Trumpeter (1990)
ISSN: 0832-6193

SPINNING THE WEB OF LIFE: FEMINISM, ECOLOGY, AND CHRISTA WOLF

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> You have but to follow and as it were hound nature in her wanderings, and you will be able, when you like, to lead and drive her afterward to the same place again.... Neither ought a man to make scruple of entering and penetrating into those holes and corners, when the inquisition of truth is his whole object. Bacon (1623) to James 1

> How often I have had the sensation of nature imploringly, passionately, beseeching something of me, so that it pierced my heart not to be able to understand what She wanted... So I stood still for a while, the murmur was like a sobbing, then it sounded to me like that of a child; and so I spoke to her as to a child. "You, my love, what is wrong?" - and as I said it, a shudder came over me and I was full of shame, as if I had spoken to one far greater than I, and I suddenly lay down and hid my face in the grass..., and then, as I lay with my face buried in the earth, I felt at once tender.

Bettine von Arnim, circa 1805

Introduction

The connection between deep ecology and feminism has been explored by a number of writers in recent times, among these Patsy Hallen in the Trumpeter's Summer 1987 issue on Ecofeminism, Carolyn Merchant in The Death of Nature (1980), and a wide range of writers in the Fall 1988 issue of Woman of Power. Our aim in this article is to enter the ongoing dialogue by drawing attention

to several specific areas of convergence and overlap of feminist and ecological concerns, with special focus on the work of Christa Wolf (b. 1929).

Christa Wolf, by way of introduction, is a leading writer in the German Democratic Republic and an outspoken critic of both East and West blocs, with regard to their political, social, and underlying philosophical structures. While her early work expressed her conviction that socialism would eventually lead to a more humane and compassionate society for all, Wolf has increasingly come to regard apparent political differences as concealing a common Western tradition, which posits man (sic) as the measure and master of all things, with woman, all living creatures, and Nature herself as mere instruments of his objectified and objectifying ends.

Her interest in the history of this tradition has led Christa Wolf to conduct extensive research into early pre-patriarchal times, into the earliest written records of Western culture, in an attempt to discover whether there were alternatives to the dominant masculine, hierarchical model of existence. Here her work has overlapped with that of the feminist scholar and futurist, Riane Eisler, who has posited two basic models of societal structure; the "dominator model" wherein "human hierarchies are ultimately backed up by force or the threat of force," and the "partnership model... based on the principle of linking rather than ranking." 1 It is the dominator model that is being enacted today, according to Eisler and Wolf, and that has been enacted throughout Western history, with its ongoing patterns of hierarchy, sexism and racism. While linking the suppression of the feminine elements with the rise of patriarchy, however, Christa Wolf has not idealized women or "female values" as such; she suggests that we do not even fully know what these values would be. Instead, Wolf has called for a full integration of both male and female elements into an authentic and transformed understanding of what it means to be human, based on a recognition that "the measure of humanity is not man, but man- and- woman." 2

The partnership of feminist and environmental concerns has been implicit in Wolf's writing for several decades. Her more recent work of the late 1970's and 1980's has incorporated an added dimension, however. During the past decade, she has traced the relationship between the evolution of the Western paradigm of reality which has led us to the brink of global destruction, and the suppression of the "female factor" in most cultures throughout history, leading to the increasing estrangement of man from woman, and from Nature. Like other writers concerned with deep ecological issues, Wolf seeks to rediscover an holistic way of being in the world, wherein individuals would live in harmony and conscious inter- relatedness with themselves, each other, and Nature. 3

As this is potentially a vast topic, we have chosen to discuss several specific areas of convergence between feminist and ecological concerns, particularly as they reflect this search for holistic alternatives to our current fragmented experience of life. We will consider the dualism inherent in Western thought; the condition of estrangement that characterizes our perceptions and relationship-

s; the essential interrelatedness and unity of all life on Earth; and finally, the possible integration of alternate modes of perception which could transform our existence. There is considerable overlap among these and they may be seen, in one sense, as variations on a theme. In order to demonstrate the common concerns and insights of writers in many disciplines, we have drawn from works of literature, psychology, theology, cultural criticism, philosophy and feminist theory. Necessarily, some ideas are introduced which we could not develop fully in a paper of this length.

While seeking organic coherence among the various sections, we have not attempted to iron out differences of tone and style between our literary voices. Some sections blend them, while others reveal their differences quite distinctly. Generally speaking, Marlene's writing tends to be broadly integrative, Steve's, poetically probing. We hope that the merging and separating of our voices will reflect the varied texture of the web, which we have chosen as our central metaphor. Borrowing the words of Patsy Hallen, then, we would like to proceed in "a spiral, processive way [and to] evoke and share a vision," 4 with the hope that you, the reader, will add your own voice, in turn.

Dualism: Divided within ourselves

A definitive characteristic of Western thought since Plato and Aristotle is dualism. It sets up hierarchical thought structures and a dichotomous world of subject and object, and it gives rise to either/or thinking. Ultimately, it results in what Jung has called the "projection of the shadow," where one's own weakness and self- loathing are projected onto an external other who is designated as "the enemy." Before turning to Christa Wolf's work, then, we will consider how dualism underlies perception itself.

Dualistic thinking is inherent to patriarchal thought, which portrays the world as a system of binary oppositions of dominant and subordinate terms. The feminist theologian, Nelle Morton, has described this dynamic as follows:

> Patriarchy has been described as a way of structuring reality in terms of good/evil, redemption/guilt, authority/obedience, reward/punishment, power/powerless, haves/have-nots, master/slave. The first in each opposite was assigned to the patriarchal father, or the patriarch's Father God, frequently indistinguishable from one to another, the second to women as "the other" and in time to all "others" who could be exploited. The father did the naming, the owning, the controlling, the ordering, the forgiving, the giving, considering himself capable of making the best decisions for all. 5

This hierarchical model of dominance and subordination has had serious implications for humanity and the Earth throughout the centuries. Dualistic thought

has posited an infinite gap between the sacred (divine perfection) and the profane (human imperfection). This has forced us to reach outside ourselves for the source of meaning in our lives, whether by turning to sacred texts or to religious leaders (prophets, holy men, gurus), or by adhering to religious laws and doctrines. (Of course, in our own secularized age, scientific authority has largely superseded the role of religion in earlier years.) In accordance with the dualistic separation of heaven and earth, spirit has been valued over matter, reason over passion, intellect over emotion, mind over body, culture over Nature, and individual over communal life.

And, as many feminist thinkers have demonstrated, the first term of each of these binary oppositions consistently has been posited as male, and the second "inferior" term, as female. As the French scholar, Helene Cixous, poetically formulates it:

> WHERE IS SHE?
>
> Activity / passivity, Sun / Moon, Culture / Nature, Day / Night, Father / Mother, Head / heart, Intelligible / sensitive, Logos / Pathos. Man — - Woman
>
> Always the same metaphor: we follow it, it transports us, in all of its forms, wherever a discourse is organized 6

Dualism has defined consciousness as predicated on the separation of subject and object, inside and outside. If I experience myself as a discrete unit of being, related to an "external" environment by chance alone, I will feel free to appropriate the "external" for my own egoistic ends; that is, to see the outside (the other) primarily in terms of how it may serve the inside (my ego). This other may be another human being, another species of life, or the environment in general.

This dynamic has been clearly manifested in the scientific enterprise, as Susan Bordo points out, tracing the "masculinization of thought" which occurred via the Cartesian concept of science. Bordo notes:

> A new theory of knowledge... is born, one which regards all sense experience as illusory and insists that the object can only be known by the perceiver who is willing to purge the mind of all obscurity, all irrelevancy, all free imaginative associations, and all passionate attachments.... 'She' becomes 'it' - and 'it' can be understood. Not through sympathy, of course, but by virtue of the very 'object'-ivity of the 'it'. 7

The "she" that has been made into an object here is both Nature and woman. Let us consider the implications of such an attitude for scientific enquiry, taking as one example, the practice of medicine.

This brings us to Christa Wolf, who, at a recent conference on psychosomatic medicine, reflects on the consequences for the practice of gynecology, of a medical ideology which "regards its object, the patient, primarily as a biological machine." 8 She describes the current state of "masculine" medicine as "untroubled by the nuisance of emotions; basing itself on experiments and 'evidence' in the form of statistics and formulas; preferably free of the impurities of actually occurring and confusingly multifaceted processes; striving to rid itself of contradictions, and absolving itself of the values which operate elsewhere in the 'unscientific' human world." 9 In other words, this paradigm of medical practice regards the practitioner as outside of and above his object of investigation, which is merely a means to an end; the raw material for his experiments. 10

Both feminism and ecology challenge this dualistic model of existence, throwing into question the assumed separation of self (inside) from other (outside). Christa Wolf has interpreted the hierarchical oppositions mentioned above as manifestations of the "one-trackminded route followed by Western thought: the route of segregation, of the renunciation of the manifoldness of phenomena, in favor of dualism and monism, in favor of closed systems and pictures of the world; of the renunciation of subjectivity in favor of a sealed 'objectivity'." 11

Since dualism causes us to remain within a rigid framework, we can see only two diametrically opposed choices. 12 This process by definition cannot contain paradox or ambiguity, and in its need to suppress these, the complex texture, the richness and diversity of experience are flattened out. It is precisely this rich and multifaceted ambiguity that Wolf refers to when she describes a poem of the Austrian writer, Ingeborg Bachmann, as "an example of the most precise indefiniteness, the clearest ambiguity.... Things are this way and no other way... and at the same time (this cannot be thought of logically) things are that way, a different way. You are I, I am he, it cannot be explained. The grammar of manifold simultaneous relations." 13 Here the reconciliation of opposites dynamically transforms the range of possibility, giving rise to new alternatives not previously perceived. Wolf has referred to this process of going beyond "either/or" as "the third alternative,... the smiling vital force that is able to generate itself from itself over and over: the undivided, spirit in life, life in spirit." 14

In what is perhaps its most pernicious form, dualistic thought enables the "projection of the shadow." This engenders the mentality prerequisite for war, where the "enemy" is regarded as inhuman, evil, and completely other from oneself and one's own nation. Historically, this has taken every conceivable form, from the religious wars of the Middle Ages to the "witch- burnings" of the Reformation and the antisemitism of nineteenth and twentieth century Europe which culminated in the Holocaust. In patriarchal culture, the "shadow" has been

especially embodied in woman. Throughout history, patriarchy has projected onto woman the unacknowledged fears, needs, and desires of both sexes, and then defined woman as weak and irrational (i.e., emotional); sinful and self-indulgent (sensual); dependent (relationship-oriented); possessive (nurturing); and illogical (intuitive).

Christa Wolf has portrayed the process of projecting the shadow in Cassandra: A Novel and Four Essays (1983), which portrays the fall of Troy to the Greeks. Unlike the Greek epic with its heroic male point of view, Cassandra portrays the fall of Troy through the eyes of the prophetess who foretold it, but was not believed by her own people. Wolf's intent in the novel, as she explains in the essays, was to recreate this event from a new perspective; that of a woman on the "losing side." Cassandra describes how the Trojans' and Greeks' mutual esteem eroded into objectification and hatred of the other, as each nation blinded itself to its own darkness. She notes: "There was a great deal of hate and stifled knowledge in Troy before the enemy, the Greeks, drew all our ill will upon themselves and made us close ranks against them, to begin with." 15 As this process intensified, the Trojan court made into enemies all those within its own walls who dared to question its actions, subordinating all human emotion and affiliation to its strategic goal of winning the war.

The novel is set at an historical turning point between the earlier matriarchal cultures and the beginning of patriarchy, which Wolf portrays as a movement from a living-in- community to an increasingly separated and estranged human society. For Cassandra, the Greeks represent the introduction of dualism ("the iron concepts of good and evil"), with its "clear-cut distinctions" and its insistence that "what cannot be seen, smelled, heard, touched, does not exist." 16 With great amazement, then, she discovers, contrary to her own projections and those of the Trojan propaganda machine, that "they are like us!" 17 Cassandra's developmental journey leads her to a recognition that the real threat to Troy lies in itself, not in the Greeks. And ultimately, it is herself that Cassandra manages to "see" more clearly, in her vocation as "seer." But it is a difficult process. Observing her own reluctance to face herself authentically, she notes, "What a hard time sentences have till the end when it is me that they tackle. How much faster and more easily they get through when they are aimed at others." 18 Above all, Wolf stresses the urgent need for self-insight. The obvious parallels with then-current Soviet-American relations are anything but coincidental, as the novel is clearly a parable about East-West tensions. Do perestroika and glasnost and the concomitant softening of East-West enmities and boundaries reflect a deepening of self-insight; the possibility of "rehumanizing" the enemy?

The need to face one's own darkness, rather than project it onto an externalized other, is stressed again in Wolf's recent work, Accident (1987), which follows the autobiographical narrator's train of thought on the day after the Chernobyl nuclear accident, April 23, 1986. Reflecting on the possible factors leading up to this event, the narrator rhetorically wonders whether a faulty "short- circuit"

in our brain has led us to associate pleasure with our own destruction, that is, to devote all our energies to creating the means of our own annihilation. The critical self-insight needed here, she concludes, is the recognition that humanity's saving grace would consist of our willingness, individually and collectively, to face the truth about ourselves without fear; "which would mean - not to attribute the danger to an external enemy, but rather to leave it where it belongs, in our very own selves." 19 If we do not do this, the narrator implies, we are doomed to ask with Kassandra, "Will the same thing always come again? Self-estrangement, idols, hatred?" 20

Estrangement: Our Condition

The defining characteristic of our lives as we experience dualism is that of estrangement. We are estranged from Nature and from each other. Most deeply perhaps, we are estranged from ourselves.

"Was it necessary that the man should come to stand 'alone' before Nature — opposite Nature, not in it?" asks Christa Wolf, in Cassandra . 21 Our relationship with Nature has undergone a series of transmutations. Feminist scholars and writers have intimated that in pre-patriarchal times, Nature was experienced as an all-ecompassing, vital presence: alive, breathing, dynamically pulsating. Nature was felt from inside herself, her heart beating strongly in the heart(s) of all. According to Owen Barfield, in early times:

> [T]he world was more like a garment [wo]men wore about them than a stage on which they moved ... Compared with us, they felt themselves and the objects around them and the words that expressed those objects, immersed together in something like a clear lake of — what shall we say? — of 'meaning'. 22

Then there came differentiation from Nature which, in its turn, was carried into detachment and distancing. The "garment of nature" was taken off, held out at arm's length, made into an object by subjects who, coming into their own, were bent on asserting their autonomy. Today, it seems we are seeing and participating in the culmination of this process: the deadening of Nature, accompanied by the loss of all her rhythms and mysteries.

Nature had been round, and in the curves and folds and recesses of her roundness, she had concealed as well as revealed. There had been night as well as day. Now — twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week — the unblinking fluorescence of the supermarket and shopping mall blandly prevails. (And this comforts us!) There had been winter as well as summer, cold as well as hot. Now environments are sealed off hermetically, thermostatically managed to avoid the slightest feeling of discomfort. (We must not feel.) Once there was bitterness

and sweetness; now, only the taste of saccharine. Once there was pain and pleasure, now only drug-induced oblivion.

Yes, Nature had been alive. She had awakened in the morning and gone to bed at night, known the extremes, the crossings and transitions, the textures and shades, the shadows and fluid variations, all of a piece. Most essential to her life was her substance, her thickness, the dimension of depth that enclosed her inner world, distinguishing it from what lay outside. As long as she could keep her insideness, life could go on.

But alas, she has become anorexic. The whole inner dimension of Nature is wasting away. Her inside is turning out. Almost all of her lies outside her today, where it shows itself as image. She is the flattened picture on the television screen, relentlessly flickering, droning away, boring us to the point of depression. Why are we sickened by the sitcom, the made-for-TV movie and the evening news? Because, for all the restless fluctuation on the surface of the screen, for all this "eventfulness," there is nothing beneath the surface. It is a cartoon without animation. Uniformity disguising itself as variety, emptiness pretending to be fullness, death masquerading as life — this is what Marlene and I see on the television screen, and when the effects of anesthesia wear off, it makes us sick. (Then again, maybe we should ask ourselves whether our disgust with "them" is actually part of the underlying problem, not just an innocent reaction to it. As Christa Wolf's Cassandra remarks: "It is so much easier to say 'Achilles the brute' than to say this 'we'.") 23

Nature is dying, starving to death. She is losing an entire dimension. What remains is the mockery of life's thickness, life's meaning, life's ground and her roots. We see the way it's going in the streamlined, modernist look of the Bauhaus; how every surface is stripped clean, leveled to featureless smoothness, cleared of all "frills," rent of all flesh. Guts, viscera, the "messiness" of life? Inefficient. An unnecessary embarrassment. Expendable.

We see life being mocked especially in the image of woman, stretched out and flattened, ironed into straightness, tailored and trimmed to fit an idealized norm. Rosalind Coward has observed that in television, film and photography, it is woman's body that is "most carefully scripted with the prevailing ideas." "Entertainment as we know it," says Coward, "is crucially predicated on a masculine investigation of women, and a circulation of women's images for men." 24

It is woman who has been deprived of her insideness. She, especially, must turn her insides out, lay herself bare, submit herself to the cold scrutiny of the subject's objective eye, a gynecological probing in which nothing is left to be. The paintings of Picasso, the centerfolds of Playboy, the Story of O, all bear witness. Woman laid open, her harboring roundness unfolded, her nourishing fullness leveled and planed to an emaciated, barely recognizable caricature of itself. Woman geometrized, elongated in the style of Modigliani, boxed in the

mode of Mondrian, recast in the fashion of Twiggy or Cosmopolitan . Today woman must shape up, trim the fat, diet unto fleshlessness, if she is to conform to the spareness and sleekness of death.

Carolyn Merchant has analyzed in depth the process through which the original experience of Gaia, the Earth-Mother, was reduced to the concept of Nature as a female to be dominated and how, in the Renaissance, "The new image of nature as a female to be controlled and dissected through experiment legitimized the exploitation of natural resources [...] The constraints against penetration associated with the earth-mother image were transformed into sanctions for denudation." 25 Indeed, the two quotations set as epigraphs to this article beautifully demonstrate these two very different modes of perceiving and interacting with the Earth.

The first passage, Francis Bacon's letter to James I, manifests the belief that Nature, like woman, is man's to control, dominate, possess, plunder, and rape. The verbs "hound", "drive", "enter and penetrate" convey the aggression involved. It is surely no accident that Bacon speaks of man laying aside his scruples "when the inquisition of truth is his whole object," at precisely the time when thousands of women were burned at the stake as witches. What was the underlying motive for this murderous purge? We suggest it was to help impose "order" in the process of promoting the ascendence of male rationality and control. Carolyn Merchant expresses the connection as follows: "The interrogation of witches as a symbol for the interrogation of nature, the courtroom as model for its inquisition, and torture through mechanical devices as a tool for the subjugation of disorder were fundamental to the scientific method as power." 26

The second quote could hardly be more different. Here, Bettine von Arnim, a gifted writer of the German Romantic period, describes her experience of communion with Nature, her sense that Nature is suffering and her overwhelming emotional reaction at once of tenderness and love, and of awe and reverence, of feeling herself to belong to something far greater than herself. The verbs "beseeching," "murmuring," "sobbing" convey the pain of the raped Earth Mother, who, at the same time, is a wounded child. Bettine's empathic identification with the suffering Earth engages her heart, soul, and body; she apprehends Nature holistically, intuits Her from "the inside."

The belief that Nature is nothing but dead matter, there at man's disposal, held in reserve for his indiscriminate use, the conviction that Nature's processes can be manipulated by man and his technologies, controlled for his own ends — such a view of Nature is largely responsible for the all-too-well-known state of affairs prevailing today: noxious wastes of every kind seeping into the earth, polluting the oceans and atmosphere, endangering countless animal species; natural resources becoming exhausted, with impending shortages of food and energy; ecological balances being disrupted; the syndrome of drought/famine/disease steadily worsening. An especially disturbing symptom of our times is the trans-

formed usage of phrases such as "greenhouse effect" and "ozone layer depletion" into everyday household words. But the act of aggression that may be most disturbing, the callous penetration of Nature that arouses archetypal forboding, is the penetration of the atom.

In Accident (1987), a highly personal, deeply reflective meditation on the unleashing of nuclear energy, Christa Wolf considers the implications of the Chernobyl accident that occurred in the Spring of 1986. For her, they range from the radioactive poisoning of her garden's contents to the possible death of poetry, because centuries of poetic images and metaphors of Nature have been rendered obsolete. "'How splendid nature appears before me,'" says Wolf, echoing Goethe with grim irony. "Perhaps the most urgent question [at a time like this] is not what we will do with the libraries full of nature poetry. But a valid question, it is." 27 Yet the narrator can also find a ray of hope in a seemingly small event: the survival of her zucchini plants, "beautifully formed, dark green and shining." "Yes," Christa Wolf proclaims, "there will be another summer." 28

As she wonders about the conditions that have permitted us to create the means of our own annihilation, Wolf muses on the likely lifestyle of the nuclear scientists most directly responsible for the accident: young men, isolated from all human contact in their high-security research stations; sustained by a diet of denatured food soaked with preservatives; "half children with their highly trained brains; with their relentless day-and- night feverish left-brain activity, what they know is just their machine. Their dearly beloved computer." 29 Here Wolf implies that inseparability of (life)style and content: an inhuman existence yields inhuman results.

Intimately related to our estrangement from Nature is our estrangement from one another. With the widespread disintegration of closely knit communities and their absorption into mass society, with the decline of all traditional institutions such as the Church and family, we are no longer sure of where we fit in the social fabric. Social roles once meaningfully grounded in authentic communal experience now involve little more than play- acting on the part of individuals whose ties to the communal body have been all but competely severed. It is the age of the individual, and the "garment of reality" indeed has been taken off. No longer do we participate concretely in social reality, in the reality of each other; no longer are we organically immersed in it. We project it now from egos that are detached. Today, I construct you. Today society is the abstract construct of uprooted, free-floating, insular selves. Philosopher Martin Heidegger observed that we are living in the "age of the world picture." This means that reality has become mere image. In the absence of your concrete, immediate presence for me, of your vital presence within me, I re-present you to myself. 30 In this way, I bypass your insideness, flatten you out, turn you into a picture. Here we see again the ascendence of image over essence.

For her part, Christa Wolf asks, "When [did] this dreadful split between indi-

viduals and society really begin?" 31 The question is explored in her novel, No Place on Earth (1979). Here she describes the sense of estrangement experienced by two young writers of the German Romantic movement at the dawn of the industrial revolution (ca. 1800). This was the time when the machines were oiled and swinging into full gear, when the assembly lines were being readied to turn out their finished products; to be neatly trimmed, packaged and delivered; to arrive with a whole dimension missing, flat to the inwardness of life, image without essence. Human beings were being made into such "products," and Wolf's young writers (Karoline von Gunderrode and Heinrich von Kleist), who sought wholeness and authenticity, knew that for them, there was "no place on earth." 32

In her later work, Cassandra , Wolf traces our estrangement from each other much further back, to the days of the Trojan War (ca. 1200 B.C.). According to Wolf, it was at this time that the voice of woman, as personified by the seer Cassandra, was being silenced; in the process, community as concretely, authentically lived was giving way to community at odds with itself. The internal divisions of emerging patriarchy are mirrored in the divided household of King Priam. Here, as war with Greece approached, it was more and more the case that the truth went unspoken and what was spoken was untrue. The intrigues and deceptions of the Court, the two-facedness and hostile double- dealings, the increasing distortions of language in the interest of propaganda, the profusion of false images (such as that of the beautiful Helen, said to have been abducted by the Trojans when, in fact, she had never even been in Troy!) — all this reflected the opening of a great hiatus between language and experience, image and reality, between one human being and another. 33 Wolf's portrayal of estrangement in ancient Troy is clearly also a comment on today's state of affairs, where alienated relations pervade every sphere of human experience including the most intimate. And as Wolf implies in a number of her works, our estrangement from each other reflects a fundamental estrangement from our selves.

The problem of self-estrangement is addressed most explicitly in Patterns of Childhood (1977), Wolf's most intense and relentless self-exploration. The problem is with memory and its loss, with repression of the child's way of knowing and being, and the inadequacy of adult language and thinking to recapture it. Was the child once undivided? Did she once feel the intimate ties of belonging? Was she once held in harboring arms, enfolded in maternal embrace? If such a child existed, she no longer can be reached. The way is blocked by the abstractions of adulthood, detachment born of the need to seal off pain. So Christa addresses herself as "you" and "she," but cannot say "I."

Can any of us say "I"? If, in the shadow-world of infancy, consciousness once was ungraded, all of a piece, now it is layered, highly stratified. Often the image of the iceberg has been invoked: one tenth lying above the threshold of awareness, nine tenths lying below, submerged in the unconscious. Particularly

in Cassandra , Wolf implies that the stratification of consciousness may increase not only for the individual, but collectively, for a culture as a whole. Perhaps the pathology rampant on our planet today is telling us that the gradient of human awareness has become far too steep; the division between the shallow and the deep, the surface and the submerged, too sharply drawn. It is this loss of contact with ourselves, this great inner rift, that is expressing itself in the many and varied dualisms of our time. And this split within the psyche is the essence of our self-estrangement.

Less and less are we able to say "I," because the "I" we are aware of seems less and less substantial, less and less convincing as the authentic center of our identity, the source of our being. The narrowly self-defining, boundary-conscious ego has thrust itself to the fore, oedipally proclaiming its autonomy. In this act of "original repression," as philosopher Michael Washburn calls it, 34 the Great Mother is banished; we cut ourselves off from the vital presence that had enfolded us, concretely grounded us, held us thick in the midst of the real, infused us with life. Washburn asserts that although the Great Mother or Dynamic Ground has been repressed by the ego, by no means has the ego become truly independent; in actuality, the Ground remains its underlying source of sustenance. For quite a time, the ego may play the game of pretending to be its own ground. Then, with the further stratifying of consciousness, the stronger repression of the Ground, the point is reached where the ego begins to sense the precariousness of its stance; uprooted more completely from its life- giving source, its image begins to wear thin.

We suggest that the artifical and impoverished images of Nature, society and woman described earlier stem essentially from the thinning out, the impoverishment of our sense of self . The contemporary ego truly is wasting away. Cut off from our roots by personal and collective acts of repression, pulled from the concrete ground that once nourished us, from the arms of Great Mother, we cling to these emaciated, paper-thin, ghost-image- selves of ours in spite of — no, because of — the doubts we harbor. No number of Big Macs, coke snorts or "quick lays," no narcotic whatsoever, can meaningfully substitute for what we lack. None can bridge the vast gap between our withering egos and their lifesource, the Ground. But we keep on imbibing, doing it more and enjoying it less, futilely attempting to fill the emptiness, to find meaning in our hollowness. What else can we do?

But doing is the problem. Having lost touch with the Ground, with our Being, we feel we must always be doing something, that the moment we stop acting, we will cease to exist. Yes, many of us sense that something is radically amiss in today's world. Yet the fundamental problem lies in the very way we have come to seek solutions. Obsessed with doing, it seems we have been chasing our tails, an activity that will take on a frenzied quality after a time. So we are caught in a vicious cycle of addictive dependencies: alcohol, drugs, tobacco, food, television, gambling, pornography, hard rock, excessive work, exaggerated

"patriotism," fundamentalist allegiance, desperate co-dependence on each other ... the ways we grasp for meaning are endless. Semi-consciously in panic over the prospect of losing our selves, we adamantly deny the only measure that could break the cycle, restore the substance and body of self: the infinitely simple (and infinitely difficult!) act of being — the meditative act by which we open our eyes to the Great Mother, lift the repression on Her so as to consciously re-weave ourselves into the web of life.

Interconnectedness: The Web of Life

In a speech delivered to the U.S government in 1854, Chief Seattle said, "Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself." 35 When Steve and I chose the title, "Spinning the Web of Life" for this paper, we were combining Christa Wolf's metaphor of a "narrative web" (implying multiple connections rather than linear progression) with our intuition of feminism's and ecology's deep common concern with healing our planet. Since then, it seems, we have seen references to the web of life wherever we have turned. 36

Not that the phrase is merely metaphorical. Underlying the condition of estrangement that we all experience, are remnants of an intuition of the essential interconnection of all life within the universe. This intuition, long submerged in nether regions of the psyche, has been resurfacing in fields as varied as the arts and sciences, politics and spirituality, quantum physics and parapsychology. One of its most concrete contemporary manifestations is the resurgence of interest in Gaia, Mother Earth, as living presence. If patriarchal thought regards reality in terms of oppositions, fragmentation, discrete bodies and units, the "Gaia hypothesis" views the universe as an organic whole, and life as an all-encompassing web of interconnectedness. Carolyn Merchant has described this perception of wholeness in The Death of Nature:

> Holistic presuppositions about nature are being revived in ecology's premise that everything is connected to everything else and in its emphasis on the primacy of interactive processes in nature. All parts are dependent on one another and mutually affect each other and the whole. Each portion of an ecological community, each niche, exists in a dynamic relationship with the surrounding ecosystem. 37

Many have seen the re-emergence of Gaia, the ancient Goddess of the Earth, as symbolizing a rebirth of the long-repressed feminine element in life. In contrast to "masculine" elements such as hardness, abstraction, and assertiveness, all of which entail separation, disconnection and dualism, the "feminine principle"

is characterized by empathy, nurturance and concrete presence, traits implying interconnectedness. 38 Beyond lifting the repression on the feminine, an integration of the masculine and the feminine would offer the possibility of a transformed psychic wholeness within the individual as well as within the global communal body.

Intimations of a personal and transpersonal psychic wholeness are often experienced as mystical moments of unity with all the Earth, and of belonging to the oceanic flow of life itself. These moments may include the loosening of ego boundaries and a flowing of oneself into the surrounding environment, and are frequently described as containing all opposites and contradictions within a larger whole. Often, they consist of an intense identification with Nature. Kim Chernin has described how one such experience in the Irish countryside forever altered her relationship with the universe:

> All around me the colors were growing deeper and richer, the air was saturated with light. The flock of black sheep seemed to be grazing joyfully upon a grass so vibrant I could scarcely believe it was a material substance.... And now the whole valley became one great wave of light, rising and falling, shaping and dissolving. My idea that the sky was a sky and the tree a tree, separate and distinguishable from one another, had to be questioned. Here they were dissolving into one another. Was it possible everything I had been told about the universe was simply an assumption, a style of perception, rather than truth? 39

The interplay and reconciliation of opposites as well as the fluid identity described by Chernin are expressed in Eastern thought, particularly in the writings of Taoism and Zen. This also emerges in the voice of Wisdom, the feminine divine power who speaks in the Gnostic Gospel of Thomas:

> For I am the first and the last. I am the honored one and the scorned one. I am the whore and the holy one. I am the wife and the virgin.... I am the barren one, and many are her sons....I am the silence that is imcomprehensible...I am the utterance of my name. 40

Similarly, Karoline von Gunderrode, during the German Romantic period, expresses her vision of universal unity as follows: "It is not two, not three, not thousands, it is one and everything; it is not body and spirit, separate, one belonging to time, the other to eternity; it is ONE, belonging to itself, and is both time and eternity at once, visible and invisible, constant in change, a never-ending living."

While deep ecology has regarded Gaia as a concrete image of the living planet, feminist thought has emphasized the implications of feminine divinity for a new,

post- patriarchal spiritual experience. Nelle Morton, for example, states that the emergence of "the goddess as metaphoric image" at this time in history is crucial for "the whole of creation in both a spiritual and physical sense." Morton experiences this image as embodying empathy, inclusiveness, and concrete presence, in contrast to the hierarchical, abstract, and disembodied spirituality suggested by the image of the patriarchal "God the Father".

The experience of interconnection and unity described by Chernin and Morton also takes the form of an empathic identification among human beings that overcomes the notion of separate bodies. Again, we illustrate this with a passage from Wolf's Cassandra . Here, Cassandra describes her experience of inter-identity with her brother, Hector, at the time of his death:

> In the deepest depths, in the innermost core of me, where body and soul are not yet divided and where not a single word or thought can penetrate, I experienced the whole of Hector's fight, his wounding, his tenacious resistance, and his death. It is not too much to say that I was Hector: because it would not be nearly enough to say I was joined with him. 43

This degree of interpenetration transcends the usual boundaries of individual ego, which keep us forever limited to our own perspectives. It also implies that the starvation of millions of human beings annually has everything to do with each one of us; that in addition to being our individual selves, we are all each other. Thus, we cannot continue to engage in warfare against each other, to oppress each other, to devastate the environment by dumping nuclear wastes, or destroying the remaining forests, without ensuring our own destruction. As Susan Griffin poetically expresses it:

> What he has sent into the rivers comes back, blackens the shore, enters the land, feeds his crops, enters his mouth, festers in him. What he has burned gathers in the air, hangs in space, yellows his vision, stings his eyes; he breathes it... Barely seen, soundlessly surrounding him, with hardly a breath of evidence, all he has burned, all he has mined from the ground, all he cast into the waters, all he has torn apart, comes back to him. He is haunted. Carbon monoxide, Dioxin, DDT, will not let him forget. Lead, mercury, live in his dreams. 44

The damage we inflict upon the other is inflicted upon ourselves; it comes back to haunt us. This is more true now than ever before in human history, as if by confronting us with the equation, murder = suicide, Nature were saying to us, "the time has arrived for you to come home to each other, come home to yourselves, come home to me."

This essential interconnectedness is not only of thematic importance in the literature of feminism and ecology, however. Often, the language and literary forms themselves are innovative in the attempt to enact the interconnection of writer and reader. Christa Wolf, Nelle Morton, and Helene Cixous are just three examples of writers who attempt to make contact with the whole vital human being rather than with a disembodied intellect; to engage in a mutual co-creative enterprise; to open themselves and to share their visions with readers who will collaborate and think/feel them further, with the understanding that the vision is communal. The goal here is not to send a "finished product" out into the world but to bring into play both the author's and the reader's subjectivities, and to reflect and cast light on the very process of writing.

The notion of process is crucial here. The very title of Nelle Morton's collection of essays and reflections, The Journey is Home , speaks to the celebration of process, while the last two chapters, entitled "Unfinished Business" and "Journal Jottings," attest to the journey's continuation. The chapters of the volume, written across a timespan of more than a decade, also embody the notion of process in their format. The author notes "a cyclical way of thinking, movement, and writing" and observes, "when I follow that cycle year after year for the ten years this book covers, I see now the shape of my own enlarging consciousness." 45

Christa Wolf in turn begins her poetics lectures by inviting the audience/reader to accompany her on a journey which is simultaneously a process, "in a literal as well as a metaphorical sense." Describing her writing as an unfinished web, she adds:

> Many of its motifs are not followed up, many of its threads are tangled. There are wefts which stand out like foreign bodies, repetitions, material that has not been worked out to its conclusion.... I make you witness of this work process. I also make you witness to a process which has changed my lens on the world. But this process of change has only just begun, and I feel keenly the tension between the artistic forms within which we have agreed to abide and the living material, borne to me by my senses, my psychic apparatus, and my thought, which has resisted these forms. 46

In thus calling attention to the open and unfinished nature of the work, Wolf overcomes the traditional barriers between author and reader, between process and product; positing instead, a web of multiple correspondences and interconnections which include, on her part, an holistic response encompassing intuition as well as sensory perception; feeling as well as thought.

Holism: Other Modes of Perception

Wolf's integration of sensing, feeling, and thinking leads us into our final area of discussion. Having looked at some of the personal, social, and global implications of dualistic thought and at our underlying intuition of the unity of all life, we will consider several modes of perception largely overlooked by modern Western rationalism, whose acknowledgement could contribute to a healing reintegration of heart and mind, body and soul. These may include such states of awareness as "wide focus" perception, paranormal experience, dream-states and hypnagogia, and tacit body knowledge.

The theologian Nelle Morton has offered a vision of holistic consciousness that provides an evocative starting point here:

> Holism gathers up the totality of living experiences - eating, talking, dancing, waking, discovering, discussing, studying, worshipping into a new environmental space and a new kind of time. It may be seen as a unified focus of all the faculties of one's being, each feeding on the others and many of them surfacing simultaneously. Holistic recovers gesture and movement as essential to theologizing. Learning to listen with one's whole body. Learning to hear with the eye and see with the ear and speak with the hearing. Knowing the Spirit in movement and not in stasis. 47

We are accustomed to speaking about perception in terms of the separate senses. Seldom do we experience them as interwoven (synesthesia), much less their integration with other aspects of the psyche such as thinking and feeling. Nevertheless, various writers have attempted to describe their understanding and experience of a broader and more encompassing mode of awareness. Christa Wolf has spoken of the need to "think feelingly and feel thinkingly." Martin Heidegger has used the term Gedanc to adumbrate a meditative "listening reverence," a thinking that would involve "the whole human thinker, [...] his heart as well as his intellect." 48

In her seven year quest to name the conditions of her experience of happiness, Marion Milner discovered two utterly different modes of attention which led, accordingly, to very different experiences. She describes this process in her Preface:

> I tried to learn, not from reason but from my senses. But as soon as I began to study my perception, to look at my own experience, I found that there were different ways of perceiving and that the different ways provided me with different facts. There was a narrow focus which meant seeing life as if from blinkers and with the center of awareness in my head; and there was a wide focus which meant

> knowing with the whole of my body, a way of looking which quite altered my perception of whatever I saw. And I found that the narrow focus way was the way of reason... but it was the wide focus that made me happy. 49

Throughout her account, Milner provides many examples of the "wide focus," which she comes to understand as "experiencing the present with the whole of my body instead of with the pinpoint of my intellect". 50 She describes an "internal gesture" which allows her to "spread herself out" into the environment, (e.g. into a flower, a work of art, a musical composition, and even into another human being). However, the widened focus also expands inward to the dark recesses of her subconscious, turning her menacing childhood "dragons" into experiences of delight. Whereas she had formerly regarded her perceptions as desperate means to some elusive end, she comes to discover a great contentment in experiencing the flood of sensations and impressions for their own sake alone. 51

Marion Milner's description of narrowly and widely focussed awareness is closely analogous to David Lavery's respective distinction between the "focal" and "peripheral eyes." 52 Lavery suggests that the former is characteristic of the way of knowing that has risen to dominance in the Western world, the way of rational thought, science and technology — all based on an experience of reality from the single perspective point of the detached ego. Indeed, in citing Owen Barfield's metaphor of "taking off the garment of reality," Lavery includes Barfield's emphasis on the consequences of the emergence of perspective in Western art, occurring around the time of the Renaissance. In differentiating themselves from the environment that had formerly enveloped them, in distancing themselves from it, the men of the Renaissance placed it in perspective. It was this that enabled them to sharpen their focus on reality, devise better maps for their exploration and subsequent exploitation of the New World, dramatically improve their methods of mathematical analysis (Descartes' new system of coordinates, the development of analytical geometry and the calculus, the beginnings of projective geometry, etc.), introduce modern experimental science a la Francis Bacon. Note that the same passage from Barfield on the "garment of reality" is quoted by Susan Bordo, who brings out the gender implications of the rise of perspective, speaking of the "Cartesian masculinization of thought" that followed the pre- perspectival state of immersion in Nature.

Significantly, while Lavery acknowledges that the continuation of focalized experience is currently wreaking havoc on our planet, he does not counsel a simple return to the peripheral. Instead he speaks to the need for an "integrated eye," citing Robert Pirsig's enigmatic Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance as hinting at what that might entail: "the objects in the corner of the eye and the objects in the center of vision are all of equal intensity now, all together in one." 53 When all three alternatives become visible — peripheral, focal and integrated; pre-perspectival, perspectival and trans- perspectival 54 — it is clear that

Marion Milner's recommendation of the "wide focus" is not a proposal that we circle back to the first condition, but that we spiral back in a way that brings us forward to the third. In adopting the "wide focus," rather than merely losing our sense of distinct selfhood, we would gain a sense of inter-penetrative communality.

Christa Wolf, for her part, in attempting to envision the new mode of perception, which would take us beyond the dualisms of patriarchy, first asks:

> [...] ought we to go 'back to nature,' or - what many people take to be the same thing - back to early stages in human history? [...] we cannot want that. 'Know thyself,' the maxim of the Delphic oracle, with which we identify, is one of Apollo's slogans; it could not have occurred to any goddess in the undifferentiated age. 55

What would going forward entail? Intimations appear throughout Wolf's work. She has repeatedly explored the nature of unaccountable knowledge, intuition, and new modes of perception in her writing. In The Quest for Christa T. (1968), for example, she describes the protagonist's attempt to overcome the schism between reason and passionate sensing in her own life: "Why can't the powers of reason see, hear, smell, taste, touch? Why this falling apart in two halves?... My thinking is more darkly mixed with sensations, curious. Does that mean it's wrong?" 56 For Wolf it is clearly right, but out of step with the times, and Christa T. dies a lingering death of leukemia, symbolizing her inability to survive psychically or spiritually in her fragmented environment.

In both Wolf's and Milner's work, there are hints of paranormal linkages with the outside world. Cassandra describes one such experience as follows: "I had the feeling that I was screening with my body the place through which, unbeknown to everyone but me, other realities were seeping into our solid- bodied world, realities which our five agreed-upon senses do not grasp: for which reason we must deny them." 57 Recall also, in the passage cited in the previous section, Cassandra's experience of her brother: "It is not too much to say that I was Hector: because it would not be nearly enough to say that I was joined with him." This sense of immediately shared identity with the other also comes into play for Marion Milner, in relating intimately to her own child:

> When trying to persuade my baby to go to sleep I would often wait beside him, absolutely motionless, but my own heart filled with peace. Once I let impatience and annoyance dominate my mind he would become restless again. This may have been sheer accident, of course, but it happened so many times that in the end I found it very difficult to escape from the belief that my own state of mind did have some direct effect upon him. 58

Milner searches for words to articulate the "new world of direct communication" (p. 193) she has discovered:

> It was not only that my own perceptions were heightened, not only that by spreading myself out towards a person I could "feel the necessities of their being," it was that they also seemed to receive something, for in no other way could I explain the changes in their behavior. 59

Dream states may also give symbolic expression to holistic perception. Cassandra's spiritual rebirth, for example, is marked by the return of her dreams which reveal a new awareness of possibilities of existence: "I saw colors, red and black, life and death. They interpenetrated, they did not fight each other as I would have expected even in a dream. They changed form continually, they continually produced new patterns, which could be unbelievably beautiful. They were like waters, like a sea." 60 The dream imagery here evokes the reconciliation of opposites and a process of ongoing transformation in a vision of unity that goes beyond the pattern of war and aggression surrounding Cassandra. The dream also heralds her intuition that hostility and war among human beings are not inevitable.

Recently, a great deal of research has been conducted into hypnagogia, the half-waking state wherein "the absence of directed, analytical (cortical) thinking" leads to a loosening of ego boundaries, wherein boundaries dissolve and the subject experiences a more diffuse, interwoven perception, because an "undercurrent of unconscious - nonrational mental activity" is able to surface. 61 Andreas Mavromatis states that hypnagogia "promotes exactly those attributes which are generally taken to be characteristic of the creative personality, namely spontaneity, effortlessness, expressiveness, innocence, a lack of fear of the uncertain, ambiguous or unknown, and an ability to tolerate bipolarity and to integrate opposites." 62

The last paragraph of Wolf's longest and most autobiographical work, Patterns of Childhood , provides a beautiful example of conscious dreaming:

> At night I shall see - whether waking, whether dreaming - the outline of a human being who will change, through whom other persons, adults, children, will pass without hindrance. I will hardly be surprised if this outline may also be that of an animal, a tree, even a house, in which anyone who wishes may go in and out at will. Half-conscious, I shall experience the beautiful waking image drifting ever deeper into the dream, into ever new shapes no longer accessible to words, shapes which I believe I recognize. Sure of finding myself once again in the world of solid bodies upon awakening, I shall abandon myself to the experience of dreaming. I shall not revolt against the limits of the expressible. 63

The flowing images of this passage portray an experience of fluidity, empathy, inter- identification, and ongoing transformation not accessible to the waking mind. From its usual narrow individual boundaries, existence has been liberated to intermingle, interweave, inter-permeate. The experience of this fluid identity, however, while partially a remembered one — we recognize it — is unspeakable in our present vocabulary. It is only in her waking dreams that the narrator can fully enter into it.

Finally, there is a form of tacit body knowledge which exists quite apart from our mental constructions. The psychologist Eugene T. Gendlin has described the "felt sense" of a situation as "bodily awareness... an internal aura that encompasses everything you feel and know about the given subject at a given time - encompasses it and communicates it to you all at once rather than detail by detail." 64 According to Gendlin, this felt sense, which we all experience without even being aware of it, reveals an holistic truth of a situation, or an experience much more authentically than our conscious beliefs and opinions do. Thus it offers richer insight into self.

And if our bodies have wisdom which our minds lack concerning our holistic well- being, it follows that ignoring this wisdom will eventually lead to physical manifestations of dis-ease. Some professionals have gone so far as to relate specific symptoms of physical illness to particular emotional traumas, suggesting that our bodies literally embody our inner conflicts. Louise Hays, for example, suggests that headaches always embody emotional resistance, while pain in the knee joint is symptomatic of a reluctance to face the future. Dr. Bernie Siegel relates cancer and indeed all illness to a lack of love in his patients' lives:

> The fundamental problem most patients face is an inability to love themselves, having been unloved by others during some crucial part of their lives.... all disease is ultimately related to a lack of love, or to love that is only conditional, for the exhaustion and depression of the immune system thus created leads to physical vulnerability. I also feel that all healing is related to the ability to give and accept unconditional love. 65

Siegel's experience suggests that physical healing is an external manifestation of spiritual and emotional healing. Indeed, the relationship between wholeness and health is evident in the fact that the words "heal" and "whole" both stem from the same Anglo- Saxon root "hale". 66 Similarly, in modern German, "heil/heilen/heilig" translate as "whole/to heal/holy".

And if we can gain a "felt sense," an holistic perception of ourselves as undivided beings, might we not do the same for each other? If we are woven into an embodied, all-embracing web of life, is there not the potential for us to become aware, to sense/feel/intuit our "social body," and even the body of the planet Herself? Perhaps it is only because we are so accustomed to separating our

experience into distinct spheres — physical, emotional, spiritual, mental — that we find such ideas fanciful. It may be precisely this divisive perception that is most in need of healing, if we are to reweave the web of life.

We have returned to our point of departure, the theme of dualism. No doubt, you, the reader, will have seen gaps and will have had your own ideas and intuitions concerning the interrelatedness of the issues we have considered. In closing, we would like to reiterate briefly the common concern of feminist thinking and deep ecology.

Both feminism and deep ecology seek to make conscious and to name the divisions and fragmentations within our lives and, by "hearing the Earth's suffering to speech," (Morton), to bring about healing within Mother Earth and within us, her children. This healing takes the form of "remembering the future;" of lifting the repression that has blocked our experience of wholeness within ourselves, with/in each other, and with/in the Earth.

In Christa Wolf's work, visions of a peaceful, fluid, holistic existence appear twice in dream-states in the final pages of literary works concerned with the fragmentation that characterizes our daily lives. The very placement of these visions at the end of the works reflects the author's belief that a renewed experience of this unity is possible. Perhaps even the dreaming itself is the first step in the healing process. Certainly all of us can identify with the closing sentence of Accident . After a stress- ridden day of reflecting on the fragility and insecurity of this life which we take for granted most of the time, the narrator falls asleep with the thought, "How difficult it would be to take leave of this Earth." How difficult, indeed.

Notes

1. Riane Eisler, The Chalice and the Blade (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987) pp. xvii, xix.

2. 'Subjektive Authentizitat: Gesprach mit Hans Kaufmann", in Christa Wolf, Die Dimension des Autors (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1987), p. 800. Unless otherwise stated, all translations from the German will be Marlene's.

3. For several discussions of these factors, see The Fourth Dimension: Interviews with Christa Wolf , trans. by Hilary Pilkington (Material Word) (London and New York: Verso, 1988).

4. Patsy Hallen, "Making Peace With Nature: Why Ecology Needs Feminism," The Trumpeter 4,3, Summer 1987, p.3.

5. Nelle Morton, The Journey Is Home (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), p.75.

6. Helene Cixous, "Sorties", in New French Feminisms , (E. Marks and I. de Courtivron, eds.) (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1980), p.90.

7. Susan Bordo, "The Cartesian Masculinization of Thought," Signs , 11,3, Spring 1986, p.452.

8. Christa Wolf, "Krankheit und Liebesentzug," in Die Dimension des Autors , p.731.

9. Ibid. , p.729.

10. Wolf cites an interesting counterpoint to this; a female doctor's observation that despite the technological sophistication of modern medicine, "what it cannot do is to offer an insight into the connections, into the innermost 'secretive web'." Ibid. , p.731.

11. Christa Wolf, Cassandra: A Novel and Four Essays , trans. by Jan van Heurck (London: Virago Press, 1984), p.287.

12. See also Nelle Morton, who challenges dualism on the grounds that "no longer can we separate theory and practice or their corollaries action and reflection. In a feminist perspective both are fused into a new kind of dynamic." The Journey is Home , p.182.

13. Cassandra , p.276.

14. Ibid. , pp.106-7.

15. Cassandra , p.71.

16. Ibid. , p.106-7.

17. Ibid. , p.13.

18. Ibid. , p.51.

19. Christa Wolf, Storfall (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1987), p.104. The English translation, Accident , is to appear Spring 1989.

20. Cassandra , p.124.

21. Ibid. , p.283.

22. cited in David Lavery, "The Eye of Longing", ReVision , 6,1, Spring 1983, p.25.

23. Cassandra , p.119.

24. Rosalind Coward, Female Desire (London: Granada Publishing, 1984), pp.75,81.

25. Carolyn Merchant, The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), p.189.

26. Ibid. , p.172.

27. Storfall , p.44.

28. Ibid. , pp.40,42.

29. Ibid. , p.70.

30. For the term "re-present," Heidegger uses the German word vor- stellen, interpreted by translator Lovitt as a "setting- before [...] that arrests and objectifies." Martin Heidegger, The Question Concerning Technology (W. Lovitt, ed.) (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), p.131.

31. Christa Wolf, "Romanticism in Perspective," The Fourth Dimension: Interviews with Christa Wolf , trans. by Hilary Pilkington (New York: Verso, 1988), p.91.

32. No Place on Earth , trans. by Jan van Heurck (London: Virago Press, 1983). The novel implicitly voices Christa Wolf's feeling of disillusionment with and estrangement from her own sociopolitical milieu, East Germany during the mid to late 1970s. At the time, she was personally embroiled in a crisis of government censorship culminating in the expatriation of poet and songwriter Wolf Biermann, accused of defaming the GDR state.

33. For a detailed examination of this theme, see Marlene Schiwy's doctoral thesis, Language and Silence: "Sprachlosigkeit" in the Work of Christa Wolf , University of London, 1988, chapter 9.

34. Michael Washburn, The Ego and the Dynamic Ground (New York: SUNY Press, 1988).

35. Cited in Patricia M. Mische, "Toward a Global Spirituality," (New York: Global Education Associates, 1988), p.9.

36. Joanna Macy, for example, observes that "the self is experienced as inseparable from the web of life in which we are as intricately interconnected as cells in a larger body." "Awakening to Our Ecological Self", Woman of Power , 11, Fall 1988, p.94. See also Nelle Morton, who claims: "Transcendence is no longer the issue. But healing the web of life is."(p.216)

37. Merchant, The Death of Nature , p.99.

38. For a detailed examination of the relationship between gender and modes of thinking about relationships, see Carol Gilligan, In a Different Voice (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1982).

39. Kim Chernin, Reinventing Eve (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), pp.6- 7.

40. Elaine Pagels, The Gnostic Gospels (New York: Random House, 1979), p.xvi.

41. Karoline von Gunderrode, "Apokalyptisches Fragment," Der Schatten eines Traumes (Christa Wolf, ed.) (Darmstadt, Luchterhand, 1983), p.108.

42. Morton, The Journey is Home , p.169.

43. Cassandra , p.112.

44. Susan Griffin, Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), p.134.

45. Morton, The Journey is Home , p.xx.

46. Cassandra , p.142.

47. Morton, The Journey is Home , p.83.

48. Herbert Spiegelberg, The Phenomenological Movement (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982) p.402.

49. Marion Milner (Joanna Field) A Life of One's Own (Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher, Inc., 1981), p.13.

50. Ibid. , p.176.

51. Note, however, that the wide focus alone is not enough either, for it is her conscious reflection upon it (involving narrow focus) that yields insight and the possibility of cultivating it.

52. Lavery, "The Eye of Longing," p.25.

53. Cited in Lavery, "The Eye of Longing," p.30.

54. This term is a successor to the term "post-perspectival" used by Steve in his essay, "A Neo-Intuitive Proposal for Kaluza-Klein Unification," Foundations of Physics , 18, 11, November 1988. Also, it is closely related to the term "aperspective," used by philosopher Jean Gebser in "The Foundations of the Aperspective World", Main Currents in Modern Thought , 29, 2, Nov/Dec 1972. Note that Steve has also written a novel which climaxes when the main characters come to experience each other and their environment in a "trans-perspectival" manner. See Rosen, The Moebius Seed (Walpole, N.H.: Stillpoint, 1985).

55. Cassandra , p.294.

56. Christa Wolf, The Quest for Christa T. , trans. by Christopher Middleton

(London: Virago Press, 1982), p.73.

57. Cassandra , p.106.

58. Milner, A Life of One's Own , p.193.

59. Ibid. , p.193.

60. Cassandra , p.124.

61. Andreas Mavromatis, Hypnagogia (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), pp. 267,278.

62. Ibid. , p.274.

63. Christa Wolf, Patterns of Childhood , trans. by U. Molinaro and H. Rappolt (London: Virago Press, 1983) p.407.

64. Eugene T. Gendlin, Focusing (New York: Bantam, 1981), p.32.

65. Bernie S. Siegel, Love, Medicine & Miracles (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), pp. 4,180.

66. David Bohm, Wholeness and the Implicate Order (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), p.3.

67. Storfall , p.119.

Citation Format

Shiwy, Marlene A. & Rosen, Steven M. (1990) SPINNING THE WEB OF LIFE: FEMINISM, ECOLOGY, AND CHRISTA WOLF *Trumpeter*: 7, 1.
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