Framing Fragments:

Painting and Re-membering Women at the Johannine Supper

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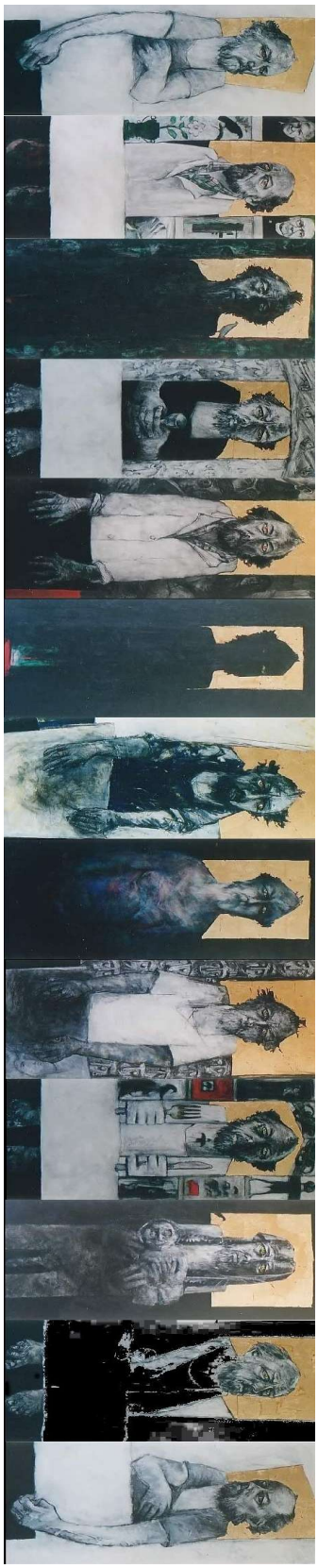
> Now before the feast of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come … Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. John 13:1

> Art frames fragments of our world: paintings, poetry, novels, sculpture, dance, music; helps us look at colors, sounds, bodies, events, characters – whatever – with full attention. Something is lifted out of the world and put into a frame so that we can, perhaps for the first time, see it. (McFague 1997: 29)

> Re-membering conveys together the ideas of bringing what has been hidden out of the shadows of history, of putting together what has been dismembered and of making someone a member of oneself, of a community or the tradition in a new way. (D'Angelo 1994 : 136)

This article brings into dialogue the Aotearoa New Zealand artist, John Badcock's provocative painting of *The Last Supper* and a feminist socio-rhetorical re-membering of women at the Johannine supper table. My interest in the painting arose when it was displayed in the ChristChurch Cathedral during Lent of 2003. I had agreed to contribute to the Lenten series "Conversations with a Painting" from the perspective of feminist biblical studies.



In speaking about his understanding of art, Badcock is reported as stating that it enables us "to go somewhere you've have never been before" (Thomas 2002: 17). Badcock will not comment on this painting for he maintains that he spoke when he painted. However, he does volunteer that "it's not necessarily the work that will upset you. It's what the work triggers in you" (Thomas 2002: 17). In the first part of this article, I describe aspects of Badcock's work. Then, in the second part, I outline the connections that it triggered for my research on women and the Johannine supper. In part three, through a feminist socio-rhetorical re-membering, I show that women are at the Johannine supper table.

I. John Badcock's *The Last Supper*

Badcock's startling *The Last Supper* was erected along the Cathedral's south wall and stretched over thirteen panels, each two metres high by nearly one metre wide. Its sheer size overwhelms. Most confrontational of all in the dim light was its repetitive maleness. The thirteen traditional characters are not only fragmented into single unconnected panels, but are self-portraits of the artist which are set against dark, shadowy backgrounds. The frenzied eyes evoke the darker moments of the human story. The sense of foreboding was heightened because that week a world, that longed for other solutions, awaited the invasion of Iraq by coalition forces. The darkness and the terror in those eyes attest to Badcock's claim to depict the Last Supper today. For Badcock states correctly "we are all in the period of the Last Supper", an assertion most would agree with, but in the history of interpretation, and in art, we are not all there (Thomas 2002: 18). Women need to be re-membered and represented. My task to place women at the table seemed not only of diminished importance but impossible, in that, this painting's repetition of the same person as the male characters

accented maleness, thereby, appearing even more exclusive of the female than traditional depictions.

This was not the first time that I had encountered a painting of the Last Supper which disturbs. I had stood in tears before massive, apparently empty *Abendmahl (Last Supper)* of Ben Willikens and reeled before Harald Duwe's *Abendmahisbild (Last Supper)* in which the unimaginable is presented pictorially (Crumlin 1998: 135, 133). While I could walk away from other paintings, I was committed to a conversation with this one. So I spent several lunch hours with the painting to befriend it and watch the response it evoked. The life of the Cathedral went on around me. Visitors streamed in. Some lit candles for a peaceful solution in Iraq. A film crew shot a scene for a movie. Mourners arrived for a funeral. People stood before the painting and interrupted my silent contemplation. They wanted to talk to me, or anyone, about it and that was what the painting did – it engaged. It ruptured the popular religious imagination's construction of a central event of the Christian story that had been shaped by the calm timelessness of Leonardo Da Vinci's medieval painting. It is fair to say that for most there was a clash, a rupture, a gap between the expectations generated by the religious imagination's depiction of this event and that of Badcock.

Provoking a rupture or gap by framing is precisely the point of art – a painting such as Badcock's and a story such as the Johannine community's representation of the last supper. Both frame a memory, or more precisely an interpretation of a memory, through visual images or through words that evoke images in particular contexts. According to Sallie McFague, "art frames fragments of our world" and enables us to look at "bodies, events,

characters …with full attention" (1997: 29). Further, she suggests that art enables us to lift something out of its familiar world and, as Badcock demonstrates, put it "into a frame so that we can, for perhaps, the first time, see it" (McFague 1997: 29). Badcock's painting is an entry point and a frame for a feminist socio-rhetoric re-membering of women at the Johannine supper.

II. Of Badcock's *Last Supper* and Re-membering Women at the Supper Table

The term "re-membering," for Mary Rose D'Angelo, "conveys together the ideas of bringing what has been hidden out of the shadows of history, of putting together what has been dismembered and of making someone a member of oneself, of a community or the tradition in a new way" (1994: 136). She advocates that this re-membering is an act of the historical imagination which is always provisional and subject to revision as new questions and resources arise (D'Angelo 1994: 136). Thus new questions may be posed to the text by Badcock's painting to facilitate the journey of the religious imagination from the female exclusion in Da Vinci's depiction, not to apparent emptiness of Willikens, but to the inclusive re-membering of Margaret Ackland's depiction which places women and children at the supper table (Fisher and Wood 1993).

The two insights contribute to my task of remembering. For Dorothy Lee, the question of women's presence or absence at the supper is a complex one because of the involved dynamics of history, tradition and redaction (1993: 18-19). The differing Synoptic accounts, and the evidence of the Fourth Gospel, indicate an early tradition which goes back to the

historical Jesus. For Moody Smith, the role of the Paraclete in the Fourth Gospel is to recall (14:25) and to expand what Jesus has said (14:12-15) in earlier times. The words of Jesus are understood as having been spoken "from the standpoint of a spirit-inspired post-resurrection community [cf. 7:39; 20:22] and are to be regarded as the fulfilment of the promise of the Paraclete rather than the words of the historical Jesus" (Moody Smith 1975 : 232-233). Moody Smith, therefore, reminds us that the Jesus of this gospel's supper is "distilled from the confession and controversies of the Johannine church" and, thus, at some distance from the historical figure (1975 : 232).

Lee suggests that surely a wider group of disciples, including women, were present at this supper. Between the historical Jesus and the recording of the Synoptic accounts, the tradition of the twelve emerged to displace other groups of disciples (Lee 1993: 18-19).[1] However, the dislodging of the latter, including women, is by no means complete; for according to Lee "the footprints of women can still be traced", yet "we are left with the uneasy testimony of texts which both conceal and reveal; in which women are both present and absent" (1993: 15).[2] In addition, for Lee "the tenor of the whole Gospel warrants" the conclusion that women were present at the Johannine supper (1993: 15). She posits that women's presence there "is more securely located" in this Gospel than in the others (Lee 1993: 15).[3] The description, "absence – an effective shadow of presence", has been applied to the Willikens *Abendmahl (Last Supper)*, a painting devoid of people who are arguably evoked by his variation of a room which is modeled on that of Da Vinci.[4] Visually, Badcock evokes absence as an effective shadow of presence, as I shall demonstrate the text of the Fourth Gospel also does.

Badcock's *The Last Supper* not only "frames fragments" but also fragments the unity of the supper into thirteen panels. The participants are together but not in a seamless whole, for they sit disconnected not only in each particular panel but also the lines of the table do not match. A male figure dominates each panel of Badcock's painting. Likewise, the history of the interpretation of the Johannine supper concentrates on male disciples and the presupposition that only male disciples were present at the supper. A closer examination of the painting reveals traces of a female world which further dislodge the unity of the painting. Similarly, a closer examination of the Johannine text will reveal gaps and insertions in the supposed closed surface. The painting, therefore, offers a visual representation of the symbolic worlds of the Johannine supper text: a dominant male symbolic world recognised in the history of interpretation and traces of an unrecognised female symbolic world.

The painting underscores that the scriptural account of the Johannine supper is also a work of art that frames a particular memory. The recorded memories of John 13:1-17:26 are a selection of fragments chosen from the memories of the Johannine communities. These have been reshaped in the process of telling and retelling into the present unified composition which is also not seamless. Literary form indicates separate origins. Broadly speaking, there are the panels of the narrative of 13:1-30, the discourses of 13:31-16:33, and the prayer of 17:1-26 (Tolmie 1995: 12; Brown 1966-1970: 582).[5]

Badcock collapses the particularity of the thirteen male participants into self-portraits of the artist. This makes stunningly visible the presupposition, which is rarely stated in mainstream biblical interpretation, that the interpreter is in the interpretation and is influenced by her or

his presuppositions, context and life experience. The overwhelmingly male painting has the interpreter of the Last Supper visually and repetitively inserted in the interpretation and highlights an admission that is refreshing from a feminist perspective. In effect, Badcock's painting is a visual statement of the hermeneutical understanding that interpretation is never objective or neutral because the interpreter is always embedded in the interpretation as I am. Now I examine the textual panels of the Johannine supper to uncover that along with the dominant, visible, male world of text, there is a female world of women who are at its table.

III. Textual Panels Recording Memories of the Supper

1. *"Having loved his own"* - Women Included?

I shall extend the context of the supper beyond 13:1-17:26 to include chapters 11-12 and chapters 18-20. Of course, a feminist sequential reading of the gospel would approach the farewell discourses with certain expectations arising out of the stories in the two preceding chapters, the last of which presents the culmination of the signs. However, the strategy of delineating 11:1-17:26 as a section of the gospel presents other advantages. In the first place, this delineation enables a division of this gospel which will make visible the presence and activity of the women disciples in the theological meaning-making of the death-glory of Jesus in the highly androcentric, dominant discourses found within 13:1-17:26. In addition, certain links between chapters 11 and 12, and the death-glory of Jesus, even raise the possibility of such a reading among sections of the Johannine communities. Second, within this division, chapters 11-12 depicts two women disciples as involved in incidents which foreshadow the imminent death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. Third, chapters 13-17, which are traditionally the exclusive sacred space of Jesus and his male disciples, are read to

reveal traces of female disciples at the table. Fourth, chapters 18-20 are inextricably linked to chapters 11-17.

For this delineation to render women visible, Jn 13:1, a sentence which looks back to previous events and serves as a focus for what lies ahead, raises a key question. Jn 13:1 is crafted with words and phrases that have particular Johannine themes and nuances (Schnackenburg 1990: 3:6-9, 15-16).[6] The phrases or clauses, "Jesus knew that his hour had come", "to depart out of this world to the Father", and "having loved his own … he loved them to the end", evoke the death of Jesus. Further, there is the suggestion that 13:1 transcends time (Moloney 1998: 378).[7] Who is present or absent from the Johannine supper hinges on an exploration of a question which arises out of this solemn sentence: Who are this own? In order to pursue this question, following Badcock, I shall fragment the chapters of John 11-20 into ten textual panels in order to make women visible and to re-member the supper. Therefore, Chapter 11 is textual panel 11 of a sequence of ten panels which comprise the Johannine supper (see appendix for textual panels 11-20). I have retained the correlation of chapter numbers and textual panels because, even though chapter 11/textual panel 11 denote the "beginning" of the supper, my delineation of its context and my fragmentation of chapters into textual panels cannot, in fact, remove this particular section of the gospel from what has been evoked in chapters 1-10 or from links between the panels. I shall now examine the textual panels chapters 11-20. However, the limitations of space means that textual panels 11-13 and 15-17 will be treated in more detail while brief reference will be made to textual panels 14 and 18-20. Some features will be discussed across the panels. Likewise, there are many aspects of Badcock's intriguing painting that I cannot discuss here.

2. Re-membering: Making Visible the Invisible

Textual Panels 11 and 12 – Martha and Mary

At least two women are found in Badcock's panel 5 and lead me to focus on two women, Martha and Mary in the textual Panels 11 and 12 which comprise that section of the gospel which many described as hinge chapters (for example, Schneiders 1999a: 150). Sandra Schneiders points out that Jesus is executed symbolically by the decision of the authorities (11:47-53), buried symbolically in the anointing scene (12:1-8), and glorified symbolically by his triumphal entry into Jerusalem (12:12-15.) which is occasioned by his raising of Lazarus (11:17, 38-44) (1999a: 150). Further, the disciples, Martha and Mary are often seen to be placed in the narrative at the climax of the ministry of Jesus. Their roles in the theological meaning-making of the death of Jesus foreshadow, and are also an interpretative key for, the symbolic presentation of that event in this gospel. While emphasis is usually given only to the roles of Mary and Martha, for Adele Reinhartz "the crucial juncture" at which these sisters are found also "compels us to take them seriously" as characters and vehicles for Johannine theology (1991: 181) .

A feminist reader who approaches Jn 11 is now familiar with two arenas of increasing tension. First, the death-glory of Jesus has been foreshadowed by at least three textual strategies – images,[8] predictions by Jesus of his death (3:14; 8:28), and reference to his death (8:21). Second, the foreboding of the acceptance and the rejection of Jesus/Logos/Sophia by his own in 1:11-12 are unfolded by the depiction of characters who either become disciples

through gradual recognition or who do not believe. In chapters11-12, the reader discovers that the momentum around these two trajectories increases as the story builds dramatically.

These foreshadowings of Jesus' approaching death are confronted in Jn 11:1-45 with real death and life restored. The sisters, Mary and Martha of Bethany are surely among "his own" for it is discovered that Jesus loved them (11:5). Further, these two are described as active in the events surrounding the raising from the dead of their brother. Paradoxically, this foreshadows Jesus' own resurrection yet precipitates his death. Many Jews believed (11:45) yet others went to the Pharisees (11:46) who, with other religious leaders plan for his death (11:47-57; 12:10-11). Yet others, like Jesus' friends at Bethany, do not heed orders to report his whereabouts (11:57) but welcome him into their home. Mary's anointing of Jesus was mentioned proleptically in 11:2.[9] Immediately after the anointing, Jesus defends her action by linking it to his burial (12:7).[10] Of all the disciples, Mary is portrayed as understanding the implications of what has transpired and of what is about to happen, for Jesus is the messiah, the Christ, "the one anointed" who is coming into the world as Martha had proclaimed previously (11:27).

Martha's confession would seem to be part of a progression of understanding.[11] Indeed, later her confession reflects the words in which the very purpose of the Fourth Gospel is stated in 20:31. Ingrid Rosa Kitzberger suggests the "doubtful question" of the woman of Samaria (4:29) is now answered by Martha constituting a "*configuration* between them" whereby one woman is interpreted in the light of the other (1995: 574-575). A plot development is achieved. According to Kitzberger, "Martha gives the answer which the Samaritan woman

might have been able to give later" (1995: 574-575).[12] Further, it is interesting to place Martha's confession alongside other instances when characters use "Messiah" in this gospel. These gravitate around characters who question that Jesus is the messiah[13] or depict circumstances of inadequate belief.[14] In that she believes before the sign (cf. 4:44-54) and makes her confession without empirical evidence, Martha is contrasted with Thomas (20:29). For Reinhartz, this settles debates on questions of the profoundness, or otherwise, of Martha's understanding (1991: 178) .

Kitzberger sees another "configuration" between the words of Martha's confession of Jesus as the Messiah and the actions of Mary, which are an implicit confession of the suffering Messiah (1995: 575). The abundance of her lavish anointing with nard fills the house with fragrance.[15] In addition, her service of anointing and drying Jesus' feet (12:3)[16] foreshadows Jesus' own action (13:4ff.). She has already participated in his action as the one who serves. As well, she anticipates an action similar to that of Jesus which is paradigmatic of the relationship between Jesus and his own (13:13-16), and the pattern for the great commandment of love between disciples and friends (13:34-35; 15:12-14). Further, Mary has demonstrated how one who is called - that is, "his own" - by the Good Shepherd responds (11:1, 28-32; 12:1-8).

This résumé of Mary's actions projected into the context of farewell discourses, along with the memory of Martha's going out of the house to meet Jesus (11:20), her theological engagement with him (11:21-22, 24, 27, 39), and her act of faith (v.27) lead to comparisons with Peter. In the case of Martha, there is a striking parallel to the words of Peter in Mt

16:16. Mary's initiative in her anointing and wiping of Jesus' feet contrasts with Simon Peter who clearly does not understand the import of Jesus' action and at first protests vehemently (Jn 13:6-8).

The sisters are shown to be in relationship with the general Jewish community who console them in their grief (11:19, 31) and weep with them (11:33). They do not distance themselves from the mourners when Jesus arrives (11:32 ff.). This family is clearly and openly attached to Jesus, and integrated into the Jewish life. This counterview to the depiction of the hostility implied between "the Jews" and Jews who confess that Jesus is the Messiah as depicted in 9:22, 12:42 and 16:2, is extraordinary and unnoticed by commentators. This supports the contention that here are several voices and traditions in the Johannine text. These offer different readings of the Johannine community and of the theological meaning-making and story-telling of the supper and death-resurrection of Jesus.

Textual Panel 13 – The Love Command and Washing Feet

Badcock's panel 9 appears to stress the presence of women at the supper because a face of a woman is part of the very fabric of the tablecloth from where she looks at the male characters. The foreshadowings of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection outlined above, and his intimacy with these two sisters also lead the feminist reader to have certain expectations. Now as "his hour had come to depart" and "having loved his own … to the end" (13:1), these women and/or other women disciples would surely be present at the events which 13:1 signals. They are near the cross (19:25-27) and present after the resurrection (20:1-18). The two sisters are portrayed as the initiators and main characters in the events of chapters 11 and

12 which set in motion a particular chain of symbolic and prophetic actions. Now in 13:1-17:26, in the presence of Jesus and other disciples who are presumed to be male, the symbolic and prophetic actions continue and also encompass coming events, as future and present merge beyond the conventional notions of time (O'Day 1991: 156). It is arguable, however, that in the narrative world "his own" includes women and men disciples. Indeed, the action of Mary, as has been stressed previously, foreshadows Jesus' action and presents the love commandment in action.

Further, the visibility of women is imperative, if Tolmie's narratological reading of the characterisation of God is correct. He demonstrates convincingly that 13:1-17:26 communicates "a comprehensive ideological perspective on discipleship" (Tolmie, 1998: 71). The emphasis which until chapter 13 was on the possibility of a relationship between God and human beings in general, "is now directed at a specific group, i.e., the disciples" (Tolmie 1998: 71). It is, therefore, to be determined whether women are numbered among the disciples, and visibly so, as the story reaches its purpose.

Jesus rose up, surely in the sense of leaving the meal table, (13:2-3) and then reclined again (13:12). That meal is, of course, recorded as taking place "before the festival of the Passover" (13:13). However, its theological and chronological setting suggests that the whole death-glory of Jesus and not just the meal find meaning in the traditions of the Passover (Brown 1970: 549).[17] Such a feast in the Jewish world is inclusive of family. Further, women and children have specific ritual roles. Certainly, "the feet of the disciples" (13:5) is open to the possibility that women and men participated in the footwashing.[18] Surprisingly, this point

escapes commentators, who in the main act from the unstated presuppostions of the supposed traditional "place" of women. The action of footwashing (13:15) which is understood as the example of service - the love commandment in action and the measure of equality among disciples - was the work of a woman slave or wife. According to Sawicki, "the genre of gender is violated in order to express the bodily identity and availability of the Lord" (1994: 295).[19] This raises an interesting question given that the washing of the feet is found in this gospel instead of the bread and wine of an institution narrative. It also raises another question as to why it is that the washing of the feet by Jesus, an integral part of the Johannine supper, is so rarely represented in art, yet, the sexualising and incorrect stressing of a sinful woman washing his feet has been a frequent subject.

Textual Panel 15 – "Abiding"

Badcock's Panel 3 has women etched into the wall of the room, abiding and present at all that transpires. The language of "abiding" in the metaphor of the vine suggests a community of interrelationship, mutuality and indwelling.[20] It expresses Jesus' relationship to God (15:10), Jesus' relationship to the community (15:4, 9), and the community's relationship to Jesus (15:1, 7). For Lee, "abiding" is "an icon of wholeness and intimacy" which "move[s] through suffering, to accept the reality that life and fecundity come through pain and death, through pruning and the pierced side (7:38; 19:34)" (1997: 136). This undoes the effect of "patriarchal kenosis" (Lee 1997: 135). Related to this notion, O'Day identifies a language of love (13:35) which suggests a language of discipleship as a language of fullness, a different ethical language than that of self-sacrifice and self-denial (1992: 302-303).[21] The metaphor of

the vine also offers what O'Day describes as "a radical nonhierarchal, perhaps even antihierarchal image," for the composition and constitution of the church (1992: 303). All the intertwining mass of branches are indistinguishable by hierarchy of any kind and grow out of the one vine. It may be argued that the language of "abiding" and metaphor of the vine evoke inclusion of the women.

Textual Panel 16 - The Woman in Childbirth

In panel 11, Badcock presents his most overtly female presence at the supper. A veiled figure, the only one of the thirteen main characters so dressed, carries a child somewhat awkwardly. However, the character is bearded and has an exposed penis. A small songbird peeps from the corner of a golden window.

Textual panel 16 also evokes a woman and a child in the parable of 16:21. Jesus' deep concern for the disciples is voiced in paradoxical language which speaks of their remaining in the world after his departure (17:11), and yet of his going which is characterised by his remaining present (14:18). Throughout chapter 16, he speaks to the disciples before their experience of suffering his death and before their experience of suffering persecution. The transformation and the merging of the times are conveyed through variations of an enigmatic phrase which comprises the noun *hora*, the verb *erchomia*, and often a preposition denoting a personal genitive of possession (for example, in 7:30; 8:20). Surprisingly, in 16:21, is a preposition denoting female gender (16:21). This, and the metaphor of birth in which it is found, is indeed an irruption into the male world of the text, for it is the only explicit reference to the world of women in 13:1-17:26.

Interlaced in the understanding of the merging of the times is the new creation and the new age which is evoked by the transformative image of Jn 16:21. This image traverses pain and suffering to birth and rejoicing. Further, such a transformative image advances re-membering for the symbolic world of women, splinters not only a male world, but a symbolic male one of betrayal and misunderstanding. I have argued extensively elsewhere that this female image evokes Jesus' death-glory, and through the interconnection of present and future time, it evokes the suffering and future transformation of the situation of the Johannine disciples (Rushton 2000 and 2002).

Textual 17 – Footsteps of Women Accomplishing the Works of God

In panel 2, a photo of Badcock's grandmother looks out at the viewer. A bird perches on a leaved branch above a potted white flower. Under the table are slippers suggestive of female feet. We shall see that traces of female footsteps are indeed found in textual panel 17.

After 16:33 and from 17:1, the disciples, who are the characters Jesus addresses to that point, drop out of the story for the duration of chapter 17. The prayer of Jesus is addressed to God. This has the rhetorical effect of indicating that the "present moment of ch.17 is the decisive access point to the future" for those disciples not then present (O'Day 1991: 164). In other words, access to presence is not dependent on whether or not they "heard" Jesus. Therefore, in re-membering, "she" - the reader - and the women disciples of the Johannine communities are also included in the *tois anthropois* of 17:6. This leads the reader to recognise further literary and theological threads which are evoked by *eis telos* of 13:1.

In this context, the phrase *eis telos* has two meanings which embrace the understanding that Jesus loved his own until the end of his life and with a quality of unimaginable loving.[22] These become major themes which inform the rest of the story, namely, how Jesus makes known his love for his own and how he makes God known (cf. 3:16-17). These two meanings of *eis telos* link with "the hour." Further, anchored firmly in the feminist reader's memory is another connection. The noun *telos* recalls the earlier use of the root *teleo* in Jesus' defence of his encounter with yet another woman who disturbs profoundly the perceptions of male disciples (4:34. *Teleioso autou to ergon*.).[23]

The link between the mission of the woman of Samaria and the gathering together, which is part of God's work, is found in the prayer of Jesus in chapter 17. In this prayer in 17:4, Jesus addresses God as father: "I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do" (*to ergon teleiosas*). The meaning of 17:4 is amplified in 17:6-8 when Jesus describes how he has accomplished God's work among the disciples. To do the will of God, or God's work, is spelt out in 17:2b-3: "to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you sent." Then Jesus prays for the disciples in 17:.9-19. In 17:17-19, he parallels his own mission to the mission of the disciples (especially in 17:18: "As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world"). Now Jesus prays for all those who will believe in him through the word of the disciples (17:20).

This prayer of 17:20 evokes the one of whom it is said "many Samaritans … believed in him because of the woman's testimony" (4:39). As Schneiders points out the text, *dia ton logon tes gunaikos martupruses*, literally says, "through the word of the woman bearing witness" (1999b: 192). The woman of Samaria is the first, and only person, in the public ministry of Jesus in this gospel, through whose word of witness a group of people is bought to "come and see" (4:29), and to believe in Jesus (4:41-42).[24] Further, the "eternal life" of 17:2b-3 also recalls Jesus' discussion with her (4:7-15) in terms of the imagery of water, thirst and "a spring of water gushing up to eternal life" (4:14).

This woman, the woman of Samaria, like Mary of Bethany, has recognised who Jesus is.[25] In action, Mary anointed the One whom she recognised as the Messiah. In action, the woman of Samaria left her jar in order to tell her townspeople about Jesus whom she believed to be the Messiah (4:28-29). The irony in this instance is very strong. The disciples return not daring to reveal their real questions about Jesus and this woman. Her leaving her jar (4:28) is evocative of the Synoptic male disciple call stories in which they leave the tools of their occupations. It is a motif entirely absent in the Fourth Gospel except for this instance.[26] The scene has implicit and explicit references to food, eating and not eating (Jn 4:27-34), to imagery of the harvest, fruit and the sower which are evocative of fecundity, as well as, apostolic call and mission. Jesus explains to the presumably male disciples the purpose of his life and mission (4:34), and by implication, theirs. Simultaneously, the woman of Samaria, identified by her gender and ethnicity, is engaged in apostolic activity which apparently has results (4:39-43). It is clear that the Samaritan mission, which appears to be the initiative of this woman, is one in which the disciples will participate as "reapers."

This recalls the first appearance in this Gospel of the root *teleo* in the context of two significantly related expressions, namely, Jesus' mission is to do the will of God, the one who sent him, which means Jesus must "accomplish" or "bring to perfection" (*teleo/teleio*) a certain "work" (*autou to ergon*). It is remarkable that these first occur within the context of the story of the woman of Samaria (4:34). These two expressions occur again in the ministry of Jesus in 5:36.

These evocations of the story of the woman of Samaria in the prayer of the Johannine Jesus, which according to many scholars takes the form of testimony genre, is highly significant from a feminist socio-rhetorical re-membering (Bammel 1993: 103-116; Moloney 1998: 377-378). This draws the obvious gender tension found in the story of the woman's mission into the sacred space and intimacy of the table. Here the gospel, the very essence of which concerns witness in the locus of the encounter between Jesus and post-resurrection disciples, highlights a community struggle which evolved after the departure of Jesus (Schneiders 1999b: 97-131). Feminist biblical scholars, like Schneiders, have drawn attention to the effectiveness of the ministry of the woman of Samaria and her depiction as "a genuine theological dialogue partner gradually experiencing Jesus' self-revelation even as she reveals herself to him" (1999b: 191). This story most likely points to the possibility that the shapers of the tradition had experience of women as theologians and apostles, a situation which aroused tension in the communities. The story is shaped to present Jesus as legitimating female participation in roles appropriated by males.

Jesus continues by praying for all who have been given to him (17:24). It is clear that although the Gospel may be said to be about Jesus, the concern of Jesus is God's work (17:25-26). The claim of Jesus may be understood as: doing the will of the one who sent him (4:34) by accomplishing the work of God (4:34; 5:56; 17:4) and by enabling eternal life for all who come to know God through Jesus, the one sent (17:2-3). This momentum takes place within the gathering of the people of God (10:15-16; 11:50-52; 12:11, 19, 20-24, 31-32). These two movements in the text, namely, Jesus' claim of accomplishing the work of God and the gathering of community/communities, link to the women at the cross (19:25-27) and to the phrase, "It is accomplished" (19:30a: *tetelestai*).

In summary, I have demonstrated that by extending the supper to include 11:1-17:26 and linking it with chapters 18-20, the women of the Johannine gospel may be seen to take their place at the table of the supper, at the footwashing, at the discourses, and in the prayer of Jesus. In the symbolic world of the Johannine text, the events in which women disciples figure in 11:1-45 and 12:1-11 enact symbolically, those which transpire in the comparatively symbolic enactment of the events of 13:1-17:26. From a socio-rhetorical re-membering, and concordant with the claims of female discipleship and meaning-making, this could have been a late first century reading. The symbolic world of women recognising, professing and anointing Jesus the Messiah draws women disciples into the sacred space of the events of the supper, the footwashing and, most particularly, into the prayer of Jesus for those who accomplish the works of God. This creates heightened irony, for the male disciples inhabit the visible narrative world, yet they function in a symbolic world of betrayal and misunderstanding which prefigures their later desertion.

3. The Androcentric Human and Divine Worlds of Textual Panels 13-17

I have employed the women in the shadows of Badcock's painting to re-member the women in the textual panels of the Johannine supper. The farewell discourses are set in an intimate atmosphere.[27] Jesus tells of the glory of his death-resurrection to "his own" (13:1) who are his friends (15:14), and for whom he will lay down this life because of his great love (15:13). Nevertheless, as in Badcock's painting the women are rendered invisible for in the textual panels only the names of male disciples appear. This world of visible male disciples is marked by betrayal, denial and lack of understanding, and foreshadows the actions of the male disciples in chapters 18-19.[28] Ironically, the first named disciple is Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who was named proleptically as betrayer in 12:4, and whose question in 12:5 had precipitated Jesus' defence of Mary (12:7-8). What the reader has learnt from the atmosphere generated in the narrative through symbolic acts and speech, is now articulated in the word of Jesus. His imminent death comes into focus when he speaks of his burial (12:7). Now it is stated that the devil had already put into Judas' heart to betray Jesus (13:2; 26-27) and he leaves (13:31).

The foreboding of 13:2 is intensified by the words of Jesus in 13:21. This foreboding culminates in the prediction of Peter's denial of Jesus (13:36-38), the very one who is named several times (13:6, 8, 9, 24). The one whom Jesus loved and who was lying close to his breast (*kolpo*) is mentioned in 13:23 and in v.25, asks, "Lord, is it I?" In chapter 14, three named disciples portray a marked lack of understanding at this crucial time. Thomas asks: "Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" (14:5). Philip says: "Lord, show us the Father and we shall be satisfied." This elicits a rebuke from Jesus:

"Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip?" (14:8-9). Judas (not Iscariot) queries: "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" (14:22). The progressive focus on the disciples continues in chapter 16. From a gender perspective, the irony in 13:1-17:26 is very marked. Previously, the symbolic universe of named disciples was a female one marked by the faith of Mary and of Martha and their recognition of the significance of Jesus in chapters 11-12. In contrast, in the sacred space of the Passover, the male disciples, some of whom are named while the rest are assumed to be male, are visible in a symbolic male universe characterised by betrayal and misunderstanding. The named women and indeed all women disciples are invisible.

The androcentrism in relation to the naming and characterising of the human characters is accentuated in chapters 14-17 for this also extends to the divine world. The repetitious addressing of God as "father" by Jesus is conspicuous. The reader contrasts this with the preceding chapters in which Jesus calls God "father" only once in chapter 11 (v.41) and five times in the second half of chapter 12 (vv.26, 27, 28, 49, 50). In chapter 13 the narrator refers to "the father" twice to indicate God's relationship with Jesus (13:1, 3). In chapter 14 the total of 23 times points to a marked increase in the usage of "father" as a term for God.[29] Chapter 15 has a total of 10 times while in chapter 16 the term "father" is found 11 times.[30] The numerical count tails off in the prayer of Jesus in chapter 17 to 6 times (vv.1, 5, 11, 21, 24, and 25).

In summary, the male world is dominant as visualised in Badcock's *Last Supper*. There is explicit and repetitive reference to God as "father" by both Jesus and the narrator. It is also a

male world which is created by the male Jesus, the naming of the male disciples - Judas Iscariot, Simon Peter, Thomas, Philip and Judas (not Iscariot) - as well as, several references to "the disciples" who are presumably male. The spoken words which are recorded are those of males (13:1-17:26). This is the male world impressed on the Christian imagination and visualised in art.

IV. Conclusion

This article has worked with the framing of fragments of memories as found in Badcock's *Last Supper* and in Jn 11:1-17:26 to re-member women at the Johannine supper table. A close examination of the text uncovered clues to re-member women disciples among Jesus' own whom he loved and who have been hidden and unsought in the shadows of history. The importance of re-membering in the task of art, both the art of textual representation and the art of visual representation is touched on by a recent comment of Rowan Williams on art displayed in Canterbury Cathedral.

> [S]ome of the history of Christian art is about the tension between recognising that the change associated with Jesus is incapable of representation and recognising that for change to be communicated it must be in some way represented (Kenny 2004: 14).

The Archbishop was referring specifically to depicting the resurrection of Jesus. However, his insight is applicable to my project. Both art and the history of biblical interpretation of the last supper have shaped the Christian imagination in ways that have rendered women

invisible and shaped civil and ecclesial practice and power accordingly. Williams points out correctly that "for change to be communicated it must be in some way represented."

My re-membering of the Johannine supper offers three key factors which splinter the illusion of the dominant male symbolic world – the re-membering of Martha and Mary whose responses are in a different key, the re-membering of their possible participation with other women at the supper, and the image of woman giving birth. In the project of the representation of change, the art of Badcock which has women in the shadows is important. However, my study offers a biblical basis to the Last Supper of Margaret Ackland and that of the Polish artist Bohdan Piasecki.[31] It also calls artists, poets and preachers visually, textually, and orally, to communicate the re-membering of women at the supper.

Appendix: Textual Panels 11-20

Key:	***"his own"***	**footwashing/love commandment**
	woman disciples	male disciples *other details*

11	12	13
Mary and Martha – Initiators		
1 ***"his own"***	**1.8 Mary "hears" Understands**	1 "his **hour**" ***"his own"*** *eis telos*
2 anointing proleptically	**JESUS SYMBOLICALLY ANOINTED BURIAL**	2 Judas
5 **"loved" Martha & her sister**	**3 foot/wash/dry**	**4 ff. Jesus foot/wash/dry**
REAL DEATH JESUS SYMBOLICALLY DEAD	4.5 Judas' complaint	6.9 Peter misunderstands
13 speaking of his death – disciples do not understand	7.8 **Jesus links to burial Defends Mary**	11 knew…betrayal
		12ff**. Footwashing**
	11 many Jews believed – gathering of people of God	
19 consolation of Jewish community	12-15 **JESUS GLORIFIED SYMBOLICALLY –ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM**	18 speaks of betrayal
27 **"the Messiah, the Son of God …" Martha**	19 *gathering of people of God*	24 Peter – "who is it?"
28.32 ***Shepherd heard voice - "his own"***	20.24 Phillip, Andrew *gathering of people of God*	30-31 Judas leaves
31 **consolation Jewish community**	23 "the **hour** has come"	**34.35 Love commandment**
REAL LIFE RESTORED JESUS SYMBOLICALLY RAISED	24 *grain of wheat*	36.38 prediction Peter's denial
45 *many believed*	31.32 gathering of people of God	
46 some went to leaders	37 many did not believe	
50 Gathering of people of God	42 hostility of "the Jews"	
57 welcome	50 **eternal life**	

14	15	16
	1. Abiding *Jesus/community*	1 "said these things to keep you from stumbling" 1 hostility of "the Jews"
Questions of disciples: 5 Thomas: "How can we know the way?"	**6 abiding** *Jesus/community*	
8 Philip: "…and you still do not know me …"	**8 abiding** Jesus/God	
		17 "some of his disciples said to one another, "What does he mean by saying …" 18 They said "What does he mean by …"
	<u>12.14</u> <u>love commandment</u>	19 "Are you discussing among yourselves …"
22 Judas (not Iscariot)		**21 woman in childbirth "her hour" *lupe* joy/sorrow – transformation**
	35 law of love	29 His disciples said … 31 "Do you now believe?" 32 "the hour …when you will be scattered …and leave me alone."

17	18	19	20
Disciples drop out 2b-3 **eternal life** 4. **finish the work** ***to ergon teleiosas***	3ff. Judas betrayal		1.18 Mary Magdalene 10 Peter/other disciple went to their homes **11. But Mary stood…**
9.19 *prays for disciples* **18 mission** **19 those who believe through their word** **25-26 God's work** **4:7-15 eternal life** **4:34** ***teleioo*** ***4:39 dia ton logon tes gunaikos martures*** **4:28-29 Messiah** **4:28 leaves the jar**	15 ff. Simon Peter and another disciples followed … denial –three times	**25.27 women near the cross** **30** ***telelestai*** **"handed over his spirit"** **34 blood and water**	**18 Commission: my/ your Father/God** 29 Thomas 31 "…**the Messiah, son of God …"**

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[1] Possibly, the tradition of the twelve evolved in the painful struggle between the early Christian communities and Judaism to justify the former's identity. While this tradition may have been entrenched by the time the Synoptic Gospel were recorded, the symbolic import is both negative and positive. The faithfulness of the women is contrasted with the faithlessness of the twelve. Matthew and Luke tend to present a positive symbolic portrayal of the role of the twelve while Mark modifies the tradition to undermine their role. See Lee (1993: 18-19).

[2] On how art has perpetuated the view that only "the twelve" were present and for a project which places women at the table, see Fisher and Woods 1993. On creative articulation, see Schüssler Fiorena (1992: 73-76).

[3] On the question of women and pilgrimage to Jerusalem at festival time, see Frankel (1998: 126), and the telling of the Exodus story (1998: 106).

[4] From my notes made from a description displayed at the Exhibition *Beyond Belief: Modern Art and the Religious Imagination*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 24 April-26 July 1998.

[5] The evidence for redactional activity is "overwhelming", see Tolmie (1995: 12); Brown, describes the "artificial character of the present organization" and "its monotony of style, repetitions, confusing time perspective, and almost irreconcilable variety of expectations" (1966-1970: 582). On composition theories, see Brown (1966-1970: 583-588) and Segovia (1991: 1-58).

[6] The only concrete statements are "before the feast of the Passover" and "during supper." This underscores theological interests as opposed to historical purposes.

[7] Because *eidos, agapesas* and *egapesen* are aorist tenses and gnomic, they are of universal application and not limited to any one time.

[8] These include concrete images (2:19; 10:11) and abstract images of exaltation (e.g., 3:14; 8:28).

[9] On analepses and prolepses, see Culpepper (1987: 54-70). Kitzberger , does not consider 11:2 as a prolepsis referring to 12:1-8 (1995: 572).

[10] Sawicki, constructs the compositional history of the anointing in the grieving customs of elite hellenised Jewish women in Jerusalem who gathered in a *gynaikon* to grieve over Jesus (1994: 152-154). Their interpretation is then presented to a *symposium*/*ιhaburah*. See Sawicki (1994: 153, fig. 4).

[11] Some see this as ambiguous, for example, Lee (1994: 206). The majority, however, do not see it as reflecting contemporary messianic expectation and, therefore, partial, for example, Schneiders, who also sees it as "the most fully developed confession of Johannine faith" in the Fourth Gospel (1999a: 158). For those who adopt a similar position see, Moloney (1998: 339).

[12] On resonances between when Martha calls Mary (11:28) and when the woman of Samaria calls her villagers (4:28-30), see McKinlay (1996: 222).

[13] 7:26, 27, 31, 41-42; 9:22; 10:22, 12:34. In 1:20, 25; 3:28, John states he is not the messiah.

[14] On 11:41, see Moloney, who states categorically that "the claim on the part of the first disciples to have found Jesus and to have come to a decision about his person and role is a blatant untruth. This is seldom noticed by commentators" (1998: 60).

[15] This contrasts with the order of decay in 11:39, see Lee (1994: 222). In the gospel, there is objection to the cost of Mary's perfumes (12:5-6), while no-one comments on the quantity or cost of those of Nicodemus (19:39).

[16] Sawicki, draws attention to flowing hair which bothered Paul (1 Cor 11:4-16) and suggests the tradition preserved in Lk 7:38 and Jn 12:13 may serve "to mock and discredit prophetic women from whom had flowed a messianic anointing" (1994: 161, 163). For background suggesting Mary's intimate action was "honorable," see Fehribach (1998: 90).

[17] Brown suggests "[p]erhaps we should not try to be too exact" about the translation of *Pro de tes eortes tou pascha* , for it is "inserted to give a theological, as well as a chronological, setting to Jesus' whole passion and not just to the meal" (1970: 549). On Johannine and Synoptic differences, see Brown (1970: 555-558); Schnackenburg (1990: 3:33-47). On the three Passovers in the Fourth Gospel as related to the passion narrative, see Knöppler (1994: 116-121).

[18] The Fourth Gospel does not list the twelve. Subtitled in bibles as "the first disciples" are Andrew, unnamed disciple, Simon Peter, Philip and Nathanael (1:35-51). These and other male disciples named elsewhere do not correspond to lists in Mk 3:16-19 or Mt 10:2-4; Male disciples named elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel are Andrew (6:8; 12:22); Simon Peter (6:8, 68; 13:6, 9, 24, 34; 18:10, 15, 25; 21:2, 3, 7, 11, 15); Philip 6:5, 7; 12:21-22; 14:8-9; Nathanael 21:2; Judas Iscariot (6:71; 12:4; 13:2, 26, 29; 18:2, 3, 5), Judas not Iscariot (14:22), Thomas (11:6; 14:5; 20:24, 26, 27, 28; 21:2); James and John, the sons of Zebedee (21:2). "The twelve" are mentioned only in 6:67, 70, 71; and 20:24. On the minimised role of the twelve and the focus on a more inclusive category of discipleship, see Brown (1979: 81-88, 186, 191).

[19] On footwashing in the ancient world, see Ford (1997:138-141), on Aseneth washing Joseph's feet (1997: 141).

[20] The verb meno is used 10 times between 15:1-11.

[21] This emphasis differs from the discipleship language of self-denial of Mk 8:34; Mt 16:24; and Lk 9:23 which follows Jesus' prediction of his death (Mk 8:31-33; Mt 16:21-23; Lk 9:22). The exhortation for disciples to take up their cross and follow Jesus is not found in the Fourth Gospel.

[22] Brown (1970: 550), Schnackenburg (1990: 3:16) and Moloney (1998: 374). Contra Westcott (1903: 188) and Bernard (1928: 190), who agree it has two meanings but consider the temporal one does not suit this context.

[23] Two verbs are used: *teleo* (19:28, 30) and *teleio* (4:34; 5:36; 19:28).

[24] In chapter 1, before the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, John points out Jesus to two of his followers who subsequently bring personal acquaintances and relatives to Jesus (1:35-42).

[25] On major commentaries which undermine the woman of Samaria's "evident identification" with the post-resurrection disciples-apostles of Jesus thereby ignoring or suppressing "the characteristically Johannine pattern of faith development" (1:35-39, 41-42, 44-51; 20:18-20, 25), see Schneiders (1999b 193, 188).

[26] Mk 1:20; 2:14; Mt 4:22; 9:9; Lk 5:11; 5:28.

[27] This contrasts with the previous discourses which take place among hostile audiences and evoke rejection.
[28] These foreshadow the actions of the male disciples in chapters 18 and 19.
[29] 14:2, 6, 7, 8, 9 [2x]), 10 [3x], 11 [2x], 12, 13, 16, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28 [2x], and 31 [2x].
[30] 15:1, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 23, 24, 26 [2x] and 16:3, 10, 15, 17, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28 [2x], and 32.
[31] Piasecki's 1998 "Last Supper" includes six women and two children along with Jesus and the traditional twelve disciples in the setting of a Passover Meal. It is to be noted Jesus' final supper in John is not a Passover Meal.