

WITH PLACE LOVE BEGINS...

The Philosophy of Luce Irigaray, The Issue of Dwelling, Feminism and Architecture

Andrea Susan Wheeler

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**School of Architecture
The University of Nottingham**

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Abstract

The question of dwelling, how, where, in what way and in what manner describes a crisis in many professional women's lives especially when living in pursuit of equality becomes dissatisfying and the demands of traditional stereotypes unappealing. Books such as *Desiring Practices* (1995) demonstrate the need for some sort of shared expression and community to resolve the career frustrations of working academics in traditionally male dominated environments. Documents such as *Why Women Leave Practice?* (2003) record what is seen as a very real difficulty for the Institution. The important aspect of Irigaray's work for these debates, however, is how she has already begun to unravel the problems women face in contemporary societies. For architects concerned with diversity, her work is an incitement to reformulate this question by thinking how we can positively approach sexual difference as the basis for approaching all other differences. For feminists, Irigaray's philosophy also presents the possibility of a practice (albeit a practice profoundly reconsidered) beyond a simple desire for equality with men but nevertheless, without denying the problem of a culture of discrimination within the profession. Furthermore, for theorists concerned with how we approach the other, the hidden, or the devalued within our discourses her work is motive to take further these theories towards a more radical poetic or artistic practice. The question of dwelling as a reconsideration of coexistence, co-habitation and co-belonging, as relation rethought, extends the problem of the intimate to address issues of the architectural.

Publications

Wheeler, Andrea (2000) 'Love in Architecture' In *Luce Irigaray presents International, Intercultural, Intergenerational Dialogues Around Her Work, Paragraph* Special Edition, Edinburgh University Press, 105-117.

Wheeler, Andrea (2004) 'About being-two in an architectural perspective: interview with Luce Irigaray' In *Journal of Romance Studies*, Volume 4, Number 2, 91-108.

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Abbreviations

EP	Everyday Prayers
PM	Pathmarks
KW	Key Writings
S	Speculum of the Other: Woman
TS	This Sex Which Is Not One
D	Dialogues
FIMH	Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger
WD	Why Different?
TTD	Thinking the Difference
SG	Sexes and Genealogies
AESD	An Ethics of Sexual Difference
AB	The Age of Breath
PP	Le Partage De La Parole
EE	The Ethics of Eros
JTN	Je, Tu, Nous
ILTY	I Love To You
DBBT	Democracy Begins Between Two
BDT	“Building Dwelling Thinking”
FA	The Forgetting of Air
BT	Being and Time
LIPF	Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine
BTHME	Being Two: How Many Eyes Have We?
TBT	To Be Two
WL	The Way of Love
TSNN	To Speak is Never Neutral

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Introduction

Heidegger argues that the human is in the world in a way that dwelling is an issue for it. Dwelling is fundamental to the human: It is the manner by which he *is*. The question Irigaray's work asks, however, is - if being and dwelling are the same (a question arising from Heidegger's study of the presocratics) and it is evident that relational desires are different between men and women¹ - how can we reformulate what it means to dwell?

'Où et comment habiter?' (1983) is the title of one of Irigaray's early papers. In it she questions her desire to find a way of living not shaped by a Western tradition and that at present, she argues, has refused to adequately address such difference. The paper suggests a dialogue with Heidegger on dwelling, but it also raises the question of how as women and men faithful to who we are, or as Irigaray writes: '...belonging to a sexed nature to which it is proper to be faithful' (*ILTY*, 11): How can we change our understandings of what it means to dwell so that we can properly co-exist. This issue of dwelling is important to architecture as it challenges the very fundamentals of practice, but when read with the philosophy of Luce Irigaray it can also resolve many contemporary issues women raise, in particular, the recent problem described as gender in architecture.

Elizabeth Grosz was one of the first theorists to have described the importance of Irigaray's philosophy to architecture and to have compared Irigaray's philosophy with that of Plato (and Derrida's reading of Plato) Bataille and others. In 'Women, *Chora*, Dwelling' she cites 'Où et comment habiter?' (an as yet untranslated text) to propose that the question of sexual difference is important to architectural theory. However, since the publication of Grosz's paper, in particular her more recent "Architectures of Excess" in *Architecture from the Outside*, Irigaray's *The Forgetting of Air*, *To Be Two*, *Democracy Begins Between Two*, *To Speak is Never Neutral*, *Dialogues* and *The Way of Love* have all been published in English. Moreover, Irigaray, in a way that challenges many

¹ See, as one example of this argument, the exhibition *Che Sono Io? Che Sei Tue?* University College London, November-December 2003.

interpretations of her work, has suggested that Heidegger is one of her most important influence, she writes:

His thought enlightened me at a certain level more than any other and it has done so in a way that awakened my vigilance, political as well as philosophical, rather than constraining me to submit to any programme. To conceal such a light would be, in my opinion, a serious error and an ethical mistake for our culture. To gather in this light, to allow it to settle, to pass it on seems more valid to me. And this is what I have tried to do, with respect and gratitude (*FIMH*, 315).

Irigaray's work with Heidegger is recognized by many theorists, Tina Chanter's *An Ethics of Eros* was one of the earliest to record this influence. Nevertheless, few theorists, apart from Chanter, take up Irigaray's work with Heidegger in any detail. One difficulty has been the delay in the translation of her work, but Heidegger's philosophy has also been dismissed in the current theoretical context, both by feminists and contemporary theorists alike. More recent books, such as *Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger*, have attempted to remedy this situation, declaring the need for a new and greater exploration and reassessment of his philosophy for feminism but as yet this new wave of interest in Heidegger's philosophy has not informed a similar reassessment within architectural theory. Moreover, examining Irigaray's dialogue with Heidegger adds a dimension to the possible debates. Seen from the perspective of being-two, the issue of dwelling illuminates what is really at stake for the profession, in particular for women, and also for feminism and for contemporary culture. According to Irigaray, it suggests the question of how we can approach (sexual) difference amongst ourselves, as the manner in which we are, and this for architecture leads to a new way of dwelling and a new way of building.

Irigaray's work is notoriously difficult to understand and complex in its criticisms. It has a political motive and a poetic dimension, but to describe her either as a feminist or a philosopher of difference (and simply associated with those who have adopted strategies of deconstruction) risks reducing her thinking. Irigaray's philosophy of *sexuate* difference is not an affirmation or deconstruction of difference between a culturally privileged man and a subordinated woman.

Rather, she writes, '...being born a woman requires a culture particular to this sex and this gender, which it is important for the women to realize without renouncing her natural identity' (*ILTY*, 27). Irigaray's philosophy explores sexual difference in order to re-establish the cultural importance of a more archaic difference than that suggested by the Western tradition, a relationship between two whom are equal in rights and at the same time different, and to build upon this difference. In this respect she writes, women '...should not comply with a model of identity imposed upon her by anyone, neither her parents, her lover, her children, the state, religion or culture in general' (*ILTY*, 27): Rather, women should work to recover their difference. Irigaray's philosophy suggests that the difference between a man and a woman is the most universally misunderstood, it is also the most complex, and most unthought within our cultures(s). However, we can only adequately approach all other differences if we can approach this relationship as that between a man and woman who are two. This can only happen if women have access to their modes of relationality and to cultural values, that will sustain their own differences in desire. To illustrate this issue, in *I Love To You* Irigaray writes: 'Sexual difference probably represents the most universal question we can address. Our era is faced with the task of dealing with this issue, because, across the whole world, there are, there are only, men and women' (*ILTY*, 47).

Irigaray's philosophy is both *deconstruction* and *building*, both these aspects of her work can be understood through her reading of Heidegger. New approaches to dialogue, new philosophies of encounter and exchange, all aid the recovery of desires and values appropriate to women. They assist the redefinition and *building* of a culture of the female. Irigaray writes of her work: 'There are thus two acts to be carried out almost simultaneously: an act of constitution and an act of interpretation and departure from a cultural identity' (*ILTY*, 47).

Thus, the title of this thesis ...*With Place Love Begins?* Is an architectural question firstly asked of philosophy. It is a question also aimed at Heidegger and a tradition of philosophers who as critics of Heidegger have been influenced by his philosophy. For Heidegger, the question for architecture is that of dwelling. For Irigaray, however, while she acknowledges the value of this

approach, she argues that Heidegger does not take these issues far enough to think what it is to be in, or upon the world in relation differently, as men and women. That is to say, Heidegger does not adequately think the problem of difference which according to Irigaray means the redefinition of a cultural identity suited to the natural identity of each sex (see *ILTY*, 23). Thus, for Irigaray, there is a more fundamental question for architecture than that of dwelling, described by Heidegger; this is the question of living together, of coexistence in difference, which could also be described as an ethics of love.

For Heidegger, things themselves are places and in this way things are not in space. Heidegger gives the example of the bridge as 'Thing' in 'Building Dwelling Thinking'. The bridge is in itself a place, and in its way, it makes space for dwelling. In the addendum to 'The Origin of the Work of Art,' Heidegger writes that we must think 'to place' in the sense of *thesis*, in the Greek sense, which he interprets as a setting up in the unconcealed. That is to say, bringing forth what is present. He writes: 'The Greek "setting" means placing, as, for instance, letting a statue be set up (...) Placing and laying have the sense of bringing here into the unconcealed, bringing forth into what is present, that is letting lie forth' (Heidegger, 1993, 207). To place, to make place, is thus thought by Heidegger in terms of Truth and as Heidegger writes of Truth: 'Truth is the unconcealment of beings as being. Truth is the truth of Being. Beauty does not occur apart from this truth. When truth sets itself to work it appears' (Heidegger, 1993, 207). Thus the essence of architecture and arts corresponds with this setting up, and bringing forth.

'Truth' is a difficult concept in Heidegger's philosophy but it is also a focus of Irigaray's criticisms, in particular, in *The Forgetting of Air*. Furthermore, in *Two Be Two*, Irigaray suggests to further this criticism an alliance of truth and ethicity. Irigaray takes Heidegger's thinking back to its presocratic roots. The question that troubles Irigaray initially is Heidegger's faithfulness to Parmenides, as already stated and the status of the body is also a part of her thinking on this matter. Heidegger's presumption, his adoption of Parmenides' thought, she argues, prevent the question of the sexed body being asked. She writes:

"Of What" is a being can be posed as a question. "Of What" [is] Being is not "posed". It is, always, pre-supposed. Fore-seeable, pre-established. At least since Parmenides: to be and to think being, the Same. And the question of "of what" is thought made, being left unthought (...) "Of what" [is] this *is* such that it remains invisible though it be the fundamental condition of the visible, such that it be unable to be posed though it be the condition for all posing, such that it not be produced, yet it be the condition for all production, such that it have no origin but be the originary itself (*FA*, 3-4).

For Irigaray, the question of Being and being in Heidegger's thought do not, and cannot, adequately consider difference. Truth as unconcealment cannot allow a sexed other to build him or herself. Together with 'Building Dwelling Thinking', 'The Origin of the Work of Art' is also an influential and important essay to architects to reconsider. In this paper Heidegger derives his meaning of art from the Greek word for art, which he translates as "making something visible", or "making-visible," and which he argues corresponds to unconcealment or bringing forth. In this sense Heidegger argues that art and architecture can bring about an unveiling, in his terms, an unveiling of the essence of Truth. Irigaray challenges this concept of disclosure in his philosophy as a privileging a masculine perspective. Her approach suggests an 'illumination' that underlies Heidegger's thought, and that she describes as a 'making-touchful'. This is not to privilege touch *per se* but to suggest another being-touched by another more fundamental everyday reality than Heidegger describes and that needs to be cultivated. She writes in this respect:

The natural, aside from the diversity of its incarnation or ways of appearing, is at least *two*: Male and female. This division is neither secondary nor unique to human kind. It cuts across all realms of the living which, without it, would not exist. Without sexual difference, there would be no life on earth. It is the manifestation of and the condition for the production and reproduction of life. Air and sexual difference may be the two dimensions vital for/to life. Not taking them into account would be a deadly business (*ILTY*, 37).

The 'making-touchful' of art and architecture, according to Irigaray, is an illumination of a different reality. Both the questions of art and dwelling are means to explore Heidegger's thinking

for architecture and many theorists have done so but importantly these issues are *also* ways to begin to address Irigaray's thinking about architecture and understand how she constructs a philosophy from the perspective of *two* in difference.

Irigaray takes issue with many of Heidegger's terms: Being, thinking, place, Truth, as only those already described, as also with the method Heidegger uses. In tracing back, it is *air*, she suggests, that is prior to being. *Air*, she argues, is the *arch-mediation* of the logos, of thinking, of the world and not Being. It is what is necessary for thining and for being. Air and breath are more transcendental and sensible than Heidegger's philosophizing of existence, as he describes *Dasein*. She writes:

Is not air the whole of our inhabitation as mortals? Is there a dwelling more vast, more spacious, or even more generally peaceful than that of air? Can man live elsewhere than in air? Neither in earth, nor in fire, nor in water, is any habitation possible for him. No other element can for him take the place of place. No other element carries with it – or lets itself be passed through by – light and shadow – voice or silence. No other element is to this extent opening itself – to one who would not have forgotten its nature there is no need for it to open or reopen. No other element is as light, as free, and as much in the “fundamental” mode of a permanent, available, “there is”. No other element is in this way space prior to all localization (...) no other element as originally constitutive of the whole of the world (*FA*, 8).

For Irigaray, Heidegger's place making, his setting up, his building, prevents a certain meeting with the other and with nature. In his conception of place, she argues that he has already constructed an artificial perspective on Nature, destroying the properties of natural space. The other, is projected onto Nature or the built thing to disguise a meeting with nature, but she writes: 'The natural is at least two: male and female. All the speculation about overcoming the natural in the universal forgets that nature is not *one*' (*ILTY*, 35).

For Irigaray, Heidegger's philosophy constructs an abstract and artificial perspective of human experience as gender neutral in the place of a more fundamental experience of sexuate

difference. Of the bridge, as an example of a 'thing' which is itself place, and its bringing into the unconcealed she argues that with its construction, '...the there is of the bridge has carried away that other towards whom it sought to be the passage' (FA, 23). Thus, for Irigaray, whilst art and architecture suggest a positive means to approach and reconstruct (sexual) difference, this cannot take place whilst limited to the perspective of the Western tradition or to critics, such as Heidegger, who seek to overcome this influence.

Karsten Harries in *This Ethical Function of Architecture* cites Eliade to describe how man demands events, sacred times and space (which include buildings) to gather everything into a meaningful whole. Time and space are shaped and becomes place, space for dwelling, an *ethos*. Thus, Harries argues that from the very beginning architecture has had an ethical function, '...helping to articulate and even to establish man's ethos' (Harries, 1998, 395). In this respect Harries argues that: 'To build is to help decide how man is to dwell on the earth or indeed whether he is to dwell on it at all' (Harries, 1998, 396). Harries also cites Norberg-Schultz (again a theorist profoundly influenced by Heidegger) where Norberg-Schultz suggests that architects still do not know what the actual tasks of architecture are, they do not know the question of architecture is that of dwelling.

This thesis is divided into two main sections. This first section questions current understandings of dwelling, preparing the ground for re-conceptualising love, dwelling and architecture. This initial theoretical platform is a necessary in order to find a way to respond to recent questions raised by women architects and theorists concerning gender or feminism in architecture. After exploring the current interest in rethinking dwelling, the issues of gender and feminism, the final chapters – comprising the second section – explore how a cultivation of love between two, re-evaluates such theories, bringing them back into architectural theory as a new way to approach the problem of difference.

After an initial introduction to dwelling in Chapter One, Chapter Two develops the complex problem of equal rights in architecture, beginning with the recent re-emergence of the

problem, somewhat unsurprisingly perhaps, forged in terms of the need for diversity within the profession. Chapter Three, however, reviews the recent changes in architectural theory that surround the question of gender, and adopt postmodernist theorists and philosophers of difference to suggest another way of tackling the problem of feminism and architecture. Chapter Four, responds to questions raised in this context by looking in more detail at the issue of dwelling, how it is thought in Heidegger's philosophy and how Irigaray criticises his work. Chapter Five raises the issue of love, both in the contemporary philosophical context and within Heidegger's work. This chapter suggests that the issue of living together is more fundamental to the question of Being and being and is not adequately addressed by Heidegger's philosophy. The purpose of the chapter is to lay a foundation to examine the concepts both of 'care', 'building' and 'dwelling' and demonstrate how Irigaray's philosophy is both faithful and critical of Heidegger.

Questions of language and writing are often discussed by philosophers in the context of Irigaray's work, in particular, the distinction between Irigaray's philosophy, deconstruction and *écriture féminine*. Chapter Five thus also seeks to establish how Irigaray's approach to the other differs from other current philosophies, and to demonstrate that her work cannot be reduced to that of Derrida's or to any other so called 'French feminist'. Luce Irigaray's writing has long been linked with that of Hélène Cixous in the Anglo-American reception of her work, and either mis-described as a mode of *écriture féminine* or reduced to a form of deconstruction. Irigaray has always disputed this association. Chapter Five resolves this confusion but at the same time also addresses criticisms directed against her work. Discrediting reductive comparisons with either Cixous, or Derrida, is an important process in understanding how Irigaray's work is not only a criticism of contemporary Western philosophy and culture but a construction of alternative ways. Taking this step to distinguish Irigaray's work also means that I attempt to extend the issue of writing suggested by contemporary philosophers such as Cixous, or feminists informed by Derrida's work (and those architects who adopt the philosophies of those thinkers) to propose a different sort of sexual difference. Sexual difference (or *sexuate difference*) is, for Irigaray, more

fundamental than any other forms of difference and it is this difference that needs to be rethought before we can adequately approach other forms of difference. This is not to deny that other forms of difference are constitutive to individual women's oppression - to a greater or lesser extent – but to suggest that how sexual difference is approached within cultures often correspond to how other forms of difference are thought.

Finding the reality of sexual difference and the means to sustain it can only serve to improve the rights and freedoms of women. One of the other aims of Chapter Five is to explore how Irigaray finds within current social and cultural structures this difference. As the chapter seeks to demonstrate, deconstructing social structures, whilst it is a necessary part of Irigaray work and of contemporary philosophy, it is not the only factor contributing to women's oppression and not the only issue, women must address. Hence, Chapter Five looks not only at Irigaray's philosophy of being-two and the misunderstandings that have surrounded this mode of being. Several recent studies have criticised being-two and misconceptions shroud Irigaray's work in this respect. Furthermore, the aim of this chapter is not only to question the imposition of such criticisms but to show how the imposition of such modes of critique simply push back Irigaray's creativity into the current forms of thinking that she attempts to escape. The problem faced is how to engage with Irigaray's work.

Following on Chapter Five, Chapter Six examines how architects could take up Heidegger's and Irigaray's thought. Whilst Irigaray's criticisms of Heidegger are precise, Chapter Six seeks to demonstrate that Irigaray's philosophy is not a commentary as sometimes suggested but a consistent and extensive cultural criticism that can extend to contemporary debates in architecture in a concrete way. With reference to Irigaray's lecture, 'How can we live in a sustainable way together?' it explores Irigaray's notion of dialogue and the role of the architect. It demonstrates how within architectural theory a restrictive notion of difference has sustained conflict, not only within feminist theory in architecture, but as existing prejudices within the profession. The chapter aims to suggest how a new light on architectural interpretations of dwelling

still has significant value to contemporary discourses. However, this chapter also proposes that architecture and architects can begin to create and sustain a space of hospitality, where human potential can be cultivated in an environment free of discrimination. Ostensibly the growth in studies of gender in architecture should support the notion of being-two, as both men and women architects are clearly turning their attention to questions of difference. In the wider architectural community questions associated with ethics, in particular green ethics, and sustainability are not only popular but also common requirements in architectural projects supported by public funding. Nevertheless, these discourses rather than being evidence of a developing ethics in architecture or a wider vision risk effacing gender ethics, in favour of an apparently wider ethical perspectives. It is a specificity for woman, a way of finding herself in her own way, in relation, that Irigaray insists is a necessary part of women's work towards human liberation and the question of love can be used to bring philosophers such as Heidegger, Derrida and Irigaray into encounter over the question of difference, together with sustainability and community, as the most fruitful way to address the problem of woman and architecture.

CHAPTER ONE

Art is a thinking that memorises and responds. (Poetry, Language, Thought, xi)

Art grows out of being and reaches to its truth.

'... when the evening light slanting into the woods somewhere bathes the tree trunks to gold (...) Singing and thinking are the stems of neighbour to poetry. They grow out of being and reach to its truth. Their relationship makes us think of what Hölderlin says of the trees of the wood (...) And to each other they remain unknown, So long as they stand, the neighbouring trunks (see Heidegger; 'The thinker as poet').

1.1 The Issue of Dwelling

Architectural debates are not generally keen to discuss the meaning of dwelling. It tends either to be considered as self-evident, old-fashioned or simply dismissed as irrelevant in comparison to more contemporary issues. Heidegger raised the question of dwelling in the latter half of his life, his talk "Building Dwelling Thinking" was held at the "Darmstadter Gespräche" of 1951. In the preamble to the series of talks, he states that the plight of our age is homelessness. His response, however, is not the resolution of this homelessness but rather the realization that we are always underway. This very homelessness motivates our questioning, he argues, it motivates philosophy or existence, it motivates life itself.

For Heidegger philosophy is homesickness. Homesickness awakens man and homesickness drives the human towards what is. Homesickness is, he writes, an attunement that releases '*...our free everyday perspective*' (see *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 91, also Heidegger's italics): Homesickness is the urge that drives philosophy on. For Heidegger, he or she, is in that he or she is called by what is beyond, an excess or transcendent. However, within Irigaray's philosophising our *free everyday perspective* is one that awakened in a different relation to the beyond and moreover to a different 'beyond'. For Irigaray, it is this question of desire that she argues that is not adequately addressed in his thought. As Irigaray describes the motive of her

latest publication, *The Way of Love*, to stage an encounter, which suggests a 'releasement' (although these Heideggerian terms are reconsidered) to a different everyday reality. She writes: 'Through female eyes,' the otherwise forgotten horizontal dimension of human becoming can be rediscovered (WL, 145). For Irigaray, it is this horizon she also describes as a sensible transcendental that needs to be discovered. If we are to have a culture of equality, she argues, this relation has to be cultivated, and moreover, cultivated without turning it into a relation to a wholly Other or a belonging to the beyond of this world (WL, 140). For Irigaray, the human being *is*, in that he or she is in a more natural and more fundamental relation with the world than that suggested by Heidegger's philosophy and that within the Western tradition. The human being is, in that he or she is in a relation of sexual, or in Irigaray's terms *sexuate*, difference.

Making reference to Hölderlin's poetry Heidegger writes that homesickness awakens man and drives the human towards what is, to *world*. He writes that we *are* in that we always called upon by language. We are in that we are somehow always already departed. We are in that we are always already on the way towards world. We are in that we are on our way, and yet we are in that we are simultaneously torn back, oscillating to and fro. This restlessness is our nature (see Heidegger, 1997, 6). When Heidegger argues that his philosophy is an awakening to the way humans are on earth, the way human are is this oscillation. Nevertheless, *The Way of Love* criticises the inspiration Heidegger finds in Hölderlin and his interpretation of dwelling. Irigaray writes: 'It is not necessary to depart for a foreign land to tear oneself away from proximity; breathing will suffice' (WL, 311). Moreover, in the last chapter of *The Forgetting of Air*, she writes of a relationship of entrusting to the other, to the rhythm of their breathing and to a being together prior to any face-to-face meeting and prior to any being-with, at least as Heidegger conceives (see FA, 173-174). *Everyday prayers* also suggests a poetry that attempts to evoke this relation with nature and the other. If philosophy is homelessness, always already departed, on its way towards the meaning of being and authentic existence; there is, nevertheless, in Irigaray's philosophy in her criticism and faithfulness to his thought, a different rhythm, a different stepping back that can

happen, she writes, and that can lead to a deeper ‘...more blossomed level of Being’ (*WL*, 17). This way of philosophising is not the departure and homecoming that inspires Hölderlin's poetry or Heidegger's language, as it is found in a relation of difference with a living tangible other: In Irigaray's philosophy this corresponds to breath and breathing. Hence, this leads her to argue that we must find our own ways of living must take place in regions not already said (*WL*, 52).

Architectural Theory

Some of the architects that have been associated with Heidegger's work are Mario Botta, Frank Lloyd Wright, Alvar Aalto and Le Corbusier. Theorists that discuss his contribution to architectural theory include Karsten Harries, Alberto Perez Gomez, David Farrell Krell, Gunter A. Dittmar, and Christian Norberg-Schultz, and there are many others whose work in a more contemporary context draws influence from Heidegger's philosophy, often unknowingly.

Karsten Harries is an architectural theorist influenced by Martin Heidegger. He adopts a broadly phenomenological position from which to expose the factors which he sees as being responsible for the 'disarray' of contemporary architecture. For Harries, the joint obsessions with technology and aesthetics have led to a placelessness in contemporary architecture. Harries calls for an architecture which might enable dwelling, responsive to a *genius loci* and an architecture that can contribute to a sense of community. Harries, however, has been challenged for the influence he draws from Heidegger in this respect and theorists suggest that his uncritical use of terms such as dwelling, authenticity, *genius loci* and community, problematize this work. Contemporary writers in response point towards more contemporary thinkers such as Derrida, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Fredric Jameson and Jean Baudrillard, to, in effect, bring Harries's theory up to date.

Nevertheless, despite such dismissals and misunderstandings of Heidegger, Heidegger's texts have remained popular. Reading his work can benefit from understanding the perspectives of more contemporary interpretations and criticisms. However, Heidegger's essay "Building

Dwelling Thinking" is now more than fifty years old, and has inspired many architects and critics in its own right. A major problem for architects is the perceived problem that it can be difficult to understand how to convert Heidegger's philosophy into specific design practice. Architects tend toward the notion that for a philosophy to be useful it needs to be applied to architecture – in this sense architects tend to like plans, objectives or guidelines that can easily be put into practice. However, in this way, architecture and the architect remains within the subject and object relations of 'scientific thinking' (Heidegger's terminology). A relationality Heidegger's philosophy fundamentally challenges. Heidegger argues that first we must understand what it means to dwell and moreover suggests '...only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build' (*BDT*, 160). Dwelling becomes the fundamental question for architecture, according to Heidegger and yet it is also one that Irigaray argues is limited and forgetful. Returning in this way to Heidegger's work and listening to Irigaray's criticisms architectural theory, could, nevertheless, develop approaches to some important questions of contemporary culture.

Dasein

Dwelling is a questioning, a way, or manner in which the human *is*. It is associated with Heidegger's account of human experience. Miguel de Beistegui in his book *Thinking With Heidegger* describes Heidegger's project in *Being and Time* as an account of what human experience *is*. Human experience, or *Dasein* (Heidegger's terminology which translates from the German for existence) is fundamentally a questioning that comports itself to the question of the meaning of being. Heidegger writes in his introductory remarks to *Being and Time*:

Do we in our time have an answer to the question of what we really mean by the word "being"? Not at all. So it is fitting that we should raise anew *the question of the meaning of Being*. But are we nowadays even perplexed at our inability to understand the expression "Being?" Not at all. So first of all we must reawaken an understanding for the meaning of this question. Our aim in the following treatise is to work out the question of the meaning of *Being* and to

do so concretely. Our provisional aim is the Interpretation of *time* as the possible horizon for any understanding whatsoever of Being (Heidegger, 1962, 1, italics in original).

Furthermore, he continues in the introduction: 'The very fact that we already live in an understanding of Being and that the meaning of Being is still veiled in darkness proves that it is necessary in principle to raise this question again' (BT, 23). The provisional starting point for Heidegger in *Being and Time* is Dasein, which is described as '...that entity which already comports itself, in its Being, towards what we are asking about when we ask this question' (BT, 35).

In the notes to the first of the *Zollikon Seminars* (a study of the relation of Heidegger's philosophy to psychoanalysis), Heidegger also argues by means of an illustration, how human existence, or Dasein, exceeds subject and object relations which are implicit in psychoanalytic modes of the psyche or consciousness (as most other forms of scientific thought). He writes:

This drawing should only illustrate that human existing in its essential ground is never just an object which is present-at-hand; it is certainly not a self-contained object. Instead, this way of existing consists of 'pure' invisible, intangible capacities for receiving-perceiving [*Vernehmen*] what it encounters and what addresses it. In the perspective of the Analytic of *Da-sein*, all conventional, objectifying representations of a capsule-like psyche, subject, person, ego, or consciousness in psychology and psychopathology must be abandoned in favour of an entirely different understanding. This new view of the basic constitution of human existence may be called *Da-sein*, or being-in-the-world. Of course in the context of the *Da* of this *Da-sein* certainly does not mean what it does in the ordinary sense – a location near an observer. Rather, to exist as *Da-sein* means to hold open a domain through its capacity to receive-perceive the significance of the things that are given to it [*Da-sein*] and that address it [*Da-sein*] and that address it [*Da-sein*] by its virtue of its own 'clearing' [*Gelichteheit*]. Human *Da-sein* as a domain with the capacity for receiving-perceiving *is* never merely an object present-at-hand. On the contrary it is not something which can be objectified at all under any circumstances (ZS, 4, italics in original).

Dasein is an open space for encounter. Dasein is by virtue of its own clearing. If, however, Heidegger's project can be compared with Irigaray's, it could be said that her philosophy seeks not to reawaken an understanding for the meaning of the question of Being, but to reawaken the human

to the question of sexual difference. This requires that women understand their own desires (for autonomy from patriarchal models of subjectivity) and reconstruct themselves and their relation, in relation. However, whilst Irigaray writes *I Love To You*: It is (...) a question of awakening her to an identity and to rights and responsibilities corresponding to her gender' (ILTY, 5). She also writes:

What woman need most are mediations and means of distancing. Immediacy is their traditional task - associated with a purely abstract duty - but it places them back under spiritual authority of men. And so to grant a woman what she wants without teaching how the detour of mediation boils down to behaving like a patriarch, against her interest (ILTY, 5).

Thus, women require values and art, language, poetry and architecture that can illuminate these values: For Heidegger man's access to his humanity is through listening to and responding to language. For Irigaray, on the other hand, access to ones own nature, must be through listening and responding beyond the confines of language, beyond even the poetic language described by Heidegger. Fundamental to Irigaray's philosophy is the study of the difference between men and women in the use of language. The difference in the language of boys and girls, in particular, she argues, is permeated by a difference in desire, although unacknowledged. The role of language in Heidegger's philosophy and Irigaray's own language studies, are hence, important issues in understanding Irigaray's criticism and in finding a way to understanding how she rethinks sexual difference in the context of his work. She writes:

The natural, aside from the diversity of its incarnation or ways of appearing, is at least two: male and female. This division is not secondary nor unique to human kind. it cuts across all realms of the living which, without it, would not exist. Without sexual difference, there would be no life on earth. It is the manifestation of and the condition for the production and reproduction of life. Air and sexual difference may be the two dimensions vital for/to life. Not taking them into account would be a deadly business (ILTY, 37).

Thus, for Heidegger, whilst the most fundamental question for architecture is the question of

dwelling, as stated, of what it means to dwell. For Irigaray, dwelling is a matter of coexistence which requires the reconsideration and rebuilding of sexual difference.

In his book, De Beistegui explains the relation of dwelling and architecture, in a chapter devoted to architecture, writing:

Dwelling, Heidegger will insist throughout, is indicative of and made necessary by the openness to this excess that marks the human in its essence, and not by, say, the building itself, or the economy that it harbours. Never can a building, no matter how well it is built, "how well planned, easy to keep, attractively cheap, open to air, light and sun," [see 'Building Dwelling Thinking' page 146] assure us that *dwelling* takes place therein. For dwelling in the Heideggerian sense presupposes the openness to - and the experience of - that which throws us beyond the familiarity of things into the uncanny of the Open as such, where we find ourselves primarily not-at-home. Dwelling in the most fundamental sense beings with *Unheimischkeit* (De Beistegui, 2003, 139, italics in original).

Nevertheless, why and how this openness is remains an issue for Irigaray.

Building

Heidegger writes in 'Building Dwelling Thinking' that not all buildings are dwellings and yet they can belong to the domain of dwelling. For Heidegger and interpreters of Heidegger such as de Beistegui, there is a distinction made between dwelling and merely residing. Heidegger equates dwelling with the essence of man. De Beistegui explains this, writing: '...dwelling belongs to a different order altogether. It belongs in the order of beings as such. To be, Heidegger will suggest, is to dwell. We humans inhabit the world as dwellers' (De Beistegui, 2003, 139). Thus, the question raised by dwelling is not one of residing, of shelter, but is one of what it means to be in the world. This, for Heidegger, is the question of architecture. Architecture cannot suffice as a technical solution to a problem (the common way of thinking about architecture), as the problem of architecture, Heidegger argues, is not technical.

The question of architecture posed in terms of dwelling is thus an ontological issue. This is

what emerges from Heidegger's meditation on architecture. Irigaray's philosophy also takes this argument up but in criticism and to take this question further. Despite its openness to the 'Uncanny', despite the virtue of its clearing, Irigaray's criticism of Heidegger's thinking is that it remains within an abstract world closed to the other: woman. His philosophy, she argues, is one that remains within an economy that does not and cannot, address the question of the other while the question remains within an unchanged horizon of thought. She writes in *I Love To You*: 'For it is not a matter of changing this or that within a horizon already defined as human culture. It is a question of changing the horizon itself - of understanding that our interpretation of human identity is both theoretically and practically wrong' (*ILTY*, 20). For Irigaray, to question the essence of man and woman requires a reconstruction of the horizons of our thought.

Krell, in his book, *Archeticture*, describes how in *Being and Time* Heidegger proposes that temporality 'founds' human experience. Krell cites Heidegger's italicized claim: '*Only on the grounds of ecstatic-horizontal temporality is the irruption of our being-there into space possible*' (Krell, 1995, 44, italics in Krell's text, Heidegger, 1966, 369). Krell writes that for Heidegger the human being lives out ahead of itself, always inhabiting the possibilities and projects that come toward it as its own future. Existence is ek-static. *Dasein* comports itself by virtue of its clearing towards 'the Open' and this leads Krell to write:

What is most proper to *Dasein* is its persistent expropriation. Its animation is in fact a kind of ecstasy, a standing out there in the spaces of the world, a being moved by the raptures or seizures of time. And of space? (Krell, 1995, 74).

Nevertheless, this is a description of a mode of being that Irigaray argues shows significant gender biases. It is a way preferred by the masculine. This is where Irigaray's studies of the language of children become important and where she argues that language, even that of children demonstrates a sexuate difference: Language cannot and is not just a function of need, as is often argued it has to evolve so that it can meet the desires of men and women in their differences. So for Irigaray

Heidegger's gender neutral Dasein is a masculine mode of being. Language has to be reconstructed before it can adequately question the essence of man and woman.

De Beistegui argues, that Heidegger's philosophizing is historical, *Dasein* is historical. He writes: 'For the ontological is such as to have always already explicated itself in a number of ways, such as to have always already begin to unfold in history, science, economics, politics etc., The ontological is never encountered in its purity, and in isolation from the field within which it explicates itself' (De Beistegui, 2003, 140). De Beistegui defends Heidegger from critics in this way but, for Irigaray, it is this very historical context that is problematic. In her studies of myth, in particular, those which mark the threshold of the establishment of patriarchal economics, she argues that a very different possibility exists for the question of the meaning of being, she writes: 'The entire male economy demonstrates a forgetting of life, a lack of recognition of debt to the mother, of maternal ancestry, of the women who do the work of producing and maintaining life' (*TTD*, 7). Irigaray's criticisms of Heidegger if considered in the form of questions, are: first, that of desire, that is to say what happens to it and thus to sexual difference in his philosophy; and secondly, and not unrelated, that towards this horizon of his philosophizing, or to what calls us - the excess in De Beistegui's terms - and throws us beyond familiarity into 'the Open'.

Heidegger's form of thinking is fundamentally shaped by a patriarchal tradition. Heidegger's criticism of Western philosophy but this does not and cannot go beyond patriarchal and abstract notions of a neutral experience and which at the same time deny women the reality of their experience. Irigaray writes of her alternative: 'It would be a matter of setting into motion a passive and retroactive and intentionality to become aware of being a woman or a man, and wanting to become one' (*ILTY*, 39). In so doing, the passivity traditionally associated with women is redefined as one positively related to a natural and cosmic economy. She writes:

Her so-called passivity would not then be part of an active/passive pair of opposites but would signify a difference economy, a different relation to nature and to the self that would amount to attentiveness to fidelity rather than passivity. A matter thereby not of a pure

receptivity but of a movement of growth that never ultimately estranges itself from corporeal existence in a natural *milieu* (ILTY, 39).

Women's becoming is thus that in relation to a natural reality (as opposed to the artificial reality constructed by patriarchal culture) and this awareness of difference, this difference, begins to change patriarchal economies, as a new form of building.

Being-in-the-World and Being-upon-the-World?

Irigaray takes as objective evidence for her argument with Heidegger; difference in desire, her linguistic studies, her psychoanalytic practice and her explorations of the philosophical tradition. Her work with children is aimed at discovering this difference before the demands of stereotypes set in. Beistegui's reading of the issue of dwelling and his own emphasis can be seen as demonstrating an affirmation of a masculine approach which proposes gender neutral experience and in doing so denies woman her own existence despite its contemporary nature. Irigaray's proposal in response to Heidegger is to ask us to reconsider what it means to live, as sexual beings? To ask ourselves, and the other, what it means to be upon the world where *sex* pervades our being, and where we can work towards the cultural foundation of this difference. This questioning, she insists, has to happen beyond the confines of language which reinforces the fallacy of a fundamental gender-neutral way of experiencing shared by both sexes, and this means '...a liberation of the reality of sex and gender from subjection to a metaphysics or religion that leaves them to an uncultured and instinctual fate' (ILTY, 39)

While Krell also describes the role of language in Heidegger's philosophy stating: '...language is thoroughly prepositional whereby the preposition *in* has a special eminence, as though our being *in* the world, our indwelling were as significant for our horizons as our temporal existence and all historical occurrences are' (Krell, 1995, 44). While, the *in*, for Heidegger, designates a relation of *care* with the other and with Nature or the environment. This very model of

Dasein, of *in*habiting, for Irigaray, suggests not 'love' (which is associated with care in Heidegger's thought) but an exploitative relation to Nature and of the other and a dependency which mirrors the complementary and subordinate role of the feminine in patriarchal economies.² This does not suggest the difference Irigaray proposes when she describes becoming aware of being a woman or a man and wanting to become one which is a matter of desire and energy (see *I Love To You*, as already cited). She argues that the patriarchal model of love, especially for a woman, is limited to a duty, to love for husband or child; 'care' thus cannot be a neutral experience shared by the sexes. She writes: 'She has no right to a singular love not to a love for herself. She is thus unable to love but is to be subjected to love and reproduction. She has to be sacrificed and to sacrifice herself to this task, at the same time disappearing as this or that woman who is alive at the present (*ILTY*, 22).

In *Being and Time* Heidegger describes *Dasein* as '... an entity which, in its very Being, comports itself understandingly towards that Being' (*BT*, 78). Furthermore, he writes that *mineness* is the condition which makes authentic or inauthentic existence possible. He writes: 'Dasein exists. Furthermore, Dasein is an entity which in each case I am myself. Mineness belongs to any existent Dasein and belongs to it as the condition which makes authenticity and inauthenticity possible' (*BT*, 78). Dasein is grounded, Heidegger writes, on that state of being called 'being-in-the-world' and 'Being-in' is a state of *Dasein's* Being. Of being-in-the-world, he writes: 'So one cannot think of it as the Being-present-at-hand of some corporeal Thing (such as a human body) 'in' an entity which is present-at-hand. Nor does the term "Being-in" mean a spatial 'in-one-another-ness' of things present-at-hand, any more than the word 'in' primordially signifies a spatial relationship of this kind' (*BT*, 79-80). However, for Irigaray, this conception bares the marks of the masculine perspective. For Heidegger, the 'in' of being-in; of 'being-in-the-world' is derived from '*innan*' - 'to reside', '*habitare*' or 'to dwell'. The 'in' he writes also means "I am accustomed" or "I am familiar with", "I look after something", "I take care of something" or "I devote myself to something". The translators footnote to *Being and Time* describes Heidegger's influence from

² In *The Way of Love*, Irigaray describes a *being-upon-the-world*.

Grimm, where Grimm notes the connection of 'bei' with 'bauen' to build. Being-in-the-world means to *care*, or to be in a relation of care. To summarize Heidegger writes: 'The entity to which Being-in in this signification belonged is one which we have characterized as that entity which in each case I am myself [*bin*]. The expression '*bin*' is connected with 'bei', and so '*ich bin*' ['I am'] means in turn 'I reside' or 'dwell alongside' the world as that which is familiar to me in such and such a way' (BT, 79-80). He writes: 'Being [Sein] as the infinitive of '*ich bin*' signifies "to reside alongside..." "to be familiar with..." "*Being-in*' is thus the formal existential expression for the Being of Dasein, which has Being-in-the-world as its essential state' (BT, 80). Thus, as an *existential* 'being alongside' or 'in' never means anything like side by side of 'Dasein' with the world - subject and object, man in space, it is a mode of relationality. For Irigaray it is a masculine way of relationality that does not and cannot recognize, acknowledge, or approach a sexuate other: An other that is different and remains difference in desire or in love.

In her essay 'Approaching the Other as Other' in *Between East and West*, Irigaray writes that we have long been educated to make our own all that is pleasing to us, to appropriate, or to incorporate into our own world. Furthermore, she writes: 'On the level of consciousness, on the level of feelings, we make our own what we approach, what approaches us' (KW, 23). This manner of loving corresponds to an appropriation, and this manner of loving is our habit. She writes: 'Our culture, our school education, our cultural formation want it this way: to learn, to know, is to make one's own through instruments of knowledge capable, we believe, of seizing, of taking, of dominating all of reality, all that exists, all that we perceive, and beyond' (KW, 23). This approach to the other, to nature, means that life and the other loses its life and this is in part her criticism of Heidegger. She writes:

We want to have the entire world in our head, sometimes the entire world in our heart. We do not see that this gesture transforms the life of the world into something finished, dead, because the world thus loses its own life, a life always foreign to us, exterior to us, other than us (KW, 23).

However, sometimes, a state of grace, a perception otherwise, can be found, she writes: '[W]hen we are immersed in a new landscape, in an extraordinary cosmic manifestation, when we bathe in an environment that is simultaneously perceptible and imperceptible, knowable and unknowable, visible and invisible to us' (*KW*, 23). In this state, she argues, we can be situated in an event that escapes our control and our imagination. This is one reason for her suggestion of the language of being-upon-the-world, in *The Way of Love*. This whilst there is the necessity for women to become aware of the difficulties they face in contemporary culture and strive to change it. Many have experienced the possibility of living otherwise but struggle to express such thinking.

Language Tells Us Building and Dwelling Belong Together?

The most well known paper to discuss architecture directly is Heidegger's "Building Dwelling Thinking" (with no commas in the title). In it Heidegger investigates two questions: What is it to dwell and; how does building belong to dwelling. Heidegger traces *building* back into the domain to which everything that *is*, belongs. To understand the issue of dwelling, Heidegger suggests, that '...if we listen to what language says (...) we hear three things: 1. Building is really dwelling. 2. Dwelling is the manner in which mortals are on the earth. 3. Building as dwelling unfolds into the building that cultivates growing things and the building that erects buildings' (*BDT*, 148). Dwelling is an activity Heidegger describes as to be at peace, to remain in peace, to be free, to be preserved from harm and danger, to spare, to cherish and protect, to cultivate, to care for, or to return something to its own nature as "letting-be" (*sein-lassen*). Building as dwelling constructs, but it also cultivates, what it means for the human to be in the world. For Irigaray, however, building suggests building oneself in a different relation of care that she describes as being-upon-the-world.

Dwelling is, as already stated, a fundamental experience more originary than any conception of dwelling as sheltering within a building. Dwelling belongs to a different order of experience. The human being dwells in such a way that, as De Beistegui writes:

...in its very being it encounters not just things, or beings, but the very horizon from out of which these things are: the event of presence itself, being as such. There is, if you will, something in excess of being themselves in Dasein's mode of being, and this is the Being (itself not a being) or the "there is" that sustains and preceded the manifestation of all beings (De Beistegui, 2003, 140).

Irigaray challenges this notion of the excess, *air*, she argues, is more fundamentally a mode of permanent "there is".

Building and dwelling are not related only as ends and means, Heidegger writes: 'For building is not merely a means and a way towards dwelling - to build is in itself already to dwell' (*BDT*, 145). Dasein is in relation, which corresponds to *building*. The question of dwelling is not simply related to housing or for that matter building is not some question related to a technique of construction. The questions of building and dwelling are fundamental to what it means to be human and it is as already suggested, this question architects must ask in order to build. However, it is also language that provides Heidegger with this meaning: Language, he writes, '...tells us about the nature of a thing provided that we respect language's own nature' (*BDT*, 146). Further emphasizing the role of language, he writes: 'Man acts as though he were the shaper and master of language, while in fact *language* remains the master of man' (*BDT*, 146, Heidegger's italics). He also argues that perhaps it is man's subversion of this *relationship of dominance* that drives him into the alienation of technological thinking (Heidegger's emphasis, see page 146). Language, in particular poetry, in addition to art and architecture, play important roles in Heidegger's philosophy, but not just as means for communication or representation, as a mode of man's access to the world and to existence: Language tells us that building and dwelling belong together. However, whilst building and dwelling belong together, there is a problem for Irigaray in this correspondence as there is with being and thinking being the same. For example, whilst, Heidegger writes that: 'Bridges and hangars stadiums and power stations are buildings but not dwellings; railway stations and highways, dams and market halls are built but they are not dwelling places. Even still these buildings are in the

domain of our dwelling. That domain extends over these buildings and yet is not limited to the dwelling place" (*BDT*, 145). And if we consider the issue of dwelling as pertaining to a spatiality, it is this spatiality that needs reconsideration. Dwelling is the manner in which human beings are on the earth, this manner is a questioning and an openness, it is how building and dwelling belong together, but not one that goes far enough in its exploration of sexual difference. As Heidegger writes conventionally understood man does not dwell in public buildings: "These buildings house man. He inhabits them and yet he does not dwell in them, where to dwell means merely that we take shelter in them" (*BDT*, 145).

The Question of Love and Dwelling

For Irigaray love is not something that has already existed and that has a language. However, *The Way of Love* does try to anticipate what love could be, how it could exist as a love between two, notably through the use of language. This could be deemed a philosophy of love. Irigaray's "wisdom of love", her philosophy, is one, as she suggests, that includes all the human - body, sex and sexuality - in particular women's sex. Irigaray's criticism is that man has not reached a stage of wisdom in relation to the other, and thus, a part of humanity is left uncultivated. She writes: 'The original place of the relation between two parts of the human has to be cultivated in order for humanity to exist as such' (*WL*, viii). *The Way of Love* proposes ways to approach the other, '...to prepare a place of proximity: with the other in ourselves and between us. The book is in search of gestures, including gestures in language, which could help on the way to nearness, and in order to cultivate it' (*WL*, ix). Thus, her task of philosophy is different from other contemporary philosophising, in particular Heidegger's definition of philosophy as homelessness. She writes:

The task is different. It is a question of making something exist, in the present and even more in the future. It is a matter of staging an encounter between the one and the other - which has not yet occurred, or for which we lack words, gestures, thus the means of welcoming, celebrating, cultivating it in the present and the future. Meeting with the other, the different,

this has happened to us. We were surprised touched, wonderstruck, called beyond or on this side of what we already were (...) Until today, what we have found is, at least, to integrate the other: in our country, our culture, our house. That does not yet signify meeting with the other, speaking with the other, loving with the other (*WL*, ix).

There has to be a meeting with the other beyond the habitual, beyond language, for there to be a meeting between two.

Of Hospitality and the Neighbour

In the example of how *building* belongs to dwelling in 'Building Dwelling Thinking', listening to what language has to say, Heidegger derives a root meaning of the word building (in German *bauen*) as dwelling. This real meaning, has been lost to us, he argues, but some trace of it is found in the word neighbour, or near-dweller, in the Old English *neahgebur* and the High German, *Nachbar*: Heidegger writes, 'Now to be sure the old word *buan*, not only tells us that *bauen*, to build, is really to dwell; it also gives us a clue as to how we have to think about the dwelling it signifies' (*BDT*, 147). In this derivation he argues that dwelling is the manner in which the human *is*, and building corresponds to this manner in which we humans are on earth. He writes:

When we speak of dwelling we usually think of an activity that man performs alongside many other activities. We work here and we dwell there. We do not merely dwell – that would be virtual inactivity – we practice a profession, we do business, we travel and lodge on the way, now here, now there. *Bauen* originally means to dwell. Where the word *bauen* still speaks in its original sense it also says how far the nature of dwelling reaches. That is, *bauen*, *buan*, *bhu*, *beo* are our word *bin* in the versions: *ich bin*, I am, *du bist*, you are, the imperative form, *bis*, be. What then does *ich bin* mean? The old word *bauen* to which the *bin* belongs, answers: *ich bin*, *du bist* mean: I dwell, you dwell. The way in which you are and I am, the manner in which we humans are on earth, is *Buan*, dwelling (*BDT*, 147).

How building belongs to dwelling can also be explored in the question what is a built-thing. His essay, 'The Thing' elaborates this question and uses an example of the jug. However, Irigaray,

argues in both examples that Heidegger builds without caring for the other, he dwells without caring for the other, and being-with cannot be coexistence where meaning is derived through language in this manner.

Irigaray's criticism of dwelling implies an engagement with Heidegger and yet it also suggests a tradition of thought that has demonstrated some influence from Heidegger's thinking. Heidegger argues that not every building is a dwelling place. He writes: 'That domain extends over these buildings and yet is not limited to the dwelling place' (*BDT*, 145). Furthermore, if dwelling is the end goal and building its means, Heidegger argues this, '...means-end schema blocks our view of essential relations' (*BDT*, 146). He writes that to build is to dwell and dwelling is our way of being-in-the-world: 'For building is not merely a means and a way towards dwelling – to build is in itself already to dwell. Who tells us this? Who gives us a standard at all by which we can take the measure of the nature of dwelling and building?' (*BDT*, 145) The answer to this question is language, as he argues:

It is language that tells us about the nature of a thing, provided that we respect language's own nature. In the meantime, to be sure, there rages around the earth an unbridled yet clever talking, writing, broadcasting of spoken words. Man acts as though he were the shaper and master of language, while in fact language remains the master of man. Perhaps it is before all else man's subversion of this relation of dominance that drives his nature into alienation. That we retain a concern for care in speaking is all to the good, but it is of no help to us as long as language still serves us even then only as a means of expression. Among all the appeals that we human beings, on our part, can help to be voiced, language is the highest and everywhere the first (*BDT*, 146).

This means that building belong to dwelling, but it also means building suggests both to care and to construct, through language, Heidegger writes:

To be a human being means to be on earth as a mortal. It means to dwell. The old word *bauen*, which says that man is insofar as he dwells, this word *bauen*, however, also means at the same time to cherish and protect, to preserve and care for, specifically to till the soil, to cultivate the vine. Such building only takes care – it tends the growth that ripens into its fruit

of its own accord. Building in the sense of preserving and nurturing is not making anything. Shipbuilding and temple-building, on the other hand, do in a certain way make their own works (*BDT*, 147).

These two aspects of building correspond to how we are in the world - as cultivating and in construction. Heidegger writes of this latter aspect:

Here building, in contrast with cultivating, is a constructing. Both modes of building – building as cultivating, Latin *colere*, *cultura*, and building as the raising up edifices, *aedificare* – and comprised with genuine building, that is, dwelling. Building as dwelling, that is, as being on the earth, however, remains for man's everyday experience that which is from the outset 'habitual' – we inhabit it, as our language says so beautifully: it is the *Gewohnte*. For this reasons it recedes behind the manifold ways in which dwelling is accomplished, the activities of cultivation and construction. These activities later claim the name *bauen*, building, and with it the fact of building, exclusively for themselves. The real sense of *bauen*, namely dwelling, falls into oblivion. At first sight this event looks as though it were no more than a change of meaning of mere terms. In truth, however, something decisive is concealed in it, *namely, dwelling is not experienced as man's being; dwelling is never thought of as the basic character of human being*. That language in a way retracts the real meaning if the word *bauen*, which is dwelling, is evidence of the primal nature of these meanings; for with the essential words of language, their true meaning easily falls into oblivion in favour of foreground meanings. Man has hardly yet pondered the mystery of this process. Language withdraws from man its simple and high speech. But its primal call does not thereby become incapable of speech; it merely falls silent. Man, though, fails to heed this silence (*BDT*, 146).

Challenging this sort of derivation Irigaray argues that we must take charge of the act of speaking so as to transform it. This is not as the poetic-speaking Heidegger suggests, rather she argues that we must take charge of the act of speaking so as not to be dictated to by already existing language and the world. Such an act of speaking, of dialogue, is a listening, but also an experience of speech and thereby language irreducible to any other. She writes: '*...we would not have to listen to what comes back to us from a language or world already there*' (*WL*, xi, authors italics): It is a matter of listening but in a way listening so that we can respond to it and remain in faithfulness to ourselves,

as she writes: ' An encounter between two different subjects implies that each one attends to remaining oneself' (*WL*, xiv). Building is thus, for Irigaray, not something purely external; it does not concern the Thing, it is not in an unveiling, or in the event of the Thing. According to Irigaray dwelling takes place through a building between two, in a refuge and hospitality offered to the other in his or her becoming. This has to reconstruct how it is to carry out philosophy and create an encounter.

The Question of Sexual Difference in Dwelling

How *as women* can women live? Or how and where *as women* can women dwell? Is what Irigaray asks Heidegger to reconsider. In *The Forgetting of Air* it is, she argues sexual difference constitutes Heidegger's unthought, it underlies the longing that drives Dasein's questioning – his homelessness. Implicit in his thought, she proposes, is a more primordial longing for a reunion with the other. Irigaray places herself, as woman, in Heidegger's philosophy, within his thinking, to try to find uncover and play with the play of sexual difference so that a different reality might emerge. It leads Irigaray to argue that all Heidegger's philosophical comings and goings, turnings and departures, separations are longed-for reunions. She argues for an acknowledgement of the material condition that make entry into presence possible, and suggest the possibility of a sensible transcendental missing from his thought suggesting a different rhythm and a different desire. Irigaray evokes *air* as this material condition in Heidegger's work, the 'what is' that makes entry into presence possible. Air, she argues, is the condition for Heidegger's philosophy, but this passes unnoticed. She writes:

It [air] is the (sensible and) transcendental condition (the physical ground) for the oppositions that constitute the structure of metaphysics; but because it offers nothing to the eye, slips away and holds itself in reserve, it cannot properly be said to "be" Like "woman", it eludes capture in the metaphysical categories. Thus, could not air be said to constitute the proper house of being? The proper home of the being who asks the question of being? And yet, this philosopher, concerned above all with finding that home, passes by and through air without noticing it (End papers, *L'Oubli de l'air*, authors translation).

Thus, underneath the desire for a proper dwelling, for the mineness of Dasein, lies a need for the recognition of a more primordial home, *air* frees Heidegger from this need.

Irigaray's corpus of work as a whole sets out to expose Western philosophy as a construction shaped by the needs of the male and based on models of exclusion. This also means that "woman" (stereotyped or maternal in character) is utilised by Western thinking to represent what is outside, other to this discourse, but it is also simultaneously what it is dependent on for its existence: Western thought, represses and devalues women, whilst at the same time woman is symbolised and elevated as the maternal feminine.

Irigaray's criticisms of the traditions of Western philosophy are thus that of the repression of the feminine, and of the repression of sexual difference. Philosophical discourse, she argues, universalizes the subject in a process that normalizes the male as the universal subject. The cultural order that results from this type of thinking imprisons both male and female. She writes that for women, the effects are an alienation, a lack of proper identity, but for man the effects are also an imprisonment, cutting him off from his real nature and not allowing him to recognize a sexuate other. And yet, Irigaray's work not only provides a criticism of the influence of patriarchy on western discourse, it suggests, how it may be otherwise. Nevertheless, the path is not easy to find, she writes:

Turning back to oneself to be reborn free, animated by (ones/his/hers/their) movements, words, breath seems to be most decisive conquest for women. But everything pulls her out of herself. From the very beginning, she starts to measure herself against masculine performance, as though that represented the most noble duty. She knows for all that woman and man are not really two, are still two parts of a whole, but she identifies herself none the less with half of humanity and above that not her own half. Under the pretext of liberation, isn't she doubly betrayed by herself, she does not find herself (one) she leaves herself to search for herself where she is not. She effaces the traces of femininity, already so hidden, so much that they are no longer visible (*AB*, 10e).

The Spatiality of Dasein and Care

Dasein is the name Heidegger gives to existence. Heidegger writes that we find and situate ourselves, as *Dasein*, held out into the nothing, the open or the free. There (*Da*) in the "clearing" *Da-sein* comports itself to ask the question of its existence. *Dasein* inhabits, or dwells in the myriad of possibilities that come towards it and in so doing also holds open the domain of dwelling. De Bestegui writes that man *is* insofar as he stands ecstatically in the midst of things. Insofar that his stance is itself a clearing. De Beistegui writes '...he stands open to more than just those things that surround and affect him: to the world as such and as whole, to the Open or the truth of being. It is this very connection to truth as disclosedness, this specific mode of standing in the world, that characterises the essence of man' (De Bestgui, 2003, 15). This stance also corresponds to *care*. To reinforce this argument De Beigestui cites Heidegger in "Letter on 'Humanism'":

...[t]he human being occurs essentially in such a way that he is the "there" [*das "Da"*], that is, the clearing of being. The "being" of the *Da*, and only it, has the fundamental character of ek-sistence, that is, of an ecstatic inherence in the truth of being. The ecstatic essence of the human being consists in ek-sistence, which is difference from the metaphysically conceived *existentia*. Medieval philosophy conceives the latter as *actualitis*. Kant represents *existentia* as actuality in the sense of the objectivity of experience. Hegel defines *existentia* as the self-knowing Idea of absolute subjectivity. Nietzsche grasps *existentia* as the external recurrence of the same (...) Ek-sistence, thought in terms of ecstasis, does not coincide with *existentia* in either form or content (Heidegger, 1998, 247-248).

In this way "Essence" is defined as the ek-static character of *Dasein*. In terms of care Heidegger writes that as ek-sisting, the human being sustains *Da-sein* in that he takes the *Da*, the clearing of being, into "care" (see Heidegger, 1998, 248). Hence, for Heidegger, human existence refers primarily to a way of relating to the world, to a stance within the world. He is not in the world as an object in space or as substance: He is spatiality. De Beistegui citing Heidegger writes in a letter to Jean Beaufret of 1949:

This withstanding is experience under the name 'care'. The ecstatic essence of *Dasein* is

thought in terms of care, and conversely care is experienced adequately only in its ecstatic essence. Withstanding, experienced in this manner, is the essence of the ecstatic that is to be thought here. The ecstatic essence of existence is therefore still understood inadequately as long as one thinks of it as merely a "standing out", while interpreting the "out" as meaning "away from" the interior of an immanence of consciousness or spirit (...) The stasis of the ecstatic consists - strange as it may sound - in standing in the "out" and "there" of unconcealed, as which being itself unfolds. What is meant by "existence" in the context of a thinking that is prompted by, and directed towards, the truth of being, could be most felicitously designated by the word "in-stance". The proposition "the human being exists" means: the human being is that being whose being is distinguished by an openstanding that stands in the unconcealedness of being (De Bestegui, 2003, 15-16).

The manner in which *Dasein* is, is that being is an issue for it. It is that the world as such and as a whole, is at issue for it. *Dasein* is a questioning. *Dasein*'s essence is its ek-static character, is its 'standing'. *Dasein*'s essence is its being-in-the-world in a relation of care. Hence, man does not stand in the world as a thing, as De Bestegui writes: '[man] stands "in" the world insofar as it stands outside of itself, disclosing the world, clearing things within it, inhabiting it' (De Bestegui, 2003, 16). *Dasein* is a being-in-the-world in a different way to other beings, and in a different way to scientific models of the subject. *Da-sein*'s questioning and the *in* of being-in-the-world suggest a relationality, which Heidegger calls care, but to formulate the relation with architecture, it is also thought in terms of building in 'Building Dwelling Thinking'. Beistegni writes:

To be in something in such a way that one inhabits it or feels "at home" in it thus presupposes this relation of familiarity born of an impossibility not to be concerned with or to care for that within which one finds oneself. Such is the reason why Heidegger insists that we understand the "in" of *Dasein*'s "being-in" on the basis of the Old German verb "innan", to inhabit, to dwell (De Beistegni, 2003, 141)

Hence, to be in the world, to dwell, is to be in a relationality. Whilst Heidegger writes that man is in so far as he dwells, and to dwell also means to cherish protect, preserve and care for and to build. Whilst being on the earth is man's everyday experience, this mode of being has been forgotten.

Heidegger writes:

That language in a way retracts the real meaning of the word *bauen*, which is dwelling is evidence of the primal nature of these meanings; for which the essential words of language, their true meaning easily falls into oblivion in favour of foreground meanings. Man has hardly yet pondered the mystery of this process. Language withdraws from man its simple and high speech. But its primal call does not thereby become incapable of speech; it merely falls silent. Man thought, fails to heed this silence (*BDT*, 147).

However, there is another relation to the other, according to Irigaray, than that which suggests a subordinated other, or an appropriated other and Irigaray writes: 'For the welcome to be real, it is important to step back behind one's own horizon, beyond the limit of what was until then proper to oneself in order, beyond the threshold, to question the unknown who comes' (*WL*, 77). This text suggests a passage to another reality, to another look, another light, to a relation to oneself, to the world, we do not yet know. Irigaray writes of this that it concerns an opening of oneself to another truth that will never have a site on earth; and which she deems being-upon-the-earth (see *WD*, 78). She writes: 'It is upon ourselves and upon our world that we henceforth have to impose a negativity and not upon the world that we henceforth have to impose a negativity and not upon the world which stands in front of us' (*WD*, 78).

Dwelling has to be a matter of coexisting, of being with, but where being-with can take account of the differences between man and woman at a relational level. Irigaray's work develops accounts of sexual difference that acknowledge the existence of the two sexes, of two bodies, two forms desire, two ways of living and sustaining this living. In this way Irigaray aims to promote and encourage the development of modes of relation. Where women's identity is given by themselves and not by male theory. Nevertheless, this has also lead to conflict with feminist theorists and to a criticism of essentialism. Feminists have feared that Irigaray's work will act against campaigns for equal rights.

Irigaray is a somewhat controversial figure, but the accusations made within the feminist

community have stifled understandings of her work. Despite Irigaray's engagement with and criticism of Heidegger, only recently have these accusations begun to be put aside. Dwelling requires rethinking the relation between the sexes so that each has the right to their own mode of relationality. This cannot be thought in terms of essentialism. As Irigaray writes:

The unity of the relation between two subjects is a creation, a work of the two elaborated starting from the attraction, the desire which pushes the one towards the other without the relation being then already conceived as a "with the other" (*WL*, 78).

The Question of Essence and The Sexed Body

Whitford explores the criticisms of essentialism, but she also views Irigaray's philosophy as suggesting essentialism as provisional, as a temporary house. Whitford argues in her somewhat poetic terms, that *mimeticism* (or mimicry) is Irigaray's strategy, that essentialism is her stage and this 'stage' is obligatory if women are to become subjects in the symbolic. Whitford further suggests that Irigaray has no choice over essentialism that one cannot get beyond essentialism without passing through essentialism. Male philosophers are free, she argues, because of the founding exclusion in language of the maternal-feminine. The male subject or rather subjectivity as thought within patriarchal traditions is free to deny their own essential. Whereas women, in order to grow, not only have to pass through essentialism, but to speak its language. This could suggest a misreading of Irigaray's work without a discussion of what Whitford means by essentialism. A better re-evaluation of Irigaray's relation to this debate would be her thinking on sexual difference. As already stated, for Heidegger, *Dasein* is ek-static, for Irigaray, woman has a different relation to the other and Nature, one that does not deny the significance of the body but one that cannot be described within the confines of the debates surrounding essentialism.

Irigaray's strategy is the recovery of this feminine mode of relation from masculine philosophies. Through the subject of her critique, usually a philosopher or psychoanalyst who has contributed significantly to Western thought, she investigates the motives of his thought, its

imagery, and his relationship to the feminine. The stage of all Western discourse is the maternal body. Mother is the ground for the subjects projection and also his transcendence. Irigaray's philosophising aims to rethink this dependence, a dependence on the maternal body that he forgets. In her philosophy Irigaray not only determines a dependence on the maternal body but also 'listens' for what is silent, what is absent, what the male cannot express - and associates this with the feminine. Engaging with this drama, and adopting the position of the feminine, is a subversion of it and allowing dialogue is, one way for woman as woman where she as yet has no language to express herself. Nevertheless, it is not Irigaray's only strategy.

Irigaray's position with regard to feminism can seem ambiguous. She has been criticised by the feminist movement as being disinterested in political action. This criticism can be argued as one not only directed at Irigaray but directed generally as the division between those involved in feminist philosophy and those promoting feminist action. Some accuse her of being an essentialist, as already stated, and thereby acting against the struggle for equality. Irigaray's position with regard to feminism and her own political views are discussed in an early paper 'Equal or Different?', where she criticises the work of Simone De Beauvoir. Her question in the paper is that directed at feminists, and De Beauvoir, who campaigned for equal rights. She asks, Equal to what? What do women want to be equal to, Men? Why not to themselves? Irigaray thereby suggests that if the exploitation of women is based on sexual difference it can, therefore, only be resolved through sexual difference: Women can only take up equal sexual rights if they can find some value in the cultural symbolic of being women and not simply mothers.

However, Irigaray's position with regard to equal rights and difference does not, stop her campaigning for women's rights. Irigaray's position with regard to feminism represents an attempt to address a bigger struggle, to challenge the foundations of the cultural and social order that subordinates and excludes women's specificity. She is a political thinker in the broadest sense, who wants to transform the whole order of the *polis*, so that women can take their place. For women to have rights according to the law, she states, they first need to be allowed access to a sexual identity

- equal rights need to be campaigned for as equal but necessarily different sexual rights. Equal rights need to be fought for but not so as women become assimilated into the world as men. The danger of accepting the current political system as one that can address the desires of women is that women have to become men to be equal – which leads Irigaray to challenge the political system. Moreover, the danger is that in struggles for equality that do not simultaneously address difference women fall back into a language and a social order which exiles and excludes them. Furthermore, the problem with philosophies of sexual difference, as the accusation of essentialism suggests, is that historically women's difference has been used against them and without cultural change, it will continue to be so. She writes: 'If the Being of one of the two elements is taken as the only pole of division, its relation with the other becomes impossible' (*WL*, 79). In this way the question of essence is secondary, as is the question of feminism.

The Thing and the other: Woman

To return to the question of dwelling and building, which as stated belong together according to Heidegger: Heidegger writes that building portrays nothing, it discloses '...in it's standing there'. He writes that if we listen to what building tells us it gives things their look and to men their outlook on themselves. In the example of the bridge-Thing in 'Building, Thinking, Dwelling,' Heidegger writes that '...the bridge makes location' that is to say, the bridge makes place come into presence and elements emerge as what they are. The bridge brings the stream and bank and land into each other's neighbourhood, the bridge 'gathers', a word Heidegger derives as associated with word 'Thing', in other terms as "an assembly". The bridge as thing and location allows 'site'. Only something that is a location can make space and provide site and only things that are locations in the manner of the bridge allow site for building. The thing as Thing is thus location and 'standing there' the Thing, opens up 'what is' or world. The temple, for example, as Thing, makes 'visible' the rockiness of the rock and makes 'visible' the

invisibility of the air. It makes room for the 'four-fold', which Heidegger describes as earth, sky, mortals, and gods all belonging in a mirror play which constitutes the world. This mirror-play of the four-fold is space made clear, wherein things appear as what they are.

Buildings, for Heidegger, admit and install the 'four-fold', as things, which put up location. They also set up space. Space, for Heidegger, is neither external object nor inner experience. He writes: '...spaces open up by the fact that they are let into the dwelling of man' (*BTD*, 157).

For architectural readers of the text 'Building Dwelling Thinking' Heidegger resolves the question of architecture by saying that first we must think the nature of things which themselves require building as the process in which they are made. It is this way space is set up. This intensity of thinking the question is the first step to building (see *BTD*, 154). However, in a feminist criticism of Heidegger questions arise as to the absence of adequate thought to the body, to the nature of desire (or strange presence and absence of it) and sexual difference, as already stated. Allowing a subjectivity for women or doubling subjectivity (in Irigaray's terms) would mean a different sort of poetic dwelling, a different way of speaking, a dialogical way which would take into account both man and woman's use of language and way of speaking. This would initiate a different poetics. Such a language would not conform to Western logic or scientific thinking that Heidegger's criticises but neither would it conform to Heidegger's 'thinking', nor his valorisation of poets such as Rilke Trakl, Hölderlin (*WD*, 131). Irigaray argues, these poets lacks the energy of desire shared by two subjects and the energy for getting beyond dereliction linked to death and solitude (*WD*, 133).

To work with the criticisms suggested by Irigaray's readings of Heidegger, provides the possibility of a different sort of conception of Things, a different open 'between' (for the four-fold) and a different *Gestalt*. Moreover, the exchange between these two subjectivities would create a third language, which unfolds between two modes of speaking; a language we still do not know, and is yet to be created (*WD*, 131). The event of the 'Thing' in Heidegger's thought for Irigaray

refuses the female wholly other. Approaching the other for Irigaray, as already suggested, means recognising an irreducibility between two which are equal and different as the place of a future construction. The location that is the thing whilst it refuses a female wholly other, she argues, presumes that nothing remains outside. Irigaray's question in *The Forgetting of Air* is directed to what man *is*, and can be before the Being of man already is? Before he dwells in language, before he listens to, and responds to language and the world, which he is. Furthermore, Irigaray questions whether there can be a place for the feminine that is not pre-apprehended by language, something he otherwise assimilates to envision the free space. In addition, she questions why there is the need for a clearing; a free space opened up where authentic existence becomes possible, where air suffices. Thus, when Heidegger questions the danger of modern technological and scientific thinking for man's habitation, Irigaray argues that, he remains within a patriarchal perspective. Something happens to desire in Heidegger's work, where, it presumes that '... nothing can come about unexpectedly outside the space-time that is already determined by and for the Being of man' (*FA*, 25). Furthermore, Irigaray argues that is the Being of one is taken as the only pole of division, with the distinction of Being and being relation with the other becomes impossible. She writes:

It will seek in the other the lost whole, the complement of its amputated Being, the instrument of its division or of its reunification. It will claim or believe that a single term is capable of establishing a universal model, this model becoming from then on inappropriate to the human being in its totality and, moreover, or at the same time, authoritarian and dogmatic (*WL*, 79).

What allows dwelling, she argues, is the limit created by each being faithful to oneself and to a relation with the other in their irreducibility. That the other cannot be contained, thus, complicates what Heidegger describes as the fold and the Open. It radicalises this clearing, which, for Heidegger, is the place where thinking takes place. It is no longer a matter of receiving the gift of language, of what it says about things, but of listening to what the other says, or wants to say, beyond the confines of language. For example, Irigaray writes: '...it is not because of my speech the

other exists' (*WL*, 162). If this suggests another open, fold or clearing, this place would be silent but then even to describe it as a silence could be to misrepresent the positivity or fertility of this silence. She writes: 'Taking account of the transcendence of the other in thinking amounts rather to a releasing all hold that sends each one back to what or who he or she, is' (*WL*, 163). This approach to the other rethinks all notions of dialogue, of seeing, hearing, of speech and listening. She writes: 'The truth that discloses itself in this way is related to the moment of encounter, its light keeping a human measure. It is only bestowed thanks to a fidelity of each to oneself' (*WL*, 163).

The Example of the 'Bridge' as Bridge Towards the other

Heidegger uses the bridge in 'Building Dwelling Thinking,' as an example to clarify how building belongs to dwelling, or, to use his words, '...what building understood by way of the nature of dwelling really *is*' (*BDT*, 152, Heidegger's italics). He writes that for the answer to how building belongs to dwelling, what building understood by the way of the nature of dwelling really *is*, limiting the question to the built thing, a bridge may serve as an example for such reflections (see *BDT*, 152). Of the bridge, he writes:

The bridge (...) does not just connect banks that are already there. The banks emerge as banks only as the bridge crosses the stream. The bridge designedly causes them to lie across from each other. One side is set off against the other by the bridge. Nor do the banks stretch along the stream as indifferent border strips of the dry land. With the banks, the bridge brings to the stream the one and the other expanse of the landscape lying behind them. It brings stream and bank and land into each other's neighbourhood. The bridge gathers the earth as landscape around the stream. Thus it guides and attends the stream through the meadows. Resting upright in the stream's bed, the bridge-piers bear the swing of the arches that leave the stream's waters to run their course. The waters may wander on quiet and gay, the sky's floods from storm or thaw may shoot past the piers in torrential waves – the bridge is ready for the sky's weather and its fickle nature. Even where the bridge covers the stream, it holds its flow up to the sky by taking it for a moment under the vaulted gateway and then setting it free once more. The bridge lets the stream run its course and at the same time grants their

way to mortals so that they may come and go from shore to shore. Bridges lead in many ways. The city bridge leads from the precincts of the castle to the cathedral square; the river bridge near the country town brings wagons and horse teams to the surrounding villages. The old stone bridges humble brook crossing gives to the harvest wagon its passage from the fields into the village and carries the limber cart from the field path to the road. The highway bridge is tied into the network of long-distant traffic, paced as calculated for maxim yield. Always and ever differently the bridge escorts the lingering and hastening ways of men to and fro, so that they may get to other bank and in the end, as mortals, to the other side. Now in a high arch, now in a low, the bridge vaults over glen and stream – whether mortals keep in mind this vaulting of the bridges' course or forget that they, always themselves on their way to the last bridge are actually striving to surmount all threat is common and unsound in them in order to bring themselves before the haleness of the divinities. The bridge *gathers*, as a passage that crosses, before the divinities – whether we explicitly think of, and visibly *gives thanks for*, their presence as in the figure of the saint of the bridge, or whether that divine presence is obstructed or even pushed wholly aside (*BTD*, 153).

Tracing building back into '...the domain to which everything that *is* belongs,' respecting the nature of language and deriving an ancient meaning of the word "thing" as gathering, the "bridge," as thing, Heidegger writes, '...*gathers* to itself *in its own* way earth and sky, divinities and mortals,' allowing that which appears to show itself in its own way (*BTD*, 145, 153). It does not simply connect banks already there. He argues that the banks emerge as banks as the bridge crosses the stream. In this manner, the bridge makes, '...a free realm that safeguards each thing in its nature' (*BTD*, 153-154).

Similarly, Heidegger's mode of existence, or *Da-sein*, holds open a domain to perceive what it encounters and what addresses it: To exist as *Da-sein*, means to hold open a domain, or a free-realm, through its '...capacity to receive-perceive the significance of the things that are given to it and that address it by its virtue of its own "clearing".' (*ZS*, 4) We find and situate ourselves in our own way in this "clearing" and only held out into the nothing, to the open or free, into the "clearing" can *Da-sein* can only comport itself to ask the question of existence. Contrary to

contemporary scientific and conventional psychoanalytic models, Heidegger's view of human existence, *Da-sein*, thus consists of 'pure' invisible intangible capacities for receiving-perceiving what it encounters and what addresses it and is not something which can be objectified at all under any circumstances (see *ZS*, 4).

Thus, for Heidegger, the experience of being as subject (and corresponding object) whilst it has existed since Descartes, our culture has long been accustomed to this thinking, to understating the nature of a thing as an unknown with perceptible properties attached to it. But the gathering nature of the bridge-thing cannot be understood, as an object with property afterwards read into it. The bridge-thing cannot be in space and man opposed to space. Apace made by the bridge is space open through human existence; the bridge makes location. Heidegger uses the bridge, and his poetic description of it, to illustrate human existence. He writes:

...people think of the bridge as primarily and really merely a bridge; after that, and occasionally, it might possibly express much else besides; and as such an expression it would then become a symbol, (...) But the bridge, if it is a true bridge, is never first of all a mere bridge and then afterwards a symbol. And just as little is the bridge in the first place exclusively a symbol, in the sense that it expresses something that strictly speaking does not belong to it. If we take the bridge strictly as such, it never appears as an expression. The bridge is a thing and *only that*. Only? As this thing it gathers the fourfold (*BTD*, 153).

However, in criticism of this illustration Irigaray argues in *The Forgetting of Air* that Heidegger refuses to perceive his entry into the world as a passage or a 'bridge' between male and female:

'Entre l'un et l'autre, l'un et l'une, il n'y a pas du moins au present de passage. L'être serait une attente dont l'ouverture s'est refermée encircle – aussi de l'oubli – pour qu'y demeure en repose le penser.' (Between one, and the other, between a male one and a female one, there is, at least at present, no passage. Being would be a waiting whose opening has closed itself up in a circle – likewise in oblivion – so that the thinker can remain at rest there) (*FA*, 23).

Furthermore, of Heidegger's illustration, Irigaray writes: 'With its construction the *there is* of the bridge has carried away that other towards whom it sought to be the passage' (*FA*, 23). Irigaray

suggests a question towards both the motivation that constructs the 'bridge,' and the nature of the 'clearing,' free realm or location gathered into the constitution of *Da-sein*. Irigaray argues that there are two oblivions for Heidegger not the one of being he describes, but of the first place, of his maternal origin, and the passage of blood and air. The second the oblivion of a desire of a female wholly other. These are not unrelated. The other is and assimilated and projected and in so doing, she argues, Heidegger culls Nature and keeps her confined within his dwelling: It is necessary to return to a beginning before Heidegger's thought, to a mode of relation that language does not privilege. She argues that it is necessary to return to the *from which* or *of what*, his capacities for receiving-perceiving are made. She writes: '...being must have assimilated something in order to be; pocket of air or blood, the real first place, materiality is assimilated' (FA, 28). In order to construct the bridge, there must be, she argues, an imperceptible passage from one air to another. To think sexuate difference there must be a different sort of receiving-perceiving that can perceive the other, recognising that there is desire in his relation to the other. The perception of another passage, or another sort of bridge, she describes as from one air to another, or from one invisibility to another (FA, 28).

Irigaray argues that human existence is suspended between two in Heidegger's thought the *from which* or the *of what* his capacities for receiving-perceiving are made and the feminine 'other,' towards which the bridge conveys, but Heidegger recognises neither. Irigaray argues that in part outside Heidegger's thought, is a free energy not determined by the living being that he or she is from birth, nor by language. Women understand this condition, however, this evades Heidegger, and a tradition of male philosophers influenced by his work. Even when Heidegger tries to think the 'other', or in Heidegger's terms the nothing that 'scientific thinking' rejects as a possible question, it is only a mood that can only legitimate the question, this nothing is gathered into the constitution of *Da-sein*, legitimised by an experience of anxiety. He writes of: 'Anxiety in the face of ... but not concerning this thing or that' (PM, 88) This anxiety constitutes *Da-sein*: 'Anxiety is there. It is only sleeping. Its breath quivers perceptually through *Da-sein* (...) those daring ones are sustained by

that on which they expend themselves – in order thus to perceive the ultimate grandeur of *Da-sein*.’ (PM, 88). We sometimes meet things we cannot comprehend and, Irigaray suggests in her criticisms of Heidegger, this experience has often been deferred ‘...to the invisibility of a God or into the fear of a nightmare. That which evokes the times before birth for example’ (BTHME, 4e). Or projected in myth onto the sea, and the earth, and illustrated in the heroic journey’s of myth of Oedipus, for example, or by the poets influential to Heidegger. But Heidegger constructs a world where language shapes existence, where language takes the place of nature. For Irigaray, with this gesture he rejects the possibility of a relationship with things where language has not yet imposed its shape on nature. The thing as such thus does not suggest the possibility of a space for sexed identity. This is Irigaray’s fundamental criticism of Heidegger. She writes: ‘...no more than the life-death watch that is our obligation from birth, if not before (...) When he thinks he is master; he is slave to belief’ (SG, 31). The bridge that Irigaray suggests ‘practicable and mobile’ is that between two different subjects each contributing to a *building* both proper to oneself and appropriate in relation to the other.

Air and Breath

The perception of another passage, or another sort of bridge, from one air (an air Heidegger argues nevertheless imperceptibly sustains *Da-sein*, to another) an autonomous breathing, for example. Or from one invisibility to another in a cultivation of perception; or from a reflected light to another interior illumination, all describe the move that women need to make to win their own autonomies. This would correspond to women’s liberation, or to a *free everyday perspective* for women. The feminine is not called to carry out the task of construction a world, which is similar to man’s. Irigaray writes: ‘To become a world herself, to cultivate herself without violence or power over what surrounds her – all these correspond more to the feminine ‘to be’.’ (TBT, 72) For Irigaray, *building* to cultivate two, would be a question of whether women are creative enough to exert an

energy that escapes the mastery of Western cultural forms, that is to say, to construct 'bridges' that correspond to their creative capacities, or to their own 'to be'. To speak of women's liberation without this course, Irigaray writes, is not simply possible (see *AB*, 7e).

Cultivating breath is, for Irigaray, one such 'bridge' towards the feminine 'to be'. Breath provides a bridge between the world and is never separated from nature. Moreover, it can transform and transubstantiate it (*AB*, 7e). Breath awakens and arouses a reserve of free energy, she writes, it corresponds to a new *parousia* (see *Marine Lover*, and *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*). It corresponds to the divine in women but this she writes '...does not necessarily signify for women that entity called God exists. The relation of the woman with God seems both subtler and more incarnated, less reduced to an object (...) sent beyond our world' (*AB*, 7e). Breath is enough for women. Women have no need of idols. She writes: 'It is ideal for me (...). A breath of fresh air and the world changes substance. Still material, it is subtilized, transubstantiated (...) Each inspiration brings you truth' (*AB*, 4e). For women, it is a question of making this divinity her own, she argues, accepting responsibility for it, of incarnating actively in herself the divinity received at birth (see *AB*, 4e). She writes: 'This breath as vital or spiritual matter of a human being corresponds to this third ground from which we can appear as humans and relate between us' (*AB*, 20e).

Perception

Cultivating perception, attentive to qualities both of what or who is perceived, to the invisible (or other) in the who or what, and the invisibility of the one who perceives, would also correspond more to a feminine 'to be'. In *The Age of Breath*, cultivating 'breath,' corresponds to a mode of woman's 'to be', arousing a sort of energy and receptivity that cannot be mastered. Cultivating a sort of contemplative perception would be another way, in that she writes:

If you remain alive, my gaze my senses are always aroused by your present intentions, and I cannot fall asleep in my knowledge of you, in the repetition of what I have already felt from you, as long as a stronger sensation keeps me awake. Your gestures, if they are inspired by your

desire, attract my attention, my gaze. Its horizon is not closed but remains open upon your mystery, upon your intention. Turning towards you, my eyes are centred upon you but they do not yet have, within, an image or a spectacle. They are always and already virginal when looking at you, at the expression of your desire (*AB*, 20e).

Thinking dwelling in architecture as a receiving-perceiving, or as a ‘...hospitality given to the other as other not only in one’s own country in one’s own home but also in oneself – in one’s own body, and in one’s own breath, one’s own mind or soul’; could be a way of thinking the possibility of being-two in architecture (*BTHME*, 14e). Perhaps thinking dwelling as a co-existence could be imagined as two intertwining ‘bridges’, and a third place of hospitality, of life and ‘love’. However, first of all it must be a matter of finding an autonomous existence for women, an interiority at the same time as maintaining correspondence. To think sexuate difference there must be a different sort of receiving-perceiving that can perceive the other and that recognises that there is life and desire in the other. Whilst the properties of feminine identity remain to be thought, cultivating an interior energy not determined by the living being that he or she is from birth, nor by a learned culture, an energy the Western cultural traditions forget: In this respect the cultivation of the ‘to be’ of woman may also be capable of redirecting man to his own ‘to be’. If women refuse cultivation of the senses, in a perception that is attentive to the qualities both of what is perceived and of the one who perceives, we reject the possibility of a space to encounter the other and we renounce sexuate difference. Nevertheless, Irigaray writes: ‘The rift between the other and me is irreducible. To be sure we can build bridges, join our energies, feast and celebrate encounters, but the union is never definitive, on pain of no longer existing’ (*WL*, 157).

1.2 Building Bridges Between Those that Love Each Other, and the Influence of Heidegger in Irigaray’s Philosophy

Whitford suggests, in *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine* that the influence on Irigaray of

Heidegger's philosophy is a particularly interesting, but as yet little discussed. She writes that although Irigaray has sympathy for phenomenological philosophies which stress language, the body and ethics, none of these philosophies address the issue of sexual difference. Irigaray's criticism is that phenomenology reproduces in one form or the other, the image, needs and desires of the male body. Mortensen argues in *The Feminine and Nihilism* that Irigaray's critique of phenomenological thinking, is primarily with that of the conceived certainty of the subject and of what the subject understands and perceives. Mortensen suggests that Irigaray rejects the phenomenological tradition, insofar, as it assumes language and appearance are the totality of what is. She argues that Irigaray proposes that the feminine cannot be approached within phenomenological philosophy as she cannot be seen within traditional 'phenomenological optics'. Mortensen writes that women's specificity will always be outside, invisible and 'elsewhere' to this phallogentric framework. Thus, phenomenology is not, in her review of Irigaray's philosophy, a valid structure for such an investigation: It is an apparatus foreign to women, belonging to masculine logic. However, Irigaray does engage with phenomenology, she does not dismiss it out of hand. Her strategies to recover female desire and rethink sexual difference have, as she admits, learnt from the phenomenological tradition. Her work is often described as a 'tracing back' which has similarities with Heidegger's method. However, Irigaray also argues that the feminine is more primordial than Heidegger's thinking and that of the phenomenological tradition. Sexual or sexuate difference is a rediscovery, challenging patriarchal prohibitions, beyond conventional logic.

Irigaray's criticism of Heidegger's philosophy provides a challenge to an architectural theory, which uncritically adopts Heidegger's theories of dwelling. It inspires questions of how women, as subjects of philosophical discourse, as different to a universal (male) subject, can build the architectural environment. Irigaray's project, as in all her work, concerns the recovery of sexual difference through a critique of Western thought. This critique includes the analysis of many sources, but her main concerns are with those philosophers who have acted to significantly change our understanding. In this way, the phenomenological tradition is of importance to twentieth

century thought. Irigaray is committed to showing the absence of the feminine in what is traditionally thought of as the universality of philosophic and psychoanalytical discourse. She has deconstructed many of the assumptions that underlie seemingly neutral accounts of identity, at the same time as working to suggest an autonomous female specificity hidden within such assumptions. For Irigaray, all current philosophy and psychoanalysis exclude difference, and the goal of Irigaray's critique is to replace patriarchal representations of the other (which acts to support in the construction of male identity) with a more radical philosophy of the other.

The Background to Luce Irigaray's Philosophy

Irigaray's first published works were in psycho-linguistics, where she explored the way in which the symptoms of different kinds of mental illnesses are manifested in the formal structure of language, through language breakdown and different forms of speechlessness. She became interested in how identity, in particular women's identity was enacted partly by a self-positioning in language in relation to an interlocutor (a speaking subject) and became interested in the normal the speech differences between men and women. This early work was not an analysis of texts, but analyses of responses of one speaker to another, where the relationship between can be addressed directly.

The themes of her early better known works, moved to a critique of psychoanalysis and philosophy. Her readings of Freud and Plato were published in *Speculum of the other: woman*. It was with the publication of this book that she became known as an outspoken critic of psychoanalysis in its traditional form. However, with its publication she also lost her academic position in the Department of Psychoanalysis at Vincennes and was exiled (her own terms) from the psychoanalytical community. (Irigaray is not wholly hostile to psychoanalysis, but she does criticize Freud for not recognizing his own limitations, and the influence of the Western philosophical, metaphysical tradition, on his thought.)

Speculum was celebrated for its criticisms of Freud as well as condemned and thus her first

works are known as those engaged with psychoanalysis, even though at least half of the text is a discussion of philosophy. Her most recent work is concerned with the effect her work could have on society and changing social forms, and has focused on women's civil status. Whitford writes that her stress on mother/daughter relationships in earlier work has given way recently to a focus on having an effect on the "world of men". She has indeed a very clear desire to put forward practical and concrete social proposals to help women achieve a cultural identity but it is difficult to characterize her work so completely in this way. More or less all of Irigaray's texts are associative and often the source is not obvious, this means that the complexity of Irigaray's work is not always fully recognized. Irigaray often writes in a poetic and associative style and in a language through which she aims to stir thought and allow a mobilization of what is repressed in current discourse. She gives few precise theoretical references to construct her critique and she is thus often criticized as inaccessible. There can be a difficulty with the language with which Irigaray presents her ideas and a difficulty in construing her meaning. It is, however, as Whitford writes, often a mistake to try to fix the meaning of her work. Irigaray's meaning, her terms, her language, her words, can infuse slowly, as Whitford writes, as they aim to suggest what is outside our traditions.

Thus whilst Heidegger's philosophy suggests that language is the domain to which everything that is belongs. For Irigaray, this only demonstrates only the difficulty man has with his natural corporeal origin. She writes that, 'Unlike Heidegger, I would say that my first home isn't language but air, the indispensable medium (or vehicle) of communication with the other ' (*WD*, 130). Instead of facing the problem of sexual difference, or facing the problem of a relationship with the other, in particular the other woman, she argues that Heidegger's philosophy has built a closed world, one which does not allow communication with the other. Whilst *air* has many important roles, in this context, it grants women autonomous existence where language cannot.

Irigaray's *poetic of air*, is not metaphoric, her philosophy rather attempts to awaken the escape from language's confines, and thus cannot be described in terms of metaphor. Of air, breathing and autonomous existence, which seeks to communicate this experience, Irigaray writes:

I become autonomous from the moment I begin breathing outside my mother, and this continues to happen everyday of life. If I don't breath autonomously then I am not autonomous in relation to the world and to others. If I am autonomous, then speech is clear and allows for real communication with the other, whether its a man or a woman. But few people are autonomous. So speech remains a cry or a call, signifying a need to go back into the mother. The Eastern way - of a Buddha for example - shows that one can be born again through breathing; one can receive autonomy a second time, not the autonomy imposed at birth, but rather the autonomy expected from a rebirth. It doesn't seem that Heidegger was familiar with this autonomy of being (*WD*, 130).

Air grants autonomy but also, in so doing, it grants the possibility of many different ways of being beyond the horizon of patriarchal cultures, air is sensible and transcendental, it is the 'there' that Heidegger's philosophy cannot think but one that can be 'made touchful'. Irigaray argues: 'Air is what makes me one from the inside through breathing, as well as from the outside. I stand in air, I move in air, it' s in some way the place I occupy' (*WD*, 130).

For Irigaray, Heidegger still thinks within a tradition in which men share amongst themselves, that is to say with a patriarchal economy where one half are not fully human, and where sharing between men and women is not possible. For Irigaray, dwelling is a matter of coexistence, and for Irigaray, Heidegger's model of existence does not sufficiently think the relation between individuals, in particular men and women, so they can coexist together, in the recognition of their difference(s).

Where Irigaray calls for a recognition of difference, a different kind of complementarity, at least this is not one of complementarity conventionally understood. It would recognize that we belong to a sexed nature to which it is proper to be faithful, as already stated. She writes:

We need rights to incarnate this nature with respect. We have a need for the recognition of another who will never be mine and to recognize the importance of an absolute silence in order to hear this other. We need to work towards new words which will made this alliance possible without reducing the other to an item of property. We need to reinterpret notable figures or events in our tradition in terms of that horizon. We need to turn the negative or limit of one gender in relation to the other into a possibility of love and of creation (*ILTY*,

11).

In an argument that attempts to dispel these misunderstandings in particular over *Speculum*, she writes that she starts from an asymmetry that does not allow the relationship to happen if it does not acknowledge the negative of an irreducible alterity. Sexual difference, for Irigaray is complementary but it is also asymmetrical, it is a different way of thinking difference than that within the logic of patriarchal cultures. For Irigaray there is a space of attraction (a love or desire) beyond language.

In the last chapter of *The Forgetting of Air*, as illustrative of this argument, she writes: '...people who love each other gravitate towards each other because of an attraction that exists beyond all words, all certainty, all being, in the general sense of the word. People who love each other are attracted to each other only through breath, through air' (*WD*, 130). In other words there is a love between two that can initiate new ways of being: Love in this sense is that between two who are different and between those who recognize, as she writes in *I Love To You*: I am not you nor am I yours and you are not me nor you mine (see "Prologue", page 11). *Air* is a different horizon and it allows an autonomous existence for women outside patriarchal logic's demands. Irigaray writes:

It seems to me that in our culture - and this may explain our lack of consideration for our planet - air has been put into prison, in captivity. Concepts, codified behaviours, and religious dogmas often prevent us from living free in the air, air that can offer us the possibility of being born and reborn every second. Instead, many people go on vacation not to breath peacefully, in a meditative and contemplative way, but rather to exploit air. The end result is an exploitation of the presence of the other, of others, and also of nature and culture, when what our age really needs to do is to return to the elementary and necessary reality of life: breathing (*WD*, 133).

There are many references to Eastern traditions in Irigaray's work, and in her re-evaluation of breath and breathing. In *I Love To You* and her essay 'A Breath That Touches in Words' she develops her approach to speech, in this context, as 'poetic-talking' (see pages 121-128).

Furthermore, Irigaray suggests in an interview with a student that her work with Heidegger's texts revealed the need for woman to propose her own way of questioning. Man, by himself, she argues, cannot be the guardian of Being.

In the interview the interviewer cites Irigaray's text, 'Man cannot be the guardian of Being insofar as his vigilance presupposes a certain degree of domination over nature and over language which in the end paralyse the movement of "letting Being be" (*WD*, 136). The interviewer also refers to Irigaray's own suggestion where Irigaray writes: 'To conceive of Being as two - the Being of man and the Being of woman - shifts and splits the layout of the limit of a world in which to dwell, to live and think " (*WD*, 136). Dominijanni (the interviewer) argues that Irigaray chooses air to be the threshold to a feminine mode of being, because, she writes, citing Irigaray again, '...the element air whose imperceptible presence is in each and every life, word, or thought, would be the path which allows the return beyond the foundation and closure of metaphysics in order to find again the breath and the spirit which it has captured and imprisoned within its logic' (*WD*, 136). *Air* is the element of proximity, indeed, and for Irigaray it provides a way out of (maternal) dependence, liberation for ourselves (and our mothers). Irigaray writes:

Breathing conjugates inseparably Being-there with Being-with. Coming out of the mother, I emerge in the air, I enter the world and the community of the living (...) with its rhythm breathing helps me to renounce the dream of fusional proximity with what gives or gives back life, namely the mother, or nature. Breathing means detaching oneself from her, being reborn, and giving back part of a puff: as air, as praise, as work which is living life and spirit. Breathing is abandonment of prenatal passivity, that infantile state both dependant and mimetic, in order to ensure and cultivate a status of autonomous living (*WD*, 136-137).

Breathing thus cultivates autonomy and as Dominijanni (the student) writes it cultivates a relation with the other is not possible without autonomy, certainly coexistence is not possible. Irigaray writes:

There is neither life nor relation without autonomy and there is no autonomy without air. It is not by chance that in Eastern culture the wise cultivate breathing until they obtain the

so-called "rebirth". In the West, which does not know a culture of breathing, we have constructed a world that resembles a prison, dialogue is possible solely among likes, never with an other (male or female). To forget air means forgetting the element that makes individuation and relation possible (*WD*, 137).

Forgetting air, for Irigaray, means forgetting sexual difference, which means forgetting the difference between two autonomous subjectivities. However, in an essay in the recent publication 'Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger' entitled 'From The *Forgetting of Air* to *To Be Two*' originally published as the introduction to the Italian version of *L'Oubli de l'air*, Irigaray also writes that 'air' is not just significant to this book or to her criticism of Heidegger. She writes that 'air circulates' and the element that 'goes hand in hand with Being' in chronological later works such as *I Love To You* and *To Be Two*. She writes:

Sometimes it applies itself to saying its paralysis in our intellectual tradition: philosophy. At other times it frees itself and protects itself in order to love at the limit of life, or to provide room for an interval that safeguards the difference between the Being of woman and the Being of man (*FIMH*, 309).

In illustrating what she means by air going hand in hand with Being, and the significance of air, Irigaray writes:

The memory of breath would permit us to reach another epoch of Being, where Being presents itself as two - man and woman - and not as a split between appearance and essence, or the being and the becoming of every phenomenon, including the human. The air element, its imperceptible presence in every life, in every act of speaking, in every thought, would be then the path that permits a return beyond the foundation and the closure of metaphysics in order to discover again the breath and the spirit that they have captured - captivated in their logic. The frequency of nature as empty clearing, the cultivation of breathing would provide a passage from the Western tradition to the Eastern culture that Heidegger, as well as others among recent philosophers, tried to make emerge from oblivion, tried to question as source both on this side of and beyond our Being, we hyperboreans (*FIMH*, 310).

One of the most important criticisms Irigaray's raises in relation to Heidegger's work is his relation

to origin, maternal and material. The distinction, and equally need to return to maternal or material origins, leads Irigaray to argue that although *Dasein* has mastered this origin he is also dependent. Irigaray's philosophy reworks concepts of a radical ethics or a responsibility to the other to suggest new approaches to difference. This is difference between a man and a woman. In this difference we can neither claim knowledge of the other nor possess the other. This difference is thus not sexual difference as is commonly understood. Neither is it a rediscovery of difference limited only to the sexual relation. It is *not* an affirmation of difference between a culturally privileged man and a subordinate female or any other singularly vertical hierarchical difference. Rather Irigaray's philosophy motivates a return to the difference of which only the most faint gestures remain in contemporary Western cultures, the difference between two in a horizontal relationship, a relationality the Western tradition does not value.

There is a growing body of work in architectural theory which investigates issues of gender and which cites the work of Luce Irigaray. Irigaray's philosophy has been used to support an argument for a continuing "feminist" campaign in architecture but, on the other hand, also to challenge theorists who argue that old-fashioned "feminist" activity is at odds with apparently more ethical and inclusive 'post-modern' theories in architecture (See *Gender, Space, Architecture*). Irigaray has been active in many political contexts and especially in Italy, but her work cannot be simply linked to arguments for a continued "feminism" or as most commonly understood in its campaign for equality with men. She associates these movements with a desire for a privilege and power that simply parodies the male and at the same time refuses to question of how women may sustain equality or if, indeed, it can be won.

Contemporary theorists have attempted to forge alliances between deconstruction and feminism and to describe Irigaray as a post-modern theorist in this category. However, the same critics describe her understanding of sexual difference as somewhat marred commonly rejecting it as tainted by "essentialism", in preference for the purer work of philosophers such as Derrida or even Levinas. Toril Moi is perhaps the best known in this respect and argues that Irigaray has learnt

her method from Derrida. However, many contemporary reviews of Irigaray's work also make this suggestion. In celebrating the question of difference in this context critics forget how complex the issue of sexual difference is and how Irigaray argues contemporary philosophy cannot think the other: woman.

Architectural theory proposing its questioning in the language of gender rather than of either feminism (see *Gender, Space and Architecture*) or sex (see *Desiring Practices*), revisits these debates. In a collection of essays *Desiring Practices* (1996), the editors predominately UK based women architects describe their motive as the shared feeling that their occupation leaves them without a space to practice their desires. However, the publication also propagates essentialist arguments with proposals that the terminology of debates should refer to 'gender' in architecture rather than 'sex'. (The latter, they suggest leads to an essentialist definition of the subject).

Questions of sex, gender equality or of difference are in no way definitive of the discourse that surrounds women in architecture, and Irigaray's philosophy, moreover, demonstrates how complex and far-reaching the issues of discrimination within the profession are. Contemporary theory in architecture begins to suggest what is really at stake but it also shows how the need to suppress women's need for rights is still current even amongst women theorists. The problem of discrimination has to be that of the status of women within current cultural traditions but the solution is neither as simple as the fulfilment of a desire for equality with men, nor of a radically individualistic rejection of culture in pursuit of creative freedom. To extend Irigaray's observations to, for example, the editors of *Desiring Practices*, we have to ask whether women can know or say their desires, when we still, as yet, have to become who we are and a further problem is that we have forgotten the way to rediscover our desires.

The importance of Irigaray's philosophy is not just in criticism but in the threshold her philosophy provides, a threshold not only to how we can respond to the other: woman but how we can become woman. The architectural issue of dwelling is a question that must explore this

becoming as equal if not more important than any of the problems of discrimination within the profession. At the same time the question of dwelling addresses an ethics of how we, as women architects, can respond to the desires of the other(s).

The role of dialogue in Irigaray's philosophy suggests an approach, as criticism and faithfulness, to the question of building and dwelling. The importance given to language in Heidegger's work, and hence the relation of building, thinking and dwelling, is Irigaray's first criticism. Heidegger's thinking is inadequate, both in his thought to the other and to sexual difference, as many others have suggested. However, what is unique to Irigaray is her suggestion that there is another way of building and dwelling, one that Heidegger forgets. Irigaray's dialogue with Heidegger seeks to open up a place of dwelling between us, between two who are equal. This practice is a practice which extends to ethics and politics as much as to architecture. Irigaray writes of dwelling:

This shelter is built by the two in the respect for mutual differences, nature being transmuted into a spiritual matter which little by little envelops and protects the subjects on their path while constraining them to pursue it (*WL*, 81).

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 The Problem of Practice

The *Royal Institute of British Architects* (RIBA) has recently made changes to their policy to include the statement:

The RIBA values the creative potential which individuals from diverse backgrounds, and with differing skills and abilities, bring to the Institute and the architectural profession. *We will endeavour to foster an environment that is free from harassment or unfair discrimination, where human potential can be cultivated and in which the human rights of all individuals are respected*' (RIBA Equal Opportunities Policy Statement, February 2001, authors emphasis).

To achieve this, the Institute states that it is committed to fostering an environment of mutual respect in working relationships; to increasing awareness of equal opportunity policy, ensuring the promotion of equal opportunities, and; to identifying means to achieve diversity in education and the profession. This need to define policy reflects social pressures upon the Institution, however, whilst proposing to cultivate human potential, and to value the creative potentials of individuals from diverse backgrounds has significance; the goal of greater diversity within an historically white male dominated profession cannot be enough to address how an environment '*free from harassment or unfair discrimination, where human potential can be cultivated and in which the human rights of all individuals are respected,*' can be achieved.

Identifying a trend of decreasing numbers of women in the profession, the RIBA equality forum 'Architect's for Change,' commissioned a study in September 2001, to determine why women fail to qualify as architects or to continue to work as architects. Statistical data collected by the RIBA demonstrated that rather than a general trend towards equal numbers of women and men within the profession in comparison to other professions the numbers of women were decreasing sharply even in economically favourable conditions. To emphasize the issue the group cited RIBA statistics, which state:

Over the past 10 years the percentage of women studying architecture has risen from 27 % to 37% of the total architecture student population. During this period drop out rates of women students during the Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3 stages of the course have also steadily reduced, so that they are now at an equal level with their male counterparts. However, once they qualify the percentage of women falls from being around 37% of the student population to only 14% of the architectural profession. This compares poorly with law and medicine where women now make up almost half of the active profession (RIBA, Equal Opportunities -Statistics and Issues).

The study, as commissioned, aimed both to determine why women fail to fully qualify as architects or to sustain working lives as architects, and in doing it was required to suggest means to achieve better working conditions. Through personal testament, and, in particular, on-line questionnaires, the group collected information as to the stages women leave the profession and some of the reasons women state for being compelled to leave. Outcomes of the study were initially envisaged as guidelines acting to counter this trend in the form of recommendations for Human Resources Managers, however, the numerous cases studies in response to the questionnaire also provided alarming evidence of endemic illegal work practices that somewhat overshadows the research. In the original RIBA call for applications, which was taken up by researchers from *The University of the South West*, the committee writes:

The results will inform any future statements and action on the RIBA's equal opportunities policy. The ultimate objective is to further endorse the business case demonstrating the HR benefit of diversity, where equal opportunities are fully integrated within established employment initiatives designed to maximise staff potential and increase creativity. The RIBA is particularly interested in recommendations that offer practical help to our members in managing the diversity agenda within the work place (RIBA call for applications: *Why do women leave architecture?* Research into the retention of women in architectural practice).

However, encouraging diversity by campaigns for equality is only a partial and wholly inadequate solution to cultivating the working environment that RIBA states its commitment to. Encouraging diversity through policy aimed towards Human Resources managers does not address the complex

problem of how to foster a respect for difference and greater diversity does not necessarily lead to an adequate understanding and approach to difference. Moreover, the language of diversity can work to appease the complex issues involved in understating this issue. The question the research raises is whether we can indeed approach the problems of discrimination within the architectural profession only by means of policy; whether policy will be adequate. Outcomes aimed at better employment practices may only reassert the inadequacy of current thought to difference within culture(s) and the profession by attempting knowingly or not to erase difference. The issue for women cannot simply be that of gaining equal employment rights with men, especially where such equality forces women to adapt their difference(s) to the benefit of existing systems. Furthermore, whilst in commissioning research the Institution has demonstrated its desire to be seen to respond to the obvious inequalities, there is no guarantee that either Schools of offices will value or adopt such recommendations. Especially not if they are immediately suspected of being economically unbeneficial or in conflict with economically successful, albeit exploitative, prejudiced work practices. Moreover, the research has met with criticism from successful women working as architects in this respect. In one response to the research as described in the architectural press, one woman architect is recorded stating her own advice to young women: '...never think you are different: I've never felt I was a woman, a foreigner or different from anyone else' (Foreign Office Architects, see *Building Design*, October 2003). The question of equal opportunities, of genuine equality, real and sustained, has to be one of finding the means of creating ways of living that do not perpetuate existing hierarchies between women and men, and responding to difference cannot be a matter of simply creating more flexible working conditions - or images of women as architects in career literature, although in a limited way beneficial. As Irigaray argues, in her many discussions with women: How can we be equal where being equal means being equal to men?

Many women architects have already suggested that issues of women's inequality within the profession are those that philosophy should address. What Irigaray's philosophy proposes, in

this context, is a way of revisiting, in her somewhat old-fashioned terms, “women’s liberation” albeit this is liberation rethought, by reconsidering (sexual) difference. Irigaray's work proposes that in order to sustain equality we must insist on rights specific to each sex, as well as finding new cultural forms or expressions, which would include architecture, of being-together that recognize and can cultivate this difference. To re-stage the words of the RIBA equality policy statement, Irigaray’s thought proposes the cultivation of *sexuate* rights. In the inadequate language of the policy statement, Irigaray’s work would suggest fostering an environment that is free from harassment or unfair discrimination, where *sexuate* potential can be cultivated and in which the *sexuately different* rights, rights appropriate to all individuals in their *full humanity* are respected. This is a matter for education. This would take any conventional thinking of both equality and difference, whether in terms of the RIBA aims to promote diversity, or in contemporary architectural theory adopting difference, further than more traditional or contemporary philosophical approaches.

In an interview when asked about this problem of diversity in the architectural profession, Irigaray argues that this language can be a way of escaping the question of sexual difference, dismissing the problem of liberation by associating it with past feminisms (see ‘Being Two: From an Architectural Perspective’) ignoring that women still have to fully discover their own cultural values in order to gain equality. That ‘equality’ cannot be achieved without cultural change is Irigaray's argument in *Thinking the Difference*. Using the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* to illustrate her argument, Irigaray proposes that women's rights must be re-written to address sexual difference and sets about using the document for this process. This is a way for beginning to create a place or dwelling in a respect between those who are different by making changes to language and laws in addition to cultural forms. For example, the declaration uses gender neutral terminology, as does the RIBA statement, and this is Irigaray's first criticism, even from the first article (“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood”) in criticism,

she writes:

I, a woman, no longer feel 'human' [I feel I am a 'man']. For I am not 'born free equal in dignity and rights' [to other 'men']. I have female identity problems that current law does not resolve. I cannot feel that this 'universal' charter includes me unless I renounce my sex and its properties, and also agree to forget all the women who do not enjoy the minimal civil liberties that I do (*TTD*, ix).

Thus, the RIBA could set out to promote equality but only if it reconsiders how the profession approaches the question of difference. She writes, '...real persons still have no rights, since there are only men and women: there are no neuter individuals' (*ILTY*, 21). For Irigaray, diversity suggests a goal of equality based on a male standard and this is an abstract notion perpetuated by the masculine economy. *Sexuate* difference, however, constitutes a basic human reality and *sexuate* rights, thus, a basic human right. She also argues that *sexuate* difference is a more basic reality than differences between ages, races, cultures, as all of these are formed by patriarchal culture and its values. Thinking *sexuate* difference is a way of approaching all the other differences of age, race, culture or religion.

In her subsequent analysis of the document Irigaray draws on her own experience. She states of Article 17 ("(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property"):

'No one shall be arbitrarily deprived for his property', Fine. But what is rape then? Or, the use of my naked body for advertising in the Metro? Or the exploitation of women's bodies by the pornographic media? (*TTD*, x).

Further, referring to an assault that took place outside her home, she writes, of Article 13, "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of the person" but at what time of day? I have learned the hard way that the "right to freedom of movement" [Article 13] is not mine' (*TTD*, x). And, in addition to Articles 7, 8 and 9, Irigaray writes:

Article 7: 'All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal

protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination,' To whom do I report the inequality between the treatment given my body and that given a man's? What 'competent national tribunals' are there that can provide me with 'an effective remedy' [Article 8] against any act of disrespect to my physical or moral person? Just what exactly is my 'recognition [...] as a person before the law' [Article 6]. How can it be defended against 'cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment' [Article 5] whether corporeal or spiritual (*TTD*, ix-x).

Declaring her disappointment with this document, Irigaray writes that the Declaration means nothing in terms of women's everyday reality. Rather, in contrast, she writes: 'The rights of abstract citizens are to varying degrees, modelled upon or derived from religious rights and duties, in particular patriarchal ones (...) we do not as yet have civil law pertaining to real persons, concerning first of all, women and men (*ILTY*, 21): The document pushes women further away from the possibility of liberation. Irigaray's proposal is that we need rights specific to our *sexuate being* and it is only this, that can sustain a culture of difference: The existing alternative, the expression of human rights in gender neutral terminology only undermines female identity, whereas the '*reality of the difference between the sexes*' (Irigaray's terminology) would promote a respect for difference (see *TTD*, xi). This respect for difference where neither sex has authority over the other, corresponds to a coexistence, a non-appropriative, non-exploitative, being-together, the foundation of a new community, and of a democracy. Irigaray writes it means that '...power is restricted by the fact that it constantly passes between woman and man, between all citizens of a country, between all living beings on this earth' (*TTD*, xi). The research carried out by RIBA presumes that greater equality will come about with equal rights to men. Whilst the research is important, it assumes, as does most current feminism, that liberation is in the right to be as men.

It is language that for Irigaray establishes these problematic models. She writes: 'If language does not give two sexes equivalent opportunities to speak and increase their self esteem, it functions as a means of enabling one sex to subjugate the other' (*TTD*, xv). Language can

suppress the other, but it can also liberate. In the first essay in *Thinking the Difference*, written after Chernobly 'A Chance to Live' Irigaray explores this problem in a gendered reading of the question of technology.

Changing forms of relation, which otherwise perpetuate the exploitation of natures resources, is, for Irigaray, a question of changing the habits of speech. It is a question, she argues, of changing conventions, which associate the human generic with that of man. However, this is impossible within the horizon of contemporary patriarchal cultures, as contemporary philosophy suggests and gender theory implies. In terms of iconography, the habitual use of images which portray men as respectable citizens and women as the sexual property of men, are an important challenge, it is illustrative of one aspect of the problem but it is only one aspect of work women must carry out. The problem of the prohibition of values specific to the other sex infiltrates all cultural discourses, which includes architecture, this prohibition marks the founding of patriarchal societies.

Changing these habits and customs will be a long process, as Irigaray is aware, however, the consolation, is that beginning and this beginning includes establishing sexed rights, is a process which will let women speak. She writes: 'We can start letting women do half the speaking, start paying attention to how images are used at home and in society at large, and we can all start respecting each other without forgetting who we are' (*TTD*, xvi). Thus, redefining the right to a civil identity, a public identity (not just equal rights with men) is, for Irigaray, one of the most urgent tasks facing women. Furthermore, this task concerns not just the future of women but the community as a whole. Allowing women to speak means allowing women the right to be women, to have rights as women, the alternative is only limiting to humanity. As Irigaray argues:

Today, rights are increasing almost exclusively in the sphere of rights to ownership of property, benefits, various types of capital, etc., These new rights are greatly concerned with having (property) but little concerned with being(s) - women and men - and little with relationships amongst individuals based on this notion of free, responsible human identity (*TTD*, xvii).

In the conclusion to this series of essays, Irigaray states her case that *sexuate* difference and establishing rights appropriate to sexual difference is the best way for women to hold on to the rights towards equality they have gained over the past century. Without the work needed to establish these *sexuate* rights, women risk the violence of oscillations in power which correspond to abstract forms of relation to the other, which is why feminist campaigns for equality are so difficult for Irigaray to support. In this respect, and on the question of equality and sexed rights, she states her political position:

...women's rights must be redefined so that women can tailor the rights they have gained in the name of equality to their own identity as women. Redefining rights appropriate to the two sexes to replace abstract rights appropriate to non-existent neutral individuals, and enshrining these rights in law, and in any charter constituting some sort of national or universal declaration of human rights, is the best way for women to hold onto rights already gained, have them enforced, and gain other more specifically suited to female identity: the right to physical and moral inviolability (which means a women's right to virginity of body and mind), the right to motherhood free of civil or religious tutelage, women's rights to their own specific culture, etc. (*TTD*, xv-xvi).

To address the issue of diversity within the architectural profession, will not satisfy women's loss of faith in the Institution or in their career path. Ultimately reconsidering what it means to be women, who and what we are and what this means for the future might be a more satisfying way for women to address the issue of practice and lack of faith in the profession. Diversity will only act to erase difference and ultimately reinforce the privilege of the male, and building can suggest a way to rediscover and re-establish community with laws and values specific to women.

2.2 The Questions of Equality, Feminism, Women's Liberation - Or the Right to One's Own Identity?

Irigaray has been involved with many women's groups and has widely criticized campaigns that

propose the possibility of equity with men. Campaigns for equality, she has argued, are wholly inadequate solutions for addressing the discrimination women face in contemporary societies: Equality is based on the impossible ideal of a gender-neutral experience. Nevertheless, her insistence on sexual, or more precisely *sexuate* difference and the dismissal of gender neutral experience as masculine fallacy has also led to accusations of essentialism, which have plagued her work from the early 1980s onwards.

Sexuate Difference

Irigaray's philosophy does not suggest that the question of sexual identity is a matter of "sex", not, at least, as conventionally understood - that is to say, as one side of the opposites sex and gender. While the use of the term 'gender' is commonly used to describe sexual identity as constructed, or as already codified by language and culture, for Irigaray this also implies a project to overcome difference. This argument, she writes, is perpetuated to sustain the existing hierarchy between women and men. On the other hand, Irigaray's use of the term *sexuate* is meant to designate that sexual difference must be reconsidered. To suggest that difference is rethought in terms of difference in relationality, means that *sexuate* being is differently to an abstract and artificial gender neutral being. By introducing and using the term *sexuate*, Irigaray states, that with this gesture she simply means to imply that for women sex pervades her being. Women and men are *sexuate* beings. Sex becomes that thought on the level of being and not easily designated on one side of the nature and culture divide (although this divide is already argued a somewhat artificial and divisive theoretical proposition pervading feminist thought). *Sexuate* (as Irigaray describes) identity is thus not easily categorized as an essentialist position, it is as the 'bodying-forth' of Dasein in Heidegger's thought but where this form of existence and body is rethought in difference.

Sexuate difference is the most culturally repressed difference, and yet she also argues it is the most fundamental and universal difference: If we can adequately recognize and cultivate this

difference she proposes that we will be able to respond adequately to all other differences. Suggesting an exploration of sexual difference, does not mean that Irigaray denies the significance of other forms of difference, rather, as already suggested, she argues, that whilst levels of emancipation obviously vary between cultures, she writes '...differences between cultures often depend on a certain degree of subjection and oppression of the feminine sex or gender by patriarchy, or a masculine identity conceived as authoritarian and imperialistic' (*WD*, 7). Rethinking sexual difference is a more important task and more difficult task for culture(s) and will lead to a better reconsideration of the difference between neighbours. What is unique to Irigaray's philosophy is this radical criticism of approaches to difference, and what is significant in this project is its value for both feminist philosophies and feminist political activity. Furthermore, the issue of sexual difference in architecture corresponds to that of dwelling.

Rights Appropriate to One's Own Sex and the Rediscovery of the Sexual

However, unlike other contemporary philosophers whose relation to the political and specifically to feminist politics is somewhat problematic. (Derrida's philosophy, for example, although adopted by feminists can be argued as fundamentally indifferent to the question of women's rights.) Irigaray's work has a clear ethical and political intention towards changing women's current status in society: Not, so as to be equal to men, but to be themselves, in their own way, as sexual beings. This is also why she is most often positively cited in contemporary discussions of feminism. Irigaray's ambition for women is thus radically different from any other current feminist theory, that either seeks to establish equality with men, presuming an underlying neutral experience, as already stated, or that seeks to celebrate sexual difference, as it is already understood within contemporary cultures. For Irigaray, deconstructing social structures which shape the hierarchies of sexual difference is a necessary part of the work of philosophy, but it is only one factor and indeed only the first stage to sustaining social change. In addition, women need rights and values

appropriate to their sex.

In 'Each Sex Must Have Its Own Rights' for example in *Sexes and Genealogies* Irigaray argues that feminism has failed to establish an ethics of sexuality despite its call for an ethics towards equality for women (which she also argues it has often sought by means of aggressive and also violent agendas towards the goal). The result, or the counter-side of this sort of activity, has been an unthought relation to nature, fertility and sex, a symptom of which are the debates which surround essentialism and perhaps also the wealth of books such as *The Sex of Architecture* or *Building Sex*. She writes:

The achievements recorded by recent movements for women's liberation have failed to establish a new *ethics* of sexuality. They nonetheless serve notice to us that ethics is the crucial issue because they have released so much violent, undirected energy, desperate for an outlet. They fall back into unmediated naturalness: the obligation to give birth, violence barely channelled into sadomasochistic scenarios, regression to animality (with no display?) in the erotic act, fear and destructiveness between the sexes...(SG, 3, italics in original).

'Ethics', in particular thought to a sexual or sexuate ethics, is Irigaray's suggestion. However, she also associates this with a cultivation of energy. She writes:

Obviously, I am not advocating a return to a more repressive, moralizing, conception of sexuality. On the contrary, what we need is to work out an art of the sexual, a sexed culture, instead of merely using our bodies to release neuro-psychic tensions and produce babies (SG, 3).

To sum up, Irigaray has been active in many political contexts but she associates feminism with the desire for equality with men. In this way, she argues, feminists run the risk of parodying the male privilege in an envy of his power. In contrast, her exploration of the term "women's-liberation" calls for a reconsideration of the question of (sexual) freedom and liberation of sex and the sexuate, where each concept is radically reconceived and in part attempts to step outside the rights and duties imposed on individuals, in particular women, by patriarchal codes.

Irigaray and the Problem of Equal Rights

Nevertheless, Tina Chanter has forged a relation between Irigaray's philosophy and feminism. In *The Ethics of Eros*, in a nuanced reading of both Irigaray's philosophy and feminist thought, she argues that whilst Irigaray does not describe herself as a feminist, this does not prevent her work from being both part of a feminist discourse and perhaps, more importantly, it does not prevent her philosophy from challenging the foundations of contemporary feminist theory. While Irigaray does not describe herself as a feminist, it is evident, to agree in part with Chanter, her relation with feminism cannot be described so simply as a rejection. Rather, Irigaray's statement: 'I've devoted most of my life to thinking and practicing a new historical era where women can exist and reflect upon what they are in respect to their difference(s) with men'; demonstrates her complex commitment to women's struggles (*WD*, 29). To describe Irigaray as a feminist is to risk suggesting beliefs that she simply does not hold - such as a motive towards equality with men.

The problem with campaigns for equality, for Irigaray (which is how Irigaray distinguishes feminism) is that the horizon of thought remains unchanged. If we remain within a society shaped by patriarchal family structures, norms and traditions, she argues, but without a change in the horizon of culture, without a challenge to patriarchal genealogies, patriarchal models and values, and a rediscovery of an approach to a tangible and sexuate other, equality will not and cannot be maintained however hard fought for. Feminist thought does not take its criticism far enough. To change the horizon of our thought, rediscover other values and a sensible transcendental, this would mean rediscovering and respecting an irreducible difference between us. Sexual difference, as traditionally thought is that constructed in a relation of difference to the male. In *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, to describe the significance of addressing 'love', Irigaray writes:

Currently there is a kind of *one* built on a division of labour, of goods, of discourse, a *one* which is merely an enslaving complementarity: yet, love cannot but be free. A kind of *one*, moreover, which is incarnated only in the child - thus trapping the three terms in an alliance which is no alliance. If the *one* of love is ever to be achieved we have to re-discover the *two*'

(*AESD*, 67, italics in original).

Thus, in her criticism of Heidegger's philosophy (as one of her many engagements with philosophy) Irigaray argues that there is in part outside his thought a free energy, a sensible transcendental, not determined by the living being that he or she is by language and one that would allow two. Finding the means to cultivate this energy or desire would initiate a difference experience of sexual identity, and hence, Irigaray writes, to speak of women's liberation without such a course is simply not possible (see *The Age of Breath*). It is this rediscovery of an autonomous, self-defined experience of sexual difference through energy, that is key to Irigaray's philosophy. It leads Irigaray to write in *The Age of Breath* of '...[a]n absolute difference that takes place first of all between us and, thanks to it, we may escape animality, and all sorts of subjection or slavery, and become divine. The acknowledgment of this difference corresponds to the gestures of consciousness or a conscious both spiritual and concrete' (*AB*, 17e). It is this that will allow, she argues, a more adequate approach to women's liberation. Irigaray's criticism of feminism does not only have value to feminist theory; it extends to community and to forms of democracy. In *Le Partage de la Parole* (2002) Irigaray argues that the conflict between equality and difference is still the order of the day, not only within the discourse of women's liberation but within contemporary culture and politics. It is a question that is also fundamental to how we can practice democracy in society as demonstrated in *Democracy Begins Between Two*. As she describes in this book, the problem is that despite the apparent ideal of equality, the discourse of equality imposes a model of the citizen that is white, Western adult, competent, self-possessed. It is of the one and its complement within the Judeo-Christian tradition and this model remains unchallenged by any equally powerful alternatives. In the book she also describes her work with Renzo Imbini. Chanter's alternative argument in *The Ethics of Eros*, linking Irigaray with feminism, is that Irigaray's work could fund a feminism that attends productively to sexual difference. For Chanter, feminism is undergoing a crisis that is, she writes, '...neither far removed from nor incidental to the economic and political

crises that the Western industrialized capitalist world is undergoing, at both global and individual levels' (EE, 7). Chanter recognizes Irigaray's need to extend the feminist debate that is often limited to considering how to improve women's lives, to reconsidering sexual identity. Chanter cites, for example, in *Je, Tu, Nous*, Irigaray's argument that her thought on women's liberation goes beyond simple demands for equality. Chanter argues that in the many essays contained in the book, Irigaray suggests that women's struggles must lead to sexed rights, or rather equivalent and sexed rights being written into the law. In this way, Chanter argues, women will find value in being women; not just being mothers (as is the most valued model of femininity in patriarchal culture) rather in being themselves. However, as Chanter acknowledges, this also means that centuries of socioeconomic values have to be rethought and transformed, starting with oneself.

Chanter suggests that for Irigaray equality between women and men cannot be achieved without a theory of gender, which rewrites the rights, and obligations of each sex as different. That is to say, so that each sex has different social rights and obligations as law. Whilst, Chanter acknowledges, Irigaray does not describe herself as a feminist, in an interview with Elaine Baruch and Lucienne J. Serrano (cited by Chanter) Chanter argues that Irigaray states:

I don't particularly care for the term feminism it is a word by which the social system designates the struggles of women. I am completely willing to abandon this word, namely because it is formed in the same modes as other great words of the culture that oppresses us. I prefer 'struggles of women' which reveals a plural and polymorphous character.

In the same interview, Chanter suggests that Irigaray also remarks:

But I think that when certain groups of women criticize and fight against feminism they don't take into account the gesture they are making with regards to the dominant culture. After all, it is necessary to claim the term back and then refine it and say something else (both quotes from Baruch, Elaine Hoffman and Lucienne J. Serrano (eds.) 1988: 150. Cited by Chanter, T. in *The Ethics of Eros*, 269).

Hence, Chanter suggests that whilst Irigaray is reluctant to embrace the language of equality, there may be a value in reclaiming the word. Chanter also argues that Irigaray's hesitation to adopt the

term 'feminism' must be read against understandings of the French feminist political context - that is to say Irigaray's own understanding of what feminism means - which means against a background of attempts by exclusive groups to usurp the feminist platform in France. While Irigaray insists that the question of sexual difference is central to contemporary economic and political crises that the Western world is undergoing, Chanter agrees that Irigaray's work cannot be simply reduced to a political agenda - as feminism can often be. However, Chanter still argues that it is rethinking relations between women that can found a new approach to sexual difference.

The reasons for antagonistic relations within feminisms, have to be explored by feminists themselves. The gender and sex division is somewhat active in debates within feminism, but this is as much a symptom of the culture that oppresses women, as is the inability to adequately approach sexual difference. Chanter cites the essays in *Je, Tu, Nous* where, for example, Irigaray writes:

Peoples never cease to divide themselves into secondary but deadly rivalries without realizing that their primary and insurmountable division is into two genders. In this respect, we are still in our cultural infancy. It's important for women's struggles, for women's social networks, and above all for each individual woman to realize the significance of the issues at stake which fall to them. Issues associated with the respect for life and culture, and with the continuous passage of the natural into the cultural, the spiritual into the natural (*JTN*, 13).

For Irigaray this division, this antagonism has its roots in that between the genders and it is thus through sexual difference, through the reconsideration of the sexuate, it can be resolved. However, Chanter's position is adamant that Irigaray's work can reconstruct feminism, Chanter writes:

The fact that Irigaray's work does not fit neatly into our preconceived categories as to what feminism should look like, does not mean that it cannot be read as feminism. Rather, it is indicative of the challenge that Irigaray presents to her readers in asking whether feminism has adequately formulated questions that are fundamental to it, and, correspondingly, whether feminists have a sufficiently radical view of what constitutes feminism (*EE*, 35-36).

The Sex and Gender Division

Gender is one of the most powerful categories of analysis within contemporary feminism, however, the sex and gender, nature and culture divides have become the target for feminisms most antagonistic debates. This divide is precisely the focus of Irigaray philosophizing as it is at the heart of whether women can adequately readdress the issues of life, culture and nature which befalls them. For example, rethinking sexual difference, Irigaray argues, '...requires a rearticulation of passages between nature and culture while considering the concrete reality of man and women, and the manner in which this concrete reality can be structured at a symbolic level' (*WD*, 167). This is why Irigaray emphasizes that she addresses *sexuate* difference to distinguish her particular approach to sexual difference. Feminists committed to maintaining gender (generally considered in this context as a social construction) are at the centre of many feminist analyses, many name Irigaray as an essentialist, somewhat mistakenly. These theorists also tend towards arguments that 'theorists of difference' do not address the need for social change. Chanter writes:

The latter objection is often couched in terms of the idea that to take psychoanalytic theory seriously is to give up any hope of improving women's situation, an idea which in turn is sometimes expressed as a misgiving about the priority psychoanalysis accords language. To privilege language - the implication is - to deprive feminism of its potential to effect change through social protest (*EE*, 1).

Motivating this antagonism is the suggestion that if a theorist is concerned with the power of language, she or he cannot be concerned with social change. Furthermore, polarizing the debates as such, acts by default, to suggest that to explore sexual difference is to limit the discourse to an exploration of relations that currently exist between men and women, thereby to suggest that the difference between men and women is inevitable or that the situation is incapable of improvement. Implicit in this sort of criticism are attacks made on Irigaray accusing her of privileging sex over social construction: That is to say, being an essentialist. Nevertheless, one of Irigaray's tasks, as already stated, has been to uncover the evidence that the discourse of the sexual need not invoke an unchangeable or static approach to the current

social configurations designating difference between man and woman, or that sexual difference as constructed by our current cultures is inevitable. Chanter writes, responding to the charges against Irigaray of a certain apoliticism:

[T]he idea that Irigaray endorses currently prevailing social configurations rests upon a failure to distinguish her view of language from naively metaphysical accounts, it seems to be emblematic of a more general problem that plagues the reception of feminists who take seriously the continental tradition of philosophy (*EE*, 3).

Chanter's argument is that problems in the reception of Irigaray's work stem from feminist theorists' inadequate understanding of the history of philosophy. Most infamously Irigaray's call to interrogate sexual difference, she argues, has been interpreted as an essentialist view of sexual difference and Chanter cites Mary Poovey as exemplifying this trend where Poovey states, crudely and inaccurately:

Luce Irigaray (...) authorizes the return of biology and essentialism in her creation of a myth of female desire and in basing 'feminine' language on the physical properties of female genitalia (Poovey, 1988, 51).

However, even amongst theorists who have addressed the question of essentialism in Irigaray's work, the case, for whether Irigaray is or is not an essentialist, is not clear. Diana Fuss's in *Essentially Speaking* writes: 'Irigaray works towards securing a woman's access to an essence of her own, without actually prescribing what that essence might be, or without precluding the possibility that a subject might possess multiple essences which may even contradict or compete with one another' (Fuss, 1989, 72). Even this description of Irigaray's position can misrepresent the complexity of her thought, if what essence means for Irigaray or Fuss is not explored adequately. Certainly it avoids discussion of Irigaray's influence to, relation with and criticism of contemporary philosophy in terms of a culture of breath or a *sensible transcendental*. Chanter argues that if Irigaray's work is read in context of Heidegger's questioning of traditional concepts of essence, and also in terms of Derrida's elaboration of Heidegger, the inadequacy of the idea that Irigaray would

try to secure an essence for woman, or that she might conceivably prescribe such an essence, quickly emerges (see a footnote to the preface in *The Ethics of Eros*, page 266). Chanter does however throw some of her own light on the problem of essentialism in contemporary feminist debates, stating:

My suggestion is that the essentialist charge originates from a well meaning but outmoded idea of what feminism should be. To use the language of the essentialist debate - language from which I want to move away - one might say that the essentialist dismissal of Irigaray rests upon an essentialist definition of feminism - namely, the idea that feminism can only consist in playing down sexual difference. Underplaying sexual difference, in this feminist scenario, is the corollary of emphasizing gender construction, which appeals not to sexual difference but to the commonalties between the sexes (*EE*, 5).

However, it is not difficult to understand why Irigaray's work has initiated such accusations, taking out of context and without adequate understandings of her philosophy, statements can be misunderstood. In conclusion to Chanter's argument that Irigaray is a feminist whether she likes it or not (but not an essentialist feminist) Chanter argues that to emphasize gender rather than sex in feminist debates has been an important stage for women. However, underplaying sexual difference is now the corollary of emphasizing gender construction in the context and which argues towards the commonalties between the sexes. Chanter cites Moira Gatens where she writes:

Critics of feminists of difference tend to divide the entire theoretical field of social inquiry into an exclusive disjunction: social theory is either environmental or it is essentialist. Therefore it follows quite logically from this premise, if feminist theories are not environmentalist then they must be essentialist (Moira Gatens, 1991:141, Cited in Chanter, 266).

Feminists have relied on the distinction between nature and culture, sex and gender, to fuel their debates, but Irigaray's work engages precisely with this distinction, and in a way that does not militate against social change. Furthermore, where feminists are becoming increasingly aware of the need to redefine relations to issues of race and gender that Irigaray addresses sexual difference is not to suggest she is bound to questions of other differences. To conclude Chanter's position,

Chanter writes that whilst it is without question invaluable to women how strategies to secure equality have benefited lives and increased opportunities for women, playing off gender against sex should not, in Chanter's opinion, obscure the need for feminism to move with the times and it needs to redefine its goals. A crucial part of this redefinition might be to reassess how useful it is to emphasize gender to the extent of obliterating the significance of the question of sexual difference, and more importantly to explore in depth how contemporary women philosophers have already addressed this issue. For Chanter to propose the reconsideration of sexual difference is also to be a feminist. It is important to continue to maintain the necessity of equal rights, but, she argues, for Irigaray there is another more important issue to address, that of sexual difference. For Chanter this aim can be incorporated into the discourse of feminism, adding another dimension to debates, this means whilst it remains important to continue to lobby for equal rights other issues can be addressed. It is a mistake to restrict feminism to such a goal. For Irigaray, the question of sexual difference is more fundamental and more significant to both men and women than the discourse(s) of feminism. Chanter argues that there are fundamental questions for feminism to ask itself, about whether or not, for example, the equality with men for which feminists strive is worthy of attainment. However, Irigaray is not merely concerned with equal rights for women, but with a critique of patriarchal standards and, in a point that Chanter does not emphasize the construction of new values.

Irigaray's Own Perspective on Feminism

Irigaray has written about this issue of feminism and her response to her feminist status has been to direct questions to today's feminism. Despite Chanter's elaborate argument, with these questions it is difficult to see how Irigaray's work can fit within the discourse of feminism. In an interview in *Why Different?* entitled "Different but United Through A New Alliance," Irigaray suggests, that there are five points feminism must reconsider, (albeit with the caveat that feminism is not one

discourse). She writes that the first point, which has been already been more than emphasized, is a criticism of feminism where it considers liberation to be that of equality with men. Elaborating this point she states that acquiring a female identity cannot be confused with economic status, as is the tendency of our age (and perhaps also that of RIBA researchers). This, she writes, reduces the human being to a socioeconomic being. The second point, she makes, is towards feminisms forgetting that the alienation of women first takes place in a relationship of difference with man (within sexual difference). In forgetting this, she argues, feminists obscure the manner that alienation can be remedied, that is to say in relationship to man. The third issue, she states, is the misunderstanding that gathering many women together will be the same thing as finding women a valid identity - as in, for example, collective or separatist projects. The fourth is an insufficient concern for the objective ways, she argues, to promote and save individual subjectivity and collective relations. For example, in civil rights and adequate language as already suggested. The fifth is an insufficient questioning of women who led the women's liberation movement and a confusion between historically worthy women and those who opened up a new age for women's emancipation and liberation. That is to say a question of gratitude or appropriate thanks (see *Why Different?* page 119).

Hence, whilst it is necessary for women to women with current political and social structures to achieve equality of rights and opportunities, these efforts, cannot be allowed to hide the problems with existing social structures, and shade the significance of rethinking sexual difference. Criticisms of existing social structures are necessary, however, it is far from sufficient for what Irigaray insists upon, which is an equitable legal system for both sexes, rights appropriate to both sexes, sexed civil identities, at least, as a start. A process she has begun with her discussion of the European Charter of Human Rights.

Defining Irigaray's project as feminist, arguing that her philosophy supports a continuing feminist project in architecture, presents some problems for women theorists. The uncritical adoption of the term feminism invites misunderstanding, especially amongst architects, and

attempts to categorize Irigaray's work into existing feminisms can limit understandings of her approach. Especially whilst Irigaray is keen to disassociate her work from feminist theory that argues for equality preferring to describe her work as engaged with the '...the continued struggles of women' (*WD*, 22).

In *Thinking the Difference*, Irigaray writes: 'I have never called myself simply a feminist, and I feel I have very little common ground today with a good many feminists (who, incidentally, do not form a homogeneous group) especially when it comes to the relation between political theory and practice' (*TTD*, xiii). Her project for the recognition of female subjectivity thus differs considerably from any already existing alternatives to political struggles for equality. For example, it differs from radical feminists who either advocate the celebration of difference, or from those who propose separatism - although Italian feminists have taken up her work as supportive of a type of separatism particular to Italian feminist politics.

Vikki Bell, as an example of a self-defined 'feminist' theorist and one addressing some of these difficult issues, argues, in a similar way to Chanter, for the need to reformulate the questions that are fundamental to feminism. Bell argues, in her book *The Feminist Imagination*, that feminism has reached a crisis in its thought, which she associates with post-modernism. She writes: 'The tasks of representing woman and of knowing who the community is that feminism represents have become, and rightly so, vexed questions for feminist theory (...) there can be no return to an innocence with regards the subject position or the existence of a community' (Bell, 1999, 8). In her thesis Bell suggests that the feminist involvement in post-structuralist and post-modern theory has meant that an interrogation of the meaning of feminism has to take place on many levels, including historical and organization levels, as well as on the level of epistemological and philosophical considerations. In her project to affirm feminism within this context, she states that in so doing: 'I commit myself to a form of political awareness and at the same time I am intellectually obligated to ponder the "yes" and think about that political commitment for partaking in feminism involves partaking in marking out boundaries' (Bell, 1999, 5-6). However, Bell does not make her argument

with the same political force as Irigaray and Irigaray 's philosophy disputes Bell's arguments: For what do women's women and political affiliation mean if women have not got their own civil identity? She argues that if they are not women in their own right. If they remain without identity, with only a critical stance. If this remains the position of women they remain supporting and promoting a male tradition and society to which they are alien and which to some extents annihilates them as person. Irigaray thus expands Bell's arguments where Bell states feminism should reconsider its foundations; Irigaray is critical of such projects as they remain within patriarchal model of relations to the other, that is to say within the horizon of patriarchal culture. In Bell's perspective on feminism, "feminism" must be a non-exclusionary, transnational and multi-cultural constantly vigilant of the tenuous status of its community, its inclusions, its exclusions and its future hopes. Bell's theory is influenced by her own reading of Emmanuel Levinas and by Derrida's project, and she cites this tradition together with feminist thought, but for Irigaray the question of sexual difference is in danger of being put to rest, in this way, by this sort of 'feminist' project.

The Right to One's Own Desires

Irigaray's philosophy presents the need for the creative redefinition of cultural values and civil rights specific to women, as already stated. Discovering a language of desires, is part of this task. For example, in *Why Different?* she writes:

We still don't talk enough among ourselves about sexual issues. Every time we meet up, namely to address problems concerning contraception and abortion, it would be useful for us to talk about our sexuality, to share our problems, to understand how our desires underwent an abortion in our girlhood and continue to be aborted in our lives as women. Simply having the courage to relate the difficulty we meet in fulfilling our desires, our pleasures, our loves, makes these things less dramatic (..) discovering the imagination and language of our desires positively is much more fascinating (*WD*, 26).

This is still a collective task and an issue for feminism but it is not one that suggests that simply gathering women together, to work together, or campaign together, will lead to their liberation.

Chanter argues that Irigaray's philosophy could promote a feminism, however, she also writes:

...how to act together as women, how to communicate with one another in ways that respect the differences between us and how to remain a politically viable movement cannot help but intersect, and conflict, with questions about how we love and live, what we want for ourselves and for those closest to us, and how we envision, endorse and enact our friendships with others (*EE*, 20).

For Irigaray women's project not only means the cultural recognition of values and desires appropriate to women, but finding the way to rediscover these desires. Chanter's work to envision how Irigaray's philosophy supports a project of women's liberation has to be noted as significant to debates raging within feminist theory, especially those that cited philosophy such as Levinas and Derrida to support a feminist argument. However, trying to categorize Irigaray as a feminist is, as demonstrated, problematic, her relationship to feminism is complex and post-modern feminism influenced by Derrida or Levinas do not address these question of difference in desire or in relationality. Her thought on feminism would place a different emphasis on the question than Chanter suggests, however, Irigaray is critical of women who refuse to acknowledge their debt to historic feminism and in this way it is important to recognize those women who have assisted others towards greater legal rights. Forgetting the women who have opened up the possibility of a new age and forgetting the cultural gains won by them, she argues, can isolate, it cuts female genealogies, leaving them women in constant conflict and moreover without understanding this as a masculine model of relationality. However, it is a rethought model of the sexual relation that Irigaray suggests is an essential project. She writes of women's tasks:

Our culture being patriarchal, we have to remain alert to a number of key points: refuse to accept a hierarchical relationship between men and women defined *a priori* and in a formal way; respect, in words and in acts, the natural and spiritual genealogy among women; re-establish horizontal and vertical relation between men and women based on the respect of

two genealogies, in and for us, as well as for the other sex or the other gender; progressively organize a society of two sexes, two genders both in cultural and political terms and in terms of the most intimate love. This means that political representatives will be men and women - male and female divinities, linguistic and cultural codes which are sexed in such a way that men and women will represent them with an equivalent value adequate to their difference in identity (*WD*, 61).

Finding a Way to Rediscover Our Desires: Women's Liberation

Feminism as a project for women by women, which is Chanter's suggestion, thus takes away a certain emphasis on the task of reconsidering the sexual relation. Neither feminist efforts for equality nor forgetting the cultural gains won, Irigaray argues, can be allowed to dominate 'feminist' debates, as each obscures the problem of conceiving experience as neutral which is patriarchy's tool. This is evident in statements such as: '[The] current social order and that includes the order defining occupations is not neutral when viewed in terms of the difference between the sexes. Working conditions and production techniques are not equally designed nor equally applied with respect to difference' (*JTN*, 84). The attempt to eliminate difference through equality could be described as Simone De Beauvoir's inheritance to feminism, and Irigaray is similarly critical of her work. In a statement directed to De Beauvoir's much cited, 'One is not born a woman, one becomes one,' Irigaray writes: '*Je suis née femme, mais je dois encore devenir cette femme que je suis par nature* (I was born a woman, but I must become again this woman that I am by nature) (*JAT*, 168).

In the series of lectures presented in Italy in *Thinking the Difference*, some of which were by invitation from the Italian Communist party, Irigaray argues that unlike France, in the Italian context, thinking about the difference between the sexes is not an unusual topic. It is a matter, even, of public and political debate. Irigaray also suggests that in France, the difference between the sexes no longer exists, and it is prohibited. Men and women, she writes, in France, at least as according to the media, enjoy the same rights as a matter of law, whilst in Italy sexual difference continues to be thought. This is not to say that Irigaray thinks Italians are thinking difference in the

right or adequate way.

In Italy, she writes, sexual difference is of concern to both radical feminists and also to the Catholic Church. For women separatists in Italy it is a question of constructing a specific identity for women before or beyond the combination of the two sexes. For the Church, the question of sexual difference, as stated by Jean Paul II (in a response to feminist theologians), is one resolved by the biblical interpretation that man and woman are one, that is to say, sexual difference between man and woman is a result of woman's sin (see *Thinking the Difference*, page vii). Difference, for the Catholic Church, is thus to be overcome. Irigaray's approach is obviously somewhat different to both these and sexual difference where each sex enjoys rights appropriate to his or her sex conforms to neither of these arguments.

Irigaray does endorse women's struggles and traditional forms of political protest and Chanter argues that Irigaray is more associated with the feminist movement than she suggests. Chanter cites Irigaray's paper 'Why Define Sexed Rights' in *Je, Tu, Nous* where in this paper Irigaray writes that her philosophical interests have not stopped her from:

...joining and promoting public demonstrations for women to gain this or that rights: the right to contraception, abortion, legal aid in the cases of public or domestic violence, the right to freedom of expression - etc., demonstrations generally supported by feminists, even if they signify the right to difference (*JTN*, 11).

However, Irigaray in a footnote to this point, Irigaray argues that her own position regarding jurisdiction is more radical than those of the marches she has attended. Chanter makes references to *Sexes and Genealogies* to further support her argument that Irigaray is in fact a feminist, or at least promotes a feminism as defined by Chanter, where Irigaray writes: 'It [sexual difference] does not mean that women should be paid less. It does mean that salaries and social recognition have to be negotiated on the basis of identity - not equality' (*SG*, vi). This radical form of 'feminism' is according to Chanter further defined by Irigaray in her mimicking of Freud in *This Sex Which Is Not One*, where Irigaray writes that: 'Just as Freud overlooks 'the fact that the female sex might

possibly have its own specificity' (*TS*, 69): So too feminism, that construes itself strictly in terms of equality overlooks the fundamental need to establish sexual difference, on the level of the subject (see *SG*, 107). However, this is not necessarily best suited to a collective project of discovery amongst women. If this complex relation to feminism can be summed up, perhaps Irigaray's writing best suffices. In *I Love To You* Irigaray states:

To want to be equal to men is a grave ethical fault: In seeking equality women contribute to the erasure of a neutral and spiritual reality based on an abstract universal which is in the service of a single master, death (*ILTY*, 27).

Chanter's thesis does not as yet correspond to any already conceived feminist agenda, although many theorists discuss Irigaray's work. Whitford writes of Irigaray's argument: 'Whatever equality means it does not mean becoming like men' (Whitford, 1991,12). Irigaray does not dismiss the importance of continuing to pursue equal rights - only that women cannot limit themselves to such goals. Sexed rights, or positive rights for citizenship in the feminine mode, must, she argues, motivate women's aims (see *DBBT*, 38): Rediscovery of these rights and values must be the first stage.

Reading Irigaray's work it becomes apparent that challenging the foundations of the current social order is one of our cultural tasks. Challenging the limits of Western culture and how, and for whom, subjectivity is constructed, could be described as a liberation, and this 'liberation' a way. However, this liberation cannot be achieved without some process of construction to sustain identity and this construction is one in relation with the other, in a relation between two: Limited in that we cannot know the other, or as Irigaray writes in *To Be Two*, that the other will always remain a mystery. This way corresponds to the issue of dwelling.

For Irigaray conventional feminism fails to take account of the difference between the sexes, races and classes when it calls for equality. Post-modern feminisms claim to discuss issues of difference between sexes, races, cultures and ages, however, Irigaray's work challenges women to reconsider sexual difference so as to move towards a new era through sexual difference and thus

to adequately approach all differences. Looking at contemporary readings of Irigaray's work by theorists both within philosophy and feminism, what is evident is a need for feminism to evolve past internal antagonisms. In this respect, Irigaray's work is invaluable. If we try to eradicate difference, reducing the other, all others, to a product of our existing economy (an economy she describes in *An Ethics of Sexual Difference* as an economy of the same). It is evident we cannot respond to female otherness as it is experienced and lived by women but neither do we have a good or ethical relation to other differences. As feminist theorists we need to find ways of acknowledging the debt we have to the struggles of first wave feminists, but, we cannot allow ourselves to be trapped within their parameters and drives. Neither can we allow ourselves to uncritically adopt gender theories without seeing that complicity many have in maintaining hierarchical gender relations, which privilege the male. To focus on the social construction of gender at the expense of sexed bodies or to construe race as an acculturated concept, as Chanter argues, does not alleviate that fact that the female sex and back bodies are still the locus of discrimination (see Chanter, 2001, 12). Chanter's feminism, is one informed by Irigaray's philosophy, but even whilst it recognizes the limitations of 'feminist' discourse it remains committed to feminism bound to the very antagonistic relations Irigaray tries to deconstruct. Chanter writes:

I want to emphasize the need for feminist to continually draw new boundaries, to take account of the shifting significance of feminist agendas, and to recognize the limitations of discourse which may once have been feminist in a revolutionary way, but which might have become reactionary, and even complicitous (*EE*, 79).

For Chanter, this radical conception of feminism would suggest ways in which women can act together as women, communicate with one another, and respect difference, at the same time as constantly questioning how we think about, endorse and act out our friendships as a politically viable project, but, as stated, this is to over emphasize the question of relations between women.

The Cultural Prohibition of Values Specific to Women

Chanter does not fully explore this approach to difference as sexual difference. In the paper exploring issues surrounding equal rights, 'Each Sex Must Have Its Own Rights' Irigaray argues that despite calls for equal rights little thought have been given to what this might mean as a whole, as the Western tradition prevents the recognition of values appropriate to women's difference. In this paper, which discusses Hegel's thought, she argues, that whilst Hegel took on a project of how a whole society functions, the weakest link in his philosophy was how the family functions. She writes: 'Hegel is unable to think of the family as anything but a single substance within which particular individuals lose their rights' (SG, 1). This absence in Hegel's thought is symptomatic of the whole of the Western traditions, in general, however, Irigaray focuses as example on Hegel's interpretation of the myth of Antigone who in burying her dead brother, against the law of the king, was cast out of the city. In the myth she is forced to sacrifice her values. In a chapter on the family in *Phenomenology of Mind* Irigaray argues that Hegel explores why the daughter (Antigone) who remains faithful to the laws relating to her mother has to be cast out, out of the city, and out of society. She cannot be killed she must be imprisoned and deprived of liberty, air, light and love. This symbolic gesture and is illustrative of how patriarchy constructs itself. Antigone cannot obey the law of the king because she must obey her own laws, those of her own values, but these laws are prohibited. These laws, Irigaray writes, are:

...religious laws relating to the burial of her brother who has been killed in a war among men. These laws have to do with the cultural obligations owed to the mother's blood, the blood shared by the brothers and sisters in the family. The duty to this blood will be denied and outlawed as the culture becomes patriarchal. This tragic episode in life - and in war - between the genders represents the passage into patriarchy. The daughter is forbidden to respect the blood bonds with her mother. From the spiritual viewpoint, these bonds have a religious quality, they move in consonance with the fertility of the earth and its flowers and fruits, they protect love in its bodily dimension, they keep watch over female fruitfulness within and without marriage (depending on whether the kingdom of Aphrodite or of Demeter is invoked)

they correspond to times of peace (SG, 2).

Antigone represents a woman at the threshold of patriarchy. One who knows and acknowledges her own genealogy but one who finds this is in conflict with the patriarchal tradition. Irigaray suggests that our morality, our ethics towards the other (even ethics as it has been rethought by contemporary philosophy) is still derived from these very ancient events, events that recall the birth of patriarchal society. This means that within the Western tradition, within patriarchy, women's genealogical tradition, women's duty to her mother's "blood" is forbidden; the recognition of values specific to women are similarly forbidden. Irigaray writes:

Under the rule of patriarchy the girl is separated from her mother and from her family in general. She is transplanted into the genealogy of the husband; she must live with him, carry his name, bear his children, etc., The first time that this takes place, the move is recorded as the abduction of women by a man-lover. A war breaks out among men to recapture the stolen woman and bring her back to her community of origin (cf. *Thinking the Difference*, Demeter and Kore, SG, 2).

The existence of a genealogy between women is made impossible, allegiance to these laws punishable by the state. Irigaray argues that Freud even reinforces this in *Totem and Taboo*, apparently for the benefit of women. With patriarchy, love between mother and daughter and transmission of their own values is transformed into an obligation for women to sacrifice herself to her husband and children, to devote herself to a cult of maternity as the patriarchal tradition defines the proper role of woman. The only proper place woman then has, is that of mother and a stereotype of mother at that, as defined by patriarchal culture. She writes:

In fact, despite the incest taboo, there seems little indication that man has sublimated the natural immediacy of his relationship to the mother. Rather, man has transferred that relationship to his wife as mother substitute. In this way the man-woman couple is always out of place by a generation, since male and female genealogies are collapsed into a single genealogy: that of the *husband* (SG, 2, italics in original).

Irigaray describes her work as the exploration of the woman I am by nature, Irigaray's

understanding of 'nature' is, nevertheless, one of the most complex issues to address especially from within a philosophical tradition underscored by a refusal to recognize values specific to women. What is evident is that with the strength of such prohibition engrained within language and philosophy, art and architecture, it requires a return beyond the beginnings of patriarchy and beyond its influence to recover such approaches. Irigaray's philosophy suggests that women need to re-interpret the idea of nature that underlies our perspectives, which are already, as stated, 'codified in the man's camp'.

Being forced into a culture where there is only one set of values, forces women, out of their own natures and out of a respect for their own values. The myth of Antigone marks the beginning of a failure of culture to recognize these two genealogies. When this happens, when a patriarchal concept of nature is established, Irigaray writes, this new notion '...takes the place of earth's fertility, abandons its religious quality, its link to the divinity of women and to the mother-daughter relation' (SG, 3). Paradoxically, the cult of mother, she argues, is often associated with a scorn or neglect of nature, in contrast to the values that Antigone seeks to uphold. Femininity is idealized in figures of maternity in patriarchal cultures in particular Judeo-Christian traditions, but, Irigaray writes:

It is true that in patriarchal genealogy we are dealing with the cult of the *son's mother*, to the detriment of the daughter's mother. The cult of the son's mother ties our tradition into the whole mother-son incest issue and the taboo upon it. Our societies forget fascination with that incest leads us to neglect the genealogy of the woman, which has been collapsed inside the man's (SG, 3, italics in original).

The Impossibility of Two Genders Without Rights Specific to Each

Rediscovering values appropriate to women is a way of beginning to establish a culture of equality and difference. Writing them into legislation a way to address political action for change. This one way to a culture with two different genders or two different sexes and thus a real equality. This is not a privileging of sexual difference or heterosexual relations or even the suggestion that

differences of race, age or nationality are less significant than sexual difference. Rather it is the suggestion that we have not thought adequately about the difference between man and woman, we have not yet thought, differences in values, needs and cultural expectations. This does not mean a discussion of stereotypes but that women have to rediscover difference in relation and rediscover how they can re-evaluate this difference. In the current state of affairs there is only one tradition, and that is one, which elevates the relation between Father and son, and between Mother and son. With only one set of values, it becomes impossible to define two, two genders or two sexes; it is forbidden, which at least partly explains the difficulties her works meets in the contemporary context. She writes:

Once one genealogy has been reduced to the other's, it becomes impossible or at least difficult for the casual thinker to define two different genders or sexes. Man takes his orientation from his relation to his father insofar as his name and property are concerned and from his mother in relation to unmediated nature. Women must submit to her husband and to reproduction. This means that gender as sexuality is never sublimated. *Gender is confused with species*. Gender becomes the human race, human nature, etc., as defined from within patriarchal culture. Gender thus defined corresponds to a race of men (*un peuple d'hommes*) who refuse whether consciously or not, the possibility of another gender: the female. All that is left is the human race/gender (*le genre humain*) from which the only real value of sex is to reproduce the species. From this point of view, *gender is always subservient to kinship*. Man and woman would not come to maturity with a thinking and culture relative to the sexual difference of each. They would be more or less sexed children and adolescents, and then reproduce adults. In this perspective, the family serves the interests of property, of material patrimony, and the reproduction of children. The family is not a small unit in which individual difference can be respected and cultivated (SG, 3-4, italics in original).

The question of gender, within this one genealogy, becomes an issue of belonging or not to the human race. This race of 'men', perpetuates a privileged relation between men. Within this system, women, traditionally, do not have legislative protection. Feminist changes to the system within this domain, such as those for equality are thus not sufficient, as Irigaray writes:

A few partial changes in rights for women have been won in recent times. But even these are

subject to recall. They are won by partial and local pressures whereas what is needed is full-scale rethinking of the law's duty to offer justice to *two genders that differ* in their needs, their desires, their properties (SG, 4, italics in original).

How Is This Love?

The question of love is a way of thinking about nature, and valid lifestyle. It is a way of thinking about Antigone's commitment to her brother, which although Irigaray argues is illustrative of cultures move towards a single patriarchal law, it is still a story permitted by patriarchy. Irigaray writes on this matter:

When faced by questions such as these many men and women start talking about *love*. But love is only possible when there are two parties and in a relationship that is not submissive to one gender, not subject to reproduction. It requires that the rights of both male and female are written into the legal code. If the rights of the couple were indeed written into the legal code, this would serve to convert individual morality into collective ethics, to transform the relations of the genders within the family or its substitute into rights and duties that involve the culture as a whole. Religion can then rediscover how each gender interprets its relation to the divine - a religion freed from its role of guardian of a single gender and financial trustee for the property of one gender more than of the other. Hardly a godly role (SG, 4-5, italics in original).

The question of love asks for the imperatives that underlie our motives to think and act to be re-addressed. Questions of love, our ideas of love, are very much cultural issues. Love and sex have ethical dimensions, but when culture insists on the suppression of rights and values specific to women. How is this love? It is possible to read Irigaray's work as a question of love, a question of how love is thought within patriarchal genealogies and how love can be thought in the rediscovery of two traditions. However, approaching an other who is tangible and sexuate implies both criticism of psychoanalytic theory and philosophy, each of which are shaped by the prohibitions of women's faithfulness to their own desires. This is why the phenomenological tradition can play an important part in understanding Irigaray's work and why theorists such as Chanter have taken up

the project of salvaging those thinkers for contemporary feminisms, but utilizing this tradition also means rethinking it.

The Language of Parity?

Irigaray's philosophy is as distinct from Heidegger's thought as it is for Derrida's and Levinas's, her question of these thinkers, as for the whole of Western philosophy, is that of how and for whom subjectivity is constituted so as to forget modes of being specific to the female, and how each could think it differently. Irigaray's troubled relationship with the various strands of feminism can help to clarify her own positions with regards the social pressures faced by women today, in particular those of equality and diversity. Her project, however, concerns recovering and establishing values, including equal but different rights for men and women. Although Irigaray's argument could be seen as corresponding to the question of parity between the sexes, it is important to note that her rethinking difference (not only in terms of freedom from male power structures, but in terms of the liberation of genders) cannot be confused with arguments that evoke the right to equality. In this way, Irigaray writes: "Actually if parity seems to be the ultimate goal, then there is a risk of confusing the right to a certain equivalence of social roles with women achieving the right to be equal to men' (*WD*, 110). Parity also suggests the language of equality, however, difference thought in Irigaray's philosophy, to state again, cannot be used to support arguments that suggest their goal as equality with men. This problem can be identified, as Irigaray does, as the question whether women campaign for freedom to be like men thus neutralizing identity, or as she argues, whether women can seek the right to assert female identity at social, cultural or political levels. Parity, on the other hand, is generally conceived as attaining social values but which, for Irigaray, is a similar motive to men's social goals. The question is of attaining an identity, which cannot be reduced to attaining social values. Social values need to be re-established to rediscover female identity and human identity is, she states:

...women and also men, who have cared about parity most, have generally not thought too much about the difference in words, images and representations corresponding to a man's identity on the one hand and a woman's on the other. Even so, these are obviously deciding factors as much on the man's side as on the woman's, in the discovery and assertion and involvement on both sides of a subjectivity (*WD*, 111).

2.3 Changing the Horizon of Culture: And The Right To A Sexed Identity?

In the final report of the study 'Why do women leave architecture? Research into the retention of women in architectural practice,' the authors describe their approach as primarily looking to identify worse case scenarios as to why women leave the profession. A web based questionnaire is at the heart of their research, and provides the primary method in collecting information. This format, they argue, enabled anonymous responses and also allowed answers to quite sensitive questions. Other means of collecting information were described as in-depth interviews, expert panel interviews and literature review. (Ten in depth interviews were also held mainly with women who have left the profession). Key findings as to why women leave practice were summarized by the researchers as:

Low pay; Unequal pay; Long working hours; Inflexible/unfamily friendly working hours, sidelining, Limited areas of work, The glass ceiling; Stressful working conditions, protective paternalism preventing development of experience; Macho culture; Sexism; Redundancy and or dismissal; High litigation risk and high insurance cost; Lack of returner training; More job satisfaction elsewhere' (RIBA, 2003a, 3).

The authors of the report argue that there is little evidence that women left because they were incompetent designers or that they no longer wanted to be architects. One of the most alarming observations that emerged from the report, however, as the authors argue, is the extent to which some architectural practices are also operating outside current legislation in relation to employment practices (RIBA, 2003a, 3). The key recommendations from the research, the authors summarize

as:

Better dissemination of employment legislation and good practice; Inclusion of equal opportunities practice in the profession bodies codes of practice; returner training; More affordable and flexible CPD (Continuing Professional Development); Mentoring and advisory/helpline support; More diverse representation of the profession to the public; Monitoring of the performance of schools in improving diversity targets and equal opportunities practice; Advisory practice notes for both architectural practices and schools of architecture by the RIBA; More career information and again more diverse representation in promoting architecture as a career' (RIBA, 2003a, 4).

In addition to specific guidelines the authors of the report, also suggest the need for '...wider research to look at the profession as a whole and particularly to explore the nature of the conditions that provide an environment where women can thrive as architects' (RIBA, 2003a, 4). Questions that correspond directly with that of the issue of dwelling.

The aim of the report is described as identifying more clearly factors that may cause women to leave the profession. However, the report also puts forward strategies for change, in the authors terms, which they hope will assist the profession in progressing the diversity agenda, and, as well, they write: '...as reversing the tide of departure: It is hoped by proposing actions for change, both men and women will benefit and the profession will be better equipped to respond to the changing nature and requirements of society' (2003a, 4).

Whether this is in any way adequate to address the problem of women in the profession or, indeed, whether this is the best way to tackle why women feel dissatisfied with their work and lives is an important question for future research. Irigaray writes: '...women's liberation extends far beyond the framework of current feminist struggles, which are too often limited to criticizing the patriarchy, creating women's space [*l'entre-femmes*], or demanding equality with men, without proposing new values that would make it possible to live sexual difference in justice, civility and spiritual fertility' (*TTD*, xiv). In the theoretical research that forms a background to the study the authors describe three historical phases which relate to women's entry into architecture as a

profession, but each also raises the problem of a history of discrimination, and the need for inclusive practices to reflect society as a whole in its diversity. The first stage relates to the 1919 Sex Discrimination Removal Act, which opened the door to the participation of women in the profession and heralded the existence of the 'gentlewoman architect'. The second phase, they write, relates to anti-discrimination legislation of the 1970s where it became illegal to discriminate against women on the grounds of sex in 1975, to discriminate on the grounds of race in 1976 and to discriminate on the grounds of disability in 1995. The third phase relates to promoting inclusion, where the authors write:

The third phase of the move to remove discrimination might be described as the proactive phase. This phase not only includes the intention to include the outlawing of discriminatory behaviour against people on grounds other than those already covered by the legislation such as religion, sexuality or age but it also implies a definite duty to promote an inclusive environment for all. The duty to promote equality should not be confused with the idea of positive discrimination. Promotion of equality is about creating an environment within which people who all have different skills, abilities and personal characteristics and may be of either sex or of different religions, races or sexuality can flourish on equal terms. Global events such as 9/11 which has led to religious intolerance and the national outrage following the Stephen Lawrence murder has prompted actions to counter intolerance and discrimination. Other influences such as the economic imperative to make better use of all citizens in the workforce as both taxpayers and consumers is also a crucial factor for the current research project, as will be explained in the next section. It is important to recognize that although no single equality law has yet been passed this is likely to occur in the near future. The European Union has already accepted the idea of gender equality mainstreaming. This is the beginning of a new phase of anti-discriminatory practice, which implies that there should be a proactive duty to promote equality and an anticipatory duty to ensure that the environment will be suitable for a diverse range of people (RIBA, 2003a, 10).

This third phase is described in terms of a positive duty to promote equality and inclusion. The authors cite legislation such as the Race Relations Amendment Act and its duty to promote non racist environment in institutions and organizations; the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995, the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act, 2002, and the Amsterdam Treaty, mainstreaming

of gender equality in EU, 1997 (in force 1999) Europe wide integration of equality. They write that the implication of Stage 3 is:

...the duty to promote an inclusive environment and to anticipate the likelihood of a diverse range of people as professionals and as clients and users of built environments; Greater appreciation of the economic and other advantages of inclusion from an economic perspective – the business case for inclusion Greater appreciation of the cost of training women who leave the profession in financial terms and lost talent' (RIBA, 2003a, 11).

However, despite the obvious huge changes in cultural attitudes towards women the responses by women architects amount to terrifying reading of illegal employment practices, and discrimination at many levels in terms both of education and practice. It is more than evident that discrimination exists and moreover is propagated within the architectural profession, that women are discriminated against women from the lowliest student level onwards. The authors write:

There is alarming evidence to the effect that some practices are not abiding by existing working hours, equal opportunities and pay legislation. The failure to comply with the law in relation to these issues has contributed to poor working conditions and limited the promotion prospects of women. The undermining of women contributed to low self-esteem and expectations which resulted in a lack of confidence in personal capabilities. This in turn led to limited opportunities for further training and therefore reduced the accumulation of relevant experience and in the worst cases de-skilling (...) It remains to be seen whether this is through ignorance of the law or for more sinister reasons. Obviously ignorance is no excuse under the law. The failure to uphold the law belies the widely held view that equal opportunities were addressed in the 1970's and 80's. It is a cause for concern that the profession as a whole (RIBA, 2003a, 27).

From the perspective a future understanding of the situation of women within the profession the authors are pessimistic, and moreover dismissive of the question of difference as it is raised in Schools. They write:

[E]vidence shows that women, particularly after career breaks are not seen as equals. Their work is often sidelined or compartmentalized. They may be treated as people in need of protection or on the other hand disregarded or demeaned. It is very worrying that reports

from some schools of architecture indicate that the treatment of women does not bear close scrutiny. Universities should be leading the way in changing attitudes and culture of the profession to accommodate diversity, but this does not seem to be happening. Popular debate about the differences between the male and female brain has reinforced stereotypical attitudes towards gendered ability and skill. Assessment of actual ability should always be made on an individual basis and not by a group sample. These attitudes in many cases have prevented women from realizing their full potential and in the future may deter women from joining the profession. Even during the course of this project instead of focussing on the real reasons why women leave the profession the media in particular have dwelt on the extent to which women are capable of becoming architects in terms of 3D visualization skills. There is feedback to indicate that women out perform men in schools of architecture and it is evident that many women have the visual and other skills necessary for the profession. This should be recognized and the capability of women architects celebrated through raising the profile of their work (RIBA, 2003a, 27).

However, the authors of the project do attempt to provide positive, albeit perhaps limited recommendations as to how to improve this situation. This can only be of benefit. For example whilst Irigaray argues for a reconsideration of difference she also suggests that discussing the historical and cultural conditions that shape women's lives, whether anecdotal or autobiography (as the RIBA funded research has done), or in terms of our predetermining myths, while it can be cathartic, both individually and collectively, if approached in the right way. (Irigaray argues that where women have been obliged to keep quiet and have traditionally converted their distress into physical symptoms, mutism or paralysis, she suggests, speaking out can bring, '...relief to the body and enabling them [women] to accede to another time' (*JTN*, 108).) Withholding autobiographic experience, denying the discrimination and distress that is women's common testament can also be a way for some women to seemingly escape the prejudices of the architectural Institution, as some of the responses in the architectural press by women, concerning this RIBA funded research, demonstrate. Irigaray is critical of autobiographic studies, and this is an important point is distinguishing her work from other women writers, but only in that they stop short of providing a solution for women. She argues that women's autobiographies more often than not only describe

what it is to be woman within the horizon of a patriarchal culture, which means that limited to one subjectivity without, she writes, suggesting how we might approach another construction of identity (*ILTY*, 64). However, whilst describing all the discrimination women face within education and the profession can have some benefit; and denying distress also, for some women, a way of managing difficult situations, neither are adequate solutions to the problem of the cultural subordination of women. Women's stories are valuable, educational, sometimes reassuring, inspirational and affirmative can also leave women alienated and without direction. And yet silence can equally deny other women's experience.

Irigaray's way is a striving for something positive in addition to stating the negative, a way of discussing the painful realities of women's lives but at the same time searching to recognize different values. This, she argues, is the only way to alleviate the sense of alienation which disclosures of prejudice and discrimination otherwise lead. Furthermore, she argues,

To demand a right to subjectivity and to freedom for women without defining the objective rights of the female gender seems an illusory solution belonging to the historical hierarchy between the sexes and could even subject women to the authority of empty statements promulgated in an ecological blindness confused with collective good' (*ILTY*, 5).

The report provides over ninety recommendations but the responsibility for effecting change is directed to other bodies in particular RIBA, rather than women themselves. These include changing the image of the architect within popular culture and in particular within career literature from that of a white male. For example, the authors write as their first recommendations:

1. (...) the more accurate portrayal of architecture as a profession and potential for greater diversity in terms of both people and the weight given to the type and nature of projects portrayed as flagships for the profession.
2. Fewer 'white men in suits' representing the profession in schools careers events and promotion
3. More coverage of work by women architects and other minority groups.
4. More information on career to teachers generally and emphasis on less gendered career paths RIBA.' (RIBA, 2003a, 31).

This issue of image is significant and this is a task for the development of a culture but whether it is significant to developing a culture of sexual difference as Irigaray suggests is questionable. Irigaray's demands are not towards the promotion of equality but towards the becoming of women. Furthermore, she writes:

...to become equal is to be unfaithful to the task of incarnating our happiness as living women and men. Equality neutralizes that dimension of the negative which opens up an access to the alliance between the genders. This avatar of a partly nihilistic philosophy, religion and Marxism weighs on our conscious. A certain Western interpretation of Buddhism or Brahmanism may throw them a life-line at the eleventh hour. We can only perish from such abstract and disincarnate concepts of spirit' (*ILTY*, 15).

Irigaray's argues that women's work has to involve a work of love, in addition to arguments surrounding paid employment of a becoming of themselves and humanity. Rather than equality, she suggests work towards the reconsideration of relation as a formation for the new. The negative in Irigaray's philosophy, or the work of the negative, corresponds to this process and relates to a form of renunciation. She argues that understanding of the limit of one gender would aid this becoming. She writes: '...more out of consideration for the other and from collective good sense than a process of consciousness that would lead me to a more accomplished spirituality' (*ILTY*, 13). While Irigaray is critical of such studies that promote equality as those presented by RIBA, what is interesting in the comparison of her perspective and the research report is that the issues Irigaray describes have so much potential for architecture as practice, so much potential to change the way we live, especially where thought in terms of dwelling, than the writing of recommendations against discrimination. Challenging these fundamentals is a way to allow changes in the profession.

Living and remaining faithful to a question of love, *can* cause misunderstanding and even conflict; especially within an Institution where through convention and simple convenience women (and men) can feel obliged to adopt masculine modes of identity conceived as authoritarian. Women are not only constantly asked to accommodate themselves to male

expectations and ambitions but also to take on subordinated roles. Conforming to these spoken and unspoken conventions can place women, as students and teachers, in untenable positions. However, attempting to interpret the cultural determinations that shape such difficulties can also provoke conflict, albeit that which reveals the tension between recognising the cultural construction of identity and the need to find one's own path and this is perhaps why research projects such as those adopted by RIBA are the easiest option for the profession so as to be seen to address its discriminatory practices. However, placed in difficult situations, while the effects of patriarchy can be concealed and invidious, one of the ways to address the problems we as women have, has to be a criticism directed towards society and the socio-economic factors, including the historical context, which has shaped our lives and alienated us from our identities. Nevertheless, the most effective and more beneficial activity to address the problems women have within the Institution is, in addition to such analysis, also the (re)creation of positive alternatives - a form of building in fact, initiating ways of speaking and listening, of cultural values, social structures, that otherwise act to efface women. This means salvaging and re-evaluating women's desires, needs and expectations and reformulating stereotypical models of sexual difference. It is an approach that Irigaray argues, could liberate women and men to a rediscovery of the other, each other or another other than that traditional thought in Western philosophy and this is the way in which Irigaray's philosophy reconsiders feminism.

At the moment, however, we do not live in a culture that values this difference. In order to adequately address sexual difference. We need to rediscover a 'horizontal' or non-hierarchical relations with the other; a difference between us. This, Irigaray argues, implies an approach that cultivates the other to carry out his or her own becoming, whilst remaining other. In many of her essays Irigaray works to rediscover the remnants of a horizontal difference, and she has discussed this in terms of a rethought mother-daughter relationship salvaged from myth or suppressed by philosophy. This relationality is also shown in the difference between boys and girls and illustrates in her linguistic research. In her work with Italian children she suggests that there is a

clear difference in desire between boys and girls and this is shown in the art, writing and speech of children (see the exhibition "*Che Sono Io? Che Sei Tu?*" University College London, November - December 2003 and The University of Nottingham, May 2004). Hence, critical of current educational systems that do not recognise this difference, and cultures that either dismiss it or use it against women, she argues that although educational systems introduce us to cultural discourse(s) such speaking is not yet dialogue (*D*, 206): Cultural discourse(s), of which both architecture and philosophy are example, are not yet dialogue where they do not and cannot recognise the difference in relationality between men and women and allow it to emerge to *build* (see *D*, 206, and see also lecture 14th November, *Institute of Romance Studies*, London). Thus, while boys and girls express different cultural desires, girls desires are not recognised or cultivated by education, and this leads Irigaray to argue that if there is conflict because of our differences, it is only because we have not yet begun to recognise and cultivate difference, to speak together and to co-exist.

As architects, teachers and students we can teach, talk, listen or engage in consultation processes with clients but none of these activities fully address the problem of the other where we fail to think about the issue of sexual difference; and whilst education in difference is not the nature of current educational systems. Stereotypes of sexual difference restrict lives, but the suggestion of an underlying neutral experience (the presumption of Western philosophy) maintains the privilege of the male. Irigaray's work aims to reveal the patriarchal biases of Western philosophy and re-affirm sexual difference but this does not mean an affirmation of difference modelled on stereotypical understandings of sexual difference, between a culturally privileged man and a subordinate female. Rather it allows an approach to the other that may be able to begin to motivate a change in culture to sustain this difference.

Irigaray's philosophy, poetry, political activity and teaching all work to challenge the stereotypes of sexual difference. However, there is no sense in her philosophy that this is an easy task, and no suggestion that the simple desire for dialogue would achieve the sense of

co-existence proposed by her philosophy. She suggests in the conference whose proceedings are published in *Dialogues* that dialogue necessitate the use of practices of energy that are not occidental and that are as yet unknown to our cultural traditions. Furthermore, to overcome stereotypes of sexual difference to begin to have a relation, she suggests, that girls and boys need better education in difference, of which an architectural education is particularly poor and yet the role it could have is especially significant.

Preconceptions of aptitude and ability surround women architects, whether spoken or unspoken. One could argue that this is the current state of affairs with respect to the working conditions of women in general. However, the problem as the RIBA committee "Architects for Change" have demonstrated, it is particularly endemic within architectural education as much as practice. The question of dwelling not only offers a perspective on the problems women face within the Institution or in developing a practice. It is a question of what it means to live, how and where we can live together. Furthermore, Irigaray argues in her discussion of building and dwelling in *The Way of Love* that the issue is directed to a more interior building: 'It is to a more interior undertaking that the human is invited here, to a work of becoming that can be evaluated according to the blossoming of the Being of the self, of the other, of the world where they dwell' (WL, 147). This is a practice, albeit practice reconsidered.

Being faithful to Irigaray's philosophising, to the question of love, does not prohibit some regard to my own experience, disappointment or dismay with the profession. Although it does bring to light the limitation of such an exercise. More difficult, creative and liberating aspect of the work, and its value for architectural theory, is in its striving to explore how we can change our habits of living to be ourselves and in its building so that we can to work towards a more fulfilling co-existence, or as Irigaray writes: '...the co-existence and fruitful encounter of two different identities' (WD, 11).

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 Reconstructing New Perspectives, New Bodies and New Ways of Inhabiting: Or, the problem of feminism(s) in contemporary architectural theory.

Can the work current in architectural theory and inspired by contemporary French philosophy, and French feminism in particular, be described as feminist? What is feminism now and what its role in a era described as post-feminist? What motive describes the work as architectural theorists that adopt French feminism? And what is the relation of deconstruction to French feminism? How influential is Derrida's thought, and is this influence a result of an architectural context or of the historical progress of feminist thought? If Derrida's project is described, more often than not as a responsibility to the wholly other(s) of thinking, described as a question of justice, or ethics (albeit ethics rethought), what are French feminisms possible correspondences with this thought and with architectural theory that adopts deconstruction? How does Derrida's 'ethic' differ from that of Cixous, Kristeva or Irigaray? And how is this then significant to architectural theory?

Amongst theorists, Irigaray's philosophy provides one of the most radical critiques of ethics and sexual difference and her work can provide a significantly different approach to the questions of difference than that explored by those inheriting Derrida's approach. Does the architectural theory informed by French philosophy thus address difference? This is one question raised by architectural theorists that have cited Irigaray's work and one question but certainly not the only question Irigaray's philosophy can be used to explore.

Trying to characterize current projects as feminist either through a study of influences to the texts, by reference, or by assessing the relationship between a theoretical position and the actuality of any specific practice presents a difficult, if not impossible task. Recent trends in theory influenced by post-structuralist philosophy have led to a certain predicament with regards the possibility of a specifically feminist practice. However, projects demonstrating the shared limits

between philosophy and architecture are now commonplace. Contributing to this dilemma are theorists who despite refusing the term feminism are, nevertheless, popularly conceived as progressing this debate. Finding means to assess current projects as feminist or not certainly suggest some difficulty, and to a certain extent a empty task but the question still has a validity. Investigating the motives of contemporary feminism in architecture can provide an insight into crises in debates and motives of theorists. Through this question it is possible to consider whether such approaches to architecture are adequate to address the needs and desires of women in contemporary cultures.

Hence, the questions raise a number of issues, not the least problematic being that of attempting to define the old feminism from which the new feminism raises itself. As already stated, finding a way to characterize the current so-called 'feminist' projects in architectural theory through a contextual study of the influences upon such is a complex issue. Nevertheless, the discourse does have some characteristics, and these characteristics have been used to define and distinguish; to create the new and better as opposed to the old and past. So the question has to be seen as significant.

Keeping the other a Mystery

In her poetic introduction to *To Be Two* Irigaray evokes an *aporia* at the beginning of our cultures(s), an *aporia*, for which she argues we lack words. Our relationship to the other is shaped by a patriarchal family structure, she writes, personal ethical relations are modelled on the relation between Father and son and made sacred by patriarchal culture(s). This leaves the relation to the other: woman, unthought. The other of Western philosophies is one that is abstract and neutral. For Irigaray, this relationship to the other is both a source of non-truth and non-ethics. The most problematic issue contemporary society faces, according to Irigaray, is how it approaches the other and she argues, all previous philosophies are inadequate. To suggest another ethical relation to the other, she writes: '...perhaps we can take our point of departure the following corporeal, affective

and intellectual reality: the other is a mystery' (*TBT*, 110). However, whilst she argues that contemporary philosophy does not adequately address the question of the other, she does begin to propose an alternative. An alternative that can be recovered in our return to the beginning of our cultures, to this aporia. This means recognizing that the other is and will remain a mystery for me.

³ In so doing, she writes:

I can:

respect him as other without subjecting him to any of my laws;

marry ethicality and truth in my relation with the other:

I think of the other as the mystery which he is for me, as a truth, certainly, but always as one which is unknown too and inappropriable by me, unable to be dominated or universalized;

change the relation between love and truth: respecting the mystery of the other through love implies that this respect for truth which will never be mine modified my, our relationship with the truth (*TBT*, 110).

If we could approach the other in this way, she writes, it may change our relation to Truth and ethics.

It may change our perception, our everyday reality, our ways of living, and hence she writes:

Instead of being light opposed to darkness, or knowledge opposed to ignorance, truth is light which does not give up its mystery, light which illuminates with revealing; never total, never authoritarian or dogmatic, but light always shared between two subjects irreducible to one or other (*TBT*, 110).

The Problem of Current Feminisms in Contemporary Architectural Theory

Thus, whilst current debates in architecture have included the question of feminism, and women architects have both continued to investigate the structure of male power embodied in the architectural; critics have also suggested that such work refuses to consider more fashionable and arguable more inclusive concerns of otherness and difference (see Coleman and McLeod in *Architecture and Feminism*). Irigaray's work is a way to suggest a different perspective on the problems of feminism and difference thought in this way in architecture.

³ That is to say not of the economy of the Same as she describes in *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*.

Contemporary feminism in architecture is generally defined by a collection of books published from the early 1990s onwards. Only *Architecture and Feminism* argues for the continued use of the term feminism. Debra Coleman, one of the editors of the collection, and McLeod, a contributor both cite Irigaray's philosophy in support of their argument. Whilst Irigaray does not use the term feminism to describe her work, Coleman argues that Irigaray's philosophy has a more useful ethic towards the other than any question of architecture and otherness suggested in architecture schools. Coleman uses the term feminism, and proposes it should remain in circulation, first, she writes, as it is a little feared amongst architects, and secondly as feminism risks being considered obsolete, replaced by a concern for difference and otherness which neglects adequate reflection of sexual difference or the other. Irigaray's philosophy can reveal why contemporary philosophy has led to the need to extend this feminist dialogue to oppose the adoption of philosophies of difference, as Coleman argues, but it can also reveal what is at stake in arguments over terminology.

Coleman does not define what she means by feminism, or adequately suggest how a discourse of architecture and feminism would differ from explorations in the name of gender, sex or desire, as carried out by more contemporary collections of papers. There is little difference in the character of papers collected in *Architecture and Feminism* to other collections of the time. Moreover, she does not suggest how, in any detail, maintaining the term feminism would strengthen the discourse. Nevertheless, Coleman's argument is significant, it illuminates what is still at work in contemporary debates and also in those that question difference: That is to say, the opposition between sex/gender, between feminism and difference.

Where contemporary architectural theorists are generally proposed as progressing feminist debates (despite their refusal of the term) and theorists polarized between feminism and gender theory or difference, there is an obvious issue of terminology. However, the issue is more complex than mere terminology and whilst Coleman proposes the use of the term feminism, she, nevertheless, aligns her thinking with Irigaray. Referring to Grosz's arguments and her review of

Irigaray's work, Coleman writes that the question for architecture and feminism is whether. '...we theorists, critics, students and practitioners of architecture participate in the work of generating "new perspectives, new bodies, new ways of inhabiting"' (AF, xiv). Nevertheless, while there is a growing discourse of questions of gender raised in architectural theory, little of this criticism reaches out beyond more conventional design research. Feminist critics such as Coleman and McLoed imply that contemporary approaches to difference remain academic and this is in part an important criticism. However, the question of sexual difference in Irigaray's philosophy, as already stated, has a political dimension and addresses difference in a way previously ill-considered by contemporary philosophies. Difference is that refounded in dialogue and difference suggests another perspective on the real. Approaching the other, as one who is different sexually, for Irigaray, would open a new age in thought. She writes:

The alliance between ethicality and truth would open a new age of thought, of philosophy, language, and the constitution of the subject, cultural values would take care of bodies as elements of nature to be spiritualized and left as bodies, would preserve hearts as organs of life and of love which are irreducible to logical alienation and reduction, would sustain the measure and form of reason which is capable of cultivating them in their truth, in their affects, in their differences. In short, they would take care of us as the women and men that we are, in body, in heart, in words (TBT, 106).

Irigaray's work provides a challenge to feminism to rethink its aims and motives, it also provides a challenge to gender theory in architecture, calling on the discourse to reconsider its foundations.

The Problems of Feminist Practice

Recent trends in architecture have led to a certain predicament about what is practice. Contemporary feminism in architectural is generally conceived as defined by a collection of books published from the early 1990s onwards. Although Irigaray is cautious of feminism she is described as supporting feminism by Coleman. It is important thus to consider within architectural

theory what the term signifies.

Feminism is rarely a term used by women architects within the Institution even where discussing discrimination in the workplace, which would seem the most obvious purpose of feminist theory. In contemporary architectural theory the term gender seems preferred, seen to refer to the cultural construction of femininity. Feminism in architecture by contrast is assumed as a relatively untheoretical discourse, one limited only to exploring women's disadvantage and discrimination with society because of their sex and not to any other disadvantage posed by other differences. This conflict is also argues as comparable to the perceived conflict between Marxist informed feminists and those influenced by French feminism, a conflict which also evokes the sex and gender distinction. Toril Moi's work is such an example. What is at stake in such discussions according to Irigaray, which involve a certain misunderstanding of essentialism, is the possibility of an autonomous *sexuate* identity.

Current trends in feminism and architecture have been distinguished by their interdisciplinarity and demonstrated as citing widely from contemporary philosophy and contemporary psychoanalytic theory. However, to declare a major change in thinking to have taken place over the past five years and best renamed 'gender studies' rather than feminism, to, in effect, be more inclusive of 'men's studies', Queer Theory, or post-colonial feminism (as is the argument of the editors of *Gender, Space and Architecture*) underplays feminism as a comprehensive approach to reconsider the very constitution of architectural theory and practice. Moreover, it suggests the existence of an underlying neutral experience which Irigaray states is a misunderstanding propagated by masculine privileged cultures.

The Predicament of Contemporary Theory

The recent attempt to define a new type of feminism, and a new way of thinking about the issues of feminism in architecture thus raises a number of questions. Contemporary feminism is in a predicament, perhaps one maintained by masculine philosophies. Feminist research in architecture has become more interdisciplinary and whilst this has an obvious benefit, the move also runs the risk of reducing the motives of feminism to the masculine determinants of the philosophies cited, (however exceptional and despite apparently well meaning ethical intentions). On the other hand, engaging with issues surrounding inequality whilst it may describe how women are seen within society it is not necessary synonymous with contemporary feminisms (many self-defined feminists have aligned themselves with post-modern philosophies). Feminism is more than a philosophy, with a set of political demands and strategies. The simple question for Coleman's work is whether it is in fact necessary to maintain the terminology, to defend feminism, to acknowledge the struggles of women in the past, or to criticize work influenced by post-modernist or post-structuralist thought.

Finding Ourselves Again, Renewed, and 'The Return'

In her paper 'Où et comment habiter?' Irigaray describes her longing for a return to nature, to the other, to a different relationality. In this early paper, which Elizabeth Grosz cites in her discussion of architecture, Irigaray writes:

Après être rentrée chez moi, épuisée d'un séjour dans un lieu étranger où je me sentais hors de tout. Nulle part -n'étaient le ciel, la mer, et les marches de nuit au bord d'elle (Irigaray, 1983, 139).

(After having returned home exhausted from a stay in an unfamiliar place where I felt that I was out of place. Nowhere was there sky, no sea, and no walks at night by the edge of the sea.)

Thus, unlike Heidegger's exploration of poetic descriptions of heroic journey's and homecoming -

Irigaray poetry suggests a longing for a new relation *with* or beside nature and the elemental. In one of her most recent publications, *Everyday Prayers*, a selection of poems, she similarly describes this longing and a happiness she finds in her relation with nature. In the early text she suggests that away from herself she cannot dwell. In the 'architecture' as created by man, she cannot dwell. Whilst she is in no doubt that contemporary living breeds anxieties, the questions raised by the text, which can also be directed to Heidegger's thinking in dwelling, are that to language, the body, the other and their complicity with these forms of architecture. She writes:

Je suis ici maintenant, et nous venons de parler. Comment vivre? Où et comment habiter? Quelle maison? Quels corps? Quel temps? Mon rapport au divin. Nos activités ou engagements politiques (Irigaray, 1983, 139).

(I am here now and we come to speak. How to live? Where and how to dwell? Which bodies? Which time. My relationship with the divine. Which economy and what politics may or ought to be ours?)

For Irigaray dwelling is that which takes place between two, rather than that which is opened up in relation to an excess, Nothing or Other. She associates Heidegger's thought with an inadequate exploration of the influence of mono-theistic traditions on his thinking (despite Heidegger's criticisms of these traditions). Questions need to be directed, she argues, to the influence of privileged modes of patriarchal relations on philosophical thought; for example, between Father and son; in order to address the issue of dwelling appropriately. This challenge, unlike Heidegger's questioning of the Western philosophical and theological tradition needs to address the role of the body and the limits of our thought which are shaped by patriarchal relations so that being can be *sexuate*.

In 'Ecce Mulier' in dialogue with Nietzsche, Irigaray argues that patriarchal social structures are embodied in language and suggests that how we understand love can challenge these understandings. This can be a key to finding a different way of living and loving. She writes:

...the law of the Father does not escape encoding. It is even its prototype. But our love cannot submit to it (Irigaray, 1994a, 331).

Philosophies of love shape how we relate to the other. However, for Irigaray, models of love have to be re-examined and repositioned to allow the co-existence of two. Her argument is very simple: How can love not strive to recognize two? In her dialogue with Nietzsche, which suggests a certain form of mimicry used to reveal another Truth, she writes:

Between us lies the nothing of Being. It is futile to climb or stretch oneself in every direction - the irreducible is waiting there, as a site of (...) creation yet to be built (...). The most transcendent spaces are thus reduced to a confused atmosphere in which intoxication by social powers is combined with physical exhaustion blocks out any inspiration, any ray of light (Irigaray, 1994a, 323).

Exploring how she can create a different relationality, not one of conventional religious thought, or that of Heidegger's relation to things, is part of the poetic dialogue Irigaray presents in 'Où et comment habiter?' However, 'Ecce Mulier' further illuminates this struggle. Irigaray writes, mimicking Nietzsche:

Anyone who has not felt what is at stake in the transcendence between woman and man does not understand very much what I have to say. For this nothing I place between them, between us, this double nothing his and mine, thwarts all comprehension. Unless there should be a miracle, an unexpected encounter (Irigaray, 1994a, 321).

In this paper Irigaray suggests that something is lacking and this is thought to, a space, an excess, a transcendence or a Nothing (as Heidegger describes the other) but this thought is limited. She writes:

Between us, the silence is lacking, that would allow the question: Who are you? Or: What is your truth? And also; What judgement do you pass on yourself? (Irigaray, 1994a, 321)

'Où et comment habiter?' is similarly written in dialogue with an other, and in love, so that Irigaray might find in part outside the patriarchal tradition, a space of silence that would allow a different way of living. She asks in dialogue (with the reader also) to explore outside language. She writes:

Habite aussi l'invisible, je te prie. Cette étrange nuit où tu pénètres pour que nous nous révélions ce que nous ne sommes pas encore. Va te rechercher et me retrouver dans tes

tétièbres. Retourne-nous dehors. C'est infini? oui. Une vie n'y suffira pas. Tant mieux, non? Mais ne nous y trompons pas (Irigaray, 1983, 141).

(I beg you to live in the non-visible as well. Go explore yourself and find me in your darkness. bring us back from there (It is infinite, yes?) One life isn't enough for it.)

Exploring the possibility of a transcendent, 'space', silence, or limit, *between two* that would allow a different approach to dwelling, Irigaray writes:

S'il se situait là, les flammes donneraient encore et toujours la vie. transportée hors de ce lieu, de leur lieu, elles léchent ou irradiant seulement les bords (...) Au centre, plus la flamme s'anime, plus elle éclaire. Plus elle s'accroît, moins tu souffres de la chaleur. Franchi un certain seuil, tu te trouves dans l'éclair. Et ça dure. Le temps passe sans que tu le sentes. Le passé et l'avenir s'y coulent, confondant répétition ou reproduction. L'instant et l'éternité ne font qu'un. Pas de tour ni retour. Il ne s'agit plus de tourner autour, mais d'arriver au milieu. De quoi? De tout. Tu remontes ou redescends toutes les médiations, et tu te trouves où ? *In medio*. C'est le même chemin. Il suffit d'y penser - que le medium part et finit au milieu (Irigaray, 1983, 142).

(If it was located there, the flames would still and always give life, taken from this place, of their place, they flicker or light the edges only (...) At the centre, the more the flame dances, the more it gives lights. Crossing the threshold, you find yourself intensified in the light. And that lasts. Time passes without you being aware of it. The past and the future flow together there, confusing repetition and reproduction. The moment and eternity are one. Neither a turning away nor a turning back. It is not a question any more of a return, but of arriving at the centre...Of what?).

Thus, how Heidegger thinks about existence and the other must be explored. *Being-with*, as Heidegger discusses in *Being and Time*, for Irigaray, does not adequately approach an ethics to the other. Irigaray positions a transcendent between two as a way of managing co-existence. She argues that this prevents the appropriation of the feminine for the construction of a model of neutral experience and allows a relation between two, masculine and feminine, who are different in terms of their relational experience. For Irigaray, this suggests a more ethical relation than that of contemporary philosophies. This is an ethic rethought but not a moral imperative. While the body, is used and exploited by our cultures, she argues that love does not, cannot cultivate the other as a

living corporeal sexual being. Whilst reconsidering being-with as a co-existence can do so. In the paper 'Où et comment habiter?' Irigaray writes:

Perdu dans ton labyrinthe, tu me cherches sans te rendre compte que ce dédale est construit de ma chair. Tu m'as mise à l'envers, et tu me cherches dans cette rétroversion où tu ne peux me trouver. Tu es perdu en moi, loin de moi. Tu as oublié que j'avais un intérieur aussi. Non sans lumière. Et Si tu t'engages à l'envers, ou me retournes, tu retournes là où est ta première nuit (Irigaray, 1983, 142).

(Lost in your labyrinth, you seek me without realizing that this maze is built of my flesh. You have turned me back to front and you seek me in this retroversion where you cannot find me. You are lost in me, far from me. You have forgotten that I also used to have an interior. Not without light. And if you entangle yourself, or fold into me you return home to your first night. Where I keep memory of your flesh, of ours. But where you loose it.)

Irigaray's work especially in *To Be Two* has furthered these criticisms. In a conference at Leeds (2001) whose proceedings were published as *Dialogues* Irigaray suggests that to respect difference in relation is to respect an 'invisibility', to respect that the other is a mystery. This hospitality or love or care, in Heidegger's terms, is one that goes beyond the confines of traditional Western thought, and beyond the phenomenological traditions criticisms of Western Metaphysics. Moreover, Irigaray argues, that to recognize the other in this way, means respecting and maintaining an energy in self and other, which is a relationality that is not of the Western tradition.

Thus, for Irigaray, we cannot entrust relations with the other to customs, traditions, moral rules or religious sentiment. We have to question the effectiveness of, and cultures capability of meeting with the other. Furthermore, we cannot depend on systems of representation which cannot express this meeting in two or formulate an ethic towards the other. Paths evoked by Heidegger's poetry and his thinking also remain for Irigaray sterile. The problem with current forms of representation, she argues, are that they can kill becoming: It is though desire that subjectivity is constructed, and we need desire and yet appropriate thought to desire is absent in contemporary cultures.

In a text from the paper 'Où et comment habiter?' where Irigaray suggests that we need to

rethink the foundations of our culture which is based on the repression of a desire specific to women's experience, she writes:

Perdu dans ce dédale de membranes retournées, tu bâtis des univers de concepts qui manquent de racines immortelles? Leur risque? Ton fils les détruira. Et tes cités de transparences sont belles. Comment puis-je y habiter? Ne suis-je plus haut ou plus bas que leur édifice? Elles s'imposent. Ne s'épousent pas. Et ne devons-nous nous mettre indéfiniment à l'envers l'un l'autre pour cette architecture? Comment nous y joindre? Nous sommes liés déliés. Tu ne peux sortir d'un lieu où tu te tiens et m'empêches de devenir encore (Irigaray, 1983, 143).

(Lost in this maze of folded membranes, you build universes of concepts which lack immortal roots. Their risk. Your son will destroy them. And your cities of transparencies are beautiful. How can I live? Amn't I too tall or too short for their building? They keep us in awe. They do not embrace us. Shouldn't we make ourselves opposite (of) the other for this architecture? How can we be united with it? We are bound disconnected. You cannot leave [come out] of a place where you are held and stop me from becoming.)

Irigaray's criticism of the philosophical tradition, hence, seeks to suggest a way of approaching a real tangible other. Our concepts of the other, or otherness within the Western tradition are, she argues, abstract models and ones constructed to fit the needs of a privileged masculine notion of desire and of subjectivity. To escape this tradition, its logic and forms of language, she attempts to suggest an awareness of the other, in an attentiveness to gesture, body language, or breath as such, in addition to all sensitivities associated with a more mysterious notion of energy. For Irigaray, the other is one that I desire but one also that retains his or her invisibility.

For architecture this means that Irigaray's notion of the other does not fit easily with the abstract notions of otherness presented by contemporary theory; as concepts of the other, as fields of research left out of theory, either hidden, ill considered or unseen. Irigaray's notion of the other, in fact, sits more comfortably with some of the explorations of feminist theorists, however, the distinction is problematic, as Irigaray's philosophy addresses both theory and political practice. Elizabeth Grosz's theory has been influential to contemporary architectural theory that seeks to

comment on the value of Irigaray's philosophy but Grosz's work is also culpable in alleging Irigaray's philosophy of difference with Derrida's. How her approach to the other differs from any other philosophy is not adequately considered by architectural theory.

3.2 Feminism in Architecture

In her book *Living in a Man Made World: Gender Assumptions in Modern Housing Design* (1991)

Marion Roberts cites the engineer Thomas Wright who in 1868 states:

Among the working classes the wife makes the home. The working man's wife is also his house keeper, cook and several other single domestics rolled into one, and on her being managing or mismanaging woman depends whether a dwelling will be a home proper, or a house which is not home (Roberts, 1991, 1, citing Thomas Wright, 1868).

In her thesis Roberts argues that despite radical social change within the domestic sphere, attitudes to women's role and duties remain almost unchanged. Moreover, these overly common attitudes are still embodied in housing design, and, this ideology of domesticity, she argues, is still one of the factors keeping women out of the workplace. Roberts suggests that little attempt has been made to explore housing itself, and yet it is a key site of gender division and subordination. This is partly due to the domination of men in the building design profession and construction industry, however, the most valuable aspect of her research is the need for a criticism of the social and economic role of architecture, in housing design, and in its contribution to sustaining domestic stereotypes in current societies.

Roberts describes the perspective from which she writes as that of an 'old-fashioned feminist viewpoint' (Roberts, 1991, 4). She writes:

My concerns are with male stereotyped views of women, with inequalities in state provision, with inadequate provision in childcare. There is also an idealist strand, a belief that if the mechanisms for inequality are explored, then these can be changed and from that, man and women will change to make a better society (Roberts, 1991, 4).

However, understanding the mechanisms of discrimination does not, as already stated, necessarily,

lead to social change. Without strategies for change and positive alternatives for living, that is to say, something to sustain this change, this sort of project provides little direction for women - in effect it is too idealistic. Robert's feminism is certainly valuable for the contemporary climate in architectural theory, but she writes, to clarify her theoretical position:

Whilst it is easy to discuss 'women' as opposed to a separate category of 'men' in order to achieve conceptual clarity, this is an oversimplification of most women's lived experience (...) 'gender' forms not central concept of the book. By this I mean that femininity and masculinity are constructed and imposed by society and there is not nor should be any hierarchy between men and women. Biology is given, gender is learned (Roberts, 1991, 4).

Robert's theoretical position is clear, equality is her aim. This statement positions Robert's feminism clearly within campaigns for equality and steeped in the belief of an underlying fundamentally neutral experience: To suggest anything else in this context would be to present an essentialist discourse. Roberts theory is very much a part of contemporary feminisms confusion over the sex and gender divide. (Even language is not so distinct in this division as feminist theory would like to suggest. For example, the term 'women' does not necessarily suggest a purely biologically distinguished individual.)

For Roberts the role of women in society is prescribed by the planning of the home, a planning which reproduces gender and class relations, and which corresponds to and reinforces the prejudices. Elaborating on this issue of reproduction, Roberts writes:

The concept of reproduction has three identifiable components. The first is that through having a home workers are fed clothed and generally prepared for work. Motivation to gain employment is also given meaning through the home and personal relationships nurtured in the home. Reproduction also has a biological material sense, for workers are literally reproduced through childbirth and reared in the home. Finally children are socialized into taking their places in society and in this sense ideology is reproduced (Roberts, 1991, 6).

Roberts argues that although profound changes have happened to the family, there is suprisingly little change in the physical planning of the overwhelming majority of new build houses. This only

acts to reproduce and sustain the patriarchal structure of society. Whilst architects have believed in the emancipatory effects of technology, and suggested this could free women from the drudgery of household chores, the resulting architectures, have been ill received. (Roberts cites studies to show that mothers living in high rise flats overlooking landscapes have been prone to ill health.) The trend in owner occupation also acts against women, forcing dependency on men, the traditional higher earners. Thus, both provision of owner occupation housing and council house building programs have acted to bolster the male dominated nuclear family.

Housing is a complex issue, too significant to be left to stereotypical attitudes to gender and social role, and is too complex also to be left to housing policy. It can benefit from more interdisciplinary research, as Roberts writes:

Living in a man-made world is not easy for women, whether they are heterosexual or lesbian, married, divorced or single, mothers, grand-mothers or childless. Affordable, good-quality housing would benefit all in their differing circumstances (...) A visually richer and more varied housing programme which has been well designed to suit the differing needs of all women, would benefit everyone, since housing forms such a large part of the built environment which all see and experience (Roberts, 1991, 158).

Looking at philosophers approaches, Heidegger takes the question back to a more fundamental question of dwelling; and Irigaray proposes how we might approach all the issues Roberts raises but from a reconsidered perspective of sexuate difference. In this way, the question of feminism in architecture inspired by Irigaray's philosophizing takes a more fundamental direction, than self-defined feminist studies in architecture as Roberts, and one that can address and take further both Robert's theoretical position and her feminist politics in housing.

The Crisis in Architectural Theory

Like Roberts, Diana Agrest writes in *Architecture from Without* that the field of inquiry of architectural questioning takes place between role of criticism and role architecture takes in

reproducing traditional notions of society, community and culture. Agrest like Irigaray defines the important issue of architecture of our time as that understanding origin. In order to address the crisis of architecture at the moment, she writes, that we need to understand the role of our tradition notion of origin. The crisis in architectural theory, as she defines is a result of the extreme to which functionalist ideology was carried by architects, and best demonstrated by architecture that produced overpowering mega-structures and urban projects. There is, she argues, a complex relationship that exists between the urban condition and architecture but nevertheless one that exceeds architecture's agenda and that must always remain an object of enquiry for architectural questioning. She writes: 'We live in an urban culture, a fragmentary culture that transcends the limits established by architecture' (Agrest, 1993, 2-3). Furthermore, as a sort of defining statement of her position with regards a type of architectural theorising popular in the early nineties, she writes:

My understanding of architecture as a sub-region of ideology seen from the perspective of signification and culture allows a work at the level of form – acknowledging the specificity of the architecture – that transcends the apparent functionalist determinism. This does not mean that these practices and products are considered as fixed structures with fixed meanings, but rather as an open process, as texts rather than languages, as an open world where objects refer to other objects, always postponing an ultimate meaning, as chains of sense where the subject/object relationship of classic criticism was replaced by a relationship between texts (...) It is from the city the unconscious of architecture, from outside, that critical work on architecture is developed. This outside is a place where one can take distance from the closed system of architecture and thus be in a position to examine its mechanisms of closure, its ideological mechanisms of filtration, to blur the boundaries that separate architecture from other practices, from other systems, to question the hierarchical position through which architecture produces this filtering (Agrest, 1993, 3).

This is an argument that inspires the definition of current gender theory in architecture as necessarily interdisciplinary. It is, with the additions of contemporary philosophy how architecture is able to challenge its own notions of society and community and its political role.

In her paper 'On the Notion of Place' Agrest cites Althusser where he describes Heidegger's criticism of technological thinking or subject/object relations. The questions she raises are: 1. What is the nature of the structures that are able to articulate the notion of place? and 2. What is the nature of those more pertinent places where meaning is produced and made manifest? In response Agrest writes:

An intrinsic character of the ideology of architecture and urban planning is the reflection, rather than the challenge of reality. Architectural theory should arise from a dialectic relationship to architectural ideology, yet should maintain a degree of radical opposition. At the present time architectural theory needs to be developed. It is necessary to acknowledge the critical nature of two forms of raw material to be analysed – the given general ideology and the urban environment itself. (Agrest, 1993, 11).

Thus, for Agrest, architecture must contain its own self-criticism, especially regards its reproduction of traditional norms. Her direction in this is semiotics, she writes: 'The critical analysis of the ideological texts, revealing the nature of the ideological obstacle, thus allows for the development of theoretical models with which the urban environment may be considered in relation to culture, as a signifying system' (Agrest, 1993, 11).

Both Roberts and Agrest are critical of the ideologies that shape architectural design. From Agrest the emancipatory aims of functionalism have failed to understand its exclusion of women's bodies from its logic. For Robert's it is the domestic myth that goes uncriticized by architects and housing designers. For Irigaray, however, it is the human's need for a more poetic experience (albeit this is a somewhat inadequate description) that shapes her criticism, a poetry in dialogue that could 'make-visible' and sustain another way of living. This suggests something more than a simple investigation of the exclusions of architectural theory, or a self-criticism that Agrest's work investigates or, for that matter, a theoretical investigation of issues surrounding gender.

3.3 Interdisciplinary Research and Gender Theory in Architecture; Or the problems of post-modernist feminism for "feminism" in architecture

Exploring the recent attempt to define a new type of feminism in architecture, or a new thinking about feminism and architecture, thus, has an important role in exploring contemporary theory. The most recent example of this is made in *Gender, Space and Architecture* (2000) by Jane Rendell, Iain Borden and Barbara Penner, who declare a major change in thinking to have taken place over the past five years and designate the change in thinking as best described by the terms 'Gender Studies' in architecture.

Current trends in feminism have been distinguished by a certain interdisciplinarity, this interdisciplinary character can be demonstrated by papers published in collections such as *Architecture and Feminism*, *The Sex of Architecture*, *Sexuality and Space*, *Desiring Practices*, *Gender, Space and Architecture*, amongst others and in the earlier *Drawing, Building, Text*. It is also implicit in the work of theorists such as Jennifer Bloomer, Beatriz Colomina and Catherine Ingraham. In *Gender, Space and Architecture*, the editors write that research into the question of gender started to appear in architectural theory in the later 1970s largely written by women from an overtly political feminist angle. Until recently they argue that work remained internal to the discipline concerned largely with the architectural profession and inequalities of pay and opportunity and in issues concerning the 'man-made' environment, of which Robert's work is an example. Published in 1992 they argue that Beatriz Colomina's edited volume *Sexuality and Space* marked a change in how architecture thought about issues surrounding feminism in architecture. It was the first collection, they write, to bring ideas of gender into theory from fields such as anthropology, art history, cultural studies, film studies, geography, psychoanalysis and contemporary philosophy, to bear on the discourse. Hence, they state:

What such provides in an interdisciplinary context for a gendered critique of architecture, one which expands the terms of the discourse by making links, through gender, with

methodological approaches in other disciplines (GSA, 6).

This characteristic of recent discourse also leads them to suggest that '[f]eminism and gender studies have become post-modernized made interdisciplinary and therefore have to be considered as such' (GSA, 8).

What more recent work has in common is an exploration of social structures that shape discrimination, informed by contemporary theory from outside the discipline. *Gender, Space and Architecture* describes its intentions in introducing gender to this context from the perspective of important texts from the fields of feminism and contemporary theory. Editors defend the use of the term gender, as opposed feminism, by arguing that few women want to describe themselves as feminist. (The suggestion being that a use of the term feminism would, perhaps, exclude many women from the discourse through too radical a political position. Nevertheless, the editors also describe feminism as originally a term used in the 1890s to designate the belief in the right to sexual equality.) 'Feminism' they argue:

...depends on an understanding that in all countries where the sexes are divided into separate cultural, political and economic spheres and where women are less valued than men, their sexuality is held as the cause of their oppression (GSA, 7).

This definition allows many post-colonial feminists to argue that 'feminist' theorists have inadequately addressed issues of racial discrimination. This point is emphasized where the editors write:

One of the most important aspects of current feminism is the consideration of the interrelationship of a number of different forms of oppression at different times and in different places. Thinking about gender alone is not enough; for current gender theorists, issues of race, class and sexuality are inextricably involved (GSA, 8).

The editors of *Gender, Space and Architecture* argue that despite the persistence of sexual discrimination and oppression in the workplace, and especially in architecture, feminism is a problematic term. This is not necessarily evidence of a lack of interest or disagreement with the

political ambitions of feminism. For example, the editors write: 'In academia (...) feminism is still frequently met with a degree of hostility, with resistance to overtly politicized feminist ideas and actions coming both from establishment and also from women who believe that openly aligning themselves with feminism with result in stereotyping' (GSA, 7). There is rather a certain amount of oppression over the very use of the term feminism in architecture, as Coleman also describes in *Architecture and Feminism*. However, the editors of *Gender, Space and Architecture* describe in contrast to a 'warming' to the question of gender; and an increase openness to discussing gender relations and sexuality. It is just that the terminology has changed, they argue, '...feminist theory has become gender theory, women's studies have become gender studies' (GSA, 7). In this context it is easy to think that this could be a dismissal of feminism, and that gender represents a neutral and descriptive term without the political agenda of feminism. Despite this suspicion, which links gender theory to a compliance with the prejudices of the Institution, the publication is keen to suggest otherwise. 'Gender' as conceived in *Gender, Space and Architecture*, is both a category of analysis, and they write apparently importantly when thought of the relationship between men and women it can include issues surrounding the development of men's studies. Hence, while early feminist fought for women's equality, this aim can be observed as changing towards understanding how oppression occurs. In this respect the character if theory has changed. They write:

The changes in cultural attitudes towards feminism and gender are part of a more general opening of intellectual discussions - broadly termed 'post-modernism' - towards issues of cultural hybridity, and diversity, as well as racial democracy and environmental awareness. Feminism and gender studies have becomes post-modernised, made interdisciplinary and therefore have to be conceived as such (GSA, 8).

Establishing the Canon of Feminist Theory

Gender, Space and Architecture (2000) is a collection of seminal texts chosen as influential to

debates surrounded gender in architectural thought and from a variety of disciplines. The editors argue that in order to understand the development of contemporary debates it is important to return discussions to sources and to the intellectual traditions which have acted in their formulation. In this sense the book is an attempt to establish a canon and so doing it proposes its aims as an attempt to establish an understanding of the development of ideas. However, by introducing 'gender studies' to architecture, both as an observation of a changing perspective, and an affirmation of this change, the theoretical framework acts to promote what may be described as the inadequacy of feminism in architecture. The authors of *Gender, Space and Architecture* reprint abstracts from a number of papers. These include: Virginia Woolf's "A Room of One's Own"; Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*; Betty Freidan's "The Problem that has no name"; Michele Barrett's "Some Conceptual Problems in Marxist Analysis"; Audre Lorde's "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House"; Nancy Chodorow's "Why Women Mother"; Luce Irigaray's "This Sex Which Is Not One"; Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes, Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses"; Joan Wallace Scott's "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analyses"; Harry Brod's "The Case for Men's Studies"; and Judith Butler's "Subversive Bodily Acts". Whilst after four years the editors may wish to add other texts, it is evident even in introductions to the texts and the work as a whole reinforces the sex/gender divide.

Biology or Cultural Definition?

According to Irigaray, the sex gender divide is reinforced by questions of whether we are in that we are distinguished by biology, or whether we are in that we are distinguished by social or cultural definitions. However, to side with the philosophy that gender is learned, for Irigaray, represents a crisis in our culture. She writes that '...whosoever renounces the specificity of both the feminine subjectivity and identity, reducing them to simple social determinations, sacrifices even more women to patriarchy' (*WD*, 11).

Harstock makes the same observation in a paper cited by McLeod in *Architecture and Feminism*. Harstock argues that the crisis in contemporary feminism is precisely this inability to think through this definition. She writes:

These kinds of questions make it apparent that the theoretical crisis we face not only involved substantial claims about the world, about what we claim for our theories [but] questions of epistemology (Nicholson, 1990, 18).

Harstock's paper explores common theoretical problems addressed by many theorists addressing gender in their own fields.

These issues surrounding the sex/gender distinction are also taken up by Susan Bordo in *Feminism, Post-Modernism and Gender-Scepticism*. Nevertheless, Harstock and Bordo, despite their elaboration on the issue, are also still caught up in this distinction, whereas Irigaray's philosophy discusses this distinction which she places at the heart of sexual identity. Whilst Irigaray criticizes feminism as an activity most typically promoting equality with men, she also criticizes philosophies of difference for the same reason. What marks Irigaray's project from the philosophical tradition in which she works is her insistence in the reconstruction of difference. If understanding the intellectual context of contemporary theory is, in fact, the purpose of *Gender, Space and Architecture*, as the editors argue, renaming the discourse despite all claims to the contrary, in fact suggests a complicity with moves to dismiss a more overtly political agenda of feminism. *Gender, Space and Architecture* cites Irigaray's 'This Sex Which Is Not One' as informative to the field of gender studies in architecture, but this paper has been characteristically misunderstood which may have a some small bearing on the argument. Toril Moi, for example, uses it to reinforce accusations of essentialism and also argues Irigaray has learnt her method of criticism from Derrida (she also suggests it is a flawed use of his method). Proposing the question of gender as one of difference while in itself does not prohibit a discussion of sexual or *sexuate* difference, it, nevertheless, runs the risk of dismissing the question of *sexuate* difference. If sexual difference is considered a subset of all other forms of cultural constructed differences. Furthermore,

linking Derrida's concept of sexual difference with Irigaray's, risks misunderstanding her philosophy.

Can We Characterize the Different Feminisms in Architectural Theory?

In her paper published in The University of Nottingham, Institute of Architecture, Journal "CAST", Rendell describes some of the questions women in architecture ask of theory, these include: Do women practice differently? Do they have a different aesthetics? Do they have a different sense of space and time? The issue, for Rendell, in this paper, is whether these questions, these desires, stem from biology or society. She cites Sherry Ahrentzens 'The F Word in Architecture Feminist Analyses in/of/for Architecture' in *Reconstructing Architecture* as proposing an authoritative structure for understanding the recent discourse(s). She writes that over the last twenty years architectural history and theory has changed dramatically specifically in the manner in which it addresses questions of equality and difference. Nevertheless, for Rendell, women continue to divide into those who wish to remain gender neutral and those who make explicit their feminist aims. Rendell's paper, like Ahrentzen's, is divided into five subheadings, representing the changing discourse. The first discusses women in architecture from a historical perspective, the second addresses more critical issues in practice, the third begins to present theory which has challenged the prejudices in design and has looked at criticisms of architectural language. The fourth looks at how women, who have named their intentions as feminist, address the contemporary context. Rendell thus writes that in dealing with issues of difference there are, and always have been, several ways to approach how gender impacts on practice. She writes:

One has been to critique architectural value systems as implicitly patriarchal and to suggest that since women are different to men, they have different priorities in organizing and designing the production of architecture. This approach focuses on the problems inherent for women as users in 'man-made' environments and the ways in which patriarchal ideology is inscribed in space. This particular agenda fits the approach of radical feminism outlined in

the first section (Rendell, 2000, 48).

Addressing specific issues in architecture relating to women, perhaps more traditionally associated with feminism is thus classed as a radical feminist agenda, sharing theories with radical feminist approaches. This 'radical' approach to architectural criticism Rendell defines as exemplified by the work of Leslie Kanes Weisman in *Discrimination by Design* and by Magrit Kennedy in 'Seven Hypothesis on Male and Female Principles'; or in 'Making Room: Women and Architecture'.

Associating a question of difference with radical feminism, and also describing Kennedy's work as seeing '...femaleness and femininity as encompassing a set of qualities which are quite different from maleness and masculinity' is however problematic (Rendell, 2000, 48). Nevertheless, within the structure of the paper such characterization are unavoidable. Within radical feminism, for Rendell, femaleness is defined in contrast to maleness, and celebrated as such, however, Rendell also argues that 'radical' feminist theorists in architecture are in effect essentialist, defining femininity as a matter of sex. She writes:

The most obvious manifestation of sex difference in architectural practice has traditionally been in connection to formal difference, where feminist intentions are believed to be best communicated through biological symbolism. A number of feminist designers have drawn architectural inspiration from the female body, designing womb-like and curvaceous forms rather than phallic towers, spaces which focus on aspects of enclosure (shelters and prisons), explore the relationship between inside and outside (opening, hollows and gaps) (Rendell, 2000, 48).

Rendell argues that Marxist feminists, on the other hand, similarly exploring the made-made environment, have focused on how gender impacts on practice and on the production of built space and the reproduction of cultural norms. Delores Hayden is one such theorist to explore sexism in the urban environment and the work of Matrix, a London based feminist practice has also explored how to improve women's experience of the built environment. The question of difference, approached both by radical feminists and Marxist feminists, moves around the question of whether women have different values, whether they have different priorities, whether in the design of built

spaces or production methods. It is an important question for architects but it is ill explored because of the cultural and political processes that prohibit discussion of women's rights in any other terms than equality or diversity, essentialism or cultural construction.

Rendell cites Nancy Chodorow as offering a less essentialist theory that can inform questions of difference and cites Karen Frank as following Nancy Chodorow to argue that '..women's socialization fosters a different value system emphasizing certain qualities such as connectedness, inclusiveness, an ethics of care, everything life, subjectivity, feelings, complexity and flexibility in design' (Rendell, 2000, 50). This approach, Frank attributes to designers such as Eileen Gray, Lilly Reich and Susana Torre and Rendell cites papers such as 'House of Meaning' and 'Space as Matrix'. Furthermore, it leads Rendell to write, somewhat poetically: 'Promoting the idea that women designers and users value different kinds of spaces - ones which foster the flexibility required by women's social roles - also suggests analogies between spatial matrices and the fluid spatiality of the female body' (Rendell, 2000, 50). Nevertheless, in Rendell's paper Judith Butler and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick are cited as those theorists who have looked at 'place' as a critical location for performing gender and Joel Sanders is cited as addressing how the mutually dependent terms masculinity and femininity are played out within the heterosexual bastion of the architectural practice.

In conclusion Rendell argues that the development of gender theory in architecture has led to theorists suggesting that a practice of architecture (broadly defined) could offer a form of criticisms and suggest a way of opening up, with writing and images, a way of addressing what is most fundamental to architectural discourse. Bloomer's text, for example, as Rendell suggests, becomes her architecture. Rendell writes: '..her textual strategies are used to interpret architectural drawings and spaces but also to create new notion of space and creativity, allowing links to be made between architectural design, to history and theory' (Rendell, 2000, 55-56). Bloomers work is influenced by the philosophy of Derrida and Bloomer's work demonstrates that the feminine is a radical element in architectural practice. Bloomer uses images of the female body to challenge the

sterility she finds in architectural theory (see, for example, Jennifer Bloomer's 'Big Jugs'). Rendell also cites practices such as MuF and Liquid Incorporated as similarly following this direction.

In Rendell's broad categorization of contemporary gender theory in architecture she cites Luce Irigaray's philosophy but in so doing she fits it into a categorization emphasizing the connection with strategies informed by Derrida's philosophy, with work such as Bloomer's for example. This is only one aspect of Irigaray philosophy. Rendell writes:

Luce Irigaray's theory of 'mimicry' has been used to show how, when working within a symbolic system with predetermined notions of feminine and masculine, where there is no theory of the female subject, women can seek to represent themselves through mimicking the system itself (Rendell, 2000, 57).

The Uncertain Subject, the Problem of Writing and 'Mimicry' in Irigaray's Philosophy; and the Significance for Architectural Theory.

Mimicry is a part of Irigaray's criticism but her philosophy cannot be reduced to this critical activity. The term 'mimicry' is often used to describe Irigaray's methods by architectural critics, in a well cited statement, for example, Irigaray writes:

There is an initial phase, perhaps only one "path," the one historically assigned to the feminine: that of *mimicry* (...) To play with mimesis is thus, for a women, to try to recover the place of her exploitation by discourse, without allowing herself to be simply reduced to it. It means to resubmit herself - inasmuch as she is on the side of the "perceptible," of "matter," - to "ideas," in particular to ideas about herself, that are elaborated in/by masculine logic, but also so as to make "visible," by an effect of playful repetition, what was supposed to remain invisible: the cover up of a possible operation of the feminine in language. It also means to "unveil," the fact that, if women are such good mimics, it is because they are not simply absorbed by this function. *They also remain elsewhere*: another case of the persistence of "matter" but also of "sexual pleasure" (TS, 76).

However, this description of Irigaray work also acts to reduce her thinking to a derivative of

Derrida's method; an unacknowledged debt as Moi suggests (see *Sexual/Textual Politics*, 138). The notion of mimicry is problematic as definitive of Irigaray's method of criticism, nevertheless, Irigaray method is described in this way. Moi states, in what becomes an outright dismissal of her work:

Mimicry or impersonation clearly cannot be rejected as unsuitable for feminist purposes, but neither is it the panacea Irigaray occasionally takes it to be (Moi, 1985, 143).

In the chapter "Patriarchal reflections: Luce Irigaray's looking glass" in Moi's *Sexual/Textual Politics* Moi questions whether it is indeed possible, whilst 'specular logic' dominates all Western theoretical disciplines, to escape this pernicious influence - as *Speculum*, Moi argues, suggests. Moi argues that Irigaray's study of the mystic in *Speculum* in 'Le Mystérique' suggests a pleasure that the mystic has imitating the sufferings of Christ. However, if, as Moi argues, 'mimicry' is the only manner in which Irigaray questions Western philosophy and the only pleasure or desire Irigaray's work suggests. The proposal that Irigaray celebrates the mystic as an image of the feminine in the Western tradition, simply does not accord with the complexity of Irigaray's argument.

Moi cites Shoshana Felman who has also raised a series of questions to pinpoint the problems Irigaray faces when, Irigaray presents herself, in Moi's terms, as '...a woman theorist or a theorist of woman', Felman writes:

If 'the woman' is precisely the Other of any conceivable Western theoretical locus of speech, how can the woman as such be speaking in this book? Who is speaking here, and who is asserting the otherness of the woman. If, as Irigaray suggests, the woman's silence or the repression of her capacity to speak are constitutive of philosophy and of theoretical discourse as such, from what theoretical locus is Luce Irigaray herself speaking in order to develop her own theoretical discourse about women? Is she speaking *as a woman*, or *in the place of the* (silent) woman, *for the woman*, *in the name of woman*. Is it enough to *be* a woman in order to *speak as a woman*? Is 'speaking as a woman' a fact determined by some biological *condition* or by a strategic theoretical *position*, by anatomy or by culture? What if 'speaking as a woman' were not a simple 'natural' fact, that could be taken for granted?' (Moi, 1985, 138, citing Felman, 1975, 3, Felman's italics).

Felman's questions are pertinent but they demonstrate how much Moi (and Felman) are caught up themselves in the Western philosophical tradition. It is precisely its relation to the other that Irigaray is trying to challenge. Furthermore, why does Irigaray need a theoretical locus, or to choose a theoretical position, (one in which would be dominated by patriarchal models of relationality or love) in order to speak? As she herself argues, she speaks as who she is. That is not to say that Irigaray refuses her tradition, as is self-evident with her engagement with Western philosophy, Irigaray discusses sexual difference, rather than presents or represents herself as a theorist of woman. Moi dams Irigaray's work in a deliberately inadequate description of her philosophy, Moi writes:

Though Irigaray never actually acknowledges the fact, her analyses of male specular logic is deeply indebted to Derrida's critique of the Western philosophical tradition. If the textual analyses of *Speculum* are inspiring examples of anti-patriarchal criticism, it is because Irigaray knows how to expose the flaws and inconsistencies of phallogentric discourse (Moi, 1985, 138).

Furthermore, Moi argues, that Irigaray fails in this method of textual analysis, and in so doing essentializes woman. She writes:

But if, as Derrida has argued, we are still living under the reign of metaphysics, it is impossible to produce new *concepts* untainted by the metaphysics of presence. This is why he sees deconstruction as an activity rather than a new 'theory'. Deconstruction is in other words self-confessedly parasitic upon the metaphysical discourses it is out to subvert. It follows that any attempt to formulate a general theory of femininity will be metaphysical. This is precisely Irigaray's dilemma: Having shown that so far femininity has been produced exclusively in relation to the logic of the Same, she falls for the temptation to produce her own positive theory of femininity. But, as we have seen, to define 'woman' is necessarily to essentialize her (Moi, 1985, 139).

Moi's argument makes a very strong case to explore how Irigaray's dialogue with philosophy and individual philosophers suggests a way of recognizing and cultivating sexual difference. Moi's arguments are crude and divisive. Moi does recognize that Irigaray is aware of some of the

arguments raised but she writes:

Irigaray herself is aware of this problem and struggles hard to avoid falling into the essentialist trap. Thus at one point she explicitly rejects any attempt to define 'woman'. Women ought not to try to become the equals of men (Moi, 1985, 139, authors italics).

Providing evidence for her argument Moi cites Irigaray in *This Sex Which Is Not One*:

...the issue is not one of elaborating a new theory of which woman would be the subject or the object, but of jamming the theoretical machinery itself, of suspending its pretension to the production of a truth and of a meaning that are excessively univocal. Which presupposes that women do not aspire simply to be men's equal in knowledge. That they do not claim to be rivalling men in constructing a logic of the feminine that would still take onto-theo-logic as its model, but that they are rather attempting to wrest this question away from the economy of the logos. They should not put it, then, in the form 'What is woman?' but rather, repeating/interpreting the way in which, with in discourse, the feminine finds itself defined as lack, deficiency, or as limitation and negative image of the subject, they should signify that with respect to this logic a disruptive excess is possible on the feminine side (TS, 78).

The limited value Moi derives from Irigaray's philosophy is in her method of criticism associated with 'mimicry'. This is a way of disrupting patriarchal logic; 'speaking as a woman', miming male discourse in a witty parody of male arguments. However, Irigaray's method is flawed as also she suggests as it is impossible to represent women in any way not tainted by patriarchy. Moi condemns *Speculum* in this way. Moi writes:

...the academic apparatus of the doctoral thesis, still perceptible in *Speculum* may be an ironic gesture: coming from a woman arguing the case Irigaray is presenting, her impeccable theoretical discourse is displaced and relocated as a witty parody of patriarchal modes of argument. If as a woman under patriarchy, Irigaray has, according to her own analysis no language of her own but can only (at best) imitate male discourse, her own writing must inevitably be marked by this. She cannot pretend to be writing in some pure feminist realm outside patriarchy: if her discourse is to be received as anything other than incomprehensible chatter, she must copy male discourse. The feminine can thus only be read in the blank spaces left between the signs and lines of her own mimicry (Moi, 1985, 140).

For Moi *Speculum* is a conscious acting out of the hysterics mimetic position. The position

allocated to all women under patriarchy. However, Irigaray describes *Speculum* in a somewhat different way but Moi writes: 'Through her acceptance of what is in any case an ineluctable mimicry, Irigaray doubles it back on itself, thus rising the paratism to the second power. Hers is a theatrical staging of the mime: miming the miming imposed on women, Irigaray's subtle specular move (her mimicry *mirrors* that of all women) and intends to *undo* the effects of phallogentricised discourse simply by *overdoing* them' (Moi, 1985, 140). This understanding of *Speculum* also leads Moi to argue that: 'The question, however, is whether and under what circumstances this strategy actually works' (Moi, 1985, 140).

Moi's reading of Irigaray is restrictive and moreover it is Moi's intention to find Irigaray's philosophy flawed by essentialism. Whilst Moi's reading of Irigaray's text can be challenged, the underlying issues of essentialism and Moi's reading still remain problematic even within architectural theory.

The Problem of Essentialism

The problem of essentialism for feminism, and Irigaray's philosophy, is a particularly difficult issue for Irigaray and yet it is also a deliberate misunderstanding on Moi's part. Most accusations of essentialism have now been discredited by scholarship over the past fifteen years, nevertheless, it is still often very difficult to understand the use of the term. Feminist theorists such as Naomi Schor in "This Essentialism That Is Not One: Coming to Grips With Irigaray" have endeavored to present studies of the varieties of degrees of essentialism. If Irigaray's philosophy does indeed suggest a female subjectivity that could be described as based on an essentialist model of subjectivity, it has to be posed in terms of a different sort of essentialism that reconsiders the relationship between nature and culture. This leads Alison Martin to argue that the debate about essentialism is simply out of step with Irigaray's thought. Martin writes: 'For subscribing to the sex/gender distinction in a strong sense, as a division between nature and culture, perpetuates the dichotomies and essentialist

distinctions critiqued by the anti-metaphysical thought in which Irigaray's work is immersed' (Martin, 2000, 27). Nevertheless, the terms of this argument mean that the question can neither be dismissed nor considered resolved and thus it is likely to continue to re-emerge in any discussion of Irigaray's philosophy. Irigaray herself writes that if this question is that of whether we are in the name of the female body or of social conditioning but this distinction it simply does not belong to a culture of two. However, this needs to be elaborated if any discussion of essentialism in Irigaray's philosophy is to be finally addressed.

In the 1980s labelling Irigaray as an essentialist was tantamount to authorizing the dismissal of her work, as the label apparently spoke for itself. Judith Butler argues that in the late 1980s feminist thought they understood what was meant by the term 'essentialism' and at that time Irigaray was indeed very often dismissed as an essentialist (see Pheng, 1998, 19). The argument reduces Irigaray's thinking to an either/or decision. For example, if women were defined by nature or in the name of the female body, this was expressed by critics as a regressive and reactionary position. If women are the result of social conditioning, this was rightly to be overcome in the name of equality. Debates surrounding gender in architecture still have a tendency to argue in this manner reducing the question of feminism to an either/or decision. However, some theorists, such as Chanter, in a very direct criticism of these over simplistic arguments, suggests the question that must be asked is how useful it is to mobilize these debates? Whose purpose does it serve?

The reductive comparison of Irigaray's philosophy with Derrida's project is still current, as is focus on discussing mimicry, as already discussed. The notion of "writing" has never been a focus of her work: Of deconstructive trends in feminism, Irigaray argues that 'Feminism's blindest alley is to force women into a deconditioning which strips them of their feminine identity in order to attain an undifferentiated state of universality to be shared in a masculine or neutral world' (DBBT, 37). Moreover, she argues, that the constant reversal of values in deconstruction is not sufficient to address what has been made unthinkable, that is to say *sexuate* difference.

Misunderstanding Sexual and Sexuate Difference

A number of other criticisms have been directed to Irigaray's philosophy, Butler for example, although acknowledging the debt to Irigaray's thought, argues that Irigaray privileges heterosexuality. Butler writes that Irigaray: '...will not challenge the divide of the human race into two sexes' (Pheng, 1998, 21). Culture so conceived, she argues '...inevitably closes the domain of other sexual possibilities' (Pheng, 1998, 21). For Butler, Irigaray's philosophy as she writes, '...makes heterosexuality into a privileged locus of ethic' (Pheng, 1998, 23). This is another somewhat divisive misunderstanding of Irigaray's philosophy to support Butler's own theories of performativity. There is no sense in Irigaray's philosophy where she presents an 'ethic' at least not one uncritical of the philosophical heritage of the term or a sense of an argument denouncing homosexuality. Furthermore, Irigaray is very clear that her philosophy of two different subjects is not limited to a relationship between male and female. Rethinking sexual, and recognizing sexuate difference is a foundation from where she argues we can reconsider all forms of difference. It is the unthought of culture, more primordial than the abstract or stereotyped notions of sexual difference promoted by masculine cultures. Rethinking sexuate difference is a more profound rethinking of (sexual) relation than a simple celebration of heterosexual relations. As Irigaray writes, it is a return to the woman I am by nature, to become that woman, and where such values are not prohibited by masculine cultures. Nevertheless, criticism have also been made to suggest that Irigaray privileges the relationship between male and female to the exclusion of adequate consideration of race and cultural difference. Moreover, Ellen T. Armour in *Deconstruction, Feminist Theology and the problem of Difference* argues that white feminisms (she includes Irigaray in this category) remain unable to sustain attention to race. This motivates a similar misunderstanding of her thinking on sexual difference.

Patricia J. Huntington also formulates this argument in *Ecstatic Subjects, Utopia and Recognition*, writing that Irigaray cannot handle racial difference so long as she remains committed

to a criticism of the '...fixed synchronic structure revolving around a masculine feminine dyad' (Huntington, 1998, x). Hence, in the same way as Butler suggests that Irigaray is not willing to challenge the divide of the human race into two sexes and that such a culture inevitably closes the domain of other sexual possibilities, Huntington argues that Irigaray's reading of sexual difference prevents an engagement with post-colonial feminisms. The response has to be the same. For Irigaray the sexual relation is the most unthought and excluded from consideration by a tradition of Western philosophy. In *Why Different?* Irigaray argues: 'I have often been criticized for saying something that may be valid for my culture but not for another, for the Anglo-Saxon culture, for instance' (*WD*, 7). Discussing her own life and heritage she makes claim for an international status, having dual heritage of a French mother, Italian father, being born in Belgium and taking up French nationality in the 1970s.

Irigaray and the Philosophical Tradition

Irigaray proposes a relation with the other previously unthought by the Western philosophical tradition. This is a radical approach to difference. Irigaray's philosophy has to be recognized as one permeated with an intellectual history that combines phenomenology and psychoanalysis with linguistic research and feminist politics. Irigaray's work suggests that it is not possible to take account of the other without reducing that otherness to categories of the same within this tradition; to complements, or oppositions, male and female or self and other. In her criticisms of Levinas, for example, and his argument that the erotic relationship is of less value than ethical, inspires her to rethink this erotic relation and question both why it cannot be ethical and conversely whether Levinas's ethical relation is indeed ethical if it excludes *eros*. Chanter argues that it is vitally important to understand Irigaray's philosophy in the context of her intellectual tradition. Chanter writes, as illustrative:

The cultural and political climate in which Irigaray writes is permeated with an intellectual

history that blends phenomenology with psychoanalysis and post-structuralism. If we fail to make some attempt to appropriate this heritage in reading Irigaray's texts, we will also fail to understand a considerable amount of their significance and meaning (*EE*, 11).

This suggests that an investigation of some of the theoretical foundations of not only feminist thought, but feminist thought (broadly defined) and its application to architecture, is not only necessary but essential to develop the discourses. *Gender, Space and Architecture* provides a beginning and inspiration in this process. In terms of Irigaray's work it is obvious that not only are some of her readers and commentators misguided in their elaborations but often deliberately so. These readings of Irigaray's work cannot be allowed to cloud the value her philosophy has not only for the current crises in feminism, as already defined, but the conflicts as expressed in feminism in architecture.

Derrida, Deconstruction and Architecture

Analyzing Irigaray's relation to contemporary philosophy, particularly in her most recent books, is one way to challenge misunderstanding and how they have feed conflicts within feminism. For Derrida, for example, architects adopting his philosophy often reduce his approach to a representation of his thought. The question he raises is whether there is an undiscovered way of thinking in architecture that belongs to the moment of creation, something undiscovered, that may have existed before the use of the architectural metaphor (which has been used in philosophy as a metaphor for a hierarchical organization of branches of knowledge). For Derrida, the question of architecture is whether there may have existed before the dominance of metaphysics on Western philosophy and thus architectural thinking an undiscovered way of thinking, and approaching the other (see 'Architecture Where Desire Can Live'). This thinking is both an architectural thinking and a philosophical thinking, it is fundamental to each, and belongs to both. It is a thinking that he writes cannot be embodied (or represented) however, if, he argues, as thinking is a sort of

spatialization then this thinking could be described, as Heidegger does, as the clearing of a path.

Derrida writes:

...this creation of a path is not at all alien to architecture. Each architectural place, each habitation has one precondition: that the building should be located on a path, at a crossroads at which arrival and departure are both possible (Derrida, 1986, 145).

In the same way that language cannot control all its paths, Derrida argues, architecture cannot control all its paths. Within architecture is a different philosophy of habitability. Derrida refers to Heidegger in his paper on architecture 'Where Desire May Live' citing *On The Way To Language*. For Heidegger 'thinking' is always on its way and this on its way has a connection with habitability and dwelling as discussed. Derrida writes: 'This constant being "on the move", the habitability of the way offering no way out entangles in a labyrinth without any escape. More precisely, it is a trap, a calculated devise...' (Derrida, 1986, 145).

The question for architecture, as Derrida sees it, is that of place, in Heidegger's terms it is of dwelling: An architect invents something that did not exist before and there is also the inhabitant, man or god, as Derrida writes, who requires the place. Derrida's argument in this paper is that maybe there is a way, between the opposition of nature and technology, from where this opposition originates, that is a place of a new inhabitation. Hence, if Irigaray's philosophy seeks to reconsider Heidegger's philosophy, as Derrida's does, (and as is suggested by gender theorists) her philosophizing differs. For Irigaray women cannot remain constantly on the move, entangled in a labyrinth with no escape. Irigaray criticizes Derrida's thought in *To Be Two*. For Derrida the essence of deconstruction is not the dismantling of structures which privilege the masculine but, he writes:

'...a probing which touches upon the technique itself, upon the authority of the architectural metaphor (...) as an attempt to visualize that which establishes the authority of the architectural. Architectural thinking can only be de-constructive in the following sense: as an attempt to visualize that which establishes the authority of the architectural concatenation in philosophy' (Derrida, 1986, 146).

Irigaray's thought is also a deconstruction but in order to suggest a different logic, that of *two*. There is a construction suggested by her work, a building between two which suggests an interior building.

To associate Irigaray's work with a strategy of mimicry, or with Bloomer's aim, is problematic as it can imply a relation with deconstruction without care to the positive aspects of her work. To associate her work with *écriture féminine*, as many have done in the past, is also problematic as it reduces her unique approach and again misses the issue of construction. Mimicry in Irigaray's writing, may be used on occasion in a strategic manner but, she argues, it is a first stage in her philosophy.

Rendell suggests that studying the work of architects who focus on issues of gender can provide some examples of possible feminist tactics in architecture, however, whether as existing practices, or study of them, can show how to address sexual difference; or whether such a study is useful, has to be at question. Rendell writes, for example, raising the question of the possibility of feminism in architecture: 'Can users agree on what constitutes a feminist response to architectural practice and can such qualities, be they functional, material or aesthetic be communicated through architectural experience? Is consensus necessary?' (Rendell, 2000, 58) The very nature of the question is enmeshed in the expectations of patriarchal logic and its need for clarity and truth. Whilst mimicry and Irigaray's strategies are important in understanding the aims of her philosophy, contemporary feminism and feminist aims in architecture as suggested by Coleman emphasize that Irigaray's philosophy suggests more than an understanding of gender as culturally constructed and moves beyond this logic.

Redefining Gender

To define what is meant by gender, Rendell writes that whilst feminism is described as a political practice with aspects of theory and action, she argues: '...possibly the best way of understanding

what constitutes the basis of a particular feminist approach is to consider accounts given of the ways in which differences of sex, gender, race, class and sexuality structure society' (GSA, 15). The question feminism must ask, must be both how gender differences are structures by society and also how societal differences are dependent on gender differences. She argues that the distinction between sex and gender can mark the basis of specific approaches, as is the case in the previous definition of the five stages in feminism in architecture, the simple distinction of sex as a biological difference and gender as that which refers to the social construction of differences between men and women, has, as Rendell acknowledges, been challenged by many post-structuralist feminist theorists. For example, first wave feminism is associated with women's struggles for equal rights and was focused on legal inequalities and exclusion from the public realm. The very early *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* illustrates the emergence of feminism, as example. Rendell argues that the distinction between first wave and second wave feminism can be discussed in terms of a shift in focus from equality to difference. The work of Simone De Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* is central to this debate (albeit De Beauvoir calls for women to overcome difference). Second wave feminism of the 1960s and 1970s, Rendell argues, focussed on understanding differences between men and women. Rendell writes:

Attempts to evaluate female difference from men, both physically and emotionally, took place through material critiques and the establishment of women-only groups and consciousness-raising workshops. Second wave feminism recognized that, of equal significance to political and institutional forms of discrimination is discrimination experienced on a personal level - for example, within the home leading the phrase 'The personal is political' (GSA, 16).

This sort of feminism was reaction to the early political agenda of feminist thought, but it also lead to the accusation that little attention has been given to the differences between women. Black and lesbian feminism developed a criticism of this direction in feminist thought. Yet it has to be noted that even amongst these theorists divides were created, Pat Califia, for example, presents a very strong argument against Adrienne Riche's work to and the lesbian continuum (see *Public Sex*).

Post-modern or third wave feminism is more complex and its categorizing leads in itself to difficulties, Rendell writes that the questionable status of reality, history and truth has led post-modern theorists to evoke a difficult relationship with feminism. Rendell cites Seyla Benhabib in *Situating the Self, Gender, Community and Post-Modernism in Contemporary Ethics*, where Benhabib writes:

Most agree that post-modernism defines a shift in epistemology, in ways of knowing, about truth, reality and history. Postmodernism is characterized by a doubt in one's ability to know the truth - all we can know are representations of reality; a doubt in one's ability to know history - all histories are partial and reliant on the relation of historian and reader (Benhabib, 1992).

Postmodernism and Gender Theory

Post-modernism poses a challenge to feminism, for some it indicates the abandonment of any political project associated with women. Whilst some feminists such as those published in the edited collection of papers by Linda Nicholson *Feminism/Postmodernism* argue that the instability of traditional notions of truth or subjectivity is a positive notion for women. Post-modernism's effect on feminism has been to develop feminism's interests to propose that discrimination must be explored at the level of its structuring in society.

To understand discussion of gender and feminism it is perhaps necessary to examine the meaning of the currently overused terms of gender, and that of gender in its relation to feminism. To define feminist politics and its aspirations in architecture as best displaced by the term gender or at least gender theory can neglect some of feminism's more contemporary discussions of the relations of sex to gender, as discussed by Tina Chanter, for example, in 'Gender Aporias' in relation to Irigaray's work.

In this paper, in a series of questions formulated at the beginning of the paper, Chanter asks whether it is possible to formulate gender so that it is *not* the replacement of cultural determinism

with biological determinism. Chanter writes: 'If women are not assigned to subservience and passivity by some inflexible, innate nature but are accustomed to cultural roles, then rescripting those cultural roles should make transformation possible' (Chanter, 2000, 1237). Nevertheless, she argues the problem for contemporary feminism is the question of who writes the scripts and, "...how do they avoid privileging their own experiences and subject positions in a way that mimics precisely the alleged neutrality that patriarchal values uphold?" (Chanter, 2000, 1237)

In 'Gender Aporias' Tina Chanter describes three types of relation between sex and gender within the feminist movement from the turn of the twentieth century to the present day. These relations she describes as; 'necessary', 'arbitrary', and 'contingent'. Contingent is how Chanter describes as the relationship at the turn of the Millenium.

At the beginning of the century, she writes, feminists were trying to combat traditional representations of femininity, trying to combat biological determinism and Freud's work is associated with this position. The female sex was defined by certain physical biological and psychological characteristics that were taken to be innate. Whilst this type of relation Chanter terms 'necessary'. During the 1960s gender became the preferred category for analysis and feminists argued that the relationship between sex and gender was, as Chanter describes, 'arbitrary'. Gender thus became the preferred category of analysis (in contrast to sex) because it seemed to offer a flexibility, to suggest some free play, to suggest that women were not destined to prescribed roles, that the idea of female sex did not. Nevertheless, Chanter questions how exactly can gender free itself from its apparently necessary relation to sex. Moreover, she asks whether the independence of sex from gender is in itself effective enough to dismantle or even create the conditions to dismantle their apparent connection. She writes:

If gender is only arbitrarily attached to sex, if sex places no restriction of gender, then any number of cultural behaviours and gender identifications become available for adoption and re-evaluation, and being a woman no longer entails being restricted by the traditional sphere of feminine activities (Chanter, 2000, 1238)

However, as Chanter notes positing the relation between gender and sex as arbitrary, the 1960s feminists seemed to be suggesting the body as unimportant. The problem with this arbitrary relation is that, as Chanter states, it implies that there is no reason for the relation of sex to gender, that is to say, sex has nothing to do with gender. As is evident, choosing not to conform to stereotypes will not necessarily free women from being seen and treated as women. Neither will it free women from restrictive ways of thinking imposed on them. Chanter writes: 'Gender is not simply a matter of choice, or even a series of choices, at the individual level' (Chanter, 2000, 1239).

There must be, Chanter argues, a different way of conceiving the relation of sex to gender that emerges; that of a contingent relation. Thus, she writes:

To see the relation as contingent acknowledges the force of social pressure but leaves room for a certain amount of discrepancy between cultural norms and an individual's ability or desire to reject them (Chanter, 2000, 1239).

Seeing the relation in this way means that if individuals challenge gender norm, then gender norms themselves will reflect such challenges and over time become less restrictive. This contingent relation concedes, Chanter argues that '...bodies are relevant to gender identity but not determinative of them' (Chanter, 2000, 1239-1240). However, there is another problem with this contingent model, in that it posits the body as given, ignoring the body as a site of change. Chanter sites work in transgender studies, an example of which is Pat Califia's *The Politics of Transgenderism*, to suggest that bodies do not always easily fall into gender/sex categories. According to Chanter, the challenge is to find ways to reconceptualize the sex and gender relation. She writes:

The challenge, it seems to me, is to resist both the tendency to collapse one term entirely into the other and the tendency to assume the initial integrity and independence of both (...) We must find was to conceptualize the sex-gender relation that avoids both (...) We cannot be content to construe gender as belonging to society or culture and sex as dictated by physical nature; we must understand that the domains we designate as gendered can have material effects (Chanter, 2000, 1240-1241).

The problem with the sex and gender debate is its dependence on the logic of the Western tradition - its dependence on contemporary philosophy and its historical antecedents. The fear of essentialism is similarly caught up within prohibitions of patriarchy, in particular, the prohibitions of values specific to each sex. In 'The Female Gender', Irigaray argues: 'Anyone who stresses the importance of sexual difference is accused of living in the past, of being reactionary or naive, even though science is far from having to come up with all the answers about sex' (SG, 107). The human being is subjugated, she argues, subjugated to the imperatives of the Western tradition, '...to the point of believing it is possible to deny the differences of the sexes' (SG, 107). The task for women Irigaray thus writes is that of establishing sexual difference, in the campaign for rights difference to each sex, and in the promotion of sexual difference in cultural forms, which could include both architecture and language. She writes:

There is a physiological and morphological complementarity between the sexes. Why deny it? This complementarity should be lived in such a way as to facilitate growth. But in our becoming there has been no sexual difference established on the level of the subject. This is the opportunity that still lies before us, particularly in our thinking (SG, 107).

3.4 How the Work of Elizabeth Grosz has Introduced the Philosophy of Luce Irigaray to Architectural Theory – The Problems of Location and Construction.

Grosz's paper 'Women, *Chora*, Dwelling' (1991) which is reprinted by the editors of *Gender, Space and Architecture* is cited as seminal to contemporary feminism in architecture. She is certainly one of the first to discuss the significance of Irigaray's philosophy for architecture. It is a relatively early paper to discuss sexual difference and Irigaray's philosophy, and, if, as suggested, there has been a change in the focus of debates surrounding issues of gender in architecture over the past seven years, this paper could be described as one of the first to adopt this view and importantly criticize contemporary theory from a feminist perspective.

Introducing Irigaray's work, which she reads in parallel with Derrida's criticism of Plato, Grosz argues that the debt that the phallogentric subject has to the maternal body, and the attempt to cover it over, grounds the violent erasure of women in current societies. Grosz's paper is thus not directed to reviewing the discrimination against women in practice and education, as she notes. She is, however, concerned with understanding more fundamental issues of why such discrimination occurs. She writes that, in fact, she remains silent about the '...manifest discrimination against women in architectural training, apprenticeship, and practice. Such issues are best discussed and understood by those actively involved in the profession, who have not only first hand experience of the operations of discriminatory practices, but also have insights into the internal exigencies of the system in which they work' (Grosz, 2000, 210). Her concern, however, is how these issues of discrimination are related by a '...series of narrower and more theoretical issues that link the very *concept* of architecture with the phallogentric effacement of women and femininity, the cultural refusal of women's specificity or corporeal and conceptual autonomy and social value' (Grosz, 2000, 210).

Sue Best also adopts these themes in a paper within the collection edited by Grosz *Sexy Bodies: The Strange Carnalities of Feminism* asking if femininity is experienced as space (and space that she argues often carries connotations of the depth of night while masculinity is conceived of in terms of time) is the boom in the studies of space, synonymous with a growth in discussion of the feminine. Studies of space attract geographers, philosophers literary critics historians art historians cultural theorists and cultural critics. However, she argues Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva are the only philosophers that discuss woman and space and this, she writes, is surprising given that 'wherever you turn the question of space is bound up with the question of woman' (Best, 1995, 15).

In an argument that is influenced by Irigaray's philosophy and Grosz readings of Irigaray Best argues that in an array of contexts space is conceived as woman especially when a 'bounded' spatial entity is evoked, for example, in the spaces of human habitation, the world, the

nation, regions, cities and the home. To illustrate this point, she writes that: [1]. The contours of countries and districts are frequently drawn by using the concepts of motherland and mother tongue; [2] Whole countries are frequently personified as women, Britannia stands for Britain, Marianne for Republican France; [3] The most valorised and written about capital cities of the C19th, C20th and C21st – Paris, NY and LA Are all women. This observation is not unsurprising if, as Grosz argues in 'Women, *Chora*, Dwelling' the foundations of Western thought are bound up and depend upon with the association of woman with space or in Irigaray's terms to the maternal body erased by patriarchy.

Grosz begins her paper with a discussion of the cultural origins of notions of spatiality in Western thought. It is Plato's creation story in *Timaeus* and the problem of *Chora* (a term that at the time of the paper was a growing fashion amongst architectural theorists) and its exploration by Derrida, and from this architectural theorists, that is the focus of the paper. In the paper she explores Irigaray's philosophy to compare how both read Plato's philosophy. With some reference to Derrida's reading of Plato, Grosz writes that *Chora*:

...has an acknowledged role at the very foundations of the concept of spatiality, place and placing: it signifies, at its most literal level, notions of "place," "location," "site," "region," "locale," "country"; but it also contains an irreducible, yet overlooked connection with the function of femininity, being associated with a series of sexual-coded terms – "mother," "nurse," "receptacle," and "imprint-bearer." (Grosz, 2000, 210-211)

The feminine characteristic of *Chora* is Grosz's interest in the paper, this Grosz associates with an excess of meaning, and in particular, how she argues Irigaray criticizes the Western tradition and its use of the feminine to prop up masculine notions of the subject. She writes describing Derrida's project and his interest in *Chora*, that his philosophy seeks out the notions, concepts and terms in the text under examination, in order to show that which exceeds and cannot be constrained by the logic or the intention of the text. Derrida, she writes, continually seeks out terms such as *Chora*, which are impossible to assimilate into the text's logic, which are

inconsistencies but are, nevertheless, necessary for the functioning of the texts logic. Derrida's readings thus, she writes, have an 'aporetic effect' on the claims of the text in question.

Chora follows a long line of privileged terms in Derrida's writing, others include 'writing,' 'trace,' 'pharmakon,' 'dissemination,' 'supplement,' 'paragon,' or in earlier writings, she argues, 'cinder,' 'ghost,' 'remainder,' and 'residue'. 'Each term', Grosz writes '...designates and locates a point of indeterminacy or undecidability, a point at which the text's own writing exceeds its explicit goals and logic, where the text turns in on itself and ties itself into a strategically positioned knot' (Grosz, 2000, 211). Grosz's intention in this paper is more than a simple examination of Derrida's reading of Plato, or of the significance of the notion of *Chora* for architectural theory. Her project is to read Plato with Irigaray and also as she writes to read Irigaray *contra* Derrida over the notion of *Chora*: In her terms: 'Irigaray *contra* Derrida in the domain of the dwelling: where and how to live, as whom, and with whom?' (Grosz, 2000, 211) In itself a reference to, '*Où et comment habiter?*' cited in her bibliography to the paper. Grosz writes:

It will be my argument here, reading Plato and Derrida on *chora*, that the notion of *chora* serves to produce a founding concept of femininity whose connections with women and female corporeality have been severed, producing a disembodied femininity as the ground for the production of a (conceptual and social) universe. In outlining the unacknowledged and unremitting debt that the very notion of space, and the built environment that relies on its formulation, owes to what Plato characterizes as the 'femininity' of the *chora* (a characterization he both utilizes and refuses to commit himself to), I will develop some of the insights of Luce Irigaray in her critical analysis of the phallogentric foundations of Western philosophy (Grosz, 2000, 211).

This criticism, which is directed both to Heidegger's notion of dwelling, and Derrida's reading of the Western philosophical tradition regarding place, begins to suggest how feminist theorists can reconsider the philosophical tradition as threshold, to not only the possibility of new forms of subjectivity, new perspectives, new bodies but, to new ways of dwelling. In no sense, however, does it evoke the complexity of Irigaray's work, or for example (and to compare with Derrida's

'where desire may live?') evoke a way of love that uncovers another beginning more fundamental than the maternal function of *chora*.

The essay may be understood as a study of one thread of architectural thinking that has taken up Derrida's notion of *Khora*, however, Grosz's allegiance with Irigaray's analysis of the undulations of Western thinking is evident. She writes that *Chora* suggests '... the investment that all modes of knowledge have in perpetuating the secondary and subordinate social positions accorded to women and femininity' (Grosz, 2000, 211). This is Irigaray's criticism, *Chora* illustrates a covering over, showing that even when women are not explicitly mentioned the unconscious, repressed or unspoken foundation they serve to guarantee philosophical value, that is of interest. However, it is the liberation of this association of women with a maternal foundation and the suggestion of an alternative, as between two that are equal and different, that has greater significance for architectural theory, or in Grosz's terms, rethinking the domain of dwelling.

Chora's quality in Plato's argument is that it is quality-less. It is its defining characteristic. It lacks a definite feature. It functions as a 'receptacle', a 'storage point', 'the locus of nurturance' as necessary path, bridge or passage. As Grosz argues, as a place or transition necessary for the emergence of matter. In this way, in criticism of the imagery in this creation story, Grosz writes *Chora* is '...an incubator to ensure the transmission or rather the copying of Forms to produce matter that resembles them' (Grosz, 2000, 213). She writes that it is a kind of womb of material existence, albeit one where the female contributes nothing to creation.

Plato's submersion in a patriarchal economy which privileges the paternal bond between the father and son, to the extent that woman contributes nothing to creation is clear, to both Grosz and Irigaray. Despite contributing nothing to this model, creation is dependent on *Chora*. This leads both Irigaray and Derrida to argue that it is this place attributed with characteristics of the feminine is that which marks Western thought as phallogentric and also marks models of subjectivity as masculine. However, it also causes Irigaray to argue that it bespeaks of a different repressed relationality between feminine and masculine to those limited to metaphors of

masculine and maternal.

As Plato's text *Timaeus* proceeds, Grosz argues it becomes less clear what the role and character of *Chora* is, whether *Chora* has some likeness in part to the Forms or whether the Forms are dependent on *Chora*. She writes:

...it becomes less clear as the text proceeds whether something like *chora* is necessary for the very genesis of the forms themselves i.e. whether *chora* can be conceived as a product or copy of the Forms, or contrarily, whether the Forms are themselves conditioned on *chora* (Grosz, 2000, 213).

Chora can only be designated by function, and can have neither existence nor becoming of its own. *Chora* cannot be designated within the logic of Plato's text as, it, he or she. However, despite Plato's argument sex roles are played out in the text. Grosz cites Plato in this respect where he writes:

It can always be called the same because it never alters its characteristics. For it continues to receive all things, and never itself takes a permanent impress from any of the things that enter it, making it appear different at different times. And the things which pass in and out of it are copies of the eternal realities, whose form they take in a wonderful way that is hard to describe (Plato, 1977, 69 cited in Grosz, 2000, 213).

Plato compares the Forms to the role of the male, and thus *chora* to the role of the female. In Greek Science the father contributed all of the specific characteristics to a child, formless incubation was provided by the mother. Grosz writes on the point: 'Not to procreate or produce – this is the function of the father, the creator, god, the Forms – but to nurse, to support, surround, protect, incubate, to sort, or engender the worldly offspring of the Forms': This is the function of the mother according to ancient Greek collective fantasies (Grosz, 2000, 213).

Moreover, Grosz argues that whilst the function of *chora* is to leave no trace of its contributions it allows the patriarchal economy, she writes, to '...speak indirectly of its creator without need for acknowledging its incubator' (Grosz, 2000, 213). Within this patriarchal

framework, within scientific or technological thinking, to use Heidegger's terms, within Freud's thought, and equally within the tradition of Western philosophy, as Irigaray argues in *Speculum*; this is also the role of women within current cultural tradition(s).

Chora, for Plato, is a necessity in the creation of the material world. *Chora*, for Plato, Grosz argues, is a screen onto which is projected the image of the changeless Forms. *Chora* is the point of entry into material existence. Grosz writes, 'The material object is not simply produced by the Form(s), but also resembles the original, a copy whose powers of verisimilitude depend upon the neutrality, the blandness, the lack of specific attributes of its "nursemaid"' (Grosz, 2000, 213). *Chora* cultivates and this character of cultivation is nothing that she is in herself. *Chora* is devoid of all existence other than to reproduce a 'masculine' economy. *Chora* is beyond any distinction of pure and impure because she can take no place in either category. *Chora* receives but without leaving any impression. She cannot possess because she is not. She supports all material existence but has nothing that is her own. Plato writes:

We may indeed use the metaphor of birth and compare the receptacle to the mother, the model to the father, and what they produce between them to their offspring; and we may notice that, if an imprint is to present a very complex appearance, the material on which it is to be stamped will not have been properly prepared unless it is devoid of all the characters which it is to receive. For if it were like any of the things that enter it, it would badly distort any impression of a contrary or entirely different nature when it receives it, as its own features would shine through. (Plato, 1977, 69).

Grosz writes that in this description of *Chora* Plato is, in fact, defining *Chora* as space, space which makes things possible. Space in which place is made possible. Grosz writes that it is a dimensionless 'tunnel-like' opening into spatialization and obliterating itself in this process. It receives without giving and gives without receiving. She argues:

It is no wonder that *chora* resembles the characteristics the Greek and all those who follow them, have long attributed to femininity, or rather, have expelled from their women masculine self-presentations and accounts of being and knowing (and have thus *de facto* attributed to the

feminine). Moreover, this femininity is not merely an abstract representation of generic features (softness, nurturance, etc.), but is derived from the attributes culturally bestowed on women themselves, and in this case, particularly the biological function of gestation. While *chora* cannot be directly identified with the womb – to do so would be to naively pin it down to something specific, convert it into an object rather than as the condition of existence of objects – nonetheless, it does seem to borrow many of the paradoxical attributes of pregnancy and maternity (Grosz, 2000, 214).

Plato's work marks the inauguration of Western philosophy, it is a beginning, or at least a beginning that the Western tradition in part recognizes as such. It is not surprising that when writing for architects Derrida takes up the problem of *Chora*, but in challenging this model Derrida is suggesting a way in which all the presumptions of architectural thought can be challenged. Derrida shows in his reading how the counter logic of *Chora* infects other claims in *Timaeus*. The peculiar functioning of *Chora* seeps into all it contains, he writes that it seeps into all the oppositions and metaphysical assumptions that depend on it for their existence. Thus, the world of the object, material reality in all its complexity is infiltrated by this mediator - whose function is to leave no imprint, no trace. However, whilst *Chora* intervenes into the very economy of architecture, into all its systems of production, whilst *Chora* destabilizes the Western patriarchal economy, this is not enough for Irigaray, woman still has no passage or Forms to her own becoming. No way that allows her becoming as woman. It is the different logic, the dream-like logic of *chora* that Derrida suggests needs to be recovered from the tradition of Western philosophy. However, Irigaray's work in *Speculum*, her dialogues with Freud and with Plato each begin to suggest this different way of approaching the architectural.

Derrida's work deconstructs Plato's philosophy in the *Timaeus* to suggest how it is possible to write (in that writing is the opening of a way and as such is a mode of inhabitation) according to a different logic or economy. Derrida's philosophizing on *Chora* suggests this way of approaching a different logic which transforms the foundation of architectural discourse which distinguishes between space and times, form and matter, the intelligible and the sensible, theory

and practice. In this sense Derrida's contributions to architectural theory are the openings for other possibilities of thinking. Derrida adopts *Chora* in his own work precisely for the reasons suggested by Grosz, not surprising that where writing for an architecturally literate public, by which she means essays published in *Choral Works. A Collaboration between Peter Eisenman and Jacques Derrida*, Derrida takes up the theme of *Chora*. In doing so Derrida challenges, architectural theory in its series of assumptions, its categories and terms by which architecture is, as are all writing and all communication practices, implicated in and governed by metaphysics, Grosz writes that, '...architecture is clearly a mode of writing in the Derridean sense' (Grosz, 2000, 215).

Chora intervenes into the very economy (in the sense of a whole system of production and circulation) of the discourse of architecture, but there is something else, with *Chora*, a different reading of Plato that is indicated by Irigaray's criticism of Plato. In *Speculum* and in her criticisms of a tradition of Modern philosophy, there is a different sort of philosophising, a different sort of thinking, than that suggested either by writing or 'meditative thinking' or of the 'dream-like' logic of *chora*. Grosz writes:

In this sense, *chora*, and the re-conceptualization of space that a deconstructive reading of the concept entails, begs rethinking the requirements of those oppositions that have structured architecture to the present: figure and ground, form a function, ornament and structure, theory and practice; and most particularly, both architectural consumerism (whose function is to subordinate materiality to the consumer's will or desire – a fundamentally impossible project, given that inherent open-endedness of desire, its fundamentally volatile and ever-changing nature) and architectural functionalism (whose goal is to subordinate subjects' desires to the exigencies of function, an increasingly impossible project, particularly in an era of rapid transformations in technological and corporate functions) (Grosz, 2000, 216).

If there are metaphors of maternity in the *Timaeus* these need to be explored. If Derrida suggests a 'dream-like' logic this needs to be investigated. *Speculum* suggests these criticisms. If *Chora* is a nurse or has the character of cultivation, it is this quality that needs to be re-examined. The

question of love suggests one way of exploring this text, it is suggested by *Speculum*. It is in its deconstruction of architectural presumptions *Chora* has value for contemporary architectural theory. However, as already stated, to read Irigaray's work through Derrida's perspective risks reducing the significance of her philosophy. One of Derrida's goals is to contest, as Grosz writes, '...whether it is possible to build/write according to a different economy, to reroute and transform the logic that distinguishes between space and time, form and function...' (Grosz, 2000, 215). Derrida's work challenges Heidegger's philosophy of dwelling, as much as it does traditional aesthetics and systems of representation. However, there is no sense of abandoning these concerns in Derrida's writing but rather to suggest that traditional value systems must be approached again, in a way that Grosz argues, citing Derrida and Norris's *Choral Works*, these values are re-inscribed, having lost their external hegemony. Grosz links this project with the question of gender and argues deconstruction is one of Irigaray's concerns: Grosz writes that Irigaray works primarily with philosophical texts whose metaphors have some direct relevance to understanding the built environment (see Grosz, 2000, 216). To her credit Grosz does not suggest that Irigaray has learnt her method from Derrida or proposed an alliance between Derrida's thought and feminism. Moreover, she argues that the relations between Derridean deconstruction (her own description) and feminist theory have yet to be forged and explored in any detail. Derrida's work is neither feminist nor anti-feminist, it is rather fundamentally ambivalent and Grosz writes: 'Making it relevant to feminist concerns is a matter of considerable negotiation' (Grosz, 2000, 217). The problem, as Grosz sees it, is that whilst Derrida's writings always contain what she calls an inassimilable residue this she also writes: '...always tilts his writings into an uneasy and ambiguous alliance with other complex and undecidable interests and issues' (Grosz, 2000, 217). *Chora* is a part of this problematic. *Chora* has an uneasy and ambiguous alliance with the structures of Western thought as it suggests another logic within the Western tradition, however, *Chora* also props up the Western tradition, it makes it possible. Grosz writes:

Chora emblematises a common manoeuvre used to maintain this domination; the silencing

and endless metaphorization of femininity as the condition for man's self-representation and cultural production. This is not less true of Derrida than it is of Plato: their various philosophical models and frameworks depend on resources and characteristics of a femininity disinvested of its connections with the female, and especially the maternal, body made to carry the burden of what it is that man cannot explain, cannot articulate or know, that unnameable recalcitrance that men continue to represent as an abyss, as unfathomable, lacking, enigmatic, veiled, seductive, voracious, dangerous, disruptive but without name or place but serve as one of the earliest models of this appropriation and disenfranchisement of femininity (Grosz, 2000, 220-221, authors italics).

How space is conceived has until recently been considered too abstract, or even as Grosz states, to self-evident for architects to take as the theme of a critical analysis. However, in recent years philosophies of space have been associated with serious political, social and cultural debates within architectures. In this context Irigaray's philosophy could be a part of architect's knowledge, in particular in the realm of discussions of gender and space.

In this paper Grosz reads Derrida and Irigaray on the question of *chora* to suggest Irigaray's bid to take an analysis of metaphors of femininity in the text further is a way to rethink sexual difference. Quoting Irigaray in *An Ethics of Sexual Difference* (a text which is also cited frequently, where architectural theorists refer to Irigaray):

In order to make it possible to think through and live, [Grosz adds the word sexual in square brackets] difference, we must reconsider the whole problematic of space and time. In the beginning there was space and the creation of space, as is said in all theogonies. The god, God, first create space. And time is there, more or less in the service of space. On the first day, the first days, the god, God, make a world by separating the elements. This world is then peopled, and a rhythm is established among its inhabitants. God would be time itself, lavishing or exteriorizing itself in its action in space, in places. Philosophy then confirms the genealogy of the task of the gods or God. Time becomes the interiority of the subject itself, and space, its exteriority (this problematic is developed by Kant in the *Critique of Pure Reason*). The subject, the master of time, becomes the axis of the world's ordering, with its something beyond the moment and eternity: God. He effects the passage between time and space. Which would be inverted in sexual difference? Where the feminine is experienced as space, but often

with connotation of the abyss and night (God being space and light?), while the masculine is experienced as time. The transition to a new age requires a change in our perception and conception of space-time, the inhabiting of places and of containers, or envelopes of identity (*AESD*, 7)

However, Grosz emphasizes only one aspect of Irigaray's work, and although she argues that there is a desire for construction in Irigaray work she does not really explore this work. Grosz argues that the ways in which women have been historically conceived has always functioned to either contain women or obliterate them, however, in addressing the question of space, Irigaray explores both the production and reproduction of economies privileging the male *and* suggests how women could be granted space so they can live *as women*.

Irigaray's writings on dwelling, Grosz argues, are based in her readings of Kant, Heidegger, and Levinas, perhaps over determining similarities of her work with that of Derrida (at least as Mark Wigley describes his architectural philosophy) Grosz argues that Irigaray apparently depends on metaphors of dwelling, inhabitation, building, unearthing, tombs ruins, temples, homes and caves. However, perhaps more simply stated Irigaray's concerns with dwelling are directed towards the establishment of a viable space and time for women to inhabit as women. Grosz proposes that Irigaray makes it clear that a re-conceptualization of the relations between men and women is required for this to happen, it is not only the criticism of men's occupation of space that is indicated by Irigaray's work but the possibility of occupying, dwelling and living in new spaces, generating new perspective, new bodies and new ways of inhabiting as women. In this respect Grosz writes (again in a text Coleman draws attention to):

The project ahead, or one of them is to return women to those places from which they have been dis – or replaced or expelled, to occupy those positions – especially those which are not acknowledged as positions - partly in order to show men's invasion and occupancy of the whose of space, of space as their own and thus the constriction of spaces available to women, and partly in order to be able to experiment with and produce the possibility of occupying, dwelling, or living in new spaces, which in their turn help generate new perspectives, new

bodies, new ways of inhabiting (Grosz, 2000, 221).

Grosz interpretation of Irigaray's work on dwelling focuses on *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, it does not address Irigaray's more direct criticisms of some of Derrida's work, in, for example, 'Belief Itself' or in *To Be Two*, or address some of her other later books. It does not refer to her work on Heidegger's texts in *L'Oubli de l'air* although available in French at the time of the publication of the paper. Neither does she address Irigaray's reading of Plato 'Plato's Hystera' in *Speculum*. Rather she presents a general exploration of how Irigaray's philosophy can be compared with Derrida's practice of deconstruction and even in this she does not discuss how we might approach the other of sexual difference as a practice. How this mode of thinking might open up in dialogue, or how we might allow a space to emerge where we could cultivate new identities. Rather Grosz writes that the overriding direction of Irigaray's thought is to criticisms that masculine modes of thought have performed a devastating sleight-of-hand, obliterating the debt they owe to the most primordial of all spaces, the maternal space, which founds the masculine universe and, furthermore, contributes to the systematic and violent erasure of the contributions of women, femininity and the maternal from contemporary culture(s) and thought. She writes:

Men produce a universe built upon the erasure of the bodies and contributions of women/mothers and the refusal to acknowledge the debt to the maternal body they owe. They hollow out their own interiors and project them outwards and then require women as supports for this hollowed space' (Grosz, 2000, 218).

Questions of representation or of metaphors are not, the sole focus of Irigaray's philosophy. No doubt, the question of space as Grosz describes is crucial to understanding the cultural exploitation of women, and their bodies. *Chora* is representative of this issue: *Chora* is complicit in the production of a world, of religion, philosophy, knowledge, where, according to masculine values and according to these values, women cannot have a contribution. The suppression of

women is a symptom of a masculine biased universe. This appropriation of the right to a place or space correlates with men's seizure of the right to define and utilize a spatiality that reflects their own self-representations. The question of space is thus both crucial, to the cultural domination of women's bodies; and to women's struggles to acquire an autonomous space they can occupy as women. The enclosure of women in this philosophizing corresponds to the containment of women in men's conceptual universe.

Architectural theory, like a traditions of thought, often refuses to acknowledge that other perspectives are possible. As Robert's argues, the habits and traditions regarding the planning and spatial organization of the home have remained fundamentally unchanged as regards the role of women, despite massive changes in their social and personal freedoms over the last century with the birth of feminism. However, for women to change these traditions, for Irigaray, women would have to firstly, make a series of upheavals to address men's habits concerning the creation and occupation of space. Grosz argues that whilst women are positioned as guardians of men's bodies and space, in a role of care or of nursing (*Chora* has a nurse-like quality) or for that matter with hysteria (*Chora* has a dream-like quality) and without bodies or space of their own, women they become living representatives of corporeality, of domesticity. This containment strips women of their own existence, it relegates women to the position of support or pre-condition of the masculine, which is precisely the status of *chora* in the Platonic tradition: Without there own ways to reevaluate these roles and characteristics and there own means to becomes themselves and women. They are precisely the support of the masculine.

The Question of the Horizon?

"Architecture and Excess" another more contemporary paper by Grosz to address the architectural, begins with the same quote from *An Ethics of Sexual Difference* that characterizes her argument in "Women *Chora* Dwelling".

Grosz's paper explores the way in which the architectural always contains within it an excess. An 'excess' she argues as above and beyond the concerns of mere functionality (and which corresponds to Chora in Derrida's reading of *Timaeus*). To understand this excess, as an inassimilable residue, Grosz suggests that one method would be to look at what is left out of dominant social groups and also what, she argues, glues the collectives together whilst finding its existence only outside, as marginalized. The feminine is also associated with this excess, however, looking at the work of Irigaray and Bataille, Grosz argues that argues that architecture:

...must seek its own excesses, its bestial monstrosity, its allegiances with forces, affects, energies, experiments rather than with ordinances, rules, function, or form. We must ask, following this understanding of the place of the excessive as transgression, how to engender an architectural "bestial monstrosity" radically anti-functional architecture, an architecture that is anti-authoritarian and anti-bureaucratic. An architecture that refuses to function and be part of, as [Gilles] Deleuze names them, "...societies of control"" (Grosz, 2001, 154).

Grosz argues that architecture may come to see that which the architectural cannot contain as associated with the feminine, and Bataille's philosophy reminds that all systems of knowledge contain an excess. For Bataille, the excess has no function (other than expenditure of resources and energy). However, Grosz argues that Irigaray's work in comparison '...may prove immensely suggestive even if ... she actually has written very little that is directed specifically to the question of architecture' (Grosz, 2001, 156). Which is no longer the case. Bataille's excess and Irigaray's are not comparable, whilst Irigaray argues that the feminine exceeds the system, she is another sort of energy unknown to the Western tradition, she also argues that this is site of human creation yet to be built.

Grosz affirms that Irigaray's philosophy and its importance for architecture would go beyond any theoretical support to creating women-only spaces and there is also no suggestion that Irigaray's would impose normative theories of sexuality. Questioning Western philosophy's

conceptions of space and time so as to reveal the debt to the feminine, is an important part of Irigaray's criticism and it is this aspect of her philosophy that is discussed by Grosz. Whilst Grosz suggest that architectural practitioners must undertake the labour themselves to address the excess within architectural theory. What Grosz forgets is Irigaray's insistence that women can begin to build a culture of two. This simultaneous activity alongside her criticisms has remained unacknowledged and perhaps even repressed by Grosz for fear of 'essentialism'.

Irigaray argues in *Forgetting the Air*, that there is a double forgetting, a double oblivion; the first the *from which* of blood and air; the second of desire, of a female tangible wholly other. This different sort of space and time means that criticizing women's place within the male philosophical tradition is simply not enough, the fallacy of neutral experience together with the passivity traditionally associated with women is not enough. Women have to find their own 'to be,' their own 'breath' and their own or autonomy (the association of 'to be' of women with breath is examined in *The Age of Breath*, *Les Souffles des Femmes* and *The Forgetting of Air*). Irigaray writes: '...this place of women's hospitality and spiritual generation is hardly known, even by herself. In order to give being to it, the woman cannot remain solely passive, asked of her for centuries: she must accept active responsibility for her spiritual life, for her soul. She must become a creatress of humanity, generate it spiritually' (AB, 9-10c). This is a thinking a about how to approach sexual difference other than as the stereotypes of the maternal. Whilst Grosz distinguishes Irigaray's work from Derrida's her exploration remains directed to Irigaray's dismantling and not to the means and modes of reconstruction. Furthermore, the political significance of Irigaray's work, especially where both Irigaray and Bataille's works are described as a "politics of the impossible" as proposed by Alfonso Lingis, a phenomenologist and translator of the work of Emmanuel Levinas, is, perhaps, somewhat problematic. Irigaray has a very specific and extensive discourse of the political moreover she is critical of phenomenological thought, which would include that of Lingis, and Levinas in its approach to the other.

To produce an architecture in which women can live (as is the language of one of

Irigaray's papers) is to cultivate a thinking which she writes is perhaps to a greater extent perhaps only a breathing. A way of thinking and breathing which permits the passage from one space and position to another. For Grosz, this would mean that building would not function as a finished object but rather a "spatial process", but, this is a far from adequate response to Irigaray's philosophy and its potential engagement with architecture, as Irigaray's more recent work suggests.

Irigaray argues that "nature," in particular the natural elements, remain uncoded by current cultural traditions. Heidegger argues that all philosophical questions about nature, or *physis*, are that of being, Irigaray argues that there is a form of perception and dialogue Heidegger does not think, through which a different ground may emerge. There is a mode of releasement through which a different *everyday perspective* (to use Heidegger's terms) may emerge as 'the woman I am by nature': in two. Building in Irigaray's is that which women must carry out for themselves for themselves, as a rediscovery, a way of being in the world in (sexuate) difference.

3.5 "A Strange Practice of Reading": Irigaray, Deconstruction and the Question of Love.

If Irigaray's re-conceptualisation of *eros*, responds to and initiates the recognition of two subjectivities; as she argues, love is still uncivilised so long as I does not include woman in her specific and symbolic identity. If women, who are thus not genuine subjects in the patriarchal community and do not obey the same sexual economy as men, are exempt in part from phallographic law. (This she argues in a chapter entitled "Veiled Lips" in *Marine Lover*, an engagement with both Freiderich Nietzsche and Derrida's reading of the feminine in Nietzsche's work. As such, women subjects, as two, male and female or as both mother and daughter, can reflect back from their outside perspective a criticism of patriarchal society helping men (or the masculine subject) to understand themselves and find their own limits. The limit is thus one not imposed by a "male" culture but by the other. Where she writes that out of bed or away from home women somehow become mysteriously become unisexual or asexual, both the conventional construction of sexual

difference in patriarchal cultures and the disavowal or denial of difference in desire between woman and man suggests in analysis the possibility of a different sort of construction of sexual difference. It bespeaks of a more primordial relation that has been forgotten or covered over that Irigaray's readings aim to reveal. The feminine in Western philosophy, for Irigaray, is the ground of Western thought but as this ground it has made cognizability of the feminine impossible. Stereotypes of the feminine and of sexual difference are something the implicitly masculine subject of patriarchal culture can neither recognise nor do without. However, if sexual difference, as conventionally conceived is to be overcome the intimate has to be rethought and this has led to her criticism to the political. Otherwise, she argues that women and men fall back into the same formal habitual and familiar which are a nostalgia for returning back to the womb where the other is nothing but an encompassing source of food and shelter.

Through a sort of amorous relationship with philosophy (or the philosopher), a sort of love and confrontation, initiating or responding to a different kind of *eros*; as Butler suggest a relationship that suggests something fearful as it is beyond the familiar, Irigaray thereby proposes a criticism of patriarchal culture that has simply evaded men. In *I Love To You*, Irigaray writes of the recognition of a feminine subjectivity or mode of living allowing two subjectivities as the recognition of a sexual other who will never be known or possessed, where this limit becomes the possibility of 'love'. This creative aspect of Irigaray's work is, the aspect that has caused so much misunderstanding. The recognition of a radical sexual difference has to be a project both to deconstruct the tradition but also propose creative alternatives; or as Drucilla Cornell writes of Irigaray's work; a door to a radical, and by definition, indefinable future.

Perhaps women architects are more aware in their position, to disrupt and modify the formal hierarchies of architectural design; more aware of the potential they have to change the context in which women live and to challenge the foundations of the patriarchal family. As architectural theory engages with the philosophical context Irigaray's work confronts recent feminist debates in architecture. Any project discussing feminism in architecture in a contemporary

context cannot easily formulate its question as "What is feminism in architecture?" It can however ask how we can practice in architecture. Similarly Irigaray rejects the question "What is woman?" as metaphysical (requiring an either/or answer) but Irigaray's practice is sexually different. Butler writes:

I read *Speculum* again and again frightened by its anger, compelled by the closeness of the reading; confused by the *mimétisme* of the text...was she enslaved to the texts, was she displacing them radically, was she perhaps in the bind of being in both positions at the same time. And I realised that whatever the feminine was for her it was not a substance, not a spiritual reality, that might be isolated but it had something to do with this strange practice of reading (Pheng, 1998).

Nevertheless, as already stated, Irigaray's practice extends the confines of the Western tradition, of reading and writing. The issue of dwelling, for Irigaray, means reconsidering how we can respond to the other to found a belonging together, a properly human belonging which corresponds to the recognition and cultivation of sexual difference. This takes Derrida's reading to another level. Mary McLoed in *Architecture and Feminism*, unlike Coleman who as already stated suggests that Irigaray's work can be adopted to challenge the popularity of Derrida's work, argues that Irigaray's philosophy challenges how deconstruction has been adopted by architects such as Peter Eisenman, Bernard Tschumi or Daniel Libeskin to support stylistic invention. In her paper "Everyday and Other Spaces" McLoed discusses the contemporary preoccupation with concepts of the other and with otherness suggesting that a contemporary interest in creating an architecture that is somehow totally other, fails in its societal aspect - that is to say in addressing those who societies consider other. She writes that these projects fail to address the needs of those who are genuinely marginalized. McLoed is an American theorist, her paper published in the mid 1990s. This criticism is directed at the preoccupation at the time of publications such as *Assemblage* and *Any* and architectural schools such as Princeton, Colombia, SCI-Arc and the *Architectural Association*. Current debates she writes: '...promote novelty and marginality as instruments of political

subversion and cultural transgression. The spoken and unspoken assumption is that "different" is good, that "otherness" is automatically an improvement over the status quo' (AF, 1).

Contemporary feminism in architecture is embroiled in a theoretical context which has been inspired by French philosophy, and most notably by Derrida's thinking but whilst Derrida has also identified the issue of dwelling as one that architects must reconsider, whether thought through Heidegger, Derrida or Irigaray, what is clear is that the question that dwelling raises is not that of a superficial concern for contemporary aesthetic which seeks out only the novelty of otherness.

3.6 Women, Gender and Architecture

Many recent publications in architecture broadly investigating gender, feminism, sex or desire and architecture, declare themselves post-modern and interdisciplinary. However, whilst these publications have been perceived as having a feminist component, few, explicitly declare a feminist interest, as already suggested. Even in projects dealing directly with prejudice against women within the profession, the term 'feminism' is avoided the question of diversity or gender the preferred terminology. Widening traditional horizons of the architectural theory to include a range of other theoretical disciplines exemplifies a change in thinking that has taken place over the last few years. As Rendell, Penner and Borden write of the issue: '[u]ntil recently much of this work has remained internal to the discipline, concerned largely with the architectural profession and issues concerning the man-made environment' (GSA, 6): This work they write, in contrast to the new trend was written largely by women from an overtly political feminist angle. Publications such as *Making Space: Women and the Man-Made Environment* by the UK feminist collective *Matrix* although unmentioned, are, like Marion Robert's research already cited, implicated in this former position. Following Grosz's 'Women Chora Dwelling', Beatriz Colomina's *Sexuality and Space* is referred to as the first collection to introduce academic disciplines previously seen as external to architectural theory. The editors of *Gender, Space and Architecture* also write that this publication

introduced gender studies to architectural theory from fields as diverse as anthropology, art history, cultural studies, film theory, geography, psychoanalysis and philosophy.

Historically architecture has taken influence from philosophy, theology and social and political theory. However, it is in thinking about gender that the editors argue architecture must adopt thought that it has previously not considered. This provides, they write, '...an interdisciplinary context for a gendered critique of architecture, one which expands the terms of the discourse by making links, through gender, with methodological approaches in other academic disciplines' (*GSA*, 6). However, whilst *Gender, Space and Architecture* proposes a freer context for thought, the editors somewhat authoritatively propose that the terminology of debates has changed: '...feminist theory has become gender theory, women's studies has become gender studies' (*GSA*, 7).

Feminism and architecture is in a predicament, perhaps one invidiously maintained by the Institution. Feminism is, and has always been, more than a philosophy. It has demands, strategies, ambitions. Whilst overly simplistic demands for equality can be seen as problematic, in contrast theory pre-occupied with the question of gender can put to rest the problem of women's rights before they have been adequately thought through. Declaring a major change in thinking to have taken place over the past five years and best renamed 'gender studies' - rather than feminism - and consequently presented as more inclusive of fields such as "men's studies", Queer Theory in architecture and post-colonial studies, raises a real issue of how gender is being thought, and more precisely why gender is being made to oppose feminism. Even where this project is described as taking apolitical position but one more sympathetic to difference, there is a real danger that contemporary feminist theory is being underplayed. Despite the editors claims that "It is easy to be cynical, and assume 'gender' has replaced 'feminism' as a less politicized, more neutral and descriptive rather than prescriptive term. But it is also the case - one which this editorial group advocates - that to talk of gender is to take a political position but one more sympathetic to difference' (*GSA*, 7). 'Difference' in this context cannot be used without considering what this means, and specifically and somewhat problematically what the politic of difference suggests.

Importantly, it is necessary to ask how understanding gender as a cultural construction can be a politically satisfying project for women.

The interdisciplinary character of recent debates is also confirmed by a collection of books published around the mid to late 1990s and onwards. These include *Architecture and Feminism* (1996) edited by Debra Coleman, Elizabeth Danze and Carol Henderson; *The Sex of Architecture* (1996) edited by Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway and Leslie Weisman; *Desiring Practices* (1996) edited by Duncan McCorquodale, Katerina Ruedi and Sarah Wiggleswade and the earlier *Drawing, Building, Text* (1996) edited by Andrea Kahn. Each illustrates a trend to explore sex or gender through theories previously unknown to architectural theory. Whilst architecture has been influenced by philosophy throughout history, what is unique to current debates is how some architects have whole heartily adopted contemporary philosophy as a practice of architecture.

Jennifer Bloomer's project in "Big Jugs" cites the work of Derrida, Kristeva, Cixous and Gilles Deleuze to construct her proposal for architectural practice. Bloomer is perhaps the most unconventional in her academic style, presenting a work that invents terminology and further presents itself in a high poeticised style. Defending this style in both her writing and her theory for a practice in architecture, she cites Kristeva's poetic language: 'Only one language grows more and more contemporary: the equivalent, beyond a span of thirty years, [that of] the language of *Finnegan Wake*.' Bloomer's criticism of language in architectural theory compares to that of French feminism, which she cites, particularly Hélène Cixous. In 'Big Jugs' Bloomer describes a supplementary place of architecture, a place both within and exceeding the phallogocentric discourse of Western metaphysics, a place Bloomer terms in her unique style as 'the hatchery' and that she describes as 'an apparatus of overlay of architecture, writing, and the body', an alchemical vessel a writing-machine, a bridge between the sacred and the voluptuous, about acts not images, that cannot be classified into categories. This is a place where 'minor architectures', an idea she links with Deleuze's ideas of minor-writing, can be born, or rather, in Bloomer's terms, hatched. These projects, or works in progress, are, she describes, architectures without a father, illegitimate

architectures, bastard-architectures, architectures that both are, and are not, within the phallogentric tradition. Bloomer further writes, citing Alice Jardine, that the hatchery as associated with the feminine but as a space no longer passive but active and passive - the self-contained space or eroticism.

Colomina's "Battle Lines. E1027" is an example of such engagement with the proper discourse of architectural history. In this case Colomina's intention is to reveal a hidden sexual agenda in the work of Le Corbusier. Colomina studies Le Corbusier's relationship to the lesbian architect and her lover Jean Badovici in the design of the house E1027 built between 1926 and 1929. 'Battle Lines' are those drawn between Le Corbusier and Gray over the authorship of the design, Gray's independent profession status as an architect in her authorship of the design, and moreover as Colomina argues, over a question of Gray's sexual unavailability to Le Corbusier. Colomina's research is based archive study but conclusions pose a significant challenge to conventional understandings of historical research in architecture mixing what might have been peripheral information with the convention methods of study. In order to understand Le Corbusier's mural paintings in Grays house, she describes Corbusier's interest in the studies he made of Algerian women as a rather ordinary instance of the ingrained fetishistic appropriation of women, of the East, of "the other" . This fetish Colomina argues turned into a life-time obsession In a continuous project of redrawing his study of Algerian women, ultimately this became the mural "The Three Women" or *Grafitte Cap Martin* that Le Corbusier described in a letter to a friend as illustrating Gray, Jean Badovici and between them a child that was never born. Thus, Colomina argues, Corbusier's obsession with Gray's sexuality materialises on the wall of Gray's house. This mural not only defaced the house, much to Gray's anger, as a series of unwanted additions without Gray's permission, but was a defacement of her sexuality and her profession as an architect. In her complain about him she writes that he threatened to spread this debate in front of the whole world. The murals were an occupation of the house, a dematerialization of the walls of the house (as Corbusier described the function of the mural) a colonialist action to efface the space of the other.

The paper has also led to a number of published responses, particular relevant to this project that of Sylvia Lavin. She describes how Colomia, unlike those addressing the confinement of women within the domestic, Chase for example, addresses a tradition of women designing and building there own homes, a tradition that stretches back to the women that weaved the fabric for primitive tents. But, Lavin's interest in this paper is, not to see Gray's as victim of Le Corbusier, but in the study of the architectural differences in the Gray's architecture's of 'escape' in E1027 to that of Le Corbusier's 'escape' in his cabin on a site next to the house, both versions of the primitive hut, but very different versions, Lavin writes, of escapes that are clearly gendered

Catherine Ingraham similarly presents in her paper a study of the line in architectural drawing, in architecture and in the philosophical construction of the human subject. The line separates the humanistic subject from the world. The most theoretically reference work of this selection Ingraham refers to the work of Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Lacan in her study of the line. In this respect Ingrahams' project is a criticism of subject formation, in the Cartesian subject, the structuralist influenced psychoanalytical subject of Jacques Lacan and in the post-Structuralist thought of Jacques Derrida. Representation is, thus, her focus; a representation whose critique challenges the notions of representation architecture, the subject and, moreover, of the apparently separate fields of psychoanalytical thought and architectural theory. Citing Derrida's project with Plato's theories of representation, she argues that mimesis is flawed. She argues that perception, as well as representation, can only take place through a frame of intelligibility or the apparatus of representation but, nevertheless, awareness of this frame, line, or apparatus also shatters the rules of the system. Asking a question of the line, the frame, the limits of the system is Ingraham's method of questioning the proper discourse of architecture; a trend she recognises as characteristic of current architectural theory. To ask a question of the space of the line is also to ask about Foucault's, 'matrices of power', Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's 'Nomadic Space', Ingraham argues. Understanding this line, as the possibility of representation (a theme that will be discussed in greater depth) is thus the theme of the paper and yet she does not specifically

question the line within French feminist theory as that between sexual difference.

Grosz identifies a new beginning in architectural theory with Beatriz Colomina's *Sexuality and Space* and as already argued the editors of *Gender, Space and Architecture* similarly identify the importance of this book. However, Coleman charting the history of research in the main stream architectural press notes a very obvious lack of attention to feminism. The editors of *Gender, Space and Architecture* confirm this observation arguing that in academia, feminism is still met with a degree of resistance and within the profession, fears include the idea that the label 'feminist' will damage women's architectural careers or suggest too radical a political position for sustaining a professional status within the establishment. A position whether knowingly or not the editors endorse. Renaming the discourse from feminism to gender studies suggests an agenda supporting Institutional politics, one that sees feminism as too radical a politics for architecture. The fear of a backlash against feminism, or against women that openly state their feminist politics is an obvious and a much discussed characteristic of 1990s feminism. However, whilst the term gender is presented as a better description of the issues involved in feminism in architecture, not only does the opposition of gender and feminism suggest that the motives of former feminism are somehow problematic and perhaps limited theoretically, but in this context the question of gender is openly suggested as the acceptable face of feminism in the male dominated academic institution. However, it is also one that does not change the privileged status of patriarchal family and views on sexual difference in contemporary societal traditions.

Publications in architecture show a movement away from feminism and frequently make reference to contemporary philosophy but engaging with issues surrounding feminism in architecture, either in terms of inequality or gender is not necessarily synonymous with feminisms, either contemporary feminisms, or recent theory surrounding sexual difference. Rather than a simple innocent absence of the term feminism, that Coleman observes, the stake is higher in this context. This is not to support feminist political theory and its limitations but to emphasize that in making the question of feminism unacceptable is reinforcing traditional value systems associated

with patriarchy. Whilst the editors of *Gender, Space and Architecture* argue for a 'politics of difference' it is the other, represented by feminism that is suppressed: The other, bodily, sensible, sexuate, mobile, living and in particular woman.

If architectural theory adopts Irigaray's work, the question architecture must ask is how we can build to live together. Or whether we can continue the project of women's liberation in a way that at the same time initiates respect for all other differences, in race, generation, tradition and culture. Whilst the new gender theory in architecture celebrates interdisciplinarity, at the same time it practices its own form of exclusion. Whilst 'difference' is presented as a more ethical question, these ethics in themselves have to be released from their religious, and patriarchal traditions. 'Ethics' as is explored in Irigaray's work is nevertheless a complex issue, however it is in a rethinking of dialogue and relation that ethics can be refounded.

3.7 Rethinking Feminism as Specific Rights According to Our Differences

If understanding the intellectual context of the current discourse of gender and architecture is the motive of *Gender, Space and Architecture*, as the editors argue. To define the aspirations of the discourse as a understanding of gender, especially gender theory and its values according to the historian Joan Wallace Scott, simply poses gender as a social category, as imposed on a sexed body by culture.

Since sexual difference is used against women denying sexual difference, especially the significance of the biologically sexed body, for Irigaray, only acts to support women's exploitation. The existing model we have of both difference and sexual difference is thought in terms of the masculine subject. To suggest a 'politics of difference' or indeed a position more sympathetic to difference, without interpreting the very specific problem of sexual difference is at best only a denial of the sexed body in a call for equality. Whilst deconstructing alienating social identities is obviously important, women need to build identities and sexed subjectivities in order to maintain

equality, for Irigaray this means, starting from their own initial relationality.

Coleman in her introduction to *Architecture and Feminism* suggests as stated that there is a distinct absence of the word feminism in current work. In papers which proposed the need for equality with male counterparts, terms used are that of diversity and a call for a level playing field. However, she argues, where feminism is feared, she argues, the debates are weakened. In a paper 'Leveling the Playing Field' cited by Coleman, Abbey Bussel charts a history of feminist activism in architecture, focusing on US feminism in architecture. Coleman's use of this paper to support the argument that without the use of the term feminism, architects neglect what could be a contemporary feminism nevertheless this is not evident in Bussel's study. (Whilst Bussel makes no reference to the term feminism - it is equality with men that she argues women within the profession need and this is commonly associated with feminism.)

It is Grosz reading of Irigaray that influences Coleman's perspective on what could be a contemporary feminism in architecture. Coleman's criticism of architecture is simply that Bussel's concerns are not to represent the possibilities for contemporary feminism. *Gender, Space and Architecture's* motive to replace feminisms with the term gender studies criticizes feminism for its activist politics. However, if the term feminism fits uncomfortably with the Institution this needs exploration and confrontation rather than avoidance.

Although Coleman argues that the refusal of feminism cannot be allowed to diffuse debates. As already stated, Irigaray disassociates her philosophy from campaigns for equality - traditionally associated with feminism. Irigaray can and has been read as a feminist; in a predominately male profession, it is all too easy to underestimate the problems women architects face and understandably women are cautious of association with certain if not all strands of feminism and in this sense an association with feminism as that which is repressed is warranted provisionally. Despite the anxiety provoked by feminism, and perhaps because of it, it is still a useful terms, where properly qualified and in discussion of women's professional development and design practice. The suppression of the term corresponds with a certain academic discourse which has

been described as postmodernism, but the conflict created only plays into patriarchal prejudices and also misrepresents postmodernist feminist theory.

Coleman, with her criticisms of Bussel, is not suggesting a return to feminist activism. For Coleman, the debates surround feminism in architecture hang on one question: 'What role does architectural discourse itself play in preserving gender-based relations of power?' (*AF*, xii). This is the same question as Marion Roberts asks in *Living in a Man Made World*. However, unlike Roberts Coleman proposes that this cannot be resolved by calls for a level laying field, that is to say, through a question of equality, which is Irigaray's position.

Examining the structures of power within the professional Institution is not sufficient for Coleman. In addition, despite Bussel's extensive review of feminist activism in architecture, Coleman accuses Bussel of a passivity, exemplified by her statement that many people believe that a generation or two must die out before a real paradigm shift can occur (see *AF*, xi, Coleman's emphasis). Coleman suggests an '...interminable half-life quality to this kind of wait-and-see approach' (*AF*, xi). With pay inequalities within the profession standard and still less women students completing their education than male counterparts (as Bussel's paper apparently does), Coleman's plea for us to question *why* we have now refused feminism has to be acknowledged. Coleman suggests some explanation where she writes that many women seeking acceptance within the profession disassociate themselves from both feminism or talks of inequality in order to escape '...being tarred with the brush of female Otherness, of being contaminated by things "female"' (*AF*, xi). This observation is influenced by Bordo's paper in *Feminism/Postmodernism* where she criticizes women's reaction against the apparently essentialist programmes of Gilligan and Chodorow. Women architects also, however, refuse the distinction 'women architect' as much as they feminism. Coleman explains this writing: 'Feminism is "too radical" and its opposing nature is unseemly in a field that values a posture of gentility' (*AF*, xi). Coleman argues that women are drawn to a certain professionalism which allows "neutral" standards of intellectual rigor, critical objectivity and excellence. However, the promise of the ideal of professionalism has not been

adequate buttress against discrimination, as many of the testaments of the study carried out by "Architect's for Change" demonstrate. Furthermore, as Coleman argues 'neutral' experience is impossible. Citing Bordo again she writes:

In a culture that is *in fact* constructed by gender duality, however, one *cannot* simply be "human". This is no more possible than it is possible that we can "just be people" in a racist culture. (It is striking, too, that one hears this complaint from whites - "why can't we just be people; why does it always have to be "black" this "white" that - only when "black" consciousness asserts itself. Our language, intellectual history and social forms are 'gendered'; there is no escape from this fact and from its consequences on our lives (Bordo, 1990, 152 Bordo's italics).

It is not difficult to uncover discrimination in Schools and within the profession, it is mostly barely hidden and often explicit. Whilst this must be changes, focusing too keenly on professional standards, so that women can make as much money as men or can gain the same power as men can pervert feminism, what is its potential and scope for its critique. Feminism as a question of equality can become a question only of self interest. Moreover, deconstructing gender roles and stereotypes does not guarantee changes in architectural culture.

The very specific issue of professional status is one of the reasons, feminism has not really been taken up by architectural culture. Some women also fear that even the innocent term 'woman architect' will have a marked effect on clients perception of their professional standing. If Irigaray's feminism can be described as the necessity to establish a politics of *sexuate* difference, of two subjectivities, this not only implies the deconstruction of gender stereotypes and the complementary and subordinate role of the feminine, it implies establishing rights and values for women as sexed citizens. This would mean that women do not continue in her culturally subordinated position on the negative side of a binary but it also suggests the re-evaluation of practice. It takes further any feminist debates for economic and political rights but it also differs from other forms of feminism. Irigaray work is not only a criticism of language but incitement towards creative projects of both linguistic and legal change, providing women with, she writes, the

models, plans, ideals, divinities, they need for themselves.

Irigaray's approach to sexual difference has been described as a radical sexual difference. Alison Martin uses this terminology in her thesis *Luce Irigaray and the Question of the Divine*. Nevertheless, Irigaray's political project cannot be described as radical feminism, at least as commonly understood. It cannot be categorized as a type of radical feminist philosophy which is understood as a revengeful counter reaction to the exclusion or lack of power of women as a result of patriarchy or associated with essentialism. Irigaray's separatism is one that suggests two worlds, two different ways of being, of relationality, constructed in relation. Two sexes, two separate identities, instead of one sex and its complement. In this respect, this is not a revengeful reaction to patriarchy which parodies male power, the way her philosophy takes is one of vigilance in not submitting to patriarchal laws, but in so doing, creating the from which two can emerge in difference. In the 1970s and 1980s as Martin argues, especially within the British context, to be a feminist outside the boundaries of materialist thought was to be a theorist without a theory of the social. This also meant a charge, by default, of essentialism and apoliticism. The reception of French feminism by British and American feminists was marked by this conflict between Marxist feminism and its apparent antithesis with essentialist French feminism. For Anglo-American feminism, the split between biology and culture maintained by this agenda also acted to support those with more reactionary politics than Marxist feminism. If claims against Irigaray's philosophy formed around accusations of essentialism are not discredited, and if 'French Feminism' (an artificial category in itself) this makes Irigaray's philosophy, as other theorists in this category, in accordance with the *status quo* which cannot be the case

Coleman suggests, like many other theorists, that Irigaray's philosophy might offer a criticism of the foundations of understanding that in a way responds to many of the issues raised by feminisms. How this might suggest a practice of architecture, Coleman like Grosz leaves to architects and yet it is a question for theory, in particular philosophy. Irigaray's philosophy is cited by critics, architects and artists and interest in her work amongst women architects is growing.

However, many neglect the political motives of her work cite her criticism, neglecting the aspect of her philosophy that considers how we can build as practice. Studies that cite Irigaray's work or that relate to her possible intervention in architecture, typically engage with certain themes, often with little reference to context.

The problem of gender in architecture has to be informed by contemporary theory. Not risking the term feminism might be a valid position for some women but similarly arguing that feminism in architecture must be understood as a necessary and continuing project, could misrepresent the motives of some current theorists, and who work to change opportunities for women at the level of the foundations of our systems of knowledge. On the other hand, critics that attempt to dismiss the research of those rethinking feminism suggesting that any attempt to give woman a 'place' is an essentialist position, misunderstand some of the more recent work regarding sexual difference commonly associated with 'feminism'.

Contemporary feminism has been typified by the theories of Jennifer Bloomer, Beatriz Colomina and Catherine Ingraham and by a range of publications from the early 1990s onwards. In each of these collections editors propose an investigation of the blind-spots of modernism in architecture. These collections broadly propose the need to address the repressed other of architectural discourse or that which haunts architecture, to use Mark Wigley's terminology in *Derrida's Haunt*. In general books advice a questioning of exclusionary processes or lay claim to an exploration of the limits of architecture as an academic discipline, even initiate controversy. In *Desiring Practices* the motive of the work is described as an urgent need to investigate the forbidden spaces of architectural practices.

However, Irigaray's work is also influential and provides a background for many papers. In Deborah Fausch's paper in *Architecture and Feminism*, the problem of essentialism is raised as the most difficult issue for feminists to address. Fausch argues that it is dangerous to define a feminine nature. Nevertheless, Fausch also writes, '...it remains true that without any essential(ist) definition of the feminine - of the female, of woman, it becomes impossible to claim any viewpoint as

feminist' (AF, 38). Fausch explores the recent influence of French feminism on architectural theory, but Toril Moi's *Sexual/Textual Politics* takes an importance place in her criticism and review.

The suppression of the word feminism in projects where it would seem obvious is problematic, it is particularly evident in the book *Drawing, Building, Text*, one of the earliest publications to address broadly feminist concerns. In this book despite an exclusively woman authored series of texts, including papers from Bloomer, Colomina, Ingraham and Bergren and citing French philosophies, none of the contributors name their concerns as feminist. In fact, the word feminism is glaring absent from the introduction, postscript and all papers in the book. Anne Bergren's "Baubo: Gender and the Irreparable Wound" is the most obvious to illustrate how despite what could easily be become a contemporary feminist study is propped up only by Gilles Deluzes's philosophy.

Remaining limited to divisive categorizations of feminism does a disservice to women's creative capacities to change the way we live. Rejecting the term 'feminism' can be made to suit the reactionary politics of the Institution. Some women, as Coleman argues, whether knowingly or not, can be complicit with a resolutely sexist profession. What is at stake in discussion of contemporary architecture, concerns the possibility of living, of being in relation, which can (re)create *sexuate* identity. This means rethinking the sex and gender distinction and finding the autonomy to re-establish values appropriate a sexed identity.

Although many theorists recognize the political aspect of Irigaray's work, many underestimate her intentions and underplay her work. Most of the papers citing Irigaray draw on contemporary philosophy and are marked by deconstructive trends in architectural theory. It is easy to associate Irigaray's philosophy with these trends and Grosz's paper with her discussion of *Chora* is a part of this. Nevertheless, understanding Irigaray's philosophy in psychoanalytic terms is also problematic and runs the risks of reducing her scope of its criticism. Mark Wigley argues that Irigaray's philosophy could incite an alternative aesthetic, writing in a context of architectural theory inspired by Derrida's work, however, to describe Irigaray's philosophy as a form of writing

or representation would be to refuse the issue of dialogue outside the tradition or of 'building' between two suggested by her work.

Many papers cite Irigaray's philosophy but her work can be presented so briefly to communicate nothing of the potential of her intentions. Within contemporary architectural theory, and especially within work that introduces feminism in architecture, there are a number of architects that cite her work. Some examples of such papers include: May Landesberg and Lisa Quatrala, 'See Angel Touch'; Mary McLoed, 'Everyday and Other Spaces'; Venessa Chase, 'Edith Wharton, The Decoration of Houses in Turn-of-the Century America'; Mark Wigley, 'Untitled: The Housing of Gender'; Andrea Kahn, 'Overlooking: A Look at How to Look at Site or...site as discrete object of desire'; Elizabeth Grosz, 'Women, Chora, Dwelling'; Katerina Rüedi, 'The Architect: Commodity and Seller in One'. Typically these papers argue for the inclusion of philosophies of sexual difference (Kahn's paper also refers to the work of Hélène Cixous) in characteristically interdisciplinary architectural debates, alongside reference to cultural theory, post-colonial theory, social geography, or contemporary French philosophy. The feminist cultural geographer Gillian Rose, whose work addresses theories of place and female subjectivity also makes reference to Irigaray's work. The influence to architectural theory of Luce Irigaray's work can thus be seen as gained from those working, perhaps problematically, from a wealth of secondary source literature, in addition to primary sources. In Irigaray's own field, best described as that of philosophy, feminist philosophers have similarly expressed an influenced by Irigaray's work. Rosi Bradotti and Judith Butler, for example, both describe their enthusiasm for Irigaray's work, although each differ significantly in their criticism of Irigaray's work. In Butlers' case her work is also strongly influenced by Michel Foucault work and in Bradotti's by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. Less well known philosophers to engage with Irigaray, whose work I cite in this thesis, include: Alison Ainley, Ellen T. Amour, Phillipa Berry, Tina Chanter, Alison Martin, Naomi Schor, Gail Swab and Cathryn Vasseleu.

Hence, whilst studies of the significance of Irigaray's philosophy have been undertaken in

a number of fields, reference to Irigaray's work in architectural projects, particularly within the papers cited at the beginning of this chapter, nevertheless, take typical positions and moreover cite common texts. Such work either cites Irigaray in a feminist criticism of Derrida's project, or more precisely in an feminist engagement with Derrida's influence to architectural theorists, and similarly theorists typically refer to her engagement with Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis. These positions are also common amongst feminist theorists, although work with Irigaray's psychoanalytic criticisms is more typical of early engagements. However, whilst, architects suggest the possibility that Irigaray's philosophy could incite an alternative aesthetic or introduce an alternative social theory for women and architecture, whether in a context Derrida's philosophy, that is to say described either as an ethics concerning the other or that, 'haunts architecture' (as Mark Wigley describes in Derrida's Haunt) or as the 'writing-architecture' of Bernard Tschumi and Peter Eisenman (although suggested by Elizabeth Grosz would be problematic) even where papers cite Irigaray's work this is presented so briefly, perhaps this is because constructing such a dialogue would require not only an interdisciplinarity exceeding the traditional boundaries of architectural discourse but a philosophical discussion. This is not unusual as for example the work of Andrew Benjamin or David Farrell Krell demonstrates but it is not easy work.

Irigaray's philosophy offers the possibility of a significant criticism of contemporary theories within architecture, more than is currently attributed to her work. Her writing, both in its form and content, attempts to incites an alternative feminine identity but in doing so also introduces the possibility of a radically new social theory for women. In criticizing masculine philosophies, to propose a non-dialectical relationship between two, architecture becomes an enduring project of becoming two and a project to culturally maintain radical sexual difference.

Constructing a dialogue which engages with Irigaray's philosophy and her intentions requires not only an interdisciplinarity exceeding the traditional boundaries of Western thought, in particular its foundations in the philosophy of Plato and even the pre-Socratics Heidegger celebrates. Irigaray's papers on architecture suggest that the issue of architecture (and gender) must

be one of working towards co-existence in difference. How we can modify habits of living have been themes of many Modernist architects, and the phenomenological influences on architects such as Le Corbusier, Alvar Aalto, for example, are widely researched and well documented. How to live so that the human can become *sexuate*, rediscover *sexuate* identity, however, suggests a radically different agenda to architectural theory inspired by phenomenology. The project cuts across the perceived distinctions between Modern and Post-modern theories in architecture.

There is a certain suspicion concerning the use of the term feminism in the present architectural context, within the Schools, in practice, within the Institution. This is observed in many of the recent collections of papers and essays broadly concerned with gender and architecture. The question that needs to be asked in this context is whether arguments over terminology are instruments in maintaining patriarchal laws and traditions, as Irigaray describes in her discussion of Antigone, traditions that cannot allow the existence of alternative systems of values and ethics.

3.8 The Problem of Postmodernism

Whilst Rendell, Penner and Borden resolutely define the current cultural condition as post-modern, the meaning of the term is still hotly debated. Postmodernism, poses a particular challenge for feminism, in particular, the status of the female subject. The editors of *Gender, Space and Architecture* write, '...[g]iven the questionable status of truth, reality and history in postmodernism, feminism and postmodernism have had a troubled relation, particularly with respect to a theory of the female subject' (GSA, 19). Postmodernist critiques challenges the construction of the subject but some feminists argue that this questioning and the lack of stability offered to the subject is positive (see Linda Nicholson's *Feminism/Postmodernism*). Others suggest it indicates the abandonment of any specifically feminist project. Rendell suggests that postmodernism's effect of feminism has been '...a transformation from a focus on things to a focus on words, from a concern with 'real' things - the everyday realities of women's oppression: rape, unequal wages and the

problems of simultaneously working outside the home and trying to raise children - to critiquing representations of these situations (GSA, 20). However, this is precisely the criticism directed at postmodernist theory by feminists such as Coleman and McLoed as *Architecture and Feminism* demonstrate.

McLoed in 'Everyday and Other Spaces' in *Architecture and Feminism* argues that within current theory the preoccupation with the term 'other' suggests an unspoken assumption that difference is good and otherness is an improvement on the status quo. Questioning these assumptions, McLoed accuses deconstruction of not addressing the real material needs of those considered other, in particular those of women. The other is something internal to architecture, and deconstruction's alliance with feminism denies an identity for women. However, from the perspective of theorists that adopt deconstruction the call to make a place for women, could easily be turned into identifying a woman's place, which could suggest an essentialist position. Rendell writes defining postmodernism and the problems it gives to feminism:

For some postmodernism describes a specific historical condition - the economic condition of late capitalism and its associated cultures and intellectual forms; for others, postmodernism is nothing new - the transition from modernism and postmodernism is a repetition of the kind of changes in culture which have occurred in previous epochs. Most agree that postmodernism defines a shift in epistemology in ways of knowing about truth, reality and history. Postmodernism is characterized by a doubt in one's ability to know the truth - all we can know are different versions of the truth; a doubt in one's ability to know reality - all we can know are representations of reality; a doubt in one's ability to know history - all histories are partial and reliant on the relation of the historian and reader (GSA, 19).

However, as Coleman and McLoed intimate Irigaray's philosophy could allow feminism to exceed these distinctions between 'postmodernism's relativity' and 'modernist truth'. If postmodernism's effect on feminism and architecture is a change in focus on things to words, to causes of oppression in systems of representation, Irigaray's philosophy could demonstrate how a criticism of words could find another stage. Although traditional thinking about feminism in architecture cannot

remain limited to women's housing, or safety in street design, what is mean by safe street design or humane housing has to remain a valid question. Despite the conflict between postmodernist and modernist feminisms in architectural theory, there is, as Wiggleswade suggest in *Desiring Practices*, still a great deal of shared theoretical ground of 'new feminisms' with former feminisms. Wiggleswade describes the conditions that motivated the papers that make up *Desiring Practices* as that of a dinner party of women, architects, discussing the problems of their work and lives, with a shared sense of disenfranchization and dissatisfaction, acknowledging a lack of space, territory and autonomy to practice their desires. She writes:

A dinner party in a north London kitchen, October 1993. At the table are five women and two men. Our host has invited a group of architects to swap ideas for a future, as yet known, project. The conversation turns around current pursuits and preoccupations, predominantly focusing on work. Trained as architects, we are all practicing 'architecture' in some form but these forms are varied, marginal, and certainly do not reflect the idealized image of the architect-hero we were led to expect. For some, a series of part-time jobs with no security or advancement is an economic imperative, while others are trapped within the limits of a traditional career path. These choices may be the manifestation of millennial labour conditions, but something else is at stake. This very gathering signifies a shared feeling that our occupation leaves us with a sense of dissatisfaction, a lack. A lack of space, of territory, of autonomy, in which to practice our desires. It is more than a sense of disenfranchisement: it is a feeling of symbolic castration. Can it be a co-incidence that most of us are female? (DP, 276)

For Wiggleswade, the complex issue for women architects in practice, as she identifies, is '...who is the ultimate judge of what things mean?' (DP, 278) She writes is '...[m]eaning is the product of creative dialogue which puts the individual - the 'I' -into play. Who decides the value of my work, and how should I produce it? (DP, 278). Of the importance of contemporary theory in gender and architecture and the omission of former feminisms, Wiggleswade writes:

To focus on the exclusion of women opens interrogation concerns about the spatial and material practices of architecture. It raises questions such as who is allowed to speak, who has access to architectural products, as well as the social and working relationships which

produce its spaces - which production methodology prevail, and who claims authorship. Received wisdom limits the possibilities for rethinking the values ascribed to these spaces, and access to the political processes that allow us to change them (*DP*, 278).

However, Wiggleswage's questions are one's that Irigaray addresses in her arguments when she argues that women must salvage, rediscover and create their own values.

Challenging the popularity of the use of the term other and otherness McLoed defines two broad categories amongst architectural theorists who use the term. The first she describes as consisting of proponents of deconstruction in architecture who seek to find an architectural equivalent to Derrida's writing. These include deconstructivists, Peter Eisenman, Tschumi, Andrew Benjamin, Mark Wigley and Jeffry Kipnis. The second group, she argues, is a diverse collection of academics who cite Foucault, including Anthony Vidler, Demetris Porphyrrios, Aaron Betsky, Catherine Ingrham and Edward Soja. The proponents of the first group such as Eisenman and Wigley (and which can also include Jennifer Bloomer) challenge the canons of architecture, such as function, structure and enclosure. Disclosure of the instability of such structures is an end in itself. The other is something internal to architecture for these theorists, and the power of the Institution, can be deconstructed, can be undone through investigations of the structures themselves, that is to say, from within. Eisenman and Tschumi's writing allows McLoed to argue that deconstruction in architecture does not, nor even cannot, address the real material lives of those considered other. Furthermore, to the women that adopt Derrida's work to inform their own architectural theory she writes: 'Can you play Peter Eisenman's game if you're not permitted to play, or not even recognized as a potential player?' (*AF*, 9).

John Caputo in his paper 'Dreaming the Innumerable' published in the collection *Feminism and Deconstruction*, nevertheless, makes a case to support a feminist alliance with deconstruction. Unlike McLoed who argues that '...[f]or many women architects, the critical point is not just undermining of binary oppositions, but the denial of women per se' (*AF*, 9). He proposes that feminist claims that deconstruction enacts a violence against women are a misunderstanding. He

cites Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in support of his case where she argues that "woman" is a name for "undecidability" but it is not for "absence". Establishing a place for women, an identity, Caputo argues can be made to work for and against women depending upon how it is used. Caputo writes furthering this argument:

[I]f there is a truth of women, if women is a proper, identifiable name, would that not constitute another violence, the violence of classification, categorization, construction and even caricature, of typing and stereotyping, the violence of an essentialism that binds, not merely the feet but the very being of woman, that prevents movement and becoming and the step of the dance, precluding the possibility of becoming something different, something "sexual[ly] otherwise? Otherwise than a feminine essence, otherwise than the essence of the feminine (Caputo, 1997, 142).

Caputo's paper suggests that Derrida disconcerts feminists because he lets 'women' deconstruct. Derrida's readings of Nietzsche in *Spurs* as one example, addresses the question of woman by exploring Nietzsche's statement that Truth is a woman. Derrida argues that according to patriarchal, phallogocentric and oedipal law, in 'being woman' or rather entering into the relation of sexual difference, with this move, she simulates, she pretends to be woman. She acts, she mines woman, as it is defined, as she is represented by patriarchal culture. Derrida writes: '....woman is woman because she gives, she gives herself while the man for his part takes, possesses indeed takes possession. Or else she is woman because, in giving, she is in fact giving herself for, is simulating and consequently assuring the possessive mastery for her own self' (Derrida, 1978, 109).

However, in simulating something is left over, her mastery Derrida argues. The power relation is undone. Sexual difference, he argues is thus always in flux. Derrida writes: 'Man and woman change places [and thus] they exchange masks ad infinitum' (Derrida, 1978, 111). The undecidability of the relation undoes what it means to be man. Derrida writes:

The *for* which appears in the 'to-give-oneself-for' whatever its value, whether it deceives by giving only an appearance of, or whether it actually introduces some destination finality of twisted calculation, some redemption or gain into the loss of property, this *for* nonetheless continues to withhold the gift of a reverse (Derrida, 1978, 111).

It is this reserve that suggests the instability of sexual difference. In discussing the problems of gender in architecture, Rendell as many others takes a similar line on the disclosure of the instability of architectural presumptions as an end in itself. Determining the role of gender, however, she also argues, can destabilize the structures that hold up architectural norms and traditions. Joan Wallace Scott, Rendell agrees have defined gender as an analytic category in this way, she writes:

Gender not only defines lives as they were lived in the past, but it also constructs the forms of evidence chosen by the historian through which they interpret and explain history. Forms of representation reconstruct particular versions of history; they are gendered according to the viewpoint of their particular author in the past as well as the historian in the present (GSA, 20).

Rendell also argues that gendered representation can tell not only the way in which gender operates but also how class and race are organized: How class and race contribute to reinforce the issue of gender is argued as a necessary question feminists must address, she writes:

Postmodern theories regarding the construction of the subject and poststructuralist techniques for understanding systems of representation have had an important influence on feminists engaged in studying how class and race interact with gender as multiple forms of oppression. Postcolonial theory, which argues that race as a cultural construction represents notions of the 'other,' have been developed by feminists who argue that this 'other' is gendered feminine. Postcolonial feminist - for example, Chandra Talapade Mohanty (...) have also produced important critiques revealing much western feminist study to be 'colonial' and 'essential' in its consideration of race and the construction of self (GSA, 20).

Rendell is keen to point out that whilst femininity and masculinity are mutually dependent and unstable categories, gender is generally considered a term which implies a socially constructed definition of sexual identity, as opposed to any 'essentialist' definition. Rendell ends her theoretical overview of the problem of gender with a discussion of Judith Butler's work where the complex issue of essentialism, or rather how it is defined is deconstructed. Butler argues that our ideas of sex

are as equally unstable as gender: The sex and gender binary is also a construction of the patriarchal institution. Thus, Rendell writes: 'For Butler, gender is not to culture as sex is to nature, sex as natural fact does not precede the cultural inscription of gender' (*GSA*, 21).

The social construction of gender and the value attributed to gender must be of concern to theorists, as the editors of *Desiring Practice* argue. Like *Gender, Space and Architecture* the editors of *Desiring Practices* also prefer the term gender, however, in this case, the term does not replace feminism but replaces sexuality. In *Desiring Practices* 'gender' is argued to refer directly to the social construction of sexual difference, and the term 'sex' to a problematic essentialist discourse. Nevertheless if sexual difference is reduced to a question of difference (whether as explored by Derrida's philosophy or in the patriarchal tradition of continental philosophy) the result for the question of gender is to reduce sexual difference to an issue of equality. Thinking about difference, as yet does not adequately address sexual difference. Irigaray term *sexuate* difference, as already stated, to distinguish her approach. But what does this really mean? Irigaray argues that we must deconstruct alienating social identities which are based on the needs of the male subject but once these identities are found to be inadequate new identities must be developed that do not follow conventional cultural models. The motives of current cultural systems do not naturally support improved women's rights. To maintain and progress the political moves towards more equal rights for women, Irigaray argues that we need to explore and re-evaluate the foundations of our culture, in myth and in the work of philosophy and work to recreate ourselves of which the re-establishment of *sexuate* rights and values is one task..

The argument of Rendell, Borden and Penner is consistent with *Desiring Practices* in that both fear 'essentialism'. Feminism is a diverse and pluralistic domain with a sustained critique of itself and any definition of feminisms, sex or gender are bound to be contested. The works collected in *Gender, Space and Architecture* and Wigglesworth's argument in *Desiring Practices* to a certain degree each side step very important issues. Whilst, for example, the use of the words 'a politics of difference' are made to suggest a more appropriate ethics or politics than that implied by feminism,

how this corresponds to women's liberation or the continuation of women's struggles must be a matter of debate otherwise the argument sterilizes the feminist discourse. Defining and criticizing the phenomenon of feminism is a perilous business, many issues in architecture have parallels with historical feminism. It is interesting to note that whilst *Gender, Space and Architecture* proposes to map the theoretical ground to gender studies in architecture, the project, despite protestations otherwise, is that of a founding authority mimicking the gesture that founds patriarchy. Women's recent works have illustrated a variety of theoretical approaches but they also demonstrate a broadly shared interest in contemporary French philosophy. Containing Irigaray's work within the framework suggested by the editors of *Gender, Space and Architecture* risks misunderstanding of the radical nature of her discourse.

There has been a warming to discussions around gender and architecture, however, the current state of feminism remains problematic and a little confused. For example, Coleman argues that adopting a neutral professional identity to gain acceptance within the Institution depends on the taming of feminisms political will. If Derrida's project can be described as a responsibility to the wholly other(s), by commentators on his work, or similarly described as a question of ethics (albeit ethics rethought). One aspect of what is at stake in gender in architecture has to be whether or not deconstruction, can address these ethics or whether it will remain a stylistic novelty. Derrida's methods of deconstruction are described by Critchley in *The Ethics of Deconstruction* as an ethic, as an ethical demand towards or from the other Ethics, he writes, is the goal and horizon towards which Derrida's work tends and '...deconstruction takes place ethically or there is a duty in deconstruction' (Critchley, 1999, 1). This understanding of deconstruction, Critchley argues, describes the purpose and necessity of Derrida's philosophy and the value of its meeting with or influence to fields of law, politics, feminism and architecture. This ethics is also termed responsibility by Critchley. Nevertheless, Derrida is keen to argue that his philosophy is neither criticism not strategy, method not technique that could be applied, whether to law, feminism or architecture as such an application would suggest an imposition and an activity towards a

pre-determined goal. This is why such ethics are ethics rethought. His philosophizing or 'writing' is not an affect from a cause, or an ethics, politics or theory that can be applied as is perhaps more conventionally understood, a political theory. Derrida's philosophy cannot be applied in any conventional sense.

However, there are as many feminist theorists who read Derrida's philosophy as architects influenced by Derrida's thought. These include Drucilla Cornell, Kelly Oliver, Spivak, Benhabib, Peggy Kamuf and Christine McDonald. Derrida has published work directly at the request of architects, such as Peter Eisenman, Tschumi and Libeskind. Theorists working within architecture such as Grosz, Colomina, Agrest, Bloomer, Bergren and Ingraham have all taken up and cited Derrida's philosophy. Mark Wigley introduces Derrida's Haunt with his question of how we can translate Derrida's philosophy into architecture. His suggestion is that in translation language passes through an *aporia* common to all language. This *aporia* is the possibility of language. Wigley thus argues that deconstructing the language of architecture, its systems and values, reveals the possibility of other languages, systems or values. He argues that Derrida's philosophy suggests inhabiting the fabric of architectural discourse, and in so doing, at the same time, finding the excess of means, the points of madness that will allow the structures of architecture to dismantle themselves. Exploring the foundations of architectural theory, to reveal dependencies could uncover another logic, one that disrupts the traditions of architecture. These are, as Wigley points out, references to Heidegger's *On the Way to Thinking* in Derrida's writing on architecture and Wigley also argues that Derrida refers to Heidegger's philosophy in many of his works.

Drucilla Cornell, from a feminist perspective emphasized deconstruction's relationship to Levinas's philosophy. It is this relationship Cornell suggests that encourages the reading of his work as an 'ethic'. Cornell argues his philosophy can have value to influence issues surrounding women's rights in areas such as rape, domestic violence and pornography. In her work *At The Heart of Freedom* she outlines a legal and political argument for both women's freedom and protection.

She argues that for women to have identities they need to create themselves and thereby need to rights in social equality beyond the norms of gender and sexual identity. This argument has some similarities to Irigaray's and yet some important and very distinct differences. Furthermore, Cornell where commenting on Irigaray's philosophy proposes that Irigaray 'neutralizes' sexual difference. With this criticism, she refuses the aspect of Irigaray's philosophy that suggests a work to reconstruct sexual difference in difference.

Although Cornell does not commonly cite Irigaray Cornell's exploration of feminism and deconstruction from a legal perspective offers an interesting point of view from which to compare feminist interested in deconstruction with Irigaray's political writing. Cornell's philosophy establishes that contemporary philosophy has political value in rethinking legal and political theory.

3.9 'Essentialism' Re-Emerges as the Question for Feminism

The editors of *Gender, Space and Architecture* recognise that the objectives of feminism are not only to fight for women's equality, but also to understand how and why oppression occurs. As 'gender theorists' they also argue that this must extend to understanding how all forms of oppression as race, class and sexuality are inextricably involved in the oppression of women. However, this does not do enough to ensure the changes in culture necessary to sustain freedom. Whilst a shared interest in French philosophy is evident in recent theory, many theorists, each with their own reasons see Irigaray as offering an approach that can address feminism in architecture. Rendell, Borden and Penner, write, '...early work of feminists fighting for women's equality can be seen to have shifted towards critiques of existing value systems, from understanding why to analysing how oppression occurs' (GSA, 8). Furthermore, they write: 'One of the most important aspects of current feminism is the consideration of the interrelationship of a number of different forms of oppression at different times and in difference places (GSA, 8). However, Coleman, argues that challenging how oppression occurs does not necessarily ensure the changes in culture

necessary to sustain freedom. For Coleman cites Irigaray understood through Elizabeth Grosz, in the hope that certain conflicts within architecture and feminism might be addressed. Thus, whilst the editors of *Gender, Space and Architecture* and *Architecture and Feminism* both cite Irigaray (and the former reprints her paper 'This Sex Which Is Not One'), both describe her work somewhat differing theoretical context. Each promotes different motives: Coleman as a contemporary proponent of 'feminism' in architecture, albeit a feminism she describes as addressing sexual difference; and Rendell as a theorist of difference, at least as expressed in *Gender, Space and Architecture*.

In the acknowledgements to *Architecture and Feminism*, as already suggested, Coleman argues, that the use of the term 'feminism' in the title is decidedly deliberate, firstly: to promote the idea that despite much accusation to the contrary, feminism is an important area of study in architecture, and secondly; as corrective, responding to the inability in recent theory to use the word 'feminism'. Nevertheless, Coleman also states that the stakes are more than simply the absence of the term feminism in certain theorists work. The absence of the term feminism is not simply an expression of the fragile existence of feminist theory in architecture or of a discourse yet to be established. The suppression of the word feminism in projects where such terminology would otherwise seem obvious, is symptomatic. Furthermore, without the designation of feminism, there is an accusation that current discussions in architecture side step a tradition of historical feminist struggle and are thereby apolitical. Many motives are possible for the suppression of the term feminism, this is most certainly partly manufactured in to suit the political aims and institutional ambitions of some theorists. Although there are a number of additional factors that contribute to this conflict, there are many similarities between the debates surrounding 'gender' and 'feminism' to those surrounding a certain 'essentialism,' which marred the reception of French feminism by Anglo-American feminists. Coleman, for example, reviewing contemporary papers in the mainstream architectural press, remarks on the absence of the term 'feminism', even when the subject matter of the paper is prejudice against women in architecture.

She chooses as an example the paper 'Women in Architecture: Levelling the Playing Field,' as already stated, by Abby Bussel. The paper is interesting both for its subject matter and for the way language is used. Its subject matter is the invisibility of women in architecture, but its language is non-confrontational. Coleman accepts that the language used, for example, 'greater diversity', and 'level playing field' arguing that perhaps it is appropriate for a mainstream audience, but she also criticises Bussel for never using term term 'feminism'. Coleman sees its absence as symptomatic of Bussel's reluctance to confront the authorities, and her dependence on the good will of the authorities for the gains that have been made.

Nancy Harstock paper 'Rethinking Modernism: Minority vs. Majority Theories,' cited by Mary McLoed in 'Everyday and other Spaces,' although concerned with academic feminism in the Institution is useful in this respect in understanding the conflicts concerning relative merits of theory or practice. Harstock argues that women's studies is a curious academic field (perhaps only a little less curious than women's studies in architecture) and along with post-colonial it owes more that any other academic fields to social and activist movements outside academic institutions. She writes, '...we owe much of our very existence in academia to the struggles of those who did not have as their goal the creation of a new scholarly field' (Harstock, 1987, 187). Much more general social transformation thus underlies the academic work within Women's Studies' Departments than any other and, as Harstock writes, '...many of us in women's studies remain committed to doing academic work – both research and teaching – in ways that are indebted to the politics and organizational forms of the activist women's movement' (Harstock, 1987, 187). This argument that also holds true for feminism in architecture. The relation of academics to activists is more critical for women's studies than for other academic disciplines, however, like the relationship between practitioners and theorists in architecture, as Harstock argues, that the relationship between academics and activists has been fraught with a history of misunderstandings, failed expectations and bitterness (Harstock, 1987, 187). Whilst activism like practice needs to be informed by theory, it is the problem of difference (in particular the difference between women) that Harstock identifies

like Irigaray as most important: 'Theory can help us understand which issues are shared by all women and which issues affect different women differently' (Harstock, 1987, 188). However, this for Harstock is a question of differences between women. Furthermore, she writes:

...theory can give us some perspective on the significance of any particular effort. One of the dangers of political activity in the absence of a more theoretical understanding of women's situation is that such activity can lead to a submersion in the day-to-day struggle, and to a consequent failure to address the hard questions of what real difference these struggles will make for women (Harstock, 1987, 188-189).

Activism prevents academic feminism from becoming detached from the political perspectives of historical feminism, and theory can legitimate the political motives of feminist projects. However, the most important theoretical question for Harstock in this distinction between the academic and activism. She writes:

We need to develop our understanding of difference by creating a situation in which hitherto marginalized groups can name themselves, speak for themselves, and participate in defining the terms of interaction, a situation in which we can construct an understanding of the world that is sensitive to difference. Clearly this is a task of academics and activists (Harstock, 1987, 189).

Nevertheless, whilst Harstock's theme is the relationship between activism and theory, she limits her discussion to a theoretical and summarizes the problems of such a relationship with a series of questions:

What kinds of knowledge claims are required for grounding political action by different groups? What might such a theory look like? Can we develop a general theory, or should we abandon the search for such a theory in favour of making space for a number of heterogeneous voices to be heard? What kinds of common claims can be made about those of white women and women and men of colour? About the situations of Western peoples and those they have colonized? For example, is it ever legitimate to say "woman" without qualification? (Hartsock, 1987, 189)

Susan Bordo also describes the problems within contemporary feminism in 'Feminism,

Postmodernism and Gender-Scepticism,' a paper cited by Coleman in her introduction to *Architecture and Feminism*. Bordo writes, '...it seems possible to discern what may be a new drift within feminism,' a new scepticism about the use of gender as an analytic category (Bordo, 1990, 135). She further clarifies this trend, writing:

Where once the prime objects of academic feminist critique were the phallogentric narratives of our male-dominated disciplines, now feminist criticism has turned to its own narratives, finding them reductionist, totalizing, inadequately nuanced, valorizing of gender difference, unconsciously racist and elitist (Bordo, 1990, 135).

Bordo identifies conflicts as that between those who argue that, '...any attempt to "cut" reality and perspective along gender lines in methodologically flawed and essentialising,' and those for whom gender has become, '...a "discursive formation" inherently unstable and continually self-deconstructing. Where the meaning of gender is constantly "deferred" endlessly multiple' (Bordo, 1990, 134). Citing an example of the latter position from an unnamed magazine article, she writes, of a call to, '...get beyond the number two' and move towards a 'dizzying accumulation of narratives.' (see Bordo, 1990, 134) Significantly she writes not to do so is to perpetuate a hierarchical, binary construction of reality.

Like all cultural formations, Bordo argues, arguments within feminism are completely constructed, and feed by intellectual, psychological, institution and sociological elements. Gender scepticism, she argues, is an 'emerging coherency' rather than any definable position. It has emerged as a scepticism over the suggestion, made more by 1970s feminism. Bordo writes, whilst feminists argued that the male-normative view of the world has obscured its' own biases through its own fictions, each of which is shown to have a repressed other whose history and values had yet to be written; challenges have been made by those who, in this context, who see such work as oversimplistic and generalizing. Bordo in the paper identifies four currents feeding gender scepticism, firstly a marriage between theorists raising concerns over the conscious racial biases of feminist theory citing more historicist and politically orientated thought. For example, Foucault or Lyotard,

which Bordo argues have contributed to, a '...new feminist "methodologism" which lays claim to an authoritative critical framework legislating "correct" and "incorrect" approaches to theorizing identity, history and culture' (Bordo, 1990, 135). Secondly, Bordo identifies certain feminist appropriations of deconstruction, from this point of view, she argues, gender is criticized for its fixed binary structuring of reality but, also, she argues, remains animated by its own fantasies, or as Bordo describes, remains animated by its dream of everywhere.

In a criticism of contemporary architectural theory Coleman, as already stated, has claimed that the absence of the term feminism weakens the discourse. Referring to the paper 'Women in Architecture: Levelling the Playing Field' already mentioned, she writes that feminism is never voiced, Coleman writes, instead "gender," as an alternative to the term as feminism, '...appears in tandem with the word "gap," "discrimination," "bias," and "equality" to describe what's wrong with the profession' (AF, x). Coleman generously puts this absence down to a requirement for 'user friendly' terms in what is, or was (the journal is now defunct), a mainstream magazine: 'Feminism,' she states '...especially as it's often used in massculture, is an unpopular word, often misunderstood and perhaps even a little feared.' (AF, x) Nevertheless, Coleman also obviously strongly criticises Abby Bussel, author of the paper, for this, inability to say "feminism". In so doing, Coleman writes, she 'dilutes' and 'sanitizes' the message. Suggesting, greater gender diversity, as a solution to the lack of recognition of women architects, to the problems of the Institution, both in the Schools and profession remains just a reminder of how far the architectural profession has to go. This stance, she proposes, is, in fact underwritten by a complaisance, which is demonstrated by the paper which tends towards the self-help variety of recommendation and depends on the action of Institutional bodies which despite the reference to feminist activism in the paper, relinquishes any responsibility from women themselves. This gives power to change women's circumstances to the profession to already powerful organizations loathed it seems, by nature, from initiating such change. She writes:

While a few of the suggestions are of the self-help variety, ("set your own goals, ask for

challenging assignments”), many more rely on the good will and authority of the American Institute of Architects, National Architectural Accrediting Board, Equal Opportunity Commission, and universities to change policies and set new standards (under to dubious proposition that giving more power to the already powerful will create more equality) (AF, x-xi).

Abby Bussel’s paper, in its turn, was inspired by an article ‘All the Young Dudes,’ in a 1994 issue, of the UK magazine *Blueprint*. Where Bussel questioned why not even one woman was included in the review of young British architectural talent, to which the editors of the journal responded that no women met the criteria for inclusion in the article, the suggestion Bussel writes is that one can only suppose that no woman could be described as a ‘young dude’, Bussel writes:

When the April 1994 issue of *Blueprint* arrived, I saw the status of women architects illustrated in four-colour: The cover story was about emerging talent in London, but the cover line, ‘All the Young Dudes,’ was laid over a photograph of 23 men – not a woman in sight. I was appalled by the message the magazine sent, a message the editors noted – subsequently and apologetically – was in advertent. The women they had found, explained the editors in a published response to a slew of irate letters (...) did not meet the criteria set for the article (Bussel, 1995, 45).

For Bussel, *Blueprint*’s search for young talent and its failure to turn up any suitable women, demonstrates the continuing invisibility of women architects to the profession and citing Linda Groat, an associate professor of architecture at the University of Michigan, she writes that unless women bridge this gender gap, women will remain isolated. Whilst for Bussel giving everyone equal time on a level playing field is a way to avoid marginalization, it is, nevertheless, not adequate. Having a presence on the field is not enough, she writes ‘[i]t’s like making the team, but spending the whole season on the bench’ (Bussel, 1994, 45). Bridging the gender gap is the theme of the paper, How we might bridge this gap? How we might level this playing field? Is, unstated and for Coleman it cannot be solved by Policy Statements as suggested by the AIA or RIBA.

Nevertheless, Coleman’s criticisms of Bussel’s paper are not all necessarily warranted.

Like the UK, women make up 9.1 percent of the AIA's regular membership, Bussel writes, and '...our day-to-day experience in education is still strewn with the same obstacles as our predecessors' (46). Citing practitioners comments, Bussel writes that women architects generally wish to be seen as women first and architects second. A common misconception in the profession, Bussel argues, is that women want special treatment. Practitioners, want equal treatment, and not to be limited within practice to interior design, for example, whilst male colleagues are hired for building projects. Prejudice within architectural offices is still rife. The still small numbers of women qualifying are still troubling, considering the numbers entering the education processes. Discriminatory practices and sexist behaviour within offices, together with evidence of 'illegal hiring practices,' and the 'greatest evil,' as Bussel writes it, that of sexual harassment with the office, all still contribute the difficulties women have in practicing as architects. Bussel cites statistical data examining prejudice within the profession by Dr. Catherine H. Anthony *Design Juries on Trial*, and making reference one participant in the study demonstrating the continuing problems of the profession, she writes: 'Every day you've got to go out and prove [yourself] – to win their respect. They [employers and colleagues] either respect you or call you a bitch' (Bussel, 1995, 48).

However, the self-help suggestions which Coleman criticises, and proosed by Bussel are similar to those of Anthony. In summarising her report, Anthony writes that for those experiencing injustice in the workplace, activities that may help include: Setting your own goals; Asking for challenging assignments; Getting a broad range of experience; Documenting your activities; Updating your resumé regularly; and seeking help from diversity networks. For architectural firms seeking to improve their working conditions, her advice is to: institute diversity standards; educate management; encourage extra professional activities; allow flex-time for community and family involvement, and; learn from companies outside the profession that promote inclusionary practices. However, Bussel also comments that even the institutions recognition of firms that have exemplary programs regarding diversity would not necessarily eliminate discriminatory practices (48).

Disciplinary action might be more effective as the *AIA* already have a Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct that may be used as a vehicle for assuaging gender-related problems. However, one of the fears amongst women architects of reporting such problems are those of retribution, loosing jobs, or being blacklisted, deemed a 'difficult' employee (or for that matter a difficult student).

Bussel refers to the work being carried out by contemporary theorists, but her review of it is limited and she confines her reference to the then recent 1995 conference, 'Inheriting Ideologies: A Re-Examination' held in the University of Pennsylvania and specifically to contributions from Colomina and Friedman, moreover with a focus more on the academic status of the women presenting papers, rather than any detailed examination of papers presented. Thereby mobilizes the conflict between activism and the academic.

In the conference, Bussel writes, that participants dissected and revised architecture's patriarchal history and listing two examples of papers, she writes, that Beatriz Colomina, '...assistant professor of architecture at Princeton University,' spoke about Le Corbusier's subjection of Eileen Gray and, 'Alice Friedman, professor of art and co-director of the architecture program at Wellesley', spoke of significant contributions women clients have made to the design of ground-breaking work such as the Schroder House and the Barnsdall House' (Bussel, 1995, 48). (Papers in this conference were reprinted in *The Sex of Architecture*). As the editors of *The Sex of Architecture* Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway and Leslie Kanes Weisman, admit, '...while not a feminist conference *per se*, many of the papers presented there were informed by a gendered perspective – a perspective that eventually determined the contents of the book' (Agrest et al, 1996, 8). The editors describe the conference as '...the first *all women* academic assembly on architecture in the United States' (Agrest et al, 8, 1996, authors italics). However, whilst the editors of *The Sex of Architecture* write, at the same time as a greater number of women are gaining success and acceptance within the profession and academia, and conferences organized on the subject, many women encounter obstacles created by gender prejudices in their careers. They write,

...in 1995, only 8.9 percent of registered architects and 8.7 percent of tenured architecture faculty in the United States were women. Almost no women are recognized as name partners in large commercial firms, nor has any woman in this country even been commissioned to design a nationally significant building on the scale of, say, Ada Karmi-Melamede's Supreme Court in Jerusalem or Gae Aulenti's Musée d'Orsay in Paris. Moreover, the number of women holding top administrative positions and named chairs in American University architecture programs remains shockingly low; and since the retirement of Ada Louise Huxtable from the *New York Times*, no woman has had a commanding voice as architecture critic for a major city newspaper or weekly magazine. It comes of no surprise, then, that although at least two women have received the *RIBA* Gold Medal in Great Britain no woman has been awarded either of this country's highest architectural honours: the *AIA* Gold Medal or the Pritzker Prize (Agrest et al, 1996, 10).

In introducing to the collection the editors write that it is the question of the body that concerns contemporary women architectural theorists, suggesting in a statement which has echoes of Irigaray's criticisms (and Grosz's reading of Irigaray):

The inscriptions of the sexualized body is a central and recurrent theme in Western architecture, but that body is neither innocent nor androgynous. It is a reification of the male longing to appropriate an exclusively female privilege: maternity. Thus the insistence, in ancient and contemporary discourse, that male architects "give birth" to their buildings. Implicated in man's inevitable state of childlessness, which gives rise to an obsession with "reproducing himself," is the systematic erasure of woman and her contributions (Agrest et al, 1996, 11).

Describing the general theme of the papers contained within the book they also write:

If sex condenses the notions of the body and power that have permeated architectural criticism since the Renaissance revival of Classicism, an analysis of gender in modern architectural criticism reveals a social system that has historically functioned to contain, control, or exclude women. It is from these perspectives that the twenty-four authors in this book, all of whom are women, more closely reexamine some long-suspect "truths": that man builds and woman inhabits; that man is outside and woman is inside; that man is public and woman is private; that nature, in both its kindest and cruelest aspects, is female and culture, the ultimate triumph over nature, is male. These and other gender based assumptions – in particular those associating men

with economic production, wage earning, and the city, and women with consumption , non-wage earning domestic labour, and the home – are subjects of many of the essays in this volume’ (Agrest et al, 1996, 11).

Moreover, they write that: ‘Perhaps a re-examination of such “truths” might begin with the concept of “otherness” ‘ suggesting that indeed almost all of the essays in the book identify explicitly or implicitly, the female as ‘other’. From this position of other the contributors to *The Sex of Architecture* write; ‘...women writing on architecture today are exploring history, the uses of public space, consumerism, and the role of domesticity in search of “ways into” architecture, often through alternative forms of practice and education’ (Agrest et al, 1996, 11): Citing Catherine Ingraham’s and Jennifer Bloomer’s work they write: ‘We are now in an era where discourse is as important as design, often more important, and a number of authors address their subjects from this perspective’ (Agrest et al, 1996, 11-12).

Bussel’s preference, however, rather than such theoretical work, seems to be grass-roots organizations and activist feminist groups, spending a larger portion of her paper describing such activity amongst American architects. This somewhat contradicts Coleman’s comments, or at least Coleman’s motive to cite Bussel as not promoting ‘feminist’ activity. Furthermore it raises a question as to how Coleman understands feminism or rather what feminism means for her, whether Coleman’s ‘feminism’ is not that as commonly understood, for example, as the campaign for equality, but is in fact the promotion of a discourse now considered other to architectural theory. Coleman’s introduction to *Architecture and Feminism* requires some reference to what a contemporary feminist discourse might include and also exclude. For example, Bussel cites the Women in Architecture associations, chapters of the *AIA* in both North Virginia and Los Angeles, and activist groups such as *CARY* or ‘Chicks in Architecture Refuse to Yield (to Atavistic Thinking in Design and Society),’ which although now defunct, was founded in Chicago by architects, Carol Crandall, Kay Janis and Sally Levine in 1992. This activist group launched an exhibition in

Chicago on the occasion of the AIA National Convention in the city in 1992, called, 'More Than The Sum of Our Body Parts,' which Bussel describes as a series of vignettes during the convention:

One vignette, "There Were Three Professionals in a Boat..." compared architecture to two other historically dominated professions: medicine, which is 18.1 percent female (1992) and law, which is 24.4 percent female (1990). It also compared the efforts of each to confront gender bias and create policies to improve working conditions for women. The American Bar Association, for example, has recognized the importance of self-assessment. Its Commission on Women in the Profession, in a 1988 report (now being updated) to the ABA House of Representatives, argued that the barriers to women in law were affecting the viability of the profession: "We must examine the structures of our professional institutions to ensure that they do not become anachronisms – and that we do not lose the talent of our best and brightest" (Bussel, 1995, 49).

Bussel writes that the AIA had, at the time of her writing, not investigated the high attrition rate of women (unlike the RIBA) however, it has sponsored a two-part study by Roberta Feldman, Co-Director of the City Design Centre at the University of Illinois, Chicago, and Bussel writes: 'If and when it is completed, we may gain a better grasp on the reasons we are losing many of our own best and brightest' (Bussel, 1995, 49). Sally Levine is also cited as organising a show at the second annual AIA National Diversity Conference 'ALICE (Architecture Lets in Chicks, Except...) through the Glass Ceiling' but for Bussel it is an event at the conference, where an AIA Draft Policy Statement of Women's Issues in the Architectural Profession, outlined actions that the AIA could take, that offers more hope for women. The panel at the conference lists as its strategies: '...recognition of different models of leadership; promotion of fair employment practices in firms (family leave policies and flex-time schedules, open statements of promotion standards, pay equality, mentorship and role models); and promotion of gender equality in schools' (Bussel, 1995, 48). The panel also suggested, as Bussel writes, the publication of a 'Model Employment Manual.'

Coleman argues the absence of the term feminism is not simply an expression of the fragile

existence of feminist theory in architecture, of a discourse yet to be established as valid. The suppression of the word feminism in projects by women where such terminology would otherwise seem obvious is as symptomatic of the cultural positioning of woman, and a certain blindness to the political motives of contemporary discourses. Furthermore, and perhaps most pertinent to this project, without the designation of feminism, in architecture is open to side step a tradition of historical feminist struggle. Although there are a number of additional factors that contribute to this polarisation. If this absence of terminology is cynical tactic, which is a possibility, it has successfully allowed theorists to dismiss feminism. In current projects that do cite French feminisms, whether naming the discourse as that of feminism or not, the absence maybe observed as the reason why they are hailed by the architectural community as revolutionary, avant-garde or at the cutting-edge. In such a climate there is some obligation to attempt to suggest how these projects propose a responsibility to women's rights. If the term feminism fits uncomfortably within the institution the absence of the word feminism cannot continue to diffuse what is, in no uncertain terms, seen in the collections cited and as commonly understood, a feminist debate. But it is a term, nevertheless, needs explanation if the continuing project of feminism in architecture is to warrant its name, and Coleman's 'feminism' is as individualist as Chanters, more to do with Irigaray's motives, than calls for equality.

Coleman's proposal towards the continued use of the term feminism in architecture provocatively cites Elizabeth Grosz's discussion of Irigaray's project. Grosz argues, as stated, with reference to Irigaray's work, that there is a correspondence between our cultural origins of spatiality, 'our very *concept* of architecture,' and with the cultural effacement of women and femininity. Our cultural forms, she writes, depend on the effacement of women's tangible qualities and this provides the foundation on which a masculine universe and hence architecture is built: 'Concepts associated with women and femininity nevertheless continue to serve as a kind of unspoken base for philosophical value' (*AF*, xiii, Grosz, 2000, 210, Grosz's emphasis). This points to the absence of the feminine at the heart of the architectural discourse, Grosz writes, that goes

beyond mere external forces working to maintain current relations of domination. In Coleman's argument feminism is in the place of the feminine. Coleman citing Grosz in turn reading Irigaray writes:

This absence is not so much a simple act of subordination or an instance of blindness. It is the total eclipsing of the feminine. Following this analysis, just sketching 'her' in now is not enough. The issue is not really what architecture lacks, what is overlooked in its conception, what nuances are ignored. Rather, space and place must be reconceptualized' (*AF*, xiv).

Deborah Fauch in 'The knowledge of the Body and the presence of History – Towards a Feminist Architecture,' is perhaps the most explicit paper in *Architecture and Feminism* to address the theoretical issues surrounding a 'feminist' practice within the current intellectual climate, using the term 'feminism' rather than 'gender' or 'difference'. However, following Coleman's proposal to maintain the term feminism within the discourse, Fauch defines feminism in a way significantly different to Coleman. The first danger, at least that Fauch identifies, is that of essentialism. She writes: 'If, as many feminist writers have argued, it is impossible, or at any rate dangerous to define a feminine 'nature', it remains true that without any essential(ist) definition of the feminine – of the female, of woman – it becomes impossible to claim any viewpoint or issue as feminist' (*AF*, 38). (Except, that is, in a contingent or strategic activity, as Diana Fuss suggests in *Essentially Speaking* and which Fauch gives as reference in the footnotes to the paper.) A strategic position is, nevertheless, for Fauch, although apparently more acceptable to contemporary debates than essentialism proper, has apparently, 'much muddier' theoretical positions. An argument she derives from Paul Smith's *Discerning the Subject* itself influenced by Toril Moi's reading of Irigaray.

Expanding this reading of the issues at stake in feminism and architecture, Fauch writes in a footnote that 'essentialist' theories, by definition, run the risk of equating women with the body or with a bodily essence. Refusing such discourses, however, denies woman an important theoretical tool:

Identifying women with the bodily or the imaginary (unconscious) domains that have been construed by patriarchal value systems as lower than that of conscious reason, runs the risk of equating women with the body or the unconscious, as they have been historically,' and yet abandoning all gendered discourses, "eschewing essentialism" (...) deprives (...) feminism of an important tool to think with' (Fausch, 1996, 39).

Since essentialism has often been denigrated as a reactionary position, there is an important distinction to be made between 'essentialist' theories and contemporary readings of the body in women's studies. Fuss writes of this in *Essentially Speaking*:

There is an important distinction to be made, I [Fuss] would submit, between "deploying" or "activating" essentialism and "falling into" or "lapsing into" essentialism. "Falling into" or "lapsing into" implies that essentialism is inherently reactionary - inevitably inescapably or a problem or a mistake. "Deploying" or "activating," on the other hand, implies that essentialism may have some strategic or interventionary value. The radicality or conservatism of essentialism depends, to a significant degree, on who is utilizing it, how it is deployed, and where its effects are concentrated (Fuss, 1989, 20, cited by Fauch *AF*, 56).

This strategic approach avoids the problem articulated by the *Questions féministes* group, translated in *New French Feminisms*, a group whose arguments problematized the reception of the philosophy of Luce Irigaray and where, for example, they have written:

It is legitimate to expose the oppression, the mutilation, the "functionalization" and the "objectivation" of the female body, but it is also dangerous to place the body at the centre of a search for female identity. Furthermore, the themes of Otherness and of the Body merge together, because the most visible difference between men and women is (...) indeed the difference in the body. This difference has been used as a pretext to "justify" full power of one sex over the other (...) In everything that is supposed to characterize women, oppression is always present' (*AF*, 56, citing *Questions féministes* group, translated in *New French Feminism*,) (*Questions féministe* group, 1980).

Fausch compares this with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's defence of the necessity for being 'against sexism and for feminism' in 'French Feminism in an International Frame,' (also cited by Toril Moi

in *Sexual/Textual Politics*) Spivak had Irigaray's work in mind in some of the criticisms of French Feminism posed by the paper. However, whilst a 'strategic essentialism' can lead to alliances with, Fauch argues, that of other revolutionary philosophies such as Marxism and post-Structuralism, it can also leads to problems of conceiving the female as other, so that feminism becomes derivative of a dominant masculine perspective (see Fuss, 1989, 38). Despite this observation Fausch, misunderstands Irigaray's proposal.

Despite this observation Fausch misunderstands the full extent of Irigaray's proposals. In her chapter about Irigaray 'Luce Irigaray's Language of Essence' Fuss describes Irigaray as a strategic essentialist. Following Carolyn Burke, Fuss describes her as a ' "psychophilosophical" writer'; that uses essentialism for strategic purposes. Contrary to arguments presented in previous chapters of *Essentially Speaking* Fuss, nevertheless, questions what might be at stake in deploying essentialism for strategic purposes: Fuss asks is '...are there ways to think and to talk about essence that might not, necessarily, "always already," *ipso facto*, be reactionary?' (Fuss, 1989, 55). Which leads her to suggest, reading Irigaray's work, that, '...there are ways to elaborate and to work with the notion of essence that is not, *in essence*, ahistorical, apolitical, empiricist, or simple reductive'(Fuss, 1989, 55).

Fuss argues that most of the criticisms levelled against Irigaray's work since *Speculum de l'autre femme* in 1974 are based upon, or in some way linked, to the fear of essentialism. Fuss writes that, 'A summary sample of the most important and oft-cited of these criticisms is enough to demonstrate how impassioned and genuine the resistance to essentialism is for many feminists, and how problematic the reassessment of essentialism's theoretical and political usefulness is likely to be' (Fuss, 1989, 55). It can similarly be argued that the contemporary discourses in feminism and architecture are linked to inadequate theories fearful of essentialism.

Two critical essays on Irigaray's work were published in the United States in 1981 which instigated the accusations of essentialism: Christine Fauré's 'The Twilight of the Goddesses, or the Intellectual Crisis in French Feminism' and Carolyn Burke's, already cited, 'Irigaray Through the

Looking Glass' (reprinted in *Engaging with Irigaray*, slightly modified). This latter text is also referred to also by Toril Moi. Fauré's critique is a translation from the French, and this is, as Fuss argues, unquestionably the more severe criticism. Fauré, Fuss argues, objects to the general trend in French Feminist theory, which she epitomizes by Irigaray's search for a female imaginary. This for Fauré marks, '....a retreat into aesthetics where the thrust of feminist struggle is masked by the old naturalistic ideal draped in the trappings of supposedly "feminine" lyricism' (Fauré, 1981, 81). Fuss also argues that Carolyn Burke, in her paper, 'Irigaray Through the Looking Glass,' remains unconvinced that Irigaray's work, '...escapes the idealism which her deconstruction of selected philosophical and psychoanalytic texts so rigorously and persistently seek to displace' (Fuss, 1989, 56). Burke writes (quoted by Fuss):

Does her writing manage to avoid the construction of another idealism to replace the "phallococentric" systems that she dismantles? Do her representations of a *parler femme*, in analogy with female sexuality, avoid the centralizing idealism with which she taxes Western conceptual systems? (Burke, 1981, 302).

This concept of metaphysical idealism, Fuss argues, is the most damaging of the many criticisms charged against Irigaray and it is repeated in Toril Moi's *Sexual/Textual Politics*. Fuss quotes Moi's statement concerning the Irigaray's work that any attempt to formulate a general theory of femininity will be metaphysical. Moi, describes this as precisely Irigaray's dilemma, and argues Irigaray falls for the temptation to produce her own positive theory of femininity, where to define 'woman' is, in Moi's terms, necessarily to essentialize her' (Moi, 1985, 132). Fuss challenges Moi's reading of Irigaray, questioning whether, 'Is it true that any definition of "woman" must be predicated on essence?' and furthermore, she asks, '...does Irigaray, in fact, define "woman"?' (Fuss, 1990, 56).

Identifying the problem of an idealism based on the body is a fundamental misreading of Irigaray, but that is not to say Irigaray does not argue for women's need for a divine, specifically in 'Divine Women' or values specific to their own difference.

Fuss writes that the strongest critiques of Irigaray, have been directed towards her work from materialist feminists, including Moi. Monique Plaza's, ' "Phallomorphic Power" and the Psychology of "Woman"' one example of such a critique. Plaza accuses Irigaray of essentialism, and Fuss writes describing Plaza's critique: 'Irigaray's greatest mistake is to confuse social and anatomical categories' (ES, 57). Fuss further states that according to Plaza, Irigaray's theorization of female pleasure and her search for the feminine 'interior' lead her to abjure the category of the social and to practice a dangerous form of "pan-sexualism which is only a coarse disguised naturalism"' (see Fuss, 1989, 57). Furthering these arguments Fuss writes however that Plaza, along with Monique Wittig and Christine Delphy that nature is always a product of social relations and that sex is always a construction of oppression and never its cause (57). It is the move to 'desocialize women' that Plaza insists which leads which leads Irigaray into essentialism. Quoting Plaza, Fuss demonstrates her reading of Irigaray, to emphasize this point, Plaza writes:

The absence of a theory of oppression, the belief in the unavoidable and irreducible sexual difference, the psychologistic reduction, the inflation of the notion of "woman" which one finds in Luce Irigaray's investigation, can only result in this essentialist quest. In the gap left by the statement of women's non-existence, Luce Irigaray will set up a "new" conception of woman (Plaza, 28).

Fuss agrees to a certain extent that Irigaray mobilizes the question of essentialism, nevertheless, Fuss also cites Irigaray's defenders, in particular Jane Gallop, whose readings of Irigaray along with Whitford's early paper 'Luce Irigaray and The Female Imaginary: Speaking As Woman' respond to these critics. In '*Quand nos lèvres s'écrivent: Irigaray's Body Politic*' Gallop interprets Irigaray's, *at least two-lips* (a term that emerges in *This Sex Which Is Not One* (in a reading of Freud and Lacan as Fuss argues) as a construction rather than a reflection of the body, an example of a larger project of re-creating the body, albeit a 'strategic' reconstruction in Fuss's interpretation of Irigaray. Furthermore, in Whitford account of Irigaray, Whitford argues that Irigaray does blur the distinctions between the social and the biological, she writes, '...this is obviously a strategy

adopted within a particular historical and cultural situation' (Whitford, 1986, 7). For Fuss, both these directions pose a more interesting reading of Irigaray than a rejection of her work in terms for fear of 'essentialism' however, both remains limited to an either/or decision bound by a metaphysical tradition that does not permit values specific to women. Fuss writes:

This particular response to the problem of essentialism in Irigaray strikes me as the most promising line of argument to follow, for rather than foreclosing the discussion on essentialism before it has truly begun, this approach asks the more difficult question: if Irigaray appeals to a mode of feminine specificity, and if (...) she attempts to speak the female body, what might such strategic forays into the territory of essentialism allow her to accomplish? What might Irigaray's work amount to if she refused such admittedly risky ventures into "this sex which is not one"? (Fuss, 1989, 57-58).

Carolyn Burke begins her paper 'Irigaray Through the Looking Glass', with a quotation from Derrida's, *Spurs*: 'It is no longer possible to go looking for woman, or for woman's femininity or for female sexuality. At least, they cannot be found by means of any familiar mode of thought or knowledge – even if it is impossible to stop looks for them' (Derrida, 1978). Burke writes that Irigaray is a philosopher, psychoanalyst and essayist whose work explores the possibility and impossibility of understanding 'woman' (Burke, 1991, 37). With the publication of *Speculum of the Other Woman* her work, she writes, became known to an English speaking audience. However, the conceptual and stylistic difficulties her writing presents, and the lack of availability of translation, also caused problems with the early reception of her work. This situation, Burke argues, was complicated by a series of critiques, wildly out of context, which were taken to be her position. Burke argues that it is important to read Irigaray in its context, to see how her work functions in dialogue and '....whether it lives up to its own expectations' (Burke, 1981, 37). These expectations, Burke describes as the possibility of an analogy between female sexuality and a *parler-femme*, or a speaking (as) woman. She argues, 'For some time Irigaray has been working on the premise that, "...language and the systems of representation cannot translate women's desire"' 'referring to an interview with Irigaray's by Couze Venn 'Women's Exile' ' (Irigaray and Venn, 1977, 71). Burke

argues that Irigaray's first book, *Le Language des déments*, studies of the language of schizophrenics of both sexes, Irigaray demonstrates that, '...sexual differences become embedded in language,' and that, '...there is a dynamics of statement which is different according to sex' (Irigaray and Venn, 1977, 74). Generally speaking, Burke writes, Irigaray asserts that women lack language appropriate to women's desire and they suffer this condition physically. Consequently, Burke suggests, Irigaray set out in *Speculum* to understand why female sexuality could not be articulated within Western theoretical discourse. Burke writes:

Irigaray sees in this idealist tradition, which emphasizes the principles of identity, sameness, and visibility as conditions for representation in language, the philosophical assumptions underlying psychoanalytic discourse. Within this psycho-philosophical system the female is defined "as nothing other than the complement, the other side, or the negative side, of the masculine". Thus, the female subject is either assimilated to the male, as in Freud's account of infantile psychic development, or simply left out of the theory, which assumes that it cannot be conceptualized. Because the female sex offers nothing to see, female sexuality becomes the 'hole' in psychoanalytic theory. This lack scandalizes the philosopher Freud, who suspects that it is indeed impossible to say what women really wants (Burke, 1981, 38).

Hence, *Speculum*, Burke suggests '...calls for a patient but radical "disconcerting" of language and logic and also an enactment of sexual identity. Depending heavily on a reading of 'This Sex Which Is Not One' in *This Sex Which Is Not One*. Burke argues that for Irigaray, the male sex has taken unto itself the privileged status of 'oneness': 'that is, a unitary representation of identity in analogy with the male sex organ' (Burke, 1981, 38). Further citing Venn's interview with Irigaray, she writes that Irigaray, '...asserts "all Western discourse presents a certain isomorphism with the masculine sex: the privilege of unity, form of the self, of the visible, the specularisable, of the erection"' (Irigaray and Venn, 1977, 64). Furthermore, Burke argues that, '...such a logic does not allow for the expression of the *female sex organs*, which cannot be described let alone represented in unity terms' (Burke, 1981, 38, authors own italics):

Just as the female genitals are "plural" or multiple – "always at least two (...) joined in an

embrace” – so women’s language will be plural, autoerotic, diffuse, and undefinable within the familiar rules of (masculine) logic. Because Irigaray believes that female sexuality cannot be articulated within Aristotelian logic, her prose abandons the coherence and forcefulness of analytic argument. The result, in *This Sex Which Is Not One*, is a more fluid and sinuous style or styles that seek to keep “in touch” with a different form of sexuality (Bure, 1981, 38).

A statement which could be interpreted as an essentialist understanding of Irigaray and which leads Burke to conclude that speaking as woman might articulate experiences that are devalued or not permitted by the dominant discourse. Moreover, the most important of these experiences, Burke argues, are, for Irigaray, the sensual and emotional relationships of women with their mothers and with other women which have been censured in psychoanalytic theory. In Burke’s limited chronology of Irigaray’s work, ‘And the One Doesn’t Stir Without the Other’ (Irigaray, 1981) written in 1979 follows *This Sex Which Is Not One* marks the paper. Burke also refers to Irigaray’s, then latest book to be translated into English, (written in 1980) *Marine Lover Of Friedrich Nietzsche* where she argues conducts a subtle critique of Nietzsche’s philosophy taken as a type of masculine thought. However, Burke emphasizes the mother-daughter relation. Burke writes of *Marine Lover*:

...its lyrical, incantory voice refuses to argue a thesis according to the traditional requirements for such a language. It is as if she were speaking from another territory – the ocean, or the other side of the looking glass – where the familiar rules of logic have been reversed, deconstructed, and subjected to a sea change. To follow her trajectory this essay adopts the strategy of, first, locating her starting points and defining their intellectual ambience, then, imitating her progress in a search for an ideological space for the *parler-femme* (Burke, 1981, 39).

Fuss examines the ‘at least two-lips’, she writes as ‘Irigaray’s theorization of female pleasure’ (Fuss, 1989, 58). It is this concept more than any other that Fuss argues that has been responsible for generating the most accusations of essentialism, as already demonstrated in Burke’s heavy dependence on a reading of Irigaray’s *This Sex Which Is Not One*. Fuss argues to clarify this concept that ‘Three words neatly summarize for Irigaray the significance of the two lips: ‘ “Both at

once.” Both at once signifies that a woman is simultaneously singular and double; she is “already two – but not divisible into one(s),” or to put another way, she is “*neither one nor two*” (Fuss, 1989, 58) Fuss argues it is the two-lips that situate women’s autoeroticism, their pleasure, in a different economy from the phallic. Citing Irigaray, to illustrate her point:

Women’s autoeroticism is very different from man’s. In order to touch himself, man needs an instrument: his hand, a woman’s body, language... And this self-caressing requires at least a minimum of activity. As for woman, she touches herself in and of herself without any need for mediation, and before there is any way to distinguish activity over passivity. Woman “touches herself” all the time, and moreover no one can forbid her to do so, for her genitals are formed of two lips in continuous contact. Thus, within herself, she is already two-but not divisible into one(s) –that caress each other (TS, 24).

Nevertheless, as already stated in Chapter One, the more difficult relation, according to Irigaray is that of sexual difference, that also has not adequately been thought. Fuss argues that from this text, (and on the basis of this as an isolated text) it would hard to deny that Irigaray gives us an account of female pleasure based on the bodies genitalia. Nevertheless, Fuss also suggests, ‘...it would be hard to deny that her account of the phallus is any less morphological’ (Fuss, 1989, 58). What is important in this work is the context of the themes that arise, and as Butler describes ‘the strange practice of reading’ the text demonstrates. Fuss, elaborates this latter point as a ‘strategic misreading of male genitalia’ quoting an essay ‘Is the Subject of Science Sexed?’ She writes:

According to Irigaray, Western culture privileges a mechanics of solids over a mechanics of fluids because man’s sexual imaginary is isomorphic; as such, the male imaginary emphasizes the following features: “production, property (propriété), order, form, unity, visibility, erection” (Fuss, 1989, 58-59).

This leaves feminine identity associated with the properties of liquids, and citing *This Sex Which Is Not One*, Fuss describes these properties as ‘continuous, compressible, dilatable, viscous, conductible, diffusable (TS, 111). However, as Fuss, quite accurately suggests, the problem here is not simply that feminine properties are associated with the two lips, but, for Fuss, Irigaray’s reading

of phallomorphism as a kind of isomorphism, ‘... is not so much a misreading as an *exposure* of one of the dominant metaphors in poststructuralist psychoanalysis’ (Fuss, 1989, 59, Fuss’s italics). That is to say, Irigaray’s language is deliberately bodily in this text. Whilst Fuss quotes K. K. Ruthven reading of an essentialist Irigaray, where she states:

A good deal depends here on the accuracy of Irigaray’s characterization of the penis as “one” in comparison with the “not one” of the vulva. Certainly, her theory seems to require the penis to be always inflexible erect and quite without variation, and also be circumcised, as the presence of a foreskin endows it with most of the properties she attributes to the labia (Ruthven, 1984, 100-101).

Fuss argues that it is not Irigaray who erects the phallus as a single transcendental signifier but Lacan. Irigaray’s production of an apparently essentializing notion of female sexuality has to be read in the context of a reading of Freud and Lacan, and Fuss argues, it function ‘...strategically as a reversal and a displacement of Lacan’s phallomorphism’ (Fuss, 1989, 59).

There are a number of paper in which Irigaray addresses psychoanalysis, including a series of papers in *This Sex Which Is Not One*, including ‘This Sex Which Is Not One’, ‘Cosi Fan Tutti’ and not forgetting the first half of *Speculum* which engages in a detailed criticism of Freud’s paper ‘On Femininity’ for which she was celebrated and condemned. Of Irigaray criticism of Lacan, Fuss writes:

Irigaray’s critique (...) centres primarily on his refusal to listen to women speak of their own pleasure; she finds most untenable Lacan’s insistence that, on the subject of pleasure, women has nothing to say. In his *Seminar XX* on women, Lacan listens not to women but to art, not to Saint Teresa but to Bernini’s statue of Saint Teresa (Fuss, 1989, 59).

That is not to say that Irigaray thinks that Saint Teresa’s writing corresponds to her own desire, she writes:

This finitude is not mine - my love. This impossible ungraspable thing, even for me. These unceasing deadlines which compel me to let go of myself without reason. To obey what happens to me without name or face. Out of presence. Without knowing if there is any good or bad there, gift or theft, God or devil (as Thérèse would have said). In what and in whom do I act

when such events (but which?) catch me up in their weave, their destiny, their taking place (Irigaray, 1983, 143).

To elaborate on Irigaray's criticism of psychoanalysis Fuss cites Lacan and Irigaray's response to Lacan in 'Cosi Fan Tutti'. Lacan writes in 'God and the *Jouissance* of The Woman' reprinted in *Feminine Sexuality*: '...you have to go and look at Bernini's statue in Rome to understand immediately that she's coming, there is no doubt about it. And what is her *jouissance*, her coming from? It is clear that the essential testimony of the mystics is that they are experiencing it but know nothing about it' (Lacan, 1982, 147) Irigaray's response is 'In Rome? So far away? To look? At a statue? Of a saint? Sculpted by a man? What pleasure are we talking about? Whose pleasure?' (TS, 90-91) That is to say Irigaray's question is why Lacan cannot discuss this with a living woman, which is, in a sense, her criticism of the Western Philosophical tradition's perspective on desire. Fuss writes that Irigaray's observation is irrefutable, '... why would a woman need to go all the way to Rome to discover the "truth" of her pleasure? Why, after all, is "the right to experience pleasure (...) awarded to a statue"' (TS, 90). As Irigaray argues, the geography of feminine pleasure is not worth listening to. Women are not worth listening to, especially when they try to speak about their pleasure. She writes: '[T]he question is whether, in this logic, they can articulate anything at all, whether they can be heard, is one even raised. For raising it would mean granting that there may be another logic, one that upsets his own. That is, a logic that challenges mastery' (TS, 90).

Fuss argues that 'When Our Lips Speak Together' expands this criticism of Lacan's efforts to arrive at the truth of women's pleasure, through an appeal to a statue. She writes:

Truth is necessary for those who are so distanced from their body that they have forgotten it. But their "truth" immobilises us, turns us into statues,, if we can't loose its hold on us. If we can't defuse its power by trying to say, right here and now, how we are moved. You are moving. You never stay still. You never stay. You never "are". How can I say "you" when you are always other? How can I speak to you? You remain in flux (..) This life - which will perhaps be called our restlessness, whims, pretences, or lies. All this remains very strange to anyone claiming to stand on solid ground. Speak, all the same...' (TS, 214).

Nevertheless, Irigaray's problem, according to Fuss is, is a question of how can this specular economy be undone? (Fuss, 1989, 60).

In part answer to this problem Fuss writes that throughout *Speculum* and *This Sex Which Is Not One* Irigaray supplants the logic of the gaze with the logic of *touch*. Fuss writes that: 'it is the "contact of at least two (lips) which keeps woman in touch with herself but without any possibility of distinguishing what is touching from what is touched"' (Fuss, 1990, 60). This is not exactly what is at issue in Irigaray's work, in the sense that touch does not 'supplant' gaze, rather she reads both the gaze in *Being Two: How Many Eyes Have We?* and touch in *To Be Two* in a manner that does not seek to possess or master the other. Irigaray's 'touch' is more fundamental the illumination of truth, touch is the basis of all senses. We are touched by a visual stimulus as much as an audible or tactile senses. It is problematic to over generalize this move in Irigaray's work to position Irigaray as a 'strategic essentialist'.

Fuss, writes that it is tempting to compare Irigaray's 'at least two lips' with Monique Wittig's concept of 'lesbian'. Since both work to rethink the place and status of the phallus in Western culture. (For Wittig, 'lesbian' operates as a new transcendental signifier to replace the phallus, it is outside the system of exchange and keeps the system open). Nevertheless, Fuss argues that Irigaray's 'two lips' do not function in the same way, '...since the lips articulate a female imaginary and not a cultural symbolic' (Fuss, 1989, 60). (Irigaray argues that these terms 'imaginary' and 'symbolic' are not hers.) Fuss writes that Margaret Whitford uses these terms in her paper, 'Luce Irigaray and the Female Imaginary' to clarify Irigaray's departure for Lacan, Whitford writes: '...what is needed is for the female imaginary to accede to its own specific symbolization' (Whitford, 1989, 4). In other words women to find there own ways to sustain desire in current cultural traditions. Fuss writes that this symbolization of the female imaginary is precisely what Irigaray seeks to elaborate through her conceptualization of the two lips: She writes,

The sustained focus in her work on this particular trope operates in at least two ways. First, it

has the desired effect of historically foregrounding “the more or less exclusive – and highly anxious – attention paid to the erection in Western sexuality’ and it demonstrates “to what extent the imaginary that governs it is foreign to the feminine” (This Sex, 24) Second, it poses a possible way out of one of the most troubling binds created for feminist psychoanalysis: the problem of how to acknowledge the formative role of the Symbolic, the arm of phallocracy, while still subscribing the notion of feminine specificity (Fuss, 1989, 60).

The fear of essentialism and the problem of the subject of feminist theory is the primary concern of Fauch in her paper, ‘The knowledge of the Body and the presence of History – Towards a Feminist Architecture,’ in Paul Smith’s book *Discerning the Subject* is influential to her analysis especially of the general issues surrounding contemporary feminism. Fauch argues that Smith’s book, summarises the arguments for and against defining the female subject in terms of either essential bodily or psychic characteristics of women. Smith depends heavily in his chapter entitled ‘Feminism’ on Moi’s readings of French feminism in *Sexual/Textual Politics*, and Fauch quotes Smith’s reinforcement of Moi’s argument when she writes: ‘Women’s experiences and identities are limited by dint of being forged in and by patriarchy: there can be no uncontaminated place for which a female “subject” could speak or act her identity – “there is simply nowhere else to go”’ (Moi, 1985, 81). Which, for Moi, is a commentary on Julia Kristeva’s work and a response to criticisms raised over Irigaray’s work in her chapter ‘Patriarchal Reflections: Luce Irigaray’s looking-glass’. Moi writes: ‘We have to accept our position as already inserted into an order that precedes us and from which there is no escape. There is no *other space* from which we can speak: if we are able to speak at all, it will have to be within the framework of symbolic language’ (Moi, 1985, 170 Moi’s italics). Smith takes this line and even further this argument writing (quoted by Fauch in a footnote):

[W]omen’s ‘truth’s’ and identities can currently be represented only within a symbolic field organized on a principle of difference which works to exclude and defend against them. Thus the possibility of women as an identifiable set of ‘subjects’ mounting any kind of resistance to patriarchy is foreclosed upon immediately. According to such a perspective there can be no

specifically female identity and therefore no specifically female agent except one committed to struggles which are in fact ...not specifically feminist struggles. (AF, 55)

Moi is particularly critical of Irigaray, and devotes the penultimate chapter of *Sexual/Textual Politics* to a dismissal of her work. Moi concluding chapter 'Marginality and Subversion: Julia Kristeva' is a response to these problems.

Moi's question to Irigaray, or rather to her work in *Speculum*, is 'If specular logic dominates all western theoretical discourse, how can Luce Irigaray's doctoral thesis escape its pernicious influence' (138). Furthermore, Moi argues that if her study of the mystics in *Speculum* in particular 'Le Mystérique' leads her to take pleasure in the image of woman imitating the sufferings of Christ: '...is she not caught in a logic that requires her to produce an image of woman that is exactly the same as the specular constructions of femininity in patriarchal logic?' (Moi, 1985, 138). Moi cites Shoshana Felman's 'The critical phallacy' where Felman raises a series of pertinent questions that, 'pinpoint the problems that Irigaray faces when she presents herself as a woman theorist or a theorist of women' (Moi, 1985, 138). Quoting Felman:

If 'the woman' is precisely Other of any conceivable Western theoretical locus of speech, how can the woman as such be speaking in this book? Who is speaking here, and who is asserting the otherness of the woman? If as Luce Irigaray suggests, the woman's silence or the repression of her capacity to speak, are constitutive of philosophy and of the theoretical discourse as such, from what theoretical locus is Luce Irigaray herself speaking in order to develop her own theoretical discourse about? Is she speaking as a woman, or *in the place of* the (silent) woman, for the woman, *in the name of* woman? Is it enough to be a woman in order to speak as a woman? Is 'speaking as a woman' a fact determined by some biological *condition* or by a strategic, theoretical *position*, by anatomy or by culture? What is 'speaking as a woman' where not a simple 'natural' fact, could be taken for granted?' (Felman, 1975, 3).

Moi further writes problematically:

Though Irigaray never actually acknowledges the fact her analysis of male specular logic is deeply indebted to Derrida's critique of the Western philosophical tradition. If the textual analysis of *Speculum* are inspiring examples of anti-patriarchal criticism, it is because Irigaray

knows how to expose the flaws and inconsistencies of phallogentric discourse (Moi, 1985, 139).

And hence continues to use Derrida against Irigaray:

But if as Derrida has argued we are still living under the reign of metaphysics, it is impossible to produce new concepts untainted by the metaphysics of presence. This is why he sees deconstruction as an activity rather than as a new 'theory'. Deconstruction is in other words self-confessedly parasitic upon the metaphysical discourse it is out to subvert. It follows that any attempt to formulate a general theory of femininity will be metaphysical. This is precisely Irigaray's dilemma: having shown that so far femininity has been produced exclusively in relation to the logic of the Same, she falls for the temptation to produce her own positive theory of femininity. But, as we have seen, to define 'woman' is necessarily to essentialize her' (Moi, 1985, 139).

Furthermore, citing Gayatri Spivak, in her paper 'French Feminism in an International Frame' Moi suggests Spivak has Irigaray in mind:

In the long run, the most useful thing that a training in French Feminism can give us is politicized and critical examples of 'symptomatic reading' not always following the reversal-displacement technique of a deconstructive reading. The method that seemed recuperative when used to applaud the avant-guard is productively conflictual when used to expose the ruling discourse (Spivak, 177).

Moi does recognize that Irigaray is aware of this problem, and in Moi's terms, Irigaray, '...struggles hard to avoid falling into the essentialist trap' (Moi, 1985, 139). Moi writes that *at one point* (although this in fact is a more frequent declaration) she rejects any attempt to define 'woman'. For example, Moi writes citing Irigaray in *This Sex Which Is Not One* and against any theory of equality with men:

They [women] must not pretend to rival them by constructing a logic of the feminine that again would take as its model the onto-theo-logical. They must rather try to disentangle this question from the economy of the logos. They must therefore not pose it in the form of 'What is woman?' They must, through repetition-interpretation of the way in which the feminine find itself determined in discourse – as lack, default, or as mime and inverted reproduction of the subject – show that on the feminine side it is possible to *exceed* and *disturb* this logic (TS,

75-76).

However, Moi's choice of text supports the correspondences she finds with Derrida's work. Moi admits that one way of disrupting patriarchal logic is miming male discourse, nevertheless, she criticises Irigaray for *Speculum* being an academic discourse:

...the academic apparatus of the doctoral thesis still perceptible in *Speculum* may be an ironic gesture: coming from a woman arguing the case Irigaray is presenting, her impeccable theoretical discourse is displaced and relocated as a writing parody of patriarchal modes of argument (Moi, 1985, 140).

Hence, she states:

If as a woman under patriarchy, Irigaray has, according to her own analysis no language of her own but can only (at best) imitate male discourse, her own writing must inevitably be marked by this. She cannot pretend to be writing in some pure feminist realm outside patriarchy: If her discourse is to be received as anything other than incomprehensible chatter she must copy male discourse. The feminine can thus only be read in the blank spaces left between the signs and lines in the blank spaces left between the signs and lines of her own mimicry' (Moi, 1985, 140).

Like Smith, Fausch argues there is simply no mode of being for her outside the perspective of patriarchy:

...If this is the case, then Irigaray's mimicry in *Speculum* becomes a conscious acting out of the hysteric (mimetic) position allocated to all women under patriarchy. Through her acceptance of what is in any case an ineluctable mimicry, Irigaray doubles it back on itself, thus raising the paratiticism to the second power. Hers is a theatrical staging of the mime: mining the miming imposed on women, Irigaray's subtle specular move (her miming mirrors that of all women) intends to *undo* the effects of phallographic discourse by simply *overdoing* them (Moi, 1985, 140, Moi's italics).

The question is of circumstance, and whether and under what conditions this strategy actually works to destabilize. But, as already stated, this is not the only aspect of Irigaray's work, nor the sum total of her political strategy or activity. Neither can her work be read as a derivative of Derrida's writing. Moi's method of studying the effects of mimicry in Irigaray's texts would be in looking at her analogical or comparative arguments. In *Speculum*, for example, Moi argues, Irigaray sees

analogic readings as a typical expression of the male passion for the Same. Quoting Irigaray in *Speculum*:

The interpreters of dreams themselves had only one desire: to find the same. Everywhere. And it was certainly insistent. But from that moment, didn't interpretation also get caught up in this dream of an identity, equivalence, analogy, ontology, symmetry, comparison, imitation etc., which would be more or less right, that is to say, more or less good? (*S*, 27)

We might therefore expect Irigaray to mime this kind of thinking through equivalence and homology in order to undo its stabilizing, hierarchical effects, but this is not always what happens. In her essay 'Le marché des femmes' ('Women on the market') where she claims that Marx's analysis of the commodity as the basic form of capitalist wealth can be understood as an interpretation of the status of women in so-called patriarchal societies. According to Irigaray women can in the first instance be read both as a use value and as exchange value: She is 'nature; (use value) which is subjected to human labour and transformed into exchange value. It is in her role as exchange value that she can be analysed as a commodity on the market. Moi argues that her value resides not in her own body but in some transcendental standard of equivalence. However, in a footnote Irigaray defends the case for her extensive use of analogy in this essay:

And didn't Aristotle, a "giant thinker" according to Marx, determine the relationship between form and matter through an analogy with the relationship between male and female? To return to the question of sexual difference is therefore rather a new passage [retraversée] through analogism (*CS*, 170).

Fauch's paper argues around the problem of the opposition between bodily identity and social identity but it is in our relationship to the body, to the female body, to the bodily in general, and the concrete, the material, the empirical, the "brute fact" the "dumb object" all of terms which register the disgust, fear, contempt, hatred and desire in Western culture of "mere matter". It is this 'natal given', Fausch argues to use Irigaray's terms, that must be explored. Fauch argues: "To take this course is to claim, not that the feminism is bodily, but that the bodily is feminist – not that a concern

with the bodily is a guarantee of non-oppressive attitudes, but that a non-oppressive attitude would include a regard for the bodily' (Fausch, 1995, 39). As architecture is concerned with forming matter in conformity with ideas, architects cannot avoid the material. A 'feminist' architecture, for Fauch, she writes, would be one that creating a 'world' engendering particular feminine relational perceptions and experiences (Fausch, 1995, 39). For Fauch, in this way architecture can offer experiences, '...that correspond to, provide modes for, the experience of the body [and] give validity to a sense of self as bodily – a sense that may be shared by both sexes' (Fausch, 1995, 40). And in doing so, Fauch argues, architecture can, '...provide room to address Western culture's tendency towards abstraction, stop distortion, mistreatment, even banishment of the body' (Fausch, 1995, 40). In this respect, it is perhaps not surprising that Fauch's references concerning the debasement of the feminine are to the work of Irigaray. It is a shame, however, that her paper focuses so heavily on the issue of essentialism without moving out of its orbit

Irigaray's criticisms are generated around the problem of how the Western tradition conceives the other, a common interest amongst contemporary architectural theory. Thinking the other from the place of the other, her dialogue with philosophy and her poetics, sometimes described as *parler-femme* or perhaps better described by Irigaray as 'poetic-talking,' is notoriously hard to engage with, and it is perhaps the reason for difficulty in architects referring to Irigaray's work. It has been suggested that this is a deliberate strategy where refusing to give an answer on the question of woman, whilst at the same time, suggesting another sort of femininity. However, if understanding Irigaray's poetics is, the single most problem for her and her critics it, nevertheless, also demands a better, more faithful engagement to counter certain interpretations and unwarranted criticisms.

Irigaray's project for women calls for both a deconstruction and the redefinition of rights gained in the name of equality, proposing new values that would allow women to live sexual difference, to reconstruct the neutral individual, and '...so that women can tailor the rights they have gained in the name of equality to their own identity as women.' (*TTD*, xv) How architects

understand the problems of gender, difference and sexual difference in the inheritance of feminist philosophy is an important question for current debates surrounding feminism in architecture. Why architectural theorists refuse to describe their work as feminist and how they can legitimate this position within architecture is also significant in this problem but only insofar as it reveals the underlying issue. If feminism in architecture is to retain its purpose to create an inheritance for future women it has to be understood as a political discourse with its focus on women's lives. Where current trends in feminism in architecture described by a change in thinking, the conflict can weaken the motive to change women's lives for the better. Understanding Irigaray's work, the development of her ideas and its intellectual context would demonstrate that far from an apolitical discourse, supporting discourses radically distinguished from the feminisms of practices such as *Matrix Design Group* her project represents a continuation of feminist aims from equal rights, towards the redefinition of rights, and moreover, these rights she argues have to be inscribed in law and in cultural practices to be sustained. Even without the use of the term 'feminism' it is a misunderstanding to maintain that there is an apoliticism to *all* French feminist philosophy, that is somewhat contradictory to a feminist agenda, or that 'a politics of difference' distinguished from 'feminism' sole interest in women's rights would be a political of *sexuate* difference, thought through the work of Irigaray.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 Why a Re-Evaluation of Heidegger's Philosophy is Important for Feminism and Architecture.

Irigaray's engagement with Heidegger, her criticism and her re-evaluation of his work, is not a regressive move back to modernist theory and all that it has been associated with in architecture. Irigaray's work is, rather, an opening up of *the question of difference* in his thinking. The value of exploring Irigaray's criticism of Heidegger, especially in his discussion of dwelling, is in its reconsideration of how we can live together, how we can co-exist, how we can build for this co-existence and also perhaps less importantly how this can be a way of approaching feminism. The question for architecture becomes, in this context, how we can construct a way or an approach to meet with a sexuate other; to provide a hospitality and dwelling with the other. In addition, through Irigaray's dialogue with Heidegger many of the misunderstandings surrounding her work can be clarified. The question of essentialism, for example, gains an added dimension in her discussion of being. Chanter even argues that Irigaray's reading of the history of philosophy is filtered through her understanding of Heidegger and when seen in this context accusations of essentialism can be seen as over simplistic. To respond to many of the crude accusations of essentialism, in Heidegger's thought, the body is always the 'lived body', there is no body in its raw state for Heidegger, *Dasein* is a bodying forth. Thus, even Heidegger's philosophizing overcomes the issue of essentialism, at least as feared by many feminist thinkers. Nevertheless, citing Heidegger to defend Irigaray's philosophy is somewhat problematic, as already suggested. Irigaray challenges Heidegger's inadequate consideration of the bodily and of difference, she is, nevertheless, undoubtedly influenced by his thinking.

Heidegger, Irigaray, the Body and the Question of Feminist Politics

In the introduction to the Italian edition of *The Forgetting of Air*, translated in *Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger*, Irigaray states that she started writing the book a few days

after Heidegger's death. She writes: 'I had to pay homage to the philosopher for the light which he transmitted to me without any obligation, except of the course of his thinking' (Irigaray, 2001, 315). Furthermore, she writes that carrying out this work, celebrating his philosophy meant indicating a path that could contribute to the becoming of the epoch. Celebrating his philosophy in this context does not imply appropriating his thought, but, respecting it in its difference and in so doing suggesting another relationality, another relation to nature and other. She writes: 'To pay homage to Martin Heidegger in his relationship to the earth, to the sky, to divinities and to mortals presupposed for me the unveiling and the affirmation of another relation to this fourfold' (Irigaray, 2001, 315).

One of the reasons that Heidegger is dismissed by feminist thinkers is because he is not known as a political thinker. If politics is raised in the context of Heidegger's thought it is more often to do with his problematic relation with Nazism, which is a difficult issue for many historians and philosophers. Equally, he is not known for his thinking on issues concerned with sexual identity or relations between the sexes, and yet, as Irigaray acknowledges, he is a profound thinker, one of the most significant of the twentieth century.

Patricia Huntington, in her introduction to *Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger*, writes that despite his apoliticism, Heidegger's thinking on the human condition, allows feminist theorists to learn from his thought to progress feminist theory (see Holland and Huntington, 2001, 2). Moreover, she argues, in a way more supportive of Heidegger's philosophy than Irigaray, that his '...deliberately supra-political corpus,' is helpful for feminist theory.

Heidegger's thinking can suggest a way to approach many of the questions of feminism and aspects of Heidegger's thought have been taken up by feminist thinkers. Huntington suggests that one of the first engagements with Heidegger, from a feminist perspective, is that of Sandra Lee Bartky's work, where Bartky explores the significance of meditative or originary thinking to feminism. However, in this essay, written during the 1970s, can be characterized better as suggesting a more a positive disinterest rather than a learning, for Heidegger, and Bartky concludes

that Heidegger's philosophy is useless for feminists because of its lack of political content.

During the 1980s, however, the feminist mood towards Heidegger changed, but it is also important to note that this former feminist position still held weight throughout the 1980s and to a certain extent still does). Huntington suggests that it was knowledge of Irigaray writing on Heidegger's philosophy that changed the mood. She writes:

My personal view is that feminist interest in Heidegger had to wait for the Anglophone reception of the work of Luce Irigaray and, to a lesser extent, Jacques Derrida to take root and grow before bridges between matters of gender and Heidegger's brand of thought could be envisaged and received (...) [I]t is Jacques Derrida and Luce Irigaray who laid the ground work in the 1980s for such possibilities to take root' (Holland and Huntington, 2001, 6).

Huntington argues that Derrida's essays known as *Geschlecht I, II and IV* reveal that the Heideggerean concept of Dasein is not entirely inimical to sexual difference. This does not, however, change the fact that Derrida's work is fundamentally ambivalent to the question of feminism. As Huntington writes: 'Although they break open vital terrain on which a constructive turn to Heidegger could grow, the *Geschlecht* essays did not initially draw feminist attention to Heidegger, but rather impelled the continued cultivation of a Derridean or deconstructive strain within scholarship' (Holland and Huntington, 2001, 6-7). Thus, rather than resolve the potential for contemporary thought to address the relation of gender to metaphysics, Derrida's work established why it is important for feminists not to adopt his philosophy too soon. Despite this; despite its apparent apoliticism and ambivalence to feminism, and moreover despite the little emphasized influence of Heidegger; this did not stop the academic climate of the 1980s embracing a political reading of Derrida (such as those developed by Simon Critchely) at the same time as playing down Derrida's relation to Heidegger: For the same reasons Heidegger has been dismissed by feminists, Derrida is embraced.

Irigaray has, nevertheless, developed a critique of Heidegger's philosophy and of the feminist relation to deconstruction. Huntington describes Irigaray's work with Heidegger has an

elaboration on a Heideggerean understanding of the very nature of thought (albeit, as already stated, Irigaray is critical throughout *The Forgetting of Air* of Heidegger's association of being and thinking, an issue Huntington does not adequately address). Huntington, moreover, suggests that Irigaray's books from the mid 1980s onwards each have Heideggerean overtones, she writes:

These works are not primarily deconstructive but rather constitute a female variation on Heidegger's methodology of historical retrieval. In them, Irigaray tries to prepare the ground for recovering a substantial and originary manner of dwelling from out of the religious and Greek origins of the Western tradition (...) So it is that she begins to develop her own brand of originary or meditative thinking by pressing more deeply than Heidegger into sexual difference (Holland and Huntington, 2001, 9).

Huntington argues that Irigaray's reworking of meditative thinking gives birth to a positive possibility for human becoming, in sexual difference. Whilst Irigaray is in no doubt influenced, Irigaray is not a reader of Heidegger, an interpreter, and her philosophy is not a derivative of Heidegger's method. It is an altogether different approach to the meditative. She engages with many philosophers and philosophies to demonstrate what is forgotten but she also reworks the terms of each philosopher she criticises.

The purpose of Huntington's introduction is to acknowledge the importance of Heidegger's thought in developing Irigaray's work but it is equally important to note that Heidegger is not Irigaray's sole influence. Nevertheless Huntington writes of Irigaray's influence by Heidegger:

...this dimension of her thinking was overlooked in part because many feminists and translators of Irigaray do not know Heidegger's work. And many feminist still found it more acceptable to fit Irigaray into the poststructuralist sensibilities of the late-1980s and 1990s feminism or battle postmodernism out against modernist feminism where any reliance on Heidegger would surely take a beating, precisely for reasons initially articulated by Bartky and later advance by others (Holland and Huntington, 2001, 9).

These arguments are evident also in architectural theory and their cause, the very appropriative

manner of constructing subjectivity within patriarchal societies.

The later Heidegger has provided the most fertile ground for feminist studies, and this later work has led to more positive readings of Heidegger than Barthes. Huntington associates this, with a perspective taken on embodiment. She writes: 'Although crucial work along these lines has been undertaken in feminist theory (...) I do suggest, though, that feminist interest in Heidegger - atheist or theist - often stems from a nascent, if tacit, intuition that Heidegger's thinking lays out a weighty sense of incarnation or embodiment' (Holland and Huntington, 2001, 12).

Huntington's reading of feminist studies of Heidegger, and perhaps also the potential of Heidegger's work for feminism, are perhaps more 'Heideggerian,' and certainly less critical than Irigaray. Perhaps also in this sense problematic, if, indeed, as she suggests, it is Irigaray's work that has influenced contemporary feminist engagements with Heidegger. It is evident that the question of the body is important to feminist theory and that Heidegger's work does address the body in a way beyond mind and body distinctions, but he is also criticized for not adequately thinking the body, by Irigaray as much as others. Huntington, writes that that it is:

...not accidental that the first sustained works on Heidegger written by women and with an eye towards gender issues arose out of a felt kinship with the spiritualism of Heideggerian thought (...) I believe this kinship and sensibility (...) should (but may not) prove decisive in the next wave of Heidegger-influenced, female-centred thought (Holland and Huntington, 2001, 12).

It is the dual questions of embodiment and transcendence that Huntington argues are of interest to feminist theorists of the 1980s and early 1990s, but, one significant feminist criticism of Heidegger that has emerged, at the same time is Kristeva's claim that Heidegger's entire approach, his model 'Dasein' is a '...logically and chronologically repressive mythological travesty' (Kristeva, 1984, 129). In *Revolution in Poetic Language* Kristeva writes, from a psychoanalytic perspective:

The Heideggerian subject strives towards an other to reduce it to the same; he creates a community that is always lacking; he aims for a closure that is never achieved. Care is a

metaphor for the wet-nurse, the mother, or the nurse. Reassuring and promising something beyond the eternal frustration that it simultaneously proclaims (Krisetva, 1984, 129).

This argument bares many similarities to Irigaray's criticisms, however, Huntington argues citing Jean Graybeal's reading of Heidegger in *Language and "The Feminine" in Nietzsche and Heidegger*, that these accusations can be addressed if not also dismissed. Huntington writes:

Graybeal argues that both the early Heideggerian search for a joyous or authentic mode of life and especially the later Heideggerian notion of meditative thinking teach up how to live after the death of God, the Father. Moreover, living beyond "the death of 'The Father'," rather than destroying religion, delivers us to a new understanding of religiosity, one that can "make new room for the 'feminine'". Second, her work tacitly explains why many women (...) feel great kinship with Heidegger. That kinship arises because there is an intimate connection between overcoming metaphysics and recovering lost, feminine styles of acting and being. Third, she demonstrates that the early Heidegger's conception of Dasein as rooted in care as well as later notions such as the source and mystery of existence all tap into the last dimensions of Western Being (Holland and Huntington, 2001, 13).

Huntington affirms Graybeal's work but Irigaray's criticism and development of Heidegger take this issue further. Huntington argues that ultimately Graybeal supports Heidegger's statements on language, Huntington writes:

Her work stands in keeping with a fundamental intuition that language and incarnation go hand in hand, a view as old as they come in religious and philosophical studies, but certainly, as her work implies, rejuvenated by Heidegger (Holland and Huntington, 2001, 13).

However, as already stated, Irigaray's criticism of language is a significant aspect of her reading of Heidegger. Carol Bigwood, Huntington also cites as a feminist theorist influenced by Heidegger, her work can be characterized as an eco-feminist philosophy. In *Earth Muse: Feminism, Nature and Art*, Huntington writes that Bigwood's reading of Heidegger emphasizes that Dasein is historical. This means that,

[t]his interpretation enables her to overcome the tendency within some postmodern theorizing to reduce women's identity to an overtly fluid and free-floating "cultural artifice" with "no real terrestrial weight" (Holland and Huntington, 2001,14).

Bigwood's interest in Heidegger's later philosophy, for the issue of dwelling but she develops her own perspective on a gender sensitive co-habitation with the earth. Huntington writes of Bigwood's work:

Bigwood finds Heidegger immensely helpful in developing a notion of dwelling in the "world-earth-home" that fosters open encounters "between cultures; races; the past, the present, and future; and genders, and between the human and non-human (Holland and Huntington, 2001, 14-15).

Huntington writes that Irigaray has been influential in the growing trend of feminist explorations of Heidegger work, but in each of the cited theorists work. There is thus evidence that Huntington's reading of these theorists demonstrates a greater commitment to Heidegger' philosophy than a positive criticism of Heidegger.

Whilst it is important to show that Irigaray is a philosopher and, as such, has her teachers, whilst Irigaray celebrates Heidegger's work she also argues his philosophy suggests at least two forgettings. Moreover, Irigaray reject's Heidegger's privileging of language and whilst she develops a perspective on 'meditative thinking' this, is not in itself 'thinking' but relates to air, breath and breathing. Huntington's review is significant and she also develops a self-criticism of her own earlier work which in *Ecstatic Subjects, Utopia and Recognition: Kristeval, Heidegger and Irigaray* like many contemporary theorists tends to fall into the accepted readings of Irigaray. That is to say, the accusation that Irigaray is an essentialist, and an essentialist who must be saved from this by psychoanalytic theory or deconstruction. In her introduction Huntington reflects on some of these conclusions, she writes:

Despite the position advanced in my book, I have since come to think that the depth of Irigaray's interest in meditative thought and spirituality moves in a direction altogether

difference from critical imagination and utopian thought (Holland and Huntington, 2001, 17).

Thus, Huntington argues, that those seeking to suggest utopian readings of Irigaray's philosophy want either to emphasize the deconstructive aspects of Irigaray's thought or psychoanalytic influences.

4.2 Air Remains What Gives Autonomy to Every Being?

Despite Huntington's extensive elaboration on why feminist theorists have either dismissed or taken up Heidegger's philosophy, and her suggestion that the interest is, at least in part, due to Irigaray's work. In a paper published in the book Irigaray explains, herself, how her own philosophy takes an inspiration from Heidegger. She writes that *The Forgetting of Air*, and in *I Love to You* and *To Be Two*, 'the same air circulates'. Air and breath have two roles they act to make meaningful what is repressed in the Western tradition and to provide a space between two. Irigaray writes:

The same breath circulates. Sometimes it applies itself to saying its paralysis in our intellectual tradition: philosophy. At other times it frees itself and protects itself in order to love at the limits of life, or to provide room for an interval that safeguards the difference between the Being of woman and the Being of man (Irigaray, 2001, 309).

For Irigaray, Heidegger's recovery of the question of being is still a forgetting. She describes a double oblivion: The first oblivion that of '...the fluid matter that made its construction possible'; the second of desire, in the Other his work seeks. (see Irigaray, 2001, 310). In this way the question of the body is put at question as is the role of the maternal. On the other hand, the memory of breath, would allow a different mode of existence. She writes:

The air element, its imperceptible presence in every life, in every act of speaking, in every thought, would be then the path that permits a return beyond the foundation and the closure of metaphysics in order to discover again the breath and the spirit that they have captured-captivated in their logic (Irigaray, 2001, 310).

Air is a sensible transcendental, it is implicit but unrecognized in Heidegger's philosophy. She argues he limits himself, she writes: 'The air, for him, is already encircled, it is already used for something other than what it is: a source of life, including spiritual life' (Irigaray, 2001, 311). Furthermore, for Irigaray, Heidegger's quest of how to speak-otherwise, in poetry and art, is over attached to manifestation and the visible and misses the meaning of Being as 'to breath'. She writes:

What is required, rather, is to be respected for what it is, and not for another end than itself. The master of life, in this way, is he who teaches and safeguards the practice of breathing (Irigaray, 2001, 310-311).

This cultivation of breath, is, for Irigaray, a different epoch, one that allows a different relationally to emerge. This is not a subjectivity similar to a masculine model which Irigaray argues needs separation from the maternal, from mother, and from the fear of what is different. This cultivation of breath suggests a different love or relationality, without the rhythm of separation and return proposed by the masculine. In this way it is, according to Irigaray, how women can find, respect and value their own lives in difference this is how she challenges psychoanalytic models or subjectivity and existential models of the self, she writes:

Breathing signifies taking care of one's own life. This care supposes a distance from the one who gives us life: from she who has nourished the first breath with her blood, from she who continually nourishes it with her immediate surroundings. Breathing inscribes in its rhythm the renunciation of the dream of fusional proximity to she who gives life or restores it: the mother, or nature. To breath is to separate from her, to be reborn, and to give back to her a share of breath: through air, through praise, through work of life and of living spirit. To breath is to leave prenatal passivity, to leave infantile state, dependent or mimetic, to leave simple contiguity with the natural universe, in order to maintain and cultivate a status as an autonomous living being (Irigaray, 2001, 311).

No word, no poetry can substitute for this path, Irigaray argues, but it can inspire. Whilst it is necessary to redefine rights and values specific to women, women's being can only be rediscovered in relation. Irigaray, challenges any artistic or architectural theory that suggests that art or

architecture can evoke the event of dwelling, through existing practices or within traditional habits of living (which Huntington's readings of Heidegger would suggest is possible for woman). Whilst Irigaray argues that speech could bring access to one's own, to mineness, to being, this speech is yet to be created. She writes it is, '...arch-ancient and still to come' (Irigaray, 2001, 312). The relationality or love that is suggested by a practice of breathing, is a respect for life that is one's own but also a respect and acknowledgement of relation to one's own life with that of the other. Of breathing in addition to thinking which in itself a criticism of Heidegger's 'meditative thinning'. She writes:

This practice produces a distance, an estrangement, a proper becoming that is a renunciation of adherence to the environment. The near becomes one's own, through air. But this proper is never property of the self. It corresponds to the shaping of life that is never simply mine even if the task of fulfillment is my responsibility (Irigaray, 2001, 311).

Irigaray's elaboration breathing and becoming is not the same as Heidegger's, as a safeguarding or cultivation of nature. Irigaray argues, that Heidegger's forgets it is the other needs to be cultivated. She is critical of Heidegger's examples of the Thing and the bridge, as, she writes, it is the other that gives life or dwelling. She writes:

Life is never simply mine, because it is always already received from the other and presence to the other, but also because it comes to be thanks to the shared air and atmosphere (Irigaray, 2001, 311).

Man's dwelling, for Heidegger, is that which takes place, in a 'setting up' of place, and through and by means of language but escapes the restriction of language. Irigaray writes:

Air is cultivated while remaining itself and in relation with itself. This cultivation is necessary for the becoming of each one, man and woman, but also to the becoming of the relation between one and the other, of the relation between all (...) To breath combines in an indissociable way being-there and being-with. Going out of the mother, I come into the air, I enter into the world, and into the community of living beings (Irigaray, 2001, 311-312).

Irigaray is similarly critical of Heidegger's celebration of the pre-socratic, for example, his

celebration of: *To be and to think are the same*. This forgets breath and air and in this basic operation, and in so doing man separates himself from life, from the flow of life, from the link he has with mother, or with nature. Thus, she writes, he separates from '...she who engendered and nourished him, in particular from air' (Irigaray, 2001, 312).

Following *The Forgetting of Air*, in *I Love To You* and *To Be Two* Irigaray shows how air becomes the way in which woman gains autonomy, in her later more political works and those addressing a new community. She writes:

Safeguarding the air between them, breathing in moderation, he and she can meet one another, remaining two. She no longer this infinite gift that loses itself in him without return. He is no longer this master of a bridge at the end of which there is no one (...) She and he make their ways on paths that can cross without ever merging. The other shore, the foreign shore, is for each one, the other (Irigaray, 2001, 312).

As already stated, to begin this process, Irigaray suggests a question that accompanies the autonomy given by air: 'I am not you, you are not me. Who am I? Who are you?' This means that autonomy can be won but within limits, in and with *love* of the other. She writes:

In order to meet her, he must acknowledge the difference between her and him. He must not build everything starting from her, say everything starting from himself. He will never assimilate her, will never appropriate her without renouncing her and, moreover, himself. Without reducing her to a shadow of herself, to a distortion of him, without limits between them. In order to prevent this, Being must always be accompanied by a limit and by a question, or two. I am not you, you are not me. Who am I? Who are you? Each one must build, feel, speak. And what she is will never be his own (...) Strangers we are to one another, irreducible to the same Being. Being, then, is split in two, or rather, is held in two and in the relation between (Irigaray, 2001, 313).

There is a renunciation that for Irigaray must be safeguarded. A renunciation that I can ever know the other, an invisibility to be respected, in a culture or philosophy otherwise overemphasizing the visible. Giving up this ground, possessiveness, rejection and need (all of the questions of the unthought sexual relation) and letting the other be, she argues, can set one on the way towards the

search for ones own way. This safeguarding she associates with the safeguarding of *physus* (nature/becoming) in me and the other. She writes:

...safeguarding the unfolding of *physus* in the other and in me, I give up a traditional privilege of mastery that brings under control being in general, whether it be human, animal or cosmic. To cultivate no longer means simply to reduplicate, to name, to educate, to construct, or to create the already existing universe, but to leave it to its becoming while accepting that it affects my own, without robbing it of its singularity (Irigaray, 2001, 314).

Thus, Nature is rethought, as the body and the other. This can have implications for community and sustainability as well as feminine. She writes that recognizing a limit between us is supported by recognizing sexual difference, one where each has his or her own *physus*, a history and a relation world, proper to each one. In this difference, subjects are no longer unique, always at least two. It is with and in difference that a way towards sexual difference can be found and developed. In 'The Female Gender', as already cited, Irigaray writes of nature:

Nature has a sex, always and everywhere. All traditions that remain faithful to the cosmic have a sex and take account of natural powers (*puissances*) in sexual terms. They are also regulated by alternations that do not truly contradict each other. Spring is not autumn nor summer winter, night is not day. This is not the opposition that we know from logic in which the one is opposed to or contradicts the other, where the one is superior to the other and *must put the inferior down*. There is a rhythm of growth in which both poles are necessary, or so it seems (SG, 108).

Rediscovering the unthought, and cultivating it, is not a important work for women. Irigaray writes:

And to ensure the stepping back which leads to the source of thinking is not obvious - sometimes the paths and the scaffoldings have disappeared in the production of discourse, and a void as deepened. Between the forgotten Being and the one already fixed in language, the bridges are cut (WL, 99).

However, she does suggest that the moment of this discovery would be one that takes place in relation to the other, in an interweaving attention to the other as well as a fidelity to the self. Furthermore, she argues, that the energy that animates this process does not separate off from the

body: '...it transforms and transfigures as a thinking is elaborated that recognizes it as the source and dwelling of Being, including what that involves of the link - past, future, and present - with the other, with the others' (WL, 100).

This means that in addition to her criticism of the Western tradition, for example, that '...man finds himself encircled in a blindness that he confuses with the truth' (WL, 100). Irigaray suggests another way of being. It is breath, she suggests, that is the means to win autonomy from this tradition and thus, she writes 'It is after having already won autonomy that the children can discover how it belongs to a human being to enter into relation with the other. And such an unveiling is linked to what is continually forgotten: difference itself' (WL, 102).

4.3 The Female Gender

Irigaray's thinks sexual difference in terms of relational identity, but she also argues that man spends his life devoted to constructing himself as a *separate* subject, because he is incapable *by nature* of the same 'creativity' as woman. He does not have the same relation to Nature, the same *puissances*. The male gender has, she argues, its relation to the other, but this is an artificial, constructed relation, constructed in hatred, envy and inability to think the sexual relation. Within contemporary culture the relation to the other is shaped by models of a relation to God or Other, moreover, a God, she argues, that also asks us to renounce a proper relation to the body and to our sex. She writes: 'The male gender, usually called the human race, plays a game with its other but never couples with it, and ends up by forgetting its gender and destroying its sexual roots' (SG, 109). For Irigaray, women's liberation as traditionally thought avoids the real issue which is the acknowledgement of values appropriate to her sex (for reasons of prohibitions announced at the beginnings of patriarchal cultures) these values that can assist women's becoming. In *Le Partage de la Parole* devoted to a critique of language and its prohibitions, Irigaray writes:

Ne pouvant faire ou être comme sa mère, ni rester simplement lié à elle, le sujet-homme se construit un monde isolé, autonome, crée par lui au-delà du monde déjà existant. Il se bâtit un

monde artificiel pour naître à une subjectivité propre et échapper à la première relation à la mère, identifiée par lui à l'univers naturel. (Being unable to make or be like his mother, nor to remain simply related to her, the subject-man builds an isolated, autonomous world, created by him beyond the already existing world. He builds an *artificial* world to bring to birth a suitable subjectivity and to escape the primary relation with the mother, identified by him with the natural universe.) (PP, 44)

This world, through male eyes, is, for Irigaray, centered on the construction of the ego and on the relationship of this ego with material or spiritual objects which enable him to exist autonomously. It is focused on the necessary tools to manufacture objects or worlds, and on a relation with others based on the exchange of objects: tools, language, money, technologies, in particular information technology, being privileged examples. These are the preferences and privileged values of the male within patriarchal culture. Irigaray writes:

Le monde masculin est en *tension entre le sujet et l'objet*. Les autres sujets n'y interviennent que relativement à ce rapport fondateur pour le sujet: réduction de l'autre à l'objet, évaluation de l'autre pour l'appropriation ou la valeur d'objets souvent sur un mode mimétique.' (The male world is in *tension between the subject and the object*. The other subjects only intervene there relative to this founding relationship with the subject: reduction of the other to an object, evaluation of the other according to his possessions or properties, competition with the other for the appropriation or the value of objects often on a mimetic mode.) (PP, 44)

Heidegger's philosophy seeks to overcome this subject and object tension, but, for Irigaray, it does not go far enough to permit the values specific to women repressed by patriarchal cultures. Whether it is in the analysis of daily speech, in philosophical critiques or in scientific thought, Irigaray argues, each arrives at this same conclusion and leaves Western culture unable to suggest adequate perspectives on relational life, in particular for woman. What has been analysed at length in philosophic, linguistic or scientific research, is, according to Irigaray, is man's relation in opposition (a form of love patriarchal cultures do permit). She writes that this takes the form of:

...l'homme avec lui-même, la conquête par le sujet de son autonome de pensée, d'esprit,

d'âme, une vérité idéale ou un Dieu unique en étant les garants. Le rapport à l'autre vient en second (...the opposition of man with himself, the conquest by the subject of his autonomy of thought, spirit, of heart; an ideal truth or one God being the guarantors. The relationship with the other comes second).(PP, 44)

Thus it is man relation with God, with an ideal, and his conquest that forms the basis, ultimate foundation, of cultural studies. The relation with the other as other, real tangible, sensible and transcendental remains unthought. She writes:

Le rapport du sujet masculin à l'autre singulier, au *tu*, reste souvent au niveau du besoin: matériel ou spirituel. Le *tu* est plus grand ou plus petit, père ou fils, supérieur ou inférieur. Il n'est égal qu'au nom d'une morale, d'une règle, d'une loi qui a déjà séparé et unifié-réuni abstraitement les sujets. C'est un idéal formel extérieur qui les rassemble, non un désir intersubjectif. Il ne s'agit déjà plus de cet autre immédiatement présent dans sa singularité – dans l'amour ou dans la cité – mais “des autres”, d'un collectif appartenant à une même cité, une même culture, une même tradition, une même famille, avec la volonté, explicite ou implicite, d'effacer les différences dans une universalité culturelle construite. (The relationship of the male subject to the singular other, with *you*, often remains on the level of need: material or spiritual. The *You* is bigger or littler, father or son, superior or inferior. It is equal only according to a system of morals, of a rule, a law which has already separated and unified-rejoined the subjects abstractly. It is an external formal ideal which brings them together, not an inter-subjective desire. It no longer concerns any more this immediately present other in its singularity - in the love or the city - but “the others,” of a collective belonging to the same city, the same culture, the same tradition, the same family, with the will, explicit or implicit, to erase the differences in a built cultural universality).(PP, 44-45)

Male identity is construction, fabrication, created or manufactured beyond natural identity, according to Irigaray. Man gives up his natural identity to escape the maternal, or rather the power invested in the maternal. The natural which generated in this construction, an un-natural, nevertheless, thereby creates an other beyond naturalness, by default, beyond the construction of his model. This construction bespeaks a dependence and it is this dependence that Irigaray's philosophy reveals. The relationship with the other (as father or son, of mythologies, or religion, or

even more recently philosophy where Irigaray is critical of Emmanuel Levinas) is a fabricated ethical relationship, for Irigaray, it suggests a relationship with the same gender, Irigaray writes:

La tradition occidentale n'est pas arrivée, semble-t-il, à la reconnaissance du nécessaire respect de la femme comme un autre de la part du sujet masculin. Trop lié à elle par l'engendrement, par l'instinct ou le besoin, le sujet masculin n'a pas identifié le sujet féminin comme autre, un autre de dignité équivalente à la sienne mais qui lui reste irréductible. Idéalisée dans la maternité, désirée et méprisée dans l'amour charnel et dans la vie publique, la femme n'a pas encore reçu dans notre tradition le statut d'un sujet autonome avec qui l'homme trait paritairement, sinon parfois au nom d'idéaux égalitaires qui s'expriment déjà en terms d'une culture au masculin. (The Western tradition has not reached the recognition of the necessary respect by the male subject of the woman as another. Too linked to her by birth, instinct or need, the male subject did not identify the female subject as other, another of equivalent dignity to him but which remains to him irreducible. Idealised in maternity, wished and scorned in carnal love and in public life, the woman has not yet received in our tradition the status of an autonomous subject with which the man deals equally, unless sometimes in the name of egalitarian ideals which are expressed already in terms of a male-orientated culture.) (PP, 44)

Woman or women are historically included, Irigaray argues, in the construction of the male world but without enjoying their own autonomous subjectivity or identity - they are immobilized made safe. Irigaray writes that it was whilst seeking to escape this world, a project she writes that initially motivated *Speculum of the Other Woman* that she discovered,

...j'étais autre: non pas seconde ni inférieure – selon la conception de l'autre-femme que décrit Simone de Beauvoir dans *Le Deuxième Sexe* – mais réellement une autre: que j'appartenais à un monde différent. Empiriquement et transcendentalement, et que j'avais besoin non seulement d'une "chambre à moi", d'un espace extérieur à moi – comme le demande à son époque Virginia Woolf – mais d'une "âme à moi", d'une intériorité propre'. (I was different: not second nor lower - according to the idea of the other-woman as described Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* - but really another: that I belonged to a different world. Empirically and transcendentally, and that I needed not only one "room of my own," of a space external with me - as Virginia Woolf asked in her epoch - but of a "heart

[soul] of my own", my own interiority.)(*PP*, 46)

Hence, in this world through female eyes, or Irigaray's eyes, the inter-subjective relationship is the foundation and it concerns a universe of two and not of one. Irigaray suggests that it is not in opposition to her mother that the small girl constitutes herself subjectively, unless in the repressive fables of the patriarchy, but like and *with* her mother, with someone like herself. In the same way, it is not in opposition to nature which the female subject defines herself, but *with*, by means of, and like nature. Nature, Irigaray argues, represents to some extent the preferred instrument of becoming female, an instrument which merges with oneself and is not external with oneself, hence, the celebration of the elemental. Sexual identity thought in this way is not a question of submitting to nature, nor to man, as the both loved and hated complement to masculine identity. It is a question of coming to terms with nature in a fashion which is not dominating but measured, rhythmic, harmonious, growing, fruitful. She argues that it is not in opposition to sexual difference that the woman constitutes her own subjectivity, as the same sex or gender as her mother, the child girl is from birth in an easier relational life. She begins her life in a relation between sames, between accomplices. Irigaray writes that in the little girls emergence from her primitive world, she desires a *beyond the immanence*, of the infinite contiguity, but she desires it as other than herself, loves it and creates it in herself as other to herself. This respect of the other as different, is one of dimensions of the female culture. This is different to the relation to the other of the male.

The dialectic of becoming a female subject, according to Irigaray, does not move away from nature in a vertical direction, as often happens with the male subject, but it is cultivated initially by respecting the other as other horizontally, including in the difference in nature between the two. She describes this as practising the renunciation of infinite subjectivity in the recognition that there are two genders and that their differences impose limits on each of them.

The man and the woman belong to two different worlds, for Irigaray, worlds between which fruitfulness is not only natural. The world, of the man, is more centred on the object and

would need to develop the culture of the inter-subjectivity, in particular in sexual difference. The other world, that of the woman, she argues, is above all relational, privileging the two-fold relation, in particular in sexual difference, and often lacks a culture of objectivity. Nevertheless, between these two worlds there is still lacking a suitable culture, of creating bridges between two, respecting their differences, (which cannot be reduced to social stereotypes) and vigilance is essential concerning the impact of such stereotypes in this recreation of culture. In *The Way of Love*, Irigaray writes:

We thus have to take as the states of subjective becoming that which is generally forgotten: difference itself, which moreover is what, most radically, provides the relation between being and Being. It is starting from the consideration, and in some way the rectification, of a redoubled forgetting of difference that thinking must get back underway. But the representation of what is to be accomplished will then on be lacking. If its being on the way follows an intention, this intention escapes all pre-established representation, all already conceptualised knowledge (*WL*, 103).

Grosz writes that Irigaray claims that masculine modes of thought have performed a devastating sleight-of-hand, obliterating the debt they owe to the most primordial of all spaces, the maternal space. This tendency in phallogentric thought, founding the masculine universe is implicated in the systematic and violent erasure of the contributions of women, femininity and the maternal. Grosz writes: 'Men produce a universe built upon the erasure of bodies and contributions of women/mothers and the refusal to acknowledge the debt to the maternal body they owe. They hollow out their own interiors and project them outward and then require women as supports for his hollowed space' (Grosz, 2000, 218). This appropriation of the right to a place or space correlates with men's seizure of the right to define and utilise a spatiality that reflects their own self-representations. The question of dwelling is thus crucial for Grosz, '...both the production of the male domination of women's bodies and in women's struggles to acquire an autonomous space they can occupy and live as women' (Grosz, 2000, 218). As already suggested it is a question of

rethinking body, and relation to Nature and its resources, to the other in community and to creativity or love. The production of a male world, an artificial cultural environment, the production of religion, philosophy, and true knowledge according to these standards leaves women without a relation to their own values and thus alienated. Hence, this enclosure of women in men's physical space, Grosz argues, '...is not entirely different from the containment of women in men's conceptual universe either: theory, in terms in which we know it today, is also the consequence of a refusal to acknowledge that other perspectives, other modes of reason, other modes of construction are possible' (Grosz, 2000, 220). It explains the complex and heated exchanges within feminism surrounding essentialism and the question of gender. As Grosz writes, status as true and objective depends on this disavowal. In Grosz's reading of Irigaray, for women, to be able to occupy another space, women would have to firstly, make a series of upheavals in the organisation of personal-life, and inter-subjective relations, to address men's habits concerning the creation and occupation of space. Grosz writes that women are positioned as 'guardians' of (men's) bodies and space without bodies or space of their own. They become living representatives of corporeality, of domesticity: 'This containment within the (negative) mirror of men's self-reflection strips women of an existence either autonomous from or symmetrical with men's: it relegates women to the position of support or precondition of the masculine – precisely the status of *chora* in the Platonic tradition' (Grosz, 2000, 219).

Women's position within these conditions becomes one of no recognition but, as Irigaray writes: 'The other cannot serve as a resource for our project, our action. In the constitution of a human horizon, the other must remain an other, someone different with whom to learn how to live together and to dialogue (*WL*, 116). The house, as Grosz argues becomes the space of duty, of endless and infinitely repeatable chores where they have no recognition, '...the space of the affirmation and replenishment of others at the expense and erasure of the self, the space of domestic violence and abuse, the space that harms as much as it isolates women' (Grosz, 2000, 219). Grosz argues that it is as if men are unable to resist the temptation to colonise, to appropriate, to measure

and to control, they '...instrumentalize all they survey, reducing the horizon (the horizon of becoming, the measure and reflection of positionality) into the dwelling' (Grosz, 2000, 219). Furthermore, Grosz writes: '[T]his manipulation and containment of women and space always has its costs: in appropriating the body of the other, he must lose access to his own. In succumbing to the inducements of the phallus, and the paternal privilege it entails, he gives up the rest of his body' (Grosz, 2000, 219).

In her criticism of Heidegger, Irigaray argues that examining the relation between the world and things does not really get to the bottom of the reality of being-with, it is not an adequate study of coexistence which is the issue of dwelling. She writes:

Not accepting and respecting this permanent duality between the two human subjects, the feminine one and the masculine one, amounts to preventing one of the two - historically the feminine - from attaining its own Being, and thus from taking charge of the becoming of what it already is and of the world to which it belongs, including as made up of other humans, similar or different (*WL*, 110).

She argues that within masculine economies, '[w]hat appears as the ground of Being and being, and as the between two which joins them together, is thus fictitious' (*WL*, 110). However, this splitting of world, into two or even three to include the relation between two creates a complex and unrepresentable reality, a complex way of living, and loving (see *WL*, 111-113). She writes:

If some technique takes part in the relation between subjects, it is thus of a quite different sort than that to which we are accustomed. It is no longer a question of a subject submitting to a real to his own ends, not even of unveiling its truth by his own means. Turning back to a silent real in order to let the other appear and express their self could instead represent a first manner of corresponding to this real in an appropriate way (*WL*, 114).

The question of technique or method is this a complex question in Irigaray's work. She has criticized those who describe her work in terms of mimicry to suggest similarities with Derrida. There is, nevertheless, technique and method in Irigaray's engagement and she associates this also

with an interior or invisible building. Moreover, in the question of architecture, she writes:

The solution of a possible coexistence for the two subjects who make up the human species is, at each moment, to be negotiated starting from the different manner in which they live the relation to oneself, to the other, to the world (*WL*, 117).

However, this technique can never be the same; being-with has to be discovered.

4.3 Whatever equality means it does not mean becoming like men.

Current patriarchal societies neither suit the needs and desires of men nor women and Irigaray philosophy, in this argument, extends further feminist theories desires and aims. In Irigaray's work, the question of essentialism is seen as a product of patriarchal prohibitions and the problem of the Institution. The question itself is a superficial issue, clouding the recognition of the creativity implied by Irigaray's work, but demonstrating that the question of belonging needs to be raised by women academics. Nature is rethought in Irigaray's philosophy, it is a retrain to the things themselves but a return more primordial than that demonstrated by the phenomenological tradition. She writes: 'In order to carry out the destiny of humanity, the man-human and the woman-human each have to fulfill what they are and at the same time realize the unity that they constitute' (*WL*, 105). Difference exists between man and woman, it cannot be compared to a creation in our understanding.

4.4 Why does Irigaray Critique Heidegger and Why do Architects like Heidegger and Other Phenomenologists?

Why is a feminist critique of Heidegger of interest to architectural critics? Why does Irigaray take an interest in Heidegger's philosophy? Why a feminist critique of dwelling?

It is Heidegger theory of the dwelling of man, his essential 'situatedness' and his work to reveal the current alienation of man that most occupies most architects interest in Heidegger. This

is sometimes also expressed, by architects, as an interest in *genius loci*, or the spirit of the place (*Genius loci*, Norberg-Schultz argues was understood by the ancients as that 'opposite' or other that man has to come to terms with to be able to dwell).

Christian Norberg-Schultz is one of the most influential architectural theorists to have found inspiration in Heidegger's philosophy. From the earliest *Architecture: Meaning and Place*, it is Heidegger that takes centre stage in his theory. Norberg-Schultz describes phenomenology as a 'method' that seeks to 'return to the things themselves', as opposed to abstractions or mental constructions. However, as already stated, from Irigaray's perspective, phenomenology as exemplified by Heidegger remains within a masculine abstraction. For Norberg-Schultz, phenomenology offers a way to make the environment meaningful through the creation of specific places, and it is the idea of *genius loci* also suggesting a relation to the divine, that is much discussed. The Italian architect Vittorio Gregotti, like many others, also develops his theory in an influence by Heidegger. He writes:

I have always tried to keep the relationship between my theory and my work open, if not consistent. I have attempted, for instance, to understand what one could conclude from reflecting on the area of landscape and nature as the sum total of all things and of their past configurations. Nature, in this sense, is not seen as an indifferent, inscrutable force or a divine cycle of creation, but rather as a collection of material things whose reasons and relations architecture has the task of revealing (...) This can only be done if we abandon the sociological or ecological or administrative notion of the environment as an imprisoned element and think of it instead as material for architecture (Gregotti, 1996, 340-341).

Thus, for Gregotti, nature and the history of place can be revealed by architectural practice. In his 'Phenomenon of Place' Norberg-Schultz argues that it is common to mistake the tools, by which he means all kinds of scientific data, for reality. He proposes, following Heidegger, a return to 'concrete things' to the world made up of things and feelings, rather than the abstraction of scientific thinking. This world of things constitutes environment or place, things take place. It is common to think that in order for something to happen, to be, it takes place, he argues, whether this is a thought

or an object, even sleeping and eating, as Norberg-Schultz argues, take place. The issue of place, however, is rarely thought, except in phenomenology and thus defining the method, Norberg-Schultz argues: 'Phenomenology was conceived as a "return to things", as opposed to abstractions and mental constructions' (Norberg-Schultz, 1996,415). This means a return to meditative thinking or poetic thinking rather than the scientific thinking more common to architectural theory.

In order to explore the issue of dwelling and to try to describe why Heidegger deemed poetry significant, Norberg-Schultz, in this influential paper, describes how Trakl's poetry influenced Heidegger because it acts to 'make-visible' the concrete or the 'local situation'. He writes: 'In doing so this poem moves in the opposite direction to scientific thought' (Norberg-Schultz, 1996, 417).

The issue of dwelling is complex when thought in terms of both Heidegger's and Irigaray's philosophy. It is a matter of returning to the things themselves, to understanding the essential relation between Western metaphysics and meditative thinking, and yet according to Irigaray, this difference is not sufficient to escape the abstractions and mental constructions that prohibit the recognition of relational values specific to women. Both Western metaphysics and meditative thinking have to be addressed in a different way. For architecture and for dwelling this means that women must find their own ways, their own poetics, ways of communicating or *building* that can inspire a different relational identity. Women need to find some way to be in relation, in a constant becoming, that is proper to themselves and their sexuate nature. This means a work to return to a different sort of 'four-fold' as elaborated by Norberg-Schultz.

The situatedness man and building is most notably expressed in Heidegger's example of the temple, where he writes:

Standing there, the building rests on rocky ground. This resting of the work draws up out of the rock the mystery of the rock's clumsy yet spontaneous support. Standing there, the building holds its ground against the storm raging above it and so first makes the storm

manifest in its violence (...) The temple's firm towering makes visible the invisible space of air (Heidegger, 1993, 139).

To understand our situatedness in the world is to understand ourselves. Heidegger writes only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build. In another example, much cited by architects, he writes: 'Let us think for a while of a farmhouse in the Black Mountains which was built some 200 years ago by the dwelling of peasants. Here the self-sufficiency of the power to let earth and heaven, divinities and mortals enter in simple oneness into things, ordered the house' (*BDT*, 160).

When Irigaray criticizes Heidegger she questions his language, and asks whose language is this? Who does this language belong to? This language that uncovers Being? Philippa Berry has questioned the nature of this illumination or clearing and has suggested the relationship of Heidegger's clearing to a maternal *Chora*. Berry argues that for Irigaray the clearing is the maternal feminine, repressed and unthought in Heidegger's philosophical landscape. However, Berry's interest is in comparing Irigaray and Kristeva; and Irigaray's work, as stated, goes further than this criticism. She argues that we must renounce the need to subject the one to the other. Rather than construct reality, to focus on materiality of the Thing, or its mode of production, she argues, that we must find a way to allow an initial real to blossom - a way that is unique for each and in itself unrepresentable.

Letting Be and Building

Grosz's commentary on Irigaray also emphasizes the interest Irigaray presents to those concerned with women and space. Grosz argues that women have always been represented as the space or place in which man can find locate himself, as the corporeal horizon of his existence and that women's bodies define man's being. She argues that women are the dwelling to which, and from which, man comes; this means that women have no dwelling of their own. Furthermore, the sexually available woman, as the mother's substitute within this system, exchanges her possibilities

of a place to make his place or his home. Patriarchal culture immobilizes woman as first dwelling but Irigaray writes that in order for woman to have a space of her own

In the case of the domestic realm, and in his language the female of that of the maternal feminine. However, Irigaray does have a strategy; woman must adopt the position of the feminine as mother in this specific strategy or tactic of criticism in order to resist her definition in the male order and in order to make visible to bring to conscious mind that which is repressed. Irigaray writes that instead of allowing woman a place of the feminine, *he* imposes walls on her, his walls, and tries to immobilise her, to make her constantly the symbolic representation of his first home. He returns to reaffirm himself, to find love and in order to keep her here, he envelopes her with his flesh, in his definitions and values. She cannot do the same. There is no place that she can offer him (as yet) but, there is an unwitting dimension to his discourse that which is an outside to his thought, *woman*. It is to this outside that Irigaray turns, that offers an opening to the female. Woman needs her values, she needs a language to establish and maintain her visibility in culture, she needs a space of her own in relation, with the other.

Irigaray writes that young girls dream of accomplishing intersubjective communication. They dream of sharing carnal and spiritual love. Little girls and adolescent girls reveal a desire for intersubjective relations, of life *with*. Little boys, however, Irigaray writes, talk mostly of possessing objects, then ideas and adolescent boys dream of erotic, romantic and social exploits but not of sharing love between persons. The relational values of male and female therefore, not the same. The dwellings for male and female cannot, therefore, be the same.

The maternal-feminine acts as a boundary, wall, ground, horizon and mirror, as Berry argues, but these boundaries also risk being imprisoning and murderous to the male. This world of male definition has to be modified, she argues, at a foundational level in order for women to live and to dwell. The architectural imagery of *An Ethics of Sexual Difference* is often cited by architectural critics. Chase writes of this quote in the context of the work of Edith Wharton and argues that the threshold or envelope Irigaray cites is one where the decoration of women's bodies

(make-up, jewellery, fashion). It provides a type of protective camouflage, a mimicry in the sense of *mimietisme*, one that women could adopt to subvert the position allocated to them. So, Chase writes, the decoration of women's houses could suggest a potential or threshold to their space.

Grosz quotes Irigaray's work in her discussion of feminism and architectural theory and other architectural theorists have also gestured towards Irigaray's criticism. Grosz questions, assuming Irigaray's criticism, that western philosophy cannot think sexual difference. However, she does not suggest what is necessary for the formulation of a space-time framework suitable for women. What the conditions are under which each sex can have its identity, its corporeality, its place, without giving up a relation to the other? There is no answer to this autonomous, what kinds of encounter does this suggest, what is possible? How would they meet? On what grounds and with what effects would their encounter be possible? Moreover, what kinds of changes, productions and transformations would be effected by their meeting? Each of these questions is specific to each circumstance, each relation to the other, and equally there is no end goal.

The Interweaving of Separate Dwellings

Irigaray questions Heidegger's philosophy parodying Heidegger question of the forgetting of Being. In Heidegger's work Irigaray suggests another way of thinking about life. In a criticism of Heidegger's philosophy, Irigaray writes:

Historically, man has not ceased to project himself forward without questioning what animates him. Leaving his first and final cause to beings anterior or posterior to the living being that he is, he did not place, his cause in himself (*WL*, 119).

This gesture, which defines masculine subjectivity, she argues, induces him to care more about his own becoming than that of the other. Furthermore, she writes: 'From these other living beings, he also draws his source - of Being, of becoming' (*WL*, 119). This is despite the fact that he is engendered by another being. However, there is a way she suggests for a different approach. She

writes:

The blossoming of man requires, in fact, a making and a letting be. In the return of the turning back toward the man that the age of technique as such leads to, technique thus finds its limit and its safeguard - both in the unveiling of the importance of a letting nature be, including for and in culture, and in the fact that nature and its cultivation appear then as irreducible dual and implying a relation between two unities or worlds which make them up (*WL*, 125).

4.6 Irigaray's Philosophy of Sexual Difference, and the Imaginary

To bring women into philosophy, as women, it is the issue of sexual difference that Irigaray argues has to be rethought. However, sexual difference also assists. When Irigaray criticises Western philosophy she finds the shape and rhythm of masculine desire other than the pure rationality or logic supposedly governing philosophical discourses. She finds the male needs and male sexual desires shaping the construction and understanding of the world. In this respect, she argues that theories concerning the neutrality of being, or of neutral experience (for example, in Heidegger's model of *Dasein*) are fantasies of a male dominated culture. However, she writes, in somewhat architectural terms, that man forgets that his body is the threshold and porch of his universe. The architecture of the male body, thus, at least according to Irigaray, shapes meaning in Western culture.

Margaret Whitford uses the term imaginary in explaining this aspect of Irigaray's criticism. It is not, however, a term Irigaray uses, and moreover in *Key Writings*, Irigaray is critical of an over-emphasis on these deconstructive aspects of her philosophy. Whitford argues that theories of the imaginary find roots in both psychoanalytic theory and phenomenology which are influential to Irigaray. Her use of this theory, however, Whitford rightly argues, differs from both psychanalytic and philosophic uses of the term. The imaginary that Irigaray finds dominating Western thought, Whitford suggests, can roughly be defined as similar to unconscious fantasy (although Irigaray is critical of Lacanian psychoanalytic theory). Whitford argues this aspect of criticism in Irigaray's

work also has similarities and is influenced by the works of Merleau-Ponty, Bachelard and Castoriadis.

Whitford suggests that unlike predecessors who refuse to acknowledge sexual difference, or posit an imaginary that is universal, Irigaray proposes sexual difference on the level of the imaginary and linked to a gendered morphology. (In Freudian theory the imaginary is made up from experiences of the surface of the body and in relation to the other). Whitford argues that for Irigaray there is also a female imaginary. Whilst understanding the source of the development of this critique of the imaginary is useful to understanding Irigaray's philosophy it is important to note, Irigaray does not explicitly use the term and also to understand why. The reason for this is similar to the refusal to allow a description of her poetic language in terms of metaphor.

One source of the term imaginary is the work of Sartre. Sartre makes a distinction between the imaginary and perceiving functions of the mind. According to Sartre the imaginary is the object and function of an imagining consciousness, whether in the mind as internal fantasies and daydreams or external objects, as products of the imagination such as books and novels. Whitford argues that Irigaray's imaginary moves freely between phenomenological definitions (the imaginary as a function of conscious experience) and more psychoanalytic definitions (the imaginary as a product of an unconscious fantasizing mind). In *To Be Two* Irigaray writes directly about Sartre's philosophy, Merleau-Ponty and perception. The *visible* and *invisible* are notions she adopts. Merleau-Ponty describes the imaginary as having sometimes an invisible structure which can be viewed in its external and visible manifestations (for example in myth or in works of the imagination). Bachelard could also be seen as another important influence to Irigaray, and Irigaray's use of the elements do seem to echo Bachelard's. For Bachelard, the imaginary is a function of the imagination and it is a faculty of the mind that distorts images provided by perception. A sharp distinction is this made between the imagining and perceiving functions of the mind where knowledge has to purify itself from the images supplied by the imagination in order to achieve genuine objectivity. For Bachelard, the imaginary can offer a seductive solution to

philosophical issues but must be resisted if real knowledge is to be gained. Furthermore, Bachelard classes the imaginary in terms of four elements: earth, air, fire and water and argues that these are primitive categories of the imagining mind. Bachelard suggests that writers have preference for one element over the other and that this is usually the one in which they feel most at home. However, in a statement that could be described as both demonstrating this influence and distinguished from Bachelard, Irigaray writes:

Writing *Amante Marine*, *Passions elementaires*, *L'Oubli de l'air* I had thought of doing a study of our relation to the elements: water, earth, fire and air. I was anxious to go back to those natural matters that constitute the origin of our bodies, of our life, of our environment, the flesh of our passions. I was obeying a deep, dark, and necessary intuition, dark even when it was shared by other thoughts. We still pass our daily lives in a universe that is composed and is known to be composed of four elements: air, water, fire, earth. We are made up of them and we live in them. They determine, more or less freely, our attachments, our affects, our passions, our limits, our aspirations (SG, 57).

Irigaray has some interest in Bachelard's theories, but like her interests and criticism of other philosophers, her method of analysis differs considerably, and whilst Whitford argues Irigaray's use of the elemental mobilises the female imaginary. Irigaray's philosophy, evokes a direct relationality beyond the question of the imaginary, a different relationality with the natural elements, one beyond the confines of the abstract and artificial perception suggested by other phenomenological perspectives and it is the elemental, Nature, that she argues can assist women's becoming. For Irigaray, there are only two categories (rather than the four elements dominating the imaginary of Bachelard's analysis) that of the male and the female, but the elemental does play a part in her criticism.

In *Marine Lover*, for example, Irigaray suggests that the watery element in Nietzsche's work and his flight from water show an unacknowledged nurturant. In her criticism of Heidegger, similarly, the air element is unacknowledged, but she differs significant from Bachelard's belief that imagination and knowledge can be separated. This 'purifying' of knowledge is a need of

masculine subjectivity and the suggestion of a pure rationality depends on masculine claims to neutrality. The purifying knowledge from the elemental is a gesture that corresponds to the construction of masculine subjectivity. Bachelard's belief that knowledge has to purify itself from polluting images is parallel to the splitting from the maternal, and the male claiming universality. The argument has the shape of masculine desire, as Grosz argues, furthermore Irigaray argues there can be no question of achieving this sort of purification as current knowledge is irrevocably marked by the masculine.

The elemental plays an important part in Irigaray's criticism, she argues that it may be necessary to use a language of the elemental to bypass the sophistication of theoretical construction, whose imaginary is so well concealed. The elemental allows Irigaray to suggest sexual difference and go beyond the dominant sexual economy. Whitford writes of the elemental language in Irigaray work that these terms are pliable, accessible to the imagination, available to women's private imaginations, but this is part of a misunderstanding, air, for example, does not have a metaphorical significance in Irigaray's work. An other aspect of this reading, Whitford argues, is that one is less likely to confuse the imaginary with real objects, such as the body. However, in this way, Whitford's exploration of Irigaray's work in terms of the imaginary has an agenda, that is to say, to save Irigaray's philosophy from the accusation of essentialism. The elemental does, however, have a relation to the pre-Socratics but Irigaray's philosophy is not a return to the pre-Socratic world view, at least as commonly understood (or understood through Heidegger's reading).

Irigaray's use of the elemental is an attempt to return to an experience that is not yet suggested by language(s). It suggests a direct or different relation to Nature and ourselves, both interior and exterior. The elemental has in its simplicity a way of suggesting sexual difference that theoretical accounts cannot necessarily give. For example, Irigaray argues that whilst poetry can inspire it can suggest a path that it is only in relation, in (sexual) difference, beginning with sexual difference in relation with Nature or the other, that women can find themselves in their own ways. The elemental language can suggest and evoke a 'space' more open to possibilities for women to

rebuild cultural identities as women, but it is in relation that this is built.

Another source of Irigaray's influence with regards the imaginary, according to Whitford, is the work of Althusser and Castoriadis. Castoriadis philosophy provides an interesting comparison with Irigaray, Castoriadis attacked Lacan's definition of the imaginary for its conservatism and proposed a definition of the imaginary more primordial than that conceptualised by Lacan. Unlike Lacan, Castoriadis deploys the concept of an imaginary to understand the persistence of certain social formations with the purpose, in addition, of changing them. One of the terms he gives to the imaginary is *magma*, Whitford argues that this theorisation of the imaginary, which covers both the imaginary as primordial creative source and the imaginary as social formation, is probably the closest to Irigaray's imaginary (if that is she does discuss an imaginary), that, as Whitford also argues, Castoriadis did not discuss sexual difference as a dimension of the *magma*.

A number of philosophical influences shape Irigaray's work. Her influence by psychoanalytic theory cannot be dismissed, despite Irigaray's own troubled relation to the psychoanalytic establishment. Whitford also argues somewhat problematically perhaps that psychoanalysis has to be a significant influence in Irigaray's criticism of culture, at the level of the imaginary. Whitford argues that understanding the link between the morphology of the body is best explained through Lacan (and Irigaray's criticism of Lacan) and his analysis of ego development.

Irigaray was initially trained as a Lacanian psychoanalyst. Her criticism of his, and Freud's theories, caused significant problems for her in her early career. Whitford argues that her idea of the imaginary is primarily reclaimed and redeveloped from Lacan, for whom, the imaginary served a very conservative theory and offered little hope for social change as far as women were concerned. For Lacan there is nothing outside the symbolic order, there is no pre-discursive experience. The feminine has no imaginary of her own and there can be no female symbolic. Irigaray criticizes Lacan and Freud firstly because both are unaware of the philosophical influences on their 'scientific' discourses. Psychoanalysis, she argues, is unaware of the historical determinants of its own theory. Secondly, she writes that psychoanalysis is unaware of the unconscious fantasies

which govern it, and also not sufficiently able to analyse these fantasies. Thirdly, psychoanalysis is patriarchal and reflects a social order that does not acknowledge its debt to the mother. The phallogocentric basis of psychoanalysis is thereby taken as truth and there can be no female identity. Psychoanalysis is blind to its own assumptions and its presumptions of a neutral being, in itself, a philosophical concept which Irigaray's work challenges.

Freud, for example, as Irigaray argues, takes the development of the little boy as norm and assumes a similar model must apply to the little girl. This suggests that the little girl is similar to the little boy in her development and is differentiated only on desire, but not in body. She writes that Freud himself was enmeshed in a patriarchal ideology, in a power structure which allowed him to suggest that the patriarchal historical situation was natural, was nature. Sexual difference has never been adequately thought by culture, and Freud is as much blind to this as philosophers. Nevertheless, psychoanalytic theory does present Irigaray with some tools for an analysis, and her relation to psychoanalysis, despite her criticism, is more complex than a rejection. Her criticism of Lacanian psychoanalysis, in particular, has to be noted as it suggests that analysts (at least those a part of the Freudian Institution in France) impose such a rigid grid of interpretation on material it makes it virtually impossible for them to hear anything which does not conform to its set of pre-determined structure, for example it prevents the possibility of a feminine identity.

The imaginary is a psychoanalytic concept developed by Lacan in his reading of Freud. The imaginary according to Lacan is the moment in the formation of the ego, or I, when the baby whose experience of its body until then had been fragmented and incoherent is enabled by a 'mirror' (an image of himself mirrored from a parental or other figure) to see a reflection of itself as a whole body or unity with which it can then identify, in anticipation. This concept has its roots in Freud's observations as much as Lacan's. According to Freud the ego does not exist from the beginning of life. Rather, the ego is developed as a coherent organisation of mental processes. Personal identity is constructed out of a lack of preceding organisation of mental processes. This preceding stage, this lack, is described by psychoanalysis under a number of terms, including undifferentiation and

fragmented. The ego develops, it is not given from the beginning of life. Moreover, it develops in the context of relationships with parental figure which 'mirror' this development. The ego is totally affected by the child's relationships, and importantly, since it is something that develops, this means it is also capable of modification - an important point of psychoanalysis. A second point to note is that the ego is not wholly conscious, part of the ego is unconscious, and a third important point is that according to Freud, at least, the ego is a bodily ego, however, not sufficiently bodily to take account of sexual difference. This is explained by Whitford, where she writes that Freud's comment on a bodily ego is demonstrated in a footnote.

The ego is a bodily ego, derived from its experience of bodily sensations, and expressed in the form of fantasy. Whitford writes that Freud describes at several points how, through fantasy, the ego represents itself as the equivalent of bodily activities and is described in case studies as such. Furthermore, in Freud's essay 'Negation', which Whitford cites, the intellectual faculty of judgement, the capacity to assign truth or fiction, is traced to a primitive type of thinking, where everything is in terms of the body. He writes:

The function of judgement is concerned in the main with two sorts of decisions. It affirms or disaffirms the possession by a thing of a particular attribute, and it asserts or disputes that a presentation has an existence in reality. This attribute to be decided about may have been good or bad, useful or harmful. Expressed in the language of the oldest - the oral - instinctual impulses, the judgement is: 'I should like to eat this' or 'I should like to spit it out' and put more generally: 'I should like to take this into myself and to keep that out'. That is to say: 'It shall be inside me' or '...it shall be outside me (Freud, 1989. 666).

Whitford thus writes that the Freudian account of a bodily ego is to a certain extent lost in Lacan's theory. He writes that this type of thinking (to take in = true, to spit out + false) arises from an imaginary game, learnt in relation to parental figures. To judge something is true in fantasy is to swallow it, to judge something is false is to spit it out, but the fantasy itself is neither true nor false. These judgements belong to a different order, that of the imaginary. For Lacan, representations in

fantasy are not necessarily accurate representations of the body but interpretations of them.

Whitford's arguments and interpretations of Irigaray's influences and methods are important to understanding her work, at a certain but limited level, it has to be reiterated that Irigaray herself states that she does not use the term imaginary. The term symbolic is also used in a very precise and fundamental way that returns it to one of its originary meanings. Furthermore, the arguments surrounding the imaginary is a way that Whitford responds to the question of essentialism overemphasising that Irigaray is not an essentialist if her work is understood within the framework of the imaginary.

In Whitford's discussion of Freud's essay 'Negation', comparing this citation with her writing it is evident that whilst Irigaray is critical of Freud and Lacan, it is to suggest and construct the possibility of another way of being that allows sexual difference to emerge and grow. Breathing suggests a different rhythm and a different truth. The imaginary is not a term she uses as it can maintain the 'abstraction' of masculine models of truth. It is a direct and different relationality, that Irigaray seeks to evoke.

Whitford argues that in *Speculum* Irigaray criticises Freud applying a theory of the imaginary to his writing. Freud's theories, she writes, are shaped by masculine prejudices. In *Speculum* Irigaray criticizes the relation of self and other, where the other acts as 'mirror' as an objectified relation to the other. In the flat mirror model, the other is represented as a lack, she argues that in the flat mirror model the other is cannot be woman but only a fantasy of woman constructed by a masculine dominated culture. The body which is reflected in this flat mirror is not the body of the bodily sensations of the woman, rather the fragmented set of bodily sensations and the imaginary body subtending subjectivity in Lacan's theory is either the male body or else a defective male body without sexual organs (the female). The mirror model privileges the visual and thus the visible difference of the male. The flat mirror does not reflect the sexual organs or the sexual specificity of the woman - other than as lack.

The other words, according to Irigaray's criticism of Lacan, the shape of the body that

shapes the imaginary (or dominant cultural fantasies) that shapes the construction of meaning, of what is true and false, is the male body, affirmed in such a way by Lacan's theories to deny women values associated with her own drives, desires and relations. Furthermore, Whitford argues that the imaginary of Western thought is characterised by the principle of identity, and consequently the principle of non-contradiction. The imaginary body necessitates a type of thinking characterised by binarism, as if everything has to be either one thing or another. All these principles are based on the possibility of individuating or distinguishing one thing from another. Irigaray explores this issue in *This Sex Which Is Not One* where she writes:

The *one* of form, of the individual, of the (male) sexual organ, of the proper name, of the proper meaning . . . supplants, while separating and dividing, that contact of the *at least two* (lips) which keeps woman in touch with herself, but without any possibility of distinguishing what is touched from what is touched (TS, 26).

For the female, for her desire, Irigaray argues that there is no possibility of distinguishing what is touching from what is touched. For the female the desire for individuation is different. For the female, Irigaray argues, identity is fluid. Whilst the maternal female (as the mirror model, immobilised and controlled) underlies the possibilities of identity within patriarchal models, the fluid logic of the feminine cannot be represented. In one of the only references to the imaginary in her work, Irigaray writes:

Perhaps it is time to return to that repressed entity, the female imaginary. So woman does not have a sex organ? She has at least two of them, but they are not identifiable as ones. Indeed she has many more. Her sexuality always at least double, goes even further, it is plural. Is this the way culture is seeking to characterise itself now? Is this the way texts write themselves/are written now? (TS, 28)

The problem for women in contemporary culture, thought in terms of the imaginary, is that the male imaginary excludes (in its simplistic type of thinking) all that is not of its imaginary body. The female has a peculiar function to represent what is outside - other. Values associated with and

specific to women cannot be entertained within this model. There is one and other. Using the language of bodily fantasy, the woman that is in the system must be derivative and defective example. Irigaray writes that she functions as a hole in the symbolic process, but in Irigaray's suggestion of the *at least two lips*, woman does have a sexuality other than a lack.

Sexual difference, for Irigaray, is repressed in Western philosophy, it is the residue left over in the construction of a masculine order. The emergence of distinctions, identities and social organisations always implies something else, the original state of non-differentiation from which they have emerged. For Irigaray, this outside, non-graspable corresponds to the feminine, however, if these values are to deploy themselves, it cannot be as the masculine world is constructed. The female subject needs to be defined on her own terms otherwise the values of the masculine world prohibit her existence. It is only in this way that women can avoid re-assimilation into the current order. The elemental suggests a way to return to a more originary state of relation, and an escape from patriarchal prohibitions. The elemental can also nourish women's becoming in relation.

Intimate Spaces

The intertwining of the two in the approach to the other Irigaray describes in *The Way of Love* suggests a different sort of building and dwelling, which also prepares for a third, for a world born of the relation between two. She writes of this third: 'It also takes place in a letting be and a letting come to us what reaches us through the other: already thans to desire but also through the gift that he, or she, offers us of self, of the world, and of ourselves as welcomed and gathered by him, or her' (KW, 28). This is a way without seizure, capture or comprehension, the other remains a mystery, and in so doing touches us at a level that exceeds that of the artificiality constructed by masculine economies. She writes:

Drawing near necessitates allying two intimacies, not submitting one to the other. Attraction is often awaened by the difference between two worlds, by the mystery that the one represents for the other. To cover the other with the figments of my imagination favours

without doubt a violation or a theft of this mystery between us (...) To include the other in my universe prevents meeting with the other, whereas safeguarding the obscurity and the silence that the other remains for me aids discovering proximity (*WL*, 29).

It has to be emphasized that unlike Heidegger, Irigaray argues that this proximity is not the same as that with the Thing. She argues that the relation with things is not reciprocal. She writes: 'That things impose on us a certain resistance does not imply that they cultivate with themselves and for themselves an intimacy of their own, like that of which a human is capable' (*WL*, 29).

Poetic dwelling, for Irigaray, means finding another approach to dwelling, another means of approaching which does not cover the other with our own images and representations, that she '...does not cover each one and each thing with a same' (*WL*, 29). This new approach to dwelling suggests building a new encounter with the other. She writes:

...it advances step by step towards a un-covering, of oneself and the of the other, which reopens the place where each one takes shelter to prepare the moment of an encounter. From this, each one will receive oneself and will turn back, modified, toward a dwelling that will need to transform its frame in order to secure the memory of becoming - of oneself, of the other, of the world (*WL*, 30).

In order to develop a new approach requires the invention of a new language or gestures that will open the horizon of patriarchal cultures, the horizon of one alone. She also writes:

The approach is possible only in the recognition of the irreducible difference between the one and the other. This, in fact, gives access to a path from the one to the other and to the sharing of a still free energy and space. Only in what is still independent of the influence of someone, may proximity take place as event and advent. Something comes to pass which does not belong as one's own to the one or to the other. Something arrives which did not exist and that the bringing together of worlds produces (*KW*, 30).

In contrast to Heidegger, dwelling is not an 'unveiling' as such. She writes: '...it is certainly not

when unveiling that we can protect what the other is as other nor prepare the path going to meet with them' (KW, 30). For Irigaray, dwelling is that offered to the other in the silence of the hearth, in the mystery of thinking, in a restraint of giving, in a inwardness that also safeguards the becoming of oneself. It remains, in part, in darkness and silence, invisible and without words. She writes: 'Irreducible to use, we cannot apprehend the other in order to provide a dwelling for him, or her. This place of hospitality for the other becomes built as much as, if not more than, we build it deliberately' (KN, 30).

Building, even the interior *building* that Irigaray suggests is thus not planned in advance. Rather, she writes that '...it demands that we accept that it takes place without our unilaterally overseeing its construction' (KW, 30).

4.7 Heidegger's Language:

Julian Young argues in *Heidegger's Later Philosophy* that understanding how Heidegger thinks 'Truth' is one way to understanding Heidegger's philosophy of Being. One of Heidegger's statements about Being is that it constitutes '...the hidden essence of truth' (Heidegger, 1966, cited by Young). Young further suggests that one of Heidegger's best restatements of his philosophy occurs in 1930 in his paper 'On the Essence of Truth' a paper Young describes as marking a transition which marks a distinction between his early and later work; and another restatement of his philosophy of Truth takes place in 'The Origin of the Work of Art' which, as already stated, has some significance to a discussion of Heidegger's influence to art and architectural theory. Heidegger's questioning of philosophies of Truth begins, in 'The Origin of the Work of Art' with the simple what tells us what the facts are to which propositions are to be compared for correspondence? What tells us what we perceive as facts? This question challenges traditional ideas of truth as a property of statements which correspond to the facts. Heidegger's philosophy on Truth asks us to consider: Who or what tells us or shows us what the facts are, or who or what allows us to.

determine the facts? Young illustrates through some examples, that, as Heidegger argues, the correlation of words with bits or reality is not sufficient to explain what is meant by truth. He writes:

Normally, of course, communication flows smoothly and we do not suffer from the kinds of misunderstandings (...) Communication is usually unproblematic. But that is only because we share the assumption that the things named and pointed to are whole natural objects rather than their surfaces or the spaces they occupy (...) it is only because of such a background assumption that we know what kinds of things, and hence what kinds of facts, are under discussion. Heidegger calls such a background understanding a 'horizon', a horizon of 'disclosure', ('revealing', 'unconcealment'). sometimes echoing Nietzsche, he calls it a perspective (Young, 2002, 7).

It is this background understanding which allows truth to be a correspondence. The possibility of a proposition being true or false depends of it. Young writes, the reality that becomes intelligible to us depends upon:

...there being things to which they [propositions] refer and facts about those things to which they may or may not correspond, and since the identification of such a realm of facts depends on a horizon of disclosure which alone makes it possible, truth as correspondence is dependent on a something more 'primordial'. This condition of the possibility of propositions, of truth Heidegger calls 'truth as disclosure' or often, using the Greek word, 'aletheia' - *a-letheia*, bringing out of 'oblivion' or concealment (Young, 2002, 7).

Truth, depends on a background understanding, or a horizon, however, Heidegger also argues that truth is always also concealment as much as it is unconcealment, this is how, Heidegger argues, it makes truth as correspondence possible. He writes:

The horizon of whole natural objects puts out of consideration blocks, conceals, 'denies' both the horizon of surfaces and that of spaces. But this means that horizons of disclosure also block access to certain truths. If our talk is confined to whole nature objects then truths about their surfaces or spaces are not allowed to appear. This is why Heidegger says that 'truth is un-truth' (not to be confused with falsehood) since here always belongs to it the reservoir [originating region] of the not-yet-uncovered, the uncovered in the sense of concealment (Young, 2002, 8)

Youngs examples demonstrate that simply saying, 'Cat' stands for that, and pointing, cannot be enough to understand and determine reference, it depends on a shared horizon. However, the horizon that Heidegger refers to is not some particular optional shared understanding but a feature of existence, it is as Young writes:

...a feature of my existence, something which as a member of the current epoch of the historical culture to which I belong, I inhabit as a matter of necessity. Embodied in the language I speak - language understood broadly as social practice (...) it constitutes for me and my fellows the limit of what, to us, is intelligible. It is, as it were, the horizon of all our horizons (Young, 2002, 8).

This is why Irigaray's criticism of perception and language has importance. In 'The Origin of the Work of Art' Heidegger also calls horizon, 'world', citing Heidegger, Young writes, this is '...world in the ontological sense which is not to be confused with 'world' in the 'ontic' sense of the totality of beings that are disclosed by world in the first sense' (Heidegger, 1966, 76). Young also suggests that Heidegger calls it the throwness in which one finds oneself already.

Heidegger argues that world is the throwness we share, a feature of existence. However, Young also writes that to suppose that it, as a historical-cultural epoch, limits understanding is, '...the height of irrational epistemological chauvinism' (Young, 2002, 9). That is to say, whilst truth is dependent on a shared background understanding, it is not limited by this background, by this horizon as it is always also un-truth: Whilst horizons of disclosure are dependent on social practices and relative to particular cultures, it does not follow that truth is. Young writes: 'That the medium of discovery is 'subjective' does not entail that what is discovered is dependent on us' (Young, 2002, 9). Once the horizon is understood as having an historically and culturally relative character the conclusion must be that in addition to what is intelligible to us, reality possesses facets that are unintelligible to us, but that would be disclosed to us if we were to inhabit horizons other than the one we do. These horizons we cannot either inhabit or conceive. Truth, thus, can be understood as concealment, as well as unconcealment. Ultimate truth, is, as Young writes, ineluctably mysterious. However, for Irigaray, this horizon remains inadequately thought. In 'The Origin of the Work of Art' Heidegger introduces terms he calls 'earth' and 'world' as that which is illuminated in the clearing. Truth is a complex theory consisting of earth, world, the horizon, and man. Truth,

Heidegger, calls 'a constellation' as Young records, Heidegger argues to achieve insight into that which is we must '...look into the constellation of truth' (Heidegger, 1975, 33).

The Crossroads

In Irigaray's reconceptualization each one is receptacle for the other, the 'space' built, but built without mastery, or which, in part, builds itself in neither inside nor outside, neither internal nor corresponding to an external thing. Dwelling, for Irigaray, is subtle and complex approach which rethinks our relation to Truth and reality, even Truth as Heidegger thinks it.

Dwelling, as Heidegger thinks it, is not dwelling for Irigaray, it lacks the perspective necessary to perceive reality, vision loses its ability to perceived the real. In 'Being-Two: How Many Eyes Have We?' Irigaray suggests the need for binocular vision. She writes in her criticism of Heidegger:

Thus, to dwell is, according to Holderlin, for example, a fundamental trait of the human condition. But being able to dwell would be tied to the act of constructing: without building, there would be no dwelling. A house, however, could be made of language and to construct could correspond to a poetic activity. To construct only in order to construct nevertheless does not suffice for dwelling (*WL*, 144).

The difficulty with rethining dwelling in this way, Irigaray argues, is that there is simply no external measure that can access the validity of what is built. Of her rethining truth, she writes:

The light that then shones is that of an intimate sun which supports life and maes it grow without illuminating it with a diurnal light. Illumination does not separate from the discrete warmth of friendship, of love, that delimits the dite of dwelling around its hearth (*WL*, 169-170).

Being and being

The terns Being (capitalized) and being (lower case) are complex terms in Heidegger's thought and the distinction is not simple. Heidegger, writing in German, does not distinguish in this way. Young,

however, suggests, that Heidegger uses the terms B/being in two central senses, distinguished by the capitalisation and lower case. Heidegger, he argues, uses being to signify presence or presencing and this is contrasted with what presences. Young states:

Since the essence of a being [das Seinde] is that it is something present, noticeable, capable of being of 'concern' to us, 'what presences' is just another name for beings. While beings are 'ontic', being, i.e. presence, as, not a being but rather in a yet-to-be-explored sense, the underlying 'ground' of beings, is 'ontological' (Young, 2002, 10-11).

Thus, an ontic investigation is a study of being, for example, a biological investigation (in this sense a study of what or who tells us what the facts are); an ontological investigation, is an investigation of the conditions of there being, beings as such. Young explains this distinction writing that just as the visual field is necessary to their being any objects of sight at all, so presence is necessary to there being anything at all that presences. He writes: 'Only being renders it possible that beings should show up at all' (Young 2002, 11). That is to say, and as already stated, a background is necessary for beings to be understood as such,

...that which, as ground, already underlies everything present as that presence (...) and thus 'legitimises' that latter as beings, (...) in the sense of [being their] authoritative, underlying ground (Heidegger, 1998, 300).

being (with a small b) is synonymous with the horizon of disclosure and world in the ontological sense. Being (with a small b) is that which transcends beings, determines the way in which they show up. Young writes that in this sense being is the fundamental disclosure embodied in the linguistic practices of a given culture in a given epoch, being exists only through human being: Only man open for being, allows this to arrive as presence. Presence needs the open of a clearing and remains as such through this dependence given over to the human being. This does not mean that human beings are prior to being, but, as Heidegger suggests, equiprimordial. To sum up, being (with a small b) is the essence of a being, and something capable of concern to us. That there is a being depends on an underlying ground as that which allows or grants presence. Being (with a

small b) is that which transcends beings, it is a shared horizon of disclosure. However, as already stated, being suggests also all cannot be disclosed.

Young argues that there are a number of passages in Heidegger's work where perhaps a little reluctantly, but explicitly, Heidegger says that *Sein* (B/being) has two sense. One is in 'What are Poets For?' and the other 'On the Origin of the Work of Art'. In the former, Young states that Heidegger adopts Rilke's image of a sphere which like the moon has a lighted side and a dark side. The lighted side corresponding to world and the dark side to earth. (Young, however, also suggests this image should not be taken too seriously.) Referring to this 'globe of being', Heidegger defines two senses of *Sein*, being in the sense of a lightening-unifying (illuminating or making-visible) presence, and *Sein* in the sense of beings in the plenitude of all their facets. Young writes:

Since our world-disclosure is 'but the side facing us of an openness which surrounds us; an openness which is filled with views of the appearance of what are to our re-presenting objects, we need, says Heidegger, a special term to designate this openness. In the 'Conversation' [on a country path] the term chosen is not 'Being', but rather the mysterious 'that which regions'. But it is clear that this must mean 'Being' rather than 'being' since its referent 'can be thought of neither as ontic nor as ontological (Young, 2002, 14-15).

Being, Young argues, is sometimes discussed as unintelligibility as opposed to being as intelligibility. Whilst *Sein* is world in the ontological sense, in a different and even perhaps more important sense, Young argues, it lies in the heart of earth. He writes that *Sein* is earth and world taken together, or in other words, earth and world is that which really is, taken in the infinite of all its facets.

Irigaray writes that in her own work, in using the word "être" which translates as 'to be' and correspond to Being in Heidegger's philosophy, she intends to say that the human being is irreducible to the factuality of an "étant" or being. She writes:

Être - to be - , at least in my text, would express a conscious and thoughtful assumption of the fact of existing, this, an assumption which ought to always occur in the present and which provides for a bridge between past, present, and future (see *WL*, xiii).

Irigaray thus describes this as one of the most important tasks for humanity. In contrast, however, to Heidegger and in criticism of his thought, she writes:

I discovered that, in fact, we cannot be - "être" (Being) - without such an "etre" (Being) becoming an essence, or falling back into a simple substance, outside of a being in relation with an other how is different, and first of all with the other of sexual difference (*WL*, xiii).

Irigaray argues that the relation between two undoes any suggestion of fixed essence or substance. In such a relation she argues that we can have access to the reality of our existence. She writes: '...to an existence which would not be a simple passivity, notably with regard to the construction of space, time, and the relation with the other(s)' (*WL*, xiii). This existence is always in becoming, she writes, '...even if it exists, or ought to exist, in every instant' (*WL*, xiii).

How does Heidegger Think About Essence?

The question of essence is one that can be addressed through Heidegger's philosophy as also intimated in the discussion of truth. Furthermore, the question of essence, as crudely argued by feminist theorists, is bound up in subject and object relations, a relationality Heidegger's work seeks to overcome. Heidegger distinguishes three senses of 'essence': firstly, *quidditas*, or the 'what'; secondly, enabling, or the condition of possibility; and thirdly, the ground of enabling, the ground to the possibility of our apprehension of Being. It is the third sense that is of interest to feminist discussions of Heidegger. (Young writes that being is the condition of the possibility of our apprehension of beings, and Being is the ground of being. This is the reason Heidegger refers, as Young suggests, to Being as 'the Origin' or 'Source'.) Young defines the distinction between being and Being stating '...while being is the transcendental ground of our world of beings, Beings, as the generative ground of being, is its generative ground' (Young, 2002, 16). Nevertheless, Irigaray's philosophy seeks to rediscover the being/Being question as the question of sexual difference.

Heidegger's reading of nature in Aristotle's philosophy suggests that ideas of nature in Western philosophy have always corresponded to the question of being. The role of nature in Irigaray's philosophizing also suggests the significance of her influence by Heidegger's thinking. That said, when asked: 'Could you specify up to what point you leave him to go on your own way?' Irigaray responds that

I leave him at the very beginning because of the monosubjective nature of his discourse. I believe that the subject isn't one but two, because this corresponds to reality. Western philosophy lacks a philosophy that deals with both reality and life in their relationship with nature, the body proper, and the other, or other subjects. I don't believe, as Heidegger does, that life finds its limit only in death; it first finds it in the relationship with the other. The fact that we are two subjects, that being is in two not one, implies a limit to the I and to the you which determines the horizon of a world, or rather of two worlds. Heidegger has a hard time thinking this because he is locked up in a "house of being", as he calls it (*WD*, 132).

Despite Heidegger's discussion of 'nature' as corresponding to the question of beings as a whole, and Irigaray's suggestion of a faithfulness to his work, her own position with regards 'nature' is clearly somewhat different to Heidegger's. In a paper in *Sexes and Genealogies* 'The Other and Thinking about Difference', she writes: '...as long as we are still living, we are sexually differentiated. Otherwise we are dead' (*SG*, 107). For Irigaray, in contrast to Heidegger, *there is* sexual (or rather sexual difference) difference and it should be lived in a way to facilitate growth. In a longer quote which expands on this issue, Irigaray writes:

The question of whether language has a sex could be subtitled: Are we still alive? Alive enough to rise above the level of a machine, a mechanism, to exert an energy that escapes the mastery of the subject? Are we alive enough to create, engender, life, form, spirit? If we are to remain alive and regenerate ourselves as living beings, we need sexual difference (...) There is a physiological and morphological complementarity between the sexes. Why deny it? This complementarity should be lived in such a way as to facilitate growth. But in our becoming here has been no sexual difference established on the level of the *subject*. This is the opportunity that still lies before us, particularly in our thinking (*SG*, 107).

Nature provides a resource, and this is a resource that has to be cultivated in order to sustain our

lives and growth. Nature is also, however, sexed and two. There are philosophical traditions, of which she also suggests correspond more to the oriental traditions, where a respect for nature as limited resource has also lead to an account of 'natures powers' (fertility and growth, for example) in sexual terms. However, this is not generally a character of the occidental tradition. This respect for nature also leads to a validation of the rhythmic character of natures powers, of its continual becoming, and she also writes, that in these traditions in can 'inform' us. In her own poetic terms, Irigaray writes of nature: 'It is always damp also, that is to say capable of touching us without inflicting harm' (SG, 108). It thus suggests another sort of illumination. It can inform us to different concepts of 'difference' also; she writes: 'Nature is also regulated by alternations that do not truly contradict each other. Spring is not autumn, night is not day' (SG, 108).

Informed by, or interpreting nature's rhythms, Irigaray finds that there is a different sort of difference that is not suggested by Heidegger's philosophy, or by the Western tradition which includes the contemporary Continental tradition or poetry of Rilke or Holderlin. In the opposition of Spring and Autumn, for example, she writes that there is a rhythm of growth where both poles are necessary. This is not the opposition, she argues, we understand from patriarchal logic.

For Irigaray a patriarchal logic has covered nature, and Heidegger's philosophy in its discussion of 'nature' simply illustrates this. Sexual difference, as conceived in patriarchal traditions, and subjectivity shaped within these traditions, as she has argued in the myth of Antigone, mean that 'man' (or the subject) is torn between a primary matter, unmarked by sex (that is to say a cloaked nature), and the other (yet again a cloaked feminine). This for Irigaray is an economy of 'sameness' where 'man' is ever protected from 'powers of nature' and from meeting with the other. She writes: '...any operation is an error if the self is equal to one and not to two, if it comes down to sameness and a split in sameness and ignores the other as other' (SG, 115). Thus, for Irigaray, Heidegger's philosophy is held within the horizon of one single subject. As such it cannot think sexual difference. Being-two however approaches the question of being so as to provide the possibility of sexual difference, co-existence and sexual belonging.

Being-two also requires a reconsideration of communication and of language. The fundamental opposition between nature and culture is rethought in being-two so that the subject does not constitute his or her self in opposition to nature (or the other) by as Irigaray writes '*by means of nature*'. Irigaray writes that:

Nature represents to some extent the preferred instrument of becoming female, an instrument which merges with oneself and is not external with oneself as it is of ten for the male (...) It is a question of coming to terms with nature in a fashion which is not dominating but measured, rhythmic, harmonious, growing, fruitful (*PP*, 44 authors own translation)

Thus whilst Heidegger is dependent on the subordination of the maternal and the feminine in the construction of his model of existence – Dasein: Irigaray writes: 'I cannot follow him in this house of language for fear of loosing my female I' (*WD*, 132). Whilst Heidegger tries to master nature, Irigaray writes, he does not succeed. The question of being, is a question of love, this has to be by nature a question of love between two who are equal and different, and not one in a relation of mastery of the other or Nature.

'A Chance to Live', one of Irigaray's papers in *Thinking the Difference*, explores the cultural limitations of understandings of technology. Irigaray argues in this paper, in a similar way to Heidegger, that 'scientific-thinking' (subject and object relations) is not an authentic mode of being-in-the-world. However, unlike Heidegger, she criticizes the patriarchal foundations of this thinking and argues that this 'war-like method of organizing relations' has a sex, albeit unacknowledged. She writes: '...the age of technology has given weapons of war a power that exceeds the conflicts and risk taken among patriarchs' (*TTD*, 5). The masculine has exceeded its power and, as a result Irigaray argues that we are constantly subjected to a mental and physical aggression corresponding to subject-object thinking dominating conventional science and its associated disciplines. In this manner, she writes, that patriarchal cultures '...make it men's duty or right to fight in order to feed themselves, to inhabit a place and to defend their property, and their family and their country as their property' (*TTD*, 5). Consequently, within these cultural structures

women are not responsible subjects, they do not embody the valued characteristics, and they are classed as children, seen themselves as property (as are children); and, whilst women remain children, whilst they are not responsible subject, nothing can change to improve sexual relations. Irigaray argues, to overcome this ignorance women have to rediscover their own values, and themselves and find their own limits. In this way, she also argues that women can help to redefine masculinity. Irigaray writes:

So man must kill to eat, must increase their domination of nature in order to live or to survive, must seek on the most distant stars what no longer exists here, must defend by any means the small patch of land they are exploiting here or over there. Man, always go further, exploit further, seize more, without knowing where they are going. Men seek what they think they need without considering who they are and how their identity is defined by what they do (*TTD*, 5).

Both men and women are products of culture(s) but men, Irigaray argues, are products of their own culture(s) and also a little blinded to its limits. However, she argues that their relative exclusion from society women may, from this perspective, reflect back a more objective image of society than can men. Irigaray suggests that being in relation, women prefer to be in a non-hierarchical relation to men. What is significant in this observation is that in theory all other types of minority potentially are in a hierarchical relation (in the sense that these relations are pure products of patriarchal cultures). Irigaray writes of minority relations:

It is with a thoroughly patriarchal condensation, either unconscious or cynical, that politicians and theoreticians take an interest in them while exploiting them, with every possible risk of the master-slave relationship between overturned (*TTD*, 6).

This means that women, in a re-recognition of sexual difference, have more than any other minority the potential to initiate cultural change. Sexual difference, difference between two who are irreducible to each other, suggests a non-hierarchical relation. Consciously introducing this relation to dialogue and to culture, thus, has a potential transformative effect.

Sexualization is the essential characteristic of living matter but has not been cultivated by

our societies. This has led to the privileging of one sex in contemporary cultures. The father-son relationship, a relation between those who are the same dominates culture and its values. This is because, Irigaray argues, firstly, the lines of descent are not counterbalanced by a relation between genders and; secondly, exclusively male lines of descent make dialogue between male and female lines, masculine and feminine genders impossible.

Exploring the patriarchal origins of our current economies provides one means to explore the threats posed by technology's exploitation of nature, and resources. Rediscovering the sexualization of living matter, of being is a way of resolving the dominance of patriarchy. Hence, she writes:

We live in a society of men-amongst-themselves that operates according to the exclusive respect for the ancestry of sons and fathers and of competition between brothers (...) Daughters are physically and culturally separated from their mothers in order to enter male families or male institutions. The family, in the strict sense of the word, school, business, the state, information systems and most forms of recreation are organized according to male economy and law. Sexualization, which is one of the essential characteristics of living matter, has not been cultivated in our societies, for centuries, and our age of technology is attempting to eliminate it (...) human female identity is either unknown or no longer known. Society and culture operate according to male modes - genealogical and sexual (SG, 9).

Rediscovering the sexualization of living matter, of nature, of difference, is another way to address the violent inequalities of contemporary culture(s) and the exploitation of natural resources. For Heidegger, Dasein projects itself towards the possibilities that come towards it, that is its nature. Dasein is ek-static by nature. Irigaray, however, suggests that ecstasy remains sensible. She suggests a sensible transcendental. She suggests rather than ecstasy an intensity. The subject, for Irigaray, is in relation to a sensible other (or nature) as an other I can never know. That is to say, the other is recognized as sensible, living, and sharing in an economy of energy. Respecting energy, cultivating and sharing energy corresponds to a different sort of love of the other, than that generally known in the Western tradition. Respecting and cultivating energy in the one and in the other could

also create a flesh or dwelling that belongs to neither one nor the other as a passage to another culture in sexual difference. Irigaray writes:

A single Whole cannot hold together everyone and everything. It is, in fact, difficult to shelter another in one's own house (...) A home needs to be appropriate to the one who dwells in it - it is the place of preservation of one's own intimacy (*WL*, 158).

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1 The Question of Love

Love has been a recent theme of a number of feminist and cultural theorists in recent years. Julia Kristeva, for example, writes about religious love in her work *In the Beginning Was Love, Psychoanalysis and Faith* and secular love in *Tales of Love*. In *The Samurai*, Kristeva writes: 'There are no love stories anymore. And yet women want them (...) and so do men when they're not ashamed of being tender and sad like women (Kristeva, 1992a, 1). Talking about love Kristeva also writes, '...people think you are a little bit ethereal or that you are not aware that there are struggles and hate and violence in the world and so on. Or you are a little bit religious or something like that' (Gubermann, 1996, 1). Kaja Silverman in *Threshold of the Visible World* writes that love until recently has not figured prominently in either psychoanalytic or philosophical contexts. She argues: 'It has always seemed to lack respectability as an object or intellectual inquiry - to represent the very quintessence of kitsch' (Silverman, 1996, 1). Describing her study of Freud, Silverman argues that she found no definite model for conceptualizing love: 'All that emerged with absolute clarity (...) was that love is untimely bound up with the function of idealization' (Silverman, 1996, 1). With the popularity of questions of love in contemporary theory, Renata Salceci similarly discusses desire in cultural practices from within a Lacanian psychoanalytic framework in *(Per)versions of Love and Hate*; but like Kristeva's criticisms of contemporary culture, Salceci's theme is sexual love. bell hooks in *all about love* describes the problems of love for women but limits her discussion to her own autobiographic experiences within the prejudices of contemporary culture. Even amongst commentators on the work of Derrida, John Caputo, in 'For the Love of the Things Themselves' suggests deconstruction as a work of love, in particular discussing Derrida's influence by the work of Emmanuel Levinas. Thus, far from being a theme unexplored by contemporary culture, love is an issue far from unprecedented in philosophy. David Farrell Krell, as a

contemporary example, and referring to the works of Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Emmanuel Levinas and Irigaray asks, in *Archeticture*: 'What would things be like in a world where in order to make something one has to make it with something, as though making it with someone' (Krell, 1997, 15). *Tic* rather than *techne* is the word he uses for this reconsidered mode of (re)production. Irigaray has commented on the issue of love, in Freud, Plato, Levinas and many other philosophers and it is even possible to read Irigaray's work from its beginning as a question of love - from her early criticisms of Freud in *Speculum: Of the Other Woman* (and his immersion in metaphysical paradigm refuses to question) to more explicit studies of the issue with Hegel in *I Love to You* and Heidegger in *The Way of Love*.

The Way of Love is described as an attempt to anticipate, through language and through dialogue with the reader, what love between us could be in a context which recognizes a more radical sexual difference. She writes:

The book, in fact, does not speak about something or someone who already exists and for whom a language and representations are somehow available, notably through a certain use of language, what could or ought to exist as loving between us, to prepare for a wisdom between us - a dimension as crucial, if not more so, that above all mental, wisdom which Western philosophy has claimed to be (*WL*, vii).

Is this Love?

Irigaray's criticism of contemporary philosophy is that man has not reached a stage of wisdom or love in relation to the other, if he cannot recognize *sexuate* difference. All other conceptions of difference, she argues, are impositions on the other; inadequate conception of the other. In *Why Different?* and in an interview entitled 'The Time of Difference' she states:

...woman engenders in herself, makes love in herself. Man engenders and makes love outside of himself. This means that their relationship to themselves and their relationship to the other is far from being similar, favouring either the inside or the outside, either refuge in oneself or respect for the other outside oneself (*WD*, 96).

There is, thus, a part of humanity, that is to say women's form of love, left uncovered, uncultivated,

and unthought. Exploring love within the philosophical tradition is one way of unlocking the reasons why this mode of difference has been so neglected by our modern cultures, however, Irigaray also argues that this difference has to be cultivated. She writes:

The original place of the relation between the two parts of the human (...) has to be cultivated in order for humanity to exist as such. The task is still to be fulfilled by us and *The Way of Love* sketches a possible scenography for it (*WL*, viii).

The Way of Love depends on language to communicate and evoke a philosophy of love, but it is only in relation that love can be cultivated. Language is still problematic in this task, as Irigaray argues, the narrative use of language is not appropriate for philosophizing the encounter between two. It is not a matter of describing what already exists (as language can more easily achieve), it cannot be, and rather the task is different. It is a question of making something exist in the present and for the future. This is why whilst *The Way of Love* attempts to stage the possibility of an encounter in recognition of sexual difference, it is in rediscovering this reality in relation that humanity can be founded. She writes:

It is a matter of staging an encounter between the one and the other - which has not yet occurred, or for which we lack words, gestures, thus the means of welcoming, celebrating it in the present and the future (*WL*, viii).

In a language which is faithful to Heidegger (*The Way of Love* is in part a dialogue with Heidegger) she writes '...we have to awaken this [sexual difference] and bring it to meaning, to the other, to the world' (*WL*, xv). For Irigaray, the central issue that philosophy, including Heidegger's philosophy, evades is sexual difference. To distinguish her philosophy of sexual difference from more traditional approaches, she calls this sexual difference. How we can stage the possibility of sexual difference is the motive of much of her philosophy; whether it is Plato's forgetting, as she describes in her paper 'Sorcerer Love: A Reading of Plato's Symposium, "Diotima's Speech"' (see *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, pages 20 -23) or Emmanuel Levinas's neglect of an ethic towards a sexual feminine other, as she describes in the 'Fecundity of the Caress'.

Irigaray conceptualization of *eros* is a call to rebuild. Theories of love range from the instinctual to the spiritual, descriptive and critical but, Irigaray argues, these philosophies are uncivilized if they cannot include an autonomy for woman in her nature; or in Irigaray terms, in her specific and symbolic identity (see *I Love To You*). *The Way of Love* is both a continuing dialogue with Heidegger, faithfulness to his teaching (in that teaching is for Heidegger an awakening) but also a faithfulness that aims to shift the focus of his philosophy into a different realm. To a meeting with an other who is different, and, she writes, to: '...the clearing for the advent of a dialogue or conversation between two parts of humanity in the respect of their otherness to one other' (*WL*, xii). To further distinguish this event from Heidegger's philosophy, she argues, that this 'poetic-thinking' can be evoked by poetic language, it, nevertheless, first exists in a present dialogue. She states:

There we can and we must experience what speaking means. There it is incumbent upon us to take charge of the act of speaking without any form or content that would be dictated to us by an already existing world (*WL*, xi).

Hence, for Irigaray, there is another beginning than that of poetic thinking, one created in dialogue, in a relationship with an other who is different; and the sexual relation is most paradigmatic and universal of loving encounters, she argues, and the one the least well considered. Furthermore, the political significance of thinking this difference is evident in statements where, she writes:

Women could develop a culture of life and love, something that we often relegate to the beyond because we don't know how to practice it here below. They could bring a respect between us of singularity and differences, especially in terms of sex, as well as the task for joy in one's relationship to nature and the other (...). In our age especially, each person must learn to be faithful to him/herself in the acknowledgement and love of the other, the others. Sexual difference, a universal difference, can serve as a base for his learning experience (*WD*, 99).

Love has traditionally been considered women's preoccupation and preserve; however, love has not been sufficiently explored by women. Irigaray's philosophy suggests that where difference is projected onto a wholly Other, or Being, to some Thing belonging to a beyond the world, this is

both a cultural imposition on and also a suppression of the other. Our conceptions of love shape our relations but ideas of love remains those constructed for the benefit of a singular subject. Love idealized is that between Father and son but the relation between man and women, and mothers and daughters are devalued. Furthermore Irigaray argues that our philosophies and approaches to the other are so shaped by monotheistic patriarchal religious traditions that even where philosophy has challenged these traditions (such as Heidegger's philosophy) it has not adequately addressed sexual difference, as these questions are prohibited in this tradition. Nevertheless, whilst a hierarchical or vertical relation to an other, as to a Father-leader, is raised to a sacred form of relatedness this must suggest another more fundamental relationship, or a forgotten and repressed relationship of love. Not a profane love, not a love that stands in opposition but one that exceeds these vertical forms of hierarchies. This suggests the other other of love.

In Irigaray's philosophy, rethinking love implies a rediscovery, an opening to the other, a loving the other; a loving that protects and cultivates self and other. Without this reconsideration of love, Irigaray argues: '...we fall back into fusion or into couples or oppositions whose relation will be governed by hierarchy and submission to the other' (*WL*, xiv). The consideration given to sexual difference by philosophy is symptomatic of this tradition. How we can approach the other without the encumbrances of this tradition is, however, she suggests, for us to take up and it is in part at least the aim of *The Way of Love*. She writes, '...it is incumbent upon us to take charge of the act of speaking without any form or content that would be dictated to us by an already existing world (*WL*, xi).

The question of dialogue is central to cultivating or creating sexual difference, Irigaray writes: 'We have to listen to the present speaking of the other in its irreducible difference with a view to the way through which we could correspond to it faithful to ourselves (*WL*, xi). Thus, within patriarchal traditions the appropriate and essential role of the feminine has been associated with the maternal function. For Irigaray, without denying the significance of this role; women have to become free to challenge the definitions of women and free to recreate their own. Their own way

of love is fundamental to this process.

Irigaray and écriture féminine.

Irigaray's work does not refuse issues of writing but her response to question about 'women's writing' suggest both how she sees a need to distinguish her own approach and to elaborate a different sort of sexual difference. Sexual difference, or sexuate difference, is, for Irigaray, a difference that originates in relation, in part outside language. Irigaray experiments textually in her criticisms of philosophy to draw attention to what has been repressed, to draw attention to gender biases but writing is not her sole objective; it is simply a method of communicating. Distinguishing her work from others, she argues that writing restricts what she has to say, although it allows her to disseminate her thought. In a statement responding to those who seek to associate her with women's writing or *écriture féminine*, she writes: '...only those who are still in a state of verbal automatism or who mimic already existing meaning can maintain such a scission or split between who is woman and she who writes' (*JTN*, 53). Irigaray thus refuses the problematic of *écriture féminine*. To write as woman is a means of communicating and transmitting thought, however, and this is an important issue, thought which attempts in its relationship with the reader in a new cultural era of sexual difference. She argues: 'I am a woman. I write with who I am. Why wouldn't that be valid unless out of a contempt for the value of woman or from a denial of a culture in which the sexual is a significant subjective and objective relation' (*JTN*, 53). Hence, it is a re-evaluation of the sexual within culture that Irigaray suggests is a more important dimension for women and for change. Furthermore, she writes:

My use of writing in this part of the twentieth century signifies an attempt to create a new cultural era: that of sexual difference. It seems to me that this is a necessary task at this moment in History in terms of the past, the present, and the future (*JTN*, 52).

Whilst Irigaray can be dismissive of arguments concerning women's writing, she nevertheless

cannot argue that writing is not a significant aspect of her work: She earns her living by writing and passes on the results of her research by writing. She argues that she writes with who she is, however, she also has a peculiar manner of communicating the task she sees as necessary for cultural change. In an interview with Alice Jardine (reprinted as 'Writing as a Woman') Irigaray argues that writing can be a means of expression where denied the right to speak – which has been an experience within her academic career. This denial can have several meanings, she writes:

Being denied the right to speak can have several meanings and take several forms. It can be a conscious effort to ban someone from institutions or banish him or her from the polis. Such an action can mean, if only in part: I don't understand what you're doing so I reject it, we reject it. In this case, writing allows your thought to be put on hold, to be available to those women and men who sooner or later will be able to understand it. This applies to some areas of knowledge more than others, and for various reasons the discourse seeking to establish a new sexed culture is one of them (*JTN*, 53).

The effects of repression are powerful, especially with regards the possibility of a different way of being for both women and men. The relationality that Irigaray's philosophizing seeks to uncover is so repressed within cultures that even myths illustrate the violence deemed necessary to hide this possibility. In Irigaray's exploration of the Demeter-Kore myth, which addresses the oppositions of nature and culture, possession and loss, purity and fertility; it is the mother-daughter relation that emerges one of the most hidden but yet that which the story depends upon. Irigaray writes that the effects of repressed are so strong that '...they enable such strange statements to be upheld as "I am a woman" and "I do not write as a woman"' (*JTN*, 53). However, it is the suppression of a specific, relational identity for woman that allow this confusion. Moreover, Irigaray argues, that in proposing that *écriture féminine* has a liberating aspect for woman (as is suggested by those who take up deconstruction from a feminist perspective) a more repressive power is at work, which she describes as '...a secret allegiance to the between-men cultures' (*JTN*, 53). This allegiance is formed, she argues, in and as the celebration of writing linked historically with the civil and

religious codification of patriarchal power (see *JTN*, 53). Moreover, she writes, that to contribute to the language by making its writing sexed, '...is to perpetuate the pseudo-neutrality of those laws and traditions that privilege masculine genealogies and their codes of logic' (*JTN*, 53). Bearing these statements in mind, in an interview with Paola Azzolini (reprinted as 'The Teaching of Difference' in *Why Different?*) when questioned directly about her literary style she nevertheless also responds that although she does not analyse how others writing may be 'feminine' or not, for herself, she tries to write in harmony with her thinking which is that of a woman. Whilst stating the importance of a reorganization of cultural values, she also identifies in her own style of writing and a number of qualities that are implied by her thinking. These include: Not sacrificing qualities or tendencies towards beauty to argumentation; not accepting truth can exist separately from poetry; preferring dialogue and communication with the other rather than remaining alone with oneself; a love of nature; for words that breath praise and happiness; and '...the will to love in spite of today's greyness' (*WD*, 126).

One of the reasons why Irigaray is keen to dissociate her philosophy from an interest in *écriture féminine* is in the description or definition of her work as some form of women's writing. In *I Love To You* she devotes an entire chapter of her book to her regret over the misunderstandings especially regarding the intentions of *Speculum of the other: woman*. In her own description of the motive of *Speculum* she writes that she wanted to criticise the exclusive right to the use, exchange or representation of one sex by the other. This criticism, she argues, '...is accompanied by the beginnings of women's phenomenological elaboration of the auto-affection and auto-representation of her body: Luce Irigaray, signatory to the book (*JTN*, 59). This suggests a different motive to that of *écriture féminine*. She writes that it implies that the female body is not the object of man's discourse, their arts and other forms of representation, but it becomes the focus for female subjectivity; the object of female subjectivity experiencing and identifying itself. Hence, she writes of her method in *Speculum*: 'In my case, it was more a question of inverting myself. I was other of/for man, I attempted to define the objective alterity of myself, for myself, as belonging

to the female gender' (*ILTY*, 63). *Speculum*, for Irigaray, was an attempt to suggest another logic, one that she describes as appropriate to their bodies and which in *To Be Two* is also described as an alliance of truth and ethnicity. This is also a way, she suggests, of inviting the male subject to change, inviting him to define himself, she writes: '...inviting him to define himself as a body with a view to exchanges between sexed subjects' (*JTN*, 59). Hence, of the original intention of the title of her book, she states: 'The title also denotes the most faithful expression of reality possible: *Speculum mundi*. *Speculum mundi* signifies a 'mirror of the world – not so much the reflection of the world in a mirror as the thought of the reality or objectivity of the world through discourse' (*ILTY*, 60).

Irigaray's intention would have been better comprehended if she had written the title *Speculum, de l'autre: femme* and this is how she refers to her book in her more recent publications. She argues that with this title, a project of constituting the world of the other, would have been better understood. In Italian it has been translated as *Speculum, A proposito de l'altro in quanto donna* or *Speculum, De L'altro: donna* whilst in English she argues *Speculum. Of the Other Woman* is even further from what she intended; and of the problems with interpretation of this title, she writes:

There is no question of holding up some mirror to what it reflects, an other or the other woman. In *speculum* the question of the mirror figures as an interpretation and criticism of the enclosure of the Western subject in the Same, even in those proposition concerning the need to see a different mirror for the constitution of female identity (*S*, 60, Irigaray's italics)

The meaning of the title *Speculum* thus does not refer to a gynaecological instrument or the relationship between two women, as Irigaray argues. It does not refer to an already constituted relationship of Luce Irigaray with *l'autre femme* (the other woman), rather it is an exploration of relationality. Irigaray writes: '...who would this other woman be given that that no female generic yet exists as representation or as content of an ideality for women?' (*ILTY*, 60).

The creation of an ideality (including love) is one of the issues *Speculum* presents. How

Irigaray's philosophy differs from explorations of *écriture féminine* in her wish to constitute the world of the other as woman. In this respect, for Irigaray, the other is taken as substantive, that is to say as having a separate independent existence, not subsidiary, not an 'other of the same' in Irigaray's terms. In Irigaray's philosophizing the other is someone I can never know, who is a mystery to me but he or she is not neutral; he or she is sexed. She writes:

In French, the other is supposed to denote man and woman, just as it is in other languages, such as Italian and English. In the subtitle of *Speculum*, I wanted to indicate that the other is not in fact neutral, either grammatically or semantically, and that it is not, or not longer possible, to use the same words indiscriminately for the masculine and the feminine (*ILTY*, 61).

The practice of approaching the other as a neutral being is, nevertheless, widespread in philosophy; and as Irigaray writes: 'There is talk of the other's existence, love of the other (...) but without it being asked whom or what this other represents' (*ILTY*, 61). Consciously assuming sexed difference, the role Irigaray takes in *Speculum*, refusing to allow herself to be subjected to masculine forms of identity, is Irigaray's way of questioning the neutrality of the other and the neutrality of our relation to the other. This process, this 'position' or approach, does not suggest a reversal of power relations but a freeing from patriarchal authority, masculine cultural values, parental dependencies (including those of the institution) in rediscovery of loving relation that do not eradicate oneself or the other. When asked, Irigaray is thus adamant that being-two is the subject of *Speculum* as much as later works. The papers which make up the central portion of the book are more evident of this, however, Irigaray does write of the path of her work. She states:

...what has changed in my last books is the way I extract myself from patriarchal horizons. After a period of radical criticism. I'm using newer and more feminine methods to bring man, men, to dialogue that respects the duality that exists between us. I'm trying to lead him, or them, back to the man-being using the path of interiority, the woman-being's path, in order to build a world in better ways than in the past starting from our relationship as two. In order to reach this point I emphasize the horizontal relationship between the sexes or gender which

runs counter to our tradition, on all levels dominated by a vertical relationship, whether genealogical or hierarchical (*WD*, 123).

Irigaray's work in *Speculum* develops in a different direction to that of De Beauvoir; where De Beauvoir seeks to escape her position as other by claiming neutrality. Rather than refusing to be the other gender, the other sex, Irigaray's question is how she can approach the other as other, irreducible and of equal dignity (see *DBBT*, 124-125). Rethinking sexual difference provides a model for this, however, how Irigaray approaches the other has led to questions surrounding her method, as already suggested. Carolyn Burke and Gillian Gill, the translators of *An Ethics of Sexual Difference* write that Irigaray's creative play with language, '...habitually incorporates into her own prose terms from the philosophical texts she is reading' (*AESD*, vii). This has led to Irigaray's technique, her reading or writing, being described as a form of mimicry. Burke and Gill write that this does not mean Irigaray can be construed as adopting or assenting to the words or ideas she echoes, rather she experiments to draw attention to why it is so difficult for women to think what it means to be women. As already stated, Irigaray is keen to dismiss the philosophical significance of writing but seeks to further question representation. Irigaray argues that the question of woman can paralyse becoming if it is a matter of representation; and furthermore, she argues that mimicry is the behaviour of the slave and this mode of being does not correspond to the being of woman. Thus, the term 'mimicry' is often used to describe Irigaray's method; but whilst mimicry is part of her criticism, she also argues that women cannot allow themselves to be reduced to the play of representation. Both matter, essence and sexuate being remain unthought by contemporary philosophy, as does love. Whilst language does not, and cannot as yet suggest sexuate modes of existence, according to Irigaray women will remain prisoners of language that ensures feminine subjectivity remains covered. To explore further why her practice cannot remain simply a form of mimicry, and in a dialogue with Nietzsche, she writes:

I do not like extremes or opposites. When I have recourse to them it is always a strategy of

liberation. When I happen to be absolute, it is in order to escape an opposite not to espouse. And – do you believe me? – inverting does not suit me. Only necessity can force me to. Almost all existing constructions and perspectives obfuscate. Taking them as a point of departure delays the coming of truth. In order still to catch a glimpse of truth, it is useful to stand some things on their heads. Which means, among other things, making the earthy element desirable again. We should be looking for what is indispensable to life. The rest is of little importance. And if there is a privilege that opens up, is it not the privilege of living (*EM*, 319).

Irigaray's writing criticises current understandings and interpretations of human identity. However, she also invites alternative modes of being; as is suggested by the elemental. Nevertheless, this practice causes difficulty with critics. Aligning Irigaray's practice with a form of reading and writing, Butler, for example, writes:

I read *Speculum* again and again frightened by its anger, compelled by the closeness of the reading; confused by the mimetism of the text (...) was she enslaved to the texts, was she displacing them radically, was she perhaps in the bind of being in both positions at the same time. And I realized that whatever the feminine was for her it was not a substance, not a spiritual reality, that might be isolated but it had something to do with this strange practice of reading' (Chea and Grosz, 1998).

Irigaray's practice, which has also been described as a poetic dialogue, has made her susceptible to misunderstanding. However, whilst Irigaray dismisses philosophies concerning 'writing; which she argues perpetuate the pseudo-neutrality of traditions that privilege masculine genealogies and their codes of logic; misunderstandings also demonstrate both the difficulty of her thought and the pervasive need of masculine cultures to suppress such thought. In *To Speak Is Never Neutral* Irigaray writes of women's plight within current economies in a manner which confirms Grosz's criticisms of Derrida's reading of Plato. She writes:

The female remains within an amorphous maternal matrix, source of creation, of procreation, as yet unformed, however, as subject of the autonomous word. The coming, or the subjective anastrophe (rather than the catastrophe) of the female has not yet taken place. And her

movements often remain stuck in mimetic tendencies: whether it's a defence or an offensive strategy, the female behaves like the other, the one, the unique. As of yet she neither affirms nor develops her own forms. She lacks some kind of growth, between the within of an intention and the without, from without to within whose threshold remains the prerogative of the subject that has always been. The female has not yet created her language, her word, her style. He, she, they (feminine case), I, are supposedly still the reservoir of meaning, and the madness, of discourse (*TSNN*, 4).

It is in *Marine Lover* that Irigaray describes a project of mimicry. In the chapter 'Veiled-Lips', a specific discussion of both Nietzsche's philosophy and Derrida's commentary on Nietzsche in *Spurs*; Irigaray presents the possibility of another feminine. Derrida's argument is that woman dissimulates, Irigaray, however, writes:

Forever covered over or possessed by your projections, she will give them back to you as things neither she nor you want, and in which you do not recognize your own will. Beyond the horizon you have opened up, she will offer you that in which she still lives and that your day has not even imagined (*ML*, 75).

In 'Ecce Mulier' (Behold Woman) in a further dialogue with Nietzsche, Irigaray argues of this reduction of woman to the other of the same, or to the known, that woman cannot allow this to remain the extent of cultural criticism. In *To Be Two* in a similar way she writes:

Looking at the other, respecting the invisible in him, opens a black or blinding void in the universe. Beginning from this limit, inappropriable by my gaze, the world is recreated. I inhabit it but the entirety of its truth is not mine; since it is not completely known to me, it remains sensible and alive (*TBT*, 8).

Whilst for Nietzsche Truth is a woman, Irigaray argues that women must find another way of being and of this practice, she writes:

Suspending judgement thus permits the 'to be'. We can remain together if you do not become entirely perceptible to me, if part of you stays in the night (*TBT*, 8).

The cultural project of approaching the other of sexual difference is not an easy task by Irigaray's own admission. It demands that women and men pay attention to cultivating communication, in particular between the sexes. Whitford identifies a number of issues of language which characterise Irigaray's criticisms and shape how women live. Whitford writes that Irigaray identifies that: 1. men are more likely to take up a subject position in language, to designate themselves as subjects or discourse or action whilst women are more likely to efface themselves, or to give precedence to men or to the world' 2. The use of the first-personal 'I' does not indicate a feminine identity; 3. Women are accustomed to being the vehicles of men's self-representation whilst their own self-representation in language is more or less absent; 4. Women are more likely to engage in dialogue whilst men privilege the relation with the world and the object, women privilege interpersonal relations; 5. Women are not, as is sometimes thought, more emotional and subjective than men when they speak, their speech is likely to efface the expression of their subjectivity; 6. Women are less abstract than men and are more likely to take account of context, and are likely to collaborate with the researcher and take research seriously (see Whitford, 1991, 6). Irigaray argues that to have equality, to be equal, it is not equality with men that will fulfil this necessity. Women must have the right to a self-defined and sexed identity which is equal in value to that of men. Language does not as yet provide this, nevertheless, Irigaray writes in *Le Partage de la parole* it is women's desire to a different 'object,' for a different other, that can constitute a different mode of subjectivity. She writes:

... woman desires the different as the emergence from her primitive world: She desires it as a beyond the immanence of the infinite contiguity, she desires it as other than herself, loves it and creates it in herself as other than herself. This respect of the other as different is one of the dimensions of the female culture, including the transcendental level. In this culture, the relation with the other is fundamental, but it must exceed the relationship with the natural immediacy while remaining faithful to nature, it must escape from the regression to the same but also the renunciation of oneself as one from the subjective poles of the relation (*PP*, 46-47, authors own translation).

For Irigaray, becoming a female subject requires a different sort of relation with the other and this relation, she argues, corresponds to a horizontal rather than vertical father-son genealogy. She writes:

The dialectic of becoming a female subject does not move away from nature while verticalizing oneself, as often happens with the male subject, but is cultivated initially but respecting the other as other horizontally, including in the difference in nature between two, i.e. practicing the renunciation of infinite subjectivity in the recognition that there are two genders and that their differences impose limits on each of them (*PP*, 47, authors own translation).

Irigaray thus argues that man and woman belong to two different worlds: The world of the man is more centred on the object and is lacking the development of a culture of intersubjectivity, in particular, in sexual difference. The other world, that of woman, she describes as above all relational, privileging the relation in two, in particular in sexual difference. It often lacks a culture of objectivity, she argues. This, thereby, also suggests a different sort of relation between the two, between man and woman, in the respect for their differences. Differences, which, she writes: ‘....cannot be reduced to social stereotypes even if vigilance is essential concerning the impact of such stereotypes on the relational identity of gender’ (*PP*, 47, authors own translation). Women need new myths and new gods for themselves in order to become women: It is essential that we become gods for ourselves, she argues, and not idols, fetishes, symbols that have already been outlined and determined. Women are positioned as other, as the dark, the occult mother-substance, material and passage but they need their own substance and their own ways of becoming.

Thus, beginning with the intimate and rethinking the sexual relation, the question of love becomes a social and cultural criticism concerning for whom subjectivity is constructed. Irigaray argues that women lack a God to share, an ideal, a word to share and become (see *SG*, 29). In this respect, a return to the foundations of culture is an attempt to rediscover appropriate words. She writes of the elemental foundations of culture:

These elements, which, since the beginning of philosophy, have been a focus of mediation of every creation of a world, have often been misunderstood in our culture, which has tended to refuse to think about the material conditions of our existence. Poetry recalls the elements, as does science in a different (...) Traces and remains of the elements are often laid down in myths and folk tales as mysteries those stories of birth, initiation, love, war and death and passions delivered in images and actions with all the innocence of knowledge. Such affections have yet to be decoded, thought through, interpreted, not as a “failure” but rather as a stage in history (*SG*, 57).

In an interview with Heidi Bostic and Stephen Plucheczek ‘Thinking Life in Relation’ (reprinted in *Why Different?*) the interviewers define the distinguishing aspect of Irigaray’s philosophy from that of ‘deconstruction’ in that she proposes ‘...concrete alternative and concrete plans for action for effecting changes inside the space opened by the resituation of the universal subject (*WD*, 145). Irigaray’s philosophy even takes further the disabling effect of a deconstruction of Western metaphysics, they argue. In this interview Irigaray argues that women’s liberation requires this action, and it requires social change to effect its aims. In this criticism of deconstruction, she writes:

Deconstructing all reference to unity, to the absolute, to the ideal, to the transcendent without the recreating of value specific to women, without bringing out a reorganization of the energy invested in such values risks; disintegrating the subject in favour of the savage reign of death drives or of the coming to power of an even more totalitarian authority, these two possibilities not being incompatible (*WD*, 146).

Deconstruction suggests an impotency, a lack of fertility, a lack of energy form and to social change. Her gesture is to start from the initial attraction of sexual or rather sexuate difference, which she also describes as the ‘blinding void of the universe’ and which is, she argues, ‘never completely known’ (see *TBT*, 8). To adequately approach the issue of difference, it is necessary, she suggests, to start from the reality of two genders, male and female or masculine and feminine: Deconstruction, otherwise, never leaves the masculine economy of the same, in its relation to the other. In this interview she also suggests that her work differs from deconstruction, in that, she

writes:

The deconstruction of the one generally operates either through abstract models or through non-universal empirical realities, in space and time: questioning it is therefore too partial to reach a real universal. Moreover, this deconstruction often is fulfilled in an auto-logical manner, as happens to the construction of the one. It is therefore the latter which eventually moves from the real to the imaginary or reduces to a simple numerology (*WD*, 146).

Starting from two genders and rethinking this relation requires cultural values to be recognized to be able to take into consideration the existence of these two difference subjects, each irreducible one to other. However, this activity cannot simply be criticised as a creation, rather, Irigaray argues, that masculine genealogies have covered over this logic. She writes:

Certainly this reality of the two has always existed. But it was submitted to the imperatives of a logic of the one the two being reduced to a pair of opposites not independent one from the other. Moreover, the duality was subordinated to a genealogical order, a hierarchical order, in space and in times, which precluded considering the passage to another mode of thinking, and of living (*WD*, 146).

For Irigaray, the universal cannot remain one, or one and many. This forces culture, society, to reassess its beliefs. It is a call to refound culture in order to reach a civilization that is not limited to sameness, but in Irigaray's terms is more real and more just (see *WD*, 147). If women are not genuine subjects in the patriarchal community and do not obey the same sexual economy as men, as such, women can reflect back from their outside perspective a criticism of patriarchal society. It could allow men also to understand themselves and find their own limits. Culture both denies and disavows difference and at the same time discriminates on the basis of this difference, which leads Irigaray to demand an exploration, examination and recovery of difference. Sexual difference has to be rethought; both the masculine and the feminine and the relation between them has to be reconsidered. Within the current system the feminine, as defined by the masculine subject, as what he is not, acts as the foundation, ground for the construction of his subjectivity – independent, separate, unique, autonomous. However, this need of masculine subjectivity speaks of another

more primordial desire, outside what Whitford calls the isomorphic imaginary of the male subject; a relation covered over and forgotten.

5.2 Care and Love: What does Heidegger mean, what does Irigaray suggest, and why are the issues still important to architects?

For Heidegger 'care' is the name for the way we are in the world and love cannot be distinguished from care. He writes that care:

...is the name for the ecstatic-temporal constitution of the fundamental characteristic of *Dasein*, that is, the understanding of being (...) One can even expect that the essential determination of love, which looks for a guideline in the fundamental-ontological determination of *Dasein* will be deeper and more comprehensive than the one seeing love and something higher than care (Heidegger, 1987, 190).

For Heidegger, 'love' and 'care' are not terms that should be seen as separate and in *The Way of Love* Irigaray does not suggest that love is higher form of care. Where Heidegger suggests 'being-with' (the title of a chapter in *The Way of Love*) is a co-enactment in care, this Irigaray argues, is not a relationality that recognizes a sexuate other. Whilst Heidegger writes that care:

...has the structure of belonging to the other. It is only by virtue of this primary belonging that there is something like separating, group formation, development of society and the like. Thus listening to one another in which being-with cultivates itself is more accurately a compliance in being-with-one another, a co-enactment in care. The negative forms of enactment, non-compliance, not listening, opposition and the like are really only privative modes of belonging itself (Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time*)

It is this very 'belonging' that, for Irigaray, is at issue: This belonging cannot recognize sexuate difference, rather, she argues, that the other is gathered into the constitution of *Dasein*. And whilst Heidegger suggests that care is the fundamental structure of existence, of being-in-the-world, and that this is '...concealed in our joy in the presence of the *Dasein* and not simply of the person of the human being whom we love' (Heidegger, 1988, 87). Irigaray suggests, the love of a meeting, the surprise, the touch and wonder is rarely recognized and without a certain rediscovery we cannot

respond to an other that is radically other to oneself in sexuate being. In this sense, for Irigaray, Dasein cannot be an adequate description of the truth of existence. Irigaray writes:

From the other irradiates a truth which we can receive without its source being visible. That from which the other elaborates meaning remains a mystery for us but we can indirectly perceive something of it. Such an operation transforms the subject, enlightens the subject in a way that is both visible and invisible. The light that then reaches us illuminates the world otherwise, and discloses to us the particularity of our point of view. It says nothing in a way, pronounces no world but makes clear the limits of a horizon, of a site of thinking, of existing, of Being. It opens new possibilities of perceiving and of elaborating space and time, delivering them from the opacity of the night while arranging nothing - only the unfolding of another manner of looking at, of listening to, of welcoming the real, taking into account the importance of the other in their existence (*WL*, 164).

The Importance of Female Genealogies

Genealogy, in Nietzsche's sense, means understanding the history of ideas that the individual is committed to. In *Sexes and Genealogies* Irigaray argues that history has collapsed male and female genealogies, as example, she writes: 'The Oedipus complex as elaborated by Freud is one example of such triangles' (*SG*, v). For Irigaray, there is only one genealogy in the current order and that is the masculine and in our history in order to fuse the two family trees (the "reality" of two as Irigaray commonly suggests), or the two genealogies, it has been necessary to have recourse to a God-Father, unique and transcendent and without a female consort. This figure could be Zeus, of the Father of Judeo-Christian tradition, or father gods of other cultural traditions (Irigaray explores these ideas more specifically in *Marine Lover* a dialogue with Nietzsche's philosophy). Religious belief, respect, responsibility to this God, or to approaching the Other is only possible if this belief is not fully explored. Thus Irigaray's project cannot be associated with a theological discourse, at least in any traditional sense. Nevertheless, Irigaray also aims to reclaim this religious tradition and reread our cultural myths, she writes:

Once we give the whole issue the attention and serious consideration it deserves (...) it becomes obvious that God is being used by men to oppress women and that, therefore, God must be questioned and not simply neutered in the current pseudo-liberal way. Religion as a social phenomenon cannot be ignored. Marx fails to offer us any exhaustive guidance on this point, and his disciples risk perpetuating religious sectarianism and repression because they lack any adequate analysis of the materiality of culture and language (SG, vi).

Furthermore, Irigaray argues that without two genealogies claims that men, races, or sexes are not equal, '...in point of fact signal a disdain or denial for real phenomena and give rise to an imperialism that is even more pernicious than those that retain traces of difference' (SG, vi). It is all too clear that there is no equality of wealth, race, education, or culture and she writes, '...all those that advocate equality need to come to terms with the fact that their claims produce greater and greater splits between the so-called equal units and those authorities or transcendences used to measure or out measure them' (SG, vi). Whether we like it or not, she writes '...these authorities are still called capital or profit, and God(s), Man/Men. Any woman who is seeking equality (with whom? With what?) needs to give this problem serious consideration' (SG, vi).

Traditional family relations similarly support the cultural silence of women where the production, reproduction and transmission of possessions maintains the family structure. Irigaray's examination of Antigone is significant in this respect. The daughter is, as Irigaray responds to her interviewers, '...the loose coin, the currency of exchange. She doesn't pass on the father's name, the cultural heritage, or the wealth (...) So she's going to be torn from her family, from her mother, in order to ensure the genealogy of her husband-father' (WD, 19). Women, for Irigaray, on the other hand, need to demand a justice that suits their identity; and being-two is Irigaray's suggestion in this respect (see SG, vi). To achieve this goal women must learn how they relate both to gender and to kinship, she writes: 'In our day and age it seems less important to analyse where the split between nature and culture occurs than to mark the places where growth has been sterilized misunderstood, repressed' (SG, vi). Exploring myth is one way to explore this cultural inability.

(Re)Creating Love Stories With the Forgotten Mystery of Female Ancestry – Challenging Traditional Love Stories

In interviews with Martine Storti and Marie-Odile Delacour and by Maryse Marty's, (reprinted in *Why Different?* as 'Mother's and Daughter's as seen by Luce Irigaray' (*WD*, 17-27) and 'If Daughter and Mother Spoke to Each Other' discussing Irigaray's work 'And One Doesn't Stir Without the Other,' (Irigaray, 1981) 'The Forgotten Mystery of Female Ancestry' and *Sexes and Genealogies*) the interviewers question Irigaray as to why liberating the mother-daughter relationship from its cultural "darkness", or 'dark continent' could be a way out of the crisis of feminism.

Irigaray describes the mother-daughter relationship as the darkest point in our social order (or 'the dark continents of dark continents, in a reference to Freud's 'woman is a dark continent') in 'The Forgotten Mystery of Female Ancestry,' playing with the imagery of the myth and the influence it may have had on Freud. She writes: 'I don't know one woman who isn't suffering in her relationship with her mother'; however, she also whilst that '...most often this suffering is expressed through tears and screams. It also translates into a silence between mother and daughter' (*WD*, 18).

Whilst the suffering between mother and daughter as is described in 'And One Doesn't Stir Without the Other,' is expressed, in Irigaray terms, '...as a break between an almost natural intimacy and a lack of understanding, a lack of personal exchanges. It seems to go without saying that daughters and mothers are in agreement with each other, and [yet], at the same time, they remain strangers' (*WD*, 31). Both the resemblance between each other but the result of the lack of difference is a lack of communication necessary to mediate difference and the symptom is conflict between mother and daughter. To emphasize this problem, Irigaray writes, sometimes:

...even their complicity irritates the daughter, as if it were expressing an obligation to do and to be like their mother... The daughter wants to become like her mother and, at the same time, is repulsed by this idea because this "do like" is imposed on her and doesn't give her any worth as

a unique person with a unique story ...to have to resemble someone, to have to do and be like someone, doesn't make for interesting exchanges between two people but rather for wild passions, stifling complicities, and infinite loves and hates. These blind passions and complicities are often linked to the fact that daughters and mothers have the same body... They talk about it as women, in collusion in regard to the men's world, but often they're still lacking a personal path for exchange. (*WD*, 31-32).

At one extreme the consequence can be a suffocating power relationships expressed in the mother's fantasies of, for example, ' "I give you food, hence I can have a right over your life"' (*WD*, 18). Or, as another example, in the suspicion, fear, anger or other misplaced emotions within the academic context. Sorti and Delacour suggest in their interview, 'In this society, doesn't a woman stop being a woman the moment she becomes a mother? How could it be otherwise? When she refuses the maternal model, she finds herself faced with nothing...' (*WD*, 19). If women are not left any other function within patriarchal family, Institution or more wider cultural systems, than 'maternity,' (that is to say as either good or bad mothers, fitting or not fitting traditional modes of femininity), they are left 'homeless', that is to say, they are left without subjectivity or interiority of their own.

Homelessness

Irigaray uses the word *déréliction*, and it is a term Whitford takes up in *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine* which, Whitford argues, also implies lacking gods or ideals which includes love, or, in the terms of *Sexes and Genealogies*, a feminine genealogy. For women, the alternative to not challenging the existing order is to remain in the absence of symbolization, in the absence of a genealogy, and in a state of *déréliction*, which has much stronger connotations in French than in English. In English it suggests neglect, failure of ones' duty (as in the dereliction of duty) or the process of abandonment, it is also a term for the retreat of the sea exposing new land (Concise Oxford English Dictionary) In French it also connotes being abandoned by God, Whitford argues, in mythology, she writes that it corresponds to the state of Ariadne abandoned on Naxos left

without hope without help and without refuge (*LIPF*, 78). (Whitford also suggests in a footnote that according to Derrida *déréliction* is sometimes used in French to translate Heidegger's *Geworfenheit* (thrownness) (see Derrida, '*Geschlecht, différence sexuelle, différence ontologique*' translated into English reprinted in *Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger*, 53-72)).

Whitford reading of Irigaray suggests that Irigaray defines women's condition as that of alienation, as the original state of loss and separation constituted by being born, losing one's original home. However, the main point for Irigaray is that the symbolic provides alternative homes for men – the maternal provides a foundation for men - but for women, women lack an adequate symbolization to “house” them (*LIPF*, 205). Hence, in this respect, and of the problem of the relationship between women, Irigaray writes:

...the menacing fantasies attached to the maternal function. The fear of falling into a chasm, plunging into darkness, entering a magical universe. This certainly evokes an “*in utero*” regression, and especially the fact that we are touching there on a part of the social that is submerged, lacking language and symbolization. The woman-mother finds herself assimilated to a dark continent where reproduction and afterlife occur. Yet again, a role deprived of any distinctive identity (*WD*, 18).

Whitford's reference in her exploration of the term *déréliction* is the essay 'An Ethics of Sexual Difference' in *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*: Women are abandoned outside the Symbolic order, for Irigaray, she argues, and the absence of symbolization is the dereliction in which they already exist. Whereas, she argues, the fundamental ontological category for men is dwelling; whether in a literal or a figurative sense, women's ontological status in this culture is *déréliction* or a state of abandonment. (Whitford also suggest Irigaray argues in terms of *unfusionnel* - a psychoanalytic term for merging or failure to differentiate and separate (*LIPF*, 81)). This is not alienation as understood within patriarchal traditions – as an alienation from the pre-oedipal closeness between mother and child. Whilst women lack mediation in the Symbolic, she argues, for the operations of sublimation (one could suggest women suffer from 'love'), or in Whitford's terms, '....drives

without any possible representatives or representation' (TS, 189) Whilst they remain in this condition; whether in relationships between women, or between men and women, they cannot perceive the difference between themselves and the other - they lack mediation, and love is impossible for them. She writes that without *space* between them, for words and gestures, passions manifest themselves in a rather cruel way. The practical problem for women is, thus, how to establish horizontal genealogies between women and between men and women. Feminism has addressed the problem of the idealization of women's nature found in some feminist writing, for Irigaray this is not however, a utopia. Whitford writes that Irigaray suggests that it may be possible in attending to communication to negotiate problems raised in "horizontal relationships" between women without resorting to vertical power structures (LIPF, 78).

There are a number of features, Whitford argues, that women face in attempting to create a different social order, and moreover, she writes: 'It will be seen that she [Irigaray] does not attribute any special natural virtues to women, and that there is no suggestion that communities of women will automatically be idyllic or ironical spaces from which conflict, aggression, or destruction have been excluded' (LIFP, 78). What Irigaray does, Whitford suggests, in her argument is to establish '...a link between certain clichés of psychological or psychoanalytical descriptions (hatred of the mother, rivalry between women, women as women's own worst enemies), and the symbolic order; thus she allows for the possibility that a different symbolization could have effects on women's relationships with each other' (LIFP, 78). Thus, within the current symbolic order, Whitford argues that women are prey to: 1. rivalry, this is because there is no room for more than one at a time in the place of the mother: 'since the place of the mother is unique to be become a mother would mean occupying this place, but *without a relation with her in this place*' ('Love of Self Among Women in the Feminine,' AESD, 102, Whitford's italics); 2. permanent risk of annihilation; 3. the cruelty that takes place when relations are not mediated by anything, rites, exchanges or an economy (see AESD, 103-104); 4. various forms of pathology (see AESD, 111) for example, murder, which Whitford explains as 'Thus a sort of international vendetta is set up present more or less

everywhere which disorientates the female populace, the groups and micro-societies which are in the process of being formed. Real murders take place as a part of it, but also (insofar as they can be distinguished) cultural murder, murder of minds, emotions and intelligence, which women perpetuate amongst themselves (see *S*, 100). A more succinct way of expressing Whitford's reading of Irigaray's observation would be that women suffer because they have no way to individuate themselves, from a confusion of identity amongst them, a lack of respect and a lack of perception that the other(woman) is different (see *LIPF*, 79).

To explain the paralyses and the rivalries between mother and daughter, between women and within feminism and Irigaray argues that something has yet to blossom in the relationship. It is a genealogy of women that would allow women to reconceive relational identity – this relates to a genealogy for women or being-two. Mother and daughter women need modes of relation conceived in their own way, as Irigaray argues:

Each one's story lack words and images and their spiritual journey is the same once again ...because it's defined by universe in the masculine and this universe doesn't provide representations that valorize the important moments in women's life. In order for daughter and mother to communicate they need words and images symbols which represent the significant events in their life and which allow to build them in the feminine (*WD*, 31-32).

Furthermore, they need a language: 'That house of language which for men even constitutes a substitute for his home in a body (...) women is used to construct it, but [as a result] it is not available for her' (*AESD*, 105). Women disappear within patriarchal cultural traditions, or are obliged to play as man, Irigaray writes ...changing into the *one*,' that is to say, if they cannot represent themselves or their relation with other (*WD*, 37). Moreover, they become subject to 'wild passions,' 'stifling complicities,' 'infinite love and hates,' (*WD*, 31); or fears of falling into a 'menacing darkness,' or 'magical universe' (*WD*, 18). What is missing is the singular image of one woman who is also a mother – woman and mother. A specificity, a feminine I, or an *I_{she}* as is Irigaray's description in *I Love To You*. Where women do not have memories, images, stories or

words, that could include a divine, or, a genealogy, one that reminds her that she is *I_{she}*, all that is left is her homelessness. Irigaray writes: 'The woman can't maintain her woman's identity in society without the possibility of returning to her to *I_{she}*. She disappears, remains silent, plays the man, changes into one... If she doesn't have memory, images or words reminding her that she is *I_{she}*, she can't represent herself as she, a woman, nor can she represent other women as women. I think re-finding her feminine I is essential for both presenting and representing herself as for being able to meet and represent other women in collective life. It's along haul that's opening before us. It's worth the trouble...' (*WD* 37).

The problem of dialogue between mother and daughter, as Irigaray describes it, is an entirely different one to that of developing theories concerning the social problems of motherhood. The majority of us suffer from overprotective mothers, whether the relationships are good or bad, Irigaray argues, but what paralysed our mothers, had depersonalised and paralysed their own mothers; the result, a culturally prescribed guilty relationship between mother and daughter, daughter and mother, is not one of love between two people as two subjects. The consequence, for Irigaray, of not paying attention to liberating the mother-daughter relationship, is that whilst contesting the traditional enslavement to maternity, we risk of perpetuating the blind spots of the tradition. Significantly, this argument has already been raised concerning contemporary feminist theory, with reference to Irigaray's work (*WD*, 19). As women, and as women architects, we also lack opportunities to talk together that allows us to discover our desires, loves and imagination, an observation Wigglesworth makes in *Desiring Practices*. To extend Wigglesworth's argument somewhat, however, we should expect women students and women architects should not only work individually with the question of how to advance an ethic governing the relationship between the sexes but women architects should also challenge women teachers, older professionals and women professors, to initiate and sustain a genealogy of women. This is not limited to transmitting a women's history of architecture but includes, perhaps more importantly, a re-examination of foundations of architectural design. Foundations which in forgetting of this mother-daughter

relationship refuse a relationship between two subjects. Cultivating communication, in particular cultivating communication between two subjects, that is not a matter of subject and object, is not an easy task. For architecture it would mean that women are no longer supporting the incredible nostalgia for going back home. This Irigaray also proposes, can also be behind the desire to be part of the institution, to have the best job, to publish the best journal or perhaps surprisingly, sometimes even to get married and have children (see *WD*, 24). She writes:

It is true that there hasn't been enough of a clean break with institutions. There can be an incredible nostalgia for "going back home" behind the desire to published a great journal, became a self-sufficient publishing house, get such-and-such a job, or sometimes even to get married and have kids. Once again the weight of the institutions have been underestimated. But it could also be said that women haven't cared enough about creating relays, relations, new ways of organizing themselves. I already mentioned the need to re-establish our descent and ascent with our mothers, our grandmothers, and our entire cultural and militant past that does exist, and that our "masters" never taught us to know. But there's also the confinement in groups, cities, social classes, countries... Of course networks are already in operation, but they should be reinforced and the efforts should be delocalised. We have much to teach each other, and also much encouragement and support to give each other (*WD*, 24).

Successful communication between mothers and daughters, daughters and mother, is a communication which challenges patriarchal traditions, nevertheless, by Irigaray's own definition it is 'a long haul that's opening before us'; albeit worth the trouble (see *WD*, 37). If discovering the mother daughter relationship is the essential precondition for women's emancipation it would mean discovering a space and mode of being in our own way. To cite Irigaray it would mean: 'To discover a relationship, to cultivate communication with her mother [that] corresponds to discovering the path of her incarnation as a woman (...) So the woman is no longer the flesh for which man will be the word' (*WD*, 34). It would mean that woman would no longer defined according to traditional conventions of sexual difference - man and women would be different bodies and different words in a wedding of body and words. It would also mean that unlike

traditional understandings of the family, man and woman in Irigaray's poetic terms'...can unite their incarnations and gender spiritual as well as natural children, the first ones becoming the cradle where the second ones will be received' (*WD*, 34). Between two, children are no longer possessions for the woman. 'Love' between two, which Irigaray also describes as a tenderness, both carnal and spiritual, allows a different sort of difference between the sexes, between the sexes and the cosmos, initiating a human becoming and desire appropriate to two sexes and, as Irigaray writes, '...so they are not reduced either to constant copulation or to coupling for the sole purpose of procreation' (*TTD*, 95).

Genealogies of descent and ascent are important to women as they are opportunities for women, both as mothers and as daughters, individually and collectively, to find themselves in their own way, being women in their own right. Sustaining this difference can be informed by other women's stories, as Irigaray describes in 'And One Doesn't Stir Without the Other.' Or be informed by pre-history, as Irigaray describes in the last chapter of *Thinking the Difference*, 'The Forgotten Mystery of Feminine Genealogies'. Being-two can be cultivated in a contemplative relationship with the natural world as Irigaray describes in *Being Two. How many Eyes Have We? Forgetting the Air* and *To Be Two*. Or, for that matter, in relation with the other gender as described in *I Love To You*. It is as much a question of making changes to language, to taking some concern over the cultural visual representation of women, as to initiating legal change concerning 'equal and different right.'

Aphrodite's 'tenderness' a bridge between gods and humans.

The paper 'The Forgotten Mystery of Female Ancestry' illustrates a hidden role of the female architect. Irigaray argues that to make an ethics of sexual difference possible the bond with female ancestries must be renewed. In some ancient cultural traditions (ones which she describes also as very advanced) it is the woman who initiates the man into love, where it is conventionally accepted

that it is the man who must initiate woman into love (Irigaray also make this argument with regards Diotima's 'Speech' or rather lack of it in the Symposium). This 'love,' from a more ancient time, does not concern sexual pleasure or seduction, but tenderness, *philotes*, a love that is both carnal and spiritual love and requires a clear distinction between the sexes. The path to reciprocal love has been lost. The question of love is set at the crossroads of women's becoming, between the erasure the relationship between mother and daughter and women's obligation to submit themselves to the laws of men amongst themselves, within the institution, the family, or society – the result of a single genealogy.

In this last essay in *Thinking the Difference* Irigaray specifically addresses the mother-daughter relationship and investigates the mythological foundations still at work within our cultural traditions to question why female sexual development is, Irigaray writes, so impoverished and so subject to a male, or rather a more commonly understood as neutral libido that, she writes '...no longer respects the individuality of erotic partners' (*TTD*, xvij). Comparing the Freudian understandings of sexuality and that as understood through Greek mythology, this sexual disaster 'seems to be explained by the destruction of religious practices and myths concerning woman-as-lover (Aphrodite, for example) and human and divine relationships between mother and daughter (Demeter and Kore/Persephone, for example).

Pornography today, Irigaray argues, would make us believe that eroticism concerns instincts; similarly current theories of sexuality, in particular psychoanalytic (or at least Freud's understanding of sexuality) sustain a masculine perspective of love: '...most intelligent men – and occasionally women – of our time have maintained that *eros* is chaos, darkness, bestiality, sin, annihilation but that we must submit to *eros* to relieve our tensions, unburden ourselves of them shoot off and rest again' (*TTD*, 91). Where this model is not submitted to, where love is not *eros* (conventionally or psychoanalytically understood) it is *agape* (love without *eros*). She writes: 'If you do not want to fall, you can disguise the fall or atone for it by using it to procreate' (*TTD*, 92). Contemporary culture cannot even imagine, she argues, that its patriarchal foundations might be

mistaken in this respect. Understanding, love as either *eros* (conventionally understood) or *agape* (its antithesis). We are poor in love, Irigaray argues, and yet such complexities surround *eros* that it makes it difficult to escape such preconceptions.

Conventional models of *eros* (including psychoanalytic models), depending on mythological foundations, suggest that our drives are unisex, that they precede the sexual differentiation of the human into masculine and feminine, precede 'incarnation', precede sexuate bodies:

This means that we have returned to the chaos that preceded human differentiation, and that there eroticism is a sort of blind, virtually incessant drive incapable of establishing its own rhythm or harmony, of taking or giving shape, except through reproduction. We have returned to a primitive chaos, which according to our mythology is neutral-male. The only thing that enables us to emerge from this undifferentiated abyss is our own manifestation in the children we beget. Our attractions, our loves, our embraces, are supposed to have become chaotic once more, short of individuation, undefined in terms of our human appearance. We are supposedly neither man nor women because we are not yet men and women; we are still in the abyss of the undifferentiated human being, the male pole of the most primeval Eros (*TTD*, 92).

Freud describes the libido in this way, as a primitive chaos preceding his definition of the person. In this sense, chaos is still with us. However, in her exploration of Greek creation myth it is Aphrodite, Goddess of love, and her *philotes* (affection or tenderness) that Irigaray seeks to salvage from patriarchal models of interpretation as a path to love.

Within this myth, (a myth David Farrell Krell also discusses in *Architecture*) Eros urges coupling to produce descendents and more manifest forms to appear. Eros urges neutral Chaos and the Earth- Gaia - to couple in which they discover their own likeness. Their first offspring are Erebus and Night, then Ether and Day:

...the first as space, then as time. On Gaia's side, the first to be brought forth were Uranus (heaven) and Pontus (sea) which delimited and defined her as Earth, as the female pole, and in relation to which or whom she gave birth. By compelling entities that were still fairly

undifferentiated sexually – Chaos and Gaia – to couple, Eros made them give birth to sexual beings. Sexual difference thus made its appearance through the children conceived. But the male pole of the first couplings prevented his children from being born because they would have kept him from being the only lover on earth. He tried to force them to remain in their mother's womb, causing her to suffer terribly. Her youngest son therefore castrated the insatiable lover and murderous father doing so from within his mother's very body, when Uranus drew near. The blood from the castration fell upon the earth, and of it were born the Erinyes (furies), the Giants and the nymphs Melia. The son cast the genitals into the sea, the sperm floated to the surface and Aphrodite was born of this foam. She was conceived in rather the way fish are: outside the mother's womb and without copulation (*TTD*, 93).

There are a number of versions of how Aphrodite was conceived. In an older version, Irigaray suggests, Aphrodite is the daughter of the sea fertilised by the divine sperm of Uranus (heaven) without personal coupling: 'She is the daughter of more male and more female cosmic poles born of Gaia, conceived and carried in the liquid element of the universe, outside any human body' (*TTD*, 94). The significant aspect of this latter myth, for Irigaray's re-reading, is that it is almost unique in our culture, that is to say, Aphrodite is the offspring of male and female gods (Heaven and Sea).

Aphrodite as a child of sexualised gods, is a bridge between gods and humans. Aphrodite thus has a very special place in our culture, Irigaray writes: '...between nature, gods and human manifestation. She represents the embodiment of love, already sexualised in its forms – man and woman – but still close the cosmos [and] This human love [moreover] emerges in a woman' (*TTD*, 94): Aphrodite is an initiator of love in humans, the embodiment of love and as this representation of love is almost the exact opposite of all of seduction: this love corresponds to a new human becoming, it '...is spirit made flesh, especially in relations between the sexes, thanks to the goddess's female *philotes*' (*TTD*, 95). '*Philotes* is a mode of 'love' between two. It requires a clear distinction between the sexes, a distance between them, '...between them and the cosmos so that they are not reduced either to constant copulation or to coupling for the sole purpose of procreation' (*TTD*, 95):

Contrary to what is popularly said or believed, Aphrodite is not a figure or deity who incites sexual debauchery, but one who manifests the possible spiritualization of blind drives or instincts through tenderness and affection. These qualities of love are not inconsistent with the carnal act; on the contrary they give it its human dimension. In Greek, Aphrodite's specific attribute is called *philotes*: tenderness. It therefore is not a matter of agape without *eros*, but of the two combined in a love that is both carnal and spiritual (*TTD*, 94).

Aphrodite, a model for women's becoming, and for women's liberation, uses her freedom to elevate love to human identity and this, moreover, is a more suitable conception of love for women. However, forgetting or destroying *philotes* in love re-establishes a sort of primitive chaos in which the male instinct becomes regarded as neutral, 'love' conceived through male principles, or a male imaginary: '...when women are banished from love or dispossessed of it where their divinity as lover is forgotten love once more becomes drives that verge on animality, disembodied sublimation of them, or death' (*TTD*, 95). The male instinct, Irigaray argues is, thus also beyond human embodiment associated with a male god who, '...no longer teaches us the divinity of love between woman and man' (*TTD*, 95). Love appears as sin annihilating bodies:

This sending back, displacement, or ecstasy of chaos into the Beyond, without proper sublimation of love between human beings, leaves us without laws regarding the difference between the sexes and respect for nature as micro- and macrocosm. Procreation thus becomes necessary as a way out of chaos and as a means of suspending perpetual coitus (...) in a drive towards perpetual, undifferentiated coupling, without rest or respite, without intelligence or beauty, without respect for living human beings, without proper deification of them. In this unceasing drive, the very rhythms of natural growth – and particularly those of birth – are abolished, as this drive is akin to an imperialistic neutral-male that has been uprooted from the space-time of life on earth' (*TTD*, 96).

Irigaray argues that we are not so far from this primitive chaos, and according to Freud the libido is closely related to the male or neutral drive. However, in this conception of love we lose the 'very rhythms of natural growth' and we are uprooted from a human becoming respecting both sexes:

This chaos could be called life drives, in that it is an attraction with no relation to the individuation of persons; it is a male or neutral attraction determined no doubt by a desire to return to the mother's womb and enjoy exclusive possession of the fertility of the womb in order to maintain one's own vitality. The most positive aspect of love would still be the desire to return to the procreating whole, regardless of the body or sex of the procreator. The most negative aspect would be the need to destroy, even oneself, even life and the life-giver, by destroying cohesiveness. This would amount to reducing every entity to its tiniest atoms with no possibility of its becoming whole again (*TTD*, 97).

Urged by *eros*, thus, man Irigaray argues immerses himself in chaos because he refuses to make love *with* an other, or to be two in love; to be two making love, to experience sexual attraction with tenderness and respect. Male sexuality thus annihilates human individual as two sexes:

The most common type of Western sexuality, the one described by Freud, the one forbidden or censured by spiritual authorities but promoted through advertising and the media without any concern whatsoever for people and unrestricted by consistent civil regulations, is an elemental male sexuality, supposedly irresistible and useful for the reproduction of the species – a sexuality that has destroyed the *philotes* of Aphrodite (98).

Whilst, Irigaray argues, it is most often man that initiates woman into love, man does not initiate woman into anything other than, perhaps, she writes '...a pleasure that society does its utmost to forbid her to enjoy except with the man (...) This pleasure revealed by the male lover is the outcome of instincts and male drives whose residual human aspects are often singularly difficult to define (unless it is perhaps the man's obscure need to return to the mother womb if this much can be said to be human)' (*TTD*, 99). That is to say, for Irigaray, there is little subtle or spiritual in this initiation into love. The man/lover Irigaray argue induces the woman to forget herself and it does not take into consideration the different qualities of men and women, '...*eros* destroys identity not fulfils it' (*TTD*, 99). However, this reverts to an economy of desire before the birth of Aphrodite (love) or, more precisely, to Aphrodite's birth whose significance Irigaray reclaims:

The path to reciprocal love between individuals has been lost (...) and instead of contributing to individual, or to the creation or re-creation of human form, eroticism contributes to the

destruction or loss of identity through fusion, and to a return to a level of tension that is always identical, always the lowest with neither development or growth (*TTD*, 99).

Furthermore, in a socio-economic and political sense this notion of love has lead to submit childishly to male sexuality and console themselves through motherhood, for their fall and exile from themselves (*TTD*, 99). Moreover, Irigaray argues:

Motherhood – promoted by spiritual leaders as the only worthwhile destiny for women – most often means perpetuating a patriarchal line of descent by bearing children for one's husband, the state, male cultural powers, thereby helping men escape from an immediate incestuous desire (*TTD*, 99).

Irigaray also writes that 'To women, more secretly, motherhood represents the only remedy for the abandonment of the fall inflicted in love by male instincts, as well as a way for them to renew their ties of their mothers and other women (*TTD*, 99). Hence, the problem but also the site of its resolution lies in the erasure of our relationships to our mothers and in our obligation to submit to the laws of the world of men-amongst-themselves (*TTD*, 99). The destruction of female ancestry, especially its divine aspect is thus recounted in many myths:

Aphrodite's mother is no longer mentioned; she is supplanted by Hera, and Zeus remains the God who has many lovers, but no female equivalent. The goddess Aphrodite can thus be said to have lost her mother. Iphigeneia is separated from her mother to be offered as a sacrifice in the Trojan War. And though oracular speech was originally passed on from mother to daughter, beginning with Apollo it is often assimilated to the oracle at Delphi, which still has a place for Pythia, but not fro the mother-daughter relationships. Antigone's uncle, the tyrant Creon punishes by death her faith, her loyalty to her maternal ancestry and its laws, in order to safeguard his power in the polis. The Old Testament does not tell us of a single happy mother-daughter couple, and Eve comes into the world motherless. Although Mary's mother, Anne is know, the New Testament never mentions them together, not even at the moment of the conception of Jesus. Mary goes to greet Elizabeth, not Anne, unless Elizabeth is Anne, as in Leonardo Da Vinci's interpretation. Mary's leaving her mother for a marriage with the Lord is more in keeping with the tradition that was several centuries old (*TTD*, 100).

Demeter and Kore

However, the best illustration of the relationship between mother and daughter and its disguise by patriarchal traditions, Irigaray argues, is found in the myths and rites surrounding Demeter and Kore. There are several versions of this myth and these versions can be understood as a result of migrations to different places and as a result of historical developments in socio-economic groupings, Irigaray suggests. In one version, she argues, Persephone is made responsible for her fate, like Eve as seductress who tempts man: The story of Demeter and Kore is so 'terrible' and 'so exemplary' of patriarchy's misdeed towards women, '...it is understandable that the patriarchal era wished to make the seductive woman bear the responsibility for its crimes' (*TTD*, 102). Irigaray writes that where her only sin was to 'reach out and to pluck a narcissus' (*TTD*, 102).

Whatever the reasons cited for blaming Kore/Persephone it is clear that her fate is dived by men –gods. Jupiter [Zeus] Poseidon and Hades must divide up the heavens, the sea and the underworld. The episode of Kore/persephone's abduction involves a power struggle between Zeus and Hades, two brothers of different parentage who can neither meet nor see each other because of their ancestral ties (*TTD*, 103).

Irigaray argues however that, '...love is only possible when there are two parties,' (a statement that would seem obvious but not after reading the work of Lacan, for example) '...a relationship that is not submissive to one gender' (*SG*, 4). Irigaray writes that 'love' requires that the rights of men and women are written into civil code, '...this would serve to convert individual morality into collective ethics, to transform the relations of the genders within the family or its substitute into rights and duties that involve the culture as a whole. Religion can then rediscover how each gender interprets its relation to the divine – a religion freed from its role of guardian of a single gender and financial trustee for the property of one gender more than of the other.' (*SG*, 5) Women's movements have failed to establish a new 'ethics' of sexuality, the necessity for which cannot go unnoticed where undirected energy has been unleashed by the past violent protests of women's movements. However, without dismissing the importance of the women's movement or proposing

a return to more repressive conceptions of sexual difference, Irigaray aims to suggest the necessity of working out an art of sexed culture; cultural practices that sustain sexual difference.

Antigone

Irigaray argues that despite the achievements for women gained in the name of equality, little thought has as yet been given to what equal rights mean for both men and women's expectations, little thought has been given to how equal right change the whole field of relations. Irigaray's argument in 'Each Sex Must Have It's Own Rights' is that they have failed to establish a new ethics of sexuality. Citing Hegel, and his work and the thought given to the family, in this paper she writes: 'Hegel explains that the daughter who remains faithful to the laws relating to her mother has to be cast out of the city, out of society. She cannot be violently killed, she must be imprisoned deprived of liberty, air, light, love marriage, children. In other words she is condemned to a slow and lonely death. The character Antigone represents that daughter. Hegel's analysis is supported by the content of Sophocles tragedies' (SG, 1)

Hegel did take on the project of interpreting how a whole society or culture might function. His aim was to describe and work out how *Geist* or spirit of man as individual and as citizen functioned. The weakest link in his system seems to lie in his interpretation of spirit and right within the family. Even though he consistently sought to break up undifferentiated units, Hegel is unable to think of the family as anything but a single substance within which particular individuals lose their rights. Except the right to life, perhaps? Which is not that simple...' (SG, 1).

Talking about the rights of genders, in a chapter on the family in *Phenomenology of the Mind* Hegel explains that the daughter who remains faithful to the laws relating to her mother has to be cast out of the city, out of society. She cannot be violently killed, she must be imprisoned, deprived of liberty, air, light, love, marriage children. In other words, she is condemned to a slow and lonely death. The character Antigone represents that daughter. Hegel's analysis is supported by the

content of Sophocles tragedies. But what is this mother's law: Irigaray writes, ' They are religious laws relating to the burial of her brother who has been killed in a war among men. These laws have to do with the cultural obligations owed to the mother's blood the blood shared by the brothers and sisters in the family. The duty to this blood will be denied and outlawed as the culture becomes patriarchal. This tragic episode in life – and in war – between the genders represents the passage into patriarchy. The daughter is forbidden to respect the blood bonds with her mother. From the spiritual viewpoint these bonds have a religious quality, they move in consonance with the fertility of the earth and its flowers and fruits, they protect love in its bodily dimension, they keep watch over female fruitfulness within and without marriage (depending on whether the kingdom of Aphrodite or Demeter is invoked) they correspond to times of peace. Under the rule of patriarchy the girl is separated from her mother and from her family in general. She is transplanted into the genealogy of her husband; she must love with him, carry his name, bear his children etc., This first time that this takes place, the move recorded as the abduction of woman by a man-lover. A war breaks out among men to recapture the stolen woman and bring her back to her community of origin.' (SG, 2).

Our code of morality today is still derived from those very ancient events. This means that the love between mother and daughter which the patriarchal regime has made impossible (as Freud in fact reinforces for our benefit) has been transformed into the woman's obligation to devote herself to the cult of the children of her legal husband and to the husband himself as a male child. In fact despite the incest taboo there seems little indication that man has sublimated the natural immediacy of his relationship to the mother. Rather, man has transferred that relationship to his wife as mother substitute. In this way the man-woman couple is always out of place by a generation, since male and female genealogies are collapsed into a single genealogy: that of the husband (SG, 2).

Once one genealogy has been reduced to the other's, Irigaray argues that it becomes impossible or at least difficult to define two different genders or sexes: 'Man takes his orientation from his relation to his father insofar as his name and property are concerned, and from his mother in relation to unmediated nature. Woman must submit to her husband and to reproduction' (SG, 4).

This means that gender as sexuality is never cultivated, or cultured: Gender is confused with species, even where theorists argue that 'gender' is a cultural construction:

Gender (or *genre*) becomes human race, human nature, etc., as defined within patriarchal culture. Gender thus defined corresponds to a race of men (*un peuple d'hommes*) who refuse, whether consciously or not, the possibility of another gender: the female. All that is left is the human race/gender (*le genre humain*) for which the only real value of sex is to reproduce the species. From this point of view, gender is always subservient to kinship. Man and woman would not come to maturity with a thinking and culture relative to the sexual difference of each. They would be more or less sexed children and adolescents, and then reproductive adults. In this perspective, the family serves the interests of property, of material patrimony and the reproduction of children. The family is not a small unit in which individual differences can be respected and cultivated (SG, 4).

Nature provides a way of rethinking dwelling; nature, Irigaray suggests, offers an alternative place to reconstruct relationship. She writes: 'Nature offers an alternative place for life and sharing in relation to the human world, the manufactured world. Rather than exploit it or forget it, I try to praise it, sing it' (WD, 118). The prologue to *To be Two*, as does *Everyday Prayers*, Irigaray presents some poetry of a rebirth from nature, one which takes place in spring, the time of the rebirth of the cosmos itself. Irigaray argues in *Democracy Begins Between Two*:

Personally I feel that to be born again from nature is definitely necessary for us to be able, at least once, to experience the acquisition of an autonomy that is neither aggressive nor violent; and we should develop ourselves each day out of loyalty to this sort of experience (DBBT, 111).

However, as the poem continues, 'Hardly is she reborn from it that he arrives.' And from then on things become a bit more complicated. I have not said less pleasant, though, simply more complex' (DBBT, 111).

Who am I? Who Are You? And Who Answers For Our Presence?

Several recent studies have criticised Irigaray's question of being, however, most only revisit

misconceptions that surround Irigaray's philosophy. These criticisms have been discussed at length in books such as *Engaging with Irigaray*. How to engage with Irigaray's philosophy in a fruitful way; or in Irigaray's terms, how sustain being-two is a more difficult task than criticism. Irigaray presents a number of strategies to approach the other. Recognizing the other of sexual difference, she suggests, requires a cultivation of perception, in dialogue with the other or with Nature. The question of love between two is a particularly difficult problem. Irigaray writes that, experiencing joy or sorrow, desire or disgust, because of the other can be a type of possession reducing the other to feeling, or to love. In this way the other is consumed, made one's own, possessed, defined. She writes:

...we are no longer two – I lose the other in sensation, in feeling (...) I consume him in order to feel him and this way of reducing the other to feelings is a more feminine way of reducing the other to oneself and, in a way, possessing him' (*WD*, 105).

In love, as currently conceived, the other consumed. Being-two, however, retains a space of *silence, listening, or breath* between two and a mode of perception that is otherwise unthought-of in contemporary philosophy. For example, Irigaray writes that in perceiving in the other in this way, the other is left his or her autonomy. With this other of sexual difference, she writes: '... I will never be and never know... [and] that remains inaccessible and transcendent to me' (*WD*, 105). Where the other is someone Irigaray will never know or will never be, this other is as a new adventure and another sort of ethics and Truth emerges, another sort of being – as Irigaray writes *an intimate perception* develops:

...if I perceive the other as other, I always leave him outside of me, even if I feel him inside myself. In this way, I let him have his autonomy and his freedom and I make it possible for my meeting with him to always be an adventure, a new discovery: what I perceive of him is something different each time we meet. Of course, this difference corresponds to a sensorial perception: my eyes, my ears, my nose, my touch, but if I respect the other as other, *an intimate perception* develops in me which allows me to internalise the other whilst respecting

him as different and external to me. So it is possible to remain two and learn how to be together while remaining one and the other, without possessing, without merging and without consuming' (*WD*, 105, authors italics)

Irigaray begins her path to being-two by recreating the relationship between man and woman to show that, as she writes, '...we can learn to look and listen to the other without reducing him or her to me' (*WD*, 115). Whilst this approach allows the other, her or his, autonomy and frees one to one's own path. This relationship of being without possession, merging or consuming of the other, is, nevertheless, quite foreign to the way the other is perceived in current cultural conditions and contemporary philosophies alike. It does not suggest a violent overturning of patriarchal traditions (which includes philosophy) rather, being-two questions how in the West, Being, is always understood as "one" or as a "multiple of one" - a mode of thought that Irigaray associates with patriarchy. Irigaray's approach to the other invites bodies, in particular those of women, to participate in a new becoming of thought, ethics, Truth and History. Thus, Irigaray writes that identity is '...no longer about overcoming the body, or more specifically the sexed body, as is the case so often in the philosophies of our tradition' (*WD*, 122). Being-two is about founding the becoming of identity whilst belonging to a sex.

The man and woman relationship represents the conflict between nature and culture that founds family and community and, rethinking social relations starting with two is '...a way of wanting them to be more just, less artificial and hierarchical' (*WD*, 117). In her poetic prologue to *To Be Two*, nature is the place of this rebirth for the couple. Nature poetically discovered is a mother who is no longer only maternal. Like Irigaray's re-creation of myths that illustrate the problematic mother-daughter relationship (most apt is perhaps the Demeter-Kore relationship) these two aspects of femininity otherwise divided by patriarchy, rediscover a contiguity; and, with this gesture, relational identity is reborn. This poetics of nature also ultimately allows a reformulation of masculinity. Nature, reconceived, she writes, is '...a third in the relationship with the other man. It allows me to respect him and myself, by endlessly going from it to him and from

him to it, nature also allows me to construct a history that's more alive, more sensitive and happier' (*WD*, 118). Nature becomes a place between two that allows a contiguous relationship with the other, it allows a re-education of the senses of the body. Irigaray writes, '...it is also a third element that allows me to go towards the other and return me without losing the *I* or the *you*' (*WD*, 124).

In order to cultivate, create, innovate, or to breathe life into and to maintain this way of entering into this relationship, nature can thus be an indispensable and pleasurable help - a place of love and rebirth. In the same way as approaching an other that is always autonomous and free provides a way of cultivating *an intimate perception* and a way of allowing the emergence, or return of a difference mode of being – which in this poem, she also describes as love. Nature provides an intermediate space that allows this new relational identity to emerge. Irigaray writes:

The air which touches: invisible presence. Love's return everywhere. In this infinite being touched, the wound vanishes. The first and last resource envelopes me: clouds or angels, down or soft arms, smiles or words for children (...) With love for her, the blue returns. Tenderness impregnates the air – like a presence. It seems that certain words are whispered. Perhaps the birds are confiding some secret to each other. The whole blooms in a still lofty atmosphere. Between earth and sky, a breath comes and goes, joining one to the other. Its scent is perhaps the most subtle incense. (...) Now nothing separates us. Immersed in her, I share colours and light. I become her, becoming also myself. I respect her, respecting myself. I love her, loving myself. She is within me and outside of me.(...) To repose in her, to contemplate with her, allowing myself to be contemplated. Beyond fixed desire, I am embracer-embraced. Porous, I am attentive without restraining. I return to myself to welcome without keeping, to love without loving. To love to her? (...) Her tenderness in there, immobile: in the air, the flowers, the blue of the sky. If the breath is placed in unison with them, all suffering vanishes. Love is in me. Leaping closures, it rises, breaking bonds, undoing paralyses. Without pain, it consoles, awakens, calms.(...) Who knows where we are going (*TBT*, 3-5).

The poem is a criticism of man's mastery over nature; of a scientific or technological thinking that otherwise transforms us into neutral individuals and exiles us from ourselves (see 'A Chance to Live' in *Thinking the Difference*). Finding a liberating relationship with the natural universe,

refounding sexual difference, the family and culture, is Irigaray's motive: Both man and women's work, at this time, she argues, has to be directed towards a recreation of our relationship towards, and respect for, the natural world (*WD*, 117). In doing so, the relationship between man and woman can take on a different nature. It can become: '...a bridge to be built between a given nature, the body and the surrounding universe (...) to which the woman is often more faithful in her becoming (*WD*, 118). The choice and the purpose of objects, of technology, and techniques used to manufacture could have the aim of making man and woman cultivate the other of sexual difference (*WD*, 118). Hence, problematizing our relation with the natural world, problematizes our relationship to our "given nature" (Irigaray's terms), to our body and the surrounding universe; and in rethinking this relationship, the relationship between man and woman takes on new meaning and significance: It becomes an approach that cultivates an alliance between ethicality and Truth.

Being-two thus suggests a new relationship. Beginning with a given nature and an initial relational status, Irigaray refounds relationship. This realisation could extend to all levels: private, civic and political levels – and as such, it is as much a political as a personal project for women. With work to re-create sexual difference, women can find inspiration to redefine rights appropriate to their sex. Bringing to the fore genealogies that have remained in the shadows of history, and which can be recreated, or re-symbolized within current cultural traditions is one way of approaching this problem. It has a significance for architecture; but it is not the only point of concern Irigaray project raises for architecture.

Redefining sexed rights would allow women to practice, *as women*, and changes written into law (and language) would allow women freedom to re-evaluate work and family, according to self-defined laws, and for the state to recognise the value that freedom. Changes in symbolic codes could initiate the re-evaluation of traditional aesthetics: Establishing a culture where cultivating the relationship between man and woman, mother and daughter, woman (or man) and nature, becomes a cultural task; with this emerging perception, women and men learn to respect the other while respecting ourselves (*WD*, 103). Nevertheless, it is woman that is best suited to initiate this

new approach, as she, Irigaray argues, still remains in part outside the existing traditions. To illustrate this point, she writes, 'I made the gesture of inviting man, men, to a new alliance, *as a woman*' (*WD*, 115, authors own italics); with a given nature and with a relationship to the other. In the same way, Irigaray writes, that it is *as woman* that she thought the ethics and truth of inter-subjectivity: 'My feminine identity, which I received from birth and try to construct culturally, facilitates this gesture. Born of a woman, I had a direct relationship with a person whom I experienced as another subject' (*WD*, 115). So recognising that a difference between men and woman exists is, for Irigaray, a fact linked to birth, to her own becoming and to finding her own freedom: A fact that she has had to recognise and cultivate it, '...without submitting one gender to the other neither in love nor maternity' (116).

Irigaray's work does not forget men. It is just more complicated for men, one gender - that is to say, the woman - is carnally familiar with a feminine body through love and maternity, but it is not the same for man. Whilst this approach to the other of sexual difference does not concern either maintaining or reverting to traditional patriarchal models of family, or conventional perception of sexual difference; it does seek to liberate both genders.

There are many misconceptions concerning Irigaray's philosophy of being-two. Many are demonstrated in the special edition of *Diacritics*, and are also suggested in some of the later publications to study her work. The question of being-two is not, for example, a singularly religious question, or even, for that matter, a criticism of religion. The problem of love is not limited to a theological discourse - it certainly has a religious discourse associated with it - it corresponds with religious questions - but it is, first and foremost, a question concerning human identity. Salvaging female genealogies: in particular in the mother - daughter relationship (in a reclamation of the myths of Aphrodite, Demeter and Kore, or Mary and Anne, for example); or salvaging a mode of relationship with man (in, for example, Plato's *Symposium*); or, furthermore, salvaging an alternative mode of relationship of the couple to the State, in the example of Antigone; all these re-created modes of being, are, in part, outside the tolerance of patriarchal religion, philosophy and

the State. In this respect, being-two is a means of understanding the difficulties women face amongst themselves, with men, as equally with the State; and Irigaray suggests this is because of a lack of identity appropriate to them. Being-two is the suggestion that Irigaray makes for them. Thus, whilst relations between mothers and daughters tend to be conflictual (which demonstrates the difficulties with some feminist ideals). As Whitford argues ‘...since our culture displays a quasi total absence of adequate representations of the mother-daughter relationship which would permit women to negotiate new relations with each other’ (*IR*, 2); re-creating horizontal genealogies, female genealogies are essential to allow women’s becoming in cultures that otherwise privilege the love between Father and son. The question of being-two, begins the task of creating an identity for women appropriate to their sex (‘sex’ is used here in the way Irigaray uses the term, see previous Chapters). This question examines how to free the mother-daughter relationship from the traditional power relations that paralyse adequate communication, in particular between mother and daughter. The approach to mother-daughter relationships is one key in thinking this difference - a beginning that emerges from what Irigaray also calls the darkest of dark continents.

The question of being Irigaray raises is a culturally and politically important project, as Irigaray demonstrates in books such as *Democracy Begins Between Two*; where she argues that laws must be reconsidered so as to address sexed rights. She argues that respecting the difference between the sexes is a way of respecting other differences; an ethical path to cohabitation and coexistence between all men and women; based on the reality of two. It is not, however, a utopian project. It does not seek to anticipate and define the future but, rather to work towards constructing it in the now: ‘Being concerned for the future in the present is certainly not equivalent to programming it in advance but rather trying to make it exist’ (*JTN*, 57).

Neither can Irigaray’s question be reduced to the phenomenological tradition. It cannot be reduced to the thought of Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty; or Emmanuel Levinas. Being-two, as a question for architecture, for example, engages with dwelling but not as commonly understood by architects; and not as thought through the work of Heidegger. Being-two is not a

question of sexual choice, a celebration of lesbian sexuality and thus, in conflict with heterosexual theorists; nor a celebration of male and female relationship and thus criticised by Queer Theorists as homophobic (Judith Butler makes this suggestion). Although, being-two concerns the question of relation, of sex and the sexed body (the latter contributing to the now discredited accusations of 'essentialism') Irigaray's question of being is directed to dominant hierarchal sexual models, in particular the hierarchal relation of the male and female, in order to suggest new modes of existence between two in a horizontal as well as hierarchical relationship. The *caress* is a re-reading of the touch in the work of Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Levinas, and as such, explores the question of sexual relationship which Irigaray argues is inadequately thought in each of these philosophers work. Irigaray writes: '... words concerning the *caress* lend respect and love of the other as other to the touch. The *caress* is no longer a gesture that aims to grab hold of the other in his or her own freedom, mystery 'virginity' or 'integrity' (as is still the case with Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Levinas)' (*WD*, 115). The *caress* becomes a gesture '... that gives each one, male and female 'back to him/herself' (*WD*, 115). With the *caress*, the carnal relationship between man and women (or for that matter, woman and woman, man and man) can be a relationship of love between two, and not the constant reduction of the one, and in particular the feminine, to one. Furthermore, Irigaray argues that in order to love the other, as other, '... one has to leave a space between him or her and me' (*WD*, 106). Saying 'I love you' she argues, runs the risk of reducing the other to the object of love, '... the subject-man who loves the woman who becomes his object in love, [or] the subject-mother who loves the child who becomes her object in love' (*WD*, 106). In each case there is never really love because love implies two subjects who love each other, and the 'to you' is a way, for Irigaray, of handling this existence of two subjects in the separation it provides.

Conflicts arise between man and woman from the appropriation of the freedom of the other. With her little indiscretions in language (a description she uses), appropriation, possession or consumption '... no longer makes sense between those who love each other [and] desire grows from an irreducible alterity (*WD*, 18). Between two: 'Far from wanting to possess you in linking

myself to you, I preserve a “to”, a safeguard of the in-direction between us – *I Love to You*, and not: I love you. This “to” safeguards a place of transcendence between us, a place of respect which is both obligated and desired, a place of possible alliance’ (*ILTY*, 19). The ‘to’ like the *caress*, maintains each in their irreducibility: Saying, “I love *to* you,” she writes ‘...is bringing love to a way of speaking between us: to love to, like saying to talk to’ (*WD*, 106).

Silence is also a condition for communication between two. Silence, she writes, is also a place of respect: ‘...for what is given: the body and the surrounding Universe. Respect of sexual difference demands silence; man and woman’s subjectivity are both in exchangeable – neither can one speak for the other – so each one has to keep an external and internal space of silence to welcome the other’ (*WD*, 107). *Silence* is a way of respecting and acknowledging the fact, she writes, that there is difference between man and woman; and ‘Of course this difference requires us to speak in order to communicate but words can only come through after a time of silence, a pause that takes care of the space that lies in the insurmountable difference between man and woman’ (*WD*, 106). Thus, *listening* as well as *silence*, are ways of allowing the emergence of an intimate communication ‘...bringing the natural attraction between men and women to the dimension of words, of dialogue and of exchange between them’ (108). *Listening*, like *silence*, becomes a means of respecting the other and simultaneously creates a place of exchange between them and it is, importantly, ‘...a way of coming out of possession, fusion and submission or domination’ (109). *Silence*, is also a way of questioning power relations, ‘...the power of any knowledge derived from the genealogical relationship: the father, and sometimes the mother, often claim to know everything about the child. It is a *silence* that between the genders is a way of coming out of the power and the dependence that exist’ (*WD*, 106-107); and in order to love, man and woman need to beget *silence* as a condition of their becoming, each individually and together (*WD*, 107). To cultivate difference between men and women Irigaray’s strategies allow both not to give up or sacrifice their own lives and desires, or their own initiatives and creativity in love. Cultivating an perception and an intimate communication are some of those strategies:

However, women need to ask how to analyse discourse, language and communication, for themselves. The differences between the being and the speaking of woman can help; the desire to find ones own way and the expectations imposed on women, is a start. Interpreting the way in which male philosophers – such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Emmanuel Levinas – have conceived carnal love can also make clear the problematic place the feminine has where such philosophies discuss loving relations. (*TBT*, 17).

Language exceeds its power where it prevents an approach to the other of sexual difference. Irigaray writes: ‘No manner of speaking about desire is valid without this muted question: “Who are you who will never be me or mine, you who will remain transcendent to me, even if I touch you, since the word is made flesh in you in one way, and in me in another?” ’ (*TBT*, 19). There exists in the other, she argues, ‘...a subjectivity which I cannot see either with my senses or with my intellect. Male thinkers dodge this irreducible invisible choosing not to appeal to language as a path towards sharing the mystery of the other’ (*TBT*, 19). That the question of love has been considered decadent, or as Kristeva argues more unacceptable than talking about sex; derives, for Irigaray, from a tradition that debases the sensible and which does not value ‘...the exchange of words between those who love each other’ (*TBT*, 19). This tradition, which includes the philosophical tradition, has a clear distinction in terms of sexual roles, where the father son relationship of all patriarchal religions, is privileged to any relation between male and female. Moreover, positive models of the mother-daughter relation are all but absent from the patriarchal tradition. Irigaray writes: ‘This tradition reduces the feminine to a passive object which must experience sensation, while man must distance himself from woman in order to protect his relationship both with the realm of the intelligible and with his God’ (*TBT*, 23).

Irigaray has been criticised within a feminist context for apparently underplaying the differences between women. However, sexual difference is just a more universal difference than differences of education, class, race, or culture; and finding ways to approach the other of sexual difference and sustain this difference is, for Irigaray, truly the means to approach the problem of

women's liberation: Her question of being, does not neglect cultural differences between women, rather she argues that although levels of emancipation vary '...differences between cultures often depend on a certain degree of subjection and oppression of the feminine sex or gender by patriarchy, or a masculine identity conceived as authoritarian and imperialistic' (*WD*, 7). Difference exists in race, class, tradition and gender. Affirming that there is difference is not a racism, however, unless cultural horizons change by the use of words that allow this difference to emerge, we simply remain unable to adequately respond to differences between us. Irigaray writes:

Difference exists. Difference in race, difference in tradition, difference in class, and difference in gender...How can we refuse or deny that? The problem is that difference has always been a means for subordination and slavery. However, affirming difference has nothing to do with some kind of racism. On the contrary, it's lifting from the masters their right to decree laws for every man and woman, at all times in all places, because these supposedly universal laws are really just the laws of a system that's in power, the laws of the "strongest." No doubt, you have to be among the "weakest" in order to see the repressive nature of such laws. When women ask for the right to difference, they are asking not to be subjected to masculine or, more precisely, patriarchal models that paralyse and negate them in their sexual, social and cultural station. Why is there so much resistance to hearing about it as well? Is it a deliberate deafness, meant to preserve the established order? Is it a consequence of age-old repression and censorship? Or is it an effect of ...difference? (*WD*, 27);

Irigaray's question of being is her suggestion for women's liberation. This question explores relational identity but it also challenges the concerns of contemporary feminism in architecture. These concerns can be described as: [a] the problems women face within the Institution (already suggested); [b] the problems women have between themselves especially within contemporary feminism (and within contemporary feminism in architecture), and; [c] perhaps most importantly, how women architects could begin to practice a contemporary feminism in architecture. Approaching the other of sexual difference is not an easy task, and Irigaray argues that it demands an ethical vigilance from women. This path towards sexual difference is, however, necessary to be

able to live in love and reciprocity (*WD*, 104). This path is more fulfilling than any struggle for equal rights. Men's acceptance of women in the workplace although helpful, will not ultimately make women free to practice their desires (the terms the editors of *Desiring Practices* use to describe their frustrations with architecture): '...for the woman in love (...) to assume that she occupies the passive pole that experiences love or pleasure, and not the one that can actively love and consider herself. The one who can bring desire to the other and not just the desire for me as a woman through seduction, is more fulfilling of her identity' (*WD*, 104). Hence, although ultimately a fulfilling task; this approach to sexual difference does not support pessimism, passivity, shame or guilt, surrounding the problems women face, surrounding women's struggles and feminism. Becoming free requires both personal and public effort; and significantly it needs a cultivation of ethics between women:

We really should free ourselves from shame and also be more assertive and more on the attack. The movement has often responded reactively to events. Maybe it was unavoidable at one time, but now it's time to move into another stage, and learn to anticipate them (...) We have much to teach other and also much encouragement and support to give each other. Is acting a certain way out-of-date today? Maybe? Who cares? So many others are just getting started. It's rather amusing that people dare to bury women's struggles. They've never existed in so many places and in so many different forms. These remarks come from blasé intellectual circles, among others, that are always eager for the next new thing. Are women today really less enslaved by society (*WD*, 24)?

Women's liberation means liberation from habits of living, but sometimes these habits are difficult to cast off. This way of becoming is a task everyone should seek to accomplish as it would mean a liberty won through a faithfulness to finding one's own way of being without the debasement of one's sex:

Being and remaining two, in the couple, in all forms of couple, in all meetings between men and women corresponds to achieving a liberty that's not merely won against aggressivity or conflict towards the other sex or gender, but achieving one's identity as well as the ability to be faithful to oneself (*WD*, 104).

Thus, despite the recent achievements for women gained in the name of equality between the sexes, little thought has really, as yet, been given to what equal rights would mean for the lives of women and the vulnerability this could create. In *Thinking the Difference*, Irigaray gives six examples of how culture has denied women identity (suggesting, at the same time, some cultural transformation that would sustain new ways of being). Firstly, she suggests that the mythological, religious and symbolic foundations of our current cultural traditions should be reconsidered. Secondly, she argues that women must question the *written* (Irigaray's italics) or representations of law so as to address sexed rights. Thirdly, she argues, that women need to question the difference between men and women in subject-object relationships – that is to say we should question our current understandings of human identity: 'Philosophers take a keen interest in the deconstruction of ontology, in the ante- and the post- but little interest in the constitution of a new rationally founded identity, thus women should work to propose new alternatives (*TTD*, 32). Fourthly, women should question dominant sexual models where there is no other model to that of male sexuality which is constructed upon modes of being which suggest an imagery of energy involving tension, release and return to homeostasis. In so doing women could legitimate sexual models of self-defined female sexuality and a female imaginary. Fifthly, she argues, that women need to ask how we can analyse discourse, language and communication between one another, or lack of it. Lastly, Irigaray questions the practical aspects of cultural transformation, which could include architecture. Whilst Irigaray argues that we are educated to make all that pleases us our own, to possess all that pleases us, '...even our manner of loving corresponds to an appropriation' (*TBT*, 122); love, thus, becomes a consumption of the other into 'One'. Nevertheless, we are culturally programmed to construct our identities, in this way and current modes of subjectivity are closed to the mystery of sexual difference:

...our culture, our school education, our cultural formation want it this way: to learn, to know, is to make one's own through instruments of knowledge capable, we believe, of seizing, of

taking, of dominating all of reality all that exists all that we perceive and beyond (...) We want to make the entire world in our head, sometimes the entire world in our heart. We do not see that this gesture transforms the life of the world into something finished, dead, because the world thus loses its own life, a life always foreign to us, exterior to us, other than us (*TBT*, 122).

Our response to this 'life', this mystery, this 'grace,' "in the face of a mystery of springtime growth," or for example, immersed in a certain new landscape, or 'in an extra ordinary comic manifestation,' is, for Irigaray, '...astonishment, wonder, praise, sometimes questioning that, but never reproduction, repetition, control, or appropriation (*TBT*, 122).

...if we precisely grasped all that makes springtime, we would without doubt lose the wondrous contemplation in the face of the mystery of springtime growth, we would lose the life, the vitality, in which this universal renewal has us participate without our being able to know or control where the joy, the force, the desire that animate us come from. If we could analyse each element of energy that reaches us in the explosion of spring, we would lose the global state that we experienced by bathing in it through all our senses, our whole body, our whole soul. We sometimes at least partially find this state again, I would say this state of grace, in which the spring puts us (...) when we bathe in an environment that is simultaneously perceptible and imperceptible, knowable and unknowable, visible and invisible to us. We are then situated in a milieu, in an event that escapes our control, our know-how, our inventiveness, our imagination (122).

For Irigaray, this state also sometimes takes place at the beginning of an encounter with the other. 'It is in the first moments of drawing near to one another that the other moves the most, touching us in a global and unknowable manner' (123). However, Irigaray also argues, it is then too often we make this other our own, and '...in entering our horizon our world the other loses the strangeness of his or her appeal'. Whilst the other included us in a certain mystery, a *sensible transcendental* privileged term Irigaray also uses; thereby, communicating to us an awakening that is both corporeal and spiritual; we reduce the other to ourselves, we incorporate the other we make the other, the other of the same. In reducing the other to ourselves, we incorporate the other through

knowledge, love and custom and hence, at the limit, be able to no longer see the other, no longer hear the other, and no longer perceive the other. The other is a part of us, unless we reject the other.

The other for Irigaray is thus legitimated by a mystery:

The other is inside *or* outside, not inside and outside, being part of our interiority while remaining exterior, foreign to us. Awakening us, by their very alterity, the mystery, by the infinite that they still represent for us. It is when we do not know the other, when we accept that the other remains unknowable to us, that the other illuminates us in some way, but with a light that enlightens us without our being able to comprehend it, to analyse it, to make it ours. The totality of the other, like that springtime, like that of the surrounding world sometimes touches us beyond all knowledge, or judgment, all reduction to ourselves, to our own, to what is in some manner proper to us. In somewhat learned terms, I would say that the other, the other as other, remains beyond all that we can predicate of him or her. The other is never this or that we attributed to him or her. It is insofar as the other escapes all judgment on our part that he or she emerges as *you*, always other and non-appropriable by I (124).

However, this experience is not our habit. For Irigaray, the *you* is an irreducible other and a tangible other, present with us here and now, where, '...our culture generally entrusts this *you* to God-the-father: Our habits of thought (...) go rather in the direction of reducing the other to ourselves, to our own, or to transforming the other into a *he*, sometimes into a *she*, in some way reduced to an "object" of knowledge or an "object" of love' (124). Irigaray's argument is directed and to the prevalence of thought to the 'other' in contemporary theory; however, "never without doubt has an age tokens so much of the other as ours says, globalisation and migrations requiring it' (124). Nevertheless, this other, is, too often reduced to an object of study, '...to what is at stake in diverse socio-political strategies aiming in some manner to integrate the other into us, into our world' (125). Thus we avoid the problem of meeting with the stranger, with the other. We avoid letting ourselves be moved, questioned, modified, enriched by the other is such. We do not look for a way for cohabitation or coexistence between subjects of different equivalent worth. We flee dialogue with a *you* irreducible to us, with the man or woman who will never be I, nor me, nor mine. And who, for this very reason, can be a *you*, someone with whom I exchange with reducing him or

her to *myself*, or reducing myself to *him* or *her*. Nevertheless, the irreducibility of the other, the mystery of the other that we cannot incorporate remains, at least not yet, part of our culture. Whilst we have begun to think about a respect for the other, tolerance for the other as equal, we do not know how to transform culture to attain a culture of alterity, of relation with the other as other, of 'love' of the other as other, '...in order to make an alliance with him, or with her, in the respect for our respective values and limits' (126). Irigaray writes that:

This letting go of the subject, this letting be of the I towards what it is, knows, and has made its own, this opening of a world of one's own, experienced as familiar, in order to welcome the stranger, while remaining oneself and letting the stranger be other, do not correspond to our mental habits, to our Western logic. At best, the other is respected in the name of tolerance, is loved in God, is recognised as an equal or a fellow human. But that does not yet amount to perceiving and respecting the irreducibility of the other, to recognising the irreducible difference of the other in relation to me (125).

At best we are good patriarchs or matriarchs towards the other; we have 'ethic's or 'responsibility' to the other- an other that is more important than ourselves. This, Irigaray writes, still implies an hierarchical behaviour avoiding meeting with the other: 'To a man or woman that I must horizontally recognize as equivalent to me, in the radical respect of his or her difference(s)' (126). For the discourse in architectural theory, this has some significance, whilst architectural theory discusses the other- its other- questioning what the other means for it. How to create with who or what exceeds us, or what remains irreducibly exterior and foreign to us, remains outside its realm. Post-colonial theories in architecture, and feminisms in architecture, both compel architects to rethink relations with the other. For Irigaray; however, sexual difference is a universal difference, thinking sexual difference allows us to define a model of global community. Irigaray writes that '...it is often the manner of treating this difference – that is at the origin of differences of tradition, of culture, manifesting itself notably in common law' (128). This thought to sexual difference, Irigaray argues, is the only thing that can bring about 'a new step in the construction of civilization':

In fact, in our cultures woman still often remains the natural pole of masculine culture. If each gender assumes, in itself and for itself, the specificity of its nature and works out its cultivation, a new type of civility will be put in place in which the duality of genders will become, thanks to their differences, culturally fertile, and not only culturally fertile, as it still is too exclusively today. This re-founding of society and culture upon sexual difference, Irigaray argues, is to put into question notions of the proper, of ownness, of propriety, and property – a question that has been raised concerning the usefulness of Irigaray's project to feminism in architecture. The question of the proper puts into question, for Irigaray, the gesture that at present marks the entry of subject into the world, in Irigaray's terms in this paper, the 'appropriation that governs our mental and social habits' and Irigaray writes, 'It is to learn, at the most intimate, at the most passionate and carnal level of the relation to the other, to renounce all possession, all appropriation, in order to respect, in the relation, two subjects, without ever reducing one to the other' (128).

For the accusation of essentialism that is, or has been, so often levelled against her, Irigaray writes, in this essay:

To affirm that man and woman are really two different subjects does not amount for all that sending them back to a biological destiny, to a simple natural belonging. Man and woman are culturally different, and it is good that it is so: this corresponds to different constructions of their subjectivity. The subjectivity of man and that of woman are structured starting from a *relational identity* specific to each one, a relational identity that is held between nature and culture, and that assures the bridge starting from which is possible to pass from one to the other while respecting them both (129).

This specific relational identity, one's own relational identity (the word is used now in another sense, but possession of subjective or objective determination), is based on different irreducible givens: the woman is born of a woman, of someone of her gender, the man is born of someone from another gender than himself; the woman can engender in herself like her mother, the man engenders outside of himself; the woman can nourish with her body, the man nourishes thanks to his work; the woman can engendered in herself the masculine and the feminine, the man, in fact, intervenes as man above all in the engendering of the masculine.

5.3 Irigaray's Politics of Love

Some of the reasons why Marxist theory no longer satisfies us, Irigaray argues, is demonstrated by, as she writes: '...the fate of the earth as a natural resource; the question of women's liberation; and the world wide cultural crises exemplified by the student revolts that have arisen and re-arisen in France and elsewhere since '68' (ILTY, 20). Conflicts motivated by these issues have erupted and re-erupted within political groups, including feminisms; and a response to such outbursts is not possible, she argues, without questioning 'relationship' or in the terms of this thesis without questioning 'love'.

The approach to global political crises requires not only a criticism of the current socio-economic conditions but, for Irigaray, a certain creativity in order to challenge our interpretations of human identity. This, she argues, is the source of such conflicts. The current interpretations of human identity and of sexual difference, are for Irigaray, both theoretically and practically wrong. The remedy lies in analysing the relationship between men and women. She writes that it is unethical for us now, as it was for both Marx and Hegel, not to address the question of sexual difference. Whilst Irigaray's project does not dismiss the importance of continuing to pursue equal rights, as part of the continued struggles for women; she argues, nevertheless, that women cannot limit themselves to this goal. Thus, beginning with the intimate and arguing that the sexual relation is a profoundly different sort of relation (as demonstrated in some of her earliest criticisms of the philosophical tradition in particular the phenomenological tradition, in for example *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*) she has extended her work to more civil and political dimensions of sexual difference and to a 'politics of love'. (She presented a report on citizenship, to the European Parliament with Renzo Imbeni.)

In *Between East and West* Irigaray argues that the basis of traditional society - the family - only survives currently because of what she terms certain mutations that have reached the status of

norms. She writes that traditionally the founding of a home was a matter of alliance between families, and a matter of property. The girl and boy had to be given permission to leave the paternal house, on condition of perpetuating the family structure, customs and preserving wealth. This was the role of family in traditional societies, to preserve possessions and make them proliferate: Nothing foreign was supposed to enter the intimacy of this family group. However, these traditions no longer have the same power and couples are constituted by a wealth of circumstance, natural or adopted children, and living in a whole variety of manners: The family is already a model of diversity, as she argues:

While public authorities will look into the difficult problem of integration new families will have initiated the young generations into a cohabitation that is multiracial, multicultural, etc., (...) If the family is the resisting nucleus of social construction, has it not already said "no" to this standardisation imposed from above? Has it not already chosen difference as a spring board for survival (*BEW*, 134).

The patriarchal family has already been challenged by the many ways in which contemporary families are founded and constituted. Thus, in this way the family (in its mix of races, culture and parentage) can be a model for a new society, a new thinking, and a passage to a new order. The problem, however, at least for Irigaray, is that of how the Western tradition, founded on its logic of identity to self, to the same, to the similar, treats this new family. The passage to a new society exists but it needs to be cultivated. The problem is how the Western traditions treats the existence of this new form. How can it recognise and value these new forms? How can it sustain an approach to difference? One way is through sexual rights, as discussed. Rights written into law which allow us to value difference, another way is through art which can provide an impetus to new forms of dialogue.

CHAPTER SIX

6.1 Where Nothing in the World Is Single

Underlying many of the conflicts and debates surrounding feminism (as opposed to gender theory, or for that matter feminism as opposed to the question of difference) is the more interesting question, one that Luce Irigaray's philosophy asks us to reconsider, that of *sexuate* difference. How we can recognize sexuate difference and how we can cultivate it, describes the issue of dwelling, for Irigaray. This question of a properly human co-belonging, could also, she argues, found a new approach to community. Whilst Heidegger suggests that to be is to dwell and building and dwelling belong together, in *The Way of Love*, Irigaray argues that this sort of building does not suffice for dwelling. Another sort of building has to take place. She writes:

To cultivate human life in its engendering and its growth requires the elaboration of material and spiritual frameworks and constructions. These should not be opposed to the becoming of life, as they have too often been, but provide it with the help indispensable for its blossoming (*WL*, 144).

In this section of *The Way of Love* entitled 'Rebuilding the World' it is the horizontal dimension of human becoming, she argues, that first needs to be cultivated and this begins with the rediscovery of sexuate difference. Whilst for Heidegger to care is to love, and care characterizes our way of being-in-the-world: To care corresponds to a cultivation as equally a construction, for Irigaray the building (or love) that must happen is that between two.

Designing the Home for a New Family

In the paper 'How to Live in a Lasting Way Together' Irigaray argues that the house could be built from two small one roomed apartments. She writes:

Instead of centering the house around a dining-room, a lounge and a bedroom, which are mundane, functional and undifferentiated spaces that have often assimilated the family into a collective unity founded on a loss of individual identity, why not build the home on the basis of that which is particular to each one? Why not rebuild it starting from two small one-room apartments, which would replace the dining room, lounge and shared bedroom? Would not this spatial topography be more suited for today's requirements? Would not this represent an economy of space that makes room for what is one's own and that which remains foreign to us, to one's own world and the closeness with the other, to an individual singularity as well as to the foundation or re-foundation of a community: the community of a couple or a family, among others (KW, 126).

In this paper she also argues that communal life is forced upon us where it is not truly shared. The *building* that Luce Irigaray's philosophy thus suggests a work towards what she describes as a blossoming of culture. It is with this building that a new approach to community could begin. Irigaray's philosophy challenges questions surrounding feminism in architecture but its value is not only to these debates. The issue of dwelling discussed in terms of coexistence has two aspects of significance, as already discussed. First, it is a means to engage with Heidegger's philosophy of dwelling, dismissed by theorists inspired by more fashionable philosophers. Secondly, it is important in discussing the relatively recent question of gender in architecture. In this latter context Irigaray's philosophy has been used both to argue against the dismissal of feminism in architecture, apparently over concerned with issues relating specifically to women, often in favour of the wider issue of difference. Equally, women theorists have argued that Irigaray's work can be used to confront how difference is thought, especially where they suggest it eradicates the very specific question of sexual difference. Heidegger's philosophy and Luce Irigaray's reconsideration can be particularly useful in these discussions. However, there is an additional question that emerges from dwelling, that of how architects think about and approach community and linked to this is the question of sustainability. Second to that of the house, the school is perhaps one of the most important places to reassess the question of sexual difference. The example of contemporary

schools design provides a means to readdress each of these issues and elaborate on how each of these problems can, and perhaps has to be reconsidered.

Contemporary Theories of School Designs

On 12th February 2004 the Schools Standards Minister, David Milliband unveiled fourteen local education authority projects that spearhead the Government's "Building Schools for the Future" programme to rebuild or refurbish every secondary school in England. He stated that the opportunity to reconsider school design, from first principles should be a concern both to the managers of schools, governors, head-teachers and architects. He stated that 180 schools from across the country would benefit from a share of £2.2 billion capital investment in the first wave of the programme of renewal, which is due to begin in 2005. The document "Building Schools for the Future" states its aims as introducing a radical new model for the design and building of schools starting from a local level. A more interesting theoretical approach may be to reconsider schools designs from the level of a new family structure, from the level of a reconsideration of relation.

At the same time as unveiling the "Building Schools for the Future" programme Milliband revealed exemplar schools designs that had been commissioned as part of the programme. He stated that the designs commissioned (from some of the best architects in the country) incorporated some of the most modern concepts both for extended schools and special needs schools, they also included innovative ideas for schools for tomorrow which include "all through" schools, and "schools within schools". Milliband stated that the designs were meant to create benchmarks for how we design schools, to push forward boundaries of innovation and inspiration, and to develop a shared vision what building schools for the future could be. Nevertheless, whilst a great deal of money and time has been invested in these visionary designs, theorists have already warned against taking such projects as 'blue-prints' for how new schools for the future must function and 'Schools Works,' for example, a group of grass-roots theorists closely involved with the design of these

exemplars, have already argued:

Exemplars provide a range of ideas about what schools of the future could be like. We have been closely involved in the exemplar process and are delighted that schools will have this additional resource as they think about how to implement their own vision for the future. We would, however, caution against thinking of these designs as 'blueprints'. They have been developed to RIBA Stage C Outline Design, and require a significant amount of additional work to reflect an individual schools aspiration and needs.

The five firms invited to develop exemplar designs for primary schools were: Building Design Partnership Ltd., Cotrell and Vermeulen Architecture td., Dobson White Boulcott (Sarah Wigglesworth Architects), Marks Barfield Ltd., and Walters and Cohen Partnership. The five firms invited to develop exemplar designs for secondary schools were Alsop architects, De Rijke Marsh Morgan (DRMM), Mace Ltd, Penoyre and Prasad Architects, Wilkinson Eyre Architects. The firm invited to develop the exemplar design for an all-through school was Feilden Clegg Bradley Architects. Each of these practices are highly respected and eminent within their field. Of these exemplar designs and their purpose the "Schools for the Future" document states:

Our challenge is to provide attractive and imaginative and stimulating environments, which are also safe and secure places for children to learn in. They should be inclusive so no child is left out and all can achieve their full potential, and be open to wider use binding schools to their local communities (DfES, 1).

However, despite the time given to these projects and the marvelous and visionary nature of them, a question has to be raised as to whether these aims can be achieved without some awareness of the issue of (sexual) difference, and also whether some of the current architectural theory that addresses issues of gender and difference should take a part in these analyses of school design. Two important issues raised by the 'Building Schools for the Future' document are aims to improve use of schools by the community as a whole, and to improve how schools buildings are maintained. In this respect the document states:

It is vital that school staff have a strong sense of ownership (...) We are committed to making the design process simpler, while preserving the scope for ownership and input. We propose to do this on the one hand developing national 'exemplar designs' for school buildings but at the same time also ensuring, in all plans, those designs are molded to local needs by local people (DfES, 24).

Contemporary theories of school design which utilize creative consultation processes give the opportunity for communities to create their own relation to community buildings and reinforce communities. As already stated, an approach developed as the "Schools Works Toolkit" was influential in the design of exemplars. However, how well these processes can recognize and respect difference? In an interview published in *Romance Studies* (2004) "About Being-Two in an Architectural Perspective" (see appendices) Luce Irigaray discusses her lecture 'How to Live in a Lasting Way Together' published in *Key Writings* (forthcoming, 2004) arguing that to coexist we need firstly to recognize that men and women cannot dwell in the same way, relational identities of men and women are not the same. This is even more important for the development of children, and as already suggested, this argument goes beyond any issue of stereotypes.

The House

In her paper 'How Can We Live Together in a Lasting Way?' Irigaray argues that despite Heidegger's philosophy of dwelling, the architect still considers the house as that which provides shelter for the traditional patriarchal family. It meets the needs of his family but not its desires. The current form of dwelling, she argues, in her opinion, is unworthy of the human being. She writes that the house should protect the individual both physically and psychologically but, at present, present forms of living, cannot support the becoming of the individual, at least not in Irigaray's terms. The question for architects concerned with dwelling, as defined in the paper, is: How can we live together without eradicating oneself or the other? How can we dwell together, being two, in a lasting way? (*KW*, 124). The focus of a dwelling, she argues, must be in ensuring that protection of

each one's natural and spiritual life, their becoming (see *KW*, 125). The natural elements are important in this, as she writes:

The natural elements - air, water, fire and earth - all have a role in this. And, if we need houses to protect us from bad weather, it is as important for a house to provide for the presence of air and daylight, with contrast of sun and shade, if possible. As open fire has many advantages over other forms of heating. To have something to remind us of the earth, a view of the countryside or a few plants or shrubs in the house, is not a luxury. natural elements are indispensable to our life and, moreover, they are what we can universally share without renouncing our subjective differences. Thus they represent the basis of subsistence, of becoming, and of communal life all at the same time. They show us and remind us of life and its rhythms before or beyond our cultural excesses and paralyses (*KW*, 125).

In addition to the natural elements being present in the house, Irigaray suggests, dividing the house into two with places of retreat and solitude for each. This is necessary, she argues, so as to be able to perceive one's will and intentions as different, and for the body and soul to find itself again, refreshed, anew. This also allows a perspective on the other, as she writes: 'For how can the other be approached if he or she is no longer perceived as such, if undifferentiation dominates the couple, or the community' (*KW*, 125-126).

This space for oneself cannot be neutral it needs to be a space to remember oneself and what is particular to oneself in one's own difference. It is in this way that Irigaray argues that the architecture of the family home, of the intimate community can be founded and built again. She writes:

Would not this spatial topography be more suited for today's requirement? Would not this represent an economy of space that makes room for what is one's own and that which remains foreign to us, to one's own world and the closeness with the other, to an individual singularity as well as to the foundation or refoundation of a community: the community of a couple or a family, among others (*KW*, 126).

In the paper Irigaray discusses her studies of the difference in the use of language between girls and

boys arguing that this information can help to envisage a new way of dwelling. It also, as already stated, but in a less important way suggests a way of approaching feminism. Differences in the use of colour and an emphasis on relation life in women's rooms are part of her suggestions in the rooms of men and women. She writes: 'Maintaining the diversity of worlds enables and obliges one's return to one-self, but also allows each one to become familiar with the world of the other, not only at the level of words and ideas but also through everyday perceptions' (*KW*, 130).

The School

Working together to create beautiful buildings could generate a sense of purpose, pride and momentum both within and outside the school. It could suggest and preserve a different relation with nature and the other, and propose a more profound relation to the questions of sustainability. However, this approach would also fundamentally challenge the theories proposed in school design by this government funded document, and furthermore of the consultation processes promoted by the document. It is the recognition for the need for a form of 'interior-building' that has to take place first in recognition that the subjectivity of each sex is characterized by a specific world belonging to that sex (see *KW*, 127).

In a small experiment carried out with children of an 'After School's Club' in Derby, I spent a morning asking children to draw their own houses, if they could build these houses for themselves.

The questions were:

1. If you could build your own house what colour would you chose for inside?
2. Could you make a drawing with your house in it?
3. Could you draw a house for welcoming your friends or could you draw a room in your house to welcome your friends?
4. If you could choose where your house is, where will it be?
5. Could you invite a girl, if you are a boy, a boy if you are a girl, to visit your home? Could

you write a letter to invite a girl, if you are a boy, a boy if you are a girl, to your house?

Whilst this in no way suggests a scientific study, as part of a consultation process for a new building for the After Schools Club it demonstrates the difficulties of interpretation of children's desires for their own spaces. It is interesting to see how much the children asked enjoyed thinking about and responding to the questions. In the answers to the last question, in their invitation, the little boys answers were:

Dear Rox's,

Come to my comfy house (...) I have made a new room for watching TV and listening to music.

Yours sincerely,
Lewis

To Jorden,

I would like you to come to my party in my house because I have a big swimming pool and I've got a pool table and a couple of bicycles.

To quarts,

Come to my house. Living it large. Have a wicked time.

XXX

From a girl:

To Richard G. Olany,

He is nice and he is my brother. He is so kind to me. Richard say you like me please Richard.

From Sarah Olany

This girls drawing of a house was covered in hearts, had a pool and a slide in the garden, a 'welcome to my house' sign and a 'happy birthday path'. Another girls drawing was of a house in her favourite holiday place. She writes:

To Warren,

Do you want to come to dream house to play on my adventure playground.

From,
Katie

Another girls invitation:

To Liam,

Do you want to come to my adventure house we can play on the beach. But remember to bring a bucket and spade and we can go crab collecting.

There is a very clear sense in these answers of a different sort of desire for their dream houses, between the girls and the boys. However, whether this can be acknowledged, or seen as significant by architects or teachers is a question that must be raised if school design seeks to return to first principles and to challenge all of its theoretical presumptions and also design from the level of community need, for the benefit of future education. The 'School Works' process promotes the use of multidisciplinary teams of facilitators, including architects, artists, including performance artists, landscape designers and educational psychologists, to develop creative and participatory projects. Design festivals and workshops, for example, aim to involve the community as part of the process of designing a school building.

In a test of the approach described by 'School's Works' in Newcastle 120 pupils, staff and other community members took part in tours of architectural sites around Newcastle, and 40 half day workshops. Over two days, workshops were devised to address colour, texture and lighting, access and security, environmental issues, behaviour, best use of space, outside spaces, school identity, valuing the past and communications (or IT in schools). One question, in particular, asked in these workshops was to look at the way the built environment is itself a hidden form of curriculum, exerting effects on the possibilities of creative learning. Many ideas emerged from the workshops that sought to address how to engender a greater sense of belonging at the school, the authors of 'School's Works' suggest, including that of the creation of a house structure, that is to say, a group structure or a series of separate smaller groups, apparently reinforcing a sense of community. The participatory process also led to the recommendation of a new horizontal management structure at the school. Some of the questions the team also asked, particularly to teachers, were why the school day essentially still operated in the manner of a nineteenth century

factory production line, with a rigid timetable, delivering knowledge in chunks and moving large populations simultaneously at the sound of a bell.

Even if differences in desire between women and men or girls and boys were evident in any consultation process, it is very unlikely that these difference would been acknowledged and valued, perhaps not even seen by architects or design consultants. However, as Irigaray argues, the family structure that exists now is one of diversity but the problem is that social and political structures cannot and will not recognize this. Neither, is David Milliband likely to permit the issue of sexual difference to be discussed as part of, or in the preparation of, any consultation document. For example, whilst a question asked of the consultation processes for Newcastle was to look at the way the built environment is itself a hidden form of curriculum, there is no doubt that the conventions of architects and their preconceived notions of inclusivity, equality, and creativity will each assert its own curriculum on the consultation process. Not to mention the personal creative ambitions of architects and the expediency of maintaining traditional approaches in spatial planning and building. Moreover, consultants may feel a certain obligation to conform to the political ambitions of government who has funded such a programme. These issues of consultation are not discussed either in the document 'Building Schools for the Future' or in the 'Schools Works Toolkit'. However, the exemplar designs are visionary, highly creative spatially and technically and push the boundaries of design to meet the needs of future schools. What is at question in the issues of new schools design, however, is a matter for philosophy to address, but this is not without its significance for how architects practice.

The consultation processes suggested by 'Schools Works' have influenced many of the exemplar designs. Sustainability is also an important issue in each. Approaches to sustainability have included natural ventilation, openable windows, ventilation chimneys, maximizing and minimizing solar and internal heat gains, low energy building fabric and maximizing natural lighting. Whilst some of the issues of sustainability did emerge in the consultation process, most were imposed by architects. Rethinking dwelling could suggest a way to rethink sustainability, as it

is community. In dialogue with the other as other in the work of Luce Irigaray, she argues that matter becomes spiritualized, this suggests another approach to nature and its resources. Founding community in difference, would not only suggest another form of community, and of belonging, but a different attitude to sustainability in design.

Sustainability is an important issue for architects and an agenda, which has a high priority in many contemporary projects, especially those seeking public funding. So too is design which addresses community, or that promotes community in deprived and run down areas. Each of these issues is far-reaching but also problematic when imposed from above (as an ethic in design) for example. Nevertheless, each of these issues can be examined from the perspective of contemporary philosophy, including that of Luce Irigaray. The consultation process, as it stands in principle, and as it is promoted, allows the means for these questions to emerge, however, for the issue of sustainability to emerge so as to remain in the community the consultation processes would have to, at least in part, step outside the agenda of contemporary politicians, conventions of architects, and even the Western philosophical tradition according to Irigaray. The starting point is the relation with the other, dialogue rethought and reconsidered - it is the issue of dwelling - and this is also a way to address interpretation.

To address sexual difference in the home is relatively permissible - albeit as such suggests tends towards the expectation of a return to stereotypical gender roles and this may be why somewhat mistakenly it can seem an acceptable focus for discussions of gender in architecture. To address sexual difference in schools, however, is to face a storm. (Like of the imposition of equality in dress within French Schools, or rather the prohibition of religious dress codes worn at school.) The question raised by Luce Irigaray's philosophy is not one of a return to stereotypes or an unquestioning attitude to difference, including religious or cultural differences, it is one of challenging notions of difference and rediscovering the difference which must first be understood in *sexuate* difference - that between two who are equal and different. This difference is in part outside language and logic, outside our Western philosophical and religious traditions and thus, for

Luce Irigaray, provides a more profound basis from which to rediscover and approach again all kinds of difference. In her paper 'How Can We Live Together in a Lasting Way?' she writes of this difference:

The horizontal transcendence between the sexes creates space, spaces, whereas reducing it to a genealogy destroys them or at least fills them up. Of course spaces opened up by difference cannot figure directly in a home because they cannot be represented. However, they can be evoked and raised by maintaining and reawakening difference in the way of dwelling. These spaces allow desire, desires, to be preserved, so that we can live together in a lasting way (*WL*, 132).

Conclusion

This thesis described by the title 'With place love begins...' and has questioned how the work of Luce Irigaray can be directed towards the problems of continuing, what I have called a 'feminist' discourse in architecture. To this effect the research has questioned both to Luce Irigaray's philosophy as to whether the problems surrounding feminism in architecture must designate the question of feminism obsolete and whether there is a contemporary philosophy that can address the issues surrounding women in architecture. Without attempting to dictate women's aspirations I have argued that there are hopes and aspirations, dreams and desires that for many women will remain unfulfilled because culture is founded on a patriarchal family model. Irigaray writes, in this respect: '...women's exploitation is based upon sexual difference; it's solution will come only through sexual difference' (*JTN*, 12). Irigaray philosophy also suggests, in addition to this critical approach, that there are ways of living together not yet addressed by contemporary cultures yet significant to extending and maintaining the question of difference, in particular in architectural theory. It is this creative aspect of her work that is significant for architecture.

Attempts to redefine feminism in architecture, in approaches that seek to push the boundaries of traditional interests have to be celebrated but some aspects of this move raise questions. Initially concern has to be addressed to where the boundaries of new theory are placed, what is and what is not included, and moreover, what is permitted for the future.

Current theory has been distinguished by citing widely from contemporary philosophy and psychoanalytic theory but it has also been described as more sympathetic to difference than feminism. Especially where influences by Jacques Derrida's project, a common reference amongst architectural theorists. However, this makes difference an issue of equality. Engaging with issues of gender in terms of inequality describes a position of women within the profession, but such arguments are not synonymous with the potential offered by contemporary philosophy. Whilst

feminist (a term used loosely in this instance to describe the variety of work that broadly addresses questions of gender) research in architecture has become more interdisciplinary such work also runs the risk of being reduced to determinants laid down by the philosophy cited. In this case 'feminist' critiques and interventions can be resisted at the same time as outward tolerance for diversity is sustained and even promoted. As Irigaray writes in an interview 'About being-two in an architectural perspective' published in *Romance Studies*, 2004: 'To promote only diversity, as it is often the case in our times, runs the risk of remaining in an unchanged horizon with regards to the relation with the other(s)' (publication forthcoming and included in appendix).

Feminism is and has always been more than a philosophy. It has a set of demands and strategies. Whilst Irigaray argues that deconstruction of patriarchal traditions is indispensable she also argues it is not enough. Moreover, she argues that such projects cannot be allowed to obscure the problems inherent in conceiving social structures as neutral and thus able to adequately maintain sexual equality. The recognition of sexual difference as something that is not to be overcome has to deconstruct traditional stereotypes of sexual difference, but it is also a question of proposing creative alternatives, to open the door to a future not yet thought within contemporary philosophy. Irigaray needs her readers and interpreters, who include architects, this is inherent in her philosophy; she cannot change culture on her own. However, contemporary feminism is in a certain predicament, one shared by theory, and perhaps also invidiously maintained by a reactionary Architectural Institution. If the rights of women in architecture is to regain some hope of a continuing discourse (whether described in terms of feminism or not) one that offers some material change in women's lives, it needs a contemporary discourse. Exploring the possibility of instigating this project is the work offered by this thesis.

The thesis has thus questioned how the work of Luce Irigaray addresses the issue of dwelling, how she has extended contemporary philosophies of dwelling to explore issues of coexistence, and how this can be directed towards the problems raised by feminism in architecture. Problems I suggest are the focus of not only a crisis in feminism but also a crisis in architectural

theory that seeks to evoke the problem of difference. In this thesis I have thus investigated what Irigaray's philosophy of being-two, what a recognition of a feminine subjectivity or a radical sexual difference allowing two subjectivities would mean for architecture in terms of building and dwelling: What it would mean to live towards a culture of two sexed subjects. More specifically, the question she poses to architecture is, how can we both respond to and initiate modes of living that recognize sexual difference - respond to, initiate or in Irigaray's terms 'make touchful' a different sort of love that remains unthought within the current cultural tradition.

Rethinking love shared by two subjects has been a difficult theme to address especially within the traditional confines of architecture. However, love and architecture have been considered throughout architectural theory. Irigaray's claim is that her work could fund a practice that attends productively to sexual difference, opening a place for '...an energy merely deprived of the space-time it needs to unfold, inscribe, to play', motivates my question of architecture (SG, 25). How this is approached in architecture is a specific, complex and subtle practice.

An important aspect of any 'feminist' research informed by contemporary French feminist philosophies is to step outside the logic of rational theoretical thought and to reformulate the terms of the argument in relation to women's lived experience of the political and social world. One of the most interesting aspects of Irigaray's philosophy, however, is the ease in which it can criticize not only research in gender theory and architecture but also some of the research carried out outside the traditional more academic realm of contemporary gender theory. In a way, the value of Luce Irigaray's philosophy is in this application which exceeds the traditional distinction between feminism and gender theory in architecture, modernist theory and post-modernist theory, or issues for that matter of women's rights and the wider issue of difference. It is a beginning, one that can inform and motivate domestic issue as much as global political problems.

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