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Outrageous Women:

**A Comparison of Five Passages Within the
Canonical Passion and Empty Tomb Narratives Emphasizing
the
Role of Women**

by

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Declaration

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. I declare that it is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in this dissertation from the work, or works of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.


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Abstract

This dissertation seeks to further develop the existing appreciation of the role of women around Jesus, by analysing selected texts within the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives. One of the issues that will be explored concerns the historicity and significance of the canonical empty tomb tradition, in which women are portrayed as the primary witnesses to the empty tomb and the resurrection.

By tracing the history and the development of five selected texts within the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives, this dissertation will explore the role and function of women around Jesus. In addition, I will endeavour to motivate the inclusion and portrayal of women in these canonical texts based on a comparison of the treatment of these women by the canonical gospel writers.

In order to re-evaluate the significance of the illustrated behaviour of women in the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives, five texts will be examined, beginning with the tradition of the woman anointing Jesus. The actions described in these texts will be situated within the socio-cultural context of first-century Palestine and compared to the funerary customs prevalent in Ancient Judaism. Furthermore the historicity and transmission history of these texts will be examined by applying both redaction criticism and tradition history to the texts.

This dissertation will demonstrate that the tradition of the woman anointing Jesus and the tradition at the empty tomb depict behaviour, which is contrary to the culturally

expected conduct of women regarding funerary customs within Ancient Judaism. However, the texts containing women's activities before, during and immediately after the passion narratives illustrate conduct, that corresponds to the customary mourning practices. Redactional analyses of the texts further indicate the awkwardness of portraying women as credible witnesses within the androcentric character of the patriarchal culture in first-century Palestine. This dissertation argues that, in terms of the criterion of cultural dissimilarity, the anointing tradition and the empty tomb tradition are most likely based on early forms of the traditions emerging during the oral period. This suggests strongly that women were the first witnesses to the empty tomb.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1. Introduction

In the canonical gospels, men take on the more prominent roles, yet women followers of Jesus are depicted as both the witnesses at his crucifixion and the first witnesses to his resurrection. This raises a number of questions. Does the conduct of these women, as described in the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives, reflect customary behaviour with regard to first century Palestinian funerary rites? How has the transmission of the traditions behind the gospel texts been influenced by concerns about social conventions, and how have these concerns affected the portrayal of the women in Jesus' entourage? Do the appearances of these women at crucial points in the gospel narratives indicate that women played a greater role in the Jesus movement and the early Christian church which subsequently was diminished, or even suppressed in the course of transmission?

This dissertation attempts to shed some light on these questions. Textual analyses of five selected canonical passages added to a comparison between the described behaviour of women in the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives and cultural conventions in first century Palestine will facilitate a more comprehensive reconstruction of Jesus' death and resurrection. Furthermore, we will be able to assess some of the tendencies in the transmission of the traditions preserved in the gospels. Our investigations and conclusions will demonstrate both textual conformity with and

also textual departure from the culturally expected mourning rituals practised by the women in first century Palestine.

In first-century Palestine, which was essentially agrarian and patriarchal (cf. Crossan 1991; Moltmann-Wendel 1986: 81-84; Lenski 1966), literacy was restricted to a small minority; mainly males of the scribal cadres of the retainer class (cf. Millard 2000; Harris 1989; Saldarini 1994: 44-55). Nearly all women were preliterate, since we have very little evidence to suggest that women were taught to read and to write during the period when the gospels were written (cf. Wire 1991: 119-121). Consequently, the gospels were almost certainly written by men, to be read by other men (Schüssler Fiorenza 1983). The androcentric nature of the traditions and the patriarchal nature of society at the time of writing necessitates an examination of the stories, by which the texts in which women play significant roles in the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives can be re-evaluated, especially since their rather active roles in the gospels appear to be contrary to the customs at the time. In general, the role of women in first-century Palestine was restricted to the private sphere in society. Women were thus responsible for the household chores, such as providing meals (cf. Corley 1993: 78-79; Malina 1993: 76-78; Heine 1987: 81). However, the challenges brought forth by the women's active roles as portrayed in the gospels necessitate an assessment of the historical role played by women in the events behind the texts. In this dissertation I hope to demonstrate that women played active as well as key roles in events behind the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives, and that these roles have been diminished, and even in parts suppressed by the male communicators of the tradition.

2. Outline of dissertation

The main body of this dissertation consists of six chapters, this introductory chapter representing the first chapter. In chapter two the exegetical tools, redaction criticism and tradition history, will be introduced. These tools will be applied to five selected passages within the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives in order to analyse the roles played by the women in the traditions. Furthermore the application of tradition history will enable us to trace the transmission of the texts. In chapter three, the canonical tradition of the woman anointing Jesus is analysed. Chapter four examines the redactional function discovered in a three-fold introductory mention of the women, for example as standing near the cross. In chapter five, the tradition of women acting as primary witnesses to the empty tomb and the resurrection is explored.

In conclusion, I hope to demonstrate that women played active as well as key roles in events behind the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives, and that these roles have been diminished, and partly suppressed by the male communicators of the tradition.

Chapter Two

Exegetical Tools and the Gospels

1. Introduction

Paul's encouragement to the Thessalonians to "hold fast to the traditions that they had been taught" (2 Thess. 2:15; cf. 1 Cor. 15:1-8) illustrates the importance of both the knowledge and the appreciation of traditions. For the purpose of this dissertation, I will focus on the traditions encapsulated in the passion and empty tomb narratives in the gospels and in particular those traditions, which involve women. The selected passages will be analysed in the following chapters. However, in this chapter, the exegetical tools used to analyse the texts and the nature of the texts as canonical gospel texts are introduced.

I will be looking at the traditions concerning women within the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives by applying firstly redaction criticism and secondly tradition history. A metaphor will enable us to appreciate the order and function of these tools. If we compare the canonical text to an onion, the first layer to peel off is the point at which traditions are fixed into the context of the written gospels. This layer can be analysed with the aid of redaction criticism, which will help us understand how the various gospel writers selected, developed and interpreted the traditions they employed. This means that the final stages of the composition of each canonical gospel, during which the gospel writers edited their work, will be explored. Since

redaction criticism is essentially a tradition historical tool for written traditions, this also reflects the final stage of tradition history. Continuing with the metaphor of an onion, the next layer of the onion symbolises the history of the transmission of the traditions through the oral period and the pre-gospel material. The exegetical tool used at this stage is tradition history.

2. The canonical gospels

Before discussing redaction criticism and the tradition historical method in greater detail, I will briefly look at the nature of the canonical gospels and their relation to one another since they form the literary starting points of our investigations. The gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke have a large amount of content in common and often share the same narrative sequence, hence the name synoptic gospels. Yet there are also instances where two of the gospels share common material over against the third gospel and instances when one gospel has unique material. The examination of these issues is referred to as the synoptic problem, which in a nutshell is the problem of the relationships between the first three gospels (Powell 1998: 16; Sanders & Davies 1989: 51-66). It has also been accepted widely that John was written independently of the synoptic gospels (Stein 1992: 487, 488, 501), because it differs so radically in content and narrative structure.

Most scholars accept the priority of Mark (Dunn 2003: 146; Meyer 1979: 38; Kee 1977: 14-30; pace Farmer 1964: 144, 202), setting the time of writing at around 70 CE or earlier, with Matthew and Luke generally dated between 80-90 CE, and John at

about 95 CE (Pregeant 1995: 6). Even though there is a solid case for the priority of Mark, Mark 16:9-20 is almost certainly from a later period as we will see when these verses are examined separately in a later chapter, as the text represents a later addition, possibly later than John and from a different source than the rest of the gospel of Mark (Swain 1993: 11, 119).

The two-source hypothesis, associated with names such as Karl Lachmann (1793-1851) and Heinrich Julius Holtzmann (1832-1910), was developed in the nineteenth century to explain the literary relationship between Mark and Matthew, Mark and Luke, as well as between Matthew and Luke. The two-source hypothesis holds that Matthew and Luke had independent access to Mark in writing their gospels and that they shared a further common source called *Quelle* in German, or *Q* for short, which is not otherwise extant (Powell 1998: 16; Kee 1993: 87). The *Q* source, however, is not directly relevant to this dissertation since it consists of a collection of sayings with no passion and empty tomb narrative (Stein 1992).

The four-source theory, which is held widely today, represents a logical extension of the two-source hypothesis. According to this theory, Matthew and Luke are each based on three prior written sources, two of which they share in common, namely Mark and *Q* (Pregeant 1995: 101-102; Bruce 1977: 53). In addition each gospel has an unique source. The unique Matthean material, not found in Mark, *Q*, or Luke is referred to as the *M* source and the unique Lukan material is referred to as *L* source. In agreement with the general consensus, for the purpose of this dissertation I assume the four-source theory and the priority of Mark.

The identification of the literary genre of the gospels is a fairly complicated matter. There is an ongoing debate concerning the nature of the genre; on the one hand the gospels are compared to ancient Graeco-Roman biographies. Graeco-Roman biographies commonly do not have a title that suggest that they are biographies, but they usually have a formal introduction or a beginning with the subject's name, as can be seen in biographies by Aristoxenus and other ancient writers (Bauckham 1998a: 29; Burridge 1998: 145). On the other hand, a number of scholars view the gospels as generically unique (Powell 1998: 7; Telford 1997: 95).

Since the gospels recount various traditions concerning Jesus, we can observe that the gospel genre has a narrative character. In terms of the sources of these traditions, it can be assumed that the gospels have evolved from various traditions concerning Jesus' sayings and activities in oral form (cf. Crossan 1998: 49-58, 85). The evolution of the traditions through the oral and also later scribal period therefore plays a key role in the formation of the narrative character of the gospels. Furthermore, the gospels not only recount various traditions concerning Jesus but also accentuate particular theological angles due to the skill of the gospel writers as creative authors. This means that the traditions were compiled and arranged in such a way that the reader can appreciate certain theological key issues within the gospel narratives (Swain 1993: 6-7). Nonetheless, the canonical gospels, as opposed to for example the extra-canonical Gospel of Thomas, can be more precisely described as documents recounting the traditions of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus (Collins 1992: 7). In this sense the gospels are to some extent similar to historical documents in that they narrate the history of Jesus (cf. Telford 1997: 34). But as the literature of a movement (Grant 1957: 26), the gospels retain their historical character while also incorporating

theologies of the gospel writers as editors. This is illustrated by Telford's (1997: 45) observation of a tension between the historical and the kerygmatic description of Jesus in Mark, which highlights the gospel writer's understanding of the historical Jesus as the kerygmatic Christ. Apart from their historical and theological character, the gospels contain a good deal of teaching material, which is found in the form of sayings as well as parables. As I am primarily concerned with the passion and empty tomb narratives in this dissertation, other gospel material such as the sayings of Jesus will not be discussed in any detail.

Returning to the transmission of the traditions found in the canonical gospels, the texts were clearly formed in a predominantly male context. Storytellers with acknowledged roles as expositors of the traditions of their communities were usually found in the early Christian communities as well as in other groups in ancient society. These storytellers were mostly illiterate, and received and transmitted the traditions orally (Crossan 1998; Grant 1957: 28-29). In settings where scribal skills were available and there was a perceived need for documentary records, the traditions were committed to writing. Given the patriarchal nature of first century Jewish society, literate individuals were almost without exception male. Information was therefore gathered by men and disseminated for other men, which added to the patriarchal nature of their society result in the androcentric writing style of the canonical gospels (Dewey 1997; Schmetterer 1989: 60-61; Schüssler Fiorenza 1983: 43).

Since the majority of people in the first century were illiterate, religious teachings were transmitted orally at that time (Grant 1957: 22-39). This meant that the early Christians received instruction and tradition in the form of sayings, parables or stories

about Jesus from storytellers, prophets and teachers, which they in turn passed on orally (cf. Theissen 1992: 4). This material circulated orally in the early church for purposes of preaching and teaching (Kee 1989: 245-269). As mentioned previously, at a later stage certain literate individuals took the information they had received in oral form and committed it to writing (cf. Crossan 1998; Dibelius 1971: 9-10). The written information was thereafter collated in the form of gospels, letters and pseudepigrapha (Grant 1957: 32; cf. Gerhardsson 1977).

As stated above, the earliest traditions had been passed on as units of oral tradition rather than as written documents (Dunn 2003: 192, 210; Theissen 1992: 2-4; Sanders & Davies 1989: 141). Bauckham (2002: 262) suggests that especially with regard to the resurrection narratives, the transmitted narratives were based on eyewitness accounts. But as Crossan (1998: 59-68) points out, oral tradition does not lead to a factual account, since memory is almost never completely reliable. Further examination of these texts will show whether or not Bauckham's suggestion is plausible.

3. Form criticism, tradition history and redaction criticism

During the twentieth century the study of the gospels progressed through a number of stages. Form criticism, which succeeded source criticism, emerged in the second and third decades of the twentieth century with the work of Karl Ludwig Schmidt, Martin Dibelius and Rudolf Bultmann. These scholars and subsequent ones identified units of tradition that were brought together to create the narrative structure of the canonical

gospels. Kee (1993: 86) observes that these individual traditions were transmitted as self-contained units of material of varying size and complexity. The units of tradition or pericope as they are called, were transmitted as paradigms, tales, legends, myths, or exhortations (Dibelius 1971) and constitute the forms that form critics identify and discuss (Travis 1977: 155-157). Additionally, the units of tradition were transmitted during the oral stage according to the pericope's function in the life of the church, also described as the text's *Sitz im Leben* ("life situation") (Travis 1977: 154; cf. Bultmann 1963: 4). In comparison with a study of the transmission of traditions in which the structure of these traditions is a key issue, form criticism turns out to mostly be content driven (cf. McKnight 1989: 167). The early form critics assumed that the gospel writers were not authentic writers but simply brought together disparate traditions in a scissors and paste fashion. As Stanton (1989: 24) observes, the form critic's view of the gospels was "a collection of various shapes and sizes of originally independent pieces". Hence form criticism analyses and classifies the traditions that constitute the units from which the written gospels, or more accurately their written and possibly oral sources, were built (Kee 1993: 86; Rohde 1968: 5). Form criticism has proved significant because it enables us to move closer to a description of individual units of traditions that have been transmitted from orality through to written documentation (Telford 1997: 41; Travis 1977: 153).

At first, form criticism incorporated the history of the transmission of a particular form (cf. Bultmann 1963: 4), but gradually this aspect of analysis separated itself from form criticism becoming known as tradition history¹. The move to tradition history, beginning in the 1930s was in part a reaction to the growing recognition of

¹ The discussion of form criticism serves as an introduction and background to tradition history. whereas tradition history, as well as redaction criticism, will be used as analytical tools in the next three chapters of this dissertation.

the impact of orality on the gospel traditions (Rast 1972: 2). As Catchpole (1977: 165) notes, tradition history includes redaction criticism since the term tradition history points to an on-going process of development of a unit of tradition. Although the textual analyses in the subsequent chapters depend only on the application of tradition history and redaction criticism, it can be held that this dissertation engages in a type of tradition-criticism, which Crossan (1998: 97) views as the umbrella term dealing with transmissional analysis by using form criticism, source criticism and redaction criticism. According to Crossan (1998: 96), source criticism relates to that process, which seeks to determine if and what type of genetic relationships exist between texts. Even though these relationships shed light on the history of the transmission of the selected texts, this study is limited to a discussion of the history of the transmission of various traditions. Given that the term tradition history incorporates the idea of an ongoing process with regard to the transmission of traditions (cf. Catchpole 1977: 165), there is a need to define redaction criticism, which enables us to appreciate the personal input of the gospel writers as creative editors.

Redaction criticism emerged in the sixth and seventh decades of the twentieth century with the work of Philip Vielhauer, Willi Marxsen, Günther Bornkamm and Hans Conzelmann. While form critics viewed the gospel writers as scissors and paste editors, redaction critics acknowledged the gospel writers as creative theological editors. In agreement with the latter, Stanton (1989: 24) describes the gospel writers as real authors, who in his view reworked the transmitted tradition so that their particular theological and ideological convictions would be communicated in their writings (cf. Pregeant 1995: 28; Linnemann 1970). While Crossan (1998: 96) defines redaction criticism as that process, which seeks to determine the authorial

development of sources, it is also helpful to view redaction criticism as a means of examining the final stage of the composition (Smalley 1977: 181).

Bauckham (2002: 293) suggests that an example of Mark's activity as a real author and therefore as a theological editor can be seen in how Mark positioned the story of the woman anointing Jesus as well as the story of the women returning to the grave as a frame for the passion and empty tomb narratives. Usually traditions are inserted into a framework, but in the abovementioned case in Mark the opposite has occurred. Two traditions have been used to form a framework for the death and resurrection narratives. This points to the use of frameworks and various other redacting methods as a means of emphasizing the theological stance of the gospel writer directly or indirectly. In other words, these writers, as theological editors, arranged the traditions in such a way that the gospels foreground a particular aspect of Jesus' character or a particular theological or ideological concept (cf. Powell 1998: 20, 23; Guelich 1991: 207; Wisse 1989).

To summarize the relationships between redaction criticism, tradition history² and the sources of traditions, I will refer once again to the onion as a metaphor. The first layer of the onion symbolises the text in its final form. As discussed, the gospel writers' theological and ethical viewpoints strongly impact on and indeed shape the composition of the gospels, even though the gospel writers make use of numerous traditions that derived from the scribal and very often the oral stage. Redaction critical analysis permits the examination of the gospel texts as a blend of prior traditions and

² For the purpose of this dissertation, I will not apply the classical form criticism because its focus was too narrow whereas tradition history incorporates the transmission of the tradition in the pre-redactional phase, which is crucial to the examination of the role of the women around Jesus in the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives.

theological inputs from the final writer. The second layer of the onion represents the various sayings of Jesus as well as memories of Jesus as they were creatively handled in their oral transmission. This layer symbolizes the history of the transmission of the gospel traditions starting in the oral stage and moving through the scribal stage, though in practice these stages overlapped. Furthermore, this layer might conceivably be multifaceted, depending on the time of transferral to a written form as well as the type of sources used. The handling, or rather process of transmission of traditions is examined in the light of tradition history. The third layer of the onion, which is the final and innermost layer of the onion as a metaphorical device, corresponds to the collection of authentic memories and sayings concerning Jesus, some of which were transmitted orally during his ministry and some of which arose in the post-resurrection period (Fuller 1981: 24-25).

4. The analyses of the texts

Having discussed the exegetical tools that will be applied in the following chapters, a few comments will set the scene for the analysis of the selected passages within the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives. Regarding the transmission of the texts, I will, in agreement with modern scholars, for the purpose of this dissertation assume that the passion and empty tomb narratives were not transmitted as one coherent unit of tradition (Keller 1976; Crossan 1988; Mack 1988; pace Theissen 1992: 168, 290; Dodd 1965: 21; Guy 1954: 134). Therefore I will discuss the various traditions pertaining to women around Jesus within the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives individually, starting with Mark followed by the parallel texts to highlight

the commonalities and diversity of the written traditions. The selected passages are as follows: the woman anointing Jesus (Mark 14:3-9; Matt. 26:6-13; Luke 7:36-50; John 12:1-8), the women at the cross (Mark 15:40-41; Matt. 27:55-56; Luke 23:49; John 19:25-27), the women at the burial site, which is a synoptic tradition only (Mark 15:46; Matt. 27:61; Luke 23:4-54-56), the women's return to the burial site (Mark 16:1-8; Matt. 28:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-13), and finally the christophany to the women (Mark 16:9-11; Matt. 28:9-10; John 20:11-19). The last named tradition is not included in Luke's passion and empty tomb narratives.

Although this dissertation is concerned with the period of development from the first formation of the written and oral source of the tradition up to the point of stabilization as part of the canon as we know the tradition, the scope of this dissertation limits the examinations of sources to the material thought to exist in pre-gospel sources, such as Special Matthew, Special Luke and a comparable pre-Markan source. The individual analyses of the selected passages will comprise two sections each. Redaction criticism will be used to discover how the writers have made use of the traditions, which lead to their final state in the canon gospels. Thereafter, the application of tradition history will facilitate a closer look at the transmission of the traditions, in particular between the various canonical gospels.

The comparison between the portrayed behaviour by the women and the culturally expected behaviour, especially concerning a dishonourable death and burial, will enable us to use an additional tool. Meyer (1979: 86) writes, "'Criterion', as the term has been used in discussion of the topic, specifies what is universally requisite that a gospel tradition be acknowledged as historical. But, in fact, no factor proposed by the

critics as a 'criterion' is invariably requisite to the inference of historicity." This dissertation will, in particular, use the criterion of cultural dissimilarity as a method of historicity judgment (Meyer 1979: 84-87) concerning the various portrayals of the behaviour of the women, where the dissimilarity between the behaviour portrayed in the text and the culturally expected behaviour is "a *necessary* condition" (Catchpole 1977: 174). Based on the criterion of cultural similarity, it will be feasible to suggest whether or not these units of tradition are based on authentic traditions that derive from actual events associated with the historical Jesus. The criterion of multiple attestation, which depends on a tradition having been recorded in a number of independent sources, will also at times strengthen the suggestions made with the help of the criterion of cultural dissimilarity (Catchpole 1977: 176; cf. Crossan 1998: 144-146), as for example Crossan's (1991: 429, 443) classification of the anointing tradition as a case of Triple Independent Attestation included in Crossan's second chronological stratum (60-80 C.E.). To borrow Catchpole's (1977: 178) expressions concerning Jesus, the conclusions of this dissertation will demonstrate that the women around Jesus can at times be recognized as "historisch", yet also as dynamically "geschichtlich".

Chapter Three

The Woman Anointing Jesus

1. Introduction

In the Gospel of Mark, the earliest of the written canonical gospels, the passion narrative begins with the plot to kill Jesus followed by the story of the woman anointing Jesus in preparation for his death (Mark 14:1-9). But before exploring this narrative, I will first list the passages dealing with women in the passion and resurrection narratives that will form the object of my investigation in the next three chapters. My approach in this and the subsequent chapters will be to analyse the relevant passages in Mark's gospel, before examining the parallel passages in the other canonical gospels.

The canonical passion and empty tomb narratives contain five fairly distinct traditions involving the actions of women around Jesus. Even though some scholars have suggested that the passion and resurrection narrative starts in Mark 11 (Collins 1992: 100; Hooker 1991: 29), most scholars regard Mark 14 as the beginning of the passion narrative (Theissen 1992: 168; cf. Trocmé 1983: 72). Although Jesus' public ministry ends at this point, the wider nature of Jesus' ministry continues all the way to his crucifixion (cf. Broadhead 2001: 104-107). In agreement with the latter group of scholars, I accept that the passion and empty tomb narrative in Mark is initiated in Mark 14. Accordingly, the first tradition to be examined consists of the unidentified

woman who anoints Jesus during a meal (Mark 14:3-9). Matt. 26:6-13 and John 12:1-8 contain clear parallels to the Markan tradition. In Luke, however, the story of the sinful woman anointing Jesus' feet with her hair (7:36-50) is placed outside of the passion and empty tomb narrative. Nevertheless the similarities between the Lukan tradition and those found in the other three gospels are striking enough to warrant an exploration into Luke 7:36-50. The second tradition places the women at the scene of the crucifixion as witnesses to the crucifixion (Mark 15:40-41; Matt. 27: 55-56; Luke 23:49; John 19:25-27). The third tradition, which portrays the women at the burial of Jesus, is absent from John's material (Mark 15:47; Matt. 27:61; Luke 23:54-56). The fourth tradition gives an account of the women's return to Jesus' tomb (Mark 16:1-8; Matt. 28: 1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-13). The last tradition to be studied, although not found in Luke's gospel, relates the christophany to the women (Mark 16:9-11; Matt. 28:9-12; John 20:11-18). While the fourth and fifth traditions are somewhat interlinked in John's account, the two stories can be extracted separately from 20:1-18. Matthew's account of the christophany (28:9-10) is to some degree also linked to the previous passage in which the women return to the tomb (28:1-8), but in Matthew there is some clarity regarding the identification of the two passages, whereas in John the individual units of tradition are in part intertwined. The five passages are examined in three parts. As mentioned above, this chapter focuses on the anointing tradition. The next three passages are discussed in the next chapter, while the christophany is the subject of exploration in the fifth chapter. Each selected passage will in turn be analysed with the application of redaction criticism followed by tradition history.

2. The anointing traditions

a. Redaction critical analysis

The tradition of the woman anointing Jesus in Mark 14:3-9 is framed by two sections of the same narrative (Mark 14:1-2; 14:10-11). The first part portrays the chief priests and scribes as hatching a plot to arrest and kill Jesus, and the second part narrates how they recruited Judas, one of Jesus' disciples. Judas prepares to betray him into their hands (Donahue & Harrington 2002: 389). The style and content of this two-part frame and the position of the anointing narrative indicate that Mark has taken the anointing tradition and inserted it into a short narrative that has been split. Dodd describes this as Mark's method of "sandwiching" narratives (1965: 23; Best 1965: 90). This method shows how Mark edited the traditions, which he had collected (cf. Collins 1992: 104).

As an illustration of Mark's "sandwiching" technique (Horsley 2001: 72) a further fairly similar instance is found, in which Mark's passion narrative is framed by two traditions, which both feature the act of anointing for burial. The tradition in Mark 14:3-9 features a successful anointing of Jesus. Besides functioning as one part of a frame surrounding Mark's passion narrative, the anointing at Bethany also serves as an introduction to the passion narrative in Mark. The second part of the frame surrounding the passion narrative contains the tradition of the unsuccessful anointing of Jesus in Mark 16:1-8 (Broadhead 2001: 106). The women are portrayed as returning to Jesus' burial site with the intention to anoint his body (Mark 16:1), but the absence of a body in the tomb frustrates their plans. Thus the two anointing

traditions framing Mark's passion narrative differ significantly in the outcome, in that the first tradition describes a successful anointing, whereas the second tradition contains an unsuccessful anointing. This "sandwiching" technique seems to emphasize the common acknowledgement of Mark 16:1-8 as the original ending to Mark's gospel. However, the issue concerning the shorter ending versus the longer ending in Mark will be discussed in greater depth in the subsequent chapters.

From even a casual reading of Matthew's passion and empty tomb narratives, it is clear that he is dependent upon and largely follows his Markan source. For example, Matt. 26:1-5 and 26:14-16 provide a similar frame to that found in Mark 14:1-2 and 14: 10-11, in which both the structure and the content echo the parallel in Mark 14. As in Mark 14:1-2, Matt. 26:1-5 describes the chief priests as plotting to kill Jesus although Matthew changes several details, most notably by having Jesus introduce the reference to the impending Passover and by having him note his imminent betrayal as the Son of man. This announcement by Jesus shows Matthew's redactional efforts to highlight the fact that even with regard to his death Jesus is still ultimately in control (Carroll & Green 1995: 43). Matt. 26:3-5 is quite similar to Mark 14:1b-2 except that Matt. 26:3 names the high priest as Caiaphas. The content of Matt. 26:1-5 suggests a dependence on the tradition found in Mark 14:1-2, while the additions point to Matthew's style of creative editing. The allusion to the impending crucifixion of the Son of man in Matt. 26:2 possibly refers back to similar statements in Matt. 16:21; 17:22-23 and 20:18-19, even though on those three occasions Jesus' resurrection is included in the statements. The function of the three testimonies appears to consist of an attempt to authenticate the prediction concerning Jesus' death and resurrection. So Matthew may have elaborated on the tradition found in Mark 14:1-2 to draw the

reader's attention to Jesus' impending crucifixion. Matthew's referral to the impending crucifixion (26:2) may further function as an introduction to the passion and empty tomb narratives in Matthew's gospel. The inclusion of the upcoming Passover feast as well as the crucifixion in the same verse (Matt. 26:2) illustrates Matthew's understanding of Jesus' crucifixion and consequential saving death as a type of Passover, which according to Davies and Allison (1997: 437) is also found in the writing of John and Paul (1 Cor. 5:7). For example, John 19:36 probably links Jesus' crucifixion to the Paschal lamb, by implicitly referring to the passage in the Torah, which describes the first Passover (Ex. 12:43-46; Nu. 9:12) (Brown 1970b: 933). As mentioned previously, Matthew intended his gospel to reach a predominantly Jewish audience, to whom the use of Passover as a typological metaphor of the crucifixion within the concept of salvation would have made sense. Mark 14:1-2, however, does not mention Jesus in connection with the Passover. Furthermore, the narrative plot of Mark's gospel conceals the identity of Jesus as the Son of God until after the death of Jesus on the cross, at which time the centurion is described as claiming openly that Jesus was the Son of God (Mark 15:39) (Carroll & Green 1995: 29). This plot formation fits into Horsley's (2001) suggestion that the gospel of Mark ought to be read, or even heard, in its entirety, recognizing that it emanated from a particular context within an oral culture and was most probably performed orally at gatherings where Greek was spoken. Notwithstanding the value of appreciating the gospel as one narrative or even as a form of renewed covenant linked to the Passover (cf. Horsley 2001), the examination of the units of texts as separate traditions brings about an appreciation of the activities of the gospel writers as creative redactors as opposed to mere compilers of oral tradition. Luke 7:36-50 contains an anointing story, which precedes Luke's passion and empty tomb

narratives by fifteen chapters. Luke's passion narrative begins with 22:1-6, which describes the plot to kill Jesus being hatched just prior to the coming Passover festival. Clearly, the reference to Passover in Luke's gospel does not affect the time of the anointing. John 12:1 places the anointing tradition six days before the Passover, but in Mark 14:1, Matt. 26:1 and John 12:1, the scene is set for the passion and empty tomb narratives (cf. Barrett 1978: 408).

Moving on to the second part of the frame surrounding the anointing tradition in Matthew, as in the case of Mark 14:10-11, Matt. 26:14-16 exposes Judas as willing to betray Jesus to the chief priests for a monetary recompense. Matt. 26:15 uses direct speech, whereas Mark 14:10 narrates the intentions of Judas indirectly in the third person singular. Matt. 26:15 defines the sum of money mentioned in Mark 14:11, in which an unspecified amount of money is promised to Judas. In Matt. 26:15 Judas receives the specified thirty pieces of silver at the point of agreeing to betray Jesus. On the whole, Matthew's dependence on the tradition in Mark is obvious. Yet Matthew's editorial activity is evident in the use of direct speech, the specification of the amount of money as well as the use of the present tense in respect of the transfer of the money to Judas. Concerning the specification of the amount of money as thirty pieces of silver, Matthew may have drawn on Zech. 11:11-12 (Davies & Allison 1997: 450), although it is quite possible that Matthew was aware of the custom that the amount of thirty shekels represented the worth of a Hebrew slave (cf. Ex. 21:30). This would imply that the monetary worth of Jesus' life was equal to that of a slave, which was not a great deal (Davies & Allison 1997: 452).

Even though the parallels in Luke and John are strikingly different to what has been discussed regarding the anointing stories and their frames in both Mark and Matthew, a look at the anointing stories in Luke and John is crucial to form a picture of how the different canonical gospel writers dealt with the traditions available as final redactors. Contrary to Mark and Matthew, Luke's gospel incorporates an anointing story fifteen chapters prior to the beginning of the passion and empty tomb narrative in Luke 22. In Luke's anointing story (7:36-50) the anointer is portrayed as a sinner. This unidentified woman approaches Jesus at a dinner setting and anoints him, whereupon Jesus states that her sins have been forgiven. Fitzmyer's (1970: 683) heading for Luke 7:36-50 in his commentary is "The Pardon of the Sinful Woman", which illustrates that the anointing is linked to repentance, rather than burial (cf. Mark 14:3-9; Matt. 26:6-13; John 12:1-8).

Similarly to the disparity between the treatment of the anointing story in Luke 7:36-50 compared to that of the anointing stories in the other three canonical gospels (Mark 14:3-9; Matt. 26:6-13; John 12:1-8), Luke has dealt with the content of the frame in Mark 14:1-2, 10-11 (cf. Matt. 26:1-5, 14-16) differently. Although Luke's anointing story (7:36-50) has not been slotted into a frame, Pharisees feature in the verses immediately prior to the anointing story. Therefore Luke, as a final redactor, creates a sense of continuity between 7:30-35 and 7:36-50 by describing the setting of the anointing story as the home of a Pharisee (Luke 7:36). However, even though Luke's anointing story does not appear in a frame, Luke incorporates the content of the frame in Mark 14:1-2, 10-11 (Matt. 26:1-5, 14-16) at a later point. Luke 22:1-2 reflects a part of that which is found in both Mark 14:1-2 and Matt. 26:1-5. Essentially Mark 14:1a is recognizable in Luke 22:1, although Luke does not stipulate how many days

are to pass before the feast of Passover is to occur. Similarly, Luke 22:2 replicates Mark 14:1b in which the chief priests and scribes are described as seeking a method of killing Jesus, although Luke 22:2b states simply that the chief priests and scribes feared the people. Although this appears to be different from Mark 14:2b (cf. Matt. 26:5), the same meaning is conveyed, that is the concern of the chief priests and scribes regarding the people's reaction. Luke 22:3-6 narrates the betrayal by Judas. Again, the similarity between Luke 22:3-6 and Mark 14:10-11 is apparent; the description of the chief priests as having been glad (ἐχάρησαν) (Mark 14:11; Luke 22:5) illustrating the use of Mark's text as a source by Luke. Nonetheless, Luke's version includes a conspicuous divergence from the stories in the other synoptic gospels in that Luke 22:3 describes Satan as having entered Judas.

The inclusion of Judas at this point can be seen as a good example of Luke's activities as a redactor, since the text implies that Judas' betrayal is motivated by an external force that is described as evil personified. Mark 14:10 and Matt. 26:14 do not give any possible grounds other than financial gains for Judas' planned treachery. Matt. 27:3-10 tells the story of Judas repenting, returning the thirty shekels to the chief priests, affirming that Jesus was innocent and ultimately hanging himself, thereby presenting a merciful ending for Judas (Carroll & Green 1995: 59). This narrative is not incorporated in any of the other three gospels, but its inclusion in Matthew's gospel begs the question whether there was a change in Judas' intentions as relayed in an earlier tradition, or whether Matthew expressed a type of contrition by Judas to further underline the gospel of repentance and salvation. Even though space precludes further discussion, at this point it is worth mentioning that John describes Satan as having put Judas under his malevolent spell, even though in John this takes place at

the Last Supper (John 13:27; cf. 12:4-6). Probably both Luke 22:3 and John 13:27 consist of redactional observations made to portray a wider struggle between God and his arch enemy, Satan, which is emphasized in the disparity between good and evil, as well as between sin and living as a follower of Jesus. In support of the view that Luke 22:3 is a redactional interpolation, Fitzmyer (1985: 1374) states that Luke includes Satan at this point as an allusion to 4:13, where Satan is described as leaving for an unspecified time period, whereas his return in 22:3 is defined as “the cause of the sinister influence that dominates the passion narrative” (cf. Fitzmyer 1989: 158). Continuing this line of thought, Luke 22:3 may refer to Satan’s final, although futile attempt to assault Jesus (Carroll & Green 1995: 67, 76-77). Since space prohibits an exegesis of Luke 4:13, this position cannot be examined fully at this point. Nonetheless, the Lukan accent on sin and repentance, as seen in the anointing tradition in 7:36-50, points to the possibility of Luke’s redacting skills regarding the ultimate fate of Judas, who may have been used as a prototype of a disciple of Jesus. However, as the purpose of this dissertation is not a detailed exegesis of various texts, the observations regarding Judas and redemption will be restricted at this point.

In Mark and Matthew the narratives concerning the plotting of the chief priests in Mark 14:1-2 and Matt. 26:1-5 and the betrayal by Judas in Mark 14:10-11 and Matt. 26:14-16 are placed separately as a frame to surround the anointing stories in Mark 14:3-9 and Matt. 26:6-13. These stories concerning the plotting of the chief priests and that of Judas’ betrayal are located in one continuous narrative in Luke 22:1-6. As indicated earlier, the anointing story in John 12:1-8 is significantly different from the ones found in the synoptic gospels. John 12:1-8 is also not surrounded by a frame, unlike the anointing stories in Mark and Matthew. Although the anointing story in

John 12:1-6 is preceded by a narrative reflecting chief priests plotting to kill Jesus in John 11:45-57, the anointing story is not followed by Judas' betrayal of Jesus. Interestingly enough, John's anointing narrative is followed by a plot to kill Lazarus, while the narrative concerning Lazarus' revival from the grave (John 11:38-44) is located immediately prior to the plot to kill Jesus by the chief priests (John 11:45-57). Even the anointing story (John 12:1-8) itself refers to Lazarus because the meal is portrayed as having taken place in his home. John's ability as a redactor is evident in the interwoven references to Lazarus, thereby ensuring an unencumbered transition to and from the anointing story in John 12:1-8.

Although John's anointing tradition (12:1-8) is not framed in the same manner in which the anointing traditions are framed in Mark and Matthew, John 12:1-8 appears to be surrounded by narratives that consist of two intertwined traditions each. The narrative preceding John's anointing tradition (11:45-57) consists of the raising of Lazarus as well as the plotting of the chief priests (John 11:45-57), and the narrative succeeding the anointing tradition (John 12:9-11) combines a reference to Lazarus with a further mention of the chief priests. As noted earlier, John has not used the plot to kill Jesus or Judas' betrayal either in a split form as in Mark 14:1-2, 10-11 (Matt. 26:1-5, 14-16), or as a continuous narrative (cf. Luke 22:1-5). This observation suggests that John has not used the synoptic gospels as sources at this point. But, as the next point will show, this suggestion is not necessarily correct concerning the anointing narratives. Brown (1970a: 298, 448) observes that John 6:71 introduces Judas as the son of Simon Iscariot, which results in Judas being the brother of Lazarus, Mary and Martha as, if we assume that the house at which Jesus dines in John 12:1-8 belongs to Simon the leper, as stated in Mark 14:3. In that case, the

behaviour of Judas as depicted in John 6:71 and 13:2 would be acceptable, since it would reflect the behaviour of a son in his father's house (cf. Brown 1970a: 303). This would also suggest that John was aware of Mark's anointing story.

In contrast to John 11:45-57 and 12:9-11, the discussion of the frame material in Mark and the continuous narrative in Luke is vital, because they affect the transmission of the synoptic anointing traditions as well as the positioning of Luke's anointing tradition with regard to the passion and empty tomb narratives. Before moving on, one more point needs to be made regarding the frame material in the synoptic gospels. As discovered earlier, in comparison to the texts in Mark 14:1-2, 10-11 and Matt. 26:1-5, 14-16 consisting of two narratives each, Luke 22:1-6 contains these as one continuous narrative. This points to the question, whether Luke's version echoed the earlier tradition, or whether Luke had access to Mark's material and simply connected the two stories framing the anointing tradition in Mark 14:3-9.

Two issues require further examination. Firstly, does the continuous narrative in Luke 22:1-6 pre-date the split version in Mark 14:1-2, 10-11? And secondly, why has Luke positioned his anointing tradition at a much earlier point in his gospel than is the case in Mark, where the anointing tradition is connected to the passion and empty tomb narratives?

In answer to the first question, the four-source theory suggests that Luke would have been aware of Mark's frame as well as Mark's anointing tradition. Luke 22:1-6, which contains the frame material found in Mark 14:1-2 and 10-11, is situated at the beginning of Luke's passion narrative, similarly to Mark's positioning of his frame

and anointing material. This suggests that Luke depended on Mark's frame material to shape his continuous narrative. The second issue concerns the placing of Luke's anointing tradition (7:36-50) relative to the passion narrative. As we will see later on, Luke's anointing narrative is substantially different to Mark's anointing narrative. For example, in Luke's narrative, there is no mention of Jesus' burial, and Jesus' feet are anointed as opposed to Jesus' head in Mark 14:3-9. Notwithstanding Luke's ability as a creative and literary gospel writer, Luke 7:36-50 had probably been developed on the basis of a different source to Mark's anointing tradition. Fitzmyer (1970: 684) views Luke's anointing story as having been derived from Special Luke. If we accept this suggestion, then it is plausible to assume that Luke would have recognized Mark 14:3-9 as an alternative to his own anointing narrative (Luke 7:36-50) and therefore would have disregarded Mark's version, but included Mark's frame material to form the continuous narrative in Luke 22:1-6. (cf. Nolland 1993: 1023, 1029; Fitzmyer 1985: 1359-1375). As Fitzmyer (1985: 1365) observes, Luke was inspired by material in Mark, Special Luke as well as to a much smaller extent, material in Q. Concerning the original format of Mark 14:1-2 and 14:10-11 (Luke 22:1-6), Marshall (1978: 786) suggests that the two narratives found in Mark 14:1-2 and 14:10-11 originally took the shape of one continuous narrative, similarly to Luke 22:1-6. The likelihood that Mark had applied his "sandwiching technique" and thereby split the continuous narrative to construct a frame around his anointing tradition in Mark 14, makes Marshall's observation's acceptable. Matthew took over the material in Mark 14, as is evident from the similarity between Mark 14:1-11 and Matt. 26:1-16 (Davies & Allison 1997: 436; Evans 1990a: 498-499).

Having identified and discussed the frame surrounding Mark 14:3-9 (cf. Matt. 26:1-5, 14-16) as well as the narrative in Luke 22:1-6 in which the content reflects that of the frame, the content and theological slant of the anointing traditions can now be examined in greater detail. In Mark 14, the portrayed hostility towards Jesus, the murderous and devious plotting of the chief priests, and the treachery of Judas (Mark 14:1-2, 10-11; cf. Matt. 26:1-5, 14-16) is noticeably contrasted to the compassion and lavish actions of the woman who anoints Jesus in 14:3-9 (cf. Matt. 26:6-13) (Broadhead 2001: 105; cf. Suggit 2002: 70). This strong distinction between positive and negative, such as between compassion and hostility, is continued by the disparity between the manner in which Jesus is welcomed by the woman and the men (Mark 14:3; cf. Matt. 26:6), and the sheer rejection of Jesus by the chief priests (Broadhead 2001: 107). The difference between the social status of the chief priests (Mark 14:1-2) and the host of the meal who is described as a leper in Mark 14:3 further highlights Mark's redactional intentions in using stark contrasts to convey the importance of discipleship (cf. Carroll & Green 1995: 34-36). Another contrast can be located in Jesus' attitude of acceptance compared to the rejection of Jesus in Mark 14:1-2, 10-11 and Matt. 26:1-5, 14-16. As Moltmann-Wendel (1987: 95-98) suggests, Jesus' appears to be isolated from the members of his society, whose support would have literally been life saving. This isolation stands out against the acceptance of Jesus by those who represent the lower levels of society, which is illustrated by the actions of an unidentified woman and a leper (cf. Mark 14:3-9), who as members of the socially inferior levels of the society show their appreciation of Jesus. Although Mark's host is identified as a leper, the skin condition rendering a person unclean includes any number of skin problems, such as eczema. In the anointing tradition, the leper acts as host, and surprisingly, Jesus is described as having accepted the invitation to dine at

the house of a known leper (cf. Mark 14:3). This points to the likelihood that the host's skin condition had been cleared up or healed by Jesus. As Swartley (1997: 20) observes, this woman "is in touch with the theme of the section, Jesus' suffering and death". Since the plot of Mark's gospel as a whole appears to incorporate what has been described as the "Messianic Secret" (cf. Wrede 1971; Johnson 1960: 9-13), the symbolic actions of the women probably imply Jesus' Messianic status, which is not spelled out until after Jesus' death (Mark 15:39). Moltmann-Wendel (1987: 98-99) describes the woman's actions in Mark 14:3-9 as an acknowledgement of Jesus' existence and his destiny, which verifies the probability of a hidden Messianic theme in Mark's anointing narrative.

The anointing story in Mark 14:3-9 seems somewhat bizarre, because Jesus' contact with the leper and with the unidentified woman shows from all sides socially uncharacteristic behaviour (cf. Green 1998). In reaction to the anointing, Jesus reinforces this surprising set of circumstances by allowing his head to be anointed and by reprimanding the rebellious attitude of the men around the table (Mark 14:3-9) (cf. Nolland 1989: 353). While in Luke 7:39-43 the Pharisee disapproved of the woman's actions as well as of Jesus' reactions, where the anointer in effect "scandalizes the host", Luke 7:40 depicts Jesus as a well-respected teacher (cf. Nolland 1989: 353). The respect offered to Jesus is also inferred by the invitation to dine with the Pharisee (Luke 7:36). But upon entering the home of the Pharisee, Jesus is not accorded with the customary courtesies, such as a head anointing, a foot bath and the customary greeting (Evans 1990b: 121), which implies that the Pharisee effectively dishonours Jesus (Luke 7:36, 44). In support of this observation, Nolland (1989: 353) observes

that Jesus' social standing as a respected teacher does not automatically indicate that the Pharisees respected Jesus.

Moving on to a comparison of the anointing stories in the canonical gospels, the difference in the location of the four anointing stories sets the scene for a more detailed examination of the anointing stories. Given that Matthew's version of the anointing tradition is, as stated earlier, to a large extent based on Mark (Brown 1970a: 449), it is not surprising that in both Mark 14:3 and Matt. 26:6 Jesus is located in the house of Simon the leper in Bethany. Even though Matt. 26:7 describes Jesus as reclining at the table (ἀνακειμένου), the verb used (Matt. 26:7) is similar to the verb used in Mark 14:3, where Jesus reclines at the table (κατακειμένου), because the verbs used share the same root verb (κείμεναι). This again illustrates Matthew's dependence on Mark's material. It is not surprising that the settings in Mark and Matthew are fundamentally alike. Interestingly enough, John 12:2b uses Matthew's verb (26:7) when describing the action of reclining at the table (ὁ δὲ Λάζαρος εἰς ἡν ἐκ τῶν ἀνακειμένων) whereas Luke does not choose κείμεναι. In Luke 7:36, Jesus is asked to recline at a place at the table κατεκλίθη, which is the aorist passive form of κατακλίνω. Fitzmyer (1970: 688) recognizes the connection between the act of reclining and formal meals within the Graeco-Roman culture and thereby identifies the meal in Luke's anointing narrative as a festive meal. Although Luke does not refer to Jesus' death directly, a subtle connection can be established between Luke's anointing narrative and Jesus' burial, since κλίνω, as a verb (cf. Luke 7:36) describing the action of lying down or reclining, can be compared to the noun κλίνη, which is a Greek term that describes the bed or couch used to rest on as well as the funerary bier (Smith 2003: 26; cf. *bSem.* 49b-50a; *Ket.* 4:4; Sawicki 1994: 261). The

covert link between Luke 7:36-50 and Jesus' approaching death suggests that Luke's anointing story is in many ways comparable to the other three anointing stories, which are overtly connected to Jesus' death.

Luke and John place Jesus at different locations in their anointing stories. Luke 7:36 states that Jesus had been invited to eat in a house owned by a Pharisee. The Pharisee is not identified by name at the beginning of the narrative, but during the middle section of the story (Luke 7:40-43) the Pharisee is given the name Simon. Fitzmyer (1970: 689-690) observes that it is strange that the host's name should be introduced halfway through the narrative, however, Nolland (1989: 355) explains that at the moment when Jesus addresses his host directly, it becomes socially necessary to address the host by his name. The fact that the host carried the name Simon is significant, because the host's name in both Mark 14:3 and in Matt. 26:6 is also Simon, although in these cases Simon is described as a leper. Social norms in first-century Palestine stipulated that society was not allowed to commune with lepers, because these were deemed to be ritually unclean (Lev. 13; Nu. 12:10-15) (Donahue & Harrington 2002: 386; Davies & Allison 1988: 443). Hooker (1991: 328) points out that Jesus' host must have either been healed, or have become leprous subsequently. It is possible that Jesus' host had been healed by Jesus before the anointing took place (cf. Donahue & Harrington 2002: 386), because the synoptics record a story in which Jesus heals a leper. Even though in all three cases, these stories (cf. Mark 1:40-45; Matt. 8: 2-4; Luke 5: 12-15) precede the anointing stories, the description of Luke's host as a Pharisee questions the link between the healing and the alleged leprosy in Mark's anointing narrative. But the use of Simon as the name of the host in the three synoptic versions shows a possible connection between the synoptic anointing stories.

There may have been one original tradition of this story featuring a host named Simon. This possibility will be discussed in greater detail in the next section, when the transmissions of the traditions are examined.

Returning to the content of the anointing stories, as in the cases of Mark 14:3-9 and Matt. 26:6-13, John 12:1-8 is linked to Jesus' death (cf. Mark 14:3-9; Matt. 26:6-13), although in this case Jesus has been invited to dinner in Bethany at a table in Lazarus' home, while Martha serves the guests and Mary anoints Jesus. In contrast to Mark and Matthew's description of the host as a leper, Lazarus appears to have been a prominent member of the society based on the reference to his home in Bethany, in which both his sisters resided (cf. John 11; 12:1-3). If it is assumed that the house belongs to Lazarus, then Lazarus functions as the host in John's anointing narrative. Brown (1970a: 448) argues that the narrative suggests the possibility that Lazarus was merely one of a group sitting at the table, at which the meal took place (ὁ δὲ Λάζαρος εἷς ἦν ἐκ τῶν ἀνακειμένων) in John 12:2b. Taking this option a step further, if the house did not belong to Lazarus, then the house owner might be a leper called Simon, and this Simon may, as pointed out earlier, have been Judas' as well as Lazarus' father (cf. Brown 1970a: 448). Davies & Allison (1997: 443) note a Christian legend, in which it was assumed that the unnamed woman in the anointing narratives was a further sister of Lazarus. At present, the observation that the house need not have belonged to someone other than Simon, the leper (Mark 14:3; Matt. 26:6), is crucial, since it opens up the possibility of a connection between the Johannine (12:1-8) anointing story and the anointing stories found in Mark 14:3-9 and Matt. 26:6-13. Luke 7:36-50 does not seem to be overtly connected to the passion and

empty tomb narrative, but Luke's host is identified as Simon, even though this Simon is a Pharisee as opposed to a leper.

Although neither Luke nor John mirror the Mark's anointing narrative, the four canonical anointing stories share certain features. Earlier it has been noted that the host's name is given as Simon in the three synoptic stories (Mark 14:3; Matt. 26:6; Luke 7:40). It is not precluded that the host in John 12:1-8 is also a Simon. But, as Nolland (1989: 355) observes, Simon was a popular name, which points to a lack of clear evidence regarding a connection between Luke and Mark (pace Evans 1990a: 362). This means that the name "Simon" cannot be held to be a key factor in the discussion on the history of the transmission of the anointing traditions in the synoptic gospels. The geographical location of the meal in Bethany occurs in three of the four gospels, Mark 14:3, Matt. 26:6 and John 12:1. Bethany was a village situated about 3 kilometres away from Jerusalem on the road between Jerusalem and Jericho. As a village on a popular travel route, Bethany would probably have been well known in first-century Palestine. Mark 11:11 and 14:3 situate Jesus in Bethany during his final visit to Jerusalem (cf. Brown 1970a: 422). Although Luke's anointing narrative does not mention a specific town or village, it is possible that within the context of the geography of Luke's gospel the anointing took place in Galilee. The preceding narratives in Luke 7 locate Jesus at Capernaum (v. 1) and later at Nain (v. 11), both towns in Galilee. Since there is not mention of Jesus leaving Galilee until Luke 9:51, it is probable that Luke 7:36-50 should be understood as taking place in Galilee, which is where the bulk of Jesus' ministry took place (cf. Fitzmyer 1970: 654, 684). While John 12:1 and Mark 14:3 (cf. Matt. 26:6) list Bethany as the site of the anointing, this in itself does not provide sufficient evidence to establish a Johannine

dependence on Mark's anointing narrative, although a connection between Mark and John is not precluded.

Having looked at the location of the anointing stories within the four gospels as well as any relevant frames to the stories, and minor issues such as the identity of the host and the geographical setting of the meal at which Jesus is anointed, the key character in the anointing narratives will be discussed. While the three synoptic anointing narratives do not identify her by name, the anointing woman in John's narrative is Mary of Bethany. Mark 14:3 and Matt. 26:6 simply introduce the anointer as a woman (γυνή), whereas Luke 7:37 establishes this woman as a woman of the city who is a sinner (γυνή ... ἐν τῇ πόλει ἁμαρτωλός). At the time of wiping Jesus' feet with her hair (Luke 7:38), the woman's hair would clearly have been loosened. A prostitute may have entered the house with loosened hair, whereas a well-respected member of the society would have entered the house of the Pharisee with bound hair (cf. Brown 1970a: 451; Fitzmyer 1970: 685). Since Luke does not include loosening of hair within the act of anointing, the status of the woman's hair at the time of entering the house is unclear. Even though the Pharisaic host indicates that Jesus had failed to recognize the woman as a sinner (Luke 7:39) thereby questioning Jesus' status as a prophet, as Fitzmyer (1970: 689) writes, the host may have expected Jesus to recognize the character of the woman rather than her physical presentation. It is possible that the woman entered the Pharisee's house with bound hair, but the allusion to sexual entertainment in the description of the woman as a sinner of the city points to loosened hair, which was the preferred hairstyle of prostitutes and courtesans. The unidentified sinner in Luke 7:36-50 is often erroneously linked to Mary Magdalene (cf. Luke 8:2), but there is insufficient evidence for this claim (cf. Fitzmyer 1970:

688; Borland 1969: 69-71). None of the canonical anointing stories describe the anointer as reclining with Jesus, which suggests that the anointer should not be linked to sexual entertainment, even though women attending public meals in the Graeco-Roman society would very likely be acknowledged as prostitutes (cf. Corley 1993: xxi, 130). The fact that the woman is not described as reclining with Jesus probably reflects Jewish society rather than Graeco-Roman society. In contrast to sexual entertainment, Luke's anointing narrative highlights the relationship between the woman, who is depicted as a repentant sinner (Luke 7:36-50), and Jesus, who declares her forgiveness (Luke 7:48, 50). These themes of repentance, forgiveness and salvation running through Luke's anointing story are in keeping with the thrust of Luke's gospel as an evangelical document (King 1998: 132; Pregeant 1995: 274). Furthermore, Luke's anointing narrative makes use of a number of contrasts, such as the identification and the social status of the Pharisee (7:36, 40) as compared to the anonymity and lack of social status of the woman (7:37). The host's identification as a Pharisee also suggests that the purity of the table may have been a significant issue, especially if the woman was a Gentile (cf. Smith 2003: 150 – 151; Corley 1993: 125). Suggit (1997: 71) observes that as a sinner, the woman can be identified as one who does not observe the Torah, which points to the possibility that she was a Gentile. Added to the possible disparity between the Jewish significance of a Pharisee and the perception of a Gentile woman, additional dissimilarities existing between the arrogance and self-righteousness of the Pharisee (Luke 7:36-50) and the repentance, serving attitude as well as self-abasement of the anointer (Luke 7:37-38; cf. Mark 14:3-9; Matt. 26:6-13) can be detected (Barton 1994: 4; Drury 1973: 88-89). These contrasts are reminiscent of the disparity found earlier between the content of the frame in Mark 14:1-2, 10-11 (cf. Matt. 26:1-5, 14-16) and the content of the anointing

story in Mark 14:3-9 (cf. Matt. 26:6-13), which according to Donahue and Harrington (2002: 389) illustrates a comparison between the hostility and treachery in the frame and the devotion and affection in the anointing story.

Returning to the discussion concerning the anointer, the woman's lack of identity in the synoptics may serve as a protection of her vulnerability and self-abasement, especially during the re-telling of this tradition, which would have occurred in public settings (Nineham 1963: 23). Yet this argument does not hold for the anointer in John 12:3, which identifies the woman as a respected member of society, nevertheless bestowing on her the humility and self-abasement observed in the synoptic anointing stories, particularly in Luke 7:37-39, which describe the anointer as wiping Jesus' feet with her hair (cf. John 12:3) (Moltmann-Wendel 1987: 55 - 56). A further possible explanation for the anonymity of the synoptic anointer may rest on the transmission of the tradition in the oral period, during which storytellers probably identified an unknown but important character in an individual unit of tradition with a well-known individual, which may explain the perceived tendency to add names to stories in later traditions (Taylor 1953: 534). However, it is not entirely clear within the scope of extant literature why Mary of Bethany would have been a recognized figure (cf. Dunn 2003: 535; Brown 1970a: 423, 451), if she had not been thought to have anointed Jesus (cf. John 11:2). The only other significant piece of information concerning the character of Mary to be gleaned from the canonical gospels (Luke 10:39) involves an image of Mary as a disciple, or at the very least as a pupil of Jesus (Sawicki 1994: 155). Nevertheless, it is peculiar the John should choose Mary of Bethany as the anointer, because a woman who enjoyed a high level of social status would not have loosened her hair in public. Moreover, as Brown (1970a: 451) points out, Mary of

Bethany would not have let down her hair and wiped somebody's feet with her hair. The most reasonable explanation for the loosened hair in John 12:1-8 rests on the implied reference to loosened hair in Luke's anointing story, which may have served as a source to John's story. Brown (1970a: 451) adds that the narrative in John 12:3 is not plausible, since it is ridiculous to suggest that Mary would have wiped Jesus' feet after having applied expensive ointment on these feet (cf. Barrett 1978: 412). With these issues in mind, the historicity concerning the anointing story in John 12:1-8, including the identity of the anointer as Mary of Bethany, has to be questioned. This issue will be discussed in greater depth under the heading of tradition history.

Having discussed the identity of the anointer as Mary of Bethany in John 12:1-8, as well as her lack of identity in the synoptics, topics such as the nature of the ointment, flasks and the various procedures of anointing Jesus in the four gospels will now be looked at.

In the four canonical gospels the anointer brings along a form of ointment or perfume, which in most cases is described as an ointment (μύρον) (cf. Mark 14:4; Matt. 26:7, 12; Luke 7:37; John 12:3). Mark 14:3 and John 12:3-4 further qualify the ointment as an ointment of nard (μύρου νάρδου). The synoptic gospels state that the anointer carries an alabaster jar or flask (ἀλάβαστρον) (cf. Mark 14:3; Matt. 26:7; Luke 7:37), which was a vessel with a long neck containing ointment (cf. Fitzmyer 1970: 689). As mentioned in Mark 14:3 and John 12:3-4, in many cases the alabaster flask served as a container for spikenard ointment. Barrett (1978: 411-412) argues that the ointment may have been based on pistachio oil (Bauer 1957: 668), and that John may have borrowed the term πιστικῆς, which is found only in connection with the four

canonical anointing narratives, from earlier sources (cf. Brown 1970a: 448; pace Sawicki 1994: 165). Rabbinic sources suggest that small flasks containing spikenard oil were broken at the neck to release the substance within the flask (*mKel.* 30:4; Mark 14:3). Although it is clear that women wore perfume flasks, it is not entirely clear whether or not these were generally worn in public (cf. *bShab.* 62a-b; *mShab.* 6:3). In John 12:3, Mary is described as taking a pound (λίτρα) of the costly ointment (cf. *mShebu.* 6:3), which was the standard Roman pound, a unit of measurement of 327.45 grams (Bauer 1957: 476).

Sawicki (1994: 165-166) proposes an interesting connection between the flasks worn by women in first-century Palestine and the anointing episode in the gospels based on the custom of wearing a perfume vial around the neck signifying the status of marriage within Greek society. According to Sawicki (1994: 166) the perfume vial can be viewed as an “emblem of one’s matronly status”, and suggests that smashing the vial or flask would have been “shocking and foolish”, but that symbolically the act may signify the giving of the anointer’s body to Jesus similarly to the sacrificial giving of Jesus’ body in his death and resurrection. Although Jewish graves provide ample evidence for the use of perfume flasks (McCane 2003), these may or may not have denoted a level of status. The neck of the flask was generally broken to allow access to the ointment (*mKel.* 30:4), which as a necessary act to release the ointment, cannot be linked to a Greek sign of status. The evidence for Sawicki’s (1994) case is therefore not compelling. A further scenario is developed on the basis of the use of the alabaster flask by Corley (1993: 104), who suggests that within Greek society, any anointing of men by women at banquets can be related to the sexual availability of the anointer. Yet again, there is insufficient evidence to draw this conclusion, which, at

best, may simply strengthen the assumption that the sinner in Luke 7:36-50 is intended to be portrayed as a prostitute (cf. Nolland 1989: 353; Fitzmyer 1970: 689). Notwithstanding the startling and dramatic act of anointing (cf. Malina & Rohrbaugh 1992: 153, 266), it does not follow conclusively that the woman anointing Jesus is a person of questionable reputation. For example, in John 12:3 the respected Mary of Bethany loosens her hair (cf. Brown 1970a: 450) and proceeds to wipe Jesus' feet with them. Yet these utterly unexpected activities do not allow us to make a judgment about the character of Mary of Bethany. It can be concluded that in a tradition lying behind the anointing stories in the gospels, a woman had arrived at a meal setting carrying a perfume flask with the intention of anointing Jesus either on his feet or on his head. The neck of the flask would have been broken to allow access to the ointment or nard kept in the flask.

In order to appreciate the nature and impact of the anointing act in the canonical anointing stories, the customs and expectations around anointing and the meal setting as described in these stories need to be looked at briefly.

In general, men attended formal meals in the first-century Mediterranean world (cf. Sawicki 1994: 171), whereas women were expected to remain in the background thereby ensuring the efficient functioning of the household, which included preparing and serving meals (cf. Malina 1993). Yet the synoptic anointing stories (Mark 14:3-9; Matt. 26:6-13; Luke 7:36-50) describe a formal meal setting, at which an unidentified woman arrives and silently but dramatically anoints Jesus (cf. Fitzmyer 1970: 688). A brief look at the Last Supper as an example of a festive meal shows that women may have participated at some meals. Casey (1998: 226-228) argues that Mark's gospel

alludes to the possibility that women were present at the Last Supper (Mark 14:12-28), since there is a distinction between Mark's use of "the Twelve", referring to the chosen inner circle of male apostles, as opposed to "disciples", which then included women (pace Sawicki 1994: 272). Casey (1998: 226-228) also notes that if the meal was restricted to the twelve mentioned in Mark 3:13-19, the location need not have consisted of a large upper room (cf. Donahue & Harrington 2002: 392-393), since a smaller sized room would have been adequate. If Casey's (1998: 226-228) argument is accepted, it is possible that on occasion Jewish women were present at festive meals such as the Passover meal. Since the meals in the anointing stories are not defined as Passover meals, the possibility of women attending Passover meals does not impinge on the analyses of the anointing narratives and there is no need within this study to further explore the role of women at the meals that mark important religious festivals.

In ancient society a clear distinction existed between women's roles and the roles of men, as well as between the norms of the women's behaviour in the private sphere and these norms applied to the public sphere. Women played a prominent role in private spheres, which centred on their own homes and everyday lives. Rabbinic sources indicate that women were permitted to eat at any chosen location provided that the meal took place in the home of the spouse (*mPes.* 8:1), which demonstrates the strength of their roles in the private home as opposed to in the public realm. In the public spheres, women functioned in a distinctly subservient manner to their male counterparts (cf. Corley 1993: 15-17; Torjesen 1993). During the first decades of the establishment of the early church, meetings and meals were held in private homes, which meant that women played a prominent role in these gatherings and any

planning involved. But as the early church grew and extended itself increasingly into the public sphere, the role of the women diminished as the church meetings shifted from taking place in private homes to public buildings (cf. Thorley 1996: 29; Cotter 1994: 367-370; Torjesen 1993; Rossi 1991: 93).

Returning to the topic of meals, the fact that formal meals took place in the public sphere shows that in all likelihood women had not participated actively in such meals (cf. Osiek & Balch 1997; Corley 1993: 26). When considering the Markan anointing story (14:3-9), it is worth noting that Mark has embedded the anointing narrative into a frame referring to the Passover (Mark 14:1; 14:12). Mark may have selected these texts to accentuate the connection between the public setting regarding the Passover meal and a formal or even festive meal in a private home, thereby emphasising the socially uncharacteristic behaviour of the anointer. Moltmann-Wendel (1987: 96) observes that the intrusion on the male community at the table and the theatrical process of anointing Jesus in Mark 14:3-9 is contrary to the social custom at the time (cf. Corley 1993: 26), but as Dillon (2003: 298) notes, the continuous silence of the anointer does reflect the socially expected silent behaviour of honourable Graeco-Roman women within the public context (cf. Corley 1993: 43-44, 104-105). This silence is portrayed in all four canonical anointing stories (Mark 14:3-9; Matt. 26:6-13; Luke 7:36-50; John 12:1-8). Even Luke's gospel, which Borland (1969: 59) views as the gospel of womanhood (cf. Karris 1994), depicts a silent anointer. The impression of Luke as a woman-friendly gospel writer has to be modified to some degree, since the canonical gospels were recorded within the context of the patriarchal system of first-century Palestine. Swartley (1997: 21) observes, "Luke, except for Elizabeth and Mary, silences women's voices and, even though more women appear

than in the other gospel narratives, the portrait of women is controlled to accord with the educational assumptions of the Graeco-Roman world, that women are to be restricted from public roles of leadership” (cf. Dewey 1997). The question posed by Jesus in Luke 7:44 may demonstrate the value of observing the woman anointing him rather than hearing her, since Jesus asks whether his Pharisaic host had seen the woman (Βλέπεις ταύτην τὴν γυναῖκα;). Since this question is not paralleled in the other three canonical anointing stories (Mark 14:3-9; Matt. 26:6-13; John 12:1-8), it is probably a Lukan interpolation (cf. Nolland 1989: 351, 353; Marshall 1978: 306).

In general, the customs regarding meals and banquets in Ancient Judaism reflect the Graeco-Romans social norms (Smith 2003: 134, 171-172), and as Smith (2003: 219) observes, this is true also of the meals described in the canonical gospels. For this reason it is useful to examine the nature of Greek meals in the first century to appreciate the nature of the meals described in the canonical anointing stories. Within Greek culture men met frequently to share meals, entertainment and discussions in the setting of a συμπόσιον {Ant. 8, 134-138; Sawicki 1994: 258}. Women rarely joined this form of gathering as active participants, but in some cases women performed at a συμπόσιον as entertainers, by for example providing discussion partners on the subject of philosophy or more frequently providing sexual entertainment for the men (cf. Smith 2003: 35; Osiek & Balch 1997: 60; Corley 1993: 26-27). Smith (2003) writes that the Greek banquet consisted of two sessions, the first being the δεῖπνον during which the food was eaten, and the second being the συμπόσιον, at which time the diners enjoyed mixed wine and a number of different forms of entertainment. According to this description, Greek συμπόσια often consisted of “various promiscuous and lewd activities” performed in the haze of drunken stupor (Smith

2003: 36; cf. Dillon 2003: 183). Corley (1993: 29, 69) observes a trend, particularly in Roman society, of wives increasingly attending public meals, while reclining at their spouse's side (cf. Smith 2003: 42-43). But even if this trend applies to the tradition behind the gospel accounts, the situation concerning the actions of the anointer remains unaltered. Mark 14:3-9, Matt. 26:6-13 and Luke 7:36-50 clearly feature an unidentified woman, who intrudes on a formal meal. The synoptic traditions do not associate her with any of the men present at the meal, whether by marriage or by family relation (cf. Smith 2003: 43). Therefore the synoptic texts do not offer any socially acceptable motivation for her sudden presence at the meal. Smith (2003: 44) maintains that within the Graeco-Roman society an unaccompanied woman at a banquet would have been classified as a prostitute. As noted earlier, Luke 7: 39 describes the unidentified woman as a sinner from the city, which increases the social divergence between the woman and the men, and especially between the Pharisaic host in Luke 7:36 and the sinful anointer. While the men in Luke's anointing narrative express great disturbance and annoyance at the anointer's actions (cf. King 1998: 132), Nolland (1989: 354) considers that she (Luke 7:36-50) "claims no right to disturb the dinner party and so does not intrude further than to the feet of Jesus". The Graeco-Roman posture at meals, described as "reclining" (cf. Mark 14:3b, κατακειμένου), is acknowledged as having exposed the feet. Donahue and Harrington (2002: 386, 393) point out that compared to the rest of the body, the feet would be furthest away from the table but nearest to the intruding anointer.

Concerning the nature of the meal and the nature and effect of the anointer's entrance, Mark and Matthew describe a socially unexpected event (Donahue & Harrington 2002: 390), which challenges the meaning of class differences by placing a woman in

a male environment, thereby decreasing her value within the hierarchical structure of society at the meal. In Luke, the anointer's status is diminished even further, since Luke 7:37 describes the anointer as a woman who is a sinner. John 12:1-8 describes an anointing occurring in Bethany (cf. Mark 14:3; Matt. 26:6), but in this instance the meal takes place six days before Passover (John 12:1). If Passover was celebrated on the following Friday evening (cf. John 19:31, 42) (Barrett 1978: 410), then the meal in Bethany most likely occurred on the preceding Saturday evening (Brown 1970a: 447; Barrett 1978: 410; pace Sanders & Mastin 1968: 282-283). Although John 12:2 uses the word δειπνον to describe the meal as an evening meal, this does not assure the reader that a formal meal is meant (Sanders & Mastin 1968: 282-283; pace Barrett 1978: 411). Barrett (1978: 412) points out, that if the meal had taken place immediately after the Sabbath had ended, the meal might have included the celebration of *Habdalah* (*mBer.* 8:5) to conclude the Sabbath and introduce the following ordinary day (cf. Brown 1970a: 447). When comparing John's meal to the banquet structure containing the δειπνον followed by the συμπόσιον, as suggested by Smith (2003), it appears that John's meal is structurally similar to the meals described in the synoptics. The timing of the meal as well as the interest in Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised back to life (John 11:38-44), suggest that the meal in John 12:1-8 is a type of formal meal (cf. Barrett 1978: 408). As observed earlier, John 12:2, Mark 14:3 and Matt. 26:6 use the same root verb (ἀνακειμένων) to describe the reclining posture at the table, which, as Nolland (1989: 354) observes, alludes to the formal nature of the meal according to Graeco-Roman customs. Concerning the many canonical references to meals, Smith (2003: 220) notes that within oral and scribal traditions, the setting of a meal or a banquet was frequently used as a backdrop for a variety of communal activities within the growing Early Church.

Having concluded that all four meals in the canonical anointing stories can be placed into the public sphere, in which women are viewed as secondary citizens and as such were expected to be as compliant as possible, the practice of anointing will be considered briefly.

Before discussing the anointing customs, the connection between Jesus and anointing needs to be recalled, since this relationship will be helpful in the analysis of the motivation for the anointing in the canonical traditions, particularly in Mark's anointing tradition. Although not overtly related to the processes of anointing, Jesus is described as the Anointed One Χριστός (Acts 4:26-27, 10:38). There is a link between anointing and Messianic activities, since the Hebrew word מָשִׁיחַ, messiah, means the anointed one. Zechariah 4:3 and 14 refer to the anointing of a king from the royal line of David as well as the anointing of a priest, possibly from the line Joshua. These two forms can be viewed as culminating in Jesus as the ultimate Messianic King-Priest.

Although the Hebrew Bible indicates that anointing was used as a form of consecration to their specific divinely ordained roles, for example, for those who were priests (Ex. 30:30; Lev. 4:5), prophets (1 Ki. 19:16), leaders (1 Sa. 9:16, 10:1; 1 Ch. 29:22) and kings (Jud. 9:8; 1 Sa. 15:1, 16:13; 2 Sa. 2:4; 1 Ki. 1:34; 2 Ki. 9:3,12; *bK.R.* 53a), for our purposes we will concentrate on the act of anointing in the context of a burial as well as a meal setting.

The anointing of the body of a deceased person for burial formed a key aspect of the ancient Jewish funerary customs. Rabbinic literature indicates that a corpse may be anointed with oil, provided that the limbs of the body remain stationary (*bShab.* 151b; cf. *mShab.* 23:5). A number of biblical and post-biblical references (2 Ch. 16:14; Luke 23:48; *bKet.* 46b; *bM.K.* 28b; *Yoreh De'ah* 344:3; Josephus, *Ant.* 4.320, 15.61; Solon 21.4) suggest that in first-century Palestine the body of a deceased person was customarily anointed before burial as part of the preparation for burial (cf. Sawicki 1994: 255; Malina & Rohrbaugh 1992: 408-409). The act of anointing bestowed honour on the deceased and simultaneously dealt with the odour of decaying bodies (cf. Schottroff 1993: 181). Since the body was anointed prior to the burial, the anointing usually took place at the home of the deceased (McCane 2003: 48). Sawicki (1994: 255-257, 272) suggests that the anointing of bodies for burial was performed chiefly by women (cf. Corley 1993: 105).

The second relevant practice of anointing consists of the customary anointing at formal meals. As a sign of honour, first-century Palestinians generally poured oil on the hair of wealthy guests as they arrived at a formal meal (Malina & Rohrbaugh 1992: 265; Hooker 1991; cf. Smith 2003: 222). This custom probably evolved from a need to eliminate unpleasant body odours emanating from the guests, and was often carried out by attendants or slaves rather than the host (Smith 2003).

Notwithstanding the fact that Jesus is clearly alive during the act of anointing in the four gospels (Mark 14:3-9; Matt. 26:6-13; Luke 7:36-50; John 12:1-8), three anointing stories do refer directly to his burial (Mark 14:8; Matt. 26:12; John 12:7). Luke's anointing story (7:36-50) does not appear to be linked to Jesus' death and

resurrection. As observed earlier, the anointer's actions in the canonical gospels cannot be described as customary, since in general the role of women at formal meals can be seen as unobtrusively functional, unless the woman is expected to perform a specific type of entertainment for a certain time period. Apart from being actively present at a formal meal, the anointer in the canonical stories is portrayed as stepping out of her social boundaries by initiating an elaborate and extremely obvious act of devotion. Even though none of the gospel writers allow the anointer to be verbally active, as Dunn (2003: 523) observes, the gospel writers portray an embarrassing physical action that seems scandalous to the men present at the meal. Although the anointer plays the primary role, her subversion is contained by her silence (cf. 1 Cor. 14:34; *mKet.* 7:6). In this manner, the gospel writers seem to have adhered to the prevailing patriarchal value system by endowing the male characters with speech, while downplaying the role of the female character by her lack of a voice. In Mark 14:9 (cf. Matt. 26:13) Jesus essentially decrees that the anointing woman's silent actions will be given a voice, and thus her action was incorporated into the gospel tradition. Could this be a means of raising the status of the woman surreptitiously without offending the conservative patriarchal social system at the time of writing (cf. Corley 1993: 107)? Crossan (1998: 558) observes that this would suggest the transformation of a lowly act of service (Pregeant 1995: 195) into a shining monument of Christian faith (cf. Crossan 1998: 558).

As a redactor, Mark appears to have inserted two striking occasions of sincere faith into his gospels. The first occasion involves the seemingly remarkable faith of the anointing woman, who proleptically appears to believe in Jesus' imminent death and resurrection, and potentially sees a need to anoint his body while presuming that a

shameful burial would follow a shameful death on the cross (Mark 14:3-9). The second occasion is manifested by the statement of the centurion, who as a male is given a voice to utter sincerely that Jesus on the cross was the Son of God (Mark 14:39b) (Crossan 1998: 558). These examples of pillar of faith have been creatively recorded by Mark, who would in all likelihood not have had access to the earliest oral record of these traditions and would therefore not have known what the anointer believed. The proleptic nature of Mark's anointing story shows that Mark has creatively intertwined his theological messages into the traditions. Even so, there is a contrast between the woman's silent action and the centurion's vocal statement. These accounts illustrate the possibility that while representing the prevailing patriarchal hierarchy, Mark covertly looks towards the path of gender mutuality, on which the lives of all human beings have equal worth. Corley (1993: 183-184) makes an interesting observation concerning Matthew's gospel. She points out that Matthew's gospel is the only gospel that describes women reclining with men at meals, which might echo pre-gospel traditions.

Both Mark 14:3-9 and Matt. 26:6-13 portray an unidentified woman, who firstly intrudes upon a male event and secondly uses her own expensive ointment from her own alabaster jar to anoint the head of Jesus while he is reclining. As mentioned earlier, the heads of guests were often anointed with pleasant smelling oils or ointments as a sign of respect, as they arrived at the host's house (cf. Luke 7:46). Besides, the anointing of the head is reminiscent of Ps: 23:5 ("You set a table before me as my enemies watch. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows") (cf. Donahue & Harrington 2002: 389). In none of the canonical anointing stories are we told that the host or the host's attendant anoints the head of Jesus before Jesus reclines

at the table. Although neither Mark nor Matthew overtly associate the anointing to this social custom, a connection to Jesus' burial is established by Jesus' response to the disgust of the men at the economic value of the perfume used. The men's anger may have been directed at the process of anointing, rather than the cost of the ointment, unless it was feasible to estimate the economical value of the ointment by smell. This may clarify Jesus' response, which begins with a response to the voiced indignation at the economic loss by possibly quoting Deut. 15:11a, followed by an interpretation of the motivation for and the value of the woman's actions (Mark 14:6-9; Matt. 26:10-13). So Jesus first responds to the monetary concern and then highlights the spiritual value of the act of anointing (cf. Matt. 5:3). Mark's anointing narrative includes a final passion prediction (14:7; Matt. 26:11) following the predictions in Mark 8:31, 9:31 and 10:33-34 (cf. Donahue & Harrington 2002: 387; Crossan 1998: 558). As Donahue and Harrington (2002: 386) observe, a further redactional technique may be discovered in Mark's qualification of the ointment as being highly expensive to underline the lavishness of the anointing.

If the saying in Mark 14:6-9 goes back to Jesus, he "may have anticipated the likelihood of burial without anointing", since, as Dunn (2003: 798) observes, the shameful burial tradition of criminals customarily excluded anointing. This would mean that Mark or the writer of Special Mark may have adjusted an earlier form of the narrative as a redactor. Having observed Mark's redacting influence on the text, the anointing narratives as portrayed by Mark or the other three evangelists were probably not entirely based on historical data (cf. Smith 2003: 238). Mark appears to have applied his "sandwiching" technique to proleptically adjust and insert the anointing narrative into the frame in Mark 14:1-2; 10-11 (cf. Witherington 1990:

226). The proleptic insertion ensures that Jesus receives an anointing for burial in an effort to attach honour to Jesus' death and burial. Collins (1992: 129) argues that as the gospel writer, Mark would have been aware of the tradition regarding the unsuccessful anointing of Jesus at the time of burial (Mark 16:1-8) (cf. Hooker 1991: 328, 330). Since bodies were customarily anointed for burial, Mark's anointing narrative can be viewed as complying with the requirements of the Jewish burial customs. Interestingly, although Matt. 26:6-13 mirrors Mark's anointing story, Matthew does not mention an intention to anoint Jesus' body in his account of the women's return to Jesus' tomb (28:1-8). The connection between the anointing story and an unsuccessful anointing at the tomb is not mirrored in John either, even though John 19:40 describes Jesus' body being wrapped with linen and spices. Nevertheless, this successful anointing in John cannot be linked to the anointing story (12:1-8) in the same way that the unsuccessful anointing (Mark 16:1) and the successful anointing (Mark 14:3-9) in Mark are linked. As mentioned earlier, the Markan connection is further strengthened by the observation that the two anointing incidents frame Mark's passion narrative. In Luke's case, the anointing story stands apart from the passion and empty tomb narratives.

Before moving on to the discussion of anointing the feet in Luke 7:36-50 and John 12:1-8 versus anointing the head in Mark 14:3-9 and Matt. 26:6-13, the anointing stories in Luke and John require further discussion concerning the positioning and main thrust of the anointing stories. Luke 7:37, 39, 47-50 describe the unidentified woman who anoints Jesus as a recognized sinner, whom Jesus had forgiven and on whom Jesus bestowed peace in the form of a customary statement of farewell (cf. 1 Sam. 1:17; 20:42; 29:7) (Marshall 1978: 314). In Luke 7:44-46 Jesus reminds his host

that upon entering his host's house, he had not been treated with the courtesy afforded to respected guests, such as having his feet washed before reclining (Smith 2003: 27), receiving a respectful greeting, and lastly having his head anointed with oil. Fitzmyer (1970: 684) describes Luke's anointing story as consisting of a pronouncement surrounding a short parable concerning two debtors (7:41-43). As observed, at first glance the lack of connection between the anointing story and the passion and empty tomb narratives suggests that Luke's anointing story is quite distinct from the anointing stories in the other canonical gospels. Fitzmyer (1970: 683) also summarizes Luke's anointing story as "the pardon of the sinful woman", which points to Luke's theological slant. Luke ensures an appreciation for the depth and sincerity of the woman's devotion to Jesus and her gratitude for the pardon received most likely before the event of the meal by, for example, the contrast between the woman's lavish actions and the lack of courtesy afforded to Jesus by his host (7:44-46). Also, the self-abasement and devotion of the woman emphasized by her weeping at Jesus' feet, wiping his feet, which had not been washed upon entering the house, and kissing his feet (Luke 7:38), illustrate the depth of the woman's devotion (cf. Theissen 1999: 123).

Notwithstanding the stark contrast between Luke's anointing narrative and those of Mark, Matthew and John, there are certain commonalities between Luke's anointing narrative and those of the other gospels, such as the occasion of a meal, the enthusiastic act of anointing by a silent woman and Jesus' retort to one or more dissenters. In Luke's version, the woman is described as standing at Jesus' feet. This description is plausible because, as we saw earlier, the Graeco-Roman dining position involves reclining on stone benches while resting on the left elbow with the feet

resting outward from the head (Smith 2003). According to Smith's (2003) description, the woman would be closer to Jesus' feet than his head (Nolland 1989: 357; Fitzmyer 1970: 688), allowing a respectful distance between herself and Jesus. In Luke's anointing narratives, the woman is described as weeping over Jesus' feet, wiping Jesus' dirty feet with her hair, which would presumably have been long and loose, and finally anointing Jesus' feet with her own ointment. While Sawicki (1994: 258) maintains that the resemblance between the Greek terms for anointing (μυρίσαι) and weeping (μυράσθαι) suggest a link between the act of anointing and mourning or weeping, Luke uses δακρύω not μυράσθαι to describe the weeping in 7:38 so this play on words is absent from his narrative. Thus it is questionable whether the tears of the anointer in Luke 7:38 can be linked to the act of mourning and by extension to Jesus' death (pace Sawicki 1994: 258; Corley 1993: 128). If a link is to be found between Luke's anointing narrative and those of the other gospels, other evidence than that proposed by Sawicki is required.

The elaborate three-fold act of weeping over Jesus' feet, wiping his feet with her hair and kissing his feet by the sinful woman appears to be a redactional manipulation to accentuate the remorse, gratitude (Nolland 1989: 354) and devotion of the woman in response to the forgiveness of her sins, since the three-fold act is compared to the lack of a minimal three-fold act of hospitality by the host (Luke 7:44-46). Marshall (1978: 311) deems these acts of hospitality as non-essential, but Smith (2003) illustrates that these three actions correspond to customary actions when receiving a guest for a formal dinner. Fortna (1988: 144 n.325) considers the possibility that "a more complex tradition history [exists] behind this story than at first appears", which underlines the significance of the comparison between the lacking three-fold courtesy

to Jesus compared to the dramatic three-fold anointing act. To illustrate this, the woman's weeping over Jesus' feet and drying them is compared to washing the feet of esteemed guests before reclining, while the act of kissing Jesus' feet is compared to the courteous greeting, and lastly the anointing of Jesus' feet with ointment is compared to the anointing of the heads of guests (cf. Marshall 1978: 311-312; Marin 1976: 133-134). These comparisons suggest that Luke applies social norms with regard to formal meals (cf. Smith 2003) to bring to light the value of forgiveness, redemption and restoration (cf. Nolland 1989: 361-362).

There is a difficulty in understanding the reason for the anointer's forgiveness. Initially it is attributed to her love in Luke 7:47, but then in 7:50 her faith is given as the reason. Remembering that Luke's anointing story appears to be an amalgamation of different traditions, that is, a pronouncement story juxtaposed with a parable (the parable of the two debtors) as well as Lukan redactional additions, such as the three-fold anointing act compared to the three-fold act of hospitality (cf. Nolland 1989: 357, 359; Fitzmyer 1970: 685), the anointer's devotion corresponds to the theme of enthusiastic anointing, whereas in both Mark 14:3-9 and Matt. 26:6-13 faith appears to motivate the anointing.

Having discussed the synoptic anointing stories, it is necessary to briefly examine John's anointing story (12:1-8). The most striking difference between John's anointing story and the synoptic anointing stories is found in the description of the anointer. In the synoptics she is not given a name or a connection to a male family member or even a place. In Luke's anointing story she is further demoted in the social hierarchy by her designation as a sinner. But John situates the meal in the home of

Lazarus, Mary and Martha, where Mary of Bethany (John 12:3) anoints Jesus. As mentioned earlier, Mary of Bethany was a respected member of society. Her brother, Lazarus, had been raised back to life by Jesus. The actions described in John's process of anointing (12:3) do not appear to be congruent with a person of Mary of Bethany's social status (cf. Barrett 1978: 412). Although Jesus' referral to his burial in John 12:7 would presume an anointing of his head, as in Mark 14:3-9 and Matt. 26:6-13, in John, Mary anoints Jesus' feet, which covertly points to the social custom of washing the feet of a guest before the guest reclines at a formal dinner (Smith 2003). Also, there is a difficulty concerning the logic of the order of events in John 12:3, in which Mary is said to have taken her ointment, anointed Jesus' feet, and then having wiped these anointed feet with her let-down hair, after which the house is described as having been filled with the fragrance of the ointment used.

Two issues arise at this point. Firstly, why does the act of wiping Jesus' feet follow the anointing rather than precede it? Secondly, what is the significance of the fragrance filling the house? It may be possible that for John the lavishness of the anointing, as described in Luke 7:36-50, consisted of an overflow of ointment running over Jesus' feet onto the bench on which Jesus reclined as well as that of his neighbour. In that case, as Sanders and Mastin (1968: 284) suggest, Mary might have wiped off the excess ointment on Jesus' feet. As an alternative theory, Barrett (1978: 412) and Brown (1970a: 451-452) argue that John was familiar with Luke's account and Mark's account of the anointing incident, and relied on both accounts to form the anointing story in John 12:1-8. Regarding the fragrance or smell of the ointment (John 12:3, ὀσμῆς) filling the house, Brown (1970a: 453-454) considers the possibility that John used the term as a metaphor to illustrate how the news of the anointing (cf. Mark

14:3-9; Matt. 26:6-13) is to spread as knowledge of the gospel message was beginning to spread (cf. 2 Cor. 2:14-16) (cf. Sanders & Mastin 1968: 284; Barrett 1978: 412-413). The notion of a pleasant fragrance or a pleasing aroma may additionally have been appreciated within the context of an acceptable offering to God (cf. Ge. 8:21; Ex. 29:18, 25). The fragrance is said to fill the house after Mary anoints Jesus' feet and wipes them, or the excess of the ointment, with her hair. Since the meal can probably be categorized as formal, Mary would most likely not have reclined at the meal, but merely have sat at Jesus' feet while anointing them. Thereafter she would have moved about the house and assisted Martha in serving the meal, while the fragrance was probably released into the air from the ointment in Mary's hair. While it seems possible that Luke's anointer arrived with her hair unbound, it is, as Brown (1970a: 450) observes, very likely that Mary of Bethany let down her hair during the anointing procedure and not before, since loose hair would not fit her character. Nonetheless, the curious details and the seeming lack of logical flow in John 12:1-8 result in a narrative that is difficult to follow. The history of the transmission plays a prominent role in unravelling the various strands within John's anointing story, since John appears to have been dependent on both the traditions found in Mark 14:3-9 and Luke 7:36-50 (cf. Barrett 1978: 408-415). This will be discussed in greater depth under the heading of tradition history.

Before concluding this section the issue of foot anointing versus head anointing requires further examination. Mark 14:3 and Matt. 26:7 describe the anointing of Jesus' head, whereas in Luke 7:38 and John 12:3 Jesus' feet are anointed. Corley (1993: 130) suggested that the woman in Luke 7:38 may have anointed Jesus' feet rather than his head because she could access his feet judging by the position of

reclining at formal meals (cf. Nolland 1989: 357), but the anointing of feet in Luke's account may be connected to the social custom of having a guest's feet washed at the entrance before the guest reclined (Smith 2003). While anointing the feet might have little to do with being a king, priest or prophet, the sinner in Luke 7:36-50 and Mary in John 12:1-8 honour Jesus with humility, devotion and service (Theissen 1999: 123). Fitzmyer (1970: 686) argues that the anointing tradition, which portrays the anointing of Jesus' feet rather than his head, was the more primitive one, since the Hebrew Bible refers to the anointing of the head during the process of anointing kings (2 Ki. 9:3; 1 Sa. 10:1; Ps. 133:2). This demonstrates that the tradition of the anointing of feet is most likely the original version whereas the tradition of the anointing of the head is probably a later re-working. Luke 7:36-50 applies the tradition of anointing the feet in conjunction with social etiquette, whereas in John 12:1-8 the seemingly illogical sequence of events contains a similar tradition of anointing Jesus' feet. But in this case the unbound hair functions as a link between the anointing of Jesus' feet and the fragrance of the ointment spreading. In both Luke 7:36-50 and John 12:10-8, the anointer uses her letdown hair to wipe Jesus' feet. Jesus' feet would almost certainly have been dirty because he wore no footgear or open sandals. Given that his feet had not been washed upon entering the house (cf. Luke 7:44), wiping Jesus' feet with her hair signifies utter self-abasement, whether or not the feet had been anointed. It is socially unlikely that a woman would lower herself far enough to use her loosened hair as a towel to wipe dirt and excess ointment, especially as the hair of women was viewed as their crowning glory (1 Cor. 11:15). As Brown (1970a: 451) observes, it is highly unlikely that Mary of Bethany would perform this self-denigrating act. Luke's anointer, who as a sinner might have arrived with loosened hair, would certainly be more likely to perform such a lowly self-abasing act of humble service, whereas the

respected sister of Lazarus and pupil of Jesus is not expected to humiliate herself to such a degree as described in John 12:1-8. Possibly, as suggested earlier, the answer depends on an investigation into the history of the transmission of these traditions.

The act of anointing in the canonical narratives has also been linked to Jesus' Messianic status. As explored in the last paragraph, and in comparison to the synoptic accounts, John's anointing story contains a shocking and scandalous element in its portrayal of the actions of Mary of Bethany. She disrupts a male gathering, anoints Jesus' feet, lets down her hair and then wipes Jesus' dirty and oily feet with her hair, thereby demonstrating devotion, self-abasement, humility and faith. This account of the anointing has been linked to a Messianic anointing, since the anointing precedes the tradition of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, thereby possibly acting as a preparation and inauguration so that Jesus could enter Jerusalem as an anointed king in John 12:12-19 (Brown 1970a: 454). However if John's anointing (12:1-8) is linked to Jesus' Messianic status, then Mary of Bethany would have anointed Jesus' head rather than his feet, since anointing the head is socio-historically linked to the anointing of kings. By comparison, Luke's account (7:36-50) is culturally less shocking, since the anointer is introduced as a sinner. It is possible that Mark made use of the custom, whereby kings are anointed on their heads, to establish the Messianic status of Jesus, thereby symbolically pointing to his resurrection, while preparing Jesus for a shameful death and burial (cf. Donahue & Harrington 2002: 386-387; Sawicki 1994: 173-174). As observed earlier, the hidden allusion to Jesus' identity as the Messiah would connect to the plot of the "Messianic Secret" (Wrede 1971). As Barrett (1978: 409) notes, even though John 12:1-8 features an anointing which is followed by Jesus entering Jerusalem as a king, the anointing of Jesus' feet

does not inaugurate a kingship, whereas Mark 14:3-9 precedes the Markan ride into Jerusalem. This strengthens the view that Mark's anointing of the head incorporated the custom of anointing kings. Therefore Mark proleptically inserted the anointing story containing an anointing of Jesus' head to attach honour to Jesus' forthcoming criminal's death and burial, while simultaneously attesting to his Messianic status. However, this would mean that Mark surreptitiously gave the silent anointer a male role, since customarily kings were anointed by men and not by women (cf. 2 Sam. 2:4) (Moltmann-Wendel 1987: 96-98). Moltmann-Wendel (1987: 98) describes the anointer aptly as "an unknown woman [who] is at the same time a prophet who anoints the Messiah, consecrates him and equips him for his task" (cf. D'Angelo 1999a: 174).

b. Tradition history

Having examined the anointing stories by using redaction criticism, I will move onto the second step, which entails the tradition history of the anointing stories. The aim of this section is to trace the transmission of the anointing stories.

The frame to the anointing tradition in Mark 14:1-2, 10-11 (cf. Matt. 26:1-5, 14-16), compared to that in Luke 22:1-6 and the absence of material from Mark's frame in Luke 7:36-50 may shed some light on the transmission of the frame material as well as the anointing stories, particularly with regard to Mark and Luke. As pointed out earlier, Luke was aware of Mark's material. But Luke probably accessed his particular anointing tradition (7:36-50) from a non-Markan source. Having included the

anointing tradition in an earlier position in his gospel, where the anointing tradition remains separate to the passion and empty tomb narratives, it is reasonable to suggest that Luke dispensed with Mark's anointing tradition and combined Mark's split narrative (14:1-2, 10-11) in Luke 22:1-6, which immediately precedes Luke's passion and empty tomb narratives. Mark probably accessed an earlier continuous narrative, similar to Luke 22:1-6, which he split to form a frame by his "sandwiching technique". As discussed in the previous chapter, the Q source does not impact on the passion and empty tomb narratives (cf. Pregeant 1995: 571), which suggests Special Luke as the most likely source for Luke 22:1-6 (Fitzmyer 1985: 1368, 1373).

Although the anointing stories in Mark 14:3-9 and Luke 7:36-50 are disparate, as illustrated in the previous section, a number of specific similarities between the two versions suggest that Luke 7:36-50 in essence reflects the same tradition as Mark 14:3-9 (cf. Pesonen 2000; Drury 1973: 87-88). Marshall (1978: 306) and Brown (1970a: 449-452) assume that Luke's account is sourced from a separate tradition to Mark's account, such as Special Luke, due to the similarities between the synoptic anointing stories, yet the anointing stories in Mark and Luke probably originated at an earlier stage in one particular pre-gospel tradition (Fitzmyer 1970: 684-685). Even though Luke 7:36-50 and John 12:1-8 have a number of significant discrepancies, the two accounts share certain interesting features (Brown 1970a: 449; cf. Nolland 1989: 352), for example the anointing of Jesus' feet rather than his head and the use of the woman's hair to wipe the feet, which implies a connection between Luke and John (Brown 1970a: 449-452; Fitzmyer 1970: 685; Barrett 1978: 412). This connection suggests that John may have had access to Luke or alternatively to a common tradition sourced by both Luke and John (cf. Cribbs 1971; Barrett 1978: 412).

Even though John's account depicts Mary anointing Jesus with his impending burial as does Mark, although unlike Mark 14:3-9 the anointing of Jesus' feet precludes any allusion to the anointing of a king. John 12:7 associates Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet to his impending burial, although unlike Mark 14:3, Brown (1970a: 454) observes that the anointing of Jesus' feet precludes any allusion to the anointing of a king. Even though the Messianic theme is questionable with respect to John's anointing story, in both Mark 14:8 (cf. Matt. 26:12) and John 12:7, Jesus is reported as explaining to the disgruntled men that he had been anointed for his burial. This key element as well as the reference to the poor in both Mark 14:5 (cf. Matt. 26:11) and John 12:5 suggests that, as Bauckham (1998b) states, John was aware of Mark's material (cf. Barrett 1978: 410-411). It is also possible that John 12:3 ("and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment") metaphorically reflects Mark 14:9, in which Jesus states that the anointer's actions will be remembered whenever the Gospel is preached (Brown 1970a: 453). Moreover, Dunn (2003: 522-523) observes that Mark, Matthew and John incorporate a number of identical words or phrases, such as Jesus' retort "you do not always have me" (ἐμὲ δὲ οὐ πάντοτε ἔχετε) in Mark 14:7, Matt. 26:11 and John 12:8. These textual parallels demonstrate a connection between John and Mark. Brown (1970a: 449) further summarizes the relationship between Mark 14:3-9 and John 12:1-8 as follows, "[n]o one really doubts that John and Mark are describing the same scene".

Having considered that John's account shares certain features and descriptions with Mark's account as well as with Luke's account, the disparity between the object of the anointing act in Mark 14:3 (cf. Matt. 26:7) as opposed to that in both Luke 7:38 and

John 12:3 requires further discussion. As stated earlier, within Ancient Judaism the anointing of the head was carried out with regard to various functions, for example to signify kingship (Jud. 9:8; 1 Sa. 15:1, 16:13; 2 Sa. 2:4; 1 Ki. 1:34; 2 Ki. 9:3,12; *bK.R.* 53a), or to inaugurate someone into the office of a prophet (1 Ki. 19:16), or the office of priest (Ex. 30:30; Lev. 4:5; *mHor.* 3:4), or to greet a guest at a formal banquet (Smith 2003). Anointing the head of a person was evidently a customary action within first-century Palestine (Lev. 21:10). However, the anointing of feet has a very different connotation and no direct function. Smith (2003) observes that since typically the feet of guests arriving at a formal meal were washed before the guests reclined, the anointing of the feet possibly functions as a remote substitute to the custom of washing the feet of guests, particularly since neither Luke's nor John's accounts state that Jesus' feet had been washed upon arriving at the meal (pace Fitzmyer 1970: 691). Although there is no evidence to support this and the scope of this study prevents further investigation, it is worth mentioning in this context that the footwashing ceremony in John 13:1-17 and the custom of washing the feet of guests might be linked very loosely through the symbol of servanthood, even though John's anointing story (12:1-8) precedes his footwashing narrative. Since the anointing of Jesus' feet appears to be appreciably different to any customary foot anointings, according to the criterion of cultural dissimilarity, the tradition of the anointing of feet in Luke 7:36-50 and John 12:1-8 precedes the tradition of the anointing of Jesus' head (cf. Fitzmyer 1970: 686). That being the case, the anointing of the head in Mark 14:3-9 and Matt. 26:6-13 represents a later adaptation used to surreptitiously verify and inaugurate Jesus' Messianic status, while overtly being linked to Jesus' burial (cf. Moltmann-Wendel 1987: 97-98).

While it seems that all four canonical anointing narratives ultimately have one single source, which probably developed during the very early transmission in the oral phase and early scribal phase (Dodd 1965: 162-173), the transmission of the tradition probably split the tradition into different strands during the oral phase (cf. Crossan 1998: 59-68; pace Dunn 2003: 523). Sanders (1993: 126-127) suggests that the narrative in John is a composite narrative of the parallel synoptic narratives (cf. Brown 1970a: 449-452). At first glance this seems entirely reasonable, since Luke and John share certain features, such as the anointing of the feet, while Mark and John contain similarities, for example Jesus' reference to his forthcoming burial. However, while it is mostly undisputed that Matt. 26:6-13 emulates Mark 14:3-9 (cf. Meier 1979: 11-13), the issue concerning the feet versus the head complicates the assessment of the sequence of transmission. Likewise, the connection between Luke and Mark seems to challenge the clear pattern illustrated by the four-source theory, according to which for the most part Luke's material is based on Mark's gospel (Pregeant 1995: 101-102).

Having discussed the canonical anointing narratives, it is likely that the commonalities between the four versions point to a single source at a pre-gospel stage, possibly during the period of oral transmission. The various non-customary acts in the canonical anointing stories suggest that according to the cultural criteria of dissimilarity, the stories may have been based on an earlier authentic tradition. This is borne out by the criterion of coherence and the criterion of multiple attestations. According to Crossan (1991: 442-443) the anointing stories are an example of triple independent attestation, which he takes to be a strong indicator of authenticity. The differences and the similarities between the gospel accounts suggest the emergence of

at least two different strands from the same earlier tradition. Mark and Luke appear to have accessed these two different variations of the tradition. In terms of the triple independent attestation, Crossan (1991) suggests a model, in which Mark 14:3-9 and Matt. 26:6-13 represent the first layer, Luke 7:36-50 the second layer, and John 12:1-8 either the first or the second layer, since John's account can be linked to both Mark's and Luke's version. Although the analyses in this chapter point to Luke's account representing an earlier layer or tradition, Crossan's model is helpful to represent the different forms of the transmission. Barrett's (1978: 412) statement that "John has combined the Markan and Lukan narratives with each other, and with material of his own, and there is some confusion" illustrates to a certain extent the connection between John 12:1-8 and both Mark 14:3-9 (cf. Matt. 26:6-13) and Luke 7:36-50.

3. Conclusion

Applying redaction criticism, we have discovered that the traditions illustrating the roles of the women around Jesus in the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives have for the most part been adapted from earlier sources. The anointing tradition in Mark 14:3-9 has also been framed by another narrative. This "sandwiching" technique is one of many redactional tools used by the gospel writers, especially by Mark.

The use of both tradition history and redaction criticism have shed light on the connection between the anointing by the repentant sinner in Luke 7:36-50 and the anointing stories in Mark 14:3-9 (cf. Matt. 26:6-13) as well as in John 12:1-8. These traditions seem to ultimately stem from one original tradition, which has developed

into several different strands over time during the oral transmission period (pace Dodd 1965: 162-173). Hence Luke accessed a different version to Mark, particularly regarding Luke 22:1-6. Even though this analysis has highlighted the transmission of traditions, the gospel writers' activities as creative editors probably affects the portrayal of the traditions, especially in the case of Mark as the primary gospel writer. Matthew generally depends on Mark, but John appears to have accessed both Mark (cf. Moody Smith 1984: 161, 170) and Luke. This ties in with our conclusions that the tradition regarding the anointing of Jesus was not altogether in line with cultural activities performed by women in Ancient Judaism, in particular the cases of the anointing of the feet in Luke 7:36-50 and John 12:1-8.

In summary, the canonical anointing stories appear to have emerged from two different but earlier streams in the pre-gospel period. Mark sourced the version in which Jesus' head was anointed. This version was linked to Jesus' burial in Mark 14:3-9 and Matt. 26:6-13. However, as discussed, the anointing story in which Jesus' feet are anointed probably pre-dates the version in which Jesus' head is anointed. Luke probably accessed the earlier stream via Special Luke. John 12:1-8 seems to incorporate a conflation of both versions of the anointing story, as is demonstrated by the reference to Jesus' burial (cf. Mark 14:3-9; Matt. 26:6-13) as well as the anointing of Jesus' feet (cf. Luke 7:36-50).

The analysis in this chapter has shown that the tradition concerning the anointing of Jesus is most likely based on a much earlier tradition. This suggests that a specific action by a woman was recorded first orally and then by scribes. Even though she is not given an identity or a voice, the preservation of the anointing tradition enables the

ongoing remembrance of her actions. The canonical traditions present a paradox between the remembrance of this tradition, which honours the woman, and the patriarchal context that imposes shame on the woman. This disparity between honour and shame provides an ongoing challenge, especially concerning gender issues.

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Chapter Four

The women at the cross and the tomb

1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the selected canonical passages that speak of the woman who were present at the crucifixion of Jesus and who visited the site of Jesus internment in the tomb to watch the burial and also later to return to the burial site. Each passage will in turn be analysed by applying first redaction criticism, followed by tradition history. The first passage concerns the women at the cross, where they are described as watching the crucifixion (Mark 15:40-41; Matt. 27:55-56; Luke 23:49; John 19:25-27). The second passage, which has no parallel in John, places the women at the burial site, where they observe Jesus' body being inserted into the tomb (Mark 15:47; Matt. 27:61; Luke 23:54-56), and the third passage portrays the return of the women to Jesus' empty tomb to mourn (Mark 16:1-8; Matt. 28:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 12:1-13)

2. The women at the cross

a. Wailing women in Luke's passion narrative

Before analysing the three passages listed above, an earlier depiction is looked at briefly. Luke 23:27 portrays an incident pertaining to the women before they are found at the cross, in which the women following Jesus to Golgotha are portrayed as “beating their breasts and wailing”. This incident is not paralleled in the other three gospels, but it is worth noting in the context of an investigation of the women’s roles in the passion narrative. The clearest example of mourning as a funerary activity can be seen in the act of wailing and mourning by women in Luke’s account of the death of Jairus’ daughter (8:52). Although in this case, the mourning occurs after death, whereas the wailing in Luke 23:27 precedes Jesus’ death, it is helpful to observe some similarities between these cases. The women’s actions in Luke 8:52 are not reflected in Matthew’s story about Jairus’ daughter. However, Mark 5:38, like Luke 8:52, refers to loud wailing and mourning in relation to the death of Jairus’ daughter. Both Mark 5:38 and Luke 8:52 use the word κλαίω to describe the act of weeping. Even though Luke 23:27 contains ἐκόπτοντο and ἔθρηνουν, the description in 23:28 creates a link to the mourning at the death of Jairus’ daughter, since κλαίετε (Luke 23:28) is related to κλαίω, which suggests a similar meaning, in this case weeping in a mournful manner (Mark 5:38; Luke 8:52).

Wailing and lamenting formed a significant aspect of the mourning ritual in first century Palestine. Several biblical and apocryphal cases illustrate that lamenting formed a key element of the mourning custom (Deut. 34:8; Jud. 11:40; 2 Sa. 1:19; Jer. 22:18; Mark. 5:38-39; Sir. 38:16-17; 2 *Adam and Eve* 9:6, 10:8). Rabbinic sources describe women wailing in the context of a mourning rite (*mKet.* 4:4; *bSem.* 46b, 49b-50a). Tacitus, a Roman historian, also refers to lamenting within the framework of mourning (*Ann.* 3.4). This public portrayal of grief is a helpful aspect of the mourning

process, in that family members and friends are thus assisted to make any necessary adjustments to changes in the structure of their society (*Yoreh De'ah* 344).

As a critical part of the mourning process, lamenting was mostly carried out by women (4Q179, fr.2; *mM.K.* 28b; *bKet.* 46b, 48a). In many cases professional lamenting women were hired for a funeral (*m.Kat.* 1:5; *bSanh.* 47a; *Yoreh De'ah* 344:4; *Solon* 21.4). Occasionally the female lamenters were joined by women who clapped their hands (*mM.Kat* 3: 8-9). To illustrate the ability and responsibility of the women to express the lament of the society, Josephus writes, "The women, too, with beating of the breast manifested their emotion at his approaching death" (*Ant.* 4.320). In Sawicki's (1994: 255-257, 272) opinion, mourning was largely a feminine activity, because the women were thought to be in contact with major life transitions and therefore supposed to be able to give meaning to death.

While public mourning by women was a helpful element of the mourning process, it also bestowed honour on the deceased. Since the first-century Palestinian society was based on a system of honour and shame, it is not surprising that, as Crossan and Reed (2001: 246) state, executed persons were not honoured with a decent burial (2 Macc 13:7; *bSanh.* 47a-b; Eusebius *H. E.* 5.1.59) or any form of public mourning (*bSem.* 44a). Schottroff (1993: 171) notes that the refusal of an honourable burial constituted a part of the criminal's punishment, thereby further removing any shreds of honour to the death and burial of society's unwanted members (*B.J.* 2.307). Slain Israelites were buried often without shrouds (*Yoreh De'ah* 364:4), which is a further example of showing dishonour to the deceased since the custom calls for careful washing, anointing and wrapping of the body in plain shrouds so that the purity laws could be

upheld. McCane (2003: 96) writes that a dishonourable death meant that the corpse would not be laid into the family tomb, and that all mourning rites would be withheld.

Concerning wailing and lamenting, there is only one such description in the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives, which is in Luke 23:27-31. It seems that Luke either had access to a very different tradition, for example via Special Luke (cf. Fitzmyer 1985: 1494), or that Luke creatively inserted these verses as a redactional technique to create a connection between the previous and the following traditions. The verses surrounding Jesus' speech, Luke 23:26 and 23:32, might easily have been, as it seems in the case of the three other gospels, two consecutive parts within the same narrative. Therefore Luke probably authored v. 27, or alternatively was inspired by an earlier source.

Several sections within Luke 23:28-31 reflect passages in the Hebrew Bible. There are three noticeable parallels: Luke 23:29 corresponds to Jer. 16:1-4, Luke 23:30 to Hos. 10:8, and Luke 23:30 to Eze. 20:47 (cf. Brown 1994: 921). These connections point to the probability that Luke accessed the entire section including Luke 23:27 from a prior source (Fitzmyer 1985: 1494), and this could mean that Luke 23:27 is not a redactional interpolation created by Luke. But as the next section illustrates, this is not the only option.

The description of the women as a large group of wailing women who were moving with Jesus to Golgotha (Luke 23:27) sheds further light on the transmission of Luke 23:28-31. As observed earlier, rabbinic sources refer to professional lamenting women within the context of ancient Jewish mourning rites. This points to the

likelihood that Luke 23:27 refers to a group of professional lamenting women. But, the fact that these women are described as able to mourn openly and therefore publicly (cf. Luke 23:48), contrasts them to the women mentioned at a later stage in Luke 23:49, 55, who were unable to mourn publicly due to the dishonourable nature of Jesus' death and burial. The image of the women lamenting in public furthermore matches the socially expected funerary customs surrounding an honourable death and burial as opposed to a dishonourable death and burial. Accordingly a dishonourable crucifixion would not be connected to lamenting women, who wailed publicly. Although Marshall (1978: 863-864) comments that the mourning actions portrayed in Luke 23:27 would have been commonplace, the customs regarding a dishonourable death and burial seemed to have demanded different behaviour. In that case, it appears that based on the criterion of cultural dissimilarity, Luke 23:27 has its source in an earlier tradition. As Fitzmyer (1985: 1494) notes, Luke 23:27-31 may have been developed on the basis of pre-gospel material, such as Special Luke. But, as the next section will show, Luke 23:27 does not necessarily share the source of Luke 23:28-31.

Concerning a possible source for Luke 23:28-31, Brown (1994: 924) observes that Luke 23:28-31 is reminiscent of Logion 79 in the Gospel of Thomas. Since the genre of the Gospel of Thomas as a sayings gospel is unlike that of the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives, it cannot be assumed that Luke had depended on the Gospel of Thomas without further exploration. Blatz (1991) notes that the Gospel of Thomas contains no references to the death and resurrection of Jesus, which strengthens the possibility that Luke 23:28-31 is not based on the Gospel of Thomas, but rather on pre-gospel material, such as Special Luke. Crossan (1998: 312-313) links Special Luke to the Gospel of Thomas, for example Luke 17:20-21 and the

Gospel of Thomas 113:1-4. But in this case, sayings concerning the coming of the kingdom of God are compared. Returning to Brown's (1994: 924) suggested comparison between Luke 23:28-31 and the Gospel of Thomas 79:1-3, Crossan (1986: 106, 215) illustrates that the material in Luke 23:29 is comparable to that found in the Gospel of Thomas 79:3 (Fitzmyer 1985: 1494). This example shows that notwithstanding the difference in genre, it is possible to trace a saying recorded in the canonical gospels, particularly in Matthew and Luke, back to sources such as Q and the Gospel of Thomas, which have virtually no narrative material (cf. Crossan 1998: 144; 1986: xviii). Any further investigation of this topic will lead beyond the boundaries of this dissertation.

b. Redaction critical analysis

Unlike the Lukan tradition just examined that does not mention any women by name, Mark 15:40-41 mentions three prominent women from a large group of women who witnessed the resurrection. As Hooker (1991: 379) observes, Mark's identification of individual women in 15:40-41 appears quite unexpectedly; since this is the first time that Mark calls attention to women. Mark introduces Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph as well as Salome from within a group of women who had followed Jesus from Galilee and had ministered to him (cf. Matt. 27:55-56). Although Luke 23:49 does not identify the women by name, a group of women who had followed Jesus from Galilee are mentioned. John identifies a slightly different group of women, in which the only unambiguously shared character with Mark's list is

Mary Magdalene. The list in John 19: 25 consists of Mary the mother of Jesus, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

Regarding the actions of the women at the crucifixion, Moltmann-Wendel argues that the verb used in Mark and Matthew to describe the way in which the women are looking at the crucifixion scenes, θεωρέω (cf. Mark 15:40, 47; 16:4; Matt. 27:55), has a wider meaning than merely to watch, whereas Bauckham (2002: 297) interprets the “seeing” merely as a description of the women’s function as eyewitnesses. Moltmann-Wendel (1986: 130) considers that perception, understanding and communicative knowledge represent a part of the interpretation of the verb θεωρέω. This would imply that the women comprehended the wider meaning of the crucifixion as the salvation event mentioned in Mark 10:45 and 14:22-25. The verb θεωρέω appears in several different passages in Mark’s gospel where the emphasis is on both observation and perception, such as in 3:11, 5:15, 38 and 16:4. Extending Moltmann-Wendel’s (1986: 130) argument, it is possible that Mark used this word proleptically to point to Jesus’ resurrection. In this manner, Mark 15:40-41 appears to serve as the first part of an introduction to the women, who act as witnesses in 16:5, 9 (cf. Collins 1992: 129; Hooker 1991: 379). While Luke 23:49 parallels Mark 15:40 (Matt. 27:55), the verb ὀράω is chosen, which signifies looking in terms of witnessing and experiencing rather than perceiving. Fitzmyer (1985: 1521) suggests that Luke’s use of ὀράω indicates an introduction of the women as witnesses to the resurrection. Luke 23:48 contains the verb θεωρέω at a point at which the crowds observe Jesus. Brown (1994: 1167) notes that at this stage, compared to in Luke 23:40, the act of looking is not connected to the future act of witnessing. In John 19:25 the women are merely portrayed as standing near the cross.

The description of the women as followers of Jesus in Galilee suggests that these may have been female disciples of Jesus, even though Mark does not identify them as such in 15:40-41. It may be that Mark wanted to distinguish between the women who followed Jesus and the Twelve (cf. Stegemann 1996; Witherington 1990: 116). As observed, Mark 15:40-41 (Matt. 27:55-56) functions as an introduction to these women as future witnesses to the resurrection. But the allusion to the discipleship of these women attempts to create a sense of authority and necessary credibility required to allow these women to function as witnesses in the public sphere (cf. Witherington 1990: 117, 343; Beare 1981: 537). Within Ancient Judaism, women were not accepted as witnesses to a public event.

John's need to introduce the women as credible witnesses seems less pressing than in the case of the synoptics, since John's empty tomb narrative, unlike the synoptics, describes Peter and the "beloved disciple" as finding the tomb empty (20:1-9), although the first christophany is thereafter recorded as having occurred to Mary Magdalene (20:16). The "beloved disciple" is peculiar to John (Brown 1970b: 922). Recalling John's preponderance for symbolic language, the "beloved disciple" may represent the ideal Christian (cf. Brown 1994: 1022-1022, 1026). Crossan (1998: 562) suggests that the "beloved disciple" is exalted over Peter and Mary Magdalene. This strengthens the probability that the "beloved disciple" is used as a symbol for the ideal disciple, or the ideal believer. Mary the mother of Jesus appears first on John's list of women in 19:25, based on her newly defined relationship to the "beloved disciple" in the following verses (John 19:26-27). Fortna (1988: 184) suggests that John features Jesus' mother at this point, which can be taken as the conclusion of Jesus' earthly

“revelatory activity in the world”, to create a balance to her appearance at the inception of Jesus’ Messianic activities at the wedding in Cana (John 2:1-11).

In contrast to the synoptics, John 19:25 describes the women and the “beloved disciple” as standing near to the cross (εἰστήκεισαν δὲ παρὰ τῷ σταυρῷ) as opposed to standing at a distance from the cross in Mark 15:40 (ἀπὸ μακρόθεν θεωροῦσαι) (cf. Matt. 27:55) and in Luke 23:49 (ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ... ὀρώσαι). Since Jesus’ crucifixion was a dishonourable death, as was the custom in Ancient Judaism, friends and family would not have been able to mourn publicly. If they had been visibly connected to an alleged criminal by mourning the death of the alleged criminal, they would probably have suffered consequences echoing the type of death suffered by the object of their lament (cf. *bSem.* 44a; Philo, *In Flaccum* 72; Tacitus, *Ann.* 6.19). Massyngbaerde Forde (1997: 192) suggests that the proximity of the women in John illustrates the desire of the women to confront Jesus’ death, while enabling Jesus’ directives to be understood by the group at the cross. John’s location concerning the women including Mary the mother of Jesus and the “beloved disciple” at the foot of the cross certainly made Jesus’ instructions feasible. Even though the location of the group at the cross appears to be logical, it does not match up with culturally expected traditional behaviour, according to which the mourners would have found a less obvious position. This indicates, that notwithstanding the lack of overpowering evidence, based on the criterion of cultural dissimilarity, it is possible that the portrayed scene in John 19:25-27 rests on a certain degree of historicity (cf. Schnackenburg 1982: 281-282).

Although earlier on, the ambiguity regarding the discipleship of women was touched on very briefly, at this point a further discussion of the issue of women followers as disciples is necessary since little attention is usually given to this phenomenon. Meier (2001: 79) argues that women could not have functioned as disciples, since μαθητής is masculine and has no feminine equivalent. This imposes a rigid correlation between grammatical and biological gender. Acts 9:36 describes Tabitha as a μαθήτρια, which is the feminine form of μαθητής (Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988: 381). Barrett (1994: 477) argues, “Luke almost certainly means a Christian disciple, though it is conceivable that his source intended one belonging to a different religious group”. But the passages examined in this dissertation do not make use of the overtly feminine form μαθήτρια, which leaves the discipleship of women included in the collective noun for men as the topic under discussion at this point. Moltmann-Wendel and Moltmann (1983: 49) suggest that the link between service, διακονία, and discipleship (cf. John 12:26), as well as the concealment of the role of women through the use of androcentric language in the gospels (Schottroff 1993; cf. Bauckham 2002: 282-283; 1156; Schmetterer 1989: 91-98) indicate that the women identified in the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives are probably female disciples of Jesus. Schüssler Fiorenza (1983: 45) writes, “the passages of the New Testament that directly mention women do so because such women were exceptional or their actions had become a problem”. When applying this line of thought, the women are mentioned because as exceptional human beings, they could be counted as disciples of Jesus (cf. Carter 2000: 538). Moreover, as King (1998: 76-77) observes, the exceptional amount of courage required to enter the tomb of an alleged criminal and to then as female witnesses in a patriarchal society spread the news that Jesus had been resurrected, enables these women to be described as “model disciples”. Only

recently scholars have begun to acknowledge and to appreciate the significant roles played by women in the leadership of the communities described in the gospels (Horsley 2001: 203-204). The patriarchal social structure in first-century Palestine would have discouraged any female activity in the public sphere, such as accompanying an itinerant preacher from Galilee to Judea (cf. Evans 1990b: 122; Stambaugh & Balch 1986: 104), therefore we can, on the basis of the criterion of cultural dissimilarity, accept that women as disciples formed a section of Jesus' followers who stepped outside their normal cultural roles to be publicly recognised supporters of Jesus (cf. Stegemann 1996; Ricci 1994: 179-195; Albright & Mann 1971: 352). Concerning the role of Mary Magdalene, Ricci (1994: 192) suggests that she functioned as "apostola apostolorum", which essentially means that she was sent to the apostles to give them a message that they were to send into the world, since the Greek verb ἀποστέλλω means to send, and the Greek noun ἀπόστολος denotes an apostle or alternatively a messenger. Presumably the meaning of the Latin expression can be traced back to the Greek words discussed in the previous sentence. Since Mary Magdalene was chosen as the first to encounter the risen Christ and also as the first to proclaim the resurrection, she functioned as a fully-fledged disciple (Barton 1994: 59; Atwood 1993: 215; Witherington 1990: 117; Schüssler Fiorenza 1983: 332).

Given that women were not generally accepted as witnesses in the public sphere in first-century Palestine, male witnesses at the tomb and reports of the first christophanies to men would have been much more acceptable, as is evident by the Pauline list of male only witnesses to the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:3-8). This probably indicates a trend to suppress evidence regarding female disciples and their activities in the early Christian traditions.

c. Tradition history

Fenton (1963: 445) observes a connection between the synoptic descriptions of the women watching the crucifixion from a distance and Psalm 38:11. While it is not feasible to examine Fenton's (1963: 445) observation closely in the scope of this dissertation, it is worth mentioning that Luke 23:49 appears to be a redactional development of Mark 15:40-41. The phrase used to describe the women's position as standing at a distance from the cross in Mark 15:41 (ἀπὸ μακρόθεν θεωροῦσαι) is strikingly similar to the description in Luke 23:49 (ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ... ὀρῶσαι) suggesting that Luke was aware of Mark's material and phraseology at this point (cf. Nolland 1993: 1159). Luke, therefore, appears to have accessed Mark, although unlike Mark 15:40-41, Luke 23:49 does not include a list of the names of the women. Recalling earlier observations regarding Luke's sources, it is possible that Luke's deviation from Mark's material stems from a knowledge of pre-gospel material, such as Special Luke. But, as Marshall (1978: 877) observes, Luke probably redacted the material from Mark resulting in an exclusion of the names of the women to avoid repetition, since Luke 8:2 contains a list of names.

Given that the women are depicted in the synoptics as mourning privately and out of sight, which agrees with the funerary customs regarding a dishonourable death and burial, it is feasible to suggest that the synoptic texts (Mark 15:40-41; Matt. 27:55-56; Luke 23:49) function as an introduction to the women who become the primary witnesses to Jesus' death and resurrection. As Crossan (1998: 556, 559) observes, this

was probably not based on historical occurrences. These passages seem to form a redactional insertion to introduce and add credence to the women, in order to authenticate the testimony to the resurrection. Crossan's (1991: 445) classification of the passages dealing with the women at the cross as an example of single attestation in the second stratum does not offer sufficient evidence to alter the description of these passages as redactional interpolations. But the criterion of cultural dissimilarity strengthens the case for redactional interpolations, based on the correspondence of the depicted behaviour with culturally expected behaviour.

In the case of John 19:25-27, as mentioned earlier, Mary the mother of Jesus and the "beloved disciple's" nearness to the cross is not consistent with the funerary customs regarding a dishonourable death, unlike the scenario painted in the synoptics (cf. Brown 1994: 1013, 1970b: 904; Barrett 1978: 552). Also, the characters are different. For example, Mary the mother of Jesus and the "beloved disciple" are highlighted in John but are not mentioned in the synoptic gospels. Yet John's list of women includes Mary Magdalene, who is a prominent character in the synoptic passion and empty tomb narratives. Apart from his redactional activities, the disparity between John's account and that of the synoptists suggests that John had an extra-canonical source (cf. Fortna 1988: 185). Brown (1970b: 922) observes that since Mary Magdalene plays a significant part in Mark 15:40-41 (cf. Matt. 27:55-56) as well as in John 19:25-27, she probably featured in an earlier form of the traditions. As in the synoptic versions, John's reference to the women functions as an introduction to Mary Magdalene, who later takes on the highly unlikely and unexpected role as public witness to the risen Christ and subsequent public announcer of Jesus' resurrection.

3. The women watching the burial

a. Redaction critical analysis

In Mark 15:47, Matt. 27:61 and Luke 23:54-56 the women are described as observing the location and procedure of Jesus' burial. John, however, makes no mention of the women at the point of Jesus' burial. Similarly to the previous passage, the portrayal of the women observing silently from a certain distance reflects possible socially expected behaviour concerning a dishonourable burial. Swartley (1997: 21) suggests that the repeated identification of the women attempts to increase the credibility of the women with regard to their culturally unaccepted role as public witnesses. In addition, an account of the women witnessing the actual process of Jesus' burial indicates that they would not have mistaken the location of Jesus' tomb upon their return to the tomb after the Sabbath (Schweizer 1984: 364; Nineham 1963: 432). Lane (1974: 581) points out that the synoptic pericopes can structurally be viewed as both a conclusion to the passion narrative as well as an introduction to the empty tomb narrative.

Archaeological evidence indicates that according to custom people who had been crucified were left to rot on the cross, or to be eaten by wild animals (Crossan & Reed 2001: 245-246; Nineham 1963: 435). Although, as Schottroff (1993: 171) writes, ordinarily burial as well as mourning for hanged people was prohibited, the Hebrew Bible requires that the body of a (Jewish) hanged person be taken down before nightfall (Deut. 21:22-23). At this point it is unclear whether Jewish sensibilities were taken into account by the Roman administration in Palestine, and whether this led to

Jewish corpses being removed from the crosses for burial, which presumably meant burial in a common grave, before nightfall on the day of execution (cf. McCane 2003: 92-95). Ignoring the issue of Jewish sensibilities, ancient Jewish funerary customs indicate that Jesus' burial in a tomb as described in the canonical gospels contradicts the expected sequel to his death by crucifixion.

The synoptic references to the women observing the location and the process of Jesus' burial seem to be the product of redacting skills, because the portrayal of the women matches the culturally expected actions of women with regard to a dishonourable death and burial. The portrayal of the women in Mark 15:47 is different to that in Matt. 27:61. According to Mark the two Marys saw where Jesus was laid. Their act of seeing is described by the verb θεωρέω, which is the same verb used by Mark 15:40-41 to describe the women as seeing but also as perceiving beyond the immediate crucifixion. Matt. 27:61 deviates from the usual mirroring of Mark's material, in that the woman, two Marys, are depicted as sitting opposite the sepulchre (καθήμεναι ἀπέναντι τοῦ τάφου). Luke 23:54-56 once again does not incorporate a list of names, but the female followers of Jesus are described as observing both the tomb as well as how Jesus was laid into the tomb (εθεάσαντο τὸ μνημεῖον καὶ ὡς ἐτέθη τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ). The slight differences in the phraseology and descriptions are most likely the result of creative redactional editing.

The tomb is described slightly differently in each of the canonical versions. Mark 15:46 states that Jesus was laid in a rock-hewn tomb (μνημεῖον ... ἐκ πέτρας). Matt. 27:60 embellishes on this, adding that it had been hewn for Joseph's own burial (ἐν τῷ καινῷ αὐτοῦ μνημεῖον ὃ ἐλατόμησεν ἐν τῇ πέτρᾳ). Luke 23:53 echoes

Matthew's description in that the tomb was unused and new (ἐν μνήματι λαξευτῷ, οὐ οὐκ ἦν οὐδὲς οὐπω κείμενος). John 19:41 locates Jesus' burial in a new tomb in a garden where no one had ever been laid (κῆπος, καὶ ἐν τῷ κήπῳ μνημεῖον καινὸν ἐν ᾧ οὐδέπω οὐδείς). These trends suggest a desire to enhance the honour with which Jesus was buried.

b. Tradition history

As is most often the case, Matt. 27:61 essentially reflects Mark 15:47, for example both versions list Mary Magdalene and a further Mary. Marshall (1978: 879) writes, "[t]he general historicity of the account is dependant [on] Mark's narrative". Brown (1994: 1252) supports this view by indicating that Luke 23:54-56 seems to be loosely based on Mark's account in 15:47. This does not preclude redactional editing, as observed in the previous section (Fitzmyer 1985: 1523). John does not offer a parallel text to the synoptic portrayals of the women observing the burial. The fact that John's witnesses consist of one woman and two men decreases or even cancels out the need to further authenticate his trio of witnesses, whereas Matthew and Luke use a trio of women (cf. Deut. 19:15). The next section will demonstrate that the mention of the women at the burial site serves as a part of a deliberate introduction to the women in the synoptics.

4. The women return to the burial site

a. Redaction critical analysis

Textual evidence concerning the vocabulary and the rhetorical tone in the style of Mark 16:9-20 compared to 16:1-8 suggests that Mark originally ended at 16:8, and that 16:9-20 constitutes a later appendix influenced by the empty tomb traditions in Matthew and Luke and recorded by a different author compared to the gospel writer of the main body of Mark's gospel (cf. Hurtado 1989: 283; Beare 1981: 541; Metzger 1971: 122-126). In addition, the lack of contextual flow from Mark 16:8 to v. 9 (Metzger 1971: 125) further indicates that 16:9-20 represents a later supplement to the gospel, which is supported by the absence of 16:9-20 from the two oldest accessible Greek manuscripts (Metzger 1971: 122)³. Whilst Donahue and Harrington (2002: 460) assume that the last pages of Mark's gospel had been misplaced, Nineham (1963: 439-442) insists that Mark 16:8 is an unlikely ending, due to references in 14:28 and 16:7 to christophanies to the disciples in Galilee (cf. Taylor 1999).

Given that similar women are identified in the canonical empty tomb narratives, it is possible that the four gospel writers shared a common knowledge of an earlier tradition. Mark 16:1 lists Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome. Matt. 28:1 identifies Mary Magdalene and an "other" Mary. Even though Luke's

³ Seventh, eighth and ninth century Greek, Latin, Syriac and Ethiopic manuscripts incorporate two sentences following Mark 16:8 as an alternative to Mark 16:9-20 (Metzger 1971:123-124). Since women do not feature in the alternative form, this "shorter ending" will not be subjected to interrogation in the scope of this dissertation. But for the sake of completion I will include the alternative text here:

Πάντα δε τὰ παρηγγελμένα τοῖς περὶ τὸν Πέτρον συντόμως ἐξήγγειλαν. Μετὰ δε ταῦτα καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς καὶ δύσεως ἐξαπέστειλεν δι' αὐτῶν τὸ ἱερὸν καὶ ἄφθαρτον κήρυγμα τῆς αἰωνίου σωτηρίας.

empty tomb narrative does not provide a list of women at the start of the narrative, 24:10 states that Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Mary the mother of James within a group of unnamed women were the first witnesses. Nolland (1993: 1193) notes that Luke connects the identification of the women to their role as witnesses. Luke's list (24:10) appears to have merged the names found in Mark 16:1 and in Luke 8:2, at which points Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Susanna are introduced. John 20:1-18, on the other hand, appears to have incorporated a tradition concerning Mary the mother of Jesus within the empty tomb narrative (cf. Karris 1994: 13; Dodd 1965: 126).

Peter is unexpectedly featured in Mark 16:7 in connection to the list of people, who subsequently form the initial audience to the women's proclamation as witnesses to the empty tomb. Fuller (1972: 51, 53) argues that Mark 16:7 is a redactional interpolation added at the time when the longer ending was appended to the gospel, functioning as a source of continuity between v. 6 and v. 8. In Mark, the women are urged to report to Peter and the other disciples that Jesus had been raised. Overman (1996: 398) observes that "[d]espite the emphasis placed on Peter in Matthew's [g]ospel, in Matthew's version of the resurrection narrative Peter does not warrant particular mention". Similarly to the request made in Mark 16:7, the women witness to Peter as well as a group of men in Luke 24:9-10, although Peter reportedly returns to the burial site to inspect the grave (Luke 24:12). John's empty tomb narrative presents a noticeable departure from the synoptic narratives, since having observed that the stone had been moved away from the entrance to the burial, Mary Magdalene is portrayed as running to Peter without entering the open tomb (20:1-2). Peter, as the first person to enter Jesus' tomb, notes the grave clothes and the napkin that covered Jesus' head rolled up separately (John 20:6-7). But he does not encounter unknown

men (νεανίσκον, Mark 16:5 and ἄνδρες, Luke 24:4-5) or angels (ἄγγελος, Matt. 28:2-4) in or at the entrance to the tomb. Haenchen (1984: 309) argues that the inclusion of Peter in both Luke 24:12 and John 20:1-2 and vv. 6-7 suggest that in this case Luke and John portrayed a common earlier source.

Albright and Mann (1971: 358) regard Matt. 28:2-4 (cf. Luke 24:2-5) as a dramatically embellished version of the women's encounter with the young man in Mark 16:3-8. Matthew appears to have been aware of Mark's material, since the women's return in Matt. 28:1 summarises Mark 16:1-2, and the communication with the women in Matt. 28:1-8a reflects Mark 16:6-8a. For example, Mark 16:7 and Matt. 28:7 share the following phrase: προάγει ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν, ἐκεῖ αὐτὸν ὄψεσθε ... εἶπ[]ν ὑμῖν (he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as you have been told). Furthermore, the phrase οὐκ ἔστιν ὧδε is contained within Mark 16:6, Matt. 28:6 as well as in Luke 24:5. This indicates the probability that the three synoptic versions of the women's return to the empty tomb ultimately stem from the same earlier pre-gospel tradition. Luke 24:1b states that the women took spices (ἀρώματα) to the tomb. Similarly Mark 16:1 portrays the women as having acquired spices (ἀρώματα) with the intention of anointing Jesus. This points to Luke having had access to Mark's account. John may have been aware of Mark's narrative, since Mary Magdalene's return to the tomb John 20:1a is in some ways similar to Mark 16:1-3 concerning Mary Magdalene's and the observation that the stone had been rolled back from the entrance to the tomb. John and Mark as well as Matthew stipulate that Mary Magdalene returns to Jesus' tomb. Luke identifies Mary Magdalene in the context of her function as a witness to the resurrection (24:10). John was probably familiar with Luke's material, because the timing of the return in John

20:1a ([τῆ] δε μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων) mirrors that of Luke 24:1a perfectly (cf. Haenchen 1984: 309).

Notwithstanding the argument for a connection between the canonical narratives, the portrayal of Mary Magdalene in John 20:2-10 depicts a less important role compared to the role of the women as described in the synoptics (Mark 16:2-8; Matt. 28:2-8; Luke 24:2-12). John describes Mary Magdalene as seeing the open entrance to the tomb, but instead of Mary Magdalene, Peter and the “beloved disciple” enter the tomb. After their inspection of the empty tomb, the “beloved disciple” is portrayed as believing in the resurrection resulting in a similar function to the angelic beings in Mark and Matthew (Brown 1970b: 1000, 1004). Haenchen (1984: 208) makes an interesting point that Mary Magdalene could hardly be depicted as weeping in John 20:11, if she had shared the belief of the “beloved disciple”. The pronounced departure from the synoptic traditions added to the narrative progression in John 20:4-7 and the introduction to a “beloved disciple” in John’s empty tomb narrative suggest redactional intent (cf. Fortna 1988: 196-197; Haenchen 1984: 309, 311). As discussed earlier, customarily women in first-century Palestine were not endowed with the necessary authority required to function as credible witnesses in the public sphere (cf. Myllykoski 1991: 82-83). It is therefore possible that John intentionally decreased the role of Mary Magdalene as a public witness to the resurrection in reaction to the norms in the patriarchal first-century Mediterranean society. This indicates a trend to suppress the role of women in the early church, since, as pointed out earlier, the inclusion of Peter and the “beloved disciple” as the first humans to enter and observe the empty tomb is probably the result of a creative redactional insert by the writer of

John's gospel, which serves to authenticate the reports of the resurrection (cf. Brown 1970b: 1004; Dodd 1965: 149).

Given that Jesus would have suffered a dishonourable burial, at least in the impression of the public, it is questionable whether the women could have openly returned to his burial site to mourn (cf. Matt. 28:1; John 20:1) and to anoint his body (cf. Mark 16:1-2; Luke 24:1). Rabbinic writings indicate that Jews customarily returned to the tomb to examine the body of the deceased within three days after death to prevent an accidental burial of a person who was still alive (*mBer.* 3:2; *bSem.* 47a). John 11:31 portrays Mary of Bethany returning to Lazarus' grave to mourn. Concerning the burial of Jesus, the *Gospel of Peter* (12:50-51) describes Mary Magdalene returning to the tomb, to weep and lament at Jesus' sepulchre. The dishonourable nature of Jesus' death, as pointed out earlier, would prohibit public mourning. The Acts of Pilate illustrates this point in 13:2 (cf. *Gospel of Peter* 21:52), in which the Jews asked the guards why they had not seized the women waiting at the tomb.

The canonical gospel writers have dealt with this issue in different ways. John 20:1 alludes to a secretive return to Jesus' tomb by describing that at that time it was still dark (πρωτὶ σκοτίας ἐπι οὔσης). Likewise, Matt. 28:1 gives the time as late on the Sabbath ([ο]ψὲ δε σαββάτων), meaning before dawn. Mark 16:2 clearly places the return after sunrise (ἀνατείλαντος τοῦ ἡλίου), whereas Luke 24:1 locates the return at dawn (ὄρθρου), although the use of βαθέως suggests a sense of depth hinting at a dark moment before sunrise. Mark's version stands in contrast to the socially expected behaviour at that time, since in Mark, the women are described as openly

and therefore publicly returning to Jesus' tomb not only to mourn, but specifically to anoint Jesus' body.

In the previous chapter the anointing of the body was understood as an integral part of the ancient Jewish burial and mourning customs (cf. Witherington 1988: 165). According to Sawicki (1994: 255-257, 272), this custom was predominantly performed by women. Although Matt. 28:1 and John 20:1-2 allude to the custom to return to the burial site to mourn (cf. Sawicki 1994: 255), Mark 16:1 and Luke 24:1 motivate the return by the intention to anoint Jesus' body. The intended act of anointing might have transformed the dishonourable burial into an honourable burial. Apart from the planned anointing, the mourning at the tomb and the wrapping of Jesus' body as well as his interment into an honourable burial site as opposed to a shallow mass grave point to a process in which the gospel writers attempt to attach honour to the death and burial of Jesus to varying degrees. John's description of Jesus' burial location as a new tomb in a garden (19:41) compared to a rock-hewn tomb in Mark 15:46 demonstrates this process.

D'Angelo (1999b: 138) suggests that the synoptists compare faithful women to faithless men, since the male disciples desert Jesus, while the female disciples remain in Jesus' vicinity. Peter denies Jesus three times in the canonical gospels (Mark 14: 66-72; Matt. 26: 69-75; Luke 22: 56-71; John 18:15-18, 25-27), which may impact on his overt inclusion in Mark 16:7 and John 20: 2-10 where his salvation is assured and seemingly restored (cf. Zerwick & Grosvenor 1988: 165). Brown (1970b: 983) bases the inclusion of Peter on the impression that Peter had not deserted Jesus as John 18:27 locates Peter near Jesus during the occasion of Peter's three-fold denial of

Jesus. But Peter is included in only two of the four empty tomb narratives, whereas his three-fold denial and dubious desertion are found in all four gospels. Hence a correlation between Peter's denial and his apparent restoration seems doubtful.

The presence of the women, who remained near Jesus at his death and mourned for his death, is also contrasted to the absence of the men, with the possible exception of Peter. Nonetheless, Mark 16:8 portrays the women as too feeble to proclaim the resurrection, which illustrates a type of desertion of Jesus. In that case, as Schottroff (1993: 101) suggests, neither the female nor the male disciples, excluding Peter, have fulfilled their roles since both cases demonstrate a form of desertion and unbelief (cf. Donahue & Harrington 2002: 461).

Although at first glance the women's reactions in Mark 16:8 are opposed to those described in Matt. 28:8, it is noteworthy that the verb used to indicate fear of the women in Mark 16:8 (ἐφοβοῦντο) is based on the same root as the noun signifying fear in Matt. 28:8 (φόβου). However, the expression οὐδενί οὐδέν (nothing to anybody) in Mark 16:8 is sufficiently similar to related expressions used by Mark, for example οὐκ ... οὐδέν (Mark 14:50; not...anything), and οὐκέτι ... οὐδέν (Mark 7:12; 15:5; nothing more), to match Mark's rhetorical style. This suggests that the gospel writers attached different strands of similar pre-gospel traditions. Nevertheless, as Hooker (1991: 387) points out, trembling and terror are common Markan themes, which would also be expected to feature in the empty tomb narrative (cf. Lane 1974: 592). On a more practical note, as mentioned earlier, the women had to return to the grave secretly; therefore they placed themselves in danger by their presence at or in the tomb. According to Schüssler Fiorenza (1983: 322), this element of danger

caused the women to run away in fear (cf. Mark 16:8). Lane (1974: 590) argues that the women's alleged inability to proclaim the resurrection in Mark may stem from the devout Jewish expectation and belief that the occurrence of the resurrection would immediately signal the end of the world. In that case, it is curious that Matthew's gospel, which is assumed to have been aimed at a Jewish audience, portrays a different reaction to the empty tomb and the angelic direction (cf. 28:8). Crossan (1998: 560) offers the explanation that Matthew creatively rephrased Mark's narrative to convert disobedience to obedience. The issues of fear and subsequent silence of the women require further investigation, which is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

To wrap up this section, a number of observations can be made. All four narratives seem to connect with one or more of the remaining three narratives, hence it is likely that a much earlier pre-gospel tradition had developed and split into a number of different strands. John contains a Petrine tradition that is excluded from the synoptic narratives. The return journey of the women is clearly made secretly in three of the four accounts, which matches the socially expected behaviour concerning a mournful yet dishonourable death and burial. Except for in Luke, the return journey incorporates a list of the women, who later become the witnesses to the resurrection. The synoptic passion and empty tomb narratives identify the women three times. This decreases the surprise at their function as witnesses to the resurrection. Furthermore, the identification of two or three women in the synoptic narratives reflects a Jewish concern regarding acceptable testimonies. In the Hebrew Bible and in the New Testament different sources state, "a matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses" (Deut. 19:15; cf. Matt. 18:16; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 John 5:7). This suggests a reason for the number of women named in the synoptic passion and empty

tomb narratives. John also uses three individuals by adding the “beloved disciple” to Mary Magdalene and Peter. Based on the criterion of cultural similarity and on the observations regarding the two previously examined canonical passages, it appears that these three passages including Luke 24:10 form a three-fold redactional introduction (cf. Collins 1992: 129; Fitzmyer 1985: 1541-1542; Lane 1974: 585), which serves to increase the credibility of the women as public witnesses to the resurrection even though the patriarchal societal order of first-century Palestine railed against women functioning in the public sector (cf. Bauckham 2002: 260, 288). Although the intention of the synoptic three-fold introduction appears to be redactional, based on the criterion of cultural dissimilarity, the latter parts of the empty tomb narratives featuring the women’s encounters at and inside the empty tomb appear to be based on pre-gospel traditions that to some extent reflect historical events.

b. Tradition history

Excluding the list of the names of the women, the four passages reflect different strands of a much earlier pre-gospel tradition (cf. Brown 1970b: 1004). Having said that, there are distinct connections between the synoptic versions. The synoptic similarities regarding the inclusion of the women in the texts suggest a redactional three-fold introduction to the women. Quite likely Mark engineered the technique, which was followed by Matthew, who embellished Mark’s account somewhat. Luke probably altered the sequence in his narrative (cf. Luke 24:10), since 8:2 had already included a list of the names of the women, who were to feature at the empty tomb.

Notwithstanding the similarities between Luke 24:12 and John 20:3-7, Luke's narrative supports the synoptic three-fold introduction, whereas John's narrative incorporates at least two if not three different traditions 20:1-18. Even so, John and Luke share certain features that suggest a connection between the two accounts (cf. Luke 24:1; John 20:1). Concerning the identities of the women, the recurrence of Mary Magdalene's name in the four narratives strongly suggests that she, as the leader of the female apostles, featured in an earlier pre-gospel empty tomb tradition.

5. Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted a number of issues. One of these is seen in the comparison between the overt mourning in Luke 23:27 and the secretive acts of mourning described in the synoptic versions of the women at the cross, the women watching the burial process as well as the women's return to the burial site. Luke's description of public mourning cuts against what would have been culturally expected of women in the case of a dishonourable death. Therefore, based on the criterion of cultural dissimilarity, the passage illustrating the lamenting women in Luke 23:27 seems to be based on an earlier tradition.

In contrast to Luke's openly lamenting women, the synoptic narratives create a picture of secretive and furtive activities as we have seen. The women are described as standing at a distance from the cross, then secretively watching the process of Jesus' burial, and returning furtively to the grave, after which follows an interaction between the women and men or angels at the tomb. The cautious behaviour of the

women can be compared to socially expected funerary customs within Ancient Judaism. This suggests that these renditions probably do not reflect an earlier tradition. John's portrayal of Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus engaging with Jesus and another male disciple at the cross cuts against the socially expected behaviour. In this case, the application of the criterion of cultural dissimilarity would point to the possibility of an earlier Johannine source.

As observed earlier, Mark seems to have exercised his creative skills, whereas Matthew embellished Mark's account. Although, as Fitzmyer (1985) points out, Luke may have relied on Special Luke from time to time, it is highly probable that Luke was aware of Mark's material and developed his material using redactional skills (cf. Nolland 1993). John and Luke also share certain features (cf. Luke 24:1; John 20:1). Mark's inclusion of Peter (16:7) may have played a role in John's narrative, but the evidence at this point is not overwhelming. But aside from John's possible extra-canonical sources, at certain instances it appears that John has had some knowledge of Mark's and also Luke's versions (cf. Barrett 1978). Those synoptic sections that list the names of women seem to shape a three-fold redactional introduction to the women in an attempt to raise the level of credibility of the women as witnesses within a patriarchal society that restricted women to the private sphere. This observation is supported by the criterion of cultural dissimilarity as well as the Jewish requirement of two or three witnesses, which is echoed in John's account by the use of Mary Magdalene, Peter and the "beloved witness".

Chapter Five

The Christophany

1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will examine the canonical resurrection christophany accounts, which narrate encounters of women with the risen Jesus. Given that the christophany (16:9-11) is contained in Mark's longer ending, the Markan priority cannot be assumed for this section. Nor can it be held that Matthew's parallel passage (28:9-10) follows Mark's account, even though Matthew's gospel has largely depended on Mark's material up to this point. While Mark's account of the christophany has probably been recorded after those of the remaining canonical gospels, I will continue with the sequence of analyses used in the earlier chapters. This means that in order to maintain the earlier pattern of discussions, Mark's version will be considered at the outset. Luke's gospel has not preserved a christophany tradition.

2. The Christophany

a. Redaction critical analysis

Given that Mark's endings have been studied to some extent in the previous chapter, the change in authorship does not need to be discussed here. But a few additional remarks concerning the longer ending (16:9-20) will be helpful in the examination of the christophany to Mary Magdalene in Mark 16:9-11. According to Donahue and Harrington (2002: 462), the longer ending can be dated around the second half of the second century CE (cf. Nineham 1963: 450). As a collection of various contracted versions of traditions recorded in the other gospels, particularly in Luke (Donahue & Harrington 2002: 462), the longer ending may have been created and appended to Mark's gospel after 16:8 with the intention of supporting the empty tomb narrative by the records of resurrection appearances (Donahue & Harrington 2002: 463; Witherington 1988: 162-163). Furthermore, the resurrection accounts initiate and emphasize the universal mission, which radically expands the ministry of Jesus from within the borders of Israel to all nations (Davies & Allison 1997: 684). Examples of contracted reports of resurrection appearances include the Emmaus story in Mark 16:12-14 and the appearance of Jesus to the eleven during their meal in v. 14, which echo Luke 24:13-32 and vv. 36-43. While the Markan priority does not necessarily hold for the longer ending of Mark, some scholars have suggested that Mark's longer ending reflects other canonical passages, for example Matt. 28:9-10 and possibly 28:16-20 (Witherington 1990: 227; pace Green 1975: 227). Crossan (1998: 559) regards the longer ending as neither pre-Markan nor Markan, but as post-Markan, created by Matthew and John. This observation is debatable, although in essence the references to proclaim the gospel to all nations, as opposed to Israel only (cf. Luke 24:47), and to baptize (βαπτίζω) are found in Mark 16:15-16 as well as in Matt. 28:19. Given that John uses a great deal of metaphorical language and symbols, it is possible, that the story concerning Jesus and the miraculous catch of fish in John

21:1-23 can be read as an allegory illustrating the growing mission, while bestowing Peter with a specific form of authority to lead the church (cf. Brown 1970b: 1112-1117).

Collins (1992: 116-117) puts forward an interesting proposal concerning the original ending of the main body of text in Mark's gospel by suggesting that Mark 15:39 represents the conclusion to the original pre-gospel passion narrative, since according to Collins, the particulars of the tomb and the resurrection are rather vague and the writing style changes somewhat at that point. The public confession of the centurion in Mark 15:39 provides a fitting hiatus in the narrative. Moreover, Matt. 27:45 mirrors the exclamation in Mark 15:39 (υἱὸς Θεοῦ ἦν), thereby verifying the four-source theory and the Markan priority up to this point in Mark's gospel. But parts of the text in Mark 15:40-41 can be located in Matt. 27:55-56, which remark that Ἦσαν δὲ [] γυναῖκες [] ἀπὸ μακρόθεν θεωροῦσαι (Mark 15:40; Matt. 27:55). This suggests that Mark 15:39 does not serve as a former ending to Mark's gospel.

Even though Luke possesses no resurrection tradition in relation to Mary Magdalene, Brown (1994: 1170-1171) suggests that Acts 13:31 expects the christophany to the women to have taken place. But the emphasis of this dissertation is on the selected gospel passages, which means that this chapter is primarily concerned with the passages in Mark 16:9-11, Matt. 28:9-10 and John 20:11-18. The description of Mary Magdalene as the person, in whom seven evil spirits (δαίμόνια ἑπτὰ) had resided, is found in both Luke 8:2 and in Mark 16:9. This points to the likelihood that the creator and collator of Mark 16:9-20 knew of the tradition, from which the description of the Galilean women followers of Jesus had emerged (cf. Luke 24:10). In contrast,

Fitzmyer (1970: 695) argues that the tradition including the post-demonic Mary Magdalene may well feature in Luke's gospel based on her inclusion in Special Luke. But thus far, textual examination has suggested both a dependence on Mark's material as well as redactional skill. Matthew appears to make use of comparisons to underline his particular theological message by exhibiting an artistic correlation between the women (28:8) and the guards (28:15): both groups gather at the tomb (28:1; cf. 27:66), both groups observe an angel (28:5; cf. 28:4), both groups experience fear (28:8; cf. 28:4), and both groups head off to inform others (28:8; cf. 28:11). There is one significant distinction between these two groups: the women give a truthful account of their experiences at Jesus' tomb (cf. Matt. 28:16), whereas the guards are bribed to lie (Matt. 28:12-15) (Davies & Allison 1997: 659, 670-674). Nevertheless, by reporting to the chief priests (Matt. 28:11) what they had experienced at the tomb (Matt. 28:2-4), the guards unintentionally functioned as the earliest non-Christian witnesses to the empty tomb.

Matthew adds an interesting detail to the account of the women's encounter with the risen Jesus, in that the women are portrayed as taking hold of Jesus' feet and worshipping him in 28:9 (ἐκράτησαν αὐτοῦ τοὺς πόδας καὶ προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ). Davies and Allison (1997: 669) suggest that Matthew intended to highlight Jesus' new status as a resurrected being as opposed to a ghost, since ghosts apparently do not possess feet. Since Mark, in general, appears to draw attention to the human characteristics of Jesus (cf. Moltmann-Wendel 1987: 102), Matthew by relying greatly on Mark's accounts mirrors these attributes from time to time. It is therefore possible that Matthew's description of Jesus' feet reflects Mark's attitude. But the only comparable portrayal reflecting Matthew's depiction of the women taking hold

of Jesus' feet and humbly kneeling before Jesus as a physically resurrected being can be located in John 20:17. John describes Jesus as cautioning Mary Magdalene by telling her not to touch him, while giving his imminent ascension to God as a reason. But as Zerwick and Grosvenor (1988: 345) indicate, μή μου ἄπτου (John 20:17) can be interpreted as "do not cling to me", which points to a ceasing of a continuous action. In this case it is possible that in John's resurrection narrative Mary had touched Jesus, presumably in the form of a joyous greeting (cf. χαίρετε in Matt. 28:9), after which Jesus asked Mary to discontinue her hold on him. Jesus' request (John 20:17) possibly has a mystical perspective, in that Mary's physical hold on Jesus might illustrate a delay of the preparation for and the coming of the Spirit (cf. Brown 1970b: 1011-1012; Dodd 1965: 146). Although Luke does not provide a clear parallel to the issue regarding feet being attached to a resurrected being, Luke 24:36-43 reports a conversation between the risen Jesus and his disciples, during which Jesus eats a piece of fish to show the disciples that his resurrected state is not comparable to the status of a ghost or a spirit. But the Greek noun used to denote a ghost or a spirit is πνεῦμα (cf. Luke 24:37, 40), which John 20:22, for example, uses in conjunction with the Holy Spirit emanating from Jesus (πνεῦμα ἅγιον). Yet, the qualification of the πνεῦμα as ἅγιος makes the distinction between a ghost and the Holy Spirit, which in John's mystical interpretation radiates from the risen Jesus. Unfortunately the scope of this dissertation prevents any further investigation into the definition and application of these terms.

A major issue in the resurrection narratives concerns the reaction of the women to the appearance of the risen Jesus. As mentioned before, the identification of Mary Magdalene as the only woman to witness the first christophany in Mark 16:9 and John

20:14-19 independently attest to an earlier pre-gospel tradition. Mary Magdalene was urged to instruct the male apostles (Mark 16:7; John 20:16), which justifiably earns her the title of “apostle to the apostles” (*apostola apostolorum*) (Barton 1994: 60; Ricci 1994: 192; cf. Moltmann-Wendel 1987: 72-73). Apart from the addition of further women to the scene of the christophany, Matt. 28:9 suggests that Jesus greets the women, whereupon they take hold of his feet and worship him (v.10). While the women in Matthew identify Jesus instantly, it is possible that John intimates a time lag between Jesus’ appearance to Mary Magdalene (20:14-15) and her recognition of Jesus as a resurrected form of his earthly identity as opposed to a gardener (v.16). It is only after Jesus calls her by her name (v. 16), that Mary Magdalene becomes aware of Jesus’ identity and exclaims ῥαββουί (v. 17). But even that recognition is superseded by a later more accurate identification, in which Mary Magdalene pronounces ἑώρακα τὸν κύριον (v. 18), whereby she labels the risen Jesus as her Lord. Brown (1970b: 1009) argues that the drawn out process of Mary Magdalene’s acknowledgment of and confession about Jesus in response to his spoken words (John 20:16) functions as a symbolic message about the development of faith in the word of Jesus as opposed to merely in the sight of him (cf. Ro. 10:17). But the suggested time lag can be contested by the fact that Mary tells the two angels in John 20:13 that her Lord (Ἦσαν τὸν κύριόν μου) had been removed, which may signify that Mary Magdalene understood Jesus’ Messianic status before witnessing his resurrected form.

Nonetheless, the social context of the androcentric first-century Mediterranean society affected and shaped the writing of the gospels to the extent that the New Testament can be classified in general terms as androcentric and on occasion even as misogynous writing. To illustrate this, the simultaneous elevation of roles of Peter and

the “beloved disciple”, who are in the fourth gospel said to have been the first to enter the empty tomb, creates a testimony by socially valued witnesses to the public event of Jesus death and resurrection. Even though Mary Magdalene is the primary witness to the resurrection in John’s gospel, her role in the empty tomb inspection has been diminished in comparison to the portrayals in Matthew and Luke to the extent that Peter and a “beloved disciple” take over her role. As Schnackenburg (1982: 309-311) observes, it is the male “beloved disciple” who first enters the tomb (John 20:1-8), sees and believes. It is also possible that John was reminded of the Jewish tradition concerning the need for two or three witnesses and created not only a trio but a mostly male trio, while incorporating Mary Magdalene into the empty tomb narrative. Notwithstanding the suppression of Mary Magdalene’s role concerning the empty tomb, John has allowed the tradition concerning Mary Magdalene and the resurrected Jesus to be preserved in his gospel, although she does not see and believe as quickly as the “beloved disciple”. The development and consequent changes in the empty tomb narrative illustrates an increasing suppression of the role and the value of women in the Early Church by forcing women back into the private sphere and out of the public sphere, in opposition to the message of the gospel, which challenges these societal structures.

c. Tradition history

While the funerary customs in Ancient Judaism are reflected in the women’s mourning activities, for example their desire to mourn at the burial site and their intention to anoint the body of Jesus, the role of the women as witnesses to the empty

tomb and to Jesus' resurrection exhibits behaviour that is contrasted by the social customs of first century Palestine. Firstly, women were not accepted as public witnesses. Secondly, one or two witnesses do not suffice to present an acceptable testimony. Therefore the dissimilarity between the narrative and customary behaviour suggests that the empty tomb narrative is based on a much earlier tradition in which a woman witnessed the empty tomb and the resurrection.

As mentioned earlier, Crossan (1998: 558) considers Mark 16:9-20 to be based on a narrative created by Matthew and John. Other scholars assume the existence of a pre-gospel christophany tradition as a source for Mark 16:9-20 (D'Angelo 1999b: 137; Telford 1997: 147-148). Although the chronological sequence of the texts prohibits a dependence on Mark's longer ending by Matt. 28:9-10, parts of Mark 16:9-11 mirror sections within Matt. 28:9-10 and John 20:11-18, while certain resurrection narratives in Luke are summarized in Mark's longer ending. It is therefore possible that the author of Mark's longer ending was aware of a number of different resurrection stories, including the tradition concerning Mary Magdalene as the first witness. Crossan⁴ (1998, 1988) suggests a section within the Gospel of Peter as a possible pre-gospel source for much of the passion and empty tomb narratives. But the examination of extra-canonical sources does not fall within the scope of this dissertation.

⁴ The Cross Gospel, postulated by Crossan (1989, 1988) as the original layer of the Gospel of Peter and as the ideal pre-Markan passion narrative is not a viable pre-Markan tradition, since there are no references to women as first witnesses to the empty tomb and the risen Jesus. The Gospel of Peter is not a likely candidate, since 1) the sequences in the text are different to the sequences preserved in the four canonical gospels; 2) there is no mention of women or of the christophany to women; and 3) the Gospel of Peter has a number of differences in the internal sequence and word order compared to those of the canonical gospels (Brown 1994: 1321-1328). Also, the Gospel of Peter's description of the tomb shows a continuing trend to develop the dishonourable burial of Jesus into an altered occasion of honour, which is noticeable in the development of the canonical gospels.

Given that the christophany in Mark is contained in the longer ending, it appears that Matt. 28:9-10 was either a Matthean creation (cf. Crossan 1998: 560), or that Matthew depended on an earlier tradition, which was transmitted through the oral period into Special Matthew. Luke does not possess an account of the christophany, but John 20:11-18 has incorporated a report of a christophany. Both Matt. 28:9 and John 20:17 portray Mary Magdalene touching Jesus, whereas John's insert regarding Peter and the "beloved disciple" appear to be Johannine interpolations. The differing reports may have arisen from the various ways of dealing with a tradition concerning Mary Magdalene. In that case Matt. 28:1 added another Mary, whereas John 20:3 added men. Luke ignored the christophany tradition, and Mark's longer ending contains a very brief summary (16:9).

3. Conclusion

While the physical historicity of the christophany is a complex issue, the investigation in this chapter has shown that the tradition concerning the christophany to Mary Magdalene is probably based on a pre-gospel tradition. This is supported by the criterion of cultural dissimilarity, the tradition of more than one witness as well as the fact that the tradition is attested to somewhat differently by Matthew and John. Indirectly, the existence of an earlier tradition is furthermore supported by the observation that the gospel writers exhibit a trend to suppress the role of women in the Early Church (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3-8).

Chapter Six

Conclusion

Given that the role of women as primary witness to the resurrection directly opposes the socially expected role of women to function within the private sphere only, based on the criterion of cultural dissimilarity, the canonical tradition concerning Mary Magdalene as the first witness reflects an earlier pre-gospel tradition. Likewise, the anointing traditions have developed out of different strands of an earlier tradition. Nonetheless, the patriarchal nature of first-century Palestine emerges in the shape of a trend to suppress the role of women in the Early Church, as alluded to by comparing Mark 16:1-20 to John 20:1-18. This trend to remove women from prominent positions is echoed in the development of the Early Church. As the church grew and moved from the private sphere of society into the public domain, women were gradually but purposefully forced back into the private sphere, which diminished the power and authority of the women that they were meant to experience, while the power and authority of the men increased rapidly (cf. Torjesen 1993). This is evidenced in the postmodern world by the laborious and often painfully challenging move in various churches and denominations to ordain women and to present women with the amount of responsibility as well as respect that men are given.

In this context it is surprising that John has not removed Mary Magdalene's role as first witness to the resurrection altogether, even though in John 20:1-18 her function as first person to enter the empty tomb and to encounter angelic beings, is supplanted by the "beloved disciple" and Peter.

The redactional introductory technique was probably initiated by Mark to create a three-fold introduction to the group of women, who appear to be led by Mary Magdalene. Moltmann-Wendel (1987) describes Mary Magdalene as a former mentally ill and sexually promiscuous person who had been healed by Jesus. If this image of Mary Magdalene is accurate, then her leadership would ratify the notion that the gospel essentially challenges existing power structures and relationships. Within the first century Mediterranean world, early Christianity challenged the honour and shame ideology prevalent in society (cf. 1 Cor. 3).

On the whole, the canonical passion and empty tomb narratives illustrate the challenge to societal structures and expectations met by the woman anointing Jesus at a formal meal, and finally also by a woman entering Jesus' burial site. Mary Magdalene conversed with angelic beings and proclaimed the resurrection, which she had experienced, to the apostles and other disciples in the role of a leader, who portrayed imperfection and willingness to learn and understand as well as break open hierarchical boundaries. In this manner Mary Magdalene played the outrageous public role of leader to the disciples. It is no wonder that her actions are downplayed in the gospels, and that her role is suppressed, for example actively in John's empty tomb narrative and passively in Luke's empty tomb narrative by the lack of a christophany tradition in Luke. Furthermore, the sinner in Luke's anointing story (7:36-50) is often

incorrectly pictured as a prostitute attached to the name of Mary Magdalene. But the texts dare us to allow an emergence of strong and capable women both in biblical settings as well as in contemporary settings in order to accept the gospel challenge to topple the social and economic power structures so that we as a society and as the church of God can move towards the integrating and healing position of respectful mutuality.

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Appendix A

References to the Selected Passages⁵

1. The women anointing Jesus

- a. Mark 14:3-9
- b. Matt. 26:6-13
- c. Luke 7:36-50
- d. John 12:1-8

2. Women wailing in Luke 23:27⁶

3. Women at the cross

- a. Mark 15:40-41
- b. Matt. 27:55-56
- c. Luke 23:49
- d. John 19:25-27

4. Women watching the burial

- a. Mark 15:47
- b. Matt. 27:61
- c. Luke 23:54-56
- d. None in John

⁵ The first passage is examined in chapter three, the second, third, fourth and fifth passages in chapter four, and the sixth passage in chapter five of this dissertation.

⁶ This passage is not acknowledged as a separate passage, since it is treated as an expansion of the tradition describing the women at the cross.

5. Women returning to burial site

- a. Mark 16:1-8
- b. Matt. 28:1-8
- c. Luke 24:1-12
- d. John 20:1-13

6. The christophany

- a. Mark 16:9-11⁷
- b. Matt. 28:9-10
- c. None in Luke
- d. John 20:11-18⁸

⁷ This passage is generally acknowledged as the longer ending of Mark.

⁸ This passage is to some extent intertwined with the previous tradition in John 20:1-13

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