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THE MINISTRY OF PASSION AND MEDITATION: ROBERT SOUTHWELL'S *MARIE MAGDALENS FUNERAL TEARES* AND THE ADAPTATION OF CONTINENTAL INFLUENCES

by

MARK RUSSELL BENEDICT

Under the Direction of Wayne Erickson

ABSTRACT

In his most popular prose work, *Mary Magdalens Funeral Teares* (1591), English Jesuit Robert Southwell adapts the Mary Magdalene tradition by incorporating the meditative practices of St. Ignatius Loyola coupled with the Petrarchan language of poetry. Thus, he creates a prose work that ministered to Catholic souls, appealed to Protestant audiences, and initiated the literature of tears in England. Southwell readapts the traditional image of Mary Magdalene for a Catholic Early Modern audience by utilizing the techniques of Jesuit meditation, which later flourished in the weeper texts of Richard Crashaw and George Herbert. His vividly imagined scenes also employ the Petrarchan and Ovidian language of longing and absence and coincide with both traditional and mystic early church writers such as Bernard and Augustine. Through this combination, Southwell's *Marie Magdalens Funeral Teares* resonated with Catholics

deprived of both ministry and the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. These contributions

solidify Southwell's place as a pivotal figure in the religious and literary contexts of Early

Modern England.

INDEX WORDS: *Marie Magdalens Funeral Teares*, Robert Southwell, Mary Magdalene, Meditation, Jesuits, Sacred erotic, Melancholy, Petrarch, *Spiritual Exercises*, Early Modern England, Eucharist, English Renaissance Poetry, St. Ignatius Loyola, Tears symbology, Early Modern Catholicism, English recusants, Tear literature, Meditative poetry

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by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the great souls who have gone before, both boldly and gently into that good night and to those who continue to struggle with belief and persist in wrestling with the sacred questions, their own devotion, and the tears that follow.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I must acknowledge the guiding hand of Dr. Erickson, who led me through the delightful land of Faerie, Dr. Voss, who led me through the glories of Shakespeare's Italy, and Dr. Schmidt, who led me through the maze of Hegel and Nietzsche. You have my sincerest gratitude and respect for your patience, encouragement, and goodwill.

Furthermore, I must thank all those who inspired me at a young age: my family and all the teachers. Most of all, thanks to my wife for encouraging me (and putting up with me) through this endeavor. As Frodo Baggins observed, "I'm glad you're with me."

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1. INTRODUCTION

Even before the last Marian bishop, Watson of Lincoln, died in confinement in 1584, the situation for English Catholics appeared dire. After the ascension of Elizabeth, government officials reckoned that Catholicism would gradually die away with the old age of the Marian priests. As it became evident this was not the case, fines, imprisonment, and martyrdom became the enforcers. The 1559 Act of Uniformity reintroduced the Protestant Book of common prayer and banned ordination of Catholic priests "effectively prohibit[ing] Catholic worship"; in 1571, "[i]t also became treason to reconcile anyone to the Catholic Church, bring or receive papal bulls, crucifixes, rosaries, or an *agnus dei*"; in 1580, the fine for non-attendance of Protestant services soared from one shilling per week to 20 pounds per week for four successive absences (McClain, *Lest* 2, 21). Furthermore, in 1585, accompanying fears of an invasion by Catholic Spain, it became treason simply to *be* a priest ordained outside of England (McClain, *Lest 22*). These laws not only pressured recusants (both Protestants and Catholics who refused to adhere to state religion, now used only for Catholics) to abandon the old faith and endangered the work of covert Catholic ministers but also threatened the salvation of those Catholics who clung to their faith. The truncation of the priesthood and desacralization of ceremonies threatened the means of salvation for English recusants.[1]

Against these straits came a group of soon to be infamous continental invaders: the Jesuits. A speech by Sir Walter Milday, 1581, contains the first recorded English reference to the incoming members of the Society of Jesus (Morey 64).[2] The order, established by Saint Ignatius in 1540, sent back such notable and highly educated missionaries as Robert Persons, Edmund Campion, Henry Garnet, Henry Walpole, and Robert Southwell to England for the

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[1] For further development of the religious and political culture of England during the sixteenth century, see also Coffey, Duffy, Marshall, Dolan, and Wooding in addition to Morey and McClain.
[2] For further discussion of Protestant England's perceptions of the Jesuits, see Marotti, *Alienating Catholics*, 9-24.

encouragement of the Catholic faith. This group also faced fierce persecution; four of these five became martyrs. In fact, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, generally known for her attempts at religious tolerance, nearly 200 Catholics died for their beliefs. Ruling officials perceived an imminent threat from any inhabitant who might supplant loyalty from a Protestant Queen to a Catholic Pope. Though the amount of political influence and actual threat varied, the expressed purpose of many of these Jesuits was to reconcile recusant Catholics to their faith without challenging their English citizenship.

One of these Jesuits, Robert Southwell, lived a life focused on reconciling these difficulties in this prose and verse while ministering to recusants. A cursory account of Southwell's short and tumultuous life must center on his devotion to the Catholic Church and crucial return to England. Born near Norwich in 1561, Southwell left England at sixteen to board at the English College and attend William Allen's Jesuit school at the University of Douai. Due to unrest at Douai, Southwell traveled south to the very seat of Catholicism, Rome, a move which made a definitive impact on his literary and ministerial careers. Italian "tear works," such as *Le Lagrime della Maddalena* and *Lagrime di San Pietro*, gained popularity during his tenure and likely influenced Southwell's literary style (Janelle 189). Deciding to join the Jesuits instead of the more solitary Carthusians, Southwell entered Sant' Andrea's monastery in 1578 and was accepted into the Society of Jesus in 1580. After finishing his noviceship at The Roman College and work at the English College, he returned to England in 1586 with Henry Garnet. His ministerial work in England often proceeded from London and the Arundel house in Southern England. His work centered largely on ministering to gentry and producing his corpus, including various poems and personal devotions, *An Epistle of Comfort* (a letter of encouragement to recusants), *Humble Supplication* (a letter to the queen professing Catholic loyalty), *Saint Peter's*

Complaint (his most popular verse piece), and *Marie Magdalens Funeral Teares* (his widely popular prose work). Arrested by the notorious Richard Topcliffe in 1592, Southwell was tortured ten times over three years, brought to trial, found guilty of treason solely for being a priest, and executed at Tyburn on February 21, 1595.[3] In an unusual final act of mercy, Southwell's executioner pulled the Jesuit's legs to ensure the saint's hanging death before drawing and quartering his remains (Devlin 324).[4] Remarkably, as a witness to his influence, in the year of his death "six editions of his works appeared openly in London" (Martz 12).

This study will focus on the martyr's *Marie Magdalens Funeral Teares*, which derives from a misattributed earlier homily on Mary Magdalene. Southwell translated and expanded an earlier work wrongly ascribed by many at the time to the early Christian theologian Origen (White 161). The text was available to Southwell in English, Italian, and Latin; Helen White contends that Southwell's work expanded the original for heightened emotional impact, as she terms it a "Baroque Transformation" (161). Like its predecessor, *Homelia Origenis de Marie Magdalena*, *Funeral Teares* employs a narrator who depicts the scenes and character but also becomes a character and questions Mary Magdalene, Christ, and the angels (Shuger 150).[5] While biographer Christopher Devlin contends that Southwell composed the work for the feast of St. Mary Magdalene which he delivered as a sermon at Marshalsea Prison, Frank Brownlow corrects Devlin's theory by showing through Southwell's letters that Southwell traveled elsewhere in the country on that day (35). Instead, Southwell probably began writing the prose work while still in Rome but finished his text after returning to England (36). Southwell's unique position as a

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[3] Arthur Marotti claims the betrayal of Southwell by the young Anne Bellamy was fictionalized by Edmund Spenser in *The Faerie Queene* in book five's Samient-Malengin story ("Alienating Catholics" 17). For discussion of religion's influence on both Spenser and Southwell, see Woodhouse.

[4] For discussion of martyrdom and its literary significance, see Cummings 331; Marotti, "Southwell's Remains" 24-31; and Monta.

[5] Rosemary Woolf develops the influence of the original homily but strangely fails to mention *Funeral Tears* in her "English Imitations of the *Homelia Origenis de Mary Magdalena*."

writer familiar with literature of the continent in Latin and Italian allowed him to incorporate styles and traditions unknown to many English readers.

The 1591 open publication of *Mary Magdalens Funeral Teares* bears note in that its author was an illegal priest. As coded in his dedication "To the worshipfull and vertuous Gentlewoman, Mistres D. A.," Southwell created the work in response to a request from Dorothy Arundell (Southwell A3, Brownlow 35). [6] As with many works of the period, Southwell begins with a dedication and address to the reader. Boldly, the edition includes the initials "S. W.," suggesting that those in the recusant circle might know of the author yet remaining ambiguous to potentially threatening Protestant censors. [7] According to his address, Southwell decided to brave printing the work, rather than have his work continue in manuscript form since flawed manuscripts of his work proliferated, and he feared the "danger to come corrupted to the print" (A8). [8] Thus using an avian metaphor about his book, Southwell desired "to let it flie to common viewe in the native plume, and with the owne wings, then disguised in a coate of a bastard feather" (A8). Because the work contains no overtly Catholic elements, it neither faced censure nor lacked a readership; it underwent ten editions before 1636 (Brownlow 43). Ironically, this work by an illegal priest flourished in popularity and lastingly contributed to religious belief and the literary tradition of the period.

Mary Magdalene hagiography evolved over centuries into multiple roles and wide popularity. Rodney Delasanta describes her as the "reformed harlot, the myrophore, and the weeping mourner [as well as] the contemplative *par excellence*" (223). This combination of

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[6] I will maintain all original spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Only special characters will be updated. All references to *Funeral Teares* come from the 1591 printing.

[7] For further discussion of the anonymity of Elizabethan recusant texts, see North.

[8] In his dedicatory epistle and dedication to the reader, Southwell makes a small contribution to the anti-poetic controversy. He claims, "Passions I allow, and loves I approve, onely I would wishe that men would alter their object and better their intent" (A3v). He continues to encourage other authors to more wisely employ their wits, not "loose themselves in the vainest follies" (A7).

attributes contributes to her popularity and history. The story of a reformed harlot and myrrh-bearing saint derive from Biblical texts and additional treatment. While Mary Magdalene specifically receives naming solely as one of the women who witnesses the crucifixion and to whom Christ appears after his resurrection, additional associations abound (King 435). Luke and Mark comment that Christ had driven seven demons from her; otherwise, the associations were added by later Christians (King 435-6). "The anonymous sinner in Luke 7:37-50 who washes Christ's feet with her tears, dries them with her hair, anoints them and kisses them," the one caught in adultery, and the sister of Martha and of Lazarus all become absorbed into her one character (King 436).[9] The stories of the saint became conflated in early church documents and solidified by Pope Gregory's pronouncement of Mary Magdalene, Mary of Bethany, and the sinner in Luke as one person (Haskins 16). Two main Biblical passages prompt the notions of the contrite weeping as well as contemplative Mary Magdalene. According to John 11:1-44, Mary's weeping at the feet of Christ after her brother Lazarus's death causes Christ to raise Lazarus from the dead. The power of her tears here serves as a model of devotion and belief in Christ's ability. Additionally, her tears at Christ's tomb, which serve for the title of Southwell's work, give rise to the "weeper" label. The typical perception of Mary Magdalene's passion develops from authors' desires to redirect her life as a prostitute to a lover of Christ. Thus, she becomes the classic model of contrition for past sins and weeper for the loss of Christ.[10]

Southwell's arrival in England and his account of Mary Magdalene proved crucial for the buoying of Catholic faith in reformation England, and his writings make him an important figure in religious writing of the English Renaissance; in particular, his *Funeral Teares* demonstrates

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[9] Isle Frieson discusses the significance of hair in saints by noting that "unbound and free-flowing hair was a public offence" in Jewish Law (241). Haskins also discusses hair, see 229-236.

[10] For book-length treatments of Mary Magdalene, see King, Haskins, Brock, Griffith-Jones, and Malvern. For a survey of Mary Magdalene in European literature of the Renaissance, see Gibaldi's *Baroque Muse*. For discussion of Mary Magdalene in English literature of the period, see McDermott.

the continental and Jesuit impact on Renaissance England, which became a lasting influence on English literature. [11] Adapting the Mary Magdalene tradition by incorporating the meditative practices of St. Ignatius Loyola coupled with the Petrarchan language of poetry, Southwell creates a prose work that ministered to Catholic souls, appealed to Protestant audiences, and initiated the literature of tears in England. Southwell readapts the traditional image of Mary Magdalene for a Catholic Early Modern audience by utilizing the visualization techniques taught in Jesuit meditation.[12] His vividly imagined scenes also employ Petrarchan language of longing and absence, which resonates with Catholics deprived of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Through this same prose text, Southwell introduces to England the literature of tears, a genre that later flourished in the weeper texts of Richard Crashaw and George Herbert. The combination of these contributions solidifies Southwell as a pivotal figure in the religious and literary contexts of Early Modern England.

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[11] For discussion of the naming of this period in history, see O'Malley. Focusing on Catholicism, he opts for the term "Early Modern Catholicism" (8). I will use Early Modern and Renaissance interchangeably when referring to literature.

[12] Despite its popularity among Protestants, Southwell initially wrote it specifically for a Catholic audience and likely did not have a Protestant audience in mind. Southwell acknowledges the wider readership, through corrupt copies, later in the work's introduction.

2. PETRARCHAN AND OVIDIAN LOVE IN *FUNERAL TEARES*

The literature of continental authors, from Ovid to Petrarch, played a central role in Elizabethan writers' minds. At the end of the sixteenth century, while Ovid's work maintained steady influence on English letters, sonnet sequences in the style of Francisco Petrarch became vogue—from the early sonnets of Wyatt and Surrey in Totell's Miscellany (1557) to, arguably, the apex of *Astrophil and Stella* (1591).[13] These sonnets deified the remote, beautiful, and often cruel object of affection, the lady, through meditation on absence, melancholy, and passion. English Renaissance religious writers' reactions to this romantic focus ranged from condemnation to adoption.

For Robert Southwell's *Marie Magdalens Funeral Teares*, the writings of Christian saints such as Augustine and Bernard of Clairvaux inform his portrayal of these passionate Petrarchan elements in religious contexts. As he proposes in his "Epistle Dedicatorie," Southwell intends to draw his readership to true affections: "Passions I allow, and loves I approve, onely I would wishe that men would alter their object and better their intent" (A4v).[14] In *Funeral Teares*, Mary Magdalene plays the role of an abandoned, seeking, melancholic lover; thereby, Southwell can readjust and reinterpret the profane for the purpose of drawing his readers to "higher and nobler groundes of amitye" (A4). As Alison Shell summarizes, "Mary Magdalene's Christ-centered swoons and ardours were directed towards the highest possible object, and so employed the language of love more legitimately that the same emotions directed towards another human creature" (81). This accurately guided emotion, in what is now termed "sacred parody," prompts

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[13] Despite the wide influence of Petrarch, it is worth noting Yvor Winters's division of sixteenth century poetry into Petrarchan and non-Petrarchan, schools. His unnamed second school features poems with a "theme usually broad, simple, and obvious, even tending toward the proverbial" (95). For Winters, George Gascoigne exemplifies this style.

[14] All archaic characters and punctuation have been silently emended; spelling has been kept in the original. All references to *Mary Magdalens Funeral Teares* refer to the 1591 version, unless otherwise noted.

Southwell's ministerial and literary success; Southwell can succeed in presenting a religious model for his recusant audience while simultaneously adapting the popular literary tropes of Renaissance England.

I. Absence

Sacred and secular traditions directly influence Southwell's presentation of abandonment and absence in *Funeral Teares*.[15] Early church writers including Augustine, Bernard, and Gregory explore the concept of abandonment as a paradoxical means to further approach God. The secular tradition, specifically Ovidian and Petrarchan, presents abandoned lovers empowered even in their silence and perceptions of absence. In *Funeral Teares*, these two traditions merge to form Mary Magdalene's feelings of abandonment and serve as a parallel for recusants feeling the pain of separation from their source of comfort.

Throughout Christian writings including *Funeral Teares*, grief produces power, when prompted by loss and properly directed. Southwell's "Epistle Dedicatorie" to *Funeral Teares* argues, "Desire & hope are the parents of diligence and industry, the nurses of perseveraunce and constancy, the seedes of valour and magnanimity, the death of sloth, and the breath of all virtue . . . . Sorrowe is the sister of mercy" (A4-A5v). Thus, the presence of grief that comes from loss does not necessarily cause fruitless sorrow; rather, if directed toward a more suitable goal, grief becomes productive: "If many droppes soften the hardest stones, why shoulde not many teares supple the moste stonie heartes? what anger so firery that may not be quenched with eye water, sith a weeping suppliant, rebateth the edge of more then a Lions fury?" (40v). Tears contain efficacy; the motivation prompting tears and the tear's results become Southwell's focus. Potential spiritual growth through continued, unfulfilled desire couples with potential vice.

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[15] Though I agree with Thomas Roche's rejection of a strict "secular/ sacred dichotomy," I maintain the use of these terms to designate locations on an Augustinian continuum as they were used in Renaissance literature (493 n.).

Southwell models Mary's incessant seeking for Christ on the teachings of early church writers who argue that nonpossession actually results in a closer relationship to the desired object, in this case Christ.[16] Mary continually yearns throughout *Funeral Teares.* For example, even from the first pages, Southwell introduces the search: "for when things dearly affected are lost, loves nature is, never to be weary of searching even the oftenest searched corners" (6). Though Southwell does not explicitly reference Christ's parable of the lost coin, he echoes the example of searching for the lost, and therefore suggests that the desire for and seeking after Christ mimics Christ's own sacrificial quest for sinners in the gospel parables. As Deborah Shuger suggests, "The idea here is that only in being abandoned and forsaken does one generate a genuine intimacy with Christ" (142). Nicholas Perella notes that Augustine also presents this dynamic as a conduit to enlarge the soul's capacity for God's presence (86). Augustine writes:

> The entire life of a good Christian is a holy desire. What you desire, however, you don't yet see. But by desiring you are made large enough, so that, when there comes what you should see, you may be filled. . . . This is how God stretches our desire through delay, stretches our soul through desire, and makes it large enough by stretching it. . . . This is our life—to be exercised through desire. (*Homilies* 69-70)

Augustine views absence as a necessary precondition to growth—potential rather than failure. The narrator of *Funeral Teares* offers a similar assessment of the situation: "O loving maister, thou didst onely deferre her consolation, to increase it, that the delight of thy presence might be so much the more welcome, in that through thy long absence it was with so little hope, so much desired" (57). Yearning for and searching after Christ creates a greater intimacy than actually

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[16] This longing in absence coincides with Jacques Lacan's notion of desire: "The demand for love can only suffer from a desire whose signifier is foreign to it" ("The Signification of the Phallus" 278). See also his "Desire and the Interpretation of Desire in *Hamlet*," 37-38.

attaining his presence. Southwell recognizes this dynamic and uses it as a comfort to those separated from the visual and tangible elements of Catholic worship forbidden by the 1559 Act of Uniformity.

Another early church writer, Gregory of Nyssa, refers to an Old Testament passage to illustrate a similar point.[17] After witnessing God's presence, Moses continues his seeking, in Gregory's word, as if a lover: "Gregory pictures Moses as a passionate lover longing for a fuller vision of the supernal archetype of beauty . . . . But God would not have revealed himself at all if the vision were meant to have the effect of ending Moses' longing" (Perella 87).[18] Gregory interprets God's motivation for not revealing himself as perpetuating seeking through maintaining distance; attainment could cease longing in the penitent. The struggle of absence therefore serves as a vehicle to develop devotion.[19] As Perella points out, "non possession is always balanced by the hope of fuller possession" (87). Absence leads to a struggle that develops closer intimacy than actual possession.

Southwell interweaves into *Funeral Teares* this discussion of prolonged desire. Perceiving Christ, logically the end of her seeking, Mary runs to Christ to kiss his feet, yet Christ continues to maintain distance. The *noli me tangere* response prompts Southwell's narrator to question Christ's motives: "O Jesu what missery is in this?" (61v). Nevertheless, as any good minister, Southwell expounds on Christ's reaction, explaining Christ's intention. Addressing Mary, the narrator explains what Christ means: "[i]t is now necessary to weane thee from the comfort of my externall presence, that thou maist learne to lodge mee in the secretes of thy heart,

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[17] Southwell refers explicitly to Gregory repeatedly in *An Epistle of Comfort.*
[18] Perella refers to a Jean Daniélou's French translation: *La Vie de Moise* (1955). See 107-109.
[19] Laurel Fulkerson highlights this struggle of absence in her discussion of Ovidian heroines: "while [their struggle is] circumscribed by their own limitations, as well as their textual pasts and futures, I choose to focus on the struggle itself, unsatisfying and limited as it may sometimes seem, rather than on its outcome" (2).

and teach thy thoughts to supply the offices of outward senses" (63v). Prolonging Mary's inability to physically attain Christ represents a redirection of her affections to an internal spiritual presence rather than an external corporeal one. Even in the penultimate page of the text, Southwell returns to this theme. At this point, Southwell didactically addresses the audience and advises, "Absent [Christ] must be sought to be had, being had, he must be sought to be more enjoyed. Seeke him truely, and no other for him. Seek him purely, and no other thing with him. Seek him only and nothing beside him" (68v). The emphasis on searching in the midst of abandonment and absence concludes Southwell's Magdalene narrative and leaves readers with an exhortation to seek, even in the midst of their separation from the true religion.

Exhortations to seek during separation derives partly from the Old Testament's most overtly sexual passage, Canticles, and in one of his commentaries on the book, Gregory explains the symbolic nature of bride and bridegroom. Gregory makes the lovers' seeking and nonpossession a central parallel between sacred and profane love. The early bishop of Nyssa writes:

> The soul, having gone out at the word of her Beloved, looks for Him but does not find Him . . . she thinks that her yearning for the Other cannot be fulfilled or satisfied. But the veil of her grief is removed when she learns that the true satisfaction of her desire consists in constantly going on with her quest and never ceasing in her ascent, seeing that every fulfillment of her desire continually generates a further desire for the Transcendent. (270)

Gregory's supposition that grief can reach cessation in re-identifying the true goal, as yearning rather than attainment, counters the common perception that attainment equals fulfillment. Indeed, even the narrator in Southwell's *Funeral Teares* at first expects of Christ that "thou

satisfieth her seeking with your comming" (58v). The narrator eventually realizes, however, that

Christ appears to Mary not to end her desire but to perpetuate her love after his ascension.

Gregory's conclusion—that "the veil of her despair is torn away and the bride realizes that she

will always discover more and more of the incomprehensible and unhoped for beauty of her

Spouse throughout all eternity"—suggests a resolve similar to that used to console Mary (270-1).

Southwell's narrator claims, "O Mary know the difference between a glorious and a mortall

body, betweene the condition of a momentary and of an eternalle life" (62v). Mary's focus on the

physical clearly misguides affection from the eternal to the temporal. Gregory's and Southwell's

encouragement for those dealing with absence centers on refocusing on an eternal goal in

addition to merely extending seeking.

Southwell's presentation of desire through flame symbology likely derives from

Bernard's exegesis of Canticles. In fact, Bernard of Clairvaux may have had a direct influence on

Southwell's writing; during periods of Southwell's three year imprisonment, Southwell had

access to two requested books: a Bible and the writings of Bernard (Devlin 290).[20] Bernard

comments on the verses sung in devotion to Mary Magdalene on her feast day (King 436). About

the verse from Canticles—"Upon my bed at night I sought him whom my soul loves; I sought

him, but found him not" (3:1)—Bernard writes:

> the happy attainment [of God] does not extinguish this holy yearning, but rather
>
> increases it. How can it be that the consummation of joy be the end of desire?
>
> Rather it serves as oil to desire which is like a flame. And so it is. The happiness

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[20] See Schweers for further development of a connection between the Bernard and Southwell.

is made perfect; yet there is no end to the desire, and hence there is no end to the

seeking. (qtd. in Perella 88) [21]

Southwell repeats the metaphor of oil and flame twice in *Funeral Teares*, at the outset of the

prose work and after Mary sees the resurrected Christ. Initially the tears fuel her sorrow. The

narrator claims that Mary's "teares were rather oile then water to her flame, apter to nourish then

diminish her grief" (4). Thus absence leads to lachrymose sorrow, yet later those effusive tears

serve another purpose. Moments before Mary recognizes Christ, the narrator describes, "No, no,

the Angels must still bathe themselves in the pure streams of thy eies, and thy face shall still bee

set with this liquid pearle that as out of thy tears, were stroken the first sparkes of thy Lordes

love, so thy teares may be the oyle, to nourish and feede his flame" (57v). In fact, the tears have

converted from water to oil, which flames love rather than fuels grief; even the Angels benefit

from the nourishing flame of love sparked in the oil of Mary's tears. Thus, Southwell, in line

with early Christian writers, repeatedly redirects men and women from their temporal focus on

the absence and sorrow to perceive their longing as a conduit for their own salvation and

unification with Christ. Tears caused by absence become tools to perpetuate longing rather than a

method to obtain a goal or show contrition.

The sacred presentation of absence and the subsequent grief and desire closely mirror that

of secular writers, such as Ovid and Petrarch. In fact, Perella claims that the secular presentation

of desire rose from Christian ideology:

The whole matter of yearning for the beloved, the restless longing for something

superior to and beyond the immediate grasp of mortality, accompanied by the

belief that it would, if possessed, bring an untold bliss and solace—this is at the

---

[21] All Biblical quotations are taken from *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, unless otherwise noted. *Perella* refers to Bernard's *Sermones Super Cantica Canticorum*, LXXXIV, in *Opera*, II, Rome 1958, 303.

very heart of troubadour love poetry; but all this was first at the very heart of

Christian spirituality. (Perella 85)

Therefore, two traditions form the influences on Southwell's work: the sacred and profane, the

latter subdivided into the classical and the troubadour. Scholars have noted these secular

influences: Deborah Shuger contends that many of the sixteenth century Magdalene weeper texts

simply reenvision Ovid's works onto a Christian subject (151). Gary Kuchar notes,

"Magdalene's desire is Petrarchan in structure in so far as the absence of the physical, literal

object results in a deepened spiritual relation with it"(*Divine* 64). Developing a deeper

understanding of the meaning of absence in Southwell's *Funeral Teares* requires examining the

secular tradition as well as the sacred.

Ovid maintained his literary prominence throughout the Early Modern period. Several

translated editions of Ovid's work were available to the English audience, including

Metamorphoses and *Heriodes*.[22] Lawrence Lipking suggests that Ovid's "[*Heriodes* was]

probably the most popular classical poetry of the later Middle Ages" (35). Furthermore,

Heriodes thematically coincides with the Magdalene narrative. It contains "versified love

letter[s]" of abandoned women (Lipking 35). This series of epistles directly inspired such works

as Samuel Daniel's "Complaint of Rosamond" and Michael Drayton's *England's Heroicall*

Epistles (35). Lesel Dawson acknowledges that the "humanist revival of ancient literature

brought a number of lovesick women to the fore (such as Sappho, Phaedra, and Medea), and

female-voiced complaint poems also became increasingly popular . . . . The shift in the artistic

---

[22] Raphael Lyne records, "Arthur Golding's translation of the *Metamorphoses* (1565-7) is one of several translations of the period: Tubervile's *Heriodes* (1567), Churchyard's *Trista* (1572), and Underdowne's *Ibis* (1569)" (249). *A Bibliography and First-Line Index of English Verse, 1559-1603* lists seventeen translations of *Heriodes* in addition to the hundreds of other translations of Ovid.

depiction of Mary Magdalen also reflects this interest" (94).[23] The Magdalene of the sixteenth century becomes the abandoned lover at Christ's tomb rather than the repentant sinner bathing Christ's feet (95). The vogue of abandoned lovers in literature spreads to Southwell's Mary Magdalene as well.

The representation of female voice, especially Southwell's Magdalene, proves potentially problematic in considering abandoned women. As Ceri Sullivan points out, "Mary's questions about Christ are firmly answered by the author, without her being allowed to speak or act on them . . . with no interlocutor other than the narrator"; in other words, Southwell denies her "dramatic individuality" and thus she becomes a "profoundly antirhetorical [figure]" (Sullivan74). Though Sullivan correctly points out that the narrator frequently counters and limits her words, abandonment does not leave Mary Magdalene voiceless. Beyond her discussions with the narrator, her tears themselves become speakers for her. In fact, Southwell's narrator assures the *beatrix dilectrix Christi*: "Thy teares were interpreters of thy words, and thy innocent meaning was written in thy doleful countenance" (51v). Despite contrary assumptions, silenced women, including Southwell's Magdalene, frequently find voice. Laurel Fulkerson grounds her discussion of abandoned women on the unspoken rhetoric of Ovid's *Heroides*. The women do not fail for not attaining their desires; rather, their "shared presence in a poetic book—is predicated upon the notion that they themselves create influential texts" (2). Thus, the collection of epistles becomes a communal voice for the silenced speakers. In a similar manner, Mary's tears and interaction with the narrator provide communication to the audience and evidence of her devotion, which Sullivan contends Southwell denies her.

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[23] Pierre Janelle also notes Southwell's early Latin adaptation of Ovid's *Trista*; this copy prompts Janelle to observe, "Southwell knows his Ovid by heart" (135).

The main attribute of all these abandoned women, from Penelope to Sappho to Mary Magdalene, is their external silence. Like these silenced classical women who found speech in the tear-stained letters as their literary voice, Mary Magdalene at the tomb must find pronouncement through her tears and Southwell's text. Kuchar suggests that *Heroides* not only "informs the Renaissance Magdalene tradition" but that Southwell presents a Christianization "of Ovidian figures of female speechlessness like Philomela and Lucrece" ("Gender" 147).[24] Mary's example of constant seeking after her Lord redirects passion and conveys that her speechlessness arises from that overwhelming passion. After she hears Christ's voice, Mary bursts from her speechlessness—"Rabboni"—but then immediately reverts to silence again. As he often does in *Funeral Teares*, the narrator challenges her actions:

> Love would have spoken, but feare enforced silence. Hope frameth the words, but doubt melteth them in the passage: and when her inward conceits strived to come out, her voice trembled, her tongue faltered, her breath failed. In fine teares issued in liew of words, and deep sighes in stead of long sentences, the eie supplying the mouths default, and the heard pressing out the unsillabled breath at once, which the conflict of her disagreeing passions would not suffer to be sorted into several sounds of intelligible speeches. (59)

Though Mary has obtained what she sought, this unsyllabled breath fails her. The narrator misinterprets her silence as weakness but correctly identifies that her "eie" continues to supply the "conflict of passions" which cannot be pronounced. Thus, while arguably denied an audible voice in *Funeral Teares*, the Magdalene recognizes and utilizes an even more effective expression, her tears. Southwell assures her, "But feare not Mary for thy teares will obtaine. They are too mighty oratours, to let any suite fail" (56v). Since they obtain a voice of their own,

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[24] For further discussion of gender in Ovid's *Heroides*, see Lindheim.

Southwell contends they become orators in their own right, not limited by audible expression. Likewise, citing a 1623 work, *Davids Tears*, by John Hayward, Kuchar posits that religious grief is a dialogic language (*Poetry* 3). Understanding Mary Magdalene's sorrow as a dialogic tool overrides the perceptions of her as a voiceless, anti-rhetorical figure.

The most prominent woman from Ovid's epistles is Sappho. Francis Robertello revived interest in Sappho in 1554 with his edition of Longius, and Lipking suggests that the similarities to Petrarch attracted authors such as Pierre de Ronsard to turn to her from Petrarch (71). John Lyly's late sixteenth century play *Sappho and Phao* "even refutes the misogynistic belief, often echoed in the play, that 'women's hearts are such stones, which, warmed by affection, cannot be cooled by wisdom'" by presenting Sappho as in control of her own passions (Dawson 108).[25] Likewise, while Southwell portrays Mary as a passionate woman, he also portrays her as a woman able to argue and articulate responses, whether verbal or physical, to the narrator and more importantly to the audience, an expressly female one. Arthur Marotti argues that recusant women were "the target of Protestant misogyny: a masculinized reform Christianity, which attacked not only the cult of the Virgin, but also devotion to female (as well as male) saints" (Marotti, "Alienating Catholics" 4).[26] Southwell reclaims the use of a female saint as a model for a marginalized female audience. Southwell's presentation of Mary Magdalene appears to have indeed accomplished its overt purpose; Dorothy Arundell, to whom the work is dedicated, died as a Benedictine nun in Brussels (Pilarz, *Mission* 180).

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[25] Gibaldi also mentions Southwell and Lyly: "Southwell's highly rhetorical prose style may or may not have been influenced by John Lyly's *Euphues* (1578). Nevertheless, the Jesuit's debt to his native English literary tradition is very much in evidence. He seems to have been conversant with the love lament of medieval England" (*Baroque Muse* 151).

[26] For an extended discussion of the connection between Jesuits and recusant women, see Marotti's "Alienating Catholics."

Petrarch serves as a final contributor to the secular expression of abandonment. In Canzone 21, Petrarch classically laments his suffering to Laura: "if I am deprived from you, it pains me more than any other misfortune" (qtd. in Roche 63). Petrarch's suffering parallels that of the missing bridegrooms, lovers, and Lord of the previously discussed works—in this case the role of the seeker shifts to the male, but the same principles apply. Brian Cummings notes that Mary Magdalene's ability to hope in despair "is a paradox of the Petrarchan type" (354). As Southwell notes early in *Funeral Teares*, "Mary hoping in dispaire, and persevering in hope, stood without feare, because shee now thought nothing left that ought to be feared. For shee had lost her maister to whom she was so entirely devoted" (5v). Nevertheless, Cummings recognizes Mary's escape from the paradox. Since Mary has already lost "the totall of her loves" (5v), she has no option left in her despair save to hope in the act of binding herself to the object of her affection by keeping his memory alive (354). Thus, Shuger suggests that Mary's melancholy is particularly Petrarchan in that "the experience of physically losing Christ coincides with spiritually gaining him" (Shuger 143).[27] Petrarch's poetry suggests the same dynamic as the Christian doctrines; physical separation can yet increase connection to the desire. As echoes of the early church fathers inform Southwell's conceptions of absence and grief, they also find their outlet in the secular traditions of Early Modern England. By maintaining Mary Magdalene's myopic focus on Christ, Southwell amalgamates the two traditions into an effective message for both recusant and wider audiences.

II. Melancholy

In *Funeral Teares*, Mary Magdalene's grief over losing Christ also reflects both godly sorrow (a righteous grief prompting devotion or repentance) and secular melancholy. Early

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[27] Interestingly, Petrarch chooses Augustine as a "symbolic figure in his life" and enacts a self-investigative dialogue with him in *Secretum*. See Roche, page 30.

Modern understanding of melancholy derived from several sources. In literature, the Petrarchan theory of sorrow dominated and Robert Burton's instrumental *Anatomy of Melancholy* supplemented the traditional humoral theory and suggests Mary's godly sorrow. Tears, evidence of her melancholy, became "one of the Magdalen's most salient attributes, and their efficacy was emphasized repeatedly in medieval sermons. According to the evangelists, she was preternaturally disposed toward weeping" (Jansen 207). In medieval writings, these tears meant sorrow and contrition at her own sin; Renaissance authors directed their focus from Mary as a penitent to Mary as a godly griever (Jansen 207). Mary's grief and tears become evidence of her own devotion in the midst of her melancholy.

Southwell repeatedly emphasizes Mary Magdalene's grief through her tears. Majory Lange notes, "In the English Renaissance . . . tears moved from the background to the foreground in literary awareness; from simply being one sign among many, they became the focus for a great deal of artistic and critical attention" (4). Southwell represents Mary's tears in language ranging from conceits and symbols, to becoming representatives of her life story, emotions, words, and spiritual state. Beyond the importance of tears themselves as evidence of grief, Southwell emphasizes the motivation behind the grief. Sorrow potentially can distract the mourner from the true purpose of godly sorrow: redirection towards Christ. It can also stand in contrast to the Christian theological virtue of hope. Southwell's narrator warns Mary, and symbolically his recusant audience, not to miss the sight of Christ due to eyes "cloudy with teares" (2). In fact, Southwell's narrator rebukes Mary's inability to see Christ as a result of her heavy tears: "But there is such a showre of teares betweene thee and him, and thy eyes are so dimmed with weeping for him, that though thou seest the shape of a man, yet thou canst not discerne him" (44v). Indeed the motivation behind tears becomes a line of questioning in

response to the angels' inquiry of "O Woman why doest thou weepe?": "If they be tears of love .

. . . If they be tears of anger . . . of sorrow . . . of joy" (26, 26v). Southwell's narrator causes

Mary to examine her motivations for and the effects of her weeping to guard against sinning in

her sorrow.

The latent danger in grief's misdirection entails the pitfall of grief as self-pity. Southwell

witnessed first hand the pain in the lives of recusants under the dangers of nonconformity to the

Protestant state, yet he also acknowledges the need to balance sorrow and self pity. In his prose

track of encouragement to recusants, *Triumphs over Death*, Southwell calls attention to those

who "entertain their sorrow with solitary musings, and feed their sighs and tears . . . nursing

their heaviness with a melancholy humour, as though they had vowed themselves to sadness"

(91). This selfish grief, "folly" as Southwell terms it, appears in *Funeral Teares* as well (92). The

narrator chides, "Thou wilt say that though he forbad thee to weepe for him, yet he lefte thee

free, to weep for thy selfe" (14v). Mary defends her actions by reasoning that prohibiting her

weeping must correspond to a penalty for an offense; the only feasible offense she could have

committed was being too close to Christ—a fault for which she will not repent (14v-14). Again,

Southwell points to devotion to Christ as the answer to grief, heightened in His absence.

The correct direction of tears can lead to effective evidence of interior devotions and

change melancholy to holy desire. One of the most famous sermon-writers of the late

Renaissance, Lancelot Andrewes, notes the link between tears, love, and religious duty. As

Majory Lange observes of Mary's tears, "The tears themselves are less important than their

association with seeking—a characteristic of both repentance (for Andrewes' audience) and

Mary's love" (149). During his 1620 Easter sermon on Mary Magdalene preached before King

James, Andrewes exhorts his audience, "Weeping without seeking is but to small purpose. But

her weeping hindered not her seeking, her sorrow dulled not her diligence. And diligence is a character of love, comes from the same root *dilectio* and *diligencia*, from *diligo*, both. *Amor diligentiam diligens*" (8).[28] To Andrewes, even the etymology of love and diligent duty share related roots. Thus love connects Mary's weeping and seeking (Lange 149). The tears become evidence of Mary Magdalene's devotion.

The depth and source of sorrow in *Funeral Teares* directly reflect the Petrarchan conceit of what Roche calls "the grieving poet-lover" (47). The effusive emotion of a Petrarchan love sonnet reveals the soul of the suppliant through direct expression, as well as figurative language. Southwell describes Mary's feelings similarly throughout his prose; near the end, Southwell develops a conceit of Christ's meaning to Mary. At the moment of Mary Magdalene's recognition of her true lover, the narrator draws this extended conceit from troubadour poetry:

> For as he was her only sunne whose going downe, left nothing but a dumpishe[29] night of fearefull fansies, wherein no flarre of hope shined, and the brightest plannets were chaunged into dismall signes: so the serenitie of his countenance, and authoritie of hys worde, brought a calme and well tempered day, that chafing away all darkness, and disperysing the cloudes of melancholie, cured the letargie, and breaketh the dead sleep of her astonied senses. (59v)

The dark night of Mary Magdalene's soul contrasts with the brightness of Christ's appearance. Southwell makes no doubt that Mary's grief results directly from her nonpossession of Christ; the heliotropic conceit conveys Christ as the only source of light by focusing on his visage—a staple of Petrarchan figurative language. Using this language, Southwell draws from the

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[28] In this sermon, Andrewes also refers to Augustinian and Gregorian texts, as well as the pseudo-Origen homily on Mary Magdalene.

[29] The Oxford English Dictionary defines dumpish as melancholy. The example comes from another of Southwell's works. The 1822 edition of *Funeral Tears* uses "gloomy" instead.

Christian tradition of Christ as the illuminating light that shines in darkness, as well as the secular adoption of such metaphors. Utilizing the Petrarchan tradition in *Funeral Teares* was not a novelty for Southwell; Scott Pilarz also notes that Southwell's poems "Loves' servile lot," "Lewd love is loss," and "Love's gardyne grief" "imitate the figures and tropes common in contemporary poetry, many of them borrowed from the tradition established by Petrarch" (*Mission* 84). Joseph Gibaldi notes the "traditional Petrarchistic imagery" in Southwell's conversion of Cupid's arrows to divine love in "Mary Magdalene's Blush" (*Baroque Muse* 283). The congruencies between secular and sacred poetry serve Southwell to reach two audiences with language that he ultimately hopes will draw his readers to Christ while still maintaining Mary's godly sorrow rather than melancholic despair.

The potentially fatal extent of Mary Magdalene's sorrow deserves note since Southwell hopes to convey the depth of Mary's grief but remain appropriately within Christian ethical mores. When Petrarch muses over his departed love and arguably his own suicide, readers understand the hyperbole of his fancy. He ponders in Canzone 22: "It is surely time to die . . . My lady is dead and has my heart with her, if I wish to follow it I must break off these cruel years" (qtd. in Roche 64). Pilarz proposes that Southwell, through an "amorous voice," "adapt[s] the form of a lover's lament" to contemplate this dynamic in the poem "Mary Magdalene's Complaint at Christ's Death" ("To Help Souls" 47, 46). Southwell employs the same tropes in *Funeral Teares* as well. Nevertheless, he must carefully address so intense a reaction to grief. While he hopes to prove Mary Magdalene's love as deep as any secular love, he also cannot encourage suicide, a mortal sin for Catholics.[30] He claims that if it were not for Christ's memory within Mary, "the violence of her griefe would have melted her heart into inward bleeding tears, and blotted her rememberaunce with a fatall oblivion" (5-6v). Kuchar refers to this fatal oblivion

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[30] For development of Donne's suggested treatment of suicide see Kitzes 105-121.

as a "suicidal complaint" and suggests that Southwell thus raises the "ethical question: 'How does one grieve the object of all objects?' How in other words, does one grieve the sorrow inspired by such a loss?" (*Divine* 60).

For Southwell's Magdalene, the resolution derives from her ability to resituate from the physical Christ to his spiritual presence after his resurrection and subsequent ascension. Kuchar fails to refer to Southwell's next lines; Southwell immediately follows "fatal oblivion" with three conjunctions to signal the presence of hope. Rather than Mary Magdalene delivered over to fatal grief, Southwell demonstrates that love is stronger than death: "And yet nevertheless, shee is now in so imperfect a sort alive, that it is proved true in her that Love is as strong as Death. For what could death have done more in Mary then Love did" (6v). In other words, while Mary Magdalene serves as a Petrarchan character overwhelmed with grief, Love still triumphs. Excessive sorrow does not equate to defeat, as love conquers all once again. Southwell's text becomes, in Sullivan's phrase, a "silent preacher" to his audience (13).

Though melancholy has traditionally carried gendered connotations, juxtaposing *Funeral Teares* with "Saint Peter's Complaint" reveals that Southwell puts little emphasis on a gender of tears. Lange argues that realizing one's "absolute powerlessness before God" for a Renaissance preacher generates "tears [that] more often than others transcend gender" (3). Likewise, the godly sorrow of Mary Magdalene and Peter surpass gender designations. In the Petrarchan tradition which Southwell mimics, the male adopts the affected weeping associated with feminine weakness to emphasize his sorrow: "In love lyrics, male poets exploited tears to indicate the intensity—and singularity of their feelings" (Lange 3). The adoption of sorrow for lost love became thoroughly entrenched as a male behavior pattern. The gender roles become twice reverted in Southwell; troubadours adopted tearful lamentation, and Southwell then

reemploys the lachrymose behavior for his female protagonist, Mary Magdalene.[31] Though the

Magdalene has consistently been associated with weeping, Southwell utilizes her as a Petrarchan

weeper and thus adds an additional dynamic of sorrow. Additionally, Southwell's longest and

widely popular poem, "Saint Peter's Complaint," utilizes a similar weeping character, here a

male. [32] The poem begins, "Launch foorth my Soule into a maine of tears, / Full fraught with

griefe the traffick of my mind" (1-2). Similarly, in the third stanza the narrator advises, "Give

vent unto the vapours of thy brest, / That thicken in the brimmes of cloudie eyes" (13-14). Over

the next nearly 800 lines, Southwell repeats tear and liquid images and symbols, creating Peter

awash in sorrows which lead to redemption. Even in the penultimate stanza, Southwell

summarizes, "Let teares appease when trespasse doth incense" (783). The redemptive and

efficacious work of tears transcends gender and surpasses any concerns over their gendered

appropriation in Early Modern conceptions of melancholy.[33]

The seminal work defining Early Modern melancholy is Robert Burton's *Anatomy of*

Melancholy (1621).[34] As Shuger writes, "*Anatomy of Melancholy* conveniently summarizes two

millennia of erotic speculation" (159). Burton divides his sizeable work into descriptions and

cures of melancholic symptoms and then a specific discussion of love melancholy, including

religious melancholy. Burton (1576-7-1640), who graduated from Brasenose College, Oxford, in

1593 and became Vicar of St. Thomas, sees himself as a pioneer in explaining religious

melancholy in depth (xi, 866). As he comments at the beginning of his section on religious

melancholy, "[t]hat there is such a distinct species of Love—melancholy, no man hath ever yet

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[31] For instance, Shakespeare creates several weeping love-sick males including Romeo and Orsino.

[32] Quotations from "Saint Peters Complaint" refer to *Collected Poems*, Ed. Peter Davidson and Anne Sweeney.

[33] For another example of Southwell's presentation of weeper texts, see Southwell's gender-neutral poem, "A Veil of teares" in *Collected Poems*, 36-38. For discussion of Mary Magdalene's gendered grief in the medieval Lazarus plays, see Goodland.

[34] Burton was expressly anti-Catholic: his descriptions include, "But above all others, that High Priest of Rome, the dam of that monstrous and superstitious brood, the bull-bellowing Pope, which now rageth in the West, that three-headed Cerberus" and "Janissary Jesuits" (Burton 884).

doubted; but whether this subdivision of Religious Melancholy be warrantable, it may be controverted . . . I have no pattern to follow" (866). Burton acknowledges a true exemplar of attraction, the beauty of God, by seeing Canticles as a way to show God's pulchritude. He also encourages love for God because "this beauty and splendour of divine Majesty, is it that draws all creatures to it, to seek it, love, admire, and adore it" (869). After establishing this object of devotion, Burton advances into discussing the causes and complexities of religious melancholy.

To Burton, straying from true religious affection results explicitly from misguided devotion and solitude. A portion of that misguidance comes from focus on "the impertinent, needless, idle & vain ceremonies. . . . We have too great opinion of our own worth" (873). Burton sees those Catholic duties, "which Bellarmine, Gregory de Valentia, all their Jesuits and champions defend . . ." as self-righteous zeal without knowledge (873). Fasting and solitude lead the potential vices: "Amongst the rest, fasting, contemplation, solitariness, are as it were certain rams by which the devil doth batter and work upon the strongest constitutions" (893). Nevertheless, though Burton attacks their priority over Christ' actions, he does not necessarily condemn all such devotional practices. In fact, there exists an "ecstatsis" which "is a taste of future happiness, by which we are united unto God, a divine melancholy, a spiritual wing, Bonaventure terms it, to lift us up to heaven" (Burton 894). Burton affirms a place for godly sorrow, but condemns its "abuse" by Catholics, monks, and nuns, among others. Burton continues by cataloguing a diversity of misguided groups. Christians might suffer from love of one's own sect, zeal ending in martyrdom, and belief in "incrediblilities" (896). "Epicures, Atheists, Hypocrites, worldly secure, Carnalists" likewise receive due attention for their "defect" in their love of God (925). His lengthy discussion of cures can be summarized by one of his final, and briefest, sentences: "Be not solitary, be not idle" (Burton 970).

Though never referring to Mary Magdalene, Burton would have mixed reaction to Southwell's treatment of the saint's melancholy. In accordance with Burton's exhortation, Mary Magdalene does seek the right direction for all devotion, Christ himself. In Southwell's work, ceremony receives no mention and Mary's melancholy, if we shall label her sorrow as such, seems to be Burton's "divine" "ecstasis" foreshadowing greater union with God.[35] Kuchar expounds on the system of godly sorrow by referring to 2 Corinthians 7:9-11 and later patristic exegesis (Kuchar, *Poetry* 4-5):

> For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death. For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what zeal. (7:10-11)

From Paul's words both Augustine and John Chrystostom characterize, according to Kuchar, that the "Christian soul as essentially sorrowful in nature" (*Poetry* 5).[36] John Chrystostom claims "godly sorrow reveals the basic modalities of Christian experience" (5). At Mary Magdalene's conversion, her tears prove her eagerness for contrition, the state of Christian penitence; at Christ's tomb, they prove her longing and zeal, the state of Christian desire. In both Burton's and Kuchar's description of godly sorrow, Mary Magdelene's weeping despair exposes the condition of her soul and allows her to communicate with God, proving her status as a model Christian.

The humoral theory of the Renaissance constitutes the final consideration for Renaissance theories of melancholy. As Ioan Couliano summarizes, "the principal temperaments [resulted] from the predominance in the organism of one of the four humors: yellow bile, phlegm, blood, and black bile, *atra bilis*, in Greek *melina cholos*, hence the word 'melancholy'"

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[35] Nevertheless, one suspects if Burton knew of *Funeral Teares*'s author's affiliation and martyrdom, he might dismiss the piece without even considering Mary's dangerous solitude

[36] See Kuchar's *Poetry* for further development of this Godly sorrow in Donne, Crashaw, and Marvell.

(46). Descriptions of melancholics became a comical feature of plays such as *As You Like It* late in the English Renaissance. Couliano describes the general conception: " thin and gloomy, they are, in the bargain, clumsy, sordid, drab, apathetic, cowardly, irreverent, drowsy, lazy—in short, people without religion or self control who lack respect for human relations" (Couliano 46). By this depiction, Mary Magdalene hardly seems melancholic. Her boldness in addressing the narrator, her willingness to re-steal Christ's body if necessay, and her religious fervor counter Couliano's description. Perhaps Mary Magdalene portrays the "hot" melancholy rather than cold; Couliano quotes Aristotle's description of hot melancholics as having "fits of gaiety, ecstasy, liability, inspiration" (47). This appears more to be Mary's case. She may be swept in the sorrow of her loss, yet her temper seems imbued with passion for the object of her loss. As Ann Matter points out, premodern thinking "understood human nature in a different way—if not exactly as a result of them at least intrinsically allied to, external forces," a "humoral theory" (23). Thus Mary Magdalene's constitution, her perception, and her very nature derive from her post-conversion life of dedication to Christ. The melancholy she displays, whether humoral or qualifying under Burton's ideas of "divine," naturally develops from her intimacy with Christ. In his "Epistle Dedicatorie," though Southwell does not develop a humoral theory in the work, he hopes *Funeral Teares* will "direct these [passionate] humors unto their due courses" (A4v). As Southwell wrestles with his presentation of a lachrymose lover devoid of her desired object in the midst of an era rife with conflicting perceptions about melancholy, he maintains his ability to utilize Mary Magdalene as a model thanks to his faithful insistence on her devotion to Christ above any other.

III. Passion and Its Mediation

Passion and its mediation complete the dynamics of courtly and spiritual romance that influence Southwell's treatment of Mary Magdalene's presence at Christ's tomb. Incorporating physical desire into his writing directly and even using arguably erotic language reflects the Petrarchan-style presentations of desire. Though the Aristotelian mean would suggest a mediation of such passion, Southwell interprets Augustine, other church fathers, and even Eucharistic symbolism to encourage excessive desire. Thus, as he managed with absence and melancholy, Southwell incorporates teachings of the faith into the language of the literary culture.

Petrarch's writings also intermingle religious life with love, including Mary Magdalene's love, in monumentally influential poetry. As Adam Kitzes notes, it is no accident that "Petrarch's *Rime*...transition[s] from Laura to the Virgin [Mary]" (139). Though most famous for his sonnets extolling Laura, Petrarch concludes *Il Canzoniere* with verses dedicated to the Virgin Mary, which use the same language of praise as his previous amorous sonnets. Petrarch also wrote two works specifically treating Mary Magdalene; one, a prose work entitled *De Vita Solitaria*, magnified the life of solitude lead by John the Baptist and Mary Magdalene (Gibaldi, *Baroque Muse* 215-16). After a pilgrimage to Mary Magdalene's legendary hermitage cave at La Sainte-Baume, France, Petrarch composed his other work about the saint, *Carmen de Beata Maria Magdalen* (Jansen 283). Referring to this Latin poem, Gibaldi notes:

> Petrarch's transference of the language of secular love lyric to sacred verse, as
> reflected in the very first words of the poem—"Dulcis amica Dei." . . . [insists]
> here not just on the beauty of the saint's soul, but on her physical attractiveness as

well: our attention is repeatedly drawn to her shining (5) and golden (17) hair, her

white breast (16), and her state of undress in the grotto (28-29). ("Petrarch" 4)[37]

Petrarch inventories the Magdalene in a traditional blazon, overtly intersecting the sacred and

profane. Prefiguring later alterations of secular to sacred, this work presents three themes: Mary

Magdalene's conversion, fidelity at the cross, and eremitical retreat from the world (Jansen 284).

Gibaldi elaborates that when discussing these themes, Petrarch borrows from love poetry's

figures of speech such as antithesis, paradox, and amatory metaphor (*Baroque Muse* 220). This

style flourished in later Italian writers such as Serafino Ciminelli dall'Aguila (1466-1500), Peitro

Bembo (1470-1547), Giovanni della Casa (1500-1503), and most importantly Luigi Tansillo

(1510-1568), whose *Lagrime di San Pietro* likely influenced Southwell's own tear literature

(Gibaldi, *Baroque Muse* 220).[38] Though not the first to infuse amorous language to religious

topics, Petrarch's treatment of Mary Magdalene and legacy of verse shape Southwell's portrayal

of the sexual saint.

Many of Southwell's prose works, including *An Epistle of Comfort*, echo Petrarch's

legacy. In this letter of encouragement to his persecuted flock, Southwell directly compares their

situation to that of the Petrarchan lover:

> We see that an enamoured knight hath no greater felicity than to do that which is
>
> acceptable to his paramour; and the fading beauty of a fair lady's countenance is
>
> able to work so forcibly in men's minds, that neither loss of riches, dangers of
>
> imprisonment, dread of torture, no, nor present death itself, is able to withhold

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[37] For the significance of the religious iconography of hair for women like Mary Magdalene, Mary of Egypt, and Wilgefortis, see Friesen.

[38] As for Petrarch's own sources, Roche suggests, "the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, who from the twelfth century had been esteemed as the premier poet of love. It will be well to study Ovid and myth with some care for almost every detail and suggestion of that myth was used by Petrarch in the writing of the canzoniere" (9).

them. Every peril undertaken for her, seemeth pleasent . . . . O unspeakable

blindness of man's heart, that so easily yieldeth to the lure of the sense; that is so

soon caught with the beauty of an image, and yet hath not the grace to remember

whom it resembleth! (137)

Not only does the amatory heart of the knight provide a model for devotion, the mimetic beauty

of the lady serves as a reminder of God's true beauty. A paladin sacrifices for higher causes, not

fearing the punishments of duty. Rather, he considers them a joy of service prompted by

passionate "enamorment." The echoes of James 1:2-4 work as a rebuke to the pseudo-Catholics

faltering in their devotion: "My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind,

consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance;

and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in

nothing." Southwell, however, does not simply encourage the endurance of a Petrarchan lover to

rebuke the weakness of faith in his audience; he also models Christian devotion on a chivalric

code. Through secular diction and themes, Southwell evaluates the devotees' actions by their

suitableness to the beloved—even if resulting in treacherous trials and martyrdom itself.

Southwell's adopted vocabulary of secular, chivalric devotion suits his subject matter and

age. As Helen Gardner observed of periods like Southwell's, "the religious poet did not seem to

be writing against the current of his age, but to be adapting to his special subject-matter the

forms and styles of contemporary poetry" (169).[39] Her analysis proves true for Southwell's

treatment of Mary Magdalene; Southwell incorporates the Petrarchan language of devoted eros.

Lipking argues that the same erotic language expresses all desire: "desire and prayer enlist the

same vocabulary. Hence the language of abandoned women seldom distinguishes Eros from

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[39] Also see White, *Prayer and Poetry*, for discussion of the religious poet.

Agape" (14).[40] The mirrored language represents interplay between themes which Southwell must navigate in his attempts to raise language to its proper goal. Despite the similarity in terms, the sacred and profane erotic language carries a notable difference. Pilarz points out the "double nature of love [language]" but notes "while the lovers in Petrarchan poems often feign affection or hold it out for some unattainable object, Mary's love is genuine and intended for a person whom she knew very well" (*Mission* 173). Thus when Mary Magdalene says in Southwell's poem, "Marie Magdalene's Complaint at Christ's Death,"

> With my love my life was nestled
>
> In the summe of happynes
>
> From my love my life is wrestled
>
> To a world of heavynes
>
> O lett love my life remove
>
> Sith I live not where I love (25-30)

readers recognize the Petrarchan elements in the poem but also the intended sincerity of devotion. *Funeral Teares* suggests similar passion; a small sampling of descriptions reveals this language: "the great vehemency of her fervent love," "the fire of her true affection enflamed her heart," and "wholly possessed with passion" (A3, 1, 7v). When Mary Magdalene becomes overwhelmed, the narrator worries that the "violence of her griefe would have melted her heart into inward bleeding tears, and blotted her rememberaunce with a fatall oblivion" (5-6v). Fearful of the excessive passion here, Victorian editors even emended Southwell's excessive choice of "fatal" to "faithful" and excised "bleeding" (Kuchar, "Gender" 144). Without knowing the subject matter, readers might suspect both the rhymes and prose to be secular desire.

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[40] Sharon Achinstein similarly says, "[t]he duplicitous nature of that "secret panting," and the exploitation of the resemblance between holy ardor and carnal eroticism, haunts all poetry that seeks to represent the relationship between humans and the divine" (415).

Nevertheless, to treat them out of their larger textual milieu removes important contextualization. Since Southwell's lyrics were introduced by overtly Christian prefaces and contained Christian subject matter, the ramifications drawn from secular and sacred works differ. Though the language remains the same, the sacralized subject and object sanction the passion encapsulated in the language.

Southwell's *Funeral Teares* also employs Petrarchan conceits of flame, eyes, and imprisonment. The narrator records, concerning Christ, "Thou are too hoate a fire to be in her bosome, and not burne her, and thy light is too great, to leave her minde in this darknesse if it shined in her" (12). The narrator's, rather than Mary's, use of these lines suggests that Southwell does not attempt simply to divert passionate language to an over-sexed Magdalene; rather, Southwell implies that even the judicious narrator must use impassioned language to praise Christ. The narrator continues, "In true lovers every part is an eie, and every thought a looke, and therefore so sweet an object among so many eies, and in so great a light, could never lie so hidden but love would espie it" (12). Pilarz suggests that the use of an eye metaphor highlights the "lovers' tenacity in searching for their beloved" (*Mission* 174).[41] Though most noted for her lachrymose eyes, Mary Magdalene here receives exhortation to use an abandoned lover's eye to espy her Christ. Finally, as included in Gibaldi's summary of typical Petrarchan themes (*Baroque Muse* 215), Southwell also uses bondage and prison imagery, claiming that Mary Magdalene "was captive in so many prisons . . . . Love being her Jailor . . . and nothing able to ransome her, but the recovery of her Lord" (*Funeral Teares* 7). She is therefore bound by love to her grief, her search, and her passion for Christ. Since she adroitly identifies where her allegiance

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[41] Southwell repeats the same language later, see page 35. Couliano explains the pseudoscientific thinking behind eye language: ". . . for instance when the subject is fascinated by the beautiful eyes of a woman and cannot stop looking at them, he emits through his pupils so much spirit mixed with blood that his pneumatic organism is weakened and his blood thickens. The subject will waste away through lack of spirit and through ocular hemorrhage" (30).

lies, she becomes bound to the empty tomb and even more to the Christ who was there

sepulchered. Thus, as he so often does, Southwell joins the profane language of eros, love as a

jailor, to the sacred language of agape, ransom by Christ.

Erotic language surrounding Mary Magdalene also arises from an understanding of the

early life of the reformed prostitute and the later traditional poetical treatments. The stories of the

saint became conflated in early church documents and solidified by Pope Gregory's

pronouncement of Mary Magdalene, Mary of Bethany, and the sinner in Luke as one person

(Haskins 16).[42] Mary Wiesner-Hanks notes the "emphasis on the sensual and corporeal aspects

of love for God" in the later Middle Ages—Mary Magdalene providing a prime example of a

"de-emphasis on physical virginity" and emphasis on "spiritual virginity" (45). The pseudo-

Chaucerian "The Lamentatyon of Mary Magdalene" features a "Magdalene as passionate lover"

that McDermott says "anticipates Robert Southwell's attempt to substitute Magdalene's passion

for that of Venus" (50).[43] Likewise, Mario Praz, addressing the period after Southwell's,

maintains a similar assessment: "the strong erotic strain of Seventeenth-century worshippers

found outlet in the cult of female saints and martyrs"; the most popular, Mary Magdalene, "that

Venus in sackcloth," proved a "transition from profane to sacred love" (204-5). From the later

Middle Ages to the poems of Crashaw, Donne, and Herbert, Mary Magdalene played a central

roll in encapsulating the intersection of the sensual and spiritual.

The hyperbolic excess of passion, both sensual and spiritual, in Renaissance literature

complicates presentations of love in Early Modern England. Though Stephen Webb questions,

"Is it not the role of religion, as well as art, to speak in excess, to break the bondage of everyday

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[42] In 1969, the Catholic Church declared that Mary Magdalene was not actually the penitent sinner. For further development of Pope Gregory's speech, see Haskins 95-97.

[43] As for Chaucer himself in relation to Petrarch, Praz notes that "Chaucer entirely disregarded the sonnet form and confined himself to borrowing the ideas" (265).

caution, to be hyperbolic?" both secular and religious authors must contend with the dangers of

excess (xii).[44] For a religious writer, these dangers included profaning the sacred.[45] Nevertheless,

Elizabethan and Carolingian writers "challenged the norm of moderation by appropriating

diverse ancient and continental Renaissance genres and intellectual currents, including

Petrarchan love poetry" (Scodel 145). Joshua Scodel demonstrates this point by referring to

works such as a sonnet appearing in William Byrd's song collection that "proclaims that

'Ambitious Love,' which 'exceedeth' man's reason, forces the lover to 'aspire' with precarious

'climbing'; should he fail to attain his mistress, his 'brave attempt' will 'excuse' his 'fall'" (148).

This Icarean image appears in Samuel Daniel's 1592 sonnet sequence *Delia* as well; Daniel

describes his desire for height, but his wings melt by love's heat (Scodel 149). In sonnet 30,

Daniel exceeds his contemporaries by underscoring "his love's challenge to the ideal of the

mean" (Scodel 149). Daniel proposes:

> The Meane-observer, (whom base safety keepes,)
>
> Lives without honour, dies without a name,
>
> And in eternall darkens ever sleeps.
>
> And therefore *Delia*, tis to me no blot,
>
> To have attemped, though attain'd thee not. (10-14)

The pun on "mean" suggests the appropriateness of avoiding staunch adherence to the

Aristotelian mean; even if his enterprise of love fails, Daniel's narrator justifies his risk. Though

his language of desire appears hyperbolic, arguably foolish, these attempts to win love serve to

demonstrate the depth of devotion.

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[44] Webb soon answers his own question: "Hyperbole and religion . . . are inextricably connected; their fates are interchangeable" (xii).

[45] For a secular author, these dangers included courtly ambition (Scodel 148). See Scodel 146-148 for development of courtly ambition and excess.

Justifying such excessive passions in the Christian tradition requires the right direction towards the most holy object. Even Burton's melancholy tome suggests this doctrine. Burton warns against excess and defect but qualifies, "Not that there is any excess of divine worship or love of God; that cannot be, we cannot love God too much" (Burton 873).[46] Southwell's earlier works appear to counter Burton's proposal. In his "Short Rules of a Good Life," a manual of self-guidance and devotion, Southwell advises himself "that I be not light, vain, or too lavish in mirth, not too austere, or too much inclined to sadness, but with temperate modesty, rather composed to mirth than melancholy" (35). Likewise, in *Triumphs over Death*, Southwell taught: "[i]t is no less fault to exceed in sorrow, than to pass the limits of competent mirth, since excess in either is a disorder in passion" (90). Southwell seems to admonish excess. Nevertheless, both examples of temperance pertain to Southwell's outward presentation of worldly joy, not divine devotion. Southwell purposes *Funeral Teares* to address passionate love; in the dedicatory letter, he writes, "This love & these passions are the subject of this discourse" (A6). On passion, Southwell writes, "Passions I allow, and loves I approve, onely I would wishe that men would alter their object and better their intent" (A4v). F. W. Brownlow summarizes that this redirection of passion defines *Funeral Teares* as "a story, cast in the form of a homiletic meditation, about a woman's overwhelming love for an infinite object" (37). The passion of Mary Magdalene and English Catholics needs no bounds, simply proper order. Southwell can incorporate the language of eros, employing it to the end of agape—the divine gift of love.

Scholars trace the development of the sacred erotic, or Christian sensuality, as intricately bound to perceptions of Canticles and the Eucharist. Though Bernard of Clairvaux wrote the

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[46] Burton goes on to denounce Catholics, "[we cannot] do our duty as we ought, as Papist hold, or have any perfection in this life, much less supererogate; when we have all done, we are unprofitable servants" (873). Shell, however, argues Southwell's Jesuit styled redirection of loves is "not incompatible with Protestantism, and the later inter-denominational popularity of emblem books like *Pia Desideria* shows how amorous commonplaces could be actively exploited" (81).

most classic commentary on Canticles, Origen's exegesis altered the perception of the bridegroom from the Church to the individual (Perella 42).[47] The key to this metaphorization, according to Sharon Achinstein, comes through the genre of romance (418). In *Funeral Teares*, which many call a love lyric, Southwell maintains the dynamics of both romance and spiritual union by alluding to Canticles. As the lover of Canticles 6, Christ has come into the garden but disappears before the beloved can find him. Rather than interpreting this passage as erotic, Southwell allegorizes the end of recusant misfortune: "For this did Christ in the canticles, invite us to a heavenly banquet, after hee was come into this garden, and had reaped his myrrh, and his spices, to forewarne us of the joy, that after this harvest should presently insue," namely victory over death and the grave (47v- 47). The passage of Southwell's allusion sensualizes the longing of a lover for the beloved, just as Mary Magdalene, who notably mistakes Christ for the gardener, longs for union with her beloved. The erotic language of Canticles also leads to a mystical union with God. Ambrose added to Origen's connection by suggesting that Canticle's kiss permits the interchange of spirit (Perella 44). Clinging to the Lord, in 1 Corinthians 6:17, becomes full eroticized: "[i]t is by way of a kiss that the soul cleaves to and unites with God" (45). Just after his allusion to Canticles, Southwell suggests this displacement of spirit when the narrator asks Christ to "[r]estore unto [Mary Magdalene] therefore her soul that lieth imprisoned in thy body" (48). The transmission of spirit through the language of and allusion to Canticles offers magnification and divinization of sensuality.

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[47] Lytton Sells notes Bernard's mysticism in Castiglione's *Cortegiano*: "something of the mystical current deriving from St. Bernard has crept into [*Cortegiano*]. Later in his book, Castiglione says that the final union of the soul with pure beauty was experienced by St. Francis 'in whom a fervent spirite of love imprinted the most holy seale of five wounds'; that is, the stigmata; and he makes Giuliano say that there are women in our time worthy to receive the stigmata; and that Mary Magdalene had felt the same 'angellike love' (305-6). For development of the Canticles imagery, via Bernard's influence, in artwork depicting Mary Magdlane, see Yoshikawa.

The further transition from the oral intimacy of Canticles' kiss to Eucharistic symbology develops in another early church father, Theodoret. The 5th century Bishop of Cyrrhus assures, "[s]hould anyone whose thoughts are base be troubled by the term *kiss*, let him consider that at the moment of sacrament when we receive the members of the Spouse, we kiss and embrace him . . . and we imagine a kind of nuptial embrace" (Perella 46). Writing soon after Theodoret, Augustine confirms, in *Confessions*, the sensual nature of intimacy with God. In a passage prefiguring Ignatius Loyola's sensory meditation practices, Augustine uses an ascensive progression through the five senses, ordered hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch (Perella 49). Throughout, Augustine utilizes language of "amoristic delights of the several senses" (49). Adopting the language of Canticles and defining its intimacy as spiritual, Christian writings on the Eucharist transform it to the bride and bridegroom's kiss, the ultimate form of sanctified passion.

Augustine's paradigm on the limits and excesses of love serves as the most notable parallel to Southwell's presentation of love. Augustine "is, in fact, one of the richest Christian sources for [the] tendency [to] apply the language of human love to spiritual matters" (Perella 47). In his *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine condemns the dangers of "unbridled lust" and encourages Christians not to become obsessed with lesser loves: "if we choose to enjoy things that are to be used, our advance is impeded and sometimes even diverted, and we are held back or even put off, from attaining things which are to be enjoyed, because we are hamstrung by our love of lower things" (149, 15). Nevertheless, Augustine advances beyond wrongly guided passion. In fact, as Kuchar notes, Augustine licenses excess: "[i]n *On Christian Doctrine* Augustine initiates a break from classical virtues of moderation when he declares that 'there can never be too much love for God, nor too little of the impulses which impede it'" ("Gender"

149).[48] Augustine rejects the classical tradition of the mean because of the appropriateness of the object. Just as he condemns excessive lust and lower affections for their goals, Augustine justifies rightly ordered passion. As Anne Sweeney comments, Mary Magdalene had always loved much; she becomes exemplary in that her love changes from carnal to saintly, eros to agape (149).

The exhortation of excessive love for God takes effect in both Petrarch and Southwell. As noted earlier, Petrarch chose Augustine as a spiritual guide in his *Secretum* (Roche 30). Roche contends, "St. Augustine had taught Petrarch that all love is one, single, and from God; its value is determined by the object toward which it is directed" (6). In the hierarchy of love, Laura's subordination to God forces Petrarch to recognize that though the loves are on the same continuum, both his *amor* and *libido* for Laura are sin (Roche 3). Beyond Southwell's recognition of passion in his Epistle Dedicatorie, Southwell repeatedly suggests Mary's effusive devotion. Similar to Augustine and Petrarch, Southwell's Mary Magdalene claims, "They would say that I love him too well. But that were soone disproved, sith where the worthiness is infinite, no love can be inough." (42). Her understanding of her intimacy with Christ leads her to claim possession of her Lord, developing the theme "Hee was mine" (32v). She reasons that whoever took the body without her consent wrongs her since Christ was hers (31). Later, when Mary expresses her willingness to steal back Christ's body, the narrator magnifies Mary's love: "thou shewest the force of thy rare affection, and deserveth the Laurell of a perfect lover." (38v). Near the conclusion, when this perfect lover recognizes Christ, she attempts to kiss him: "falling at his sacred feete, shee offered to bath them with teares of joye, and to sanctifie her lippes with kissing his once grievous, but now most glorious wounds" (60). In the concluding pages, Southwell advises his readers to "follow her affection that like effectes may follow thine" and "with love of

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[48] Kuchar quotes D. W. Robertson Jr.'s translation (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merill, 1958).

Christ to over-rule the love of all things" (67v, 67). In all these instances of Mary's effusive

passion, Southwell credits her desire as a boon rather than a flaw.

Part of Southwell's need to address excessive passion derives from Mary Magdalene's

gender. Elizabethan society widely viewed women as the weaker sex and therefore more prone

to dangerous extremes.[49] As Scodel points out, the matrimonial homily in *Certain Sermons or*

Homiles, "read in every church, claimed that because 'woman' was 'weak,' the husband must be

the 'leader' in 'increasing concord' through 'moderation'" (Scodel 145). Male matrimonial

hegemony results partly from anxiety over female desire, as well as female devotional power

(Kuchar, "Gender" 136). Because of the absence of "outwardly conforming husbands and sons,"

Catholic Elizabethan wives and mothers, "gained considerable religious and familial leverage,

redefining the limits of both ecclesial and patriarchal control in conducting Catholic service,

supervising priestly behavior, and acting as spiritual stand-ins" (Matchinske 55).[50] Southwell,

knowledgeable about the plight of recusant women, spent much of his time in the service of

Mistress Arundell and saw the devotional potential of the marginalized recusant woman. His

choice of subject matter and dedication to a female recusant suggest his belief in and exhortation

of the place of recusant women in perpetuating the endangered Catholic faith in Early Modern

England.

Perhaps Lytton Sells overstates the case in claiming that "[n]o one had been more deeply

influenced by Italy than Southwell and no one, in his generation, did more to honour the Italian

influence" (332). Nevertheless, the continental themes of absence, melancholy, and passion as

expressed through the sacred erotic formed Southwell's ministerial prose work, *Marie*

Magdalens Funeral Teares. Petrarchan and Ovidian echoes interweave with early Christian

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[49] For discussion of women's excessive sexual desire in witchcraft trials, see Thomas 568-9.
[50] For further development of recusant women, see Bossy150-168 and Marotti's "Alienating Catholics" 15-24.

doctrine to develop Southwell's message of longing in absence, purposeful sorrow, and

excessive devotion to Christ. By incorporating these elements into his work, Southwell creates a

work popular with both Catholic and Protestant audiences, as well as effective in modeling

devout recusant behavior.

3. *FUNERAL TEARES* AS LITERARY MINISTRY

Though incorporating popular influences into *Mary Magdalens Funeral Teares* occupied

the poet's mind, Southwell's central purpose in his prose tract was to minister to the repressed

English Catholics. Published the year before his arrest, *Funeral Teares* arrived in the midst of the

persecution of recusants. Fearing the termination of their faith, Catholic denizens also faced

questions from the English government about their loyalty. Southwell even presented his case for

English Catholic loyalty to the crown in his *Humble Supplication* to the Queen, but he

consistently found a balance in his literary output. While some Jesuit works were printed on

secret presses, others (such as *Funeral Teares* and much of Southwell's poetry) came through

popular channels and to avoid censure would necessarily require avoidance of overtly Catholic

elements or political stance. Nevertheless, Southwell also needed to maintain the ministerial

benefits of his writing. English Jesuits already set a precedent for Southwell to follow: "in the 21

months between the entry of the Jesuits and the execution of Campion [in 1581] eleven Catholic

works were published and attracted much attention" (Morey 81).[51] More printed works, both

covert and mainstream, followed, with Southwell's works proving to have the most lasting

impact on English Renaissance literature. Though many scholars focus on Southwell's influence,

Pilarz notes that Southwell's intention remains ministerial despite any reforming effects it had on

contemporary literature ("To Help Souls" 42).[52] The use of *Funeral Teares* as ministry derives

from its adaptation to Catholic needs, employment of Eucharistic symbolism, presentation of a

model saint, and incorporation of Ignatian meditative literary traditions. Not only does Southwell

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[51] Continental Catholic presses also flourished; A. C. Southern notes that "Between the years 1559 and 1603 more than two hundred English works were written and published by the Catholics who were exiles for their religion" (3). For a collection of primary recusant documents, see Miola.

[52] Geoffrey Hill concurs in his chapter, "The Absolute Reasonableness of Robert Southwell" in *The Lords of Limit*.

adapt secular love lyrics to his sacred purpose; he also implements his religious training to create a document of ministry to English recusants.

I. Hope for recusants

Beyond its secular influences, Southwell's style and subject matter proceed from Jesuit practice and ideology. Cummings writes, Jesuits "actively encourage[d] acts of literature" and "[t]he study of the classics was regarded as an aid to the propagation of the faith" (335). The pragmatic focus on developing Catholic faith guides such recusant writers; Pierre Janelle, one of Southwell's first biographers, claims evidence in *Funeral Teares* of Southwell's Jesuit training "because he takes human nature into account with its mixed features, and attempts to raise, not the upper half of man only, but the whole of man, to superior regions" (115). Pragmatically, Jesuit literary theory imitated Renaissance classicism and attempted to raise its moral purpose (116). Janelle's further description of Jesuit style, however, strays from Southwell's work in *Funeral Teares* when he claims that the presence of meditative contemplation excludes passion (116). Indeed, the meditative process did take place in Southwell's writing, yet he also coupled this devotional reflection with overt passion. Southwell's ability to do so results in the effectiveness of the prose work as ministry and its wider popularity.[53]

Southwell, in writing *Funeral Teares*, avoids the explicit social and political interest of his other writings, such as *An Epistle of Comfort* or *Humble Supplication*; rather, Southwell opts for an allegorical representation. As many authors have noted, Southwell creates strong parallels between Mary Magdalene's situation and that of recusants, and he also masks his message in

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[53] For further discussion of Jesuit literary style, specifically Southwellian, see Janelle 116-141; Kuchar, *Divine Subjection* 71-76; Roberts and Roberts 66-76; and Cousins. Praz also tackles the thorny issue of Jesuit mental reservation as a literary influence: "the case of mental reservation (a form of honest dissimulation) is only a transference to the moral field of that *argutezz* (wit) which in the aesthetic field produced that typical seventeenth-century mental process, the *concetto* (conceit)" (205-6).

symbolism to circumvent censorship.[54] Kuchar succinctly summarizes Southwell's use of Mary

Magdalene's presence in *Funeral Teares* "as a movement from a fragmented state of existential

paralysis to spiritual union with Christ [which] rehearses and imaginatively resolves the sorts of

existential double binds that Southwell uses to figure the state of the English Catholic subject"

(*Divine* 39). The deadly choice, between loyalty to the crown and to their faith, forced recusants

to re-envision their concepts of submission. *Funeral Teares* offered Catholics a model for

cultivating interior submission to divine authority, rather than to a Protestant one (Kuchar,

Divine 38).[55]

Responding to such a complex and dangerous situation caused Elizabethan Catholic

writers, including Southwell, to revise their presentations of spiritual doctrine and practice in

order to best meet the needs of their audience. English Catholics recognized the inability of

official priests to meet all the needs of their flock. Therefore, modifications became necessary;

these occurred both overtly as well as symbolically. For instance, Lisa McClain discusses Peter

J. Holme's research in *Elizabethan Casuistry* and notes marked changes in practice:

> Holmes when examining the many Catholic casuistry manuals written to instruct
>
> seminary priests on how to handle the challenges faced by the laity in England, has
>
> discovered that English College encouraged practicality and flexibility among their
>
> missionary priests. Accommodations might be made. (*Lest,* 45)

These practical, explicit alterations of ministry practices considered the situational difficulties

faced by Elizabethan Catholics and their priests. Many Catholic ceremonies contained

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[54] Kuchar, for instance, notes, "[h]e begins such fashioning in the narrative by situating Magdalene's crisis in the same Catch-22 position that he used in order to represent the state of an openly Catholic subject in England. (Kuchar, *Divine* 58). Brownlow writes, "[a]llegorically speaking, Mary stands for the Christian soul separated by violence from the living Christian truth that is her only happiness. More specifically, she is an English Catholic woman" (43).

[55] Arnold Pritchard expounds on Southwell's answer to the bloody question: "On principle, then, Southwell holds that Catholics owe the queen obedience in all that does not threaten their salvation" (70). For further development of resistance and non-resistance to the state, see Holmes.

exceptions, a midwife baptizing a dying infant for instance; the insistence on a priest's presence waned. Additionally writings, "primarily pastoral literature, letters, journals, and even poetry," tested the limits of orthodoxy in order to make room for the present difficulties (McClain, *Lest* 46). Elizabethan Catholic writers knew the dire straits of their flock and knew to make accommodations for recusant's reassurance.

Adaptations for the Eucharist came in overt forms as well. The absence of Catholic priests in Elizabethan England meant there could be no Mass, no presence of Christ's body, no saving grace (McClain, "Mary" 81). Nevertheless, English authors proposed that English Catholics could take part in the benefits of the Eucharist without necessarily attending the Mass themselves (McClain, *Lest* 117). McClain points to several spiritual guides that suggest such participation, including John Radford's "A Directorie Teaching the way to the Truth in a Briefe and Plaine Discourse against the heresies of this time" (1605) (*Lest* 117). Radford, among others, suggests that God is not bound by sacraments (118).While Catholics identified tangible images of their salvation in sacraments, the conditions necessitated re-envisioning access to those sacraments.

The symbolic flexibility offered by Elizabethan Catholic literature develops partly through a change in focus of Magdalene texts. Mary's terror and anguish at not finding Christ's physical body at the tomb is "akin to English Catholic anxiety over losing Christ's upon the altar in the absence of the Mass" (McClain, "Mary" 82). During this time, a shift began to take place: from Mary Magdalene as the repentant prostitute to Mary Magdalene as the discoverer of Christ's empty tomb. Other similarly focused Catholic works included Southwell's "Mary Magdalens Complaint at Christes death" (1595), Richard Verstegen's "A Complaint of Saint Marie Magdalen at not Fynding Christ in his Sepulchre (In Odes in Imitation of the Seven

Penitential Psalms" (1601), Jesuit John Sweetnam's *S. Mary Magdalens Pilgrimage to Paradise* (1617), and Henry Constable's "To Saint Mary Magdalen" (not printed until the 19th century).[56] The refocus on Mary Magdalene's grief at the lost Christ became a parallel for Catholic writers. Their need called for the model of Mary Magdalene as weeping for faith and adapting to life without Christ rather than Mary Magdalene's contrition at Christ's feet.

The parallels of Mary Magdalene's life without Christ and Catholic loss of the Eucharist appear in Southwell's dialogue and imagery throughout *Funeral Teares*. Kuchar claims, "what is at stake in Magdalene's process of coming to know Christ within her heart rather than through physical proximity to him is the imaginative alleviation of . . . competing allegiances" (*Divine* 56). To participate in covert Catholic Mass meant potential physical imprisonment or death; to attend Protestant services meant potential spiritual death. Though practiced in the same buildings that were so recently Catholic houses of worship, Protestant services would fail to offer the benefits of the real access to Christ. Southwell employs food imagery in *Funeral Teares* to convey this situation; comparing the presence of the angels to the presence of Christ, the narrator claims, "For in them all though seest no more, but some scattered crummes, and hungry morsels of thy late plentifull banquets" (29). As Pilarz points out, even the angels are a poor substitute for the real presence of Christ or Real Presence in the Eucharist (*Mission* 174). Yet Southwell intends more than to simply compare heavenly hosts to the sacerdotal host; he suggests that Protestants' symbolic communion pales in comparison to the recent banquets where Catholics feasted on the transubstantiated Christ.[57]

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[56] For a fuller list of major English writings on Mary Magdalene, see Appendix A. For discussion of Eucharistic symbolism after Southwell, see Ross.

[57] Southwell makes a similar comparison again later in *Funeral Teares*: "That others see thy Sunne, doth not lighten thy darknesse, neither can others eating satisfy thy hunger" (43v). Attendance at a Protestant service with its claims of a symbolic, not Real Presence would fail to satisfy those who believe in Christ's presence in the host.

Southwell also personalizes the sustaining and salvific nature of Catholic participation in the Eucharist, thereby elevating the danger of Catholics' sacramental lacunae. When debating with the narrator about the removal of Christ's body, Mary claims possession of Christ for a Eucharistic purpose: "then dare I boldly say that Jesus is mine, sith on his bodie I feede" (32v). Feeding on the body of Christ sustains Mary Magdalene, and Southwell presents the dire situation of Catholics in an extended exhortation by the narrator for Christ's action after he appears to Mary:

> Behold shee hath attended thee these three daies, and she hath not what to eate, nor wherewith to foster her famished soule, unlese though by discovering thy selfe, doest minister unto her the bread of thy body, [and] feed her with the foode, that hath in it all taste of sweetnesse. . . . refresh her with that which her hunger requireth. For surely shee cannot long enjoy the life of her body, unlesse she may have notice of thee, that art the life of her soul. (55-56v)

The narrator's plea to Christ represents the Catholic desire for the reinstatement of the consecration of the Eucharist. Southwell's language unambiguously represents the absent Mass. Christ as the minister offers the bread of his body; Mary Magdalene as a congregant tastes the sweetness and becomes spiritually filled. In fact, Southwell's symbolic supplication heightens the desperation of Catholics by questioning how long she can maintain her faith without Christ's presence. Southwell expressed the same concern in a 1586 letter to Aquaviva: "Of a truth the one remaining solace of the Catholics amid all this trouble and turmoil is to refresh themselves with the Bread of Heaven; which if it be taken away, it cannot but that many will faint and grow feeble" (*Unpublished Documents* 314). Southwell's mission of service to recusants permitted

him to administer the sacraments and also compelled him to consider how the Eucharist might be participated in by the masses outside of the limited English mission's reach.

The hope for Catholics in this treacherous dilemma appears in Southwell's prose through the exemplar of the angels and Saint Mary Magdalene.[58] As McClain posits, "[t]he text becomes a proxy intercessor, a 'virtual' priest, attempting to educate, minister to, and provide a channel toward God's grace for English Catholics who had restricted physical access to a priest" (*Lest* 47). Southwell does not divert his readers from a reliance on Christ; rather, he pictures desire in gustatory language: "thy Lord is the foode of thy thoughts, the relief of thy wishes, the onely repast of all thy desires: so is thy love a continuall hunger, and his absence unto thee an extream famine" (35). Mary Magdalene and recusants correctly identify their needs and desires; Jesuit ministers must adapt their ministry. Pilarz contends that this emphasis on food "reflects Southwell's typical interest in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. One of the poet's most important ministries in England was to provide the sacrament to recusants and to remind them through poetry and prose of its significance" (*Mission* 174). Though Southwell covertly administered the sacrament, the threat of persecution hampered his work, causing him to urge the influx of additional ministers and participation in rites whenever possible.

Instead of altering the desire and fulfillment of Catholics, Southwell re-envisions their participation in the sacred host. In *Funeral Teares*' first instance of food imagery, the angels reportedly "know not where [Christ] is, and therefore are come to the place where he last was, making the tombe their heaven, and the remembrance of his presence the food of their felicity" (16v). The double-entendre refers to both the physical and theological presence of Christ

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[58] The fact of Mary's sainthood also contributes to her access to the divine. McClain elsewhere explains saints' role in the divine hierarchy: "There were two main groups of mediators to whom the faithful might turn: Mary and the cadre of saints and Catholics priests . . . . Saints were divine intercessors in heaven whom believers called upon by prayer and ritual addressed to the saint. Having been specially recognized by God, the Church and laity believed saints possessed special efficacy in presenting petitions to God" (McClain *Lest* 32).

acknowledging the absence of the Real Presence of Christ in Protestant communion but assisting

Catholics in imagined participation in the true feast. Also addressing where to meet Christ, the

narrator explains, "even the places that [Christ] had once honored with the accesse of his person,

were to her so many sweete pilgrimages, which in his absence shee used, as chapels and altars, to

offer up her prayers" (27v-27). Southwell addresses the location for commemorating such

remembrance, since holding Mass, especially publicly, was outlawed. While the illegal seminary

priests attempted to create makeshift chapels in the homes of wealthy Catholics and hidden from

Protestant authorities, vestments and other accoutrements necessary for proper service were also

severely lacking. Therefore Southwell offers an imagined access to holy sites. The imagined

interiority of worship shifts recusants' reliance on sites of worship to personal devotion in

harmony with the meditations of Ignatius.

Southwell's work also ministers to recusants by offering Mary Magdalene as an

exemplar. Throughout her identification as a saint, Mary Magdalene has been venerated and used

didactically. Referring to the Medieval play in the Digby collection of the Bodleian Library,

James McDermott writes, "The Digby Magdalene represents the most complete attempt in

medieval literature to dramatize a living human being"; she becomes "a kind of Everyman" (32).

Furthermore, as Katherine Jansen argues, "Mary Magdalene became the primary symbol of hope

in the late medieval period. Following Gregory the Great, popes and preachers alike represented

her as such" (232). Southwell's contemporaries also utilized this saintly symbol of hope; Jesuit

Robert Bellarmine's *Disputations de Controversis Christianae Fidei* highlights Mary Magdalene

and Peter, and his hymn on Mary Magdalene became part of the Roman Breviary (McDermott

87). Nicholas Breton's *Marie Magdalene's Love* and Henry Smith's *Maries Choise* "[use] the

saint's story to urge Christians of his own time to be faithful heeders of sermons" (McDermott

122). Thus Mary Magdalene's role as a model perpetually allowed her use for writers and priests; her presence at Christ's tomb permitted her use as a recusant symbol for hope.

The efficacy in Mary Magdalene's offering solace and hope derives from understanding the omnipotence of God and maintaining focus on Christ. Processing the loss of Christ's body and symbolically the Eucharist in Magdalene texts follows the steps observed by McClain:

> 1. Immediate grief over the loss of Christ's body . . . .
>
> 2. Self-blame as they wonder if they somehow might have prevented the loss.
>
> 3. Fear and frustration at the perceived consequences of the loss . . . .
>
> 4. Consideration of the alternatives . . . .
>
> 5. Confidence in the omnipotence of God to fulfill his vows of aid, comfort and salvation, no matter what the obstacle, even in the face of death, or God forbid, Protestants. ("Mary" 84)

Southwell's text roughly follows McClain's description, though Southwell peppers his prose with reminders of Christ's centrality, stage five, throughout *Funeral Teares*. Stage one, Mary's lachrymose grief, effuses the text, and the narrator and Mary consistently discusses her emotional fears as enumerated in McClain's second through fourth stages. In the midst of one of her lamentations, Mary Magdalene grieves for leaving Christ's body at all, wishing she had rather "remained with the trueth than forsaken it" (19). Southwell's language uses both meanings of the truth, Christ and the Catholic faith. The fourth stage includes the narrator's questioning of Christ and wondering how he can permit such conditions to exist for Mary and, symbolically, for the recusant followers.

The final consolation, the fifth step in McClain's outline, proves evident in the final pages of *Funeral Teares*. Southwell's concluding pages contain a direct lesson for the audience

through the saint known for her fidelity, contrition, and sorrow: "O christian soule take Mary for thy mirrour, follow her affection that like effects may follow thine" (67v). Southwell's message continues by urging repentance as did the traditional Magdalene: "that sinners may finde Christ" (67v). He then shifts his metaphor to the empty tomb by comparing an empty heart to the empty "Tombe of Christ" (67). Likewise, Southwell exhorts, "[rolling] away the stone of thy former hardnes" (67). By couching repentance in the language of the burial of Christ and his missing body, Southwell again directs his readers to the Eucharist. Nevertheless, Southwell does not leave his readers without access to the Eucharist without hope; he immediately prompts his readers to continue seeking Christ, "[a]nd if at the first search he appeare not, thinke it not much to persever in tears, and to continue thy seeking" (68v). The quest for an absent lover and the perpetuated search for salvation combine in Southwell's exhortation to his readers.

Southwell can offer this hope due to his revision of the concept of presence in the closing lines of *Funeral Teares*. On the penultimate page, he envisions Christ's appearance to readers' "inward eies" (68). He concludes with a promise:

> if with Marie thou craveth no other solace of Jesus but Jesus himselfe, he will answere thy teares with his presence, and assure thee of his presence with his owne words, that having seene him thy selfe, thou maiest make him knowne to others: saying with Marie. I have seene out Lord and these things he sayd unto me. *Laus Deo.* (68-69v)

Again using the double meaning of "presence," Southwell assures readers of the internal presence of Christ, even without the availability of the Real Presence of the consecrated sacrament. This reorientation leads Southwell to his final consolation of recusants and exaltation

of God in his final words, concluding the work with a confidence in the sovereignty of God to meet Catholics regardless of their external circumstances.

In addition to ministering to the needs of Catholics, Southwell also needed to appeal to his Protestant readership. For instance, as Joseph Scallon notes, the absence of sacramental confession in Southwell's verse works allows him "to reach as wide an audience as possible, and therefore [he] had no desire to turn away non-Roman readers" (153). Cummings puts it more bluntly: Southwell "aimed to convert" (332). Consistently ministerial in his focus, Southwell's selection of Mary Magdalene and Peter, respectively, for his major prose and verse pieces, results from both a popular focus on the repentant saints and their palatability to Protestants: "Consciousness of sin made Mary Magdalene and Peter acceptable to Protestants, as well as Catholics, where [the Virgin] Mary would not have been" (Shell 81).[59] Southwell's treatment of the saints in *Funeral Teares* and "Saint Peter's Complaint" heavily contributed to the redirection of sacred verse and "helped to create a climate in which non-biblical religious poetry became increasingly acceptable" (Shell 57). For its part, *Funeral Teares* appealed to Protestant audiences enough to prompt Gervase Markham's versification of Southwell's text entitled, "Mary Magdalens Lamentations for the Losse of her Maister Jesus." Texts of the seventeenth century which bear *Funeral Teares*'s influence include Crashaw's "The Weeper" and Herbert's "Mary Magdalen," among others.

II. Meditative Presence

Funeral Teares also appeals to both Protestants and Catholics through its derivation from and presentation of elements of Jesuit meditative practices. Meditation exercises and devotional guides were continually in use for the benefit of believers, though without the presence of

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[59] Cummings does note alteration by editors, however: "[he] made them, and his editors changed them, within a structure, that was acceptable to Protestant taste, and even designed with their concerns in mind" (332). See Sullivan, 20-21, for further discussion of the dual audiences. There is no evidence *Funeral Teares* was altered.

priests, their importance increases sharply. As Sullivan refers to Louis of Granada's *Memorial of a Christian Life*, devotional guides acted as "silent preacher[s]"; they provided inspiration, formats, and schedules for prayer usually afforded through clergy (13).[60] Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus, composed his manuscript for Jesuit practices in the early 1520s to direct exercents through meditations. Matter explains, "Loyola's 'Spiritual Exercises' is not a philosophical treatise as much as a how-to book by Ignatius, the pragmatic soldier, who knew what motivates human actions" (33). Drawing on the influence of Augustine, both in practice and plain style, St. Ignatius creates a regimen of meditations divided into a four week set of practices during a month of special devotion (Cousins 31). The four weeks subdivide in focus to meditations on sin and hell, the life of Christ, the Passion Week, and the events of Christ's resurrection and assumption (Martz 16). The first exercise serves as a model for understanding the process. The quiescent practitioner opens with a preparatory prayer, followed by two preludes. The first prelude features a "composition of place," an attempt "in seeing with the imagination the physical location of the object contemplated" (Loyola 23). The third week of St. Ignatius's meditation explicitly focuses on such exercises: "After the preparatory prayer and three preludes, it will be profitable with the aid of the imagination to apply the five senses to the subject matter of the first and second contemplations" (44). He continues to encourage the "seeing," "hearing," "sense of touch," and even "to smell the infinite fragrance and taste the infinite sweetness of God" (45).

These poetic aspects of mentally envisioning scenes serve both practitioners and poets, as seen in Southwell. In fact, Louis Martz claims Southwell as the first notable example of the literary "meditative tradition" later exemplified by John Donne, George Herbert, and Richard

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[60] Fray Luis de Granada's *Book of Prayer and Meditation* (1554),[60] Lorenzo Scupoli's *Spiritual Combat* (1589), and St. François de Sales's *Introduction to the Devout Life* (1609) constituted the three most popular meditative texts of the early modern period (Martz 5-6).

Crashaw (3).[61] Though Martz focuses on verse, his observations apply to Southwell's prose as well. Southwell's practice of the *Spiritual Exercises*, which can be glimpsed at in his *Spiritual Exercises and Devotions*, provide fodder for his vividly composed scenes in his poetry, as well as in *Funeral Teares*. As Pilarz, himself a Jesuit, claims:

> The influence of the Ignatian *Exercises* on the *Funeral Teares* is undeniable . . . .
> As in *Exercises*, the purpose of such vividly drawn scenes it to engage the
> audience and enable them to enter as fully as possible into the incident being
> described. Most importantly, the poet catalogues and examines Mary's feelings,
> inviting the reader to experience similar emotions. (173)

The passion of love lyrics combine with Southwell's ministerial goals and through the conduit of meditative practice present engaging, vivid, emotional scenes. Southwell's other biographers concur with Pilarz. Janelle notes, "the poet seems less to imagine them, than actually to witness [Christ and Mary Magdalene] present." (108). Brownlow likewise writes, "[t]he book's two most striking literary qualities, its emotional power and its vividly realized scenes, reflect Southwell's professional training as a Jesuit in the arts of meditation and self-examination, often in quite tiny details" (Brownlow 38-9). For example, *Funeral Tears* begins from the scripture, "Mary (as the Evangelist saith) stoode without as the Tombe weeping" (2v). Southwell develops this verse into twelve pages of introspection before the angels appear. Southwell sets both a physical and emotional scene, ranging through the depth of Mary's grief and the nature of her love.

A second pattern Southwell imports from meditative practice is the dialogic nature of meditation in response to these developed emotions. The second prelude of *Spiritual Exercises* calls for penitents to ask God for an appropriate, pertinent emotion based on that day's scriptural

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[61] Louis Martz's *Poetry of Meditation* is indispensable reading for scholars interested in the meditative tradition, the revival of the metaphysical poets, and recent scholarship on Southwell.

focus (i.e. sorrow for Christ's suffering or joy for his resurrection) (Loyola 23). The meditation

closes with a colloquy or conversation with Christ: "by speaking exactly as one friend speaks to

another . . . now asking a favor, now expressing sorrow for a wrong deed, now sharing concerns

and seeking advice" (25). Though Southwell avoids creating extra-Biblical dialogues between

Mary and Christ, much of the prose derives from the narrator's interaction with Mary, Christ,

and the Angels, and Mary's responses. Speaking of an author utilizing this meditative structure

in literature, Anthony Raspa claims, "[n]ot only had he to imitate in verse the structure of another

one of his disciplines, he had also to adapt the fundamentals of his psychology to create an

aesthetic response in his reader equivalent to the ascetic experience of the last stage of

Exercises" (39). Fortunately for Southwell's prose and his readers, he already possessed an

intimate knowledge of the practices. Therefore he was able to create "powerful moments

[reflecting] the Ignatian method of focusing the emotions on the subject of meditation by means

of a colloquy, either with one of the persons of scripture or even with oneself" (Brownlow 39).

The narrator prompts Christ, the angels, and Mary with questions; many of his questions

challenge her resolve and can be applied to the recusant reader as well. For instance, the often

critical narrator asks, "But O Mary, thou deceivest thyself in thy owne wishes . . . wouldest thou

indeed have thy wishes, come to passe, and thy wordes fulfilled?" (20v). Such checks on Mary's

desires and grief become balanced by Mary's own virulent responses and impassioned, though

logical, defenses of her actions and emotions. Thus the Catholic reader constantly, while

identifying with the plight of Mary, reacts and responds to the narrator's questions in the vein of

Ignatian dialogue.

Thus the use of Ignatian meditative practices facilitates Southwell's larger ministerial

goal. By envisioning a model saint through the vivid "composition of place" and use of

colloquies, *Funeral Teares* offers a devotional text for recusants as well as a poetic work appealing to Protestants. Though Southwell's intention was always more sacerdotal than literary, the combination of traditions which he offered influenced English literature of both the Elizabethan and subsequent Jacobean eras.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Robert Southwell's ability to successfully produce a lasting corpus in a hostile England bears witness to his personal character as well as literary ability. As C. S. Lewis notes, "Southwell's work is too small and too little varied for greatness: but it is very choice, very winning, and highly original" (546). Southwell's purpose was never literary greatness, though his success likely pleased him in that it meant a wider ministry and literary influence. He explicitly exhorted a literary reformation, setting himself as an example in the preface to *Saint Peter's Complaint.* Bringing the influence of Jesuit meditative practice, vogue style and subject matter, purposes of a priest, and willingness to utilize popular genres, Southwell created a set of works that ministered to Catholics as well as appealed to a wider audience both lay and literary.

Whether Southwell was cognizant of the influence of his conflation of secular and sacred continental influences, his work impacted both his contemporaries and successors. Both his verse and prose were popular: "[b]etween 1595 and 1636, eighteen editions of his poems were published, including two Scottish and two continental editions" (Roberts and Roberts 65). *Mary Magdalens Funeral Teares* itself went through ten editions from 1591 to 1636 (Brownlow 43). Among authors of Southwell's own day, Gabriel Harvey explicitly noted the elegance of *Funeral Teares* (McDermott 141-2). In the same year, 1593, Harvey's enemy Thomas Nashe wrote *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem,* which, according to Harvey, arose from Nashe's reading of *Funeral Teares* (141-4). Another poet of the English Renaissance may have learned from Southwell as well; Thomas Lodge reformed his poetry writing on the tears of the Virgin Mary and frequently referred to Mary Magdalene (145-6). McDermott contends that if Southwell's earliest biographer, Diego de Yepes, is to be believed, even Queen Elizabeth herself likely read *Funeral Teares* (145). Over the next century, Richard Crashaw, George Herbert, Henry

Vaughan. Andrew Marvell, and John Donne all evidenced the influence of Southwell through meditative style, their use of the Magdalene, or their focus on tears (Jacobs 62-7). Martz's careful textual analysis of this influence forms one cornerstone of Southwell scholarship. The task for another generation of scholars remains in tracing Southwell's influence to subsequent generations of authors. As a proto-metaphysical poet, Southwell deserves attention for his style, structure, and treatment of religious topics.

Apparently some of that scholarship has been developing recently. After relative obscurity during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Robert Southwell appears to be gaining steam in literary criticism of the last century. Five monographs since 1996 more than double the previous seventy years' output.[62] Alison Shell's recent review of scholarship recognizes this trend by referring to Klause's *Shakespeare, the Earl, and the Jesuit* (2008), Kuchar's *Divine Subjection* (2005) and article on *Funeral Teares* (2007), Pilarz and Sweeney's (2004, 2006) biographies, and the 2007 edition of Southwell's *Collected Poems* ("Recent Work" 184).[63] Scholars are beginning to take Lewis's commendation seriously: "[w]e never read [Southwell] without wondering why we do not read him more" (546).

Shell is right to identify that more is left to be done in Southwellian scholarship. Many of Southwell's lesser known poems have escaped scholarly writing completely. Despite the ongoing, albeit limited, popularity of "The Burning Babe" (of which Ben Johnson quipped that he would destroyed many of his own writings to have written it) and *Saint Peter's Complaint* and the recent popularity of "A Vale of Tears," Southwell's verse receives little critical attention (Shell, "Recent Work" 185). Given Southwell's Elizabethan and Jacobean readership, the

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[62] Authored by Janelle (1935), Devlin (1956), Brownlow (1996), Sweeney (2004), Kuchar (2005), Pilarz (2006), and Klause (2008).

[63] In a rare entry into mainstream culture, Southwell's *Burning Babe* appears on Sting's 2009 album, *If on a Winter's Night....*

pursuance of research on Southwell's verse would likely reveal not only further representation of the Catholic recusancy, meditative practice, and influences of the Italian style, but also inspiration for contemporary and subsequent verse.

Specifically for discussion of *Funeral Teares*, comparison to the theater, the most popular medium of Southwell's time, merits development. Though several authors mention the dramatic nature of the prose piece, none have explored it in depth. While Mary Magdalene played a frequent role in the medieval theater, such as in the Digby *Magdalene*, her transition to print bears note.[64] Lengthier treatments of the saint refer to this transition but need a sharper focus on textual comparison. The second major consideration for future scholarship on *Funeral Teares* is employing theory to his texts. Apart from Kuchar, and to a limited extent Shuger, no critic has ventured a theoretical reading of *Funeral Teares*. Southwell's exclusion as a Jesuit suggests a post-colonial approach; his use of Mary Magdalene suggest a feminist one. As Shell notes, it seems that the "secular academy" feels unsure of how to deal with this martyred saint (184). No matter the academy's reactions to Southwell, his presence as a Jesuit attempting to reconcile the disparate worlds of Catholic-Protestant religion and sacred-secular literature commends him to further interpretation and wider reading. Southwell's life and work provide a lasting example of how minor authors represent and shape our understanding of the English Renaissance.

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[64] The possible exception is Klause, though he focuses on textual similarities of Southwell and Shakespeare, not on dramatic elements. Through textual and biographical support, Klause argues for Shakespeare's "extended memory of Southwell's texts and his rereading of them" (256). For discussion of Shakespeare and Jesuits, see Wilson; for a more general approach to Shakespeare's religious background, see Milward.

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Appendix A: Relevant Medieval and Renaissance Mary Magdalene Works,

Arranged Chronologically

Jacobus de Voragine. *Legenda Sanctorum*. Late 1200-1300s. Prose biography.

Osbern Bokenham. *Lyf of Marye Maudelyn*. 1445. Prose biography.

Anonymous [pseudo-Origen]. "Origenis de Maria Magdalena" 1400s. Sermon.

Anonymous. [The Digby] *Mary Magdalene*. 1515-1525. Drama.

Anonymous. "Complaynt of the Lover of Cryst Saynt Mary Madgaleyn." 1520?. Poem.

Erasmo da Valvasone. *La Lagrime della Maddalena*. 1586. Poem.

Anonymous [pseudo-Chaucer]. *The Lamentatyon of Mary Magdaleyne*. 1532. Poem.

Lewis Wager. "A new Enterlude...of the life and repentaunce of Marie Magdalene." 1566. Poem.

      STC 24932. [65]

Henry Smith. "Maries Choice." Before 1591. Sermon.

Robert Southwell. *Marie Magdalens Funeral Teares*. 1591. Prose. STC 22950.

Robert Southwell. "Mary Magdalens Blush" and "Mary Magdalens comlaint at Christes death."

      in *Mœoniæ*.1595. Poems. STC 22995.5

Nicholas Breton. "Marie Madgalene's Love." 1595. Poem. STC 3665.

Nicholas Breton. *Auspicante Iehoue. Maries Exercise*. 1597. Poem. STC 3632.

Gervase Markham. "Mary Magdalens Lamentations for the Losse of her Maister Jesus." 1601.

      Poem. STC 17569.

Henry Constable "To Saint Mary Magdalen." c. 1600. Poem.

Richard Verstegen. "A Complaint of Saint Marie Magdalen at not Fynding Christ in his

      Sepulchre" (In *Odes in Imitation of the Seven Penitential Psalms*). 1601. Poem. STC

      21359.

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[65] Short Title Catalogue (STC) numbers refer to the second edition.

Nicholas Breton. "The Blessed Weeper." 1601. Poem. STC 3648.

Nicholas Breton. "Passion of a discontented Minde."1602. Poem. STC 3679.5.

William Evans. "Teares Efficacy, and sinnes pardon. Or Mary Madgalens Lachrymae." 1602.
    Poem. STC 10597.5.

I. C. "Saint Mary Magdalens Conversion." 1603. Poem. STC 4282.

Anonymous. "Mary Madgalens Lamentations for the Loss of her Master Jesus." 1604.

Cornelius à Lapide. Collected in *The Great Commentary*. Individual commentaries printed
    beginning in 1616; complete compilation printed in1681. Biblical commentary.

John Sweetnam. "Saint Mary Magdalens Pilgrimage to Paradise." 1617. Poem. STC 23532.

Lancelot Andrewes. "Sermon preached at White-hall, on Easter day the 16, of April, 1620."
    1620. Sermon.

George Herbert. "Mary Magdalen" (in *The Temple*). 1633. Poem. STC 13183.

William Hodson. The Holy Sinner. 1639. Prose Meditation. STC 13555.

Joseph Beaumont. "S. Mary Magdalen's Ointment." 1643. Poem.

Edward Sherburne. "The Magdalen And she washed his Feet with her Teares and wiped them
    with the Hairs of her Head."1651. Poem.

Richard Crashaw. "The Weeper" and "The Teare" (in *Carmen Deo Nostro*). 1652. Poems.

Vaughan, Henry. "St Mary Magdalen" (in *Silex Scintillans II*). 1655. Poem.