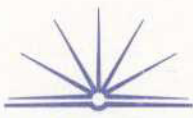
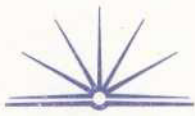


18. a. Mary Magdalene played a significant role in the founding period of Christianity. In a patriarchal society dominated by Jewish Rabbinic Law Mary Magdalene is an example of the important role which women played in Jesus' ministry. Mary Magdalene is mentioned fourteen times in the gospels, second only to Mary the mother of Jesus. She is especially important as being the first witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ and she was told to "Go and tell". Thus the Orthodox Church refers to her as 'Isopostolos' or 'Apostle to the Apostles'. Mary Magdalene was the leader of the group of women who supported Jesus Christ "out of their own resources" (Luke 8). She is significant as being an individual and leader among the women. Of six resurrection accounts she is mentioned in five and always first. Her reference to Mary of Magdala is important because she is the only woman not identified with a man. She played a lead role in maintaining the importance of women in the early Christian communities "To be one of Jesus' close followers was to have far-reaching



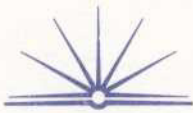
consequences for everyday life, especially for women" (Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel). Mary Magdalene is therefore significant as a role model for the position of women in ~~early~~ the early Christian communities.

b. Joan Chittisto is a Benedictine Nun of the Catholic denomination and has affected the everyday life of believers significantly in the area of education. Chittisto is a feminist theologian and has written many books on the role of women in the Catholic Church. She has impacted on the everyday life of believers by placing the role of women in church structures as on the agenda in schools and churches. She focuses particularly on the revision of language "attend to the kinds of language and affirm language that heals". She has published several books including "Icon of Ministry" and "The Story of Ruth: Twelve Moments in Every Woman's Life". These texts have been widely acclaimed by such groups as the 'Movement for the Ordination



of women' as Chittisto focuses also on the role of women in church structures. Chittisto declares "there is no justification Christian justification for the oppression of women". In June of 2001 Chittisto defied a Papal ~~Ban~~^{Ban} not to attend a conference of women's ordination in Pittsburgh, Ireland. This demonstrates his commitment to the education of women worldwide on the importance of the role of women in church structures. Chittisto has been most influential in presenting the positive role of women in the Catholic church and demanding a revision of the existing church structures.

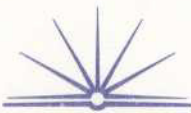
C. Joan Chittisto and Leila Ahmed are two contemporary women from the Christian and Islamic faiths respectively who have definite views on the role of language in their respective traditions. Both women have significantly different views, whereas Joan Chittisto argues for the implementation of inclusive language in the Christian church, Leila Ahmed uses the fact that inclusive language is



not an issue in the Quran to demonstrate how liberating Islam is for ~~women~~ muslim women. Language is an important issue in both traditions yet is very different in its effect in each tradition.

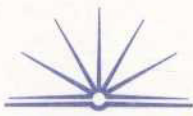
Tom Chittisto is a Benedictine Nun of the Catholic denomination ~~and~~ who calls for the return of the Christian churches to the equality which existed during the ~~time~~ ~~per~~ time of Jesus' ministry. Chittisto argues that the use of the male pronoun in Catholic services is seriously misrepresentative of the majority support of women in the Catholic church. Chittisto demands that the image of God is one of equality and language should reflect this, as how one images God determines how one approaches God and to restrict God to male only is to seriously diminish the importance of God.

Chittisto refers to Gal 3:28 "...between men and women, you are all one in union with Christ Jesus." From the fourth period women have been identified in scripture as equal to men and



inclusive language is evident. Christite calls for a need to "attend to the kinds of language that hurt and affirm language that heals". Christite does not see a future for a church that cannot recognise its own followers equally.

The issue of language is just as much an important issue in Islam yet in the opposite way. Leila Ahmed is a feminist theologian who pursues the role of women in Islam throughout history. She has published many acclaimed books such as "Women and Gender in Islam". Ahmed uses the issue of language to show how Islam is superior in this aspect compared to Christianity. The Quran uses inclusive language throughout the Suras and Surah 49 states "made from one single soul from the same earth." Thus Ahmed uses this Quranic statement to show the inclusivity of the Quran in relation to language in contrast with the Christian Bible. The existence of inclusive language in the Quran shows that Islam is indeed liberating of Muslim women



and also Muslim men in this aspect. Thus

Jean Chittiste and Leila Ahmed have significant

views on the role of language in their respective

traditions and they are both feminist theologians

with ^{sound} ~~strong~~ arguments strongly supported by

scripture.