breasts, gazing upwards in prayer).
    Lgd pen nkd

259-61. circa 1600
    ANDRE BOISSON -BUISSON- OF AIX
    259---"Marie Madeleine se penche sur le sépulcre vide de Jésus resuscité"
    260---"Marie Madeleine se dépouille de ses bijoux"
    261---"Marie Madeleine à la Sainte-Baume"
    oil paintings framed and set into the marble wall of the sanctuary around the
    main altar
    Coll. La Basilique Sainte-Marie Madeleine at Saint-Maximin-de-Province.
    *[c/p publicity brochure on Saint-Maximin-de-Province].

(259-- Mary Magdalene seated on edge of tomb, dressed in blue with golden-yellow cloak, gazing into empty tomb.

260-- Mary Magdalene standing in boudoir, clothed only in chemise or undergarment, stripping off her rich clothing and jewels, poised gazing up in prayer, hair hanging loose.

261-- Mary Magdalene seated in rocky hermitage, table with skull, cross with flowers twisted around?, opened book. Mary Magdalene gazing upward in prayer, leaning her head on one hand, other hand opened in supplication. Bare shoulders, hair uncovered and loose, dressed in white and blue).

Lgd pen + nkd

262. circa 1600

SWISS SCHOOL

"Magdalena im Hause des Lazarus"

painting, retable?

Coll. Donaueschingen.

*[b/w Das Münster 1987:235, heft 3].

(Mary Magdalene bent low kneeling looking at urn on floor, hair uncovered and loose, modest but richly dressed in comparison to Martha's modest attire. Halo with inscription).

Lgd pen/pro

263. circa 1600

SWISS SCHOOL

"Magdalena im Hause des Pharisaers Simon"

painting, retable?, from same altar as above.

Coll. Donaueschingen.

*[b/w "Das Münster 1987:235, heft 3].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling about to touch Christ's feet, no urn, hair uncovered and loose, same clothing as above. Halo with inscription).

Lgd pen

264. circa 1600

BERNARDINO LUINI

"The Magdalene"

Coll. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:118].

265. circa 1600
   PETER PAUL RUBENS [1577-1640]
   "Descent from the Cross"
   Oil on canvas
   Coll. Musee des Beaux-Arts, Lille.
   *[c/p postcard].
   Scrp pro

267. circa 1600
   PETER PAUL RUBENS
   "Christus und die Reinigen Sünder"
   Oil on canvas
   Coll. Alte Pinakothek, München, cat.no.329.
   *[postcard].

   (Magdalene very voluptuous).
   Scrp pro

268. circa 1615 Armenia
   HAYRAPET
   "Le Marie al sepolcro"
   illuminated manuscript
   fo 2 dell'Evangeliario della scriba Hayrapet
   Coll. The Chester Beatty Library, London.
   *[b/w Sele Arte 1963:16 vol 65].

   (Mary Magdalene and three women all modestly dressed in long robes and
   cloaks, heads covered and haloed, carrying little boxes of ointment? are
   greeted by angel seated outside empty tomb).
   Scrp resur

269. circa 1600
   CRISTOFANO ALLORI [c.Florence 1577-1621]
   "La Maddalena nel deserto"
   Oil on copper, cm 29, 6 x 43
   Coll. Galleria Palatina, Florence, inv.1890 n.1344.
   *[c/p Duperray 1988:8].

(Mary Magdalene, naked, lying on stomach reading book, breasts pressed against pages of book, skull, crucifix, urn on floor beside her, perhaps with suggestion of clothing on legs-photo very dark).
Lgd pro nkd

270. circa late 1600
SWISS SCHOOL
"Mary Magdalene preaching in Aix"
painting
Coll. Donaueschingen.
*[b/w Das Münster 1987:324, heft 4].
*[b/w Moltmann-Wendel 1982:74].

(Mary Magdalene high in pulpit of church preaching to group of congregation).
Lgd bea

271. circa 1600
EL GRECO -DOMENIKOS THEOTOCOPOULOS -1541-1614
"The Penitent Magdalene"
Coll. William Rockhill Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:118].
Lgd pen

272. circa 1600
CARLO SARACENI -Venice -1580-1620
"L'exhortation de Sainte Marthe a sa soeur"
Oil on canvas, cm 95 x 130
Coll. Musee des Beaux-Arts,Nantes, inv.3065.
*[c/p Duperray 1988:22].

(Mary Magdalene in contemporary period dress, low-cut bodice, bottle of perfume and vase of flowers on table, turned to look at Martha more modestly dressed).
Scrp leg pro

273. circa 1614

BARTOLOMEO SCHEDONI
"Three Marys at the Tomb"
Oil on canvas?
Coll. Galleria Nazionale, Parma.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:119].
Scrp resur bea

274. circa 1600

CLAUDE MELLAN -Abbeville 1598 -Paris 1688
"L'extase de la Madeleine"
engraving, 390 x 270mm
Coll. Bibliothèque Nationale, Cab. des Est., Paris.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:47].

(Mary Magdalene outside hermitage half-naked, fainted, head thrown way
back, mouth open, supported by female angel, male angel holding one
arm).
Lgd pen/pro +nkd

275. circa 1600

SIMON VOUET Paris 1590-1649
"Sainte Madeleine en extase soutenue par deux anges"
Oil on canvas, 100 x 80cm
Coll. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Besançon, inv.896.1.38.
*[b/w Duperray 1988: frontispiece].

(Mary Magdalene on knees swooning backwards exposing breast as
clothing falls aside, beautiful expression of ecstacy on face).
Lgd pen/pro +nkd

276. circa 1600

SIMON VOUET
"Lo svenimento della Maddalena"
disegno
Coll. Cabinet des Dessins, Louvre, Paris.
*[b/w Sele Arte 1963:8 vol 62].
Lgd

277. circa 1630

    SIMON VOUET

    "Penitent Magdalene"

    Coll. Musee des Beaux Arts, Amiens.

    [Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:118].

    Lgd pen

278. circa 1600

    SIMON VOUET

    "La Maddelena penitente"

    Coll. Visconte de Vaulchier, Chateau de Savigny-les-Beaune.

    *[b/w Sele Arte 1963:12, vol 64].

    Lgd pen

279. circa 1600

    JUSEPE -JOSE- de RIBERA -'LO SPAGNOLETTO'[1591-1652]

    "Mary Magdalene"

    painting

    Coll. Prado, Madrid.

    [Winefride Pruden].

    (Pretty, penitent Magdalene kneeling in prayer).

    Lgd pen

280. circa 1600

    ANONYMOUS -RHONE VALLEY

    "Sainte Madeleine"

    Calvary statue in Walnut-wood, h: 100cm

    traces of painted surface

    Coll. Musée Pétrarque, Fontaine-de-Vaucluse.

    *[c/p Duperray 1988:19].

    (Mary Magdaleneis kneeling, hair covering shoulders,

    head raised with tears running down cheeks,

    her mantle fallen about her feet).

    Scrp cruc pen

281. circa 1600

GEORGES DE LA TOUR -Vic-sur-Seille, 1593-Luneville, 1652
"La Madeleine à la veilleuse"
Oil on canvas, 66 x 80cm
Coll. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Besançon, inv.D.909.1.11.
formerly in Louvre, now in National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.
*[c/p Duperray 1988:29].
*[b/w Malvern 1975: 158].

> (...everything has been eliminated except what the scheme of the
> painting and the scheme of the message (scripture) requires. We see
> her head in profile. Her near hand touches the skull on the table
> before her. Both hand and skull are silhouetted dark,dead, against
> the light. her far arm is lit and living. Thus she is divided into two. She
> looks into a mirror. What we see in the mirror is the skull. The balance
> is mathmatical and dreamlike.
>
> Berger 1987:108).

Lgd pen/pro

282. circa 1600

GEORGES DA LA TOUR
"The penitent Magdalene"
Coll. Louvre, Paris.
[Winefride Pruden].

(Mary Magdalene seated,in striking candlelight effects, table with a skull, 2
candles and a mirror).
Lgd pen

283. circa 1640

GEORGES DE LA TOUR
"The Penitent Magdalene"
Coll. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:118].
Lgd pen

284. circa mid 1600

GEORGES DE LA TOUR

"The Penitent Magdalene"

Coll. Wrightsman, New York.

[Winifride Pruden].

285. circa 1600

ANONYMOUS -FLANDERS

"Mary Magdalene washes the feet of Jesus"

engraving on wood, 46 x 61mm

Coll. Musée Pétrarque, Fontaine-de-Vaucluse.

*[Duperray 1988:72].

Scrp leg pen

286. circa 1600

ANONYMOUS

"Sainte Madeleine penitente"

engraving slow impression, 245 x 180mm

Coll. Musée Petrarque, Fontaines-de-Vaucluse.

*[Duperray 1988:78].

Lgd pen

287. circa mid 1600

GILLES ROUSSELET

after work by JACQUES STELLA Lyon 1596- Paris 1657

"La dernière communion de la Madeleine"

engraving, 565 x 420mm

Coll. Bibliothèque Les Fontaines, Chantilly.

*[b/w Duperray 1988:58].

(Mary Magdalene naked, long hair tresses flowing around her, supported by
angels, kneeling to receive host, urn on ground by her knees).

Lgd pen nkd

288. circa 1601

BERNARDINO GUARINO

"Sancta Maria Maddelena"

Oil on canvas

Coll. Museo Nazionale, Ravenna.

289. circa mid 1600

CORNELIS GALLE?

after work by PHILIPPE DE CHAMPAIGNE -Brussels 1602- Paris 1674

"Sainte Madeleine en méditation"

engraving slow impression, 280 x 215mm

Coll. Musée Pétrarque, Fontaines-de-Vaucluse.

*[b/w Duperray 1988:57].

(Mary Magdalene fully dressed in hermitage, hands clasped across chest in prayer, eyes looking upwards, long hair hanging loosely, open book, skull, cross).

Lgd pen

290. circa mid 1600

MICHEL CORNEILLE -Orléans, 1603- Paris 1664

after work by RAFFAELLO SANTI -Urbin 1483-Rome 1520

"Noli me tangere"

engraving, 395 x 252mm

Coll. Bibliothèque Les Fontaines.

*[b/w Duperray 1988:50].

(Mary Magdalene very ornately dressed, hair braided, clutching urn, kneeling in pretty garden, looking up in surprise at Christ dressed as gardener with pick over his shoulder).

Scrp resur pro/bea

291. circa mid 1600

CORNELIS II BLOEMAERT -Utrecht 1603 -Rome 1684

after painting by ABRAHAM BLOEMAERT

"Sainte Madeleine en myrrophore"

engraving, 226 x 175mm

Coll. Musée Pétrarque, Fontaine-de-Vaucluse.

*[b/w Duperray 1988:35].

(Mary Magdalene holding urn, face gazing upwards with soul-filled expression, dress fallen from one shoulder exposing left breast, hair hanging loosely).

Lgd pen/pro +nkd

292. circa mid 1600

LUBIN BAUGIN -Pithiviers to 1612 -Paris 1663

"Sainte Madeleine en extasie dans un paysage"

d'après GUIDO RENI, Calvenzano 1573 -Bologna 1642

Oil on canvas, 172 x 120cm

Coll. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orleans, inv. 38 bis.

*[c/p Duperray 1988:25].

(Mary Magdalene naked from waist up, seated leaning back, long red hair hangs loosely over shoulders, left hand leaning on skull while head rests against right hand while gazing with wide tear-filled eyes and open mouth upwards. Two naked boy cherubs gaze down at her).

Lgd pen/pro +nkd

293. circa 1605

GIOVANNI LANFRANCO

"St Mary Magdalene being transported to Heaven"

Coll. Galleria, Naples.

[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:120].

Lgd pen

294. circa 1605-6

FRANCESCO ALBANI

"Repentent Mary Magdalene"

Coll. Kunsthist Museum, Vienna.

[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:118].

Lgd pen

295. circa mid 1600

EUTACHE LE SUEUR -Paris 1616-1655

"Sainte Madeleine en priere"

Oil on canvas, 48,5 x 64cm

Coll. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille.

*[c/p Duperray 1988:24].

(Mary Magdalene half-lying/ kneeling on ground with hands clasped together in prayer against low rock altar on which cross, skull are placed. Two closed books on ground. Mary Magdalene clothed in pale red cloak with touch of white undergarment, head uncovered with long loose red hair).

Lgd pen/pro

296. circa mid 1600

CARLO DOLCI [1616-1687]
"Mary Magdalene"
Coll. Corslam Court.
[Winefride Pruden].

("Mary Magdalene looks a bit like a chiropodist")
Scrp leg

297. circa mid 1600

JAN VERMEER [c.1632-1675]
"Cristo in casa di Marta e Maddalena"
oil on canvas
Coll. Frick, New York.
*[b/w Sele Arte 1959:56 vol 43].

298. circa 1644

REMBRANDT HARMENSZ VAN RIJN [c.1606-69]
"The Woman taken in Adultery"
Coll. National Gallery, London.
[Apostolos-Cappadona].

(Colour iconography suggests Mary Magdalene according to Apostolos-Cappadona).
Scrp leg

299. circa mid 1600

REMBRANDT HARMENSZ VAN RIJN
"Mary Magdalene and the Risen Christ at the Tomb"
Coll. Queen Elizabeth II, London.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:120].
Scrp

299. circa late 1600

BARTOLOMÉ ESTEBAN MURILLO [c.1618-1682]
"The penitent Magdalene"
painting

Coll. National Gallery of Ireland.
[Winifride Pruden]

(Mary Magdalene kneeling in prayer in a grotto, with ointment jar and skull).
Lgd pen

300. circa late 1600
----MURILLO
"The penitent Magdalene"
painting
Coll. Academia di San Fernando, Madrid.
[Winifride Pruden]
Lgd pen

301 circa late 1600
-----MURILLO
"The penitent Magdalene"
Coll. Church of St George, New York.
Lgd pen

302. circa late 1600
-----MURILLO
"The penitent Magdalene"
Coll.Wallrag-Richartz collection, Cologne.
Lgd pen

303. circa 1619-20
ARTEMESIA GENTILESCHI
"The Penitent Magdalene"
Coll. Pitti Palace, Florence.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:118].
Lgd pen

304. circa 1620
FABRIZIO BOSCHI -Florence 1570-1642
"La Maddelena si strappa le vanita"
Oil on canvas, 100 x 75cm
Coll. Palazzo Pitti, Florence.
*[Duperray 1988:23].

(Mary Magdalene with naked shoulders, clothed in ornate chemise in act of divesting herself of her jewels, pretty face, long red tresses of hair, Mary Magdalene reading from book, skull,and urn on table).
Lgd pen +nkd

305. circa 1626
ORAZIO GENTILESCHI
"Repentent Mary Magdalene"
Coll. Kunsthist Museum, Vienna.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:118].
Lgd pen

306. circa 1630
JUSEPE RIBERA
"Kneeling Magdalene"
Coll. Prado, Madrid.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:120].
Lgd pen

307. circa circa late 1600
PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA
"Mary Magdalene"
Fresco, north aisle
Coll. Duomo, Arezzo.

308. circa late 1600
ANONYMOUS
after N.BAZIN? after painting by CHARLES LE BRUN -Paris 1619-1690
"Les larmes de la Madeleine"
engraving slow impression, 280 x 220mm
Coll. Bibliothèque les Fontaines, Chantilly.
*[Duperray 1988:41].

(Mary Magdalene weeping, wiping eyes with robe, infront of table with crucifix, urn, little book, necklace).
Lgd pen

309. circa late 1600

G.EDELINCK -Anvers 1640 -Paris 1707
after painting by CHARLES LE BRUN -Paris 1619-1690
"Sainte Madeleine renonce aux vanités du monde"
engraving, 555 x 410mm
Coll. part
*[Duperray 1988:39].

(Mary Magdalene in boudoir, face turned away from mirror, gazing upwards
in prayer, mouth open, bejewelled hair tumbling loose, Mary Magdalene very
richly dressed frenziedly pulling off clothing, overturned jewel box at her feet,
open window shows shaft of light falling down on tower of building).
Acc to the catalogue the theme of LE BRUN's painting was widely copied
and reproduced. The original work was executed in 1656/7 for the altar of a
chapel dedicated to Mary Magdalene in the Carmelite church [du faubourg
St-Jacques]. The painting had been commissioned by l'abbé Le Camus to
face a statue of a kneeling Cardinal Bérulle. The entire chapel was said to
be decorated with scenes depuicted the life of the penitent saint. In this
copy EDELINCK has carefully reproduced all of the details in LE BRUN's
work.

Lgd pen/pro

310. circa late 1600

ANONYMOUS
after work by GOTFRIED SCHALCKEN -1643 La Haye 1706
"La Madeleine penitente dans la grotte"
aquatint, 360 x 230mm
Coll. Musée Pétrarque, Fontaines-de-Vaucluse.
*[Duperray 1988:53].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling in rocky hermitage, weeping, long hair flowing
loosely, little kettle hanging burning oil-light, closed urn and cross, possibly
open book).
Lgd pen

311. circa late 1600
JACOBUS COELEMANS -Anvers 1654 -Aix 1735
after work by JEAN-BAPTISTE FOREST -Paris 1635-1712
"Sainte Madeleine dans un paysage"
engraving, 225 x 185mm
Coll. Musée Pétrarque, Fontaines-de-Vaucluse.
*[Duperray 1988:57].

(Mary Magdalene lyimg back against rock in beautiful wooded lush
landscape, long hair hanging loose, basket with cloth beside her).
Lgd bea

312. circa late 1600
ELIZABETH SIRANI [c.1660]
"The Penitent Magdalene in the Wilderness"
Coll. Private, Bologna.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:118].

313. circa 1661-3
GIAN LORENZO BERNINI
"St Mary Magdalene"
Coll. St Peter's Cathedral, Rome.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:120].

314. circa 1664
PEDRO DA MENA
"The Repentent Magdalene"
sculpture?
Coll. Museo Nacional de Escultura Religiosa, Valladolid.
Lgd pen

315. circa late 1600
CLAUDE DUFLOS -Coucy-le-Château 1665 -Paris 1727
after work by ANTOINE DIEU -Paris 1662-1729
"Sainte Madeleine en prière"
engraving, 225 x 185mm
Coll. part.
*[Duperray 1988:55].

(Mary Magdalene half lying/seated on straw matting in woody hermitage, hands clsped together in prayer, head gazing upwards, long hair loose, robes fallen to expose shoulders and breast, skull, closed urn, open book, cross on ground, three cherubs heads above her).
Lgd pen +nkd

316. circa late 1600

CLAUDE DUFLOS -Coucy-le-Chateau 1665 -Paris 1727
after painting by CHARLES LE BRUN -Paris, 1619-1690
"Le Madeleine au pied de la Croix"
engraving, 230 x 143mm
Coll. Bibliothèque Les Fontaines, Chantilly.
*[Duperray 1988:45].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling bowed low, hands clasped in prayer gazing at feet of crucified Christ, opened chalice-shaped urn on ground, long hair uncovered hanging loosely though section braided).
Scrp cruc pen

317. circa late 1600

GUISEPPI MARIA CRESPI -Bologna 1665-1747
"Sancta Maddelena"
Oil on canvas, 44,5 x 63,5cm
Coll. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon.
*[Duperray 1988: Musée Pétrarque catelogue].

(Mary Magdalene dressed in red robe, beautiful face, long flowing red hair, gazes lovingly and sorrowfully at crucifix she holds, skull beside her).
Lgd pen

318. circa late 1600

CRESPY? GUISEPPI MARIA CRESPI?
after painting by CHARLES LE BRUN -Paris 1619-1690
"The supper at the home of Simon the Pharisee"
engraving, 370 x 234mm
Coll. Bibliothèque Les Fontaines, Chantilly.
*[Duperray 1988:42].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling in front of seated Christ, Mary Magdalene's head
with long hair loosely hanging, is bent towards Christ's outstretched hand,
her hands clasped together to her face express deep sorrow and weeping).
Scrp leg pen

319. circa late 1600

RAPHAEL SCHIAMINOSI -Borgo San Sepolcro 1620-1670
after work by LUCA CAMBIASO -Moneglia 1527 -Escorial 1585
"L'Assomption de la Madeleine"
engraving, 267 x 193mm
Coll. Bibliothéque Les Fontaines, Chantilly.
*[Duperray 1988:60].

(Mary Magdalene naked supported by cherubs in sky, long hair flowing
loosely, hands clasped together in prayer, head turned looking up).
Lgd leg nkd

320-1. circa 1684

STUDIO OF J.A.LOMBARD DE CARPENTRAS -Marseilles
--"Le ravissement de Marie-Madeleine"
--"La dernière communion de la sainte"
marble bas-reliefs on the north and south walls of the sanctuary
Coll. La Basilique Sainte-Marie-Madeleine at Saint-Maximin-de-Provence.
*[cf publicity brochure on Saint-Maximin].
Lgd pen

322. circa 1690

FRANCESCO VANNI
"The last communion of Mary Magdalene"
Coll. S.Maria di Carignano, Genoa.
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:120].
Lgd leg

323. circa 1698

MICHELE ROCCA -IL PARMIGIANO
"Mary Magdalene contemplating the Cross"
oil painting
behind altar, centre wall in sanctuary
Coll. Chiesa Sanctuario di S.Maria Magdalena, Rome.
*[cf publicity brochure on church].

(Mary Magdalene half kneeling leaning against rock, hands clasped together, hair uncovered and loose, shoulders bare, gazing upwards at cross held in sky by angels and cherubs. Opened jar/bottle lying on ground. rich blue cloth draped over dress).

Lgd pen

324. circa 1699

SANTO CALEGARI IN VECCHIO

"Maria Maddelena"

marble statue mounted on top of exterior portal of church

Coll. Chiesa di S.Maria Maddelena in Desenzano d/Garda.

*[cf publicity brochure of church].

(Mary Magdalene half naked with cloak draped around waist but showing her legs. hands clasped over her breasts, long hair flowing loosely over shoulder).

Lgd pen

325. circa late 1600

MICHAëL POSNER -Düsseldorf between 1691-1717

after Federico Barocci

"Noli me tangere"

Aquarelle on parchment, 24 x 14cm

Coll. Galleria Palatina, Florence.

*[Duperray 1988:24].

(Mary Magdalene richly dressed, kneeling with one hand holding urn, other holding edge of thin veil to head, pretty face gazing lovingly at near naked Christ who talks to her).

Scrp resur pro

326. circa late 1600

ANONYMOUS

"Mary Magdalene"

Statue

Coll. Chiesa Sancta Maria Maddelena, Duomo Desenzano del Garda.

327. circa 1656-57

CHARLES LE BRUN
"The repentent Magdalene renouncing all the vanities of the world"
Coll. Louvre, Paris.
*[b/w N.Broude & M.Garrard:232].
Lgd pen

328. circa late 1600

ADRIAEN VAN DER WERFF [c.1659-1722]
"Mary Magdalene"
Private Coll. Dresden.
*[b/w Berger 1987:92].

(Mary Magdalene is seated reading from scrolled paper, which just touches
her breast, her beautiful body is naked with robe carefully drapped over her
thighs, her long hair has been loosened, mountainous hermitage scene in
background, skull, or urn picture too dark on ground beside her).

329. circa 1700

ANONYMOUS
"Crucifixion"
engraving, 185 x 125mm
Coll. Musée Pétrarque, Fontaine-de-Vaucluse.
*[Duperray 1988:44].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling at foot of cross with both arms around cross,
long flowing hair, fully clothed. Inscription at base of picture reads,
*Vulnificum fuso tepefecit sanguine ferum. Quo Deus humanum perluit omne
genus*).
Scrp cruc

330. circa 1700

ANONYMOUS
"Sainte Madeleine pénitente"
engraving
Coll. Musée Pétrarque, Fontaine-de-Vaucluse.
*[Duperray 1988:59].

(Mary Magdalene standing in hermitage, naked holding veil over her breasts head turned gazing upwards, eyes weeping, long hair hanging loose, skull, open book, chalice-shaped urn on table).
Lgd pen nkd

331. circa 1700
FLORENTINE SCHOOL
"Marie-Madeleine penitente"
Oil on slate, 27 x 21cm
Coll. Galleria Palatina, Florence.
*[Duperray 1988:27].

(Mary Magdalene seated in rock hermitage, dress fallen exposing shoulders and breasts, right hand touching right breast while left hand holds crucifix at which she sorrowfully gazes. On rock candle burns showing ornate lidded jug, skull, closed book, beads).
Lgd pen +nkd

332. circa 1700
TERESA DEL PO -Naples 1716
"Sainte Madeleine en méditation sur les clous de la Croix"
engraving, 220 x 170mm
Coll. part
*[Duperray 1988:37].

(Mary Magdalene naked from waist up, kneeling in rocky hermitage, left hand drying tears of sorrowful face, right hand caressing three nails on rock, closed book nearby).
Lgd pen +nkd

333. circa 1700
DOMENICO CUNEGO -Verona 1727 -Rome 1794
after painting by GUIDO RENI -Calvenzano 1573 -Bologna 1642
"Sainte Madeleine"
engraving, 297 x 210mm
Coll. Bibliothèque Nationale, Cab. des Est, Paris.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:37].

(Mary Magdalene face gazing upwards in prayer, hands clasped against breasts, robe opened but hair covers breasts, long hair hanging loosely).
Lgd pen

334. circa 1700

GIOVANNI ANTONIO ZADEI -Brescia 1729-1797
after work by GIOVANNI BENEDETTO CASTIGLIONE -Genes 1611 - Mantoue 1670
"Extase de Sainte Madeleine"
engraving, 220 x 155mm
Coll. Musée Pétrarque, Fontaines-de-Vaucluse.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:56].

(Mary Magdalene half lying down right hand holding skull, left hand holds open book, long hair loose, robes fallen to expose bare shoulder).
Lgd leg

335. circa 1700

JEAN-CHARLES LE VASSEUR -Abbeville 1734 -Paris 1816
after work by CARLO CIGNANI -Bologna 1628 -Forli 1719
"L'Apparition du Christ à la Madeleine"
aquatint slow impression, 195 x 155cm
Coll. part
*[b/w Duperray 1988:51].

(Mary Magdalene hair hanging loosely, fully clothed, kneeling holding lidded urn gazing shyly down, half naked Christ touching her arm gently).
Scrp resur bea

336. circa 1700

CHARLES PECHWELL -Vienna 1742-1789
after painting by POMPEO BATTONI -Lucques 1708 -Rome 1787
"Marie-Madeleine penitente"
engraving, 310 x 413mm
Coll. Bibliothèque Les Fontaines, Chantilly.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:32].
(Mary Magdalene lying on ground, reading from book balanced aginst skull, dress fallen from shoulder exposing one breast, long hair hanging loosely).
Lgd pen +nkd

337. circa 1700

RICHARD EARLOM -London 1753-1822
after painting by PETER PAUL RUBENS -Siegen 1577
-Anvers 1640
"The supper at the home of Simon the Pharisee"
mezzotint, 495 x 610mm
Coll. Musée Pétrarque, Fontaine-de-Vaucluse.
*[b/w Duperray 1988:43].

(Mary Magdalene crouched on floor under table, kissing Christ's foot. Hair
hanging loosely, lavish robe fallen to expose shoulder and part of breast.
Opened urn on floor).
Scrp leg +nkd

338-40. circa 1756

FRANCESCO GESUELLI [c.1700-1773]
-- "The women at the Tomb"
-- "Noli me tangere"
marble bas-relief panels
sanctuary side walls
Coll. Chiesa Santuario di S.Maria Magdalena, Rome.
*[b/w publicity brochure of church].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling right hand about to touch J's right hand, hair
uncovered and loose, modest flowing clothing).
Scrp bea

341. circa 1756

BR LOUIS GUDET O.P.
"Mary Magdalen Pulpit"
wooden carved pulpit with seven bas-relief panels
Coll. La Basilique Sainte-Marie-Madeleine, Saint-Maximin-de-Province.
*[cf publicity brochure on Saint-Maximin-de-Province].

(Panels depicting life of Mary Magdalene on stairway, and a large carving of
Mary agdalene in esctacy supported by angels above the dome of the
pulpit. Mary Magdalene standing hair uncovered and loose, modest flowing
clothing).
Lgd pen

342. circa 1700
     ANTONIA CANOVA [1757-1822]
     "Mary Magdalene"
     sculpture
     Coll. Galleria di Palazzo Bianco, Genoa.

343. circa 1700
     ALLEGRETTO NUZI
     "Mary Magdalene"
     painting
     Coll. Pinacoteca Civica, Fabriano.

     (Mary Magdalene simply dressed but in a striking red, with ointment jar).

344. circa 1700
     MASTER OF THE MANSI MAGDALEN
     "Mary Magdalene"
     painting
     Coll. Staatlich Museum, Berlin.

     [Mary Magdalene, pretty figure, grandly dressed in a rocky landscape, lifting lid of vase).

345. circa 1800?
     ANONYMOUS
     "Mary Magdalene"
     polychromed wooden sculpture, part of altarpiece
     Coll. El Tejar Monastery, Quito, Ecuador.
     *[b/w Bruckberger 1953:122].

     (Mary Magdalene pretty anguished face, long loose hair, very ornate brocade dress with cloak, kneeling clasping tow hands together, looking down in prayer).
     Scrp Pen

346. circa 1900

"ARS SACRA PEKINESIS"

"Resurrection scene in the garden"

Coll. Art Academy of Fu-Jen University, Peking.

*[c/p Weltbild 1990 -June ?].

Scrp cruc bea

347. circa 1800?

CARLO BARONE MAROCHETTI

"The Magdalene"

marble sculpture

main altar

Coll. L'Eglise Sainte-Madeleine, Paris.

*[b/w Malvern 1975 6-7].

348. circa 1800

"The Elevation of Mary Magdalene"

sculpture in marble

Coll. Pilgrim Church of Madonna d'Ongero in Carona, near Lugano, Italy.

*[b/w Moltmann-Wendel 1982:86].

(Mary Magdalene with long flowing hair, half naked, mouth open in ecstacy, supported by cherubs).

Lgd pro

349. circa 1805

WILLIAM BLAKE [1757-1827]

"Mary Magdalene at the Sepulchre"

Pen and Indian ink with some watercolour

16 3/4 x 12 in

Coll: Yale Center for British Art, Mr & Mrs Paul Mellon.

(Mary Magdalene seated on floor in entrance of tomb, behind empty grave hole, leaning back, both hands on floor, looking upwards to vision of resurrected Christ standing above her on higher ledge. Her long hair gracefully hangs down to the floor. In fron of her are two differently shaped urns, on other side of grave, flanking the sides of the picture and the empty grave are two winged angels. One has arms folded in prayer, the other's hand rest on ground by knees. Beautiful composed symbolism.

Spiritual counterpart to Rembrandt's chiaroscuro. The radiance of suffering face and upper body of Christ, the face of Mary Magdalene and the two angels cannot come from external light source but must be inner and spiritual.

Scrp bea

350. circa 1862

EUGENE DELACROIX [1798-1863]

"Les tre Marie al sepolcro"

drawing

Coll. Princeton Univ.Art Museum.

*[b/w Sele Arte 1963:45 vol 62].

(Sketch drawing, all three women are fully dressed in long robes).

Scrp resur

351. circa 1812-16

FRIEDRICH JOHANN OVERBECK [1789-1869]

"Christ with Mary and Mary Magdalene"

Coll. National Gallery, Berlin.

[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:121].

Bta

352. circa 1832

FRANCESCO HAYEZ [1791-1882]

"Magdalena zu Füssen des Gekreuzigten"

painting

Coll. Mailand.

*[b/w Das Münster 1987:heft 3,1987].

(Mary Magdalene long hair flowing loosely, kneeling holding feet of crucified Christ, with her face against his legs, quiet grief).

Scrp cruc pen

353. 1833

*FRANCESCO HAYEZ

"Büssende Magdalena"

painting

Coll. Civica Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Milano.

*[b/w Das Münster 1987:325, heft 4]. Scrp leg pen

354. circa 1848
 HONORÉ DAUMIER [1808-1879]
 "La Maddelena in preghiera"
 Private Coll.
 *[b/w Sele Arte 1965:74 vol 74].
 [Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:121].

 (schizzo per un dipinto commesso all'artista nel 1849 da questi donato a
 François Cavé rimase nella famiglia fino al 1926 Sele Arte 1965:74.
 Mary Magdalene kneeling in rocky terrain, arms clasped in prayer to her
 upturned face, her body arched backwards with her robe falling off her
 beautiful body, exposing her naked breasts, stomach and pubic hair, her
 long hair flowing down to her bare feet. A cross fixed into ground in front of
 her with suggestion of opened book by her feet).
 Lgd pro +nkd

355. circa 1851
 DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI [1828-1882]
 "Mary Magdalene at the house of the Pharisee"
 Coll. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.
 [Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:121].
 Scrp leg pen

356. circa mid 1800
 BAUDRY, SALON OF 1859
 "The Penitent Magdalene"
 painting
 Coll. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes.
 *(b/w Berger 1987:92].

 (Mary Magdalene seated on ground in hermitage cave, her naked body has
 only a robe drapped over her thighs and legs, her face is turned with her
 eyes gazing upwards in meditation, long hair hangs loosely over her
 shoulder, a bare cross lies on the ground beside her hands).
 Lgd pro

357. circa 1866-68

PAUL CEZANNE [1839-1906]

"The Magdalene" or "Grief"

painting on canvas, 165 x 124 cm.

Coll. Jeu de Paume, Paris.

*[c/p Maurice Sérullaz 1978. The Phaidon Encyclopaedia of Impressionism. London: Phaidon. p.71].

(Mary Magdalene kneels, huddled on ground, forehead leaning against tree trunk, or wall?, right hand placed on tree. Dressed in blue skirt with white chemise. Skull is held by other hand? Photostat very dark - unidentified objects hanging above Mary Magdalene, and something on ground at her knees. Cezanne has powerfully expessed the depths of sorrow and despair of a woman, but why should she be "Magdalene").

358. circa 1883-4

ELIHU VEDDER [1836-1923]

"The Magdalene"

Coll. National Museum of American Art, Washington D.C.

[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:121].

359. circa 1885

ALBERT PINKHAM RYDER [1847-1917]

"Christ appearing before Mary"

Coll. National Museum of American Art, Washington D.C.

[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:120].

Scrp resur

360. circa 1889

LOVIS CORINTH [1858-1925]

"The dead Christ mourned by Mary Magdalene"

painting and preliminary sketches

*[b/w B Schnackenburg 1977. 'An early sketchbook of Lovis Corinth' *Ein fruhes skizzenbuch von Lovis Corinth* in Niederdeutsche Beitrage zur Kunstgeschichte GFR. vol 16].

361. circa 1890

    EMILE BERNARD [1868-1941]

    "Pieta"

    Coll. Clement Altarriba, Paris.

    *[b/w Thomas 1979:145].

362. circa 1900?

    ANONYMOUS

    "Mary Magdalene"

    mosaic?

    above front portal of Russian Orthodox Church of S.Mary Magdalene in Jerusalem.

    *[c/p church postcard].

    (Portrait of Mary Magdalene waist up holding chalice-shaped urn).

    Bta bea

363. circa 1891

    JEAN BERAUD [1849-1935]

    "La Madeleine chez le Pharisien"

    Oil on canvas h.104cm x l.131cm

    Coll. Musee d'Orsay, Paris.

    *[c/p postcard].

    (Mary Magdalene dressed in white evening gown, red hair braided, lies dramatically full length on the floor with her hands clasped, by Jesus's feet. Scene is contemporary 19th century dinner party with all the men dressed in evening suits except for Jesus who wears white tunic with black robe).

    Lgd pen

364. circa 1900

    ANONYMOUS

    "Mary Magdalene"

    *[b/w photo from Russian Orth.Ch.on Mt Olivet].

    (Portrait of Mary Magdalene, egg held in right hand, two inscriptions in form of cross on either side of face).

    Bta bea

365. circa 1917
ERIC GILL [1882-1940]
"The Resurrection"
Wood-engraving, 5.5/8 x 3.5/8in
*[b/w The Engraved Work of Eric Gill. pl.32].

(Illustration for St Dominic's Press, Easter 1917. The Game Vol 1, no 3. p.37 in V & A 91, 1st state].
Scrp resur pen

366. circa 1923
ERIC GILL
"Mary at the Sepulcher"
Wood-engraving, 3 x 2 1/4in
*[b/w V &A 262 in The Engraved Work of Eric Gill, pl.70].

(Engraved after a drawing by David Jones and subsequently carved).
Scrp resur pen

367. circa 1926
EMIL NOLDE [1867-1956]
"Christ and the Adulteress"
Private Coll. Cologne
[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:121].
Lgd pen/pro

368. circa 1927
PABLO PICASSO [1881-1973]
"Crucifixion"
drawing
*[b/w Dillenberger 1985:140, fig 11].
Scrp cruc pen

369. circa 1929
PABLO PICASSO
"Studies for the Crucifixion"
*[b/w Dillenberger 1985:141].
(Series of drawings dated between May and June in Cahiers d'Art, No.3-10,1938).
Scrp cruc pen

370. 1945-46
    FRANCIS BACON [1909-1991]
    "Figure study II, Büssende Magdalena"
    painting
    Coll. Huddersfield Art Gallery.
    *[b/w Das Münster 1987: 325,heft 4].
    Lgd pen

371. circa mid 1900
    DAVID JONES [1895-1974]
    "Crucifixion"
    pencil drawing
    *[b/w The Tablet Vol 239, No 7552/3 6/13 April 1985, cover picture] .

    (Mary Magdalene kneeling on ground at base of cross has her arms
    clasped around the crucified Jesus'waist. Her head rests almost on his lap
    with her long untied hair flowing down like a river towards the ground. The
    Virgin Mary, standing, head veiled, holds her arm under Jesus' arm,
    apparently in an attempt to ease the weight and pain of his suffering.
    Whereas Mary Magdalene's eyes are closed in grief, the mother and son
    gaze into each other's eyes ernestly.
    Most of Jones' work is in pencil and watercolour, he was known to be
    interested in Catholic symbolism and worked with Eric Gill during the 1970s).
    Scrp.pen

372. circa 1950
    RICO LEBRUN
    "The Magdalene"
    Coll. Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara.
    [Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:121].
    Lgd pen

373. circa 1960
    "Jesus greets Mary Magdalen"
    painting-possibly on glass
    *[c/p postcard issued by piccole Sorelle di Gesù].
    Scrp resur bea

374. circa mid 1900

ADE BETHUNE [1914-]

"St.Mary Magdalene"

lino-cut print ?

Coll. St Catherine College Library, Ade Bethune Collection, St Paul.Minnesota.

*[b/w photostat from artist].

Lgd pen

375. circa mid 1900

ADE BETHUNE

"Mary Magdalene washing Christ's feet with tears"

lino cut print ?

coll. St Catherine College Library, Ade Bethune Collection, St Paul.Minnesota.

*[b/w photostat from artist].

Scrp leg pen

376. circa 1960

GRAHAM SUTHERLAND [1903-1980]

"Noli me tangere"

Coll.Chicester Cathedral, Chicester.

[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:121].

Scrp resur

377. circa 1961

GRAHAM SUTHERLAND [1903-1980]

"Noli me tangere"

retable painting

Coll. Chapel of St Mary Magdalen, Chichester Cathedral.

[Apostolos-Cappadona 1983:121].

378. circa 1969

BERNARD GCWENSA [1918-1985]

"Mary Magdalene"

peruba wood panel

door panel of "women's door" left front side of church

Coll. Church of the Good Shepherd, Hlabisa, Natal.

*[c/p my photo].

Scrp leg pen

379. circa 1970
BERNARD GCWENSA [1918-1985]
"Mary Magdalene"
wood sculpture
fixed into cement block at entrance of church
Coll. Catholic Church at KwaGcwensa, Natal.
*[b/w my photo].
Scrp resur bea

380. circa 1970
"Mary Magdalene"
wood sculpture, +/- 150cm in height

(Seen in guest house of the Spa at Ste Baume,not far from St Maxmilian a
Ste Baume).
Lgd pen

381. circa 1980
BR RICHARD JOSEPH CssR
"Jesus greets Mary Magdalene"
icon painting
Coll. Br Richard, Howick, Natal.
*[c/p photograph from artist].

(Mary Magdalene kneeling, hair uncovered and loose, dressed in black with
rich red cloak, both hands reaching out to Jesus).
Scrp resur pen

382. circa 1990
LUCY D'SOUZA
"Mary of Magdala brings the good news to the disciples"
painting for 1991 Misereor Lenten veil: "Biblical women- guides to the
Kingdom of God"
*[c/p Misereor pamphlet 1991].

(Mary Magdalene walking through doorway, Indian style hair, dressed in rich
red sari to bring good news to apostles hiding against wall).
Scrp resur bea

383-84. circa 1989

    MARY LOU SLEEVI

    -"Mary of Magdala I"

    -"Mary of Magdala II"

    seripaintings

    *[c/p M.L.Sleevi 1989 <u>Women of the Word</u>. p 69,99].

    Scrp resur pen/bea

385. circa 1989

    design by DINA CORMICK

    woven wool wall hanging

    Coll. Dina Cormick.

    Scrp resur bta

386. circa 1990

    SR JOHANNA SENN C.P.M.

    "Mary Magdalene"

    oil painting for sanctuary wall

    Coll. Aliwal North Church.

    *[c/p photo from artist].

    Scrp leg pen

387. circa 1990

    DINA CORMICK

    "Mary Magdalene"

    water-media painting

    20 x 17cm

    Private Coll. Coral Vinsen, Durban North.

    (Printed in postcard series entitled "Heroic women of the Scriptures").

    Scrp resur bea

388. circa 1991

ROBERT LENTZ

"Mary Magdalene proclaimed the Resurrection to the Disciples"
Icon painting
*[c/p card series].
*[b/w New Church May/October 1991].

(Lentz commissioned by Rev Kitty Lehman for the Magdalene Project to celebrate the first anniversary of Barbara Harris as Bishop in the Episcopal Church.
(MM holds up egg as she faces viewer. Lentz quoted as saying "egg, symbol of the goddess and fertility is also the Christian symbol of life and resurrection. Mary Magdalene is brown-skinned, as are people from that area. She is dressed in a deep blood-red robe" (New Church May/October 1991).
Bta bea

APPENDIX B: EXTENDED LIST OF HISTORICAL TEXTUAL SOURCES

A summary of the principal source texts in Latin from the ninth century through to the thirteenth century based on David Mycoff's A critical edition of the legend of Maria Magdalene from Caxton's *Golden Legende* of 1483.

Bibliotheca hagiographia latina (BHL)

In his list Mycoff does not mention a Life of Mary Magdalene *by Rabanus Maurus*,(776 or 784-856) Abbot of Fulda and Archbishop of Mainz, mentioned by Swidler (1979:209).

(i)Sermon attributed to Odo of Cluny (d.942)

> The text contains all the major points listed by later writers regarding the first half of Mary Magdalene's life (i.e.pre-Ascension). Odo himself does not refer to any post-Ascension period.
> (BHL 5439, Mycoff 1985:13).

(ii)Vita Eremitica (circa 900-1000)

> Mary Magdalene's 30 yrs as a hermit. The theme probably borrowed from Mary of Egypt.
> loc.of hermitage, an imp detail in Provençal legend is not specified.(BHL 5453-5456, Mycoff 1985:14).

(iii)Vita Apostolica & Vita Apostolica-Eremitica

> The story of Mary Magdalene's apostolate in Provence including her exile from Palestine, the arrival in Marseilles, and her death & burial in Aix.
> Only Maximin mentioned as companion.
> VA-E draws from VA, telling of the 30 years as hermit.
> (BHL 5443-5449, Mycoff 1985:14).

(iv)Vita Evangelico-Apostolica or Cum in suis actibus with title "Vie Anonyme de Sainte Mary Magdalene";

> Text draws from Odo and VA-E, combining the story of Mary Magdalene's life pre-Ascension with story in Gaul.
> (BHL 5450, Mycoff 1985:14).

(v) Vita:Postquam Dominus N.I.C.

Mycoff did not examine this text but refers to Saxer for summary. The story of Mary Magdalene's conversion of prince of Marseilles, an important feature of the Provençal legend. (BHL 5457, Mycoff 1985:15).

(vi) <u>Vita:Fuit Secundum</u> (circa 1200)

Borrows from <u>Odo</u> & <u>VA</u>, also from (vii)below).

The list of Mary Magdalene's companions extended to include Lazarus and Martha. Mary Magdalene's parents are named, Syrus and Eucharia. No mention of the conversion of prince of Marseilles or of Maery Magdalene's life as a hermit.

FS marks significant first example of the incorporation and subordination of other legends into the Mary Magdalene tradition. Thereby integrating conflicting stories of evangelization of Gaul into a consistent story with Mary Magdalene as the leading character. (BHL Suppl.5451b, Mycoff 1985:15).

(vii)<u>Translationis Narratio Prior</u>

Refers to translation of Mary Magdalene's relics to the Abbey Vézelay, associating the cult with a particular locality. (BHL 5442,5488, Mycoff 1985:16).

(viii)<u>Translationis Narratio Posterior</u>

Describes the problems of translation of Mary Magdalene's relics to Vezelay by Girart de Rousillon of Burgandy. The popular and widely distributed text influenced Vincent of Beauvais, & Jacobus de Voragine, the two most important thirteenth century authorities on the Magdalene cult.(BHL 5489-5492, Mycoff 1985:16).

(ix)<u>Vita Beatae Mariae ae et Sororis ejus Sanctae Marthae</u> (VBMM)
(circa 1200)

The longest extant latin manuscript about Mary Magdalene. Refers to pre-Ascension, post-Ascension, and her thirty years as a hermit. But no mention about her relics. Includes post-ascension life of Martha. VBMM significant to Provençal legend because it expands the legend to cover the whole life of Mary Magdalene as well as absorbing legends of other saints (BHL 5508, Mycoff 1985:16-18).

(x)Vincent of Beauvais OP, <u>Speculum Historiale</u> (1190/1200-1264)

According to Saxer, Vincent used many sources, including

Translationis Narratio Posterior (translation of relics), Postquam Dominus (prince of Marseilles' conversion), Odo of Cluny, Vita Apostolica-Eremitica as well as Vita Marthae, supposedly written by Marcella, handmaid of Martha.(Mycoff 1985:18-19).

(x)Jacobus de Voragine, Legenda Aurea,(The Golden Legend)
(circa 1244, Voragine died 1298).

This legend was originally called Legenda Sanctorum but because of its popular appeal the name was changed by the end of the thirteenth century. An important source for many Magdalene legends after 1270, (Jehan de Vignai made French translation).
De Voragine used many sources, including Vita Eremitica, Vita Apostolica-Eremitica, Translationis Narratio Posterior, Postquam Dominus N.I.C. and Speculum Historiale and possibly other unknown Magdalene legends. (Mycoff 1985:19-20).

(xi)Petrus de Natalibus,Bishop of Equilo Catalogus Sanctorum, (circa 1370/1400, printed by bros.Hugetan of Lyons in 1542.

Shows how LgA became almost definitive for later writers.(Mycoff 1985:20-21).

verse legends
The Auchinleck Mary Magdalene, South English Legendary (SEL) circa 1275-1285, Northern Homily Collection (NHC), Scottish Legendary (ScL) end of C14, Osbern Bokenham Legyndys of Hooly Wummen circa 1443 in MS B.L.Arundel 237, which includes his 1447 *Lyf of Marye Maudelyn*. William Caxton's 1483 *Lyf of Seynt Marye Magdalene* and the Digby manuscript.

prose legends
John Mirk Festial circa 1500, Speculum Sacerdotale, Jehan de Vignay, Legende doree versions a/b/c (LgD), Gilte Legende (GiL) C15th, Caxton's Golden Legend (GoL), a translation of Jacobus de Voragine's legenda aurea printed 1483.

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