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## Mary Magdalen and the Imagery of Redemption: Reception and Revival in Fifteenth-Century Tyrol

*In 1384 a host miracle occurred in the Alpine church of Sankt Oswald in Seefeld. The perpetrator was publicly humiliated and forced to repent for his sins, but the legend of his affront was to have lasting legacy in the visual culture of the church. While certain artworks have received critical attention for their retranslation of events, a fifteenth-century mural cycle depicting the life of Mary Magdalen, Christianity's most perfect penitent, in the choir has been overlooked. This article analyses the cycle's reception of local history and the importance of the Trecento visual strategies revived for particular effect. In doing so, it accords the seemingly archaic paintings an active role in the framing of the miracle for patron, parish and pilgrims attracted by the power of divine transformation and the promise of redemption.*

On 25 March 1384, Maundy Thursday and feast day of the Annunciation, a host miracle took place in the church of Sankt Oswald, Seefeld in Tyrol (fig. 1)<sup>1</sup>. Local knight Oswald Milser demanded the largest wafer during Communion at the high altar, as public symbol of his political and social authority. The serving priest could only oblige such arrogance but when the consecrated bread came into contact with Milser's tongue it began to bleed: a punishment for his attitude of affront to the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist<sup>2</sup>. Legend has it that Milser sank dramatically into the stone floor up to his knees. He then grabbed the high altar for support, but its surface became as pliant as wax, trapping his hands. The sculpted tympanum of the main portal of the church (1468-72) captures the turning point in the tale, when the priest removed the bloody host from Milser's mouth and returned its preserved form to the paten (fig. 2)<sup>3</sup>. The knight's vassal gives a shoulder of support but also rather amusingly, raises the hemline of his master's tunic to reveal the still impounded legs. Humiliated but crucially humbled after this divine intervention, Milser retreated to nearby Stams Abbey, a Cistercian and pilgrimage foundation, where he was to repent and commit the rest of his days to the service of God<sup>4</sup>.

The sculptural relief above the portal and Jörg Kölderer's c. 1500-2 epitaph panel painted for Emperor Maximilian I, which still hangs in the choir of the church and includes Latin and German accounts of the miracle in its lower section, inevitably garner attention in the critical and popular literature (fig. 3)<sup>5</sup>. They stand as lasting testaments of artistic endeavor and high-ranking patronage made

possible by the blood miracle, and how it was marketed to parishioners, pilgrims and passing travellers<sup>6</sup>. What has so far escaped scrutiny, however, is the generation of other penitential imagery in the intervening years that renewed the reputation of the cultic site. Milser's tale was one of sin, contrition, redemption and grace, and these central doctrines found affinity with the hagiography and imagery of one of Christianity's most powerful saints, that is Mary Magdalen.

This article examines a monumental mural cycle in the choir of Sankt Oswald depicting scenes from the life of Mary Magdalen that dates from the fifteenth century (fig. 4)<sup>7</sup>. By taking into account the visual culture of the church, the objects and the collective memories surrounding them, I will demonstrate how this cycle engages with the fourteenth-century event that took place in Holy Week in concept and design. Specifically, I will argue that the iconographical, compositional and spatial aspects of the paintings are worked out in conjunction with the local miracle to produce a universally resonant, yet privately conceived, gloss on receiving the divine<sup>8</sup>. In doing so, I address the artist's revival of visual models from both sides of the Alps, and how they fed into a cross-cultural imagery of redemption.

### *Framing the Miracle of 1384*

The Magdalen mural cycle is located in the easternmost bay of the north wall of the choir of Sankt Oswald. Its seven scenes are displayed across three registers and separated by simple white frames: *Mary Magdalen Anointing the Feet of Christ* in the lunette; *Noli me tangere*, *Elevation by Angels in the Wilderness* and *Blessing at the Cave of La Sainte-Baume* in the middle register; her *Last Communion*, *Death* and *Funeral* in the lower register. Each is a concordance, in principle, with the biblical and apocryphal accounts of the saint, popularised in the visual arts. The iconography will be discussed fully in light of the scenographic context of the church. However it is worth noting at this stage the absence of any scenes of the saint preaching or enacting miracles, living or posthumously, creating a stress on her gospel authority and *vita eremitica*.

The Magdalen cycle is one of three painted programmes on the north wall that correlate with the 1384 miracle (fig. 5). Nearest the high altar is the life of the titular, Oswald of Northumbria (d. 642), recounted in six scenes. His journey to holy martyrdom by dismemberment, as recounted in *Der Heiligen Leben* (late fourteenth century), includes distributing bread and wine to pilgrims and the poor. Alongside his reputation for humility despite his kingly status, it offers a more

positive role model than the miscreant Milser who shares his name<sup>9</sup>. To the right of this cycle is a near-destroyed Passion of Christ, comprised of approximately thirteen scenes. While only the *Agony in the Garden*, *Christ before Pontius Pilate* (both sinopia) and the *Mocking of Christ* remain legible, the Passion being an Easter programme neatly prefaces its neighbour, the Magdalen cycle.

All three cycles were produced *a secco* after 1432 by the same artistic workshop, as confirmed by comparisons of figure style and decorative borders<sup>10</sup>. Together they display a meshing of northern Italian, German and Bohemian traditions in form and content. The orchestrator of these artistic confluences is unknown but his familiarity with other Magdalen imagery, and the cult in general, in this geographic area is assured – he would certainly have known about Sankt Magdalena in Leutasch, a few miles north of Seefeld, founded by the canons Regular of the Order of St. Augustine<sup>11</sup>. One church was not enough to sustain a workshop longer than a summer, necessitating migration and with that the transmission of ideas and visual repertoires. Seefeld's position on the *via Claudia Augusta*, a key transit route between Italy and northern Europe, would have eased access to bustling regional centres and lucrative valleys, peppered with Magdalen dedications. It also guaranteed exposure to the latest trends and prevailing traditions in religious art.

Alongside their regionally informed imagery, both Magdalen and Oswald cycles are notable for their fragmentary scene descriptors in Middle High German, suggesting lay presence and circulation in the sanctuary of the church<sup>12</sup>. Beyond this commonality, however, the Magdalen cycle is further distinguished by the hallmarks of private patronage and with that an implication of greater agency in its design.

Unlike its adjacent peers, the paintings that comprise the Magdalen cycle are displayed within a recessed niche (figs. 5, 6 and 7)<sup>13</sup>. Moreover, there are two heraldic shields in the lower corners of the decorative frame of the cycle that lies flush with the wall of the choir. Traces of a splayed eagle, a Habsburg symbol consistent with the guardianship of the church after 1384, are visible in the right shield, whilst the left contains a fragmentary schematic shape. Below the frame there are remnants of letters, indicating the former presence of a dedicatory or patronal inscription. Later repainting is always a possibility, but the provision of space for the presentation of arms coeval with the decorative scheme is unquestionable<sup>14</sup>. Such personalization is borne out by the votive imagery that frames the Magdalen cycle in its articulated space.

The internal embrasures of the arch are decorated with a complimentary programme of eight saints with their identifying attributes, and they stand within their own fictive niches (figs. 6 and 7). On the left, the sequence commences with

the crowned Virgin Martyrs, Catherine of Alexandria, Ursula and Agnes and terminates with a female saint wearing a white headdress who may be Martha, the sister of Mary Magdalen. Her attribute is lost but a comparison with the vase-bearing Martha on the left interior shutter of Lucas Moser's Tiefenbronn altarpiece of 1432 lends credibility to the identification (fig. 8). Moving to the right embrasure, saints Barbara, Dorothy of Caesarea and Apollonia are followed by a beardless bishop-saint, the only male presence in the lineup. Again the Tiefenbronn altarpiece helps us out. The right interior shutter displays a clean-shaven Lazarus, the other Bethany sibling, with mitre and crozier<sup>15</sup>. The white frames surrounding each saint align with the registers of the Magdalen cycle (two for the lunette on either side), and this cohesion establishes a gloss on the central imagery, and by extension an intercessional dialogue between the heavenly figures and the devotee below.

A number of the votive saints are drawn from a popular cult in the Alps, the Fourteen Holy Helpers or *Nothelfer*. They offered protection against a variety of daily ills and trials, including toothache, plague, perilous journeys or bad weather, and as such were an interchangeable group, depending upon the requirements of the patron<sup>16</sup>. Mary Magdalen was often co-opted into the cult of the Holy Helpers in the Alpine territories<sup>17</sup>. In Seefeld this alignment and choice of intercessors helped foster typological connections with the eucharistic miracle.

The onomastic choice and positioning of Dorothy of Caesarea particularly strengthens the relationship between the cycle and the miracle of 1384. She likely stands as a corrective to Dorothy of Starkenberg, the wife of Oswald Milser who also fell victim to the sin of pride. Legend states that on hearing her husband's fate she screamed, «I'd rather believe that roses blossomed on this barren trunk [...]». Three roses immediately grew from the tree causing the lady to lose her mind and flee to the nearby mountains<sup>18</sup>. Near the top right of the cycle embrasure, saint Dorothy is garbed in penitential purple and carries roses in her basket, a convenient concordance between local legend and standard attribute (fig. 9). She is also alone among her companions in looking directly at the Magdalen cycle. Positioned below Barbara, with her proffered chalice and host, and at an angle to the anointing Magdalen in the lunette of the cycle and the elevated saint in the middle register, Dorothy gazes upon the perfect model of humility and its heavenly rewards<sup>19</sup>.

Such visual and spatial distinction is continued through the opposing bays of the south wall of the sanctuary. Instead of complimentary mural cycles, we find the bell tower entrance, and proceeding eastwards, two arches with lancet windows. The easternmost window casts its light on the Magdalen cycle. It may have carried a visual programme replete with donor portraits and arms, as can be seen

in other churches of the region<sup>20</sup>. The surviving church accounts for Sankt Oswald record the donation of funds by a nobleman in 1465 for such a purpose: «Mer hab ich gebn dem glaser fier Pfund vo(n) Grauff Eberhartz glass wegn als erz v(er)setzt hat»<sup>21</sup>. While the exact location of the window is unspecified in the document and the original glass lost, Eberhardt was clearly continuing a tradition of noble family patronage in Sankt Oswald generated by the fame of the host miracle<sup>22</sup>.

Indeed family patronage began with the host relic itself. The wafer was set in the *lunela* of a silver-gilt monstrance, gifted by Parzival von Weineck in the early 1390s, with his arms displayed prominently on the foot (fig. 10)<sup>23</sup>. What display strategies were in force for the cult object in the fourteenth-century church are unknown, but it generated enough pilgrim footfall to attract the attention of the Habsburg Counts of Tyrol. Under their guardianship, Sankt Oswald was elevated to a parish and rebuilt from the 1420s as a monumental shrine to this local *cause célèbre* over a 50-year period.

The choir was completed by 1432, with the latter incorporating a chapel for the all-important relic below the bell tower. Jörg Kölderer's epitaph panel, mentioned above, confirms the location of the chapel and that it had an opening onto the south aisle of the nave protected by an iron grille (fig. 3). If we look closely at the painting, we can see a pilgrim kneeling before the grille and directing his devotions towards a gold-gilt monstrance that contains the gleaming host. Its proportions are massively exaggerated to give it prominence in a busy composition, whilst a comparison with the design of the actual monstrance suggests that Kölderer gave the receptacle an imaginative upgrade for the benefit of his patron and publics. It now has two adoring angels on either side of the central chamber and the microarchitecture above the knop showcases rising pinnacles, crockets and swirling forms.

The reimagining of the fourteenth-century events taking place in the fifteenth-century interior of Sankt Oswald in Kölderer's panel, itself dated to the early sixteenth century, is decidedly problematic for any reconstruction of the church interior. There is always a bending of the truth for effect within the confines of the frame. What fate then the Magdalen cycle and its role in the protean visual culture of the church? Perhaps the mural paintings of the north wall were simply omitted from the picture to give dramatic emphasis to Milser's unworthy act at the high altar, or it may document their disappearance below layers of whitewash by 1502<sup>24</sup>. But it is not quite a dead end. A glimpse of a second altar with retable (which remains in place today) in the panel painting prompts us to consider the liturgical topography of the choir.

The overlooked pastoral visitations of 1736 reveals that the church in fact

«habet 4 (*sic*) altaria in choro ecclesie». In addition to the high altar dedicated to saint Oswald, there were also the «2 altare S. Crucis [...] ex parte Evangelisti, 3tius altare in honore S. Uldalricis, 4tius altare ex parte Epistolae in honore di B[eate] V[ergine] et 14 ausiliatori (*sic*)»<sup>25</sup>. Placement of one of these now lost secondary altars below the Magdalen niche is likely, given that the decorative frame is approximately 160cm from the ground and incorporates a cross of consecration (fig. 4)<sup>26</sup>. A fruitful comparison with the coeval Tiefenbronn altarpiece by Lucas Moser serves our purpose once more, this time in terms of setting (fig. 11). Not only is the altarpiece (far right of apse, shutters closed) placed on an altar, it is also cohesive with the surviving mural painting to its immediate left in form and scale, which dates from 1400. The winged altarpiece has a concealed depth that is shared in the Seefeld cycle by merit of its architectural niche, with the central scene of both artworks of paramount importance for their liturgical associations.

There is no surviving documentary reference to a significant Magdalen relic, altar dedication or feast day mass but this should not be seen as a strike against the importance of the cycle in this pilgrimage church, as argued by Amy Morris in the case of Tiefenbronn<sup>27</sup>. The visual arts document cultic practice and gain cogency from their local context. With the choir only newly completed, the Magdalen cycle held a privileged place in a church that owed its changed fortunes to the Holy Week miracle. Discussion must therefore turn to the iconography, and how the saint's biblical and apocryphal lives offered a timeless parable against the sin of a minor noble.

### *Context generates Content*

Mary Magdalen was the perfect saint to offer a corrective to the sin of pride enacted by Oswald Milser. Firstly, her apocryphal life reinforced the importance of proper spiritual preparation for the partaking of communion, be it part of the Divine Office performed in the wilderness or the viaticum received at the altar of a church. She could lead pilgrims on how to approach the body of Christ with due humility and accept the grace that would be bestowed, as described in the gospels. Secondly, the Magdalen's privileged role as anointer of Christ, after the weeping of penitential tears, forged a link to the ritual practices of Maundy Thursday, the day of the miracle<sup>28</sup>. In the fifty years in which the church was undergoing its rebuild, there was also a maintenance of the visual culture, of the objects and ideas that gave shape to the church as a monument to *corpus Christi*, including the privately-endowed Magdalen cycle.

The cult of the Eucharist strongly resonated with the life of Mary Magdalen as recounted in the *Golden Legend* by Jacobus de Voragine (c.1260) and the Middle German poem, *Der Saelden Hort*, originally illustrated c.1390 and known through two later copies<sup>29</sup>. The saint's acts of anointing and receiving the holy body, moving from worldly sinner and Paschal witness in Judea to penitent anchorite in the wilderness of Gaul, served as exemplar for both religious and lay devotees across Europe. Her intercessional power in matters of fertility (the Marseilles miracle) or the efficacy of her saintly relics for a variety of ailments or atonement of sins gave her widespread appeal for pilgrims. Scholarship has noted how patrons and practitioners of late medieval visual arts were quick to develop a corresponding iconography that became relatively standardised throughout the urban cult sites connected with the mendicant orders<sup>30</sup>. In the Alpine territories the Magdalen cult was particularly strong up until the sixteenth century, with image cycles breaking free of such strictures. Numbers of scenes increased, while iconography and design were innovatory. Seefeld is an anomaly in this group apropos its concentrated format, eschewing of popular miracle-working episodes and the reintroduction of an authoritative gospel moment, the *Noli me tangere*, in the redemption sequence that would anticipate later German works (a point I will return to later). Its sacramental iconography is nuanced, and speaks to regional confluences and local concerns.

The sequence begins with the *Anointing* in the lunette of the upper register of the cycle, some 7m high. The centrally placed, kneeling Magdalen dries the feet of Christ with her hair after washing them with her tears (fig. 12). It is her first act of public contrition but also recognition after renouncing her worldly ways (Luke 7: 36-50)<sup>31</sup>. In turn, she is received and presented as an exemplar of true love and devotion by Christ, as conveyed by his didactic gesture<sup>32</sup>. But here literary and artistic conventions part company. Magdalen hagiography places the *Anointing* in the house of the Pharisee, and this is replicated in most pictorial cycles in the European tradition with the setting subject to geographical variances<sup>33</sup>. German artworks typically depict the repast outdoors, whilst Italian versions opt for an indoor setting. In the latter, the open faced room is typically dominated by a large rectangular table with the diners sitting on the far side and Christ to the immediate left; its horizontal format constructing and emphasising the humble crawl of the penitent sinner-saint<sup>34</sup>.

As a cross-cultural product, the Seefeld *Anointing* challenges such precise categorisation. The action takes place inside a crenellated-palace, with a group of men seated at a circular table replete with rounds of bread<sup>35</sup>. The Pharisee has been displaced from what should be his table and now stands to the left. In his

place, we have the twelve apostles (as distinguished by their haloes) whose presence invites an alternate interpretation of the scene as the Last Supper, which took place on Maundy Thursday<sup>36</sup>. No Italian or German Magdalen biographical programme can provide an iconographic precedent for this arrangement, driven as it by local context. However, the architectural setting of this elision, with its two side vignettes, and the round table recalls Pietro Lorenzetti's *Last Supper* (ca1320) in the Lower Church of San Francesco in Assisi, or more directly in terms of subject matter, the scene of *Anointing* in Giovanni da Milano's Magdalen cycle (1365) in the Guidalotti-Rinuccioni Chapel in Santa Croce, Florence, demonstrating our master's receptivity to Italian Trecento visual formulae.

The Last Supper witnessed the breaking of bread and the pouring of wine, the body and blood of Christ. But it also included the humble act of Christ washing his disciples' feet (John 13: 14-16). Both are evident in the Seefeld *Anointing*, however, it is the honorific Magdalen who assumes Christ's latter role. She is in the process of drying his feet after washing them with her tears. Her exceptionally large, white alabaster vase (a standard attribute in artistic representations) is placed directly below him, the heady mix of expensive spikenard soon to be sacrificially poured. The cycle thus opens with an honoring of the body of Christ and a humble act of penitence by a woman of rank and wealth, as implied by her fur-lined robe. This is a conflation of Easter and Magdalen narratives surely devised by patron, painter and clerical advisor to visually recollect the host miracle of 1384, an event that took place on that same day in the liturgical calendar.

Colour choice in the paintings reinforces this interpretation in its concordance with performed rituals on Maundy Thursday in the German-speaking lands, including the County of Tyrol. Mary Magdalen's green mantle is a departure from the traditional red, signifying *caritas*, cultivated in mendicant ideology and its dependent arts on the Italian peninsula, yet it found considerable purchase in the Alps and beyond. While possibly acknowledging her part in the resurrection and the springing forth of life, a local significance may lie with the day of the host miracle in 1384, Maundy Thursday. The German translation is *Gründonnerstag* (Lat. *dies viridium*) or Weeping Thursday, more commonly referred to as Green Thursday<sup>37</sup>. In anticipation of Easter Sunday, penitents were given green branches to mark the completion of the Lenten process. It is also possible that the celebrant priest wore green vestments<sup>38</sup>. Mary Magdalen in her green attire, drying the tears she has wept onto the feet of Christ would be understood both visually and materially as an exemplar (as directed by saint Dorothy in the arch embrasure) for those seeking absolution in the sanctuary of Sankt Oswald; one given greater cogency by recollection of the infamous miracle which took place on the same day in that sacred space.

The redemption narrative continues in the middle register with the *Noli me tangere* (John 20:17). It is a rare inclusion in Magdalen mural programmes by this date, yet is surely chosen on account of the saint's starring role as Paschal witness, and her humble attitude in recognition of the miracle of the resurrection (fig. 13)<sup>39</sup>. The *apostolorum apostola*, still garbed in green, kneels before Christ in a cultivated garden demarcated by a neat wooden fence. He is not disguised as the gardener described in the gospel text and lacks the spade often represented in the visual arts to this effect. The presence of the unguent vase confirms that Mary Magdalen has come to anoint the dead body of the Saviour, an act of touch. Instead she encounters him resurrected, announced by his flag, but not yet risen to his Father and so she must stay her hand. Words thus articulate the moment of reckoning in the Evangelist's account: her "master" to his "touch me not". Their importance to the painting is emphasised by the presence of speech banners, the only ones in the entire cycle. Mary Magdalen and Christ are given active voices, in contrast to the passive narrative descriptors in the frames. In articulating the moment through visualized words, pose and gesture, the *Noli me tangere* pulls the devotee to a true recognition of divine presence. Ocular engagement precedes a tactile one, reminding that the consecrated host, the body of Christ, must be taken only after the four stages of penitential obligation<sup>40</sup>. It is a point reinforced by the adjacent Agnes on the left embrasure of the arch who tenderly carries the lamb, the sacrificial *agnus dei* and symbol of humility (fig. 6).

The sightline of the kneeling saint in the *Noli me tangere* connects with her next privileged reception of the divine, the *Elevation by Angels*, the most popular apocryphal episode in Magdalen imagery of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (figs. 13 and 14). In contrast to the previous scene she is now hirsute, signalling a transition from the *vita apostolica* to the *vita eremetica*. The hair takes the form of a suit, which conceals her breasts and knees; a contrast with the episode of the saint's last communion on the outer right shutter of the Tiefenbronn altarpiece but entirely consistent with the elevation on the former altarpiece of St Mary Church in Gdańsk, ca 1430 (fig. 15). In bodily terms, she thus conforms to the exotic qualities of the wild woman typology, popular in the German-speaking territories, but not the overt sensuality and sexuality that would emerge in the later fifteenth century, enhanced by the use of classical contrapposto<sup>41</sup>. However, her description in the painting is also a question of continuity with past models. The Seefeld Magdalen recalls the sculptural rendition in the basilica of SS John in Toruń from the late fourteenth century, particularly the covered body, delicate countenance and three-quarter pose as she is raised aloft (fig. 16). While it is unlikely that our master saw this particular work directly, we should assume the

currency of such a vision, given its widespread articulation in sermons and hagiographical literature.

The episode takes place during her thirty-year eremitical retreat to the wilderness, as recounted in the *Golden Legend* (but not the *Saeldon Hort*) and here represented as a verdant valley between rocky mountainsides, a sacralising of the Alpine landscape that lies beyond the walls of the church; the sky now displays its underlayer of red but it would have been blue<sup>42</sup>. The Magdalen renounced somatic nourishment as atonement for her former sins. However she received holy manna by way of angelic singing during the seven canonical hours of the day, causing her hair to cover her entire body<sup>43</sup>. The arts portrayed her spiritual well-being in physical terms, aligning the consumption of the metaphysical host with sacred beauty<sup>44</sup>.

A gift for artists and patrons alike this divine transformation served the 'inner eyes' of the humble devotee: a sustained meditation on the highest of communions in the safety of the church precinct<sup>45</sup>. The touch of the Seefeld angels enhances these qualities. It is reverential yet emphatic, drawing the eye to different parts of the saint's mystically sustained body and her halo. The meditative qualities of the painting are reinforced through the V-shape of the mountains, an unprecedented arrangement that encloses but also displays the elevated saint. Her penitential experience is circumscribed. Centrally positioned in the cycle, the votive image acts as «a visual support for the sacrament of Communion» reinforcing the likelihood of an altar below with a dedication to the saint<sup>46</sup>. Comparison with the high altarpieces of Sankt Magdalena in Mareit (two valleys south of the Brenner Pass) and later that of Tilman Riemenschneider for the church of Sankt Magdalena in Münnerstadt (1492) indicate the success of this visual formula and the long term appeal of the authoritative iconography of the saint in the German-speaking territories (figs. 17-19)<sup>47</sup>.

The Seefeld cycle thus had a dual function. To provide a dignified back drop to the performance of the sacrament of the Eucharist directly below, but also to connect with the disrupted rite in 1384. This was achieved in terms of subject matter and composition, with the saint's three-quarter profile in the scene of *Elevation* turned towards the frontally positioned high altar, locus of the original sin and by then a contact relic for pilgrims. Mary Magdalen looks down through the *Noli me tangere* in the direction of the high altar. Votive image and overall programme are anchoring themselves to and reminding devotees of that defining event.

The circumscribed experience for patron and pilgrim links to the next eremitical episode (fig. 13). At the far right of the middle register, Mary Magdalen kneels in the mouth of the cave of La Sainte-Baume, the popular pilgrimage site in

Provence, well known through circulating accounts since 1170<sup>48</sup>. In the painting she receives a blessing from the hermit who lived nearby but only saw her when she was preparing her soul for death. It is a case of revelation at the appropriate time, and one reinforced pictorially given that his back is turned to the scene of *Elevation*<sup>49</sup>.

Notwithstanding degradation of painted surfaces, a comparison between the two eremitical Magdalens suggests that her hair has darkened and skin turned grey around the eyes. Painterly aesthetics are employed as a fundamental communicator of her waning life force, indicating that substantial time has now passed since the previous scene. The hermit is to take a message to Maximin, bishop of Aix-en-Provence and one of the Magdalen's companions from the holy land, that in a year's time she will appear in his cathedral to receive last communion and funeral rites.

These eschatological processes are played out in the cycle's lower register (fig. 20). Just like the scenes of *Anointing* and *Elevation* above, their extended treatment is significant in formulation. For although it is comprised of three separate scenes like the middle register, they take place within a single architectural structure of gothic style. It is an ambitious design that attempts to resolve issues of space and narrative, with reasonable success. Although we might cite as inspiration the newly vaulted choir of Sankt Oswald, our master once again appears to have looked to the arts of the past. It is here that discussion turns to the revival of visual solutions developed by the Paduan artist, Guariento d'Arpo during the late Trecento.

A comparison with the choir frescoes by Guariento in the church of the Eremitani in Padua, dated ca 1360-65 offers compelling evidence of the Seefeld Master's interest in Trecento art (fig. 21)<sup>50</sup>. He was clearly impressed by the architectural settings of the scenes of *Philip convoking the Bishops and Priests* and the *Vestition of Augustine* on the north wall of the choir and how they explored space from different perspectives. The projecting superstructure in the *Convocation* offered a confident solution for the lower register of the cycle in Seefeld, while the *Vestition* accommodated a polyscenic narrative, including the repetition of Monica, mother of Augustine. Her variations on a pose across different times were also expressed within a constrained space, a shared challenge for our master. Given two options, his solution was to conflate.

What makes this point all the more striking, art historically, is the process of the reception. Like Altichiero da Zevio, Guariento was evidently considered a "living force" in the fifteenth century on the other side of the Alps<sup>51</sup>. He had already shaken up the local schools in Bolzano from the 1360s onwards, by way of the wall

paintings for the Dominican church<sup>52</sup>. They attest to his fascination with architectural complexity, space and ornament, ideas that enjoyed great diffusion via the Masters of San Giovanni in Villa and San Vigilio, and Hans Stotzinger<sup>53</sup>. However none of their translations presage the precise conflation in Seefeld. It is either a coincidence or our master saw the prototype<sup>54</sup>.

Guariento's visual strategies helped the Seefeld master to solve the problem of a sustained meditation on the final rituals enacted upon Christian body and soul in the parish church of Sankt Oswald; one recently conferred baptismal and burial rights. From the left we find the Magdalen kneeling in prayer before bishop Maximin as she receives her last communion. She is now garbed solely in a blue dress (the cuffs are visible in the *Noli me tangere*) and her hair has returned to normal proportions. This non-hirsute guise at the altar is at odds with coeval German and north Tyrolean iconographical interpretations, including the wall paintings of nearby Sankt Magdalena in Gschnitz (two valleys north of the Brenner Pass) and the Tiefenbronn altarpiece. And while it is indebted to fourteenth-century models, for example in the Nuremberg Graduale (134r) and the fresco cycle in Dusch in Graubünden, the fact that she is not returned to her original fur-lined robes indicates intentionality of design<sup>55</sup>. The angels who transported her from the wilderness to the oratory, as described in the apocryphal legend and typically depicted in other pictorial cycles, are also missing<sup>56</sup>. It would seem that the painter was charged to convey her earthly presence at the performance of the sacrament. Situated directly below the *Noli me tangere*, where contact was first denied, Mary Magdalen demonstrates how after the thirty-years penance played out in the scenes above she is now suitably prepared and worthy to receive *corpus Christi* (fig. 4).

The middle scene focuses on the ensuing moment of her death after receiving the viaticum - a rare liminal moment in Alpine and pan-European contexts (fig. 20). The saint kneels on a wooden board placed in front of the marble step before the altar, in a final act of humility, a feature picked up in the Münnerstadt altarpiece nearly 60 years later (fig. 19)<sup>57</sup>. As she does so, she slightly turns towards the picture plane, creating an immersive experience for those who would have kneeled before the now lost altar contemplating their own sins. That experience would have been all the more intensified by the surrounding Holy Helpers, chosen and thus poised to intercede.

Unbeknown to the chanting bishop and his candle-bearing acolytes and clerics who stand behind the saint, an angel has appeared before the altar with a cloth of honour to carry away the Magdalen's soul. Comparative cycles typically represent the eidolon already in the cloth and being transported upwards

to heaven. But it is the transformative process that matters here, for her soul is fully prepared to be received by the divine's spiritual agent. With lessons learnt from Guariento's Monica in the *Eremitani*, repetition of setting, dress, and posture from the previous scene slows everything down for the contemplative gaze. The posture of the Magdalen also relates to her original anointing act in the lunette directly above, grace being channelled in a vertically downward motion through the pivotal scene of elevation and on to the altar below.

The final scene remains in the same ecclesiastical space but is viewed from a different perspective, as in the *Eremitani Vestition of Augustine*, allowing the devotee to witness the body of the saint as it lies in its porphyry sarcophagus. Maximin presides over the funeral ceremony, his crosier symbolising doctrinal authority and jurisdiction, while his clerics face out and chant from the shared antiphony. Lazarus, also a bishop, contributes to this *mise-en-scène* from the wings.

The episode of the Magdalen's funeral was first represented on the central Italian Magdalen Master panel dated to around 1285, just after the saint's body had been 'rediscovered' in 1279 by Charles of Salerno (Charles II of Anjou), transferring the cult from Vézelay in Burgundy to St Maximin in Provence (fig. 22). It reappears in the lengthy mural programmes of the late fourteenth through fifteenth-century Alps but with a change in significance and function<sup>58</sup>.

The Magdalen Master panel addressed concerns over relic authenticity after the Angevin *furtum sacrum*. Using the gabled panel format pioneered by the new mendicant orders and aspirant communities, the entombed hirsute Magdalen visually canonised connections to the established pilgrimage destination of La Sainte-Baume and the basilica of St Maximin in Marseilles, where the translated relics were held (papal sanction only came in 1295)<sup>59</sup>. The Seefeld mural in contrast belongs to a parish church, the likely product of private dynastic endowment but with appeal to pilgrims who saw the church, with its legend, contact relics and respondent artworks, as a destination on the map of devotion (fig. 20). Mary Magdalen is thus depicted bound in neatly prepared funerary linen and the tilted angle displays her corporeality as part of a local authentication, an assertion of real presence and proximity in lieu of the actual relics. The painting emphasises proper burial process and care of the host body, *intero*, after the departure of the soul. The material remains are after all the locus of the prayers of the living and of profound concern; they offered a vital connection between this world and the next.

Martha and Lazarus, who stand in the lower wings of the Magdalen niche and face out towards the viewer, reinforce these final rituals (figs. 23 and 24). Although bereft of her attribute, the positioning of Martha's hands and particularly

the gathering of the robe by her right to avoid direct contact with a sacral object bears out the earlier comparison with the Tiefenbronn altarpiece. If she was originally carrying an alabaster vessel, then both image cycles stand testament to an acceptance of Martha's status as myrrhophore in Church exegesis and the visual arts during the fifteenth century; an elision of her presence at the resurrection of Lazarus - who is represented directly opposite in the right embrasure of the Seefeld cycle - with that of Christ<sup>60</sup>. Understood as a privileged witness in the Easter story, she now bears oil for the anointing of her sister<sup>61</sup>.

It is a fitting framework for this redemptive cycle that itself is a gloss on receiving the divine on the feast of Maundy Thursday. Mary Magdalen anointing the feet of Christ created an important link with the foot washing that would take place on the day of penitence, which is the day on which the miracle happened, and it looked forward to her encounter with the resurrected Christ, as played out in the scene below. It is worth recalling, in this light, that Magdalen homilies were given during Holy Week across Christendom with Augustine famously describing on Easter Sunday the women's privileged position in the salvation narrative as «*per feminam mors, per feminam vita*»<sup>62</sup>. While the originating sin in Seefeld lay with Milser, rather than Eve, the route to eternal life was exemplified by Mary Magdalen.

### *The Imagery of Redemption - Reception and Revival*

The iconography of Mary Magdalen offered an ideal reception of the Milser miracle for later generations of parishioners and pilgrims. Her tale of redemption was derived from the gospels, giving it ultimate authority but also hope in Holy Week. It was a bridge between the 25 March and the moveable feast of Easter, key events in the liturgical calendar at Seefeld. Who better to anoint the feet of Jesus than the woman who had fallen so low. Her tears reminded penitents of the foot washing on Maundy Thursday, while green coloured their journey from satisfaction to absolution. Who better to teach about restraint than she who was told not to touch. Selfish pride would be replaced by humble devotion. Such a controlled programme ruled out the contrary scenes of worldly sin, perilous sea-journeys, evangelical mission and miracle working of Italian and northern Magdalen cycles, yet these omissions are important to the successful translation of the host-miracle narrative<sup>63</sup>. Like the injured host in the monstrance, the Magdalen as divinely sustained being was a miracle on display. What grounds the cycle in the choir of Sankt Oswald, aligning it with collective memories and ritual performances, is the

temporal sacraments enacted in church space. They promised the reward of communion and anointing that was given to Mary Magdalen and, eventually, Oswald Milser, as part of their last rites.

The Seefeld mural cycle carries a memory of a specific date, place and most importantly an idea about the humility required in the presence of the divine. However, it is also one of many witnesses to the enduring and widespread appeal of Mary Magdalen and the importance of the cross-cultural Alps in sustaining her late-medieval identity. The Seefeld cycle has a peer in Lucas Moser's altarpiece, in terms of structure, liturgy and, for the most part, iconography. And while both strike their own paths according to local context, together they herald the format and content of the Mürrenstadt Magdalen altarpiece, completed by Tilman Riemenschneider in 1492. A hirsute Magdalen in the central niche links symbolically to the celebration of the mass at the altar below, while the selected wing scenes emphasise her gospel authority and the rewards of penitence. In doing so, it remind us of the importance of wall paintings, alongside prints, panels and sculpture, in the development and circulation of ideas for religious art.

The Seefeld cycle certainly enhances our understanding of the Magdalen's status as «figurehead for eucharistic devotion» and its intertwining with the wild woman typology, but it also prompts new questions of iconographical paradigms and geographical parameters in art-historical studies.<sup>64</sup> The paintings blur the boundaries between German and Italian production, and thus warn against taxonomic certainties. After all, they were produced by a mobile artisan who carried in hand and mind knowledge of visual repertoires, but who also had the ability to tailor them to specific requirements. Guariento's Eremitani frescoes thus enjoyed an afterlife on the other side of the Alps more than seventy years later, rather than any intermediary version.

The revival of past arts for the accessibility of a local phenomenon counters the reception of the cycle in its more recent history. It is not merely canonical, the tale end of a seemingly generalised tradition of Magdalen imagery common to the late medieval Italian peninsula. This study has revealed fluidity in conception and meaning in the iconographical programme. The architectural niche provides the depth of field inherent in altarpiece equivalents, with the helper saints providing an exegetical framework for the viewing publics. But there is more at stake. By sublimating the historicity of the local host miracle through a universally revered saint who played a starring role in the doctrine of salvation (rather than the dedicatory, Oswald, whose humility was apt but not bound to the liturgical rites of Holy Week), the cycle becomes a monument of personal endeavor. It was likely commissioned by one of Sankt Oswald's rich aristocratic benefactors, perhaps

one of the Habsburgs or an allied family, and played an intended role in the wider decorative scheme of the choir and church as a whole. Indeed, along with the developing architecture, and later sculpture and panel painting, the mural cycle offered a resolute response to the events of 1384.

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- 1 Seefeld lies on the Alpine pass between the mountains of Mieiming, Wetterstein and Karwendel, 20km north-west of Innsbruck (Austria).
- 2 For the origins of the legend, see N. Mayr, *Oswald Milser. Oder wie eine Mirakellegende entsteht*, «*Tiroler Heimatblätter*» 57 (1982), pp. 102-109. For the European-wide paradigm of bleeding hosts that find their origin in tales of Jewish profanation. See, M. Merback, *Pilgrimage and Pogrom. Violence and Memory and Visual Culture at the Host Miracle Shrines of Germany and Austria*, Chicago, 2012, pp. 9-11.
- 3 The portal was sculpted by masters of the Innsbruck lodge, under the direction of Andre von Tiers and financed by Archduke Sigismund of Tyrol, whose arms appear in the canopy.
- 4 Milser founded a Holy Blood chapel at Stams. It was lost during the eighteenth-century rebuild.
- 5 For discussion of Kölderer's panel, see *Heilium und Wallfahrt: Tiroler Landesausstellung, Prämonstratenserstift Wilten und Benediktinerabtei St. Georgenberg-Fiecht, 11. Juni bis 9. Oktober 1988*, Innsbruck, 1988. For arts patronage, see A. Schiegl, *Who was (or were) Jörg Kölderer? Innsbruck Court Painter and Tyrolean Master Builder*, in *Maximilian I and the Ages of Dürer*, München, 2012, pp. 81-89.
- 6 Including Michel de Montaigne, who arrived in Seefeld on 23 October, 1580. He saw the contact relics, read the descriptions on Kölderer's panel and learned first-hand of a miracle that had purportedly taken place the day before, when a man was saved from choking on his food. See *Montaigne. Journal de voyage*, F. Garavini ed., Paris, 1983, pp. 136-137.
- 7 See note 10 below for all references to the cycle. It is absent from all Magdalen scholarship to date.
- 8 For the phenomena of host-miracle shrines in respect to the Bavarian 'Poor Souls' Mass', see M. Merback, *Channels of Grace: Pilgrimage, Architecture, Eucharistic Imagery, and Visions of Purgatory at the Host-Miracle Churches of Late Medieval Germany*, in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, S. Blick and R. Tekippe eds., Leiden and Boston, 2005, pp. 587-646.
- 9 On the continental dimensions of St Oswald's cult see most recently, M. E. Kaline, *St. Oswald of Northumbria. Continental Metamorphoses*, Arizona, 2005. As a warrior king, St Oswald would have appealed to the Counts of Tyrol who moved their court from Meran to Innsbruck in 1420. Their patronage of the church is discussed below.
- 10 It is most likely that the paintings were added after the completion of the choir. I will address

the inter-relation of the three programmes, along with issues of patronage and production more fully elsewhere. They were discovered in 1950-51, have no documentary references and have hitherto received scant attention. See J. Gritsch, «Kulturberichte», 30, Friday, 28 July 1950, pp. 3 and 6, and *Seefeld Tirol*, München, 1961, p. 3; L. Weingartner, *Neuentdeckte gotische Wandgemälde in Tirol*, «Tirol. Nature-Art-People-Life» 26, Summer 1964, p. 17; A. Triendl, *Seefeld/Tyrol. Parish Church of St Oswald*, Regensburg, 2006, p. 10.

- 11 For a map of the Magdalen image cycles in the area, see fig 2.1 in J. W. Anderson, *Mary Magdalene and her Dear Sister*, in *Mary Magdalene. Iconographic Studies from the Middle Ages to the Baroque*, M. A. Erhardt and A.M. Morris eds., Leiden, 2012, pp. 45-74: 46. Sankt Magdalena in Oberleutasch was founded in 1190 by the Augustinian monastery of Polling in Upper Bavaria. It has undergone several rebuilds with no surviving imagery from the late medieval period.
- 12 The Magdalen scripts are set below each scene, whereas those of the Oswald cycle are below and between the roundels, depicting saints Oswald and Nicholas, in the lower decorative strip.
- 13 The architectural space implies that the cycle was planned for during the first building phase of the new church, financed by Duke Friedrich IV. The frame of the cycle incorporates a cross of consecration, a demarcation of its sacrality, see n. 26.
- 14 An inscription accompanies the Marian cycle on the south nave wall of the parish church of Terlano/Terlan in Alto Adige/South Tyrol, including date of execution (1407) and the names of patrons and artist. See L. Andergassen, *Arte sacra a Terlano*, Bolzano, 1994, p. 27.
- 15 The Tiefenbronn Martha and Lazarus are securely identified by inscriptions in their haloes. I will return to the iconographical significance of Martha later in the essay.
- 16 See M. Testa, *I quattordici santi ausiliatori: origini e sviluppo del culto in Alto Adige*, Bolzano 1996, and L. Andergassen, *Vierzehnheiligen in Sudtirol – Kultgenese und Verehrungstradition*, «Der Schlern» 66, 1992, pp. 681-732.
- 17 L. Dal Prà, *La Cultura dell'immagine nel Trentino. Il Sacro*, in *Le vie del Gotico. Il Trentino fra Trecento e Quattrocento*, L. dal Prà, E. Chini, M.B. Ottaviani eds., Trento, 2002, pp. 57-59.
- 18 The story of Milser's wife is recounted in *Wunder der Furcht und Liebe in der gegen vierhundert Jahre mit Gnaden Scheinbaren hostie zu Seefeld Landes Tyrol...* Innsbruck, 1773, pp. 23-26.
- 19 Barbara was invoked against sudden death by lightning, in reference to her own father's death when attempting to decapitate her with a sword. The chalice and host offer the promise of last communion, an appropriate gloss on the prophecy enacted by the Magdalen's anointing and a correlation with the overall redemption narrative. See below for further concordances between the saints and the Magdalen imagery.
- 20 For example, the Hanstein window with its donors, Hans Laun and Amelie von Rugendorf, found in the north side of the nave (second bay west) of the pilgrimage church of St. Leonhard in Tamsweg (Austria). See E. Bacher et al., *Die Mittelalterlichen Glasgemälde in Salzburg, Tirol und Vorarlberg*. Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi Österriech IV, Wien, 2007, illustrated on p. 213.
- 21 Tiroler Landes Archiv, Kirchenbaurechnung der Kirche Seefeld, HS. 5325, Teil 13, fol. 93r. See P. Frankel, *Peter Hemmel. Glasmaler von Andlau*, Berlin, 1956, p. 28 and Bacher, *Die Mittelalterlichen Glasgemälde*, pp. 462 and 464-468.
- 22 The renown of the blood miracle was spread by pilgrim badges and prints, including the

- hand-coloured woodcut in the National Gallery of Art, Washington (Rosenwald Collection, inv. no. 1943.3.643) and a badge in a private collection, illustrated in *Heiltum and Wallfahrt*.
- 23 There is no discussion of the monstrance in scholarly literature. My thanks to sacristan Andrea Neuen for kindly allowing access and photography.
  - 24 The Holy Blood Chapel built above the sacristy on the north wall was completed by 1516, on the orders of Maximilian I, with a window perforating the Passion cycle (see fig. 5).
  - 25 Bressanone/Brixen, Archivio Diocesano, *Protocolli Visitati* 1736, fol.82v. Earlier visitations do not include such detailed descriptions; the fifteenth-century visitation is lost. Since the dedication of the fourth altar changes to just the Virgin Mary in Heaven in the 1757 visitation, it is possible that one of the altars carried a dedication to Mary Magdalen on completion of the choir. My thanks to Eduard Scheiber, Director of the Diocesan Archive, for his time and expertise.
  - 26 For a good introduction to the function of the crosses, see A. Spicer, "To Show that the Place is Divine": Consecration Crosses Revisited, in *Images and Objects in Ritual Practices in Medieval and Early Modern Northern and Central Europe*, K. Kodres, A. Mänd eds., Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, 2013, pp. 34-52.
  - 27 The Tiefenbronn altarpiece has a dedicatory inscription that names Mary Magdalen (alongside Anthony and Erhard), confirming the dedication of the altar below. It also provides a persuasive argument for the original content of the corpus (the current sculpture is a 16<sup>th</sup>-century addition). See A. M. Morris, *Lucas Moser's 'St-Magdalone Altarpiece': Solving the Riddle of the Sphinx*, PhD diss., Indiana University, 2006, pp. 120-123.
  - 28 A priest and 12 choristers would reenact the washing of the apostles' feet. See R. W. Scribner, *Ritual and Popular Religion in Catholic Germany at the Time of the Reformation*, in *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany*, London and Ronceverte, 1987, p. 23 and n. 24.
  - 29 Most often it is in connection with the feast of Corpus Christi. Blessed Juliana's vision in c1230 Liège and subsequent petitions led to Corpus Christi being ratified by Papal Bull in 1264, with the liturgy including a mass and an office for the feast and its octave. See M. Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, Cambridge, 1991, p. 188. For the life of Mary Magdalen see, J. de Voragine, *The Golden Legend. Readings on the Saints*, trans. W. Granger Ryan vol. 1, Princeton, 1997, pp. 374-383. The *Saeldon Hort* as iconographical model is discussed most recently by A. M. Morris, *The German Iconography of the Saint Magdalene Altarpiece*, in *Mary Magdalene. Iconographic Studies*, 2012, pp. 75-104: 93.
  - 30 For discursive art-historical essays and bibliography, see *Mary Magdalene. Iconographic Studies*. For the most recent interdisciplinary approach to the cult, see *Mary Magdalen in Medieval Culture. Conflicted Roles*, P. Leuen, R. Waugh eds., New York, 2014.
  - 31 The late-medieval Magdalen was a composite saint. Gregory the Great 'resolved' her identity from various biblical mentions in his Thirty-Third Homily of 591, paving the way for her meteoric rise as Christianity's perfect penitent. See K. L. Jansen, *The Making of the Magdalen. Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages*, Princeton, 2000, ch. 1, esp. pp. 32-35.
  - 32 For discussion of the *computatio digitorum* see Anderson, *Mary Magdalene and her Dear Sister*, pp. 59-64.
  - 33 Morris, *The German Iconography*, pp. 88-89.
  - 34 For example, in Santa Maddalena in Rencio, also the dedicatory chapels in the Lower

Church of San Francesco (Assisi), the Palazzo del Podestà (Bargello, Florence), San Lorenzo (Naples) and San Domenico (Spoleto). Also in the Brancacci chapel in San Domenico and the Pipino chapel of San Pietro a Maiella (both Naples).

- 35 A round table at the *Last Supper* and the prominent display of the eucharistic wafer by Christ is found on the predella wing of the *Pulkau Passion Altarpiece* (1520). Though not directly connected in terms of production, it testifies to the regional currency of such associations and artistic formulae in pre-Reformation Europe.
- 36 A similar conflation appears on the sculpted west entrance tympanum of Ste. Marie-Madeleine, in Neuilly-en-Donjon, dated 1125-50, with the horizontal format of the sculpted table and the twelve apostles necessitated by their position on the lintel. The scene is part of a larger programme of redemption through female archetypes (Eve and the Virgin Mary).
- 37 It originates from the Middle High German, *greinen* or *weinen* (to weep). See J. and W. Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, 9, Leipzig, 1971, p. 878.
- 38 See K. Kellner, *Heortologie oder die geschichtliche Entwicklung des Kirchenjahres und der Heiligenfeste von den ältesten Zeiten bis zur Gegenwart*, Freiburg, 1911, from p. 51.
- 39 The scene is typically found in Christ life cycles in the fifteenth century, as in Sta Maria Pontresina (Swiss Grisons). See J.W. Anderson, *The Magdalen Fresco Cycles in Trentino, Tyrol and the Swiss Grisons, c. 1300 – c. 1500*, PhD diss., University of Warwick, 2009, pp. 273-276.
- 40 Contrition, confession, satisfaction and absolution, as ratified by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215.
- 41 Morris, *Lucas Moser's 'St-Magdalene Altarpiece'*, p. 166; J. Antunes, *The Late-Medieval Mary Magdalene. Sacredness, Otherness and Wildness*, in *Mary Magdalene in Medieval Culture*, pp. 116-139: 118-121.
- 42 A blue pigment, probably azurite, would have been used for the upper layer but has since been eaten away. See P. Taylor, *Condition. The Ageing of Art*, London, 2015, esp. pp. 123-126.
- 43 A borrowing from another desert penitent, Mary of Egypt. Both sinner-saints are depicted in the Magdalen chapel of Assisi, a rare occurrence.
- 44 With the obvious exception of Donatello's Mary Magdalen (c. 1457) and respondent artworks in the Florentine context.
- 45 H. Kessler, *Seeing Medieval Art*, Peterborough (ON) and Plymouth, 2004, p. 167. According to hagiographical accounts, the Magdalen's daily elevations were concealed from all human sight until one year before her self-prophesised death, see Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, p. 380. For the safety of viewing rather than touching the consecrated host, but also how that spiritual or ocular viewing was theologically problematic, see C. W. Bynum, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond*, Philadelphia, 2007, pp. 86-90.
- 46 Morris, *Lucas Moser's 'St-Magdalene Altarpiece'*, p. 159.
- 47 See J. Chapuis, *Tilman Riemenschneider. Master Sculptor of the Late Middle Ages*, New Haven and Yale, 1999, pp. 208-221.
- 48 D. Webb, *Raimondo and the Magdalen: a twelfth-century pilgrim in Provence*, «Journal of Medieval History» 26/1, 2000, pp. 1-18 and Jansen, *The Making of the Magdalen*, pp. 282-283.
- 49 The hermit may represent the theological advisor of the cycle, given that he is proportionally dominant in the episode and carries a book in his left hand.
- 50 For the dating of the cycle see L. Bourdua, *De origine et progressu ordinis fratrum heremitarum:*

- Guariento and the Eremitani in Padua*, «Papers of the British School at Rome» 66, 1998, pp. 177-192:191-192 and J. Elliott, *Augustine and the New Augustinianism in the Choir Frescoes of the Eremitani, Padua*, in *Art and the Augustinian Order. Art in Early Renaissance Italy*, L. Bourdua, A. Dunlop eds., Aldershot, 2007, pp. 99-126: 101.
- 51 J. Richards, *Oblivion Deferred. Altichiero in the Fifteenth Century*, «RIHA Journal» 73, 2013, para. 4 <<http://www.riha-journal.org/articles/2013/2013-jul-sep/richards-altichiero>> (accessed 7/8/ 2014). The detached fresco depicting the Madonna and Child enthroned with a kneeling donor being presented by Anthony Abbot, from the cathedral of St Stephen in Vienna (now in the Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien, inv. 13924), attests to the diffusion of Altichiero's style beyond the Alps at the turn of the century. See F. Pietropoli, *Tra Padova, Verona e le Alpi*, in *Trecento, Pittori gotici a Bolzano*, A. De Marchi, T. Franco, S. Spada Pintarelli eds., Bolzano, 2000, pp. 188-190.
- 52 The St Nicholas chapel (east wall of the nave of San Domenico) was demolished after 1820, with most of the surviving fragments of the decorative scheme destroyed during WW2 bombing. Pre-1944 photographs are held in the Rasmo-Zallinger Fondazione, City Archive, Bolzano, and form the basis of all scholarly discussion of Guariento's influence on the local schools in Bolzano.
- 53 Franco, *Tra Padova, Verona e le Alpi*, pp. 149-165. Stotzinger was probably from southern Germany but his artistic formulation, like the Urban IV Master, was indebted to northern Italian trends. See A. Besold, *Il gotico internazionale. Influssi nordici*, in *Trecento, Pittori gotici a Bolzano*, pp. 195-197.
- 54 The architecture and battle scenes in the Oswald cycle suggests that the master also looked at the frescoes by Altichiero in the chapel of San Giacomo in the basilica of Sant'Antonio in Padua (from 1372). The great pilgrimage church was a showcase for the arts of the Trecento.
- 55 Illustrated in Morris, *The German Iconography*, p. 91.
- 56 Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, p. 381. The angels are present in the final episode of the Magdalen cycle in Santa Maddalena, Rencio (Bolzano), painted before 1387.
- 57 The board extends beyond the column to the right suggesting it is of sizeable proportions. The artist has been at pains to render distinct the grained wood in contrast to the polished marble of the altar, an insistent materiality that clearly bore import in the context of the church. A symbol of humility would align well with the performance of penitence in Seefeld.
- 58 The scene (fragmentary) is also present in a little-known mural cycle in Copertino (Lecce) in Southern Italy, see S. Ortese, *Il ciclo della Maddalena nel Castello di Copertino*, in *Percorsi di Conoscenza e Tutela. Studi in onore di Michele d'Elia*, F. Abbate ed., Pozzuoli, 2008, pp. 95-109. Ortese proposes a private commission context on account of surviving heraldry.
- 59 See J. Cannon, *Beyond the limitations of visual typology: reconsidering the function and audience of three Vita panels of women saints c1300*, in *Italian Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, V. M. Schmidt ed., New Haven, 2002, pp. 290-313.
- 60 See A.M. Ernst, *Martha from the Margins: The Authority of Martha in the Early Christian Tradition*, Leiden, 2009, esp. section 2.2.4.
- 61 In the *Golden Legend*, Martha sprinkles holy water over the dragon of Tarascon to end its terrorizing of the town, and so the aspergillum became her standard attribute in the visual arts. In church ritual, it is used to sprinkle holy water on the altar after the rite of entrance for Sunday Mass, in reference to Psalm 51, 'Asperges me, Domine, hyssop'.

- 62 Sancti Aurelii Augustini, Hipponensis episcopi, opera omnia... in *Patrologiae Latinae* vol 38, Paris, 1841, cols. 1107-1112, esp. 1108. The influence of the Augustinian canons, and the writings of their founder, may have come via the monastery in Polling, (see n.11), or Wilten Abbey, a Premonstratensian foundation in Innsbruck.
- 63 See Anderson, *The Magdalen Fresco Cycles*.
- 64 Jansen, *The Making of the Magdalen*, p. 224 and n. 85. The alignment of the Magdalen cult with the miracle in the choir adds further nuance to the phenomenon of host-miracle sites in the German-speaking territories.



Fig. 1: Church of Sankt Oswald, Seefeld in Tyrol, exterior of choir, photograph, April 2012



Fig. 2: *Oswald Milser Host Miracle*, commissioned 1472, Fussen stone, (detail), Seefeld, Church of Sankt Oswald



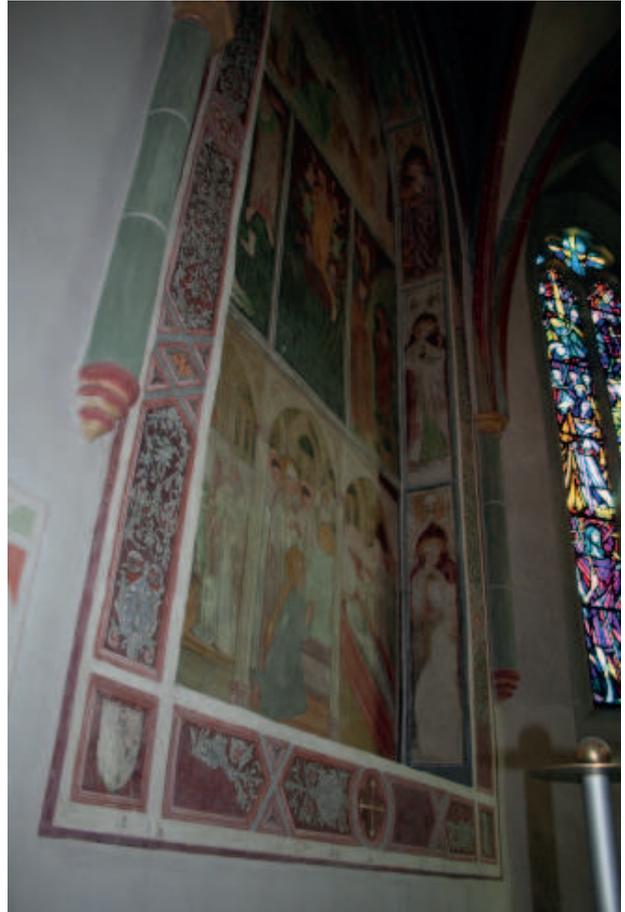
Fig. 3: J. KÖLDERER, *The Seefeld Host Miracle*, c. 1500-1502, tempera on wood, 200 x 122 cm. Seefeld, Church of Sankt Oswald



Fig. 4: ANONYMOUS, *Mary Magdalen mural cycle*, after 1432. Seefeld, Church of Sankt Oswald



Fig. 5: ANONYMOUS, *Oswald, Passion and Magdalen mural cycles*, after 1432. Seefeld, Church of Sankt Oswald



Figs. 6, 7: ANONYMOUS, *Mary Magdalen mural cycle*, details, after 1432. Seefeld, Church of Sankt Oswald



Fig. 8: L. MOSER, *Mary Magdalen Altarpiece*, altarpiece opened, 1432, panel, 300 x 240 cm. Tiefenbronn, Sankt Maria Magdalena Church. Photograph courtesy of the Denkmalpflege, Baden-Württemberg; Amy M. Morris



Fig. 9: ANONYMOUS, *Mary Magdalen mural cycle*, after 1432, detail. Seefeld, Church of Sankt Oswald



Fig. 10: ANONYMOUS, *Monstrance with the Host Relic*, 1390s, silver-gilt, Seefeld, Church of Sankt Oswald



Fig. 11: Interior of Parish Church of St. Maria Magdalena in Tiefenbronn, after restoration (Moser altarpiece to far right of apse), 1960, photograph, courtesy of the Landesmedienzentrum Baden-Württemberg



Figs. 12, 13: ANONYMOUS, *Mary Magdalen mural cycle*, details, after 1432. Seefeld, Church of Sankt Oswald



Fig. 14: ANONYMOUS, *Mary Magdalen mural cycle*, detail, after 1432. Seefeld, Church of Sankt Oswald



Fig. 15: ANONYMOUS GDAŃSK, *Winterfeld Diptych: Elevation of Mary Magdalen by Angels*, c. 1430, tempera and gold on oak (obverse right wing), 182.4 x 122 cm, inv. Śr.206. Warsaw, National Museum of Warsaw. Photograph courtesy of the NMW



Fig. 16: ANONYMOUS, *Elevation of Mary Magdalen by Angels*, 14th century, relief sculpture, detail. Toruń, SS John Cathedral



Fig. 17: H. HARDER, *Former High Altarpiece depicting Mary Magdalen with Scenes from her Life*, ca 1470, oil on wood. Mareit, Church of Sankt Magdalena. Courtesy of the Ufficio Arte sacra e tutela beni culturali, Diocese of Bolzano-Bressanone

Fig. 18: M. STÖBERL, *High Altarpiece depicting Mary Magdalen with Scenes from her Life*, 1509, oil on wood. Mareit, Church of Sankt Magdalena. Courtesy of the Ufficio Arte sacra e tutela beni culturali, Diocese of Bolzano-Bressanone



Fig. 19: T. RIEMENSCHNEIDER, *Modern reconstruction of high altarpiece with some original elements*, 1490-92, limewood, detail. Műnnerstadt, Church of Sankt Magdalena



Fig. 20: ANONYMOUS, *Mary Magdalen mural cycle*, after 1432, detail. Seefeld, Church of Sankt Oswald

Fig. 21: GUARIENTO, *Scenes from Lives of Philip and Augustine*, 1361-65, fresco, detail. Padua, Church of the Eremitani. Courtesy of the Ufficio Diocesano per L'Arte Sacra e i Beni Culturali Ecclesiastici, Padua



Fig. 22: MASTER OF THE MAGDALEN, *The Penitent Magdalen and Scenes from her Life*, 1280, tempera on panel. Florence, Galleria dell'Accademia / Bridgeman Images



Figs. 23, 24: ANONYMOUS, *Mary Magdalen mural cycle*, after 1432, details. Seefeld, Church of Sankt Oswald