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**KOLI NATIONAL PARK:
EDEN REVISITED?**

**Visitor´s first experience of Koli landscape;
a feminist - geographical approach**

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RESEARCH STATEMENT**UNIVERSITY OF JOENSUU**

In today's modern world our connection to the spiritual world has become increasingly marginalised. Science has separated the majority of people from the spiritual landscapes of the natural world. The hills of the Koli region in eastern Finland have traditionally been a sacred place but today they are part of national park and a modern tourist destination with a high level of infrastructure.

The purpose of this study is to determine what the spiritual significance of the Koli hills is to the first time visitor. The gendered elements of the landscapes within the park are focused upon through the use of feminist theory. Both extensive and intensive methods were used in the project. A survey consisting of five open-ended questions was distributed to 50 University of Joensuu students from around the world, in depth discussions with three Finns and two modified commented walks were used during this project. The results of this work suggest that Koli is still a sacred place and that there are both masculine and feminine elements in the landscapes of the park. It also found that visiting Koli is largely an individual experience even though many of the individual responses support contemporary feminist thought.

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1. THE SOIL - PROLOGUE

When we walk on the Earth we rarely reflect upon what is beneath our feet. The soil is an essential and neglected part of Life. The soil is made up of ancient rocks, plants and animals. But it is also made up of people. Our mothers and fathers, their mothers and fathers since time immemorial have made up the soil that we walk upon. The soil captures the rain and quenches the thirst of plants that, in turn, nourish animals and humans. Soil is the foundation for all Life and the clay from which animals and humans were shaped (Holy Bible The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1 – 3, 2004). The soil is the place of Life.

The first time that I visited Koli I could feel that it was a place of great significance. I had read very little of the abundant tourist literature when a small group of friends decided to walk to Koli from the city of Joensuu one weekend in the middle of October, 2003. The day we set out it was warm and sunny but there were not many others on the path. In fact, we did not meet any other ‘through’ hikers until the third day of the trip.

As the kilometres passed by under our feet and we approached the shadow of the mountain I began to notice the different behaviour of the group members (I should specify that all of us were foreigners in Finland and all of us were male). One man became more reflective, choosing to walk more slowly and absorb the more subtle nuances of the place. The kilometres walked in a day became less and less important while the surroundings themselves became increasingly the focus of attention. For others it was just about routine, left foot, right foot, left foot and so on. Passing trees, creeks and swamps became normative, and the focus shifted to good old-fashioned male bonding. For one man it was simply a trip to test the newest technical gear that he had purchased for a ridiculous amount of money.

As we began to ascend the peak of Koli there was a clearly visible change in the behaviour of one member in our group. He took it upon himself to assume the role of Alpha Male. He was walking at the back of the group with about 300 metres left to the top. His pace quickened as he passed the three others, he lowered his head to concentrate on his footing, and I am almost certain that he sprinted the last 50 metres to be the first to ‘conquer’ the mountain, although by that time he was out of sight.

The ironic part of his ‘conquest’ was the failure of his trophy to show itself. The view from the top of Koli, the highest peak in southern Finland, is some of the most spectacular scenery that the nation has to offer. But it had been raining for the last two days of our trip and the clouds were very low. Our view was limited to about five metres and the ‘mighty conquer’ was finally rebuffed by Mother Nature.

I have mentioned this story because it has helped me to focus the thesis of this paper and to decide upon a theory. After this hike I was left with many questions in my mind. Why do we climb mountains? Why do we compete to be the first to climb them? Do we really just

reduce spiritual places like Koli to places of conquest? Is this just typical male behaviour? What if there had been women with us? How do Finns come to Koli for the first time?

2. THE SEED - INTRODUCTION

The seed of a tree is a miracle of Creation. This tiny piece matter contains Life. It can lie dormant for years, waiting for the necessary conditions to grow. And then, in silence, without warning, it unceremoniously opens up to become a tree (University of Saskatchewan Website, 2004). Not just any tree, but the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. It contained the moral fate of the world according to Christian beliefs (Holy Bible, The Book of Genesis, 2004). This concept has captured the imagination of Western civilisation for thousands of years. But a seed may also represent any idea from which things, like a research project, may grow.

The Garden of Eden was an idyllic place. Peace and love reigned supreme until the temptation of sin was presented to Adam and Eve by the Devil in the form of the snake. The Bible says that Eve was the first to yield to temptation and then she tempted Adam (Ibid, 2004). Here, in what is often referred to as the Original Sin we have the first opportunity to blame women for the problems of the world. It seems that purity never had a chance on Earth. But there are places that remind us of what Eden may have been like. These places are spiritually significant, beautiful, and serene. One of these places is Koli National Park.

Koli is mountain to some, a national park and heritage site to the Finnish Government, and to the obtuse travellers of The Lonely Planet it is a park where we should not, “expect too much – it’s a hill covered in pine and birch” (Harding and Brewer 2003, 176-177). But to others this place is much more than these simple descriptions. To some of these people Koli is a sacred landscape where life exists on an more intense spiritual level.¹

For me Koli is the centre of the world. This may seem quite strange when one considers the relatively peripheral location of Koli in North Karelia, in Eastern Finland, in Europe and in its global context. But, according to Jimmie Durham, every place on the Earth may be thought of as the centre of the world (1996, 140-147). This is in part due to the Earth being relatively spherical in shape and partially because every place on the Earth can be interpreted as the centre of someone’s physical or spiritual life. This argument is echoed by geographers who have made statements like,

I shall strongly emphasize the individual experience in one’s world-making, in one’s encountering geodiversity. To write about ‘my place as the center of my world’ is to delve into the existential nature of man’s ‘earthly reality’ (Karjalainen 1986, 24).

¹ For a good definition of landscape see Kenneth Olwig’s article Recovering the substantive nature of landscape or Rose et al. who state that landscapes are not empirical objects but forms of representations, and their meanings are not solid but dynamic and fleeting, cited by Ekinsmyth (2002a, 64).

Koli is also a place that has given birth to the nation of Finland during the Romantic Era and nurtured the Finns and Sami people for thousands of years (Metla Website, 2004).

Koli National Park lies in the heart of North Karelia, the most eastern province of Finland. It is in the North, but it is not within the boundaries of the Arctic. It has the qualities that make it both a typical and exceptional place in the Finnish landscape. Koli rises up beside Lake Pielinen and is surrounded by forests. It is the kind of place that has provided sustenance for Finns for hundreds of years, and has become engrained into their collective psyche.

Most of all Koli is, and always has been, a nexus and borderland.² It is a geographic place where tectonic plates met billions of years ago. People have met on the slopes of the mountain for sacrifice, to hunt, and to farm. It is a place where the East meets the West, where the Russian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Pagan religions all converged (Cronberg 2002, 9-10). Such a meeting place has a long and storied history with periods of conflict and peace.

One point that requires clarification is the borders of this study. Abramson also points out that spiritual places often lack or have blurry boundaries. He suggests that these places need to be viewed in terms of their sacred centres (Abramson 2000, 11-12). For the purpose of this study I have taken the hills of Ukko-Koli, Akka-Koli and Paha-Koli as the sacred centre and their boundaries are limited only to the mindscapes of the individual visitor.

Koli also has a long history of visitors, travellers and tourists.³ For me, it has become increasingly interesting to see how first time visitors to Koli see the place. My interest stems in part from the fact that the first time I visited Koli there was less than five metres of visibility and felt that even without the famous view from the top of Ukko-Koli this place was spiritually significant to me. As a geographer and traveller I also feel that the first experience with any place counts for a large part of your feelings about a place. The first experience with a place is becoming increasingly important today because it is often the final experience with a place. Travellers and tourists usually want to see different places and so they often come to a place, be it a country, a city, a river or a mountain like Koli, only once in their lifetime. Based on my own personal experience, this could be linked to the consumer mentality that pervades contemporary Western society or it could be linked to personal desires to explore the planet we live on. But that is the topic of another dissertation.

Setting out on this journey of discovery was not an easy task. To understand and define any place one must begin with the origins of that place and move forward through time to

² According to Marshall (2002, 175) a place may be both, “a nexus (meeting place) and a borderland (unstable world of interpretation and meaning), existing between two cultures, informed by the past but profoundly influenced by new technologies and the consumerism of modernity.” Marshall applied this concept to her work on the island of Grand Manan.

³ According to the conversation with Lasse Lovén (2004a), and according to the Metla Website (2004) tourism has been a focus in Koli for more than 100 years.

the contemporary landscape. It means acknowledging the history, the ecology, the mythology, and all other aspects of life there. But it also means acknowledging the self. We have to acknowledge that we all have our own cultural biases, and that we as individuals bring something to a place. This often leads to different opinions and perspectives about places, their histories and life there.

I would like to acknowledge a few things about myself before I continue. I am a young, single, university educated, middle-class, white man from Canada who has travelled quite a lot in the Western world. I have my own ideas about concepts like land use, nature, biopower⁴, wilderness and sacredness that I am knowingly and subconsciously carrying with me. I have also been raised in a small community with strong traditional, Protestant Christian values. I mention this because this is part of who I am and it forms the basis for my perspective toward the world and I feel that it is relevant for the readers to know something about where I am coming from.

The chapter titles in this dissertation may also require some clarification for the reader. I have chosen to use the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil from the Bible as a structure for this work. The first reason that I have chosen to do so is to acknowledge the fact that Finland is officially a Christian nation. Whether or not the Christian religion plays a large role in contemporary Finnish society is debatable and the topic for some other research project. However, we must acknowledge that Christianity has played a role in building the nation that we see today and the attitudes and laws of the Finnish people. Christianity was also extremely active in the Koli region as demonstrated by the presence of both Lutheran and Orthodox religions. Many other religions, like Judaism, Norse, Sami and the ancient Egyptian and Mayan religions, have used the Tree of Life as a symbol (The About Alternative Religions Website, 2004). I also feel that it is important to acknowledge the cultural and artistic contributions that all religions have made to the world. Therefore, using the concept of a tree as the structure for this work seemed quite interesting to me, especially since this study is concerned with the spiritual landscape of Koli National Park.

But the tree also symbolises all Life. It begins from a seed, sprouts, the roots establish themselves in the soil and the bark of the trunk protects the inner workings as the tree grows. The branches reach outwards in all directions, the leaves bud, blossom and then fall, ultimately contributing to the soil composition and the future growth of the tree itself and other trees in the vicinity.

A tree can also be interpreted as a traveller. It may seem stationary but it is anything but stationary. As it grows it moves into different spaces, the trunk moves outwards with age and the branches stretch further and further away from the trunk. Then, through its seeds, a part of the tree continues to move further away. Generation by generation trees travel around the world, in much the same manner as people do.

It is from this point that I have formed my thesis question. What does the Landscape of Koli National Park mean to the first time visitor? In attempting to answer this question I

⁴ According to Lehtinen (2003, 238) biopower refers to the manner in which humans are responsible for the erosion of our socio-spatial relations by dominant forces by making choices everyday.

will focus on the spiritual and gendered aspects of the landscape in Koli National Park. I will use the feminist perspective to interpret my results and I will try to answer the following sub questions along the way. Does gender play a role in the landscape of Koli? If so, what are the gendered elements of Koli? Is Koli a masculine or feminine landscape? Have the sacred elements of Koli been raped? What does Koli mean to people today? Do the arts play a role in shaping the landscape of Koli?

3. THE ROOTS - BACKGROUND

The root system of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was the first part of the Tree to establish itself. The roots took hold in the soil with God's word, and when the conditions for survival were appropriate. The roots sought out nutrients and moisture in the soil, providing the fuel necessary for growth. They were hidden from sight and very fragile in the beginning. But as time passed the roots of the Tree grew deeper and stronger. They held the tree upright and formed its foundation (University of Saskatchewan Website, 2004). In this way the multiple layers of a place can be seen as the roots because they are not usually visible to contemporary societies but they are responsible for holding a place together.

Every place on the face of the Earth is not only what it is, but also those things that it has been in the past. Places consist of multiple layers and it is impossible to understand what a contemporary place is without understanding its past. Every place that exists on the face of the Earth is not really what we perceive it to be. Each place is a composition of Earth, Life and History. Not just the history that we know, but also the history that we do not know. All of the travellers who have visited a place, however briefly, have influenced and changed that place. All of the people who lived in a place before us have shaped that place. The animals and plants that have evolved in a specific place have also played their role in shaping the environment. But a place, every place, also has its own Spirit. A place is all the things that we can see, but also those things that we can only feel.

When we are reflecting upon the origins of places or landscapes we must also reflect upon some different theories. Realism and constructivism provide alternate perceptions of the world. For the realist might claim that, "nature is what it is regardless of human moral failings, indeed regardless of humans at all" (Rolston 1994, 206). While the constructivist approach may claim that the only reality is the one that humans create in their own minds. For me there is an element of truth in both of these theories but neither of them is sufficient alone. I would rather agree with Karjalainen who said that, "the point at issue is to let the landscapes (as something objective and measurable) and mindscapes (as something subjective and not amenable to quantification) merge into each other" (1986, 38).

3.1 The Book Of Genesis – Natural History As The Chora

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Holy Bible the Book of Genesis, Chapter 1 verse 1, 2004). Since then Koli has always been a place change. It is a landscape of conflict, regardless of how peaceful it may seem in human eyes (Lovén 2004a). Koli was formed almost two billion years ago when the folding process heaved the 3 billion year old bedrock upwards to form a chain of mountains. This chain, called the Svecofennian Mountain Chain, has been worn down by the elements of wind, rain, ice and time. Ukko-Koli, the highest peak in the region, has almost pure white quartzite while the bedrock to the east is hard granite gneiss and to the west the bedrock is much softer schist rock. In its current glory the highest peak of Koli stands 347 metres above the sea and approximately 250 metres above the surrounding area (Metla Website 2004). But this too is changing. With every day that passes and every foot that steps on it the mountain moves a little closer to its Chora. The Chora of a place is, “associated with an absolute place...with the unconscious and with the maternal first place” (Birkeland 1999, 24).

During the last ice age the Koli region was scoured, scraped and reshaped by glaciers. This era left drumlins and eskers throughout the region. The melting glaciers also provided sediments and water for Lake Pielinen and the peat lands in the park. Lake Pielinen is 93 kilometres long, up to 28 kilometres wide and up to 61 metres deep. The lake also has 1,259 islands (Metla Website 2004).

Koli has never existed alone it has always been accompanied by other forms of Life. Shortly after its birth Koli became a sanctuary. Perhaps the first residents of Koli were the grey and yellow lichens. They clawed their way into the stone, taking root in the smallest fissures. Over time they would break open the great rock and, with the help of time and weather, they would sacrifice their bodies and transform into soil. This layer then supported grasses, bushes and eventually trees. Spruce, pine and birch now form a blanket over the region and most of the sleeping mountain. The park also contains many rare species of plants along the banks of brooks. There are also important meadows and old growth forests within the park boundaries (Ibid).

But the vegetation was not the only voyager to take a liking to Koli. Animals also found Koli to be a hospitable home. Many species common to Finland inhabit the region. For example, the lynx, flying squirrel, fox, pine marten, otter and weasel are all known to live in Koli. Brown bears also visit the park from time to time. Many species of birds also call Koli home. Species like the chaffinch, willow warbler, fieldfare and gold crest are very common. Others like the capercaillie, willow and black grouse and three-toed woodpecker also nest in the park. Lake Pielinen is home to fish species like whitefish, powan and pike-perch. Rare invertebrates such as the grey snail and the fly *Xylomya czekanovskii* are also found in the park (Ibid).

3.2 The Book Of Exodus – The Sami

The earliest inhabitants came to the Koli region sometime during the Pre-Ceramic Era, between 7000 and 4200 B.C. These people were primarily ancient northern hunter-gatherers (“proto-Finns”) but they also used fire in their thriving. However, there are no signs that the area of Koli was permanently inhabited before the 17th century A.D., but there is evidence to suggest that the islands of Lake Pielinen and some favourable sites on the eastern coast of the Lake Pielinen were inhabited about 3000 B.C.(Ibid). There is also evidence about the slash-and-burn agriculture around Koli hills several centuries before the permanent settlements were recognised in Koli.

The next group that inhabited the region surrounding Koli was the Sami people. There is much evidence to support the fact that the Lake-Sami people were active in this area prior to the Finns. Names such as Lappeenranta, which means Lappish Coast,⁵ Jero and Vuonilahti clearly show that at one time the Sami lived in south-eastern Finland. It is also worth mentioning that Lappeenranta was called Wilmastrand by the Swedes. This name can be translated to “wild man’s coast”⁶, and we can clearly see the Christian view of a Pagan group. The names of places do also much more than reveal the dwellers of a region. Names reflect the power of dominant cultures in a region. According to Lovén (2004b, 63), for local people names also indicate the meanings of places, and they are part of social capital defined by Coleman (1961 and 1990) and Putnam (1993) and cultural heritage that is passed on from generation to generation.

Kilpeläinen states that around a thousand years ago the Lake-Saame people lived in the Koli region (cited by Lovén in Ibid, 68). They referred to Koli as “kole” which means gold and “kollid” which means to visit (Sammallahti et al. cited in Ibid, 68). By the terms used we can see that Koli was an important site to this group of people. This is also reflected in the fact that no one lived in the hills and there was a tale that a shaman had a cave there where people could go to worship the spirits of nature. Now this cave is referred to as Pirunkirkko or the Devil’s church, and we see the influence of Christianity reflected in the name change and a change in the power relationship at Koli (Lovén 2004b, 68).

Lovén states that at the same time there were ancient Karelian-Finns in the region. They referred to the Koli hills as Mustarinda or Black Hills. This name can be found on maps from as early as 1650 (Saloheimo cited by Lovén in Ibid, 69). But this name also reflects the special meaning of the words “musta” and “rinda” for the Finns who lived on the Baltic coast. To them Mustarinda referred to the “hill of the dead ones”, a place where souls departed this world for the next. People came here to sacrifice to the spirits in places like Uhrihalkeama, a sacrificial crack in the rock near the top of Ukko-Koli.

But the Pagan Sami and Karelian-Finnish people’s existence in the Koli region was fleeting. Around the year 1750 the Swedes conquered the region and brought Lutheran Christianity. Although Christianity had come into the more civilised regions of Finland from the east in the form of Russian Orthodoxy and Catholicism from the west from the

⁵ Author’s translation.

⁶ Translated by Ari Lehtinen.

11th century onwards, it was not until the middle of the 18th century that vicar Jaakko Stenius was able to impose Christianity on the wizards of the Koli area and the common people of the region (Pentikäinen, 2004). However, some Pagan beliefs remained up until the 20th century, and even today there are spiritual tourists at Koli.⁷

The beginning of something often marks the demise of another. With the influence of Christianity becoming stronger and stronger in the Koli region the Pagan believers cast aside their old ways or moved to more marginal lands in the North where they were free to practise their old beliefs. This can be seen as an Exodus of religious persecution not unlike that of the Israelites from Egypt (Holy Bible The Book of Exodus, 2004). It may also be seen as a marginal place becoming the central focus of three different religions.

3.3 The Book Of Jonah – The Romantic Finns

The early Finns were a nature worshipping Pagan culture. The wilderness provided for all of their needs. In exchange for the provisions the Finns made gods out of the wilderness. Ancestral worship, and the holy mountain of Koli came to the forefront of religious life in Karelia. This way of life continued for thousands of years until the arrival of Christianity.

The region of North Karelia lay in a borderland (Marshall 2002, 175). From the 16th century on it lay in the middle of a religious and patriarchal trap. The first Roman Catholic and then Lutheran Swedish realm lay to the west of Koli. The Russian Orthodox Empire on the east and the largely Pagan Finns were stuck in the middle. The marginal farm land of Karelia became a central hot spot for the religious war between two types of Christianity in order to “save” the Pagan souls of Finns and Samis.

But religion was not the only conflict that raged at Koli. The Romantic Age in Finland also brought many changes to the Koli region. As elite Finns sought out the real identity of Finland they turned to Karelia in order to resist Russian rule and create a nation. In an ironic twist it is this currently peripheral region of Finland that has contributed most to the national identity of Finns.

After Elias Lönnrot collected the national epic of Finland, the Kalevala, in Karelia during the middle of the 19th century artists began to flock to Koli. They came to be inspired by the typical Finnish scenery and the view from the top of the Koli hills provided the most striking example of this scenery. The most famous artists to visit Koli during this era were Järnefelt, Sibelius, Halonen, Aho, and Inha. Many people believe that Koli was what inspired Sibelius’ 4th Symphony (Oinonen-Edén 2002, 67). When we look at these prominent artists and historical figures we can perhaps see why so many of the images of Koli are so similar, they have mainly been produced and reproduced from the male perspective, except for the notable work of Venny Soldan-Brofelt (Metla Website, 2004).

⁷ According to the Conversation with Lasse Lovén (2004a) some 5000 people visit Koli annually for spiritual purposes.

3.4 The Book Of Micah – The Modern Finns

The modern Finns are responsible for the current state of affairs in Koli National Park. In 1907 the Finnish government purchased and protected the 950 hectares that would become the core of Koli National Park, but the nature in this area was not strictly protected until 1991 when the Crown Park was converted into a National Park (Simola 1994, 36-37). The park also inherited a heritage of national identity, human settlement and diverse usages. One of the more controversial aspects of Koli National Park is the Sokos Hotel Koli. According to Lovén (2004a) the decision to build a hotel near the top of Ukko-Koli was made because during the Romantic Era in Finland there was a small shack in that place. A national romantic style timber lodge-hotel built in 1930 seemed like a natural way to remember the traditions of past Finnish generations. Although it could be argued that this tradition is one of male dominance and neglects the female side of the story.⁸ According to Alanen et. al. (1995, 29), after the establishment of its Crown Park status “a ski slope opened in 1938, and dismal-looking cottages and tourist facilities emerged on the fringe of the area during the post-war era.”

Some issues may also arise for some feminists from the manner in which the modern hotel was in the year 1999 constructed. Both the design of the hotel and the naming of the visitor’s centre were carried out through competitions. In both cases a panel of judges, chairperson being a woman, decided upon the winners. The design team for the hotel was a man & woman architect duo and, the eventual name of Ukko for the visitor’s centre, was also suggested by a man (Metla Website, 2004). It could be argued that the entire process of building the hotel and visitor’s centre at Koli was carried out in a very masculine way. It was competition but also wide co-operation seeking compromises between industrial developers and conservationists that was emphasised.

Many feminists, like Wilson, Hayden, Boys and Greed, have argued that spaces and places are gendered (Ekinsmyth 2002a, 58-61). Therefore, who plans, designs, builds, and name places also controls a great deal of power over the people who visit these places. These authors have argued that males are typically responsible for these tasks and often, willingly or unwillingly, reinforce the roles that traditional societies have created for men and women.

Another complicating piece of the Koli puzzle are the ski slope on the side of Koli. The issue of nature protection that arose in the late 1980s was due primarily to the desire to expand the ski slopes and turn Koli into a ‘Winter Wonderland’. Local citizens established the Koli Protection Group and managed to get 86 000 signatures from all over Finland to protest the development and establish Koli as a national park (Simola 1994, 37). According to Lovén (2004a), the new title of national park effectively ended the park’s possibility of becoming a prominent ski centre and the park is now focused on other goals like heritage development and education.

⁸ For further insight into the feminist views of hotels see Birkland’s *The feminist hotel in the mad-made cultural landscape* (1994).

4. THE TRUNK – FEMINIST THEORY

The trunk of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is the pillar of strength that joins the branches and leaves to the root system. It is a bridge that connects the two sources of Life for the Tree, the photosynthesising leaves and the nutrient and moisture gathering roots. The trunk of the tree acts as the transportation network through which all products flow (University of Saskatchewan Website 2004). In this way it is very much like the theory of a research project. Theory is the tie that binds all the other sections of a project together and through which all information flows.

4.1 Why Feminism?

Based on the experience of my first trip to Koli as described in the Prologue I became very curious about how women experienced Koli. I also began to think and read about the names of places in Koli National Park, and how they reflected the gender roles of our society. It was from this point then that I became attracted to studying and using feminist theory for this project. I suddenly found myself excited about the idea of trying to learn about the feminist perspective. I had not had any courses on feminist theory during my undergraduate work and I began to realise that this theory was an alternative point of view to that of majority, which is largely dominated by males.

The theory of any research is the most influential characteristic of any project. It provides the underlying strength of a project and can therefore be viewed as the trunk of a tree. Its ideas will pervade all aspects of the topic including the subject choice, the methods, the analysis of results and the conclusions. The choice of a theory is extremely important and must be done carefully and the research aims must be kept in mind while selecting the theory. It is important to remember that the goal of any theory is to simplify the subject being studied in order to understand it better (Shurmer-Smith 2002, 11).

As I began reading feminist discourses regarding academic research and geography some important points arose. As Monk and Hanson pointed out in the early 1980s, a lot of geographic research has been passively sexist (cited by Ekinsmyth 2002a, 53). But as Ortner states, “patriarchy is not merely men’s oppression, but also involves women’s acquiescence and complicity” (cited by Marshall 2002, 184). To this I would also add that it is the duty of all academic researchers to acknowledge and struggle against patriarchy, regardless of their gender. I must also admit that I have often passively condoned patriarchy and that I have benefited from this system, probably more times than I am actually aware of. Another interesting point that came up very early in my readings was how women have been traditionally defined. “Women are seen as everything that men are not” (Ekinsmyth 2002a, 63). This polarised view of what men and women are is an example of what feminism is trying to change in our Western societies.

4.2 What Is Feminism?

Having chosen feminism as my theory I must begin the difficult, and much debated, task of defining feminism. Generally speaking, feminism has multiple faces and many feminists acknowledge that there is no single universal theory or truth that can explain all the processes going on in the world today. There is a lot of overlap with other theories like postmodernism and post-structuralism as well (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002, 2; Ekinsmyth 2002a, 54).

Even though feminism is often said to have a single, unified front this is hardly the case once one begins to read feminist literature. Feminists are divided amongst themselves, not only in the research areas but also in opinions of what constitutes feminism. According to Plumwood there are various areas of research such as eco-feminism, which is further divided into cultural ecofeminism and social ecofeminism, and there is much debate over the roles of men in feminism and topics like sex and gender (cited by Rose et al. 1997, 161). There are as many different kinds of feminism and feminists as there are trees in the Finnish forests.

However, as divided as feminists are there are also some very strong bonds that unite them. Most feminists would agree that they are trying to help women achieve equality in the world, that women have been oppressed by males in the past (and continue to be oppressed today), and they are trying to see the world from a different and neglected perspective (Ekinsmyth 2002a, 58). Feminism is also concerned with gender roles and relationships, and therefore, power⁹ relationships are a key element to feminist thought (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002, 13). Thus, feminism can be a virtual quagmire of political and ethical challenges to be overcome by the researcher.

There are a few basic reasons why I have decided upon using feminist theory for this project. From the experience of my first trip to Koli with a small group of men and previous experiences travelling with women and in mixed groups I realised that men and women often act very differently. Some would argue that these differences could be, in part, attributed to the differences in sex and gender. In the feminist perspective sex has historically been identified as the biological differentiation between male and female. Gender has often been described as the socially constructed realm of males and females (Ekinsmyth 2002a, 55; Gregson, et. al. 1997, 49).

Recently however these definitions have become debatable. According to Ekinsmyth and many other feminists, both sex and gender are socially constructed. Furthermore, the difficulties in defining who is male and who is female are compounded by gay, lesbian, transsexual, and trans-gendered people and also by the spaces and places they occupy. Being faced with these dilemmas, some feminists have argued that it is more about the roles that individuals play in society. It has also been argued that individuals play different roles and have performances that differ from place to place, like public and private domains, and over time (Ekinsmyth 2002a, 55-58; Marshall 2002, 177-178; Ramazanoglu

⁹ For me power is not a static entity. All people wield some sort of power over themselves and others. The power relationships that exist in the world are in a constant state of fluctuation.

and Holland 2002, 8-9). Other feminists like Butler, Butz and Berg have agreed with the role-playing ideas associated with identity production and stated that sex and gender are actually, “part of the same system of patriarchal and heterosexist domination” (Butz and Berg 2002, 87).

Due to the restrictions of time and length for a Master’s Dissertation I do not wish to enter into the current debate over the definitions of male and female. For the purposes of this project I have decided to use self-identification as the definition of male and female, if an individual defines his or herself as a man or woman that is more than enough for me to accept them as such. But it is certainly worthy to note that the debate regarding the definitions of gender, sex, male, and female rages on within the ranks of feminists.

The process of education is more important than the knowledge that is produced. According to much feminist thought, knowledge is produced and is therefore subjective in nature (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002, 14). Feminism is a new theory for me and I realise that I must struggle to learn to use it properly. I also agree with Kimmel when he said that feminism is at least a prism through which to view the world and, hopefully, improve it (Butz and Berg 2002, 91). Therefore, even if no other researcher ever uses this work I feel that it is important for me to try to enter into some sort of communion with feminism in an attempt to understand our world and hopefully try to make it a better place.

4.3 Can Men Be Feminists?

Feminists openly admit that feminist theory is controversial when used by men (Butz and Berg 2002, 87). When I chose to use feminism as my theory I grappled with the question of whether or not I, as a man, could actually learn and use this theory with respect and in some way help to acknowledge the injustices of our society in terms of gender. Sandra Harding points out that sometimes feminists are not eager to accept the feminist work of heterosexual males (cited in *Ibid*, 89). However, Butz and Berg point out that, “[t]here have been many men who have helped us understand the sexist character of Western societies. The list of such men includes academics like John Stuart Mills and Karl Marx or more recently Harry Brod, Robert Connell and Michael Kaufman” (*Ibid*, 90).

Still, as Kahane points out, it is very dangerous for men to use feminist theory (cited in *Ibid*, 92). Men using the theories of feminism inappropriately may do more damage to the feminist cause than good. But, Kahane also points out that in the eyes of many feminists men who dabble in feminism do not have much to lose and a lot to gain. That is, if they can avoid deceiving themselves because they are actually fighting themselves when doing feminist research (cited in *Ibid*, 94-95). Some feminists have gone so far as to encourage young, educated, white men to rise up and fight against the history and patriarchy that has restrained our society for generations (Spivak cited in *Ibid*, 91).

Butz and Berg also bring out another interesting point by Kahane about men using feminist theory. He points out that there are four main classes of unsuccessful male feminists. The first class is the poseur who uses feminist theory to serve male interest when it suits them

and to feel good about his self. The second class of unsuccessful male feminists is the insider. The works of these men are acceptable to feminists in their perspectives but they fail to see themselves as agents of patriarchy. The humanist class of male feminist acknowledges his patriarchy and the fact that patriarchy hurts both men and women. However, he focuses on his own experiences of constraint and how to improve himself and other men. Finally, the self-flagellator is the male feminist who has his own crisis of guilt and absolution, still focuses on men and will not be able to help women (Ibid, 96-99).

To this list Butz and Berg have added a fifth class of their own, the duppy feminist. This male feminist acknowledges that he has and is benefiting from a patriarchal society and is actually fighting against himself by doing feminist research. He is also striving to become a better feminist with genuine interests in helping women to achieve equality. He remains in the background of feminism, unrelenting in his pursuit of the ideal but has not quite achieved the ideal yet (Ibid, 94-101). With this project I hope that I am taking the first steps toward becoming a duppy feminist and that the work in some way will help reveal the ways in which women's perspectives, opinions and ideas have been stifled in the past by, both actively and passively, by our society.

The final reason that I have decided upon feminism as a theory is that is all too often an under written perspective, especially in the realm of natural resources. When I initially began working on this dissertation I compiled a list of books that I thought would be useful. White, middle class, middle aged and well-educated men wrote the vast majority of these books. It became readily apparent that there was something missing, the feminine perspective. Although, I must admit that there will likely be some feminists who would say that that I am just contributing to the long history of patriarchy by middle-class, white men in this research. That is certainly not my intention.

4.4 The Challenges Of Feminism

It is also important to acknowledge that there are many challenges to doing feminist research in contemporary society. Two of the most common challenges to doing feminist research are its marginality and claims that it is unscientific and inferior to other academic research. Another challenge associated with feminism has been the shift from scientific, liberal and Marxist thought to a closer association with post-modernism and post-structuralism. A final example of challenges to feminism has been the treatment of all women as universally the same in spite of cultural, historical, socio-economic, racial and sexual differences (Ekinsmyth 2002a, 54; Ekinsmyth 2002b, 177-180; Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002, 3-4).

In responding to these challenges feminists have raised many valid points. Although feminism is still a relatively marginal school of thought it provides an alternative way of viewing the world. Feminists have also successfully argued that women, minority groups and less educated individuals have all been marginalized in Western society and that these people have their own story to tell and their own experiences to share with the world. Therefore, their work is valid and worthwhile.

Feminists are often criticized for being unscientific in their research and that the knowledge they produce is inferior to that of mainstream academics. To this feminists would point out that science is a social construct and it cannot be totally subjective either. After all, science once proved that women were ‘inferior’ to men and the world was, at one time, scientifically proven to be flat and the centre of the universe. Furthermore, science is rife with dualisms that divide the world into binary opposites when in reality a lot of things fall somewhere in the middle (Ekinsmyth 2002a, 62-64; Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002, 12-15; Merchant and Ortner cited by Rose et al. 1997, 159).

The shift from feminism’s long association with scientific method, liberalism and Marxism to a closer association with postmodernism and poststructuralism has brought up an interesting challenge for feminists. Poststructuralism and postmodernism, according to Ramazanoglu and Holland, state that there is no methodology that can adequately describe reality (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002, 4). This means that feminist methodology would fail to acknowledge the reality of life. However, since all theory is a simplification of reality it seems a little absurd to then expect a simplifying tool to explain everything that exists in reality.

Feminists have struggled recently with treating all women as a single category. Aside from the argument of what constitutes a woman and the different roles they play, as discussed earlier, researchers must all cope with the differences between people. People’s identities are not based solely on their gender. Researchers must consider race, ethnicity, class, education, the context of culture and the varied personal experience (Ekinsmyth 2002a, 55–58; Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002, 3-5, 7–9). This becomes increasingly confusing when geographic variations are added to the mix. However, feminists have argued that women constitute a single category in terms of their oppression by men and that gender is worthy of studying. According to Ekinsmyth (2002a, 58), many feminists have stated that what is now required is ‘strategic essentialism’ or, “[w]hilst acknowledging that women are different from each other, it is never the less the case that many of the experiences that women have in male-dominated societies lead to commonalities among them.”

4.5 Feminist Landscapes

Another interesting theoretical concept that arises when reading feminist literature is that of landscape interpretation. This concept is of the utmost importance for this project since I am hoping to establish what the landscape of Koli means to the first time visitor, both female and male, as well as to Finns and foreigners. By using the term landscape in this project I am referring to not only the natural environment and built structures at Koli National Park. I am also referring to the spiritual, mythological, imagined and gendered elements of the place¹⁰. This will naturally include power relations as well.

¹⁰ For an in depth look at landscape see Olwig’s article entitled Recovering the substantive nature of landscape.

Landscapes are both material and imagined places that are closely linked to issues of representation. Landscapes are frequently selected pieces of geography that are delimited, like a framed view. The two main ways that landscapes can be gendered are in their content and by feminising the natural world in Western discourses (Rose et al. 1997, 167-169). The meanings in landscapes, whether they are photographs, paintings, movies or actual places, often act to reinforce the dominant values of a society.

However, as Rose et al. (Ibid, 170) point out, there is no one way of viewing a landscape. Meanings in landscapes can also be linked to class, religion, economy, race and many other identities that constitute an individual. Lehtinen (1996, 37) also points out that different individuals can interpret images in different ways. He uses the example of how a forest company used the symbol of, “an abstract tree figure, [which] was immediately transformed by forest activists into a detail of the track left by a forest tractor”. This is also linked to the partiality of knowledge. Still, feminism can be used as a tool to interpret and understand the landscapes and the power relationships that surround us.

Feminists have argued that landscape studies have largely reinforced gender roles and the ideas of what an environment is or should be as desired by the dominant class. In the case of Western societies this means white, educated, middle-class men. Interpreting a landscape is also strongly influenced by cultural, political and economic processes (Rose et al. 1997, 146). In the case of modern, Western societies these processes have all too often ignored the feminine perspective.

One aspect of landscapes that is frequently studied by feminists is the built or urban environment. Some have argued that built structures are often the domain of men. According to Greed, they are usually, “surveyed, planned, designed and built by men, and, more importantly, that patriarchal assumptions about gendered identities are articulated through all these processes” (cited by Rose et al. 1997, 148). It has been pointed out that if a building is to be considered feminine in its construction then the building process must include the female perspective. The process of construction should not be a competitive one. Rather, building should be a participatory process with the users having some say in the design (Ibid, 155).

I would like to make a few comments about how I have learned to “see” landscapes. I have learned, without any actual lessons, that to stand above something is become dominant over it, much like a parent stands above a child or the Alpha male or female in a wolf pack stands above a subordinate member of the pack. I have also “learned” that bigger is better. These basic “rules” are passed along in our western culture and force us, subconsciously, to interpret landscapes in a masculine way. This point is exemplified in the case of the North Cape where the majority of visitors never actually go to the northernmost point of Europe. This occurs because the real point is not high up and does not give the viewer the sensation of dominance (Birkeland 1999, 22).

4.6 Mother Nature?

Another aspect of landscape is that of the natural environment or nature. Feminists have argued that nature has different meanings at different times and it can be interpreted in different ways. As an example of this, nature, which in Western discourse has been feminised, is often seen as the 'Other' (Rose et al. 1997, 157). This means that the cultural environment is masculine by default. Braidotti states that as the 'Other' both nature and women have been separated from and oppressed by the masculine cultural world (cited by Ibid, 160-161). Another interesting point is that the feminised nature has been viewed Western society as either nurturing and plentiful or as mysterious, uncontrollable and thus threatening to the masculine world. This discourse also parallels the Madonna-whore dualism often applied to women (Ibid 157). This polarised view stems from the dualisms encouraged by the Western, scientific way of thinking and need to be changed.

Feminists have also stated the contemporary view of nature is not acceptable. Currently in Western societies science looks at nature in an exploitative manner and nature has been universally devalued. Furthermore, science has been used to rationalize the domination of both nature and women (Ibid, 159). Feminists like Nesmith and Radcliffe are now offering an alternative way of viewing nature, one that uses ways of thinking that are both academic and non-academic and include topics like environmental spirituality (Ibid, 160).

Many feminist geographers feel, "that women are somehow necessarily closer to and more sensitive to 'nature'" (Ibid 161). Monk and Norwood have studied women's relationships to the desert and they support this idea. They have suggested that the desert is, "a source of strength and personal identity" for women. Women's attitudes towards nature are often seen as more nurturing and this has been linked to the processes of childbirth and raising children (Ibid, 161-162).

4.7 Are You In Or Out?

One final note that needs to be addressed is the concept of 'insider versus outsider'. There is some argument in feminist thought that as 'outsiders' studying a group of 'insiders' researchers face a great challenge that could be morally wrong and misinterpretation could occur frequently. Others argue that if researchers only studied their own group entire populations would be left out in the cold. Some have said that the concept of 'insiders and outsiders' is dualistic and essentialist, while others have stated that all researchers are 'outsiders' because they are studying others (Ekinsmyth 2002b, 181).

My personal opinion is that I am not an outsider anywhere. I am merely a newcomer. I am an individual who belongs to the world and all of its processes, those that are good and bad, active and passive. If I choose to go to a new place or population for study or purely for the sake of interest and adventure I bring with me my own cultural baggage. But my baggage will change when I get there. I will adopt some of the local customs and methods while clinging to some of my previous ones. Therefore, I would agree with those feminists who

argue that the concept of ‘insiders and outsiders’ is much too dualistic and totally inadequate for reality.

5. THE BRANCHES - METHODS

The methods of this project can be seen as the branches on the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The branches of the Tree reach out in all directions and provide a framework upon which the leaves and fruit grow. The branches of the Tree grow annually, piece by piece in a struggle to gain access to sunlight (University of Saskatchewan Website 2004). This reflects the manner in which the methods of this project are used piece by piece to gain access to knowledge.

The methodology of any research is as important as the results of the research. Without proper methodology the results of any research question become skewed and less valid. According to Ramazanoglu and Holland, there are no distinctively feminist methods for acquiring information. They do however state that methodology becomes feminist through its theory, politics and by being based on women’s experiences (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002, 15-16). Other feminists have pointed out that most feminists are currently using qualitative, intensive methods in their research. This allows them to get closer to their research subjects and topics than you can with quantitative, extensive methods. Qualitative methods also allow the individual being researched much more freedom to express themselves (Ekinsmyth 2002b, 183).

Keeping all of this in mind I have decided to use mixed methods in my research. For this project it seemed that qualitative methods were most appropriate since what I hoped to achieve was begin to understand how a few individuals interpret the contemporary landscape of Koli National Park. However, I was faced with the problem of acquiring the opinions of non-Finns at Koli. This would require me to get the first impressions of many individuals in a relatively short period of time. Keeping this in mind, I decided to use three different methods. These methods were a small survey, discussions and follow up questions, and commented walks with a camera. In addition to these methods I will also use my experiences and observations at Koli National Park based upon 5 trips to the park during the 2003-2004 academic year.

The first method that I decided to use was a survey. By carrying out a small survey I hoped to gain access to the perceptions that foreigners had of Koli National Park. This can be viewed as an extensive method used to gain the perspective of ‘newcomers’ before delving into the Finnish experience of Koli. The survey consisted of five open ended questions and some questions regarding the personal characteristics of respondents. This can be seen as a quantitative method because the same questions were administered to a substantial group of individuals. However, all of the questions regarding Koli were open ended. This was done to give participants as much freedom as possible to respond to the questions in a rather short period of time.

The survey was administered to a small population consisting mainly of foreigners. The survey was carried out on the 23rd of January 2004 during an excursion to Koli National Park, Tulikivi Stone Works, the Bomba House and the old, wooden town of Nurmes. A total of 50 surveys were distributed to both male and female participants on the trip. Only those who felt compelled to take part in the survey did so. This means that the survey was non-random and may be seen as a form of convenience sampling (Robinson 1998, 29).

Having acquired a small foreign perspective of Koli I set out to explore what the first time Finnish experience of Koli National Park is. In order to discover what individual Finns considered Koli to be I decided to use a series of discussions, follow up questions and commented walks to explore the national landscape of Finland. Both of the participants, a couple that live together, had never been to the area of Koli National Park where the commented walks were carried out, nor had either of them ever been to Eastern Finland.

The purpose of the discussions was to acquire some basic information about the participants' perceptions of Koli and their understanding of the landscape. I did not prepare any direct questions about Koli or have any special themes written down on paper to discuss with the participants. I feel that it is often very intimidating for many people to be recorded while discussing topics and even more so when faced with an interviewer who has had weeks to prepare questions, while they have only moments to respond. Many feminist researchers also agree that the interview process can be very intimidating and that informal discussions often yield better information (Robinson cited by Marshall 2002, 177-180 and 185; Ekinsmyth 2002b, 180; Karjalainen 1986, 45). Therefore, the discussions were intended to be more intimate and friendly, and I was hopefully not seen as an intimidating and controlling presence. Although I did have certain interests that I wished to bring up during the discussions I was eager to let the participants guide the discussions and speak about the subjects they wished to.

The first discussion I had was with a Finnish couple in their home in Turku on January 31 2004. For the purpose of concealing their identities I shall refer to them as Adam and Eve. Neither of the participants had ever been to Koli or North Karelia. Therefore, the ideas that they had about Koli had been shaped largely by the media, history lectures in school and the opinions of others (Discussion with Adam and Eve, 2004). The discussion lasted approximately an hour and was recorded.

Following the transcribing of the discussion I realised that I required more information from Adam and Eve. So, I made a sheet of follow-up questions for the couple to fill in the gaps. Due to the costs involved in travelling to Turku from Joensuu these questions were delivered via email. Adam and Eve were asked to answer the questions separately and without discussing the questions prior to answering.

A second discussion was also carried out during the research process. On March 29, 2004 I met with Lasse Lovén, the park director and researcher with the Finnish Forest Research Institute, also known as Metla, at Koli National Park. He has a vast array of experiences with Koli since he not only works in the park but also lives in the town of Koli. He has

also published numerous writings about the park and been involved with many conferences surround the national landscape of Koli and its role as a heritage site, and possibly a future UNESCO World Heritage site (Lovén 2004a). The main reason for conducting this discussion was to obtain information about the park, its visitors and the history of the region. Throughout the discussion the atmosphere was relaxed, although semi-formal. This discussion was recorded but due to technical problems with the microphone no transcript is available. However, upon discovering that there were technical problems with the microphone I immediately wrote down all that I could remember from the interview.

In the modern Western world many of us have become accustomed to viewing life at 100 kilometres per hour from inside an automobile. This leaves us with a blurry interpretation of the landscape, especially when the windows are dirty, the radio is blaring and someone is talking on a cell phone and drinking a cup of coffee. The act of walking puts the world into a new perspective. It slows us down and helps to clarify the view and our thoughts. It also helps reconnect us in a physical sense to the Earth and allows us to use all of our senses.

The idea of commented walks is based upon the literature of Justin Winkler (2002). Winkler (Ibid., 1) states that, “‘Walking’ is a quite ancient condition of perception (and thinking)”. This means that while walking individuals are really interpreting their surroundings on a continual basis. A commented walk allows researchers to, “catch intersubjectively fleeting perceptions along a path” (Ibid.)

Winkler also states that these walks change the relationship between researcher and subject. This occurs because the walk and self-expression of the individuals being researched emphasises, “the competence of the everyday perception of the [participant]” (Ibid.). Furthermore, the act of walking together eliminates the distance between researcher and subject (Ibid., 2). This seems to fall in line with much feminist theory which states that the authoritative voices and methods of researchers needs to end and the individuals being researched need to be focused upon (Robinson cited by Marshall 2002, 177 and 185).

Commented walks also act as an alternative method of viewing landscapes. According to Berleant, the standardised way of viewing a landscape is usually a motionless framed view (cited by Winkler 2002, 1). By walking the perspective of a place changes and new things come into focus while others are blurred. In fact, Winkler goes so far as to say that by walking the individual’s perception becomes free and that motion is an environment itself (Ibid., 2).

In order to analyse the results of a commented walk Winkler cites Thibaud’s four basic categories. These are associations, transitions, apparent qualities and reflexivity. Associations are linguistic links to past experiences or referrals to other things that help explain ones feelings or experiences. Transitions are the movement from one type of space to another. Apparent qualities refer to the uncertain phrases that bring out a more, “precise and phenomenological description”. Reflexivity refers to the moments when an individual makes reference to his or her own position in relation to the environment (Ibid., 4).

Adam and Eve visited Koli National Park for the first time on May 9, 2004. This was a little over 3 months after the initial discussion took place in their home. Each walk

consisted of the same path, which left the hotel, climbed the staircase and followed the short path to the top of Ukko-Koli. From there we walked along the path until we reached Akka-Koli and the walk ended on Paha-Koli. Repetition was intended to ensure that both participants visited the same environments to maintain some form of a control variable without controlling the experience of the participants and in order to be able to compare their experiences more directly. By using the same route at Koli I also hoped to gain deeper understanding of what the contemporary landscape of Koli really is. I also felt that it was important to do all of the walks on the same day so that the weather would be as close to the same as possible for both Adam and Eve.

In addition to the standard commented walk I thought that it would be very interesting to see what the participants were seeing at Koli. In order to achieve this I let each of the participants use a digital camera during the walk. They were told to take as many pictures as they liked and to choose whatever subject they liked. I feel that the act of taking pictures relieves some of the stress of being recorded by giving the participant something else to focus on. I was also left with another way to compare the experiences that they had and an easy way to see what they felt was important in the landscape.

Following the transcription of the commented walks the analysis was carried out. The survey data, transcripts of the discussions and commented walks and photos from the walks were all analysed using feminist theory. The results were then recorded and conclusions were drawn.

6. THE LEAVES – RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The leaves of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil gather the energy necessary for producing fruit and sustaining the Tree. They are numerous and varied. Each leaf is unique but works together for the common goals of survival and production. In this way they resemble the results and discussion of a research project.

The Primary focus of this research project is to determine how visitors to Koli National Park interpret the landscape. I was especially interested in the spiritual and gendered elements of this landscape and sought to reveal what some of the characteristics of these elements are in Koli. Keeping this in mind I had decided to use in-depth theme interviews at Koli with various individuals. However, the chance to participate in a bus excursion to Koli National Park, and a few other sites in North Karelia, arose and I quickly decided to do a survey since most of the participants would be first time visitors to Koli. It was after this survey that I became increasingly interested in the individual experience of first visits to the landscape of Koli because I realised that many of these individuals would never return to visit the landscapes of Koli again.

After the completion of the survey, I tried to keep the idea of first time visits to Koli by seeking out Finns who had never been to Koli. To do this I was forced to use personal

connections to expedite the process. In truth this meant trying to find individuals from other regions of Finland since everyone I was able to contact in North Karelia had already visited to Koli. Once again I tried to focus on the spiritual and gendered elements of the landscape. A chance meeting also let me combine the idea of in-depth interviews with commented walks. Much like Stacey expressed, the research in this project just sort of happened to me, like an unplanned pregnancy (cited by Marshall 2002, 178).

6.1 The Newcomers – The Survey

Before I begin to discuss the survey results I feel that it is quite important to explain a little bit about the day and the weather conditions at Koli. It was the end of January and it was quite a cold morning when we left Joensuu. It was approximately –22 degrees Celsius. We left Joensuu around 8 a.m. so that we could be on top of Ukko-Koli to watch the sunrise. I feel that this is important to comment on because the weather, season and time of day can all dramatically affect the appearance and atmosphere of a landscape. I would also like to point out that the organisers of this tour did not mention anything about the history of Koli, the other hills or the spiritual places like Uhrihalkeama and the Pirunkirkko. The only places to visit on the excursion were Ukko-Koli, the Heritage Centre Ukko and the hotel.

The survey consisted of a relatively small sample population with only 50 surveys being distributed on the bus ride to Koli. A total of 34 were returned with 27 being completed by women and seven by men. There are a few issues to discuss regarding the respondents of the survey. All of the participants were somehow interested in Koli since they were willing to pay for the trip themselves. Secondly, the survey was not random and only those who desired to respond to the questions did so. A third potential critique of the survey is that all of the participants were students at the University of Joensuu, either on some sort of exchange program or seeking a degree at the institution. This means that all of these people are somewhat educated, eager to travel, interested in other cultures and from the survey we can tell that they are quite young. They are all between the ages of 19 and 28. When we take all of this into account it is possible that many of these individuals may have many other personality traits in common which could affect the survey results. Using the same survey with a different demographic group could, and probably would, yield different results. Since the focus of this research, the first time experience of Koli, was adopted only after the survey was completed there is another problem with the respondents. Only three of the seven men in the survey were at Koli for the first time. Furthermore, only 20 of the 27 women in the survey had their first experience with Koli during this trip. The survey results may also be criticised because the number of respondents based on their nationality is far too low to claim any sort of representation for that specific nation.

One final note concerning the survey is the fact that none of the respondents come from English speaking countries. This means that they are expressing themselves in a language other than their native language. However, due to the fact that in order to participate in a university exchange program one must be proficient in English I assume that all individuals on this excursion are capable of responding to the open ended questions in a meaningful way.

However, this survey also has some strong attributes. The respondents are not all from one gender and it was open to everyone who participated on the trip, but no one was forced to participate. There are also 14 different nationalities represented in the survey. These nations are Czech Republic (6), Germany (5), Finland (4), Russia (3), Cyprus (2), The Netherlands (2), France (2), Spain (2), Japan (2), Denmark (1), Latvia (1), Lithuania (1), Hungary (1), Italy (1) and Unknown (1). As stated earlier the number of respondents from each nation is quite low and representation cannot be claimed. However, this does not mean that the responses of these individuals do not represent larger populations in their home countries or in other nations.

One of the critiques of the survey was that not all of the participants were first time visitors to Koli. This could have also been an attribute. The individuals who had been to Koli previously could provide an Other for comparison with the first time visitors to Koli. However, since there are so few individuals to provide an Other in this survey and all of the nationalities that would be an Other do not have any first time Koli visitors to compare with, except for the Germans, I feel that the conclusions from this would be invalid on any acceptable level.

The analysis of the survey results proved to be quite interesting when viewed through feminist theory. The first thing that must be commented on is that the vast majority of the respondents were female. There were more female participants on the excursion (56 out of 94 participants were female according to the Student Union Sign Up Sheet) but the ratio was not as extreme as the 27:7 ratio of female respondents to male respondents. In fact, less than 20 percent of the men chose to participate in the survey while almost 50 percent of the women on the trip chose to participate. Another interesting point is that the vast majority of female respondents wrote considerably more than their male counterparts. All of this seems to suggest that the female participants on this excursion were much more open to sharing their experiences and thoughts with me than their male counterparts were.

In order to analyse the survey I have chosen to use the work of Sandra Bem. In her book *Sex Role Inventory* she lists the Scale of Masculinity and the Scale of Femininity. These lists are comprised of words or phrases that western societies often associate with male and female entrepreneurs but they also seem applicable to travellers who are, in a way, similar to entrepreneurs because they are taking the initiative to visit places. I will use these words and phrases to analyse the survey responses even though they are perhaps too dualistic and provide a black and white approach to gender studies. But, I do feel that Bem's lists do represent the western stereotypes that mainstream society has regarding gender roles. Also, at the very least, these lists are not the polar opposites of each other so they have some more merit than the lists that define women as being those things that men are not (Ahl 2002, 49). I would have preferred to create my own lists that would have been less dualistic but due to the time constraints of this project I was unable to do so. Bem's lists can be seen in Table 1 on the following page (cited in Ahl 2002, 51).

Table 1 Bem's Scale of Masculinity and Femininity.

<u>Bem's Masculinity Scale</u>	<u>Bem's Femininity Scale</u>
Self-reliant	Affectionate
Defends own beliefs	Loyal
Assertive	Feminine
Strong personality	Sympathetic
Forceful	Sensitive to needs of others
Has leadership attributes	Understanding
Willing to take risks	Compassionate
Makes decisions easily	Eager to soothe hurt feelings
Self-sufficient	Soft spoken
Dominant	Warm
Masculine	Tender
Willing to take a stand	Gentle
Acts as a leader	Loves children
Individualistic	Does not use harsh language
Competitive	Flatterable
Ambitious	Shy
Independent	Yielding
Athletic	Cheerful
Analytical	Gullible
Aggressive	Childlike

6.1.1 What Is This Landscape?

The simplest way to analyse the results of the survey is to go through the survey on a question-by-question basis. One of the main sub-questions of this dissertation is to determine if Koli is a gendered place. Working on the theme of gender we can easily see that there are differences between the responses of men and women.

In question number one the men were much less articulate when expressing their thoughts and feelings about Koli. All of the men limited their responses to their thoughts about Koli and none of them mentioned feelings. The responses were most often adjectives like “nice” or “beautiful” or “gorgeous”. These words suggest that the experiences of these individuals was largely limited to the aesthetic and not very emotional, many of these same words are often used by men to describe women. It also reinforces the idea that some men view both nature and women as objects (Rose et al. 1997, 159).

Two of the men emphasised the importance on being on top to of the hill to enjoy the view. One stated that Koli was, “beautiful especially from the very top” (Survey # 5) and the other said that, “As a single and largest hill it gives a very good point to get a nice view” (Survey # 6). This can be interpreted as a reflection of dominance since standing on top can be interpreted as a position of power over something, in the way that a parent stands over a child, a teacher over a student or the Alpha male of a wolf pack over another pack member.

Also, only one man responded to the part of the question that specifically asked about the natural and constructed landscape, with a reference to the hotel. He was a first time visitor to Koli and thought that, “The buildings especially the hotel, were disturbing the atmosphere” (Survey # 9). This is very interesting when we consider Inger Birkeland’s (1994) article called the Feminine hotel in the man-made cultural landscape. In this article the hotel is seen as the domain of women who are maintaining their traditional role as care givers. In an expression of further male dominance, this man would like the hotel to be smaller. Whether we can interpret this as wanting the female identity in the landscape to be further oppressed is perhaps unclear at best and entirely a misinterpretation at worst.

But these comments do lead us into a debatable subject. In Birkland’s (1994) work she discusses how many women are continuing their traditional role of caregiver in modern day hotels. Her concern is primarily the functional roles of women. My research is primarily focused on the aesthetic role of the hotel in the landscape. This is due to the fact that my research involved only students who were visiting Koli only for a day and had very little functional contact with the hotel. However, it is possible that the underlying concepts in the two works are linked but it would require further study to make any sort of conclusions regarding such a link.

If we look at the first time male visitors to Koli we see the same kind of answers as stated previously. Their answers were largely descriptive adjectives. However, one man said that, “It makes your thoughts flying away” (Survey # 9). This seems to suggest that he felt some kind of higher emotion than just a superficial view of the landscape from Ukko-Koli.

When answering the same question about their thoughts and feelings the women were much more articulate. Their responses were much longer and much more diverse than their male counterparts. However, some of the women responded in a very similar manner to the men with words like “beautiful” and “nice” (Surveys # 8, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 33 and 34). What is of note here is that all of these respondents, except for one (Survey # 13), wrote other comments to go along with their descriptive ones. Some of the other women answered that they were unable to describe their emotions and were left speechless by the view (Survey # 7).

Only a few more of the female respondents also answered the entire question as it related to their feelings about both the natural and constructed elements in the landscape. Eight of the women answered the question regarding the constructed landscape. Of these eight women seven had not been to Koli before. Two of these women saw the buildings as functionally necessary while two others saw the buildings as fitting in well to the landscape. Two more stated that it was good that they were, “small, subordinate” (Survey # 12) and, “situated so that they didn’t disturb the peacefulness of the beautiful landscape” (Survey # 15). Some of them also commented that the natural materials helped make the buildings more suitable. One other woman mentioned that it was ironic that for the first stage you could take the funicular lift but after that there was nothing to help the elderly or weak to the top in winter. She even said that, “Only man who deserves it can take benefit of the view in winter” (Survey # 28).

Some women expressed that view that coming to Koli helped to increase their respect for nature, while others said that they felt like they were in a picture or a postcard. One woman even mentioned that it was like a fairy tale (Survey # 10). This follows with Bem's classification of women as childlike and tender. Another respondent expressed the idea that there was nothing artificial in the landscape (Survey # 23). This may be interpreted as either childlike, naïve or perhaps she failed to notice things like the pulp mill at the southern edge of Lake Pielinen.

However, some of the women responded in a manner that seemed to fall more in line with masculine characteristics. One woman described the landscape as being homogenous and lacking diversity (Survey # 14). This seems to be a rather cold or mathematical view of the landscape, as if she was taking an inventory of what the landscape contained. This also seems to fall in line with one of Bem's words that describe male attributes, analytical. Another woman described the landscape as "Old, steady...Aristocratic. Cold. Proud. Wise. Mighty. Grandiose" (Survey # 34). These words seem to indicate that there is a very strong male presence in the landscape of Ukko-Koli, and they also follow Bem's classification.

Based on this question then we can draw a few simple conclusions. The men did not express as strong an emotional connection to the landscape as the women did. However, one man did express some emotions exemplifying the fact that some men do have a strong connection to the natural world. Also, it is possible that these men were just not capable of expressing the emotions that they felt.

The majority of the women upheld Bem's classification of femininity. They were open to sharing their feelings and expressed a significant emotional bond to the landscape. However, there were some exceptions to this and some women did display qualities that are usually associated with men. One woman even brought up the masculine qualities in the landscape with her description of it.

6.1.2 What Is The Significance Of Koli?

When asked about the significance of national parks like Koli most of the male responses were quite brief. Only one man wrote two sentences while the others either wrote one sentence or just a few words. The dominant view was that national parks were primarily for the protection or conservation of nature and to limit the amount of economic activity in the park. One man (Survey # 3) mentioned that parks were significant to ensure that future generations were able to enjoy them and two also mentioned that it was important to preserve the national scenery of Finland (Surveys # 6, 9).

From this information we can see that the men in this survey were primarily concerned with protecting nature. This reflects Bem's idea that men are willing to defend their own beliefs and take a stand. But we must also consider the underlying reasons for their desire to protect nature. This attitude may be the result of years of abusing the environment by past patriarchal societies, and now some men feel the need to save nature because of human

kinds sins against nature (Rolston, 1994). This may be interpreted as a reflection of the way that men have historically treated women. Women have been understood to be the 'weaker' sex and in need of saving. The reality is that neither nature nor women need to be redeemed by men. They do, however, need men to become more understanding and stop oppressing both nature and women.

However, the man who expressed the idea of setting aside nature for future generations exemplifies that, at least, some men are considerate of others, loves children and understanding to the greater needs of society. These concepts reflect Bem's words associated with females. Some of the surveyed women also stated that it was important to protect the natural environment from economic development. It should be duly noted that Bem associates words like taking risks, competition, and ambition with the male identity. These are some of the concepts that are linked to economic progress as well. However, as previously stated, these classifications are perhaps too dualistic and there is a lot of grey area left out where many individuals, both men and women, may be included.

Another interesting point is that more of the women expressed a link to others in their responses. Many of the women expressed the idea that parks were good for future generations and that parks helped us to recognise that we are a very small and weak part of nature (Surveys # 11, 14, 17, 34). Many of the women also interpreted parks as a way of connecting with our natural roots and the past (Surveys # 16, 34). Parks were also seen as places to meet nature, one's Self, others, and God (Surveys # 23, 27). Others expressed the idea parks were places to preserve our culture and heritage (Surveys # 21, 28, 30). The women in this survey were also more apt to mention their feelings, like relaxation and happiness.

From this question the results clearly show that the majority of women do reinforce the values that Bem says society associates with women. However, just as there are exceptions with the men there are some exceptions with the women. The reasons for some of the women wanting to protect nature may be very much in line with the argumentation given for men desiring to do so, which would mean that they also have some male characteristics. Also, one woman mentioned that these places are a source of pride (Survey # 19). Pride is a selfish, individualistic emotion that is more often associated with being male. Another interesting point raised by one woman was that Koli did not seem to be protected. She felt that there were too many buildings and facilities within the park (Survey # 28).

6.1.3 Is Koli Gendered?

The question about the gendered elements in the landscape of Koli seemed to be rather difficult for people to answer. Four men and ten women left this question blank or responded with "I don't know" or "I don't think this way" or that there were no such elements. This seems to suggest that many people do not think in terms of gender when they view a landscape or nature. This may be to education, culture or some other unknown reason.

This brings us to a debatable point. Constructionist would argue that the only reality is that which humans create while realists would argue that there is a reality regardless of human activity. This brings us to the point of whether gender really exists in a landscape or if it is just constructed by a few individuals. For me the point is rather moot. To consider a world without humans would have absolutely no meaning. We are here, and we are a part of all the processes that go on here. What this means in the case of gender is that gender does exist in the landscape in explicit and implicit forms. It is only up to the individual to realise it and acknowledge it. Gender is a key element in our landscapes and our lifescape. How we approach the issue is the key to the debate.

Three of the men responded that there was gender in the landscape. One of the responses was relatively useless for analyses since he stated that the snow covered the landscape and his imagination did the rest (Survey # 5). The other two responses were much more useful though. The first said that the stones were masculine and the snow was feminine (Survey # 2). The second responded that the, “white color remind me something really kind, soft, lovely” (Survey # 4).

From this we can deduce that at least some men do look at the world as being gendered. It is also interesting to note that they saw hard stone as being male and soft snow as feminine. But the adjectives used by the second male also reflect words that are often used to describe a woman’s body and the colour white is associated with purity and virginity. So, at least for one man the winter landscape of Koli was definitely feminine.

Some of the responses given by women were similar to the two ideas expressed by the men. Four women specifically mentioned stones as being masculine (Surveys # 10, 11, 13, 20) and one saw the tough, sturdy strength of the landscape that may be linked to stones (Survey # 34). Another women expressed the thought that maybe in summer this landscape would seem more masculine because it would be brown and robust (Survey # 33).

Three elements in the landscape that the women presented conflicting ideas about were the trees, the hills and the lake. The trees were perhaps the most prominent element of the landscape and most debatable as well. Three women saw the big snow covered trees as representing a male presence in the landscape (Surveys # 23, 29, 32) while four others felt they were feminine (Surveys # 10, 17, 19, 21). Two of those who felt that the trees were male saw them as old men either moving slowly in the wind or as having large beards. One of the women who saw the trees as feminine saw them to be women in fur coats, while another saw the snow covering as women who cover their babies with blankets (Surveys # 10, 17, 23, 32).

One woman saw the hills as masculine (Survey # 12) while another saw them as feminine (Survey # 29). They did not give any answers as to why they felt this way but the differences could be various things. One could see the hills as feminine because when covered with snow they may resemble to curves of a woman’s body. Or they may be seen as a dominating male presence because of their height, mass or stone foundation. However, this is all just speculation.

The lake was seen as being masculine by one woman (Survey # 10), while two felt that it was feminine. The two who felt that the lake was feminine were both Finnish and one felt that it might come from the belief in, “vedenneito’, lady of the lake” (Survey # 21), which also makes a reference to the national epic of Finland, the Kalevala. While the other Finnish woman thought that, “the lakes represent the water of womb of the mother earth, from where the life of the landscape is being birth” (Survey # 19).

Two of the women also raised another issue concerning gender in the landscape. They interpreted the constructed elements of the landscape, like the buildings and ski slopes, as being masculine (Surveys # 19, 20). This can be explained by Bem’s list as being a form of economic development, which is competitive, individualistic and the result of viewing nature from an analytical perspective. It may also be seen as bringing the unnatural to the natural, an invasion if you will. However, as expressed earlier in section 5.1.1 some females felt that these buildings were necessary and did not interfere with the nature too much.

All of this seems to support much feminist literature in that it is often supposed that women have a stronger connection to nature than men do (Rose et al. 1997, 161). It also supports Bem’s categories in that the various references to motherhood and the birth process seem to point to a more nurturing attitude toward the environment. It is also interesting to note that no one made any reference to phallic symbols in the landscape, such as the trees or the smoke stack from the factory at the south end of the lake or the cell phone tower.

But there are a few problems in claiming that the women are all closer to nature than their male counterparts. For example, the woman who saw the trees as women wearing fur coats illustrates a good point (Survey # 10). Some individuals are willing to condone the practices associated with fur farms and the killing of innocent animals for the sake of fashion. They condone these actions either by acknowledging and accepting the practises or by not being aware of them. This seems to be a very selfish, aggressive and individualistic approach to nature. Although Bem identifies these characteristics as being male, females may also exhibit them.

6.1.4. Is Koli A Holy Place?

When confronted with the question of whether or not they saw Koli as a holy or sacred place the men were divided in their responses. Four of the men felt that Koli was not a holy place at all. One man mentioned that Koli was just, “a place to be in contact with nature” (Survey # 2). One man who felt that Koli was not holy did mention that it was like being in a church though and said it was, “because you are so little and around you is beautiful nature and silence” (Survey # 3). This suggests that he is not part of a conventional religion but does respect religious institutions. Another man who felt Koli was not a holy place mentioned that he knew it had been at one time but he felt that no place was holy (Survey # 6).

Three of the men did feel that Koli was some sort of holy place. One Russian man felt that Koli was holy because, “You look at the landscape and understand that it is perfect...Winter in Heaven!” (Survey # 4). But there is also an element of non-Christian sacredness to Koli as exemplified by the man who felt, “the uniqueness of Koli which strengthens me” (Survey # 5). Still another man thought that Koli was holy because you could go there to find peace with yourself and with nature (Survey # 3).

Of the 27 women in the survey only eight felt that Koli was not a holy place. Interestingly enough of those eight, three were Finnish and had been to Koli before which may reflect an idea that Lovén (2004a) brought up during our conversation. He said that sometimes he begins to take the landscape for granted with it because he lives and works in it everyday. He also said that that is when he needs to go away for a few days and come back to appreciate it again. One of the women also commented that Koli was like church for her but that neither was holy (Survey # 15). These negative responses to Koli’s holiness may be due part of a larger trend that is occurring in the western world, that is, secularisation. Or it may stem from the male dominated views perpetuated by science.

But these statements contradicting the sacredness of churches or places of spiritual significance bring up the point of whether an individual can truly ignore the sacredness of a site. Many people, even if they are atheists, will follow the rules of various religions and behave just as believers do. For example, when I enter an Orthodox church I remove my hat and take my place with the men, apart from the women. Most people do not walk across graves in a cemetery instead they choose to walk along the rows. These types of actions show that in some ways individuals acknowledge and accept the sacredness of sites even if they claim not to believe in it.

However, 18 women did feel some sort of sacred elements in the landscape of Koli. Many saw the landscape as being, “untouched, pure like innocent child, virgin” (Survey # 10). Others reflected this idea; one woman said Koli made her, “certain about the existence of God” (Survey # 23), while another said that it was a place, “to pray” (Survey # 29) and another said that Koli was, “not only for humans but also for animals, for sacred spirits” (Survey # 30).

Koli has had a very spiritual history as discussed in sections 3.2 and 3.3. The results of this survey also support Lovén’s comments that Koli is still a sacred or holy place today.¹¹ However, matters of sacred or holy are highly individualistic and based on this study I cannot claim that either men or women see more sacred elements in the landscape of Koli than the other group. Also, both men and women see to have a deeper spiritual connection to this place either through organised religion or some more personal spiritual beliefs.

6.1.5 What Does Art Have To Do With It?

As expressed in section 4.3 Koli has had a long relationship with the arts. The most marked point in this relationship occurred during the Romantic Era of the late 19th century.

¹¹ In the conversation with Lasse Lovén (2004a) he stated that approximately 5000 visitors come to Koli as spiritual tourists.

I thought that it was somewhat interesting to question people to see what, if any relationship they saw between art and Koli today. I felt that this was important because art can be used to not only to express cultural values, norms and identity but also because it can strongly influence the opinions of society. Art is also used to introduce people to new places and inspire them to visit.

When asked about the relationship between the arts and the natural world the most common response overall was that the arts are inspired by the natural world. Two men felt that the arts took their inspiration from nature (Surveys # 1, 4). One man believed that nature was theme used in art work (Survey # 2). One man stated that the, "Arts have their roots in the natural world" (Survey # 5), while another felt that the arts were used as a medium between society and nature to create environmental awareness (Survey # 6). He also said that nature provided the raw materials for art. Of the remaining two men, one's response was not legible and the other felt that there was no relationship (Surveys # 3, 9).

Ten of the women also felt that nature was a source of inspiration for the arts and one Czech woman was actually so inspired that she wrote a poem in her native language (Survey # 13). Ten of the women also commented on the fact that nature is a common theme in the arts. Three of the women felt that the arts had their roots in nature, one commented that the arts got their raw materials from nature and two women mentioned that you can integrate the arts and nature through out door concerts and such. Four women said that the arts were trying to copy nature but that they could never achieve the same beauty, while seven women said that nature is art. Finally, eight of the women said that both art and nature were related to feelings, emotions or personal experiences.

The question of what to make of all this now arises. Since each male gave a unique response, and there are so few of them, it is impossible to categorise them in any meaningful way. When we combine this fact with the wide variety of responses given by the women in the survey it seems natural to conclude that the topic of art in the natural world is highly individualistic and would require a much more detailed research to make any sort of definite conclusions.

However, there are some general comments to be made about the responses of the women in the survey. Almost one third of the women mentioned that art and nature were related to feelings and personal experience. This seems to support the idea that women do have a strong emotional connection to the natural world as claimed by Rose et. al.(1997, 161). However, based on this survey I cannot claim that the connection between women and the natural world is stronger than that of men, since the number of male respondents is so much lower than the number of female respondents.

Another point that arose during the analysis was that many females saw the natural world as a work of art. This may of course be interpreted in different ways. It might mean refer to the personal and emotional connection mentioned above. But it may also be interpreted in a very different manner. Since many people to choose to purchase art and put it on display as a prize, the women who responded that art is nature may also see nature as

something to possess. I think this is somewhat unlikely but it is possible. However, the depth of this survey makes any conclusion on this topic impossible.

6.1.6 General Survey Comments

The chance of carrying out a survey arose quite suddenly when I heard about the excursion at an International Student Meeting. Therefore, there are some problems with the survey that must be addressed. At the time that the survey was carried out the focus of my research was not set precisely. As such, the questions were designed to cover a wide variety of topics. If I were to do the survey over again I would choose to focus more on the elements of gender and spirituality.

There is some basic background information also missing from the survey. It would have been very interesting to know if the respondents belonged to any organised religion, if so, which one. Also, it may have been very useful to know in which faculty they were studying. It could prove very useful to compare the students of humanities versus the students of natural science.

6.2 Who Are Adam And Eve?

Before I begin to analyse and discuss the results of the time I spent with Adam and Eve I feel that I should mention a few words about the couple. Hopefully this brief explanation will begin to establish which categories of Finnish people these two represent. All of the following information comes from the conversation that I had with them at their home or from the follow up questions I sent them by email.

They have been a couple for two and a half years, living together the entire time. Eve is from Helsinki while Adam was born in Lapland but moved to Oulu as a young child. Both of them come from the traditional nuclear family and both have two siblings. They both have strong family connections and talk to family members at least once a week and frequently visit them in person. I feel that these similarities are important to note because similar upbringing may be responsible for similar views and values in life. It may also contribute to the way people interpret their own experiences.

Both Adam and Eve are also studying medicine at the University of Turku and are 22 years old. This means that the scientific world is a strong presence in their life. But I feel that the spiritual presence is also strongly present in their lives. They both work as nurses and dealing with elderly and sick patients mean that they are in frequent contact with processes like birth and death.

Adam considers himself slightly religious, which he defined as an, “organized system of beliefs and worship”. He is Lutheran and attends ceremonies a couple of times per year. Interestingly he noted that he attends the ceremonies of, “other religions (Catholic, Buddhist, Chinese traditional etc) as often as possible”. This shows that he is interested in

the religious aspects of life. He also felt that spirituality referred to, “your personal belief in something (greater) and how you express it to yourself and perhaps to others”.

On the other hand, Eve does not consider herself to be religious, which she says is,

some kind of package of thoughts, beliefs and habits a group of people share, that they use to understand and explain things concerning life, death, happiness, meaning of life etc. This group of people usually attend religious ceremonies and live according to rules their religions has.

Eve also does not consider herself as spiritual, which she understands as being, “quite near religion...maybe it’s the thought that something that we really don’t understand is actually ruling the world.” Rather, Eve considers her self to be scientific which she says is belief, “in things if there is evidence to prove they are right.” However, even though Eve does not consider herself either religious or spiritual she does attend religious ceremonies a couple of times per year. Interestingly, this is the same amount as Adam who considers himself to be a religious person.

What all of this means is that even though their backgrounds are quite similar they do have very different ways of looking at the world. In fact, based on the point of religion and spirituality we could say that Adam is more feminine than Eve because science is usually taken to be a masculine way of viewing the world. But this categorisation would be an oversimplification of their views.

To complicate this matter I asked them about a few daily tasks in their life together. As it turned out, many of these tasks support their traditional family values. For example, according to both Adam and Eve, she does most of the cooking and cleaning at home. This suggests that Adam plays the traditional male role while Eve plays the traditional female role. But when it comes to paying the bills, usually a task carried out by men, Eve said that they were both responsible while Adam said it was Eve’s task. So, in some tasks this couple upholds the stereotypical traditional way of life while in others it opposes them.

6.3 A Conversation With Adam And Eve

The conversation was conducted with Adam and Eve together at their home in Turku, Finland. The discussion was carried out together in part due to time restraints and in part because it allowed me to see how the couple acted together. The choice of using their home as a setting for the conversation was made to be able to control the amount of background noise, to ensure privacy, to limit the travelling costs for the couple to one trip to North Karelia and to ensure that they were as comfortable as possible.

This did pose some minor problems for my research though. Since Adam and Eve live together they have already established a balance of power and their own norms in their relationship. However, I believe that the balance of power in any relationship is not a firmly set entity, and the power between the three of us shifted throughout the discussion.

Another problem with recording a conversation is that there are often moments when individuals are interrupted and when more than one person speaks at the same time, rendering the recording inaudible in places. However, in return for brief moments of inaudible recording I was able to recognise who was wielding the most power at various stages of the conversation. All three participants were in control of the conversation at various points.

Another point that warrants comment is the vocal qualities of Adam and Eve. Since English is not their native language I questioned them about how comfortable they were in expressing themselves in English. In the follow up questions after the conversation Adam expressed that he was, “quite confident” while Eve said that she was not very confident in her English speaking abilities and that, “especially now finding the right words feels extremely difficult”. However she later said that it really depended on the topic. This may have had some reflection in the conversation where Adam spoke more than Eve and with much more authority. However, this may also be due to an assertion of his more ‘male’ attributes.

This conversation brought out some very interesting perceptions of what Koli is to Adam and Eve. Overall, their preconceptions regarding Koli were quite similar. Adam saw Koli as a, “certain cultural landscape that is very Finnish” (Line # 7), to which Eve responded, “Something very Finnish, I agree” (Line # 8). But as the conversation progressed and they began to describe their visions of Koli they had slightly different views.

Adam felt a very strong connection to Koli even though he had never been there before. He said that Koli, “is very close to the heart of all Finns” (Line # 9) and that, “I think it’s like Lapland” (Line # 15). The first statement implies that Koli is still a significant landscape to Finns. The second statement is considerably important when we consider that Adam was born in Lapland and still frequently visits Lapland where his family’s summer cottage is.

The media is largely responsible for the image that Adam had of Koli before he visited the park. “I have seen the pictures of Koli...the TV series *Suuri Seikkailu*” (Line # 15) and “TV commercials, and in, probably in *Lapin Kulta* commercials” (Line # 34). He then went on to describe what his image of Koli included. The hill top view overlooked a forest and several long, narrow lakes and included people. Adam also mentioned that the image could be from an airplane. His image did not include any buildings or ski lifts (Lines # 20, 21, 23, 39-41, 47, 51).

Examining Adam’s image of Koli proved to be rather insightful. Since the view is from the top of the hill, or from an airplane, we can see that he has placed himself in the position of dominance. However, when I questioned him about this he replied that being above the landscape is like, “being part of it, not conquering it” (Line # 80). This reflects Lasse Lovén’s (2004a) comments that when you see pictures of Koli with people on top of the hills you imagine yourself there as a part of the landscape. But Adam did point out that if he was climbing a real mountain it might be different. He said, “If you think about a mountain, and conquering the mountain, and beating the mountain it might be more masculine, like dominant thing” (Line # 82).

Based on Adam's perceived image and description of Koli we can see some conflicting views. Based on the results of the survey the forest and the lakes may be interpreted as either masculine or feminine elements. But the view from the top of the hill or the airplane signifies a distinct position of dominance. The view from an airplane also suggests that he views this landscape from a scientific or technologically advanced perspective. However, as Adam expressed, he still feels that he is in the landscape and not above it. He does however concede that if it was a higher mountain or very difficult to climb he could have those feelings of dominance. So this leads to the impression that he does have somewhat of a masculine view towards Koli.

To further complicate the issue Adam associates Koli with his home in Lapland, which shows that he also has a much more feminine perspective towards Koli. He also mentioned that there are people in his image of Koli. As Lovén (2004a) pointed out, when you see people in an image you imagine yourself in their place. Based on this we can conclude that the vision may not be one of dominance since he may actually be imagining himself as part of the scene.

Therefore, it seems that even though he comes across as a rather dominant male in many aspects, like speaking and his attitudes towards domestic life, he does have a much more feminine side that also affects his opinions of Koli. Adam's image of Koli before visiting the park was one that contained both feminine and masculine elements. These elements may also reflect the characteristics of his personality. But to make such a link between the two would require a much more in depth study of Adam's personality and life experience, and that is beyond the focus of this study.

Eve's perception of Koli was quite similar to Adam's. She also imagined the view from Koli from a position on dominance. The forest and lakes were also present in her imagine scene. She also agreed with Adam when he said there were people in the scene but no structures made by people were present (Lines # 20, 22,38-40, 47,48,52,53).

There were however two notable differences that Eve brought out in her image of Koli. She specifically mentioned the birch trees and that usually her image was from winter (Lines # 42, 48). According to the survey results the snow and white winter landscape can be interpreted as feminine. Based on this we can assume that Eve's view of Koli is more feminine than Adam's.

However, Eve's view also has some conflicting elements. The view from a dominant position suggests that she may have some dominating views towards nature. When I asked her about this dominating view of nature she also responded that she did not see the position as being a dominant one. She explained that when she stood on high points overlooking the surrounding area previously she didn't feel, "like owning it all, you feel, you just realise how small we actually are. And you see so much and understand so little" (Line # 81).

Eve made another point during the conversation that requires further discussion. She brought up the fact that many mountains, such as Mount St. Helens,¹² are named after women (Line # 79). Naming reflects the dominant power of cultures. I see two possibilities for interpreting this fact. The first, and probably more widely accepted, interpretation is that it is a way to honour a specific woman. The other, and probably less accepted, interpretation is that it is a way of naming one conquest, the mountain, after another conquest, the woman. I would also like to point out that simply because one interpretation is more widely accepted it does not necessarily mean that it is correct. From this we can conclude that Eve is aware of the gender injustices of the past patriarchal societies, at least to some extent, and that she relates them to the world that she lives in today.

Some other points worth discussing arose during this discussion. In order to better understand and interpret their future experience of Koli I thought that I should find out some of Adam and Eve's more general attitudes towards nature. When we began to talk about the infrastructure in many of the Finnish parks the values associated with the Finnish welfare state arose. Both Adam and Eve felt that nature in Finland should be accessible to all who desired to go there. As a result of this attitude they both concluded that although wide hiking trails, *laavus*,¹³ and other man made structures changed the natural environment they were useful to make nature more accessible to the average Finn (Lines # 59-63).

Adam also said, "Like it's good that these places exist because...no one really introduces the people to the idea of being in nature unless you have been taught since you were a small child" (Line # 71). Just prior to this Eve had mentioned that she, "wanted to have the nature after 50 years. But, on the other hand, I would like to have it just for myself" (Line # 68). These two lines show that at times Adam can have a quite feminine view of how nature should be used, being considerate of others and reflecting on childhood. But they also show that Eve has moments where her masculine view of nature is more assertive and selfish. If we consider these statements they seem to show that Bem's classification is much too dualistic and in this specific case the man is much more feminine than the woman.

When we began to talk about gender in the landscape as it relates to structures made by people the couple seemed to be a little out of their element. The large pause in the conversation suggests that neither Adam nor Eve were used to or comfortable with using the concept of gender as it relates to landscapes. Eve said, "I've never thought about that before" (Line # 87), while Adam said that he had difficulties because, "in our language we don't have the gender" (Line # 88). This was a result of the survey as well. It seems that many individuals are not used to associating the idea of gender with a landscape. But that does not mean that it does not exist. It exists and people condone it subconsciously and consciously through their daily actions.

¹² According to the United States Geological Survey Website (2004) Mount St Helens was named by Commander George Vancouver in honour of Alleyne Fitzherbert who was known as Baron St. Helens.

¹³ A *laavu* is a small shelter, usually with a fire pit and dried wood, where hikers can rest or even sleep. Some of them are enclosed and have a fire pit inside.

Although the couple was not used to the idea of using gender in the landscape they did admit that the presence of the building in nature was intrusive. Adam stated that the buildings, “could be an act of dominance” (Line # 84) and Eve saw them as, “invading into the nature” (Line # 85). Eve’s choice of words here warrant further comment. The words “invading into” have sexual overtones. One might interpret them as signifying a rape, in this case of the natural world. However, I do not feel confident in stating that those were her intentions. During the interview the couple also made a few other statements that showed a distinct separation between the natural world and the urban world (Lines # 114, 117-121).

Eve also made another comment that reiterates her strong scientific, non-religious and non-spiritual beliefs. She said, “in my mind it’s just like people and nature. Like people in my mind are masculine and feminine, nature is just, it’s like two separate things” (Line # 91). This statement exemplifies one dualism that science has created. It also shows that Eve does not see people as belonging to nature.

The religious or spiritual aspects of Koli are one of the main topics of study for this project. As such they were addressed during the conversation. Adam felt that Koli was, “tremendously special” (Line # 94), but he felt that he could not properly answer the question because he had not been there. Eve’s answer, as expected, was quite different. “I don’t know any like sacred or holy places in Finland. I don’t think there are any...at least to me” (Line # 95). Based upon these comments I was quite certain that the future commented walks at Koli would prove to be very interesting and their experiences would be quite different.

6.4 The Return Of Adam And Eve – Commented Walks

Before I begin to analyse and discuss the commented walks with Adam and Eve I would like to mention a few brief words about the route that we walked. We began at the south edge of the Sokos Hotel Koli from where one can see the Heritage Centre Ukko to the west and the ski lift to the east. Walking south you come to a sign and the concrete staircase that begins the ascent to Ukko-Koli. From the top of Ukko-Koli one can see east and south primarily as trees limit the view to the north and west. You cannot see the hotel from this, or any other peak in the park. From the top of Ukko-Koli we headed south, stopped at the overlook that stands below Ukko-Koli and then continued along the main path to Akka-Koli. A stone staircase marks the ascent to the peak from this direction. From Akka-Koli all directions except north, which is blocked by trees, are visible. From Akka-Koli we continued basically south using a smaller footpath until we turned east and reached the overlook that stands below Paha-Koli. From there we ascended Paha-Koli. From this point one can see all directions except west.

According to Thibaud’s (cited by Winkler 2002, 3) thoughts, commented walks can be varied in many ways, one of which is the season. Therefore I feel it necessary to describe the weather on the day that the commented walks were carried out. It was an exceptionally

warm spring day and the temperature was approximately 22 degrees Celsius. There was very little wind present and only a few clouds in the sky. This is important because the weather greatly influences the atmosphere of a place and a landscape.

6.4.1 The Temptation Of Eve

When we began our journey in Koli National Park at the Sokos Hotel Koli from where we could see the Heritage Centre Ukko and the ski lift. Eve remarked that the buildings, “fit quite nicely” with the surroundings especially, “the materials they used like stones and a little bit of wood” (Eve Lines # 4, 6). She also associated the buildings with passivity when she said, “It’s not bumping into your face, it’s just standing here like peacefully” (Ibid. # 8). She did not like the ski lift so much though and said that in summer, “it always looks quite stupid to have an elevator coming up to the hill” (Ibid. # 12).

Based upon these comments we can see that Eve does not ideologically oppose the built structures in the park but rather how they are integrated in the environment. It is also interesting to note that Eve emphasised the natural elements of the buildings. Many feminist writers have claimed that women have a greater connection to the natural world than men do. Eve’s comments seem to support this. However, many feminists could interpret these places quite differently. For example, Inger Birkeland’s (1994) work has pointed out that hotels are the domain of women. The Sokos Hotel at Koli is located away from the views and actually out of sight from the hill tops and thus, may be interpreted as aesthetically subordinate. But once again I must point out that Birkeland’s research was concerned with the functional roles of women in hotels and my research is more focused on the aesthetic roles that elements play in landscapes. However, the two may be linked but that would require much further study.

Eve’s comment about the ski lift also raises the point that places and landscapes can be very different during the various seasons. The ski lift may not look as “stupid” in the winter as it did during the late spring when we visited Koli. So we must consider its functional meaning as well as its aesthetic one. Eve commented that, “it would be nicer not to have it here” (Eve Line # 12).

The first transition in our voyage occurred when we ascended the stairs at the base of Ukko-Koli. The transition occurs as we gain altitude and distance from the human made structures. At the top of the stairs, if one does not look back, the built environment quickly disappears from landscape and from one’s frame of mind (Ibid. # 75-78). Eve thought that it was strange to have stairs, “made of concrete and not like wood or anything” (Ibid. # 22). Once again we can see her desire for more natural elements in the park. But she did mention that the stairs were okay because they made access easier for the elderly and disabled. This attitude of caring for others has been deemed as a feminine attribute.¹⁴ As such the stairs and many other cultural structures in the park may be interpreted as such.

¹⁴ See Bem’s Classification

From the first overlook Eve made an association with the lake. “Looks quite unreal with the lake being still frozen” (Eve Line # 34). The word “unreal” can easily be linked to concepts like dreams, visions and magic. Her choice of words here suggests a link to the mystical world and implies that there is some connection between her self and landscape. Although, I must reiterate that English is not her native language and, as such, would be very careful about interpreting her words too much.

Eve mentioned another association before we arrived at Ukko-Koli. When I pointed out all the signs in the park she mentioned that one wouldn't need a map in this park and that in Finland the different parks had different functions. She felt that Koli was, “More like a Sunday, Sunday walk place” (Ibid. # 56-58). These comments seem to suggest that Eve felt like the place was quite feminine in that it was easy to access for all people. The use of the phrase, “Sunday walk place” also brings up a connection to a holy day in the Christian world, and a spiritual element to the landscape.

Reaching the top of Ukko-Koli marked another transition for Eve as she whispered the word, “Wow” (Ibid. # 82) when she cast her gaze on perhaps the most celebrated view in Finland. But this moment also marked two associations for Eve. When I asked her if the view reminded her of anything she replied, “Of the post cards...it's just the way it's supposed to be” (Ibid. # 86). It is obvious that she had built an image up in her mind, or possibly had an image imposed on her mind by the media, and it was the same as she now witnessed. Eve also commented that, “it was worth driving all the 500 something kilometres” (Ibid. # 88). This seems to emphasise that the greater the distance travelled to a place the greater the expectations are, and that Koli was not disappointing in the least for her.

As we paused for a moment on the top of Ukko-Koli, the highest point in southern Finland, I was curious if she felt like she was, “on top of the world”. She explained that she felt, “like a small person just looking the world. Like, I feel, you know, I feel the greatness of nature and I feel, like, small” (Ibid. # 109, 110). This can be interpreted as Eve feeling dwarfed by the landscape. In this regard Ukko-Koli has a masculine character for Eve.

However, in the next instant Eve expressed another important point about her view of the landscape. She felt a separation from it. “Yeah, kind of like, you're kind of looking at, as a, not being part of it” (Ibid. # 114). This reflects Eve's scientific faith. Science has caused many individuals to objectify nature and separate the ‘human world’ from the ‘natural world’. But the two are actually one and the same.

The stairs leading down from Ukko-Koli marked another transition in Eve's journey. She liked these stairs more, “Because they are more natural” (Ibid. #130) even though they were more difficult to walk. For Eve these stairs were something she associated with life at a summer cottage (Ibid. # 132). This association marks the transition into a more natural and feminine environment.

As we stood underneath Ukko-Koli at an overlook Eve felt the environment to be much more feminine. “Yeah, maybe because this is, that [Ukko-Koli] was more like made of

rocks and this is more like forest and wood, trees, it's a bit more softer, like the atmosphere" (Ibid. # 142). She also felt that the view here was much more limited (Ibid. # 144, 146). From this point then the landscape has acquired feminine attributes in the eyes of Eve.

Continuing on the path there was a notable change in the texture of the ground. It became much softer as we passed from the rocky side of Ukko-Koli to the well-maintained path towards Akka-Koli. I suggested to Eve that the path was nice for two people to walk side by side and she replied, "Yeah, but still it's not, not a highway" (Ibid. # 155, 156). From this we can deduce that the paths in Koli National Park are not dominating the scenery, and that they are not too large to no longer represent a path. In this sense these paths may also be thought of as feminine since they have not been overly developed.

When we arrived at Akka-Koli Eve was not "wowed" by the scenery but she commented that it was much more uniform than the view from Ukko-Koli but that there was also more diversity in the landscapes as you turned (Ibid. # 184-188). She associated the large, flat rocks with the sea, another piece of nature that is often given feminine characteristics (Ibid. # 240). Eve then commented that, "This is not situated like on the edge. This is like in between, in the middle of the ridge. So it's, you feel more like you are safe in a way" (Ibid. # 192). This means that Akka-Koli has the apparent qualities of being a safe place, and can be seen as feminine. This statement is also reflexive and shows that some travellers may feel safer here than on Ukko-Koli. The concept of edges is also brought up in different geographical works¹⁵, often in the form of the horizon.

Wright says that "to our stone-age ancestors a blue mountain range on the skyline might have marked the border of the known land, beyond which lay unknown countries, lands of 'evil spirits, perhaps – into which he must often have wished to penetrate but dared not' (cited by Karjalainen 1986, 24.

Eve supported her idea that Akka-Koli was feminine when she said, "when you stay like on the edge of something it feel, the air is more free and you feel like you almost could just jump and fly" (Eve Line # 194) and, "This [Akka-Koli] is more like you're standing here like not going anywhere" (Ibid. # 196). From this we can see that Eve associates much more masculine qualities with Ukko-Koli than with Akka-Koli. This is also supported by the Bem's characteristics that claim that men are more adventurous and willing to take risks.¹⁶ Eve's description of Akka-Koli as "you're standing here like not going anywhere" also implies the traditional role of women who do not work outside of the house and may be considered more stationary than men are.

While Eve walked around taking pictures on Akka-Koli I asked her if the cell phone tower bothered her. She replied that, "They're everywhere" (Eve Line # 228). She also replied that she, "looked in all directions but [she] didn't notice" (Ibid. # 232). This was one of the very few symbols of cultural activity in the landscape and still she did not notice it until I pointed it out. It seems odd that someone would not notice an enormous phallic symbol in

¹⁵ For other examples see also *Strangers In The Arctic* edited by Seppälä or see Lehtinen's (2003b, 47-51)

¹⁶ See Bem's Classification

the landscape until you consider that people are taught to ignore those parts by the media, who do not include them in their images, and through familiarity since they are all over Finland.

There was a brief transition period between Akka-Koli and Paha-Koli. The ground became wet and slippery. Eve commented that, “It’s really peaceful” (Ibid. # 266). This comment marked the end of Akka-Koli’s influence and the beginning of Paha-Koli’s influence. After this the ground became rockier as we headed southeast to the overlook just north of Paha-Koli.

At the overlook Eve made some very interesting comments. She explained that for her Koli was not so unique or special but more typical for Finland because, “this is the first time coming here” and “it takes a while to create a personal bondage to, to a place like this” (Ibid. # 288, 290). This brings up the point that holy places become more holy through repetitive rituals or visits. Eve also explained that it was, “more like a national thing, just Finnish” (Ibid. 296). This clearly shows that for Eve, and probably many other visitors, Koli is not a sacred site but a national one.

As we stood below Paha-Koli and began to climb Eve exclaimed, “it’s not as big as Mount Everest but still” (Ibid. # 314). This implies that even though the peaks of Koli National Park offer something to Eve they would be better if they were bigger. This idea of bigger is better seems to be quite a masculine approach to viewing the landscape. When we arrived at the top of Paha-Koli Eve said, “Yeah, we did it” (Ibid. # 324). This shows that she approached the landscape from a masculine, scientific perspective where it was seen as something separate from her that she could conquer.

Eve and I began to discuss her feelings about the sacredness of Koli. She mentioned that she thought it could be sacred, “At least for some people,” (Ibid. # 334) and that, “all the shamans with drums and things” (Ibid. # 340) were nice to think about. But Eve made it very clear that these things were not part of her beliefs and that Koli is not sacred for her (Ibid. # 344-350).

At this point the question about sacredness for others arises again. Even though Eve claimed that she did not feel any spiritual or religious connection to the landscape she did acknowledge the past spiritual significance of Koli, as well as the fact that there could be some individuals who currently have a spiritual connection to Koli. These facts are bound to influence her behaviour while she visits Koli and in some small way she is connected to the sacredness of Koli.

After visiting the three main peaks of Koli National Park Eve felt that both masculine and feminine elements were present in the landscape. She saw Ukko-Koli as masculine because it was the tallest one and Akka-Koli as the woman standing next to him. Eve saw Paha-Koli as a reminder, “that there’s not just harmony between Ukko and Akka, there’s also some, something bad. You have to be, like watching” (Ibid. # 368). She also explained that in her mind nature was always somehow feminine (Ibid. # 354).

When we examine these last statements of Eve we are left with an image of the landscapes of Koli mean to her. First of all, in her mind Koli is not a sacred place but it is special in a national sense. Eve also acknowledges that for some people Koli could be a holy place. Eve also pointed out that even though she does not usually think in terms of gender she did feel that there were both masculine and feminine elements present in the landscape.

6.4.2 Adam And The Apple

As Adam and I began to walk away from the hotel I asked him what he thought about the buildings in the park. He thought that they were nice looking and were, “technical”. He also commented that there was, “Lot’s of glass and steel” (Adam Line # 2). Adam’s impression of the buildings is notably different than that of Eve’s. She noticed the natural elements of the building while Adam commented on the more processed ones. This would suggest that Eve is more feminine than Adam. However, Adam also commented that he wasn’t sure if those buildings, “belong in the national park” (Ibid. # 2) and later he said, “I’m not a big fan of these buildings” (Ibid. # 8).

Adam also realised the utilitarian functions of the buildings, the staircase and the lift (Ibid. # 14). He commented that the lift enables, “all the elderly people who can’t walk up from the lower station [to] still come and see the views” (Ibid. # 16). This shows that Adam has some elements of a feminine perspective because he cares about others.¹⁷

Adam did not expect to see the ski lift so close to the peaks of Koli. “I didn’t imagine there to be a ski lift here and maybe it’s not a good thing to have here” (Adam Line # 4). Then, Adam went on saying, “maybe they are thinking that the view in itself is the thing that is preserved, not as much this hill” (Ibid.). These comments seem to suggest that in Adam’s mind the various elements of places are separate and can coexist.

The first transition in the walk with Adam occurred in approximately the same place as it did with Eve. The end of the staircase clearly marks the point of transition away from the built environment. Here Adam commented that, “the stairs are pretty standard for every bit of nature, nature site in Finland” (Ibid. # 26). Once again Adam represented Bem’s feminine traits by stating that stairs provided better access for, “All the people” (Ibid. # 30).

On the stairs Adam also made his first association. He mentioned that he was, “not glad that there are stairs in Korouoma” (Ibid.), another protected area located in Lapland very close to where Adam was born. So, on some level the stairs in Koli brought up thoughts and feelings of home for him. He then went on to describe that Korouoma was more important for him because that is where he grew up and he said that, “I would like to keep it to myself” (Ibid. # 32-36). This shows that for Adam a personal connection to a place takes time to build and is reinforced through repetition.

As we arrived at the first overlook Adam made another association. Two elderly gentlemen passed by us and he commented that, “the people that are coming are not trekkers, they

¹⁷ See Bem’s Classification

have shoes that are worn inside” (Ibid. # 54) and they were wearing, “just normal dress and stuff so, this really isn’t a hiking place that much. Or, you can just drive to the view and take a look” (Ibid. # 56). Adam therefore associates certain kinds of clothing with certain kinds of activities. Based upon these comments we can see that Adam agrees with Eve’s assessment that Koli is not a place for serious hiking but more of a place to take a Sunday stroll. However, this may have a lot to do with the way that we came to Koli, by car and then the funicular lift. Their opinions may have been drastically different if we arrived on foot from Joensuu or some other point.

When we arrived back on the path towards Koli I asked Adam if he still felt the presence of the hotel. He replied that, “the presence of the hotel is not, doesn’t really come this far” (Ibid. # 68). This comment took place a little closer to Ukko-Koli than Eve’s comments about the sphere of the hotel but it is close enough to mark the transitions as occurring between the top of the staircase and the first overlook.

Here Adam also mentioned an apparent quality. “It feels like you’re in the nature even though the road, road is maybe 200 metres from here” (Ibid. # 70). Here we can clearly see the separation of cultural items, like a road, from natural items. But we also see that in Adam’s mind Koli has something that presents more of a natural, and feminine, face than it’s proximity to the masculine western culture of Finland.

As Adam and I stood together on Ukko-Koli he made reference to an apparent quality of the landscape. “Somehow it feels quite familiar” (Ibid. # 76). As we faced east he remarked, “it seems like have seen the same thing many times, in many different places” (Ibid. # 78). These comments could be interpreted in two ways. It could be a result of the media coverage of Koli as a typical scene in Finland. Or it could be something much more than that. It could be that this landscape has touched something within Adam to make him feel a connection. His comments later like “if you would just get a bit higher somewhere else in Finland it, I think the view would be quite [the] same” (Ibid. # 84). This seems to support the idea that Adam feels that Koli is more of a typical Finnish landscape than a unique one.

As Adam wandered around the top of Ukko-Koli he mentioned another apparent quality of the landscape. He said, “in a way this is a feeling of looking at your, your land even though I’m not, not from even close to this, this place” (Ibid. # 88). This shows that Adam see this landscape as his personal possession in some way. This can be interpreted as a very masculine way of viewing a landscape. But it also means that he does have some sort of personal bond to Koli even though this is only his first visit. This can be interpreted as meaning that Koli has some spiritual connection to some individuals.

On the top of Ukko-Koli Adam mentioned another apparent quality when he said, “in a way it seems that it’s, it’s not like here, it’s a picture” (Ibid. # 92). This is very similar to Eve’s statement from the overlook below Ukko-Koli when she said, “Looks quite unreal” (Eve Line # 34). So it would seem that for both Adam and Eve Koli National Park has some qualities that make it like a dreamscape. Whether this is the result of the media or not is debatable and calls for further study.

Adam associated Ukko-Koli with a masculine, dominant entity. As he took photos from the top of the mountain he remarked that, “I don’t feel superior to it...nature is always superior to the humans” (Adam Line # 94). He then went on to mention that this peak, “feels very cozy in a way of homelike” (Ibid. # 98). Once again we can see that Adam is associating an apparent quality of Ukko-Koli with home. This is signifying that he is comfortable with the landscape and feels a deep connection to it.

When I asked Adam about the rocks that compose Ukko-Koli he mentioned yet another apparent quality. He said that it, “Gives you a firm feeling under your legs and that you’re really standing on the firm ground when you’re looking here” (Ibid. # 124). This is quite different than Eve’s feeling of being on the edge but both statements represent a masculine entity in the landscape of Ukko-Koli.

We entered another transition zone when we left Ukko-Koli and took the stairs down that were, “more natural but more difficult to walk” (Ibid. # 134). Adam mentioned that he thought most people who went came to Koli National Park just went to Ukko-Koli and then left. He also thought that many Finns did not even take pictures there (Ibid. # 134-136). In fact that is precisely what occurred on the bus trip where I carried out my survey. None of the four Finns took pictures of the landscape, most likely because they had all been there before and had the view firmly established in their minds or perhaps because the landscape is somehow sacred to some people. At any rate, the entire group turned back to the hotel after enjoying the view from Ukko-Koli suggesting that it is the most dominating aspect of the park.

Adam also commented on the fact that all the people we saw that day were either families or elderly people (Ibid. # 146). “Maybe this is something that you want to show your children and then again for the old people some place that you want to visit that is, is really special to you” (Ibid. # 148). This seems to suggest that Koli National Park offers something that binds Finnish people of different generations together. It also brings up the point of the old Finnish name for Koli, Mustarinda the place where the dead departed from the earth for the next world (Lovén 2004b, 68). This implies that there is still a spiritual element to Koli.

As we ascended the staircase to Akka-Koli Adam made another association. He mentioned that, “This staircase goes rougher all the time, but more natural” (Adam Line # 182) and that there were tree roots growing around and through the stairs that suggested less human alteration to the environment. In Adam’s mind he associated Akka-Koli with a more natural environment.

When we arrived at Akka-Koli it quickly became obvious that for Adam Akka-Koli was a feminine place. In part this may be due to the name itself. But he also commented that there was more forest and farmed land in this landscape that faces west towards Finland. He also mentioned the apparent quality of Akka-Koli as, “more earth, earthly somehow” (Ibid. # 195-198). The earthy adjective is often used to describe women or other items defined as feminine.

The rocks of Akka-Koli also brought up a feminine association for Adam. When comparing them to the rocks of Ukko-Koli he said, “this is more flat. It’d be easier to climb” (Ibid. # 200) and, “this is a easier place to come to” (Ibid. # 204). From this we can see that Adam sees Akka-Koli as an easier and softer place to get to than Ukko-Koli was. But it also shows that Adam has some masculine ambitions of conquering the landscape.

“I just wonder if the name of Akka-Koli is just because this is lower than the Ukko-Koli or because this shows the land and the fields and all that it gives” (Ibid. # 210). This statement shows that this peak is very feminine for Adam. He sees it as a nurturing mother symbol that is approachable, generous and kind. But he also acknowledges that the greater height of Ukko-Koli contributes to its masculinity.

Adam also made an association with a sign that he saw as the couple drove to eastern Finland. It was made out of small trees and said that, “Forest is the support of Finland” (Ibid. # 212-214). He then made another association, “Maybe it’s just the idea that this is the foundation, the forests, like your mother in a way” (Ibid. # 216). Based upon these statements we can see that in his mind Akka-Koli and the visible landscape from Akka-Koli are feminine.

Adam raised similar issues to those that Eve mentioned when I asked him about the mobile phone tower visible in the landscape of Akka-Koli. He mentioned that he had noticed it and that, “it’s sort of accepted just like the factory [referring to the view from Ukko-Koli]” (Ibid. # 234) and, “those are everywhere in Finland” (Ibid. # 236). Once again the most striking example of modernity was not commented upon until I specifically asked about it. Both Adam and Eve commented that it is accepted and they both chose to ignore it. This shows that people are taught how to view landscapes and that people acknowledge only those elements they wish to.

As we left Akka-Koli Adam commented on another apparent quality of Koli National Park. He said, “there’s no, no sounds from any other people here and there’s, there’s all kinds of sounds of the nature. It feels like we could be several hours from the closest other human being” (Ibid. # 254). For some reason the hills of Koli can transport the traveller into another world quite quickly. Even though there is a major highway, a heritage centre and a hotel close by the hills seem to make all of that fade away and the traveller is left alone with the landscape. This also implies that there is something special about the hills of Koli.

The walk between Akka-Koli and Paha-Koli was also a transition zone. Adam commented that, “the trail goes smaller and smaller” (Ibid. # 260) and, “this trail sort of turns sort of old, all the time more primitive” (Ibid. # 272). We can see that the landscape is not changing in Adam’s eyes. As we leave the relative sanctuary of Akka-Koli and enter the realm of Paha-Koli the trail became less trodden and more difficult. These seem to imply that Paha-Koli is much more masculine than Akka-Koli was.

At the overlook just below Paha-Koli Adam made some very interesting comments about the hills of Koli.

Usually I think that we don't really need to advertise these kinds of places to, to mass tourism. It's better to just leave this to, to people who know about it, who really like it and can appreciate it in a way and just come here quietly to enjoy the views and what it means to them (Ibid. # 284).

Adam then went on saying, "I think that Finnish tourists might get more from this, this view [than foreign tourists would]" (Ibid. # 286). At first this may seem quite selfish and possessive. But there is an alternative way of viewing this statement. For Adam Koli seems to be turning into a very special place that he connects with. This statement points to the fact that he is realising some sacred elements of the landscape and does not want them to be trivialised or blasphemed by the mass tourism produced in many nations of the world. In a word, Koli is becoming sacred to Adam.

As we stood in the shadow of Paha-Koli thunder started rolling in on us. I mentioned a connection between Ukko, the ancient Finnish god of thunder and Adam responded that, "it sort of fits, fits this place" (Ibid. # 306). The thunderclouds rose quite quickly and caught us a little off guard. As Adam pointed out nature is, "Unpredictable" (Ibid. # 326). This means that Adam associates dark and powerful things with Paha-Koli. Power is frequently associated with masculinity. However, unpredicted storms as an uncontrollable force have been compared to the nature of women (Rose et al. 1997, 157). We can interpret this as meaning that Paha-Koli is masculine while the storm that rose up while we were there was feminine in Adam's mind.

As we ascended Paha-Koli Adam mentioned some attributes that reiterate his view that it is a masculine peak. He said, "it's much more difficult to climb. It's like a wedge" (Adam Line # 332). The first part of the statement shows that Adam still has conquest in mind and that this place is much more difficult to come to and, therefore, more masculine. The second part of the statement leaves the impression of phallic-like peak.

When we reached the top Adam commented that he could have some feelings of conquest. "I can imagine that if I would have walked from down there somewhere, and I was sweaty and I have, have been carrying a pack I'm sure that it, that I would feel that way [of accomplishment]" (Ibid. # 342). This statement shows that in Adam's view of Paha-Koli there is something to challenge, something to conquer, the man against the mountain. Therefore, it can be interpreted as being a masculine entity in Adam's view. But it also contradicts his statement on top of Ukko-Koli when he said he didn't have feelings of beating the mountain (Ibid. # 91, 92). This may also be interpreted then as a struggle of good versus evil in Adam's mind.

As we finished our conversation on the top of Paha-Koli two swans flew by and landed in an open patch of water. Adam commented how when he is out in nature the rest of the world disappears. He associated his experience with Koli to being at his family's summer cottage. "When I'm sitting in the, the shore and just listening the swan or something I can really forget about everything and be a part of the place. But I think, in a way, this is so, so much home that I can feel a kind of connection to this place" (Ibid. # 354). Adam then explained for him, just like for Eve, it takes time to build a relationship with a place but he

felt more in Koli than in many other Finnish landscapes (Ibid. # 356-362). This shows that for Adam, his spiritual bond to Koli has taken root with his first journey to the park.

6.5 Through Their Own Eyes – Photographs From Adam And Eve

Landscape interpretation is frequently associated with being a visual experience. By modifying Winkler's (2002) methods of Commented Walks and asking Adam and Eve to use a digital camera to capture visual moments of their journey I hoped to get a glimpse of what they perceived Koli National Park to be. The results of their photos proved to be quite challenging to analyse but also very productive.

As I walked along the path with Eve I quickly realised that she was not the kind of person who takes a lot of pictures. She took only eight during the entire walk. She explained this by saying, "I'm not used to taking many pictures because I usually use a film, you have to pay for every picture" (Eve Line # 220).

Nevertheless, Eve's pictures did provide some good basic conceptual evidence for this project. All of Eve's pictures included some rock, suggesting that for her the geology of the hills is very important. But it has already been established, through the survey and Eve's comments, that the rocks of Koli are a masculine element in the landscape.

To complicate the issue, seven of Eve's pictures included trees. Trees in the survey were interpreted as being both masculine and feminine. However, Eve said that trees make the atmosphere softer (Ibid. # 142). This means that in her mind trees are feminine.

Water adds a third element of confusion to interpreting Eve's view of the landscape. Eve never specifically mentioned any qualities associated with gender while she talked about the water. Based on the survey water could be seen as either masculine or feminine. What can be commented on is that for Eve water is an important element in Koli. Water was present in six of her photographs.

Another interesting point is that Eve took pictures of people while on the walk. She took one picture of a man standing on Ukko-Koli and another of me at Akka-Koli. This means that she also associates humans with the landscape of Koli, not just nature. An interesting point regarding these two pictures (see Figures 1 and 2 below) is the angle from which they were taken. For both of these photographs Eve was below the men that she was shooting. As seen in the pictures below, she chose to stand in a subordinate position to take the photographs. One may interpret this as meaning that she feels inferior to men. But, I think that this is not the case with Eve. Rather, I think that she merely took the photographs as the opportunities arose and gave little or no thought to her own position. However, this point may be debatable for others.



Figures 1 and 2.

In contrast to this the remainder of Eve's photographs were taken from positions of dominance. They provide broad views of the natural environment from above. This suggests that Eve somehow feels either separate from the landscapes of Koli or that she feels above the nature. This could have a great deal to do with strong beliefs in science, which emphasise the objectification of nature. It could also be that she is simply reproducing the images that have already been produced in the media and tourist brochures. Figures 3 and 4 below are two examples of this.



Figure 3



Figure 4

Another brief comment regarding Eve's pictures are that there are no cultural elements in them. She did not take any pictures of things like buildings, or staircases or signs. She has

chosen to ignore the cultural alterations in Koli National Park because they do not fit into her perceptions of the place.

All of Eve's pictures have large foregrounds, as exemplified by the pictures above. This means that she never gets close to the edges of the Koli hills. It could be that she is nervous or scared of falling. This would lead us to the point that Koli can be seen as a dangerous place, a masculine place. This would support Eve's previous comments about feeling safe at Akka-Koli but not on Ukko-Koli (Ibid. # 192).

Adam's use of the digital camera differed from that of Eve's. He took a total of 34 pictures and was obviously much more comfortable with it than she was. This also suggests that perhaps Adam is more visually oriented than Eve is. But this statement would need further studies to prove.

The natural elements in Adam's photographs proved to be somewhat similar to that of Eve's. A total of 26 of his pictures contained rocks. Three of these pictures contained only rocks. This suggests that the masculine element of rocks was very important for Adam.

Adam took a total of 29 pictures with trees. This suggests that these are another important element in the landscapes of Koli. In Adam's mind the trees are a feminine element in the landscape. He thought of them as the foundation of Finland and associated them with a mother figure on Akka-Koli (Adam Line # 216). Since Adam took so many pictures of the trees he must feel a strong connection to the feminine elements of Koli.

In Adam's photographs water was not as prominent as it was in Eve's photographs. He took only 13 pictures with water. Just like Eve, Adam did not make any gender oriented comments about the water. Since the survey also proved inconclusive on the gender of the water in the landscape we are left only with the conclusion that water is still a necessary element for Adam's vision of Koli.

Based on the survey, it has been determined that snow is a feminine element in Koli National Park. Adam took four pictures with snow in them. In one of these pictures the snow was the focal point. In the picture on the next page (see Figure 5) the snow resembles a breast and the green plants in the centre could be interpreted as a nipple. Whether this is actually the case would require further Freudian investigation.



Figure 5

Unlike Eve, Adam did not take any pictures of people at Koli. This contradicts his statement from the first interview in Turku when he said that people were an important element in his idea of what elements make up Koli (Line # 47). Adam did however take three photographs that contained cultural elements. Three of these were of staircases and one was of a sign, see Figures 6 and 7 below. This shows that Adam feels that the human world is an important element in the landscapes of Koli.



Figure 6



Figure 7

The perspective that Adam used while taking photographs was also quite different than that used by Eve. Less than half of his pictures were taken in the typical landscape style of photographing Koli. He took 16 pictures of landscapes from a dominant position (see Figure 8). However, Adam took 18 pictures from a subordinate position to the landscape (see Figure 9). This would suggest that he views the landscape as being more masculine and that he is subordinate to it. This is supported by his statement that, “nature is always superior to the humans” (Adam Line # 94).



Figure 8



Figure 9

A final comparison between Adam and Eve’s photographs reveals that Adam seems to be more daring than Eve. His use of foreground in the pictures was different than Eve’s. In many of Adam’s pictures there was no foreground. Technically this can be achieved by using the camera lens differently. But effectually it is the same as getting closer to the edge. It represents a much more dangerous and masculine view of Koli, as seen in Figure 10 below.



Figure 10

7. THE FRUIT - CONCLUSIONS

As the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil grows during another season its fruit grow plump on the branches. The fruit has been nourished by water and nutrients from the roots, supported by the trunk, held out by the branches and given energy by the leaves. They ripen slowly and then wait. They will wait to be picked by unseen hands or they will fall to the earth below where they will rot slowly and transform into the nutrients needed for next season. In this way the Biblical prophesy told in the Book of Revelations is realised. There is death but there is also a chance for rebirth.

In the beginning of this project I set out to answer the question of, “What does the Landscape of Koli National Park mean to the first time visitor?” The following sub-questions were used to help answer the research question. Does gender play a role in the landscape of Koli? If so, what are the gendered elements of Koli? Is Koli a masculine or feminine landscape? Have the sacred elements of Koli been raped? What does Koli mean to people today? Do the arts play a role in shaping the landscape of Koli?

Based upon the result of my research I have found that gender does play a large role in the various landscapes of Koli National Park. The survey clearly shows that these women had a stronger, more intimate connection to Koli than their male counter parts did. They were also much more open to sharing their experiences with me. This seems to support feminist thought in general.

However, the results of the interviews and commented walks provided a different view. During the commented walks it seems that Adam’s personal connection to the landscapes of Koli was greater than that of Eve’s. Both seemed equally open to sharing their experiences but it was Adam who connected to the landscapes on a deeper level than Eve. This means that there are exceptions to ideas espoused in much feminist discourse.

Given this, and the fact that some of the surveyed men also exhibited moments of intimacy with Koli we must remember that it is important to take all people as individuals. But generally speaking, my research seems to indicate that women either share a stronger bond with the natural world or they are simply better at articulating this relationship.

The various natural and constructed elements within Koli National Park represent masculine and feminine identities in the minds of visitors. Regarding the natural elements in the landscape the survey shows that the rocks were largely considered to be masculine and the snow was feminine. The trees and the lake were both masculine and feminine so the results are inconclusive. Very few of the survey respondents mentioned the constructed elements in the park but when they were mentioned it was in a masculine way.

Both Adam and Eve described the rocks in a masculine way and the trees as feminine. Both of their walks proved to be inconclusive regarding the gender of the lake. When it came to the constructed elements of the park Eve commented on the builders use of natural

elements like wood and stone. This suggests a more feminine view of the buildings. Adam however emphasised the glass and steel, the more masculine elements of the buildings. Another point that must be emphasised is the fact that the survey was carried out during a different season and different time of day than the commented walks were.

My research indicates that Koli National Park is not entirely masculine or feminine. Both genders are represented in the diverse landscapes of the Koli hills. The survey group was limited to the landscape of Ukko-Koli. Based upon the results of the survey the only conclusion that can be drawn is that Ukko-Koli has both feminine and masculine elements present in the landscape.

The commented walks showed another side to the story of gender in Koli National Park. Adam was especially articulate in expressing his view that,

Ukko and Paha are more masculine than the Akka. Not, not that much because of what is the view in these two places...I don't know if it's partly because of the ice but these feel colder than the view that we have on, on top of Akka-Koli, which was maybe more welcoming and, and warm because there was large areas of forest and it was, well, we had good sunshine (Adam Line # 370).

Eve explained that in her mind Ukko-Koli was masculine, Akka-Koli was feminine and Paha-Koli was neither gender. She saw the three hills as standing together, a man, a woman and a reminder that there was something evil in the world that needed to be watched (Eve Line # 368). Eve's expression remarkably resembles the Biblical story of Adam and Eve and the Serpent in the Garden of Eden.

This brings us to the question of whether or not Koli remains a sacred place today. The results in this project clearly indicate that the sacred elements of Koli have not been raped by our modern society. The survey showed that some foreigners, with little or no previous knowledge about Koli, had a spiritual connection to the place and felt that it was holy. The responses ranged from private spiritual beliefs to those of more organised religions like Christianity. However, there were also many individuals in the survey who felt that Koli was just a place to get in touch with nature or a place to preserve nature and had no sacred elements.

The commented walks lead us to basically the same conclusions. Adam said that he felt a much stronger spiritual connection to Koli than Eve did. This may be a reflection of their personal beliefs. Eve is more scientific than Adam who considers himself somewhat religious. Both of them mentioned that Koli was a special place in a nationalistic sense but Adam's feelings seemed to run much deeper than Eve's. This would oppose most feminist thought, which states that women are closer to the natural world. This could also just be one exception to the rule or it could also be argued that Eve's beliefs are the result of a masculine, scientific education. However this last point seems useless since Adam had a very similar education.

Koli means different things to different visitors. There is no right or wrong way to feel about Koli. Adam and Eve and all of the surveyed people are unique individuals who have their own ways of interpreting what a landscape means to them. The meanings of Koli National Park reflect their own cultures, their own past experiences and their own personal beliefs. That does not mean that we cannot begin to understand what it means to the people who visit the park. To many it is a place to protect nature and participate in education. To others it is a national landscape that should be preserved. To some it is a place to enter into a spiritual communion with nature or God. What a visitor receives from Koli depends entirely on how the visitor approaches the mountain, both physically and mentally. It has been argued that modern methods of transportation have lessened the impressiveness of landscapes (Birkeland 1999, 23). Based on my own personal experiences with Koli, I believe that the season and the weather also have a profound impact on the way people view a landscape.

The arts play a large role in the way that visitors think about Koli and the way that they view the landscapes in the park. Both Adam and Eve mentioned that their preconceived images of Koli were formed largely by the arts in the forms of postcards, paintings and music. Those few individuals who have made Koli a famous place with their works have inspired visitors from all over Finland and the world to visit this park. But it seems that many of these artists have neglected the less “spectacular” landscapes of Koli and thus reinforced a dominant, masculine view of these landscapes. It should also be pointed out that the most prolific artists to explore Koli were men. They have created a male perspective that has been proliferated over time. The survey results also showed that many people believe that the arts have a fundamental relationship with nature.

I would like to make one final point. This research does not, by any means, lead us to any geographic laws that govern the world. In fact, it has never been my intention to establish any such laws. Martin has argued that, “owing to the presence of a human element and the complication of motivated action, there are not, and never can be, laws in the strict or physical sense, and it is futile and misleading to attempt to discover any” (cited by Karjalainen 1986, 37). Based on the research carried out in this project I have only attempted to make conclusions about the way a few individuals interpret a landscape.

This project is by no means a comprehensive study of Koli National Park. It still leaves many opportunities for further research in these landscapes. It would be very interesting to carry out these commented walks with various demographic groups of Finns. It would also prove enlightening to carry out these walks at the other sites in the park, like Uhrihalkeama, Kärjäkivet, the heritage farms and the Pirunkirkko (Dilling 2004) or even just by altering the paths used or seasonal variations. The hotel in Koli National Park would be interesting to study to see how closely it matches Birkeland’s study called the Feminine hotel in the man-made cultural landscape. These are but a few of the seemingly endless possibilities for future studies within Koli National Park. Figures 11, 12 and 13 are intended to not only make you think about how we view landscapes but also to remind you that we must still enjoy them for what they are...beauty.



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13

The Autumn – Epilogue

As autumn descends upon Koli National Park the leaves transform into brilliant shades of amber and red. Then, as they wilt and die, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil lets go of them one by one. Slowly they drift to the earth, where they will remain until the snow covers them. The following spring they will sacrifice their worldly bodies and feed the Tree and all the other forms of Life that exist in the garden. And then, in an endless cycle of Life, the Tree will once again begin to blossom. “So the end necessarily becomes a new beginning in the continuous creation of geography’s possible worlds” (Karjalainen 1986, 17).

SPACES by Janós Pilinszky (1991)

Hell is a sensation of space. Heaven is much the same.
 Two kinds of space. Heaven is free,
 The other we look down at
 like a room at the basement,
 we look down from above, as if

we peeped downwards from a staircase
through the door left (forgotten?) open
of a basement room.

What's going on there is something that is
Unbearable just for me. Perhaps nothing else,
They open a box of rags,
They weigh how many pounds a swan is
Or they talk with the only being I love,
repeating a thousand times the same,
about things that are
impossible, that are forbidden
to write or talk about.

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