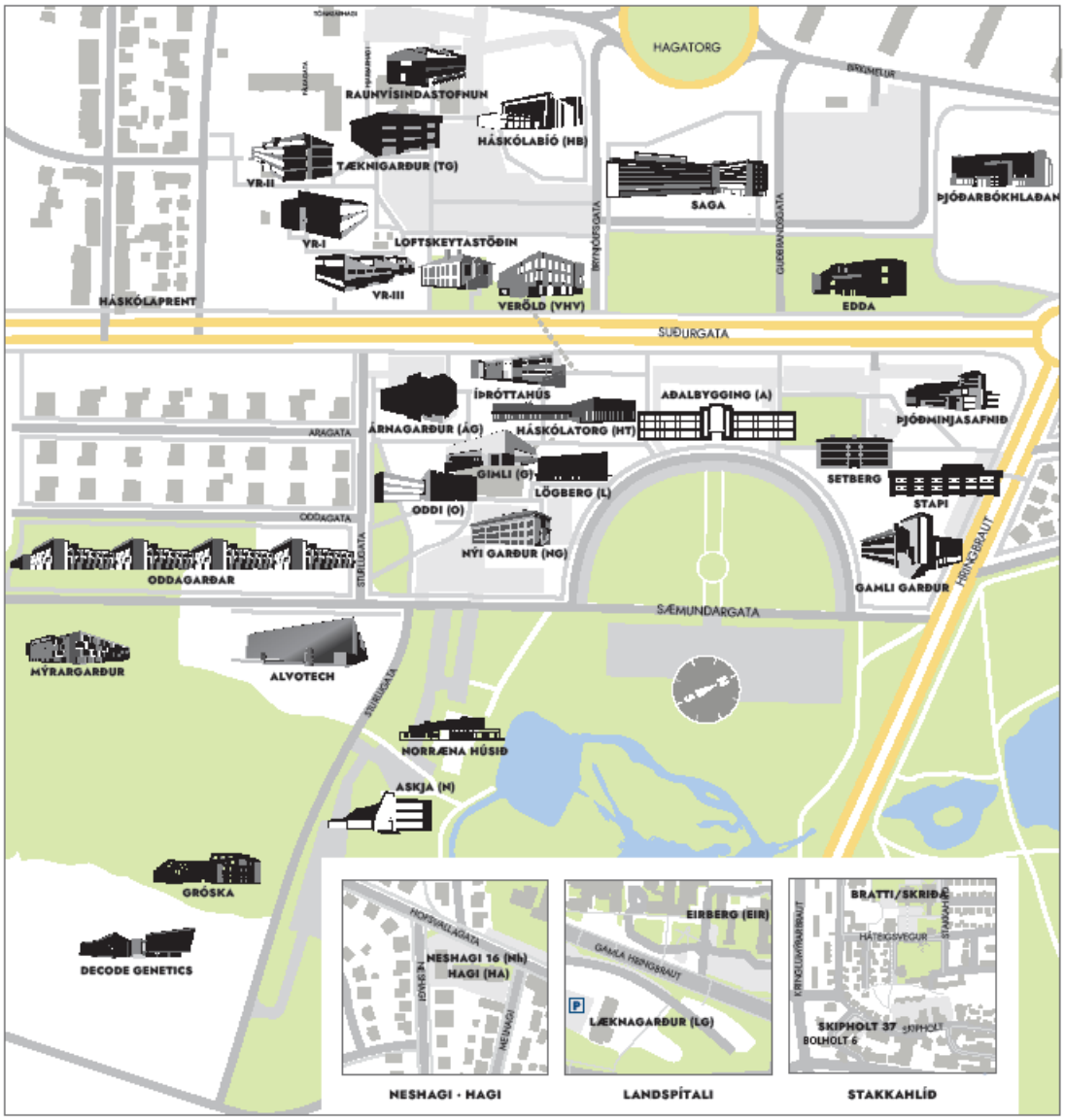
14th Meeting of the Irigaray Circle: Touching the World
University of Iceland, Reykjavík, Iceland

June 6-9, 2024

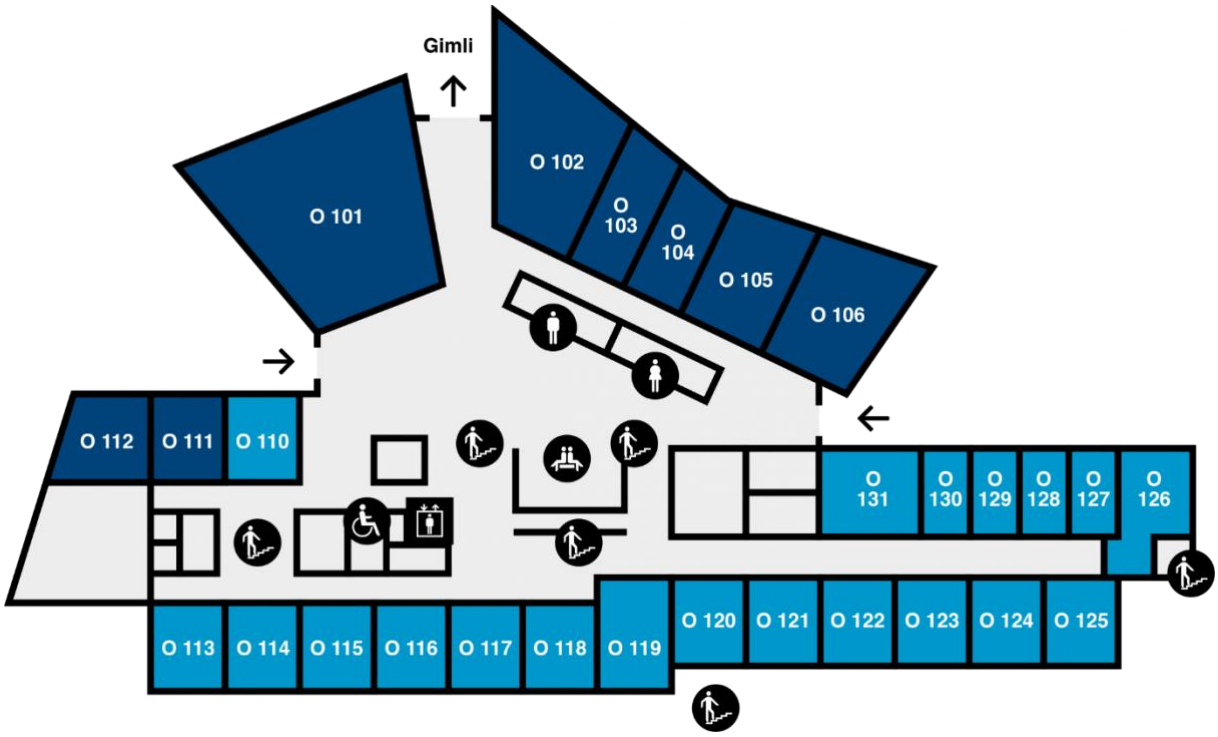
Keynote speakers: Fanny Söderbäck and Sigridur Thorgeirsdottir

Map of the University Campus

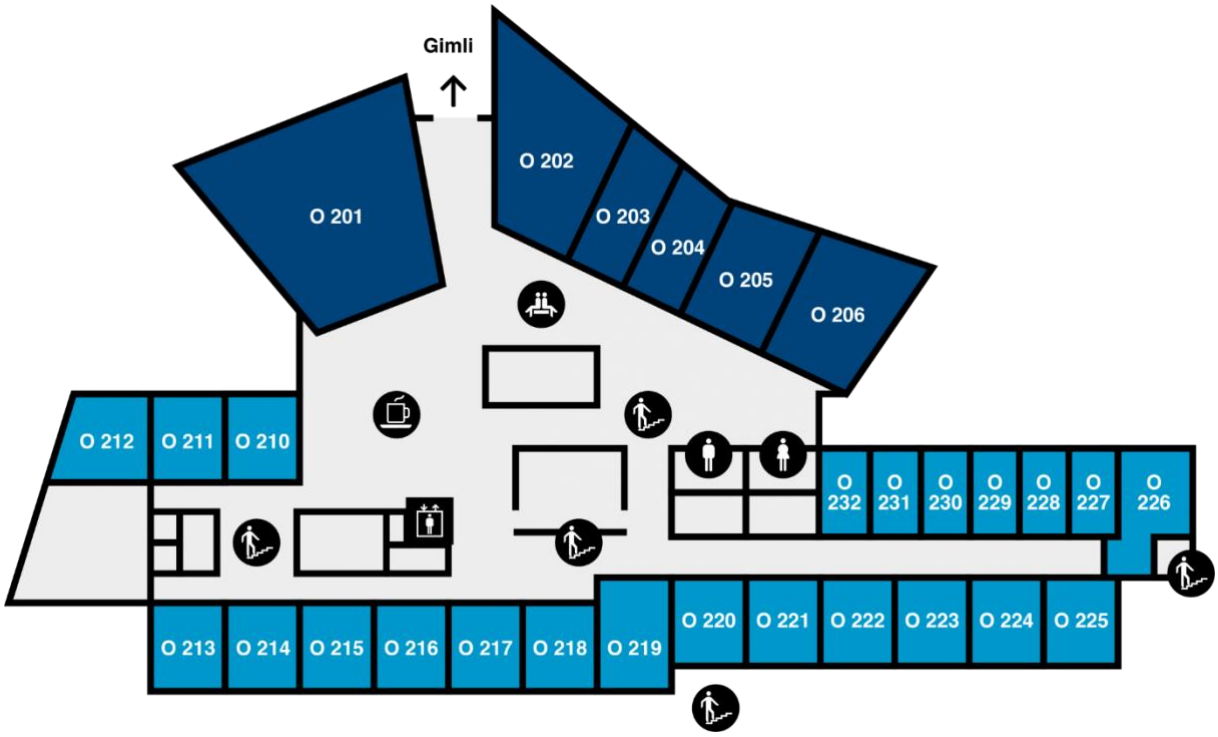


Abstracts are available on the conference website: https://www.irigaray.org/2024-program.html

Oddi – Ground floor



Oddi – 1st floor



Program:

Thursday, June 6 2024

08:00-11:00 Registration, Ground floor, Oddi

09:00-09:30 Commencement, Oddi 101

09:30-10:30 Keynote: Fanny Söderbäck, Associate Professor, Södertörn University

Title of presentation: Fifty Years of Touch: Tracing Tactility in Luce Irigaray's Corpus

Moderator: Sigridur Thorgeirsdottir, Professor, University of Iceland

10:30-11:00 Buzzgroups, Oddi 106, Oddi 202, Oddi 206; Coffee, Ground floor, Oddi

11:00-12:30 Sessions:

Paper Session 1: Age and mental health, Oddi 106

Victoria Philibert, PhD Candidate, University of Toronto: Sexual Difference in the Linguistic Patterns of Schizophrenic & Dementia Patients: The early linguistic work of Luce Irigaray in dialogue with recent developments in Natural Language Processing (NLP)

Margarita Navarro Pérez, Modern Languages Professor, University of Castilla-La Mancha: Touching the World Bioethical Dilemmas in Old Age and Irigaray's Sexuate Difference in Charlie Brooker's Black Mirror

Esther Zaplana, Modern Languages Professor, University of Castille La Mancha: Self-Affection in Old Age: May Sarton's As We are Now and Irigaray's Path of Transcending Human Reality

Moderator: Michael Nelson, Associate Professor, UC-Riverside

Paper Session 2: Care and Catastrophe, Oddi 202

Erin Edwards, Associate Professor of English, Miami University: Breathing Through The Book of the Dead

Rachel Jones, Associate Professor, George Mason University: The Inconstancy of the Earth: Sexuate Difference, Contingency and Desire

Guðbjörg R. Jóhannesdóttir, Associate Professor in Arts Education, Iceland University of the Arts: Self-Affection in Old Age: Thinking with the Glacier

Moderator: Sabrina Hom, Associate Professor, Georgia College & State University

Paper Session 3: Touch and Dwelling, Oddi 206

Else Werring, PhD Fellow, The University of Oslo: On Space and Maternity in Rachel Cusk's Outline trilogy

Camilla Pitton, PhD candidate, University of Warwick: Contact Zones: Plurality and Philosophical Dislocations in Irigaray's "When Our Lips Speak Together"

Tjaša Škorjanc, PhD Candidate, Sience and Research Centre Koper & Institutum Studiorum Humanitatis: Revisiting Marc Augé's non-place: a crossroad between touch and speed

Moderator: Hildigunnur Sverrisdóttir, Architect, Architects Association of Iceland

12:30-13:30 Lunch, Háma

13:30-15:00 Sessions:

Paper Session 4: Maternalities, Oddi 106

Sigríður Guðmarsdóttir, Associate Professor, University of Iceland: Irigarayan Mariology, Feminist Theologies and the Ecclesiastic Art of Kristín Gunnlaugsdóttir

Elín Strandberg Ásbjarnardóttir, MA Student, University of Iceland: Matrescence in the Light of Irigaray´s Philosophy

Vilja Alanko, Doctoral researcher, University of Helsinki: Self-Affection in Old Age: The Mother-daughter relationship according to ancient hagiography: a reading in dialogue with Irigaray

Moderator: Emilia Plichta, Doctoral Researcher, Åbo Akademi

Creative Endeavors: Poetry, Oddi 202

Ann M. Carson, Miami University: Breathing Through the Book of the Dead

Moderator: Kristian Guttesen, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Iceland

Paper Session 5: Eros and sexual identities, Oddi 206

Adam Herpolsheimer, Adjunct Professor/Doctoral Student, Temple University Beasley School of Law, The University of Oslo: Through Sexual Difference and Interpellation

Michael Nelson, Associate Professor, UC-Riverside: Contact Zones: The Role of Touch in Sexuality

Silvia Locatelli, PhD student, Universidade de Lisboa: Luce Irigaray: Touching the Other to Overcome the Essentialism/Anti-Essentialism (patriarchal) Dichotomy

Moderator: Carol Stampone, MA Student, KMD UiB

15:00-15:30 Coffee, Ground floor, Oddi

15:30-17:30 Sessions:

Roundtable: Irigaray, Embodiment and Religion, Oddi 202

Phyllis Kaminski, emerita, St. Mary's University: The Coming of the Flesh in Human and Cosmic Relations

Cheryl Lawler, St. Louis Psychoanalytic Institute: In the Beginning Was the Relation: The Divine as Ternary Agential Field

Cara Judea Alhadeff, public scholar and artist: Becoming Trickster: Irigaray Inhabits the Impossible

Andrea Wheeler, Iowa State University: Inner and Outer Potentialities: A Spiritual Approach to the Problem of Regenerative Design

Jena Jolissaint, South University: This Legal Subject Which is Not One: Luce Irigaray and a Jurisprudence of Sexual Difference

Moderator: Wesley Barker, Associate Professor, Mercer University

Creative Endeavors: Paper and Sculpture Installation, Oddi 206

Elizabeth Presa, Senior Lecturer, University of Melbourne: Colour: Bleeding into sorrow and joy

Moderator: Moderator: Valgerður Pálmadóttir, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Iceland

17:30-19:00 Reception, Main Building, Ground floor

Program – Friday – 7 June 2024

09:00-10:00 Keynote: Sigridur Thorgeirsdottir, Professor, University of Iceland

Title of presentation: Invisible Women Philosophers: How Sabina Spielrein and Lou Salomé (may have) influenced Irigaray´s Marine Lover

Moderator: Mary Rawlinson, Professor Emerita, Stony Brook University

10:00-10.30 Coffee, Ground floor, Oddi

10:30-11:00 Buzzgroups, Oddi 106, Oddi 202

11:00-12:30 Sessions:

Creative Endeavors: Paintings, Oddi 106

Marianne Morild, Bergen Art Academy, Bergen Art Academy: I saw a stone that was an eye

Panel: What is Sexual Difference? Oddi 202

Lynne Huffer, Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor: Mysterics: Extinction and Emptiness

Emanuela Bianchi, Associate Professor, New York University: Irigaray's Speculum as Corporeal Philosophy

James Sares, Postdoctoral Scholar, University of Kentucky: The Ethics of Thinking with Irigaray

Elaine Miller, Professor, Miami University: A Spiritual Approach to the Problem of Regenerative Design

Peg Rawes, Professor, UCL: Luce Irigaray and a Jurisprudence of Sexual Difference

Moderator: Steinunn Hreinsdóttir, PhD Student, University of Iceland

12:30-13:30 Lunch, Háma

13:30-15:00 Session:

Panel: The Interval: Sexual Difference, Decolonization, Oddi 202

Yvette Russell, Associate Professor, University of Bristol: Towards a philosophy of law grounded in sexuate being: mana wāhine and constitutionalism in the postcolony

Rebecca Hill, Senior Lecturer, RMIT University: The interval can never be crossed: Approaching Irene Watson's Raw Law

Stephen Seely, NUAcT Fellow, Newcastle University: From the War of Worlds to Sharing the World: The Interval as a Topology for Ontological Politics

Moderator: Rachel Jones, Associate Professor, George Mason University

15:00-15:30 Coffee, Ground floor, Oddi

15:30-17:30 Session:

Plenary panel: Reconfiguring the Cartography and Materiality of Touch, Oddi 202

Colin Stragar-Rice, PhD Student, Cornell University: Canvas Infinita: Outline of a Decolonial Imagining

Athena Colman, Associate Professor, Brock University: Touching space-time: A morphological critique of anatomical thought

Ruthanne Kim, public scholar and artist: Becoming Trickster: Irigaray Inhabits the Impossible

Moderator: Sigríður Guðmarsdóttir, Associate Professor, University of Iceland

22:00- Recommendation:

Summer Ball: For those interested in a night on the town, we recommend the Summer Ball of Heimilistónar, a quirky band of actresses/musicians who are kind of housewives gone wild. You can buy tickets online or just go to Gamla Bio when the ball begins at 10 pm.

Gamla Bíó (https://tix.is/en/event/17496/sumarkjolaball-heimilistona/)

Program – Saturday – 8 June 2024

10:00-11:00 Plenary Panel on the work of Mary Rawlinson, featuring her response

James Sares, Postdoctoral Scholar, University of Kentucky: On Being Claimed by Our Relations

Sabrina Hom, Associate Professor, Georgia College & State University:

Peg Rawes, Professor, UCL: Liveable Futures

Elaine Miller, Professor, Miami University: In Defense of the Singleton

Mary Rawlinson, Professor Emerita, Stony Brook University: Response

11:00-11:30 Coffee, Ground floor, Oddi; Buzzgroups, Oddi 106, Oddi 202, Oddi 206

11:30-13:00 Sessions:

Paper Session 7: Touching Life, Oddi 106

Steinunn Hreinsdóttir, PhD Student, University of Iceland: 'Touch in the touching'— a critique of Merleau-Ponty´s idea of the touching hands

Annu Dahiya, Doctoral Lecturer, CUNY: The Logic of Touch as the Logic of Life (beyond Modern Science)

Valerie Daoust, Assistant Professor, Université of Ottawa: Touching the World and Gratitude Between (at least) Two

Moderator: Kristina Bojanovic, Professor, University of Donja Gorica

Paper session 8: Aesthetics, Oddi 202

Louise Burchill, Visiting Lecturer, University of Melbourne: Self-Touching Tranposed Visually: The Art of Women's Self-affection

Giulia Rho, PhD, Queen Mary University of London: A Transfiguration of Flesh and Blood: Irigaray's Aesthetics for a Cinema of Sensible Transcendence in Barbara Rubin's 'Christmas on Earth'

Hildigunnur Sverrisdóttir, Architecht, Architects Association of Iceland: The Diagonal as a Means of Sharing Space

Moderator: Sigríður Guðmarsdóttir, Associate Professor, University of Iceland

Paper Session 9: Politics, Community and Peace

Anja H. Lind, TU Dresden: Irigaray & Anarchism

Andrea Wheeler, Associate Professor, Iowa State University: Pillars of Global Peace: The Philosophy of Luce Irigaray and Peaceful Coexistence

Moderator: Tjaša Škorjanc, PhD Candidate, Sience and Research Centre Koper & Institutum Studiorum Humanitatis

13:00-14:00 Lunch, Háma

14:00-15:30 Sessions:

Paper Session 10: Sexuate texts, language and culture, Oddi 202 (2 hour session, 2pm-4pm)

Kristina Bojanovic, Professor, University of Donja Gorica: The contemporaneity of the language of sexual difference

Anna Bunting-Branch, Artist and researcher: Touched by a Sexuate Text: Wonder, interaction and the animation of sexual difference

Lior Levy, Senior Lecturer, University of Haifa: Philosophical Sisters – From Antigone and Ismene to Irigaray and Beauvoir

Ana Laura Funes Maderey, Assistant Professor, Fairfield University: Luce Irigaray's Engagement with Yoga and Some Challenges/Possibilities for a New Culture of Energy

Moderator: Elín Strandberg Ásbjarnardóttir, MA Student, University of Iceland

Creative Endeavors: Performance, Oddi 202

Talking with Luce (a performance)

Emilia Plichta, Doctoral Researcher, Åbo Akademi: Breathing Through the Book of the Dead

Carol Stampone, MA Student, KMD UiB

Moderator: Kristian Guttesen, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Iceland

Paper Session 11: Elements and mythologies

Kristin Sampson, Professor, University of Bergen: Touch, Fire and the World: Irigaray and Heraclitus in an Ecofeminist Setting

Jorge Ernesto Arjona Quintero, PhD Candidate, University of Pardubice: Irigaray, Femaleness, and Matter in Plato's Timaeus

Dawn Bunch, PhD Student, Duquesne University: The Fall of Redemption of the Feminine Revealed through Kore-Persephone and The Blessed Virgin Mary

Moderator: Emanuela Bianchi, Associate Professor, New York University

15:30-16:00 Coffee, Ground floor, Oddi

16:00-17:30 Walk & Plenary:

Walk: Departure from the entrance of Conference Venue, Oddi Lobby (The duration of the walk is 45 mins)

Sigríður Þorgeirsdóttir: Environmental Immersion in Walking

Moderating: Business meeting, Oddi 202

18:00 – 21:00 Conference Dinner, Veröld – Ground floor

Program – Sunday – 9 June 2024

10:00-11:00 Creative Endavours, Veröld 007

Creative Endeavors: Writing Workhop, Veröld 007

Writing Yourself (a workshop)

Emilia Plichta, Doctoral Researcher, Åbo Akademi: Breathing Through the Book of the Dead

Carol Stampone, MA Student, KMD UiB

Moderator: Louise Burchill, Visiting Lecturer, University of Melbourne

11:00-12:00 Plenary, Veröld 007

Moderating: Reflections, end of conference

Moderators: Kristian Guttesen, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Iceland,
Sigríður Guðmarsdóttir, Associate Professor, University of Iceland,
Sigridur Thorgeirsdottir, Professor, University of Iceland

Abstracts

Bojanovic, Kristina

The contemporaneity of the language of sexual difference

Relying on philosophical heritage left by Luce Irigaray and trying to connect her thought to the contemporary state of feminist theory and practice, with an emphasis on problems that arise in dealing with totalizing thinking, I will try to explain what language of sexual difference means and why it is important to open, establish and maintain female identity in a language that is not neutral and which does not reduce. By representing thesis about the necessity of creation and use of language that would ultimately respond to the supremacy of philosophical logos and its universalization I will try to consider the way by which it can/must be invited a different text, a new addressing that would indicate the neutralization of sexual difference in history, transformed the question of the other into question of sexed other, and through that gesture erased philosophical-ethical injustice, breaking with tradition and traded logocentric language and thinking. Finally, I am considering the necessity of identifying female action and female speech, their inextricability, especially in context of problems that feminist theory and practice encounter every day, and I am pointing to the traps that patriarchate sets to woman by its assimilating addressing and treatment.

Key words: language, sexual difference, feminine, other

Škorjanc, Tjaša

Revisiting Marc Augé's non-place: a crossroad between touch and speed

The anthropologist Marc Auge propounds the notion of "non-place" (to be found in airports, stations, and hotels) as a superficial spatial category in which the contemporary consumer-subject experiences a complete immersion into the atomized logic of hypercapitalist society. We wish to overcome such a nostalgic and devotionally contemptuous view. The landscape that determines the surface of our search for an answer will be stretched between onto-phenomenology of touch on one hand, and dromocracy as "the rule of speed" on the other. To unlock what is meant by this couplet, it is necessary to turn to the primary form of spatiality that preordains the coming-about of the human subject. The thought of a primary dwelling inside of the Mother is inseparable from the notion of touch. Touch in its ontological meaning functions as a "syncope" that outlines a distinction between the subject and the mother. The forgetting of this origin within the mother (intextricable from the syncopathic touch) results in, as claimed by Luce Irigaray, the violent separation between immanence and (vertical) transcendence. We shall argue that haptic (and not tactile) touch, preceding the artificial separation of the senses, presupposes a circulation between the subject and object, and reverberates in human encounters with specific forms of syncope. The existing social, political, economic and interpersonal order displays characteristics of privileging a specific type of the transcendent, which is distinct from the ethical position of horizontal transcendence as operationalized by Irigaray. Here we will ponder "speed" as the paradigmatic principle of contemporaneity. Dromocracy, which is the expression guiding Paul Virilio's examination of the rule of speed and the correspondent obliteration of the path for the destination as well as the immobility of the human body, results in this specific "outwardness" of the human subjects and their confinement into harsh distinctions between the subject and the object. "Non-place", conversely, represents a particular form of a syncopathic interruption between different forms of our transcendentally oriented movement. Between cars, airplanes, and metros, there suddenly appears a remnant of "path". Furthermore, the generic and delocalized appearance of the non-place as well as procedures of documenting passengers' identities function as a conglomerate between the emancipation of the gaze from the double screen of the smartphone, pure space that opposes the dominant eradication of physical space, and a momentarily alleviation from identifying oneself through objects, while still preserving dominant modes of existence proper to the

hypertechnological sphere. Finally, we will relocate ourselves to a completely different type of the non-place: the refugee camp. Within the rule of speed, access to speed is what formulates which lives are within and which outside society. Our objective in the concluding section will consist in understanding how awareness of the segregating power of speed and its influence on time, space, the body, identity, and the gaze, might help open a path towards “horizontal transcendence”, where each life is finally within.

Keywords: dromology, haptics, non-place, camp, speed

Wheeler, Andrea

Pillars of Global Peace: The Philosophy of Luce Irigaray and Peaceful Coexistence

In this proposed paper presentation, I explore the concept of positive peace as described in peace studies by Johan Galtung; comparing it with Luce Irigaray's notions of peaceful coexistence in difference. I examine Irigaray's emphasis on refining our senses in relationship to open up a pathway to positive peace. Sensitivity is understood in this context is understood as a discovery rooted in the reality of our bodies and physical senses. In an ecological context, deep green perspectives in the built environment call for a paradigm shift towards a different way of understanding living: and a sensitive approach to rethinking difference becomes a bridge from exploitative ways of being upon the earth to more lasting modes of co-existence.

Thus I examine understandings of positive peace and compare with the call for a return to ourselves or to ecological belonging in Irigaray’s philosophy to examine sensitivity and moreover why reimagining intimacy matters for enhancing notions of peaceful coexistence. The exploration of sensory experience and of intimacy between two, is nothing naively romantic, and when seen in relation to the critical project of positive peace, and continuing global violence and hostility, Irigaray work is a path opened up in peace studies for a reevaluation of relationship as fundamental to peaceful coexistence in difference.

Keywords Positive peace, peace studies, love, coexistence, sexuate difference

Sampson, Kristin

Touch, Fire and the World: Irigaray and Heraclitus in an Ecofeminist Setting

Abstract: The question of nature, and more specifically, how we are to relate to the natural world we inhabit in a sustainable way, is arguably one of the vital questions of our time. This paper considers how Luce Irigaray’s reconceptualization of the notion of touch, and its connection to fire, may contribute to providing new and much needed answers that may help us gain access to more fruitful ways of relating to the natural world we belong to. Irigaray famously argues the importance of touch, in a culture that for millennia has favoured sight (1985, 25-26; 2019, 95). In connection to our way of relating to the world, and in particular our natural environment, this notion of touch is interesting. The question remains, however, what kind of touch we speak of in this context. Moving back to the ancient Greeks, we find that the most common word for the verb “to touch” in classical Greek language – haptô – is an inherently ambiguous word, which carries a multitude of meanings. Some of these resonate with the way Irigaray speaks of touch. Others, however, seem to imply a very different meaning, such as for instance “to set upon”, “attack”, or “assail”. One of the meanings of the verb “to touch”, in classical Greek language, is “to kindle” or “to set on fire”. Touch, at least in this ancient Greek context, is thus connected to fire. This connection between touch and fire can also be found to be echoed in some of what Irigaray describes, for example in Sharing the Fire, where she speaks of fire in connection with desire (2019, 88) and also invokes fire as an elemental, ontological entity, and criticizes the way it has been unfolded as something never shared (2019, 94). The sharing Irigaray talks of, also in Sharing the World, is vital for a new and sorely needed way of relating to our living environment. The pre-Socratic thinker Heraclitus evokes

the element of fire as an ontological principle that describes both the inherent generation of the cosmos, but also, an aspect of logos (which carries a number of meanings, one of which is “reason”), as transformative (Kahn, 1989, 128). Fire transforms in ways that may be both destructive and constructive, according to this way of thinking. And, considering the challenges of our contemporary era, it is tempting to say that the use of reason (logos) by man, constitutes a transformation that may prove to be our undoing in all its destructiveness. Irigaray argues the imperative necessity of thinking touch and fire, in our relations to the world, in ways that involve sharing between sexuate different others. By considering the various meanings of touch, not least those connected to fire, in Irigaray, with a sideview to Heraclitus, this paper considers the question of how this may open up new and different ways of relating to nature and the world.

keywords: Irigaray, touch, fire, Heraclitus, world

Maderey, Ana Laura Funes

Luce Irigaray’s Engagement with Yoga and Some Challenges/Possibilities for a New Culture of Energy

Luce Irigaray’s thinking has been intimately touched by yoga, both by the practice and, to some extent, by the philosophy. In her most recent acknowledgment of this influence, A New Culture of Energy, she discloses some of her teachers in the tradition of Viniyoga, and her approach to the philosophy of Patañjali, Vedic myths, Hindu Tantra, as well as to the image of the Buddha and Hindu gods. As she makes it clear in this text, her engagement with this tradition has not been through a rigorous reading of its textual sources, but through the oral teachings she received from her yoga instructors throughout more than forty years of practice, an encounter with Krishnamacharya in a workshop she went to India, and some secondary bibliography on the topics. Although her approach to Eastern traditions has been strongly criticized before, many scholars and readers of her work have tried to go beyond them by acknowledging her efforts to think about an ethics of sexuate difference that contemplates other cultures and by appreciating the creative and inspiring results of Irigaray’s experience with yogic breathing. As a Mexican middle-class cisgender woman who has been deeply touched by both yoga and Luce Irigaray’s philosophy, and who specializes in the study of Sanskrit philosophical traditions of ancient and classical India (writing, teaching, and living in the area corresponding to the traditional homeland of The Paugussett Nation, in Connecticut, US), I constantly wonder about the risks and possibilities of building bridges between East and West, something Irigaray calls for at the end of her essay, especially for those of us who practice yoga in the West. But what does it mean to build a bridge between cultures? And how to ensure we do so without building it (yet again) behind the backs of those whose traditions we are supposed to respect? Indeed, several claims made by Irigaray regarding Yoga philosophy are inaccurate, which may lead us to question the way one can be touched by practices from a different tradition without deeply touching the philosophy those practices are embedded in (with all the privileges that doing so entails). I agree with Schwab that Irigaray’s engagement with Yoga philosophy should be read as a “narrative of transformation” and not as a theoretical analysis or source of information about India or Hindu Philosophy. However, I would like to find a bridge between this transformational narrative and the relevant yogic philosophical sources that have inspired it. This exercise will show that Irigaray´s critical interpretation of samādhi in the Yogasūtra of Patañjali brought her closer, inadvertently, to the qualified dualist vedānta philosophy that animated Krishnamacarya´s yogic teachings. I believe that by dialoguing with the textual sources of yoga as rigorously as philosophers do with any other philosophical tradition in the West (and not just as inspiration for our Westernized practices) we’ll be able to advance more responsibly in building the new culture of energy that Luce Irigaray envisions as going beyond East and West.

Key words: bridges, culture, East/West, Luce Irigaray, yoga philosophy

Locatelli, Silvia

Eroticizing Irigaray: Touching the Female Body Through a 'Revised' Pornography Theory

Connecting Luce Irigaray's thinking to the philosophical studies of pornography, as this article aims to do, might seem like a particularly extreme action. However, this philosophical move can find its meaning if the specific stages of this path are followed, leading to interesting reflections on how to employ the thoughts of the French philosopher in the realms of pornography, eroticism, and sex. Indeed, throughout her philosophical reflections—especially in her recent writings—Irigaray has attempted to give proper value to the experience of touch through her thoughts on sexuate difference. And sex – which is largely influenced by pornography – is certainly one of the various ways in which the touch of the other of sexuate difference can take place. Hence arises the rationale for this reflection, articulated through two sections. The first directly concerns Luce Irigaray's thought, introducing her philosophy of sexuate difference and how it leads to a reflection on the act of touching the other. In this section, the various stages of the French philosopher's work will be analyzed to clearly demonstrate how the recognition of the other manifests in the mode of physically touching him or her (or them), giving rise to what Irigaray defines as the 'sensible transcendental.' In the second section, we delve into the heart of the philosophies of pornography, always keeping in mind the tools provided by Irigaray regarding the recognition of the other and the importance of the experience of touch. First and foremost, a point will be emphasized where every position find agreement: the fact that mainstream pornography displays a sexuality incapable of recognizing woman as woman, hence its inability to show, to the broad spectrum of people consuming it and forming an idea of how sex operates, what it truly means to touch the otherness of sexuate difference, as Irigaray's philosophy would suggest. Subsequently, a stance will be taken within the feminist debate on pornography, asserting that rather than its elimination and censorship, what is needed is its 'revision.' This implies that the necessary move within the realm of pornography thought should focus on creating methodologies and production theories wherein women (alongside non-conforming subjectivities) are recognized as such, within the spectrum of their various pleasures and desires. In this manner, always utilizing the tools provided by Irigaray, I suggest that we can contemplate a production of pornography, and hence a reception by those who consume it and shape their sexuality based on it, wherein the touch of the other can occur in a concrete and anti-patriarchal manner.

Keywords: Irigaray, Sexuate Difference, Tech, Pornography, Sex

Jones, Rachel

The Inconstancy of the Earth: Sexuate Difference, Contingency and Desire

One year after the 1755 earthquake devastated the city of Lisbon, Immanuel Kant wrote three public essays in response. By focussing on the natural causes of earthquakes and refusing narratives of divine wrath, Kant contributes to making the Lisbon earthquake a defining moment for Enlightenment thought. Yet, the earthquake essays also provide more specific insights into the motivations for Kant's later critical project. Despite emphasizing his concern with the causes of such events rather than the human suffering they produce, Kant cannot resist wondering why, "As human beings, who were born to die, we cannot tolerate the fact that some died in the earthquake, and as strangers here who possess nothing of our own, we are inconsolable that goods were lost which in the general nature of things would soon have been left behind anyway." (2012: 360; trans. modified) Natural disasters teach us that the transience of worldly goods cannot satisfy our nobler desires. More generally, the essays are pervaded by an unease that we live on the earth without knowing what lies beneath our feet. The critical project of re-grounding philosophy "on a transcendental ceiling" (Irigaray 1985: 203) can thus be read as a response to the instabilities of living on an earth that moves. When read with Irigaray, Kant's anxiety about subterranean depths that are replete with holes and passageways can be seen as a screen for a more repressed unease about his own origins within the maternal body (ibid 137). His repeated images of a porous, quaking earth displace the essentially inert and lifeless matter of the critical project (Kant 1987:

276), while the fiery vapors that seep through labial clefts and fissures serve as an unsettling reminder of bodily flows, haptic desires, and a matter “already fissured and open” (Irigaray 1985: 134). Approached in this way, the earthquake essays can be re-appropriated to retroactively unground the critical project and reimagine the earthly, sexuate, and shifting materialities of being human. For David-Ménard too, Kant’s later philosophy constitutes a response to “the inconstancy of sensible life” and its unmasterable contingencies (David-Ménard 2000: 91). The desire to escape such inconstancy fuels the pathologization of the sensible via the moral law and the investment in an absolute break between the autonomy of reason and the heteronomy of inclination. In this melancholic phantasy of detachment, all objects of desire are equally suspect and, thus, equally substitutable. David-Ménard suggests that contingent structures of desire are translated into apparent philosophical necessity in ways that not only subtend phallocentric phantasies but also inform the very thought of sexual difference. Refusing its naturalization, she argues that sexual difference “is inscribed in conceptual thought as the necessity of a contingency.” (David-Ménard 2004: 265) In this paper, I will first read the contingencies of Kant’s fear of an earth that moves back through the work of Irigaray, before reading Irigaray with David-Ménard, to interrogate the ontological status that Irigaray accords to sexuate difference and to question the ongoing place of contingency as its potentially ungrounding ground.

Keywords: earthquakes; contingency; desire; Kant; David-Ménard

Nelson, Michael

The Role of Touch in Sexuality

Touch played a fundamental role in Merleau-Ponty (MP) and de Beauvoir (dB) accounts of consciousness, perception, intersubjectivity, and erotic love, while vision, the gaze, seems to have played that role in Sartre’s account. For both MP and dB, touch most clearly exhibits the ambiguity involved in subject and object, passive and active, and mental and physical, as we touch ourselves. But the philosopher of touch is Luce Irigaray, who placed self-touch at the center of her fascinating account of sexual difference. I argue that her account of sexual difference is problematic, but that the autoeroticism at its center offers a promising account of undifferentiated, unorientated human sexuality and sexual pleasure. In her ‘This sex which is not one’, Irigaray argues that feminine sexuality starts from an autoeroticism that is “very different from man’s”: Whereas a man’s erotic self-touching requires both an “instrument” and activity, a woman is always touching “herself without any need for mediation, and before there is any way to distinguish activity from passivity,” thanks to the fact that a woman’s “genitals are formed of two lips in continuous contact” (24). So, she claims that, thanks to typical physiological differences, a man but not a woman needs an instrument and a minimum of activity to self-touch. The first presupposes that one’s hand is an instrument. But when one strokes one’s cheek with the back of one’s hand, one is engaging in a pure act of self-touching. One’s hand is an instrument only in the sense that it is active as subject. Maybe then the second claim does the real work: Whereas a man must be active to self-touch, a woman does not, as the labia are always just touching. However, the pleasure of and from touch requires movement and movement requires activity; pleasure in touch requires coming to be touched when prior one wasn’t. The activity might be outsourced. Perhaps one is sitting entirely passive in a car as it bounces over an unpaved road and the organic self-touching is pleasurable. But such cases are then equally applicable to men, provided their hands rest in the right places. Finally, I think that this account of sexual difference requires equivocating between early and later stages of development. By the time genitalia stand as special sources of pleasure, well beyond infancy and early toddler years, a fairly robust pleasure schema is in place. In early stages, it is the sexually undifferentiated mouth with lips the surround it that has a special status. Irigaray’s account of autoeroticism is better construed as a promising account of undifferentiated, unorientated human sexuality from which accounts of sexual difference, difference in orientation, etc., can be built; it is the core pleasure schema upon which an erotic and sexual schema is then built. The phallocentric conception of sexuality, where man is active and pure subject and woman is but an object for his sexual pleasure, is not faulty just because it allows for only a masochistic

feminine sexual pleasure, but also because it is an incoherent conception of male sexuality. The notion of pure sexual subject and pure sexual actor is incoherent. Touch lies at the center of sex and the concept of a pure toucher, something that touches without being touched, is simply incoherent, as touching something is necessarily reciprocal and feeling the touch necessarily involves receptivity to the object of touch.

KEY WORDS: Sexuality, erotic thought, autoeroticism, touch, phenomenology

Herpolsheimer, Adam

Through Sexual Difference and Interpellation

It is uncontested, even if only begrudgingly, that Luce Irigaray's notion of sexual difference comes in direct contact with the feminist chiasmata that link "biological sex"—complete with the inevitable essentialist contestations that follow—with the radical notions that undergird identity, subjectivity, and sexuate being. In some ways this has been an obstacle for transgender theory and the formation of transgender identities. But what if it doesn't have to? What if it never had to? Using George Canguilhem's insights on conceptualization and sex determination as an axiologically grounding backdrop, this paper argues that sexual difference is not the ontological link between the alleged prediscursive realm of biology and the eventual birth of the sexed individual. Instead, sexual difference itself requires a particular normative determination that can at best be described discursively as a consequence of the very interpellation that makes description cognizable or even possible at all. In that sense, from Louis Althusser to Judith Butler, and neatly back at Irigaray, a robust investigation within the conceptual mechanics of interpellation and its discursive scaffolding is key to understanding the crucial albeit multiplicitous interplay between sexual difference and the individual subject. Urgently, this paper reiterates that sexual difference is itself by no stretch of the imagination problematic. Sexual difference offers invaluable insights into the nature and breadth of feminist theory, queer theory, and everything in between. Moreover, though sexual difference is emphatically a prerequisite for all that can and heretofore has been considered "being," it would be a misstep to end any such ontological pursuit there. No, through sexual difference, one must acknowledge the impact and structural necessity of "choice" as it pertains to all that can conceivably constitute life. Only then can an individual subject be acknowledged as an individual. The question must shift from "how is one supposed to be?" to "what does it mean to be?" In both cases the answer lies imbedded within one's identity, though an unencumbered identity is required if authenticity is to be realized. Not only is this crucial for the formation of transgender identities, but for the possibility of any authentic selves at all.

Keywords: Sexual difference, interpellation, identity, ontology, conceptualization

Rho, Giulia

A Transfiguration of Flesh and Blood: Irigaray's Aesthetics for a Cinema of Sensible Transcendence in Barbara Rubin's 'Christmas On Earth'

Experimental filmmaker Jonas Mekas wrote in his manifesto: "we don't want rosy films – we want them the color of blood" (1961). In this paper, I suggest that cinema understood as the erotic, tactile and visual opportunity to rethink the production of meaning can serve to bring about Irigaray's sensible transcendental through art. I approach the sensible transcendental as an aesthetic mode that asks the question: "Why do we assume that God must always remain an inaccessible transcendence rather than a realisation— here and now—through the body?" (Irigaray 1993). To respond to Irigaray's enquiry, I turn to the case of Barbara Rubin's erotic short film Christmas on Earth (1963). Following Mekas' call to action, Christmas on Earth stages scenes of worship both religious and sexual. The formal strategies Rubin employs communicate by exceeding verbal expression: beginning with a closeup of the female organ, the film defies phallocentric scopic economy, converting the subordination of the "horror of nothing to see"

(Irigaray 1985) of the female sex into joyous, sensual affirmation. Through rhythmic orchestrations of “flesh colours” (Irigaray 2004) and humanoid shapes, Rubin conjures the divine as “a resurrection and transfiguration of blood, of flesh, through language and an ethics that is ours” (Irigaray 1993). The film upsets the limits of what was possible in cinematic experiments of the 1960s, suggesting that through ethical embodied encounters with the other a transformation of language, verbal or cinematic, can take place. I argue, through close formal analysis informed by Irigaray’s writings on the aesthetics of sexual difference, that Rubin strategically employs the medium of cinema to subvert the visual spectacle of female and queer sexuality and of subjective experiences in relation to touch. This resonates with Irigaray’s project of the sensible transcendental, the advent of which would bring about a reorganisation of the economy of meaning entailing “an exchange thus able to communicate at times, to commune beyond any exchange of objects” (Irigaray 1996). Rubin challenges visibility to complicate representation and reception, and privileges haptic ways of relating to the world of the film and the people in it. Throughout Christmas on Earth the spectator is immersed in a complex cinematic experience that renders narrative codes useless. The unpredictable soundtrack, the vibrant colour effects, and the psychedelic editing “create a visceral, embodied affect, which gesture[s] towards the pre-oral and non-oral realms Irigaray sets up as alternatives to the realm of the visual” (Bolton 2011). This radical disconcerting of cinematic aesthetics invites a diffused sensorial engagement by the audience, defying distance in time and space, with the ambition to depict and bring about a feminine imaginary relying on proximity. In fact, Irigaray’s notion of the sensible transcendental reconfigures the terms on which aesthetics traditionally relies and will be interpreted as methodologically indicative of how an ethics of sexual difference might be represented.

Key Words: Aesthetics, Sensible Transcendental, Film Studies, Ethics

Philibert, Victoria

Sexual Difference in the Linguistic Patterns of Schizophrenic & Dementia Patients: The early linguistic work of Luce Irigaray in dialogue with recent developments in Natural Language Processing (NLP)

In recent years, research in natural language processing (NLP) .shows an increased focus in the automatic detection of schizoaffective disorders (SAD) and dementia from everyday language use (Zhang et al., 2022). Most NLP algorithms use spoken or written data assembled from social media, electronic health records, and interview transcripts to identify the linguistic parameters associated with a particular illness domain. The scope and range of accurate diagnoses from these detection methods is already reported to be robust and wide, encompassing bipolar disorder (Huang et al., 2019; Sekulic et al., 2018), obsessive-compulsive disorder (Chandran et al., 2019; Coppersmith et al., 2015) and autism (Hilvert et al., 2019). This paper examines the methods and results deployed by these new machine learning algorithms and compares them with those employed in the early work by Luce Irigaray on the language patterns of patients with schizophrenia and dementia. While Irigaray identifies the linguistic sciences as being concerned primarily with models for utterances, with synchronic structures of speech, and with language models (1984, p. 124), she maintains a consistent skepticism after her initial studies on the limits of scientific methods to represent an objective, neutral, sexless subject in the study of language (2002, p. 139). Attested by an absence of collected variables on sex and gender in her early analyses, Irigaray claims she did not initially set out to prove that discourse has a sex but discovered proof of sexual differentiation in discourse during her analyses. Following this, she shifted her research protocol to the collection of spoken utterances in a series of experimental language games with her participants. While most NLP-related research on mental illness detection does not concern itself with gendered analyses of its categories, we argue that Irigaray’s methods can be used to evaluate cross-applicability to these datasets and the tenability of gendered linguistic phenotypes. The paper is divided into four sections. In Section (1), Luce’s early linguistic studies are presented and her particular theories of morphology, verb conjugation, kinship structures, and pronoun use expounded. In Section (2), the aggregate results from several different

NLP studies on SAD and dementia are presented are shown and several methodological differences noted. In Section (3), variables of gender and sex are discussed in relation to other psycholinguistic studies outside of NLP. Finally, in Section (4), pronoun use is analysed in detail to generate working hypotheses of how to mobilize Irigaray's findings and critique into future research.

Five key words: Luce Irigaray; artificial intelligence; natural language processing; philosophy of language; psycholinguistics

Lind, Anja H.

Irigaray & Anarchism

Laura Roberts' Irigaray and Politics concludes with an evocative gesture toward International New Municipalism. Grounded in Irigaray's (2002, 14) insistence that the common(s) ought be defined by proximity, and not by property, by "closeness with others" and not by "rules," "goods" and "borders," and pinpointing the cornerstone of her 'women's politics' as a "community made up of autonomous relational sexuate subjects, in non-appropriative and non-hierarchical relations with each other" (Roberts 2019, 150), Roberts suggests that it is municipalist organising—decision-making at a very local scale, allowing for direct, participatory and subject-to-subject communication—that may most faithfully represent the politics of sexuate difference. What Roberts does not have space to consider is the intriguing ramifications which emerge from heralding a municipalist framework, the central figure of which—Murray Bookchin—was an (almost) life-long anarchist, his libertarian municipalism arising directly out of anarchist ideals, theorised to directly target the usurping of the commons by property, and centrally concerned with politics taking place at the human-scale—between autonomous subject-to-subject members of the same community, in direct participation. This paper takes up this connection, arguing that the political "revolution" Irigaray (2002, 127) calls for follows a distinctly anarchist formulation: the breaking of hierarchies to insist upon horizontal relations; the anti-capitalist critique; the simultaneous necessity "to reground singular identity and to reground community constitution" (Irigaray 2002, 3); indeed her very description of community as "composed of autonomous individuals in conscious relation to one another," as opposed to "an undifferentiated whole of citizens organized by an instinct, a will, an idea, or a leader, whether it be the leader of a horde, of a tribe, of Church or of State" (Irigaray 2002, 102–103). Anarchism as political theory is centrally concerned (in its social/communist forms) with the dialectical relationship between the autonomous individual and the community; with the breaking of all forms of hierarchy; and with the explicit rejection of an undifferentiated, atomised, depoliticised amalgam beneath the leader and the state. This paper suggests that Irigaray's politics, and Roberts' examination thereof, may be enriched with a reading of anarchist scholarship, in particular as it is expressed by Bookchin, not least because of their shared concern with proximity. Bookchin's formulation of anarchist justice (1991, 148) precisely articulates the differentiation key to Irigaray's project: society must be organised not around a liberal fantasy of 'equality,' failing to consider the differences between members of a community—the "inequality of equals," in which injustice stems from a fiction of perfect (bodily) equality, the domination of the same—but rather around the "equality of unequals," an equality built upon the inherent recognition of difference, be it sexuate, ability, or any other relevant marker. Piecing together the sparse and tentative connections made between Irigaray and anarchism so far—in the work of Lewis Call (mainly 2002), in Seònaid Mary-Kate Espiner's dissertation (2019), and indirectly in Mario Klarer (1992)—and through a close reading of Bookchin, this paper suggests that the projects of sexuate difference and anarchism could mutually enrich one another.

Keywords: politics, anarchism, hierarchy, proximity, community

Hreinsdóttir, Steinunn

‘Touch in the touching’— a critique of Merleau-Ponty´s idea of the touching hands.

In the text “The visible of the Flesh: A Reading of Merleau-Ponty, The Visible and the Invisible, “The Intertwining—the Chiasm”” and with the concepts of sexuate difference and self-affection, Irigaray draws critically on the phenomenology of touch as laid out in Merleau-Ponty’s text — especially with respect to his idea of the two touching hands, being both subject and object of intentionality and experience. Irigaray criticizes Merleau-Ponty for ignoring sexuate difference and the invisible touch between two. Instead of putting the focus on the subject-object relation in perception (as Merleau-Ponty does), in which the self and the world become available, her focus is on the relation between two different bodies that are of a sexuate nature. Hence, she elaborates Merleau-Ponty´s notion of the body and his notion of touch towards an ethical understanding of ‘being two’ that includes affect in thinking, that allows embodied dynamism between two and within oneself. Merleau-Ponty´s analysis of the tangible, doesn´t allow dynamic interaction between two bodies; the two hands belong to the same person. With a continuation of the notion of ‘coming in touch’ upon the world, the body being the medium of perception, Irigaray elaborates the ‘touch in the touching’, the somatic experiential meaning that is pre-verbally felt. Hence, she works out an alternative phenomenology of sexuate difference in which an ethical relationship to the other is of central concern that includes lived experience and that functions as an act of resistance and change.

Keywords: Touch, self-affection, inter-affection, the sensible transcendental, sexuate difference

Bunting-Branch, Anna

Touched by a Sexuate Text: Wonder, interaction and the animation of sexual difference

Abstract: ‘Sexuate difference in the manner of perceiving ourselves, the world and the other(s) is then a qualitative difference, which would later be reduced to a quantitative one. […] It is not only through our sight that we can perceive the world and the other(s), by means of images or representations, it is also through the trace in ourselves of their way of touching us.’ (Irigaray 2019:96) In this paper, I take up the position of reader-as-fan: one who is touched by their interaction with a text, immersed in its terms, and intimately engaged in the transformational exchange that it offers. In the first part of this paper, I will pick up on the curious rhetoric that characterises Irigaray’s engagement with sexual difference in her writing—as expressed in her poetic figures of speech, speculative questions, and mobilisation of wonder. While Irigaray has suggested that sexual difference might be characterised by its capacity to evoke a sense of wonder ([1982] 1993), readers like Judith Butler (2004), Gayle Salamon (2010) and Tim R. Johnston (2015) have argued that the attempt to conjure difference in provocative rhetorical terms only makes for more epic fails. Paying particular attention to the affective capacities of wonder—from the vertiginous ‘Irigaray anxiety’ identified by Penelope Deutscher (1996:6) to the queer textual intimacy that inspires Perry Zurn (2016), and the curious thought experiments of Stephen Seely (2016)—I will suggest that re-engaging with wonder can lead fans of Luce Irigaray towards more inclusive and intersectional conceptions of sexual difference beyond binary logic and the limits of anthropocentric imagination. In the second part of this paper, I will elaborate on Seely’s wonderful definition of sexual difference as the capacity for informatic exchange (2016:115) to frame a discussion of interactive fiction that animates new ways of engaging difference with wonder. Drawing connections between the work of artists like Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley (2020), Uma Breakdown (2022) and Belladonna Paloma (2023), and Luce Irigaray’s own writing, I will consider the affective life of a text that shapes and is shaped by interaction with different readers: a sexuate text. Given my own understanding of the philosophy of sexual difference as being enlivening because of and not in spite of its provocative nature, this paper advocates for forms of engagement that keep the sense of wonder alive in the imagination—animating different thinking both within and beyond the Irigarayan corpus.

Keywords: Difference Wonder Fandom Interactive fiction Animation

Werring, Else

Distressing Dwellings, Elemental Thresholds: -On Space and Maternity in Rachel Cusk's Outline trilogy

What if you crave your own becoming, while also mothering, nurturing and enveloping others? Is self/other really a contradiction, or has it been falsely construed as such by patriarchy? These are questions addressed by British writer Rachel Cusk, whose narrators tend to be mothers. Being in touch with oneself is a precondition for touching others, argues Luce Irigaray. In order to remain in touch with oneself, one must have a space of one's own, modelled on the "placental economy": a space enabling precarious, mutual co-becomings rather than strict separations or fusions (1993). The patriarchal motherhood institution (Rich) demands that the mother be a space for others, but fails to offer her a space of her own : " the nest for the child would be possible if the female had her own nest. If woman had her own territory: her birth, her genesis, her growth" (Irigaray 1993, 149). This paper examines the Irigarayan concepts of "dwelling" and "threshold" in relation to Cusk's novels Outline (2014) and Transit (2018), whose narrator Faye is a contemporary mother in a state of "dereliction". Motherhood has rendered Faye an empty vessel, channelling other people's voices, but bereft of a voice of her own. In Outline, Faye undertakes a trip to Athens, that is also an excavation of the past. She discovers the "matricidal" beginnings of literature and philosophy, while dwelling in an apartment alluding to the top of Plato's ladder (Symposium), amidst the universal forms of Truth and Beauty. But there is no room for lived maternal experience there; only immaculately organized bunk beds welcoming the "concept of children" rather than any particular child. At the centre of the flat looms an eerie statue of the woman-mother as constructed by patriarchy. Faye descends the stairs, plunges into the sea, and unearths her "liquid ground" (Irigaray 1991). Yet she remains mute and her journey unfinished. After all, a threshold like the sea is only a bridge leading elsewhere. The follow-up novel Transit, relates Faye's return to her home town, London, where she buys a "virtually uninhabitable" house in a middle class neighbourhood. It is "not a place where you could expect children to live", with its squalid garden of rotting plants, and a furious madwoman looming in the basement. But it is undergoing change, in tandem with Faye herself. As Faye drifts between these dwellings and other significant spaces, she happens to pass through elemental transitions – or thresholds – enveloping her in water in Outline and a "cloudscape" of air in Transit (Irigaray 1993, 1999). Cusk's novels question the precarious future of care and its links to motherhood and sexual difference. How may change begin from within and between spaces? Which spaces stifle mothers, and which ones engender transformational touch? The novels offer no fixed conclusions, but I suggest a fluid one: meandering through elemental thresholds might be just what we need to gestate "the fecundity of the caress".

Key Words: Luce Irigaray, Rachel Cusk, Motherhood, Dwelling, Threshold, Touch.

Arjona Quintero, Jorge Ernesto

Irigaray, Femaleness, and Matter in Plato's Timaeus

This paper aims to undertake the genealogy of a terminological entanglement that sits at the base of Western misogyny. Following continental feminist philosophies, I claim that the elements of this entanglement are already present in Plato's Timaeus and serve as a violent foundation for what would become Western misogyny. Accordingly, in this paper I trace the textual evidence in the Timaeus that justifies or denies the existence of a specifically platonic rationale for the Western association of matter and femaleness. In the Timaeus, Plato introduces an ontological principle as the mediating instance between the Forms and their instantiations (49a5-6), namely, the receptacle, the place where the inscription of the Model Forms on their sensible copies takes place. Even if Plato discourages the likening of the receptacle to any other body, he himself

compares it to a nurse (49a6), a mother (50d3), the odorless liquids that are the basis of ointments (50e7), and the soft material out of which figures are molded (50e8), giving rise to possible interpretations of the receptacle as sexed – specifically female – matter. Even though Plato himself never explicitly identifies the receptacle with matter, his formulation led to a particular exegetical tradition, in which first Aristotle suggested this identification, and later Plotinus posited matter as the source of evilness in the Timaeus. This entanglement of matter, femaleness and evilness is a driving force of misogyny in the West and as such must be encountered head-on if the conceptual apparatus of Western misogyny is to implode. Plato's sexed description of the receptacle adds a layer of difficulty to the historical reception of the Timaeus. This sexed materiality of the receptacle has been explored within French Theory circles, specially by Luce Irigaray in Speculum de l'autre femme. When describing the receptacle, Plato is consistent with a figurative economy largely current in his era, namely, that of the association of femaleness, motherhood, wetness, softness, and matter. This figurative economy is taken up by Irigaray to explore the ultimate ontological consequences of this understanding of femaleness. In the chapter 'La mère de glace' she applies her cut-up technique to Plotinus' On the Impassibility of Incorporeals to highlight the gender stakes in Plato's description of the receptacle in the Timaeus. Mimicking Plotinus, Irigaray asserts that the receptacle "is given the name of mother by analogy; given that she does not engender anything… this engendering faculty that only belongs to the being whose virility is intact" (1974, p.223-224). In this paper, following Irigaray, I argue that there is a circularity behind Plato's analogy, which partly characterizes Western misogyny: is the receptacle female-like because of its malleability and matter-like character, or is it malleable and matter-like because of its female-like character? To some extent, this circularity would not matter had it not turned into a mutually deprecating entanglement. Hence the necessity of disarticulating this entanglement: its circularity sustains a misogynist figuration of femaleness. To challenge this figuration implies the genealogical struggle for different meaning out of the ruins of deprecating circularity.

Keywords Receptacle, Matter, Femaleness, Circularity, Misogyny

Dahiya, Annu

The Logic of Touch as the Logic of Life (beyond Modern Science)

This paper contends that Irigaray provides us with a paradigm shift in how we understand and practice logic, and that her radical critique and recasting of logic gives us a pathway to understand the logic of life (specificially physics and biology). In short, Irigaray can serve as a much needed antidote to understand the concept of life because she affirms life as relation. Though it may seem paradoxical, life (both philosophically and scientifically) has too often been theorized through a framework of death. In This Sex Which is Not One, Irigaray argues that "certain properties of the 'vital' have been deadened into the 'constancy' required to give" the theoretical machinery of Western philosophy its form. As a result, this theoretical machine (and its accompanying logic) fundamentally misunderstands and misrepresents life. An Irigarayan conceptualization of life needs an alternative formulation of logic, one lies outside the logic of dominant Western philosophical traditions. The specific "logic" would differ from how "logic" is traditionally understood within philosophy as "the study of validity and the methods for determining whether a valid inference can be made from a given set of sentences to some other sentence" (Hass and Falmagne). Irigaray roots her novel rethinking of logic in a philosophy of sexuate difference, which is being and thinking as touch. This paper explores how touch can serve as a guide to rethink the logic of life outside the logic of oneness and sameness that grounds classical modern science. I specifically examine the relationship between touch and an Irigarayan recasting of logic. The logic that grounds the subjectivity and language of man not only makes it near impossible for other sexuate identities to come into being—it also has detrimental impacts on metaphysics that underlie science. In this paper, I underline the detrimental shortcomings of such a logic by outlining Irigaray's critique. I then think with Irigaray and contemporary biological research to outline how Irigaray's thesis is affirmed by, and even serves as a metaphysical guide on how we can understand biological life.

KEYWORDS: logic, life, modern science, biology

Alanko, Vilja

Body against body: mother-daughter relationship according to an ancient hagiography (Works-in-Progress) My paper stems from my larger study that explores the conditions for becoming a female subject and the possibility of sexual difference in the context of ancient Christian asceticism and hagiography, the lives of saints. Conducted in a dialogical relationship with Irigaray's thought, it challenges not only the idea that the female perspective is forever lost to us, a notion common in early Christian scholarship, but also adds to the histories of gender and the sexed body by thinking through sexual difference in historical terms. Theoretically, through my engagement with Irigaray, my work connects to the philosophical inquiry into sexual difference as a question regarding our ways of inhabiting the world as embodied beings who are relationally constituted, natal and mortal (Schott 2010; Jones 2015). This paper presents my analysis of a fourth-century description of a mother-daughter relationship, as accounted in the "Life of Macrina", that I read in relation to Irigaray's writings on maternal body and placental economies, in particular. When Macrina declines marriage and insists to stay with her mother Emmelia, they become so close that the mother describes their relation as if she always carried her daughter in her womb. Here, the hierarchical relation of mother and daughter becomes one of mutual caring in which the needs of body and spirit are entwined. My reading considers thus the womb and the continuous bodily contact to be a place, and a relation, in which Macrina becomes body. Against the annulment of the mother, and resisting her desubjectivation, I am looking at Emmelia, here focusing on her and the question of maternal contribution to subjectivity and the generativity of the maternal relation, this time accounted for. The focus on the mother challenges the cultural "matricide" that signifies the bypassing of the mother's subjectivity while still appropriating her maternal generativity and the material basis of all living. As Rachel Jones points out in her reading of Irigaray's ouevre, "[i]t is the generative passage between mother and child that Irigaray seeks to recover as a matter for thought, not simply the mother as the origin of the child" (Jones 2015: 160). Thus, I seek to restore maternal generativity and subjectivity for Emmelia, allowing the relational difference that already exists, in the beginning, in that pregnant body; difference that must be accounted for, to allow mother to be a subject and the daughter to evolve in relation to her.

Key words: mother-daughter relationship, maternal body, placental economies, matricide

Burchill, Louise

Self-Touching Tranposed Visually: The Art of Women's Self-affection

In "How to Make Feminine Self-Affection Appear?" (2006), Luce Irigaray critically appraises works by (the painter) Maria Lassnig and (the sculptor/installation artist) Liz Lerner from the perspective of how successful the artists had been in "reaching and expressing their feminine identity"—which is to say, how successfully they had appropriated a space of self-affection, the latter term being, of course, employed by Irigaray from her very first texts to name the process or framework by which feminine identity is attained or in which it consists. Yet, while her early texts predominantly proffer "models" of tactile self-affection—the most renowned of which is the touching of women's two lips—as a means of schematizing "the gathering together of one's whole being" that is entailed, for Irigaray, by self-affection, her 2006 text seeks to discern how one might visually "translate" this self-feeling, which, as "a kind of inner matrix," is nonetheless irreducibly of the order of sensation, of "fluid, evanescent, indiscernible" touch. "The matter is to make it appear that the most irrepresentable could have some form" or, as Irigaray goes on to elaborate, find expression through gestures, traces, or chromatic lines evoking movement, in the case of painting, and the evocation of properties such as "volume without mass, expansion without weight, a density without gravity" or "fluidity, malleability, instability, transformation, evanescence, etc.," in the case of sculpture/spatial installation. Of course, the latter properties are all attributed to self-affection in Speculum's "core" chapter, "The Uncircumscribable Volume." What renders, however, Irigaray's inquiry into the visual translation of such properties so interesting is that, beyond its consideration of the

technical/aesthetic modalities by which this translation might be achieved, it constitutes her most sustained analysis of the concept of self-affection per se—an analysis elaborated, moreover, in reference to concrete instantiations of two women artists' failure to fully realize their "capacity of self-affecting." Taking this text as our departure point allows us to reconsider—to retouch on—a number of constellations in Irigaray's thought: • Irigaray's schematization of self-touching by morphological models such as "the two lips": how is the concept of self-affection inflected by its modelization in terms of colour, gesture, spatial installation, etc.? • Irigaray's criticism of Merleau-Ponty—from whom she derives the notions of "the two lips" and "the flesh"—for instating vision as the model for all other perceptual relations. What, if any, inflexion to this critique results from her inquiry into an other relation between flesh, tactility, and vision in her 2006 text—written one year after "To Paint the Invisible" in which she was to continue her dialogue with Merleau-Ponty begun in 1984, drawing in this instance precisely on issues raised by painting? • Irigaray's aesthetic stance concerning women's art: is this, as Margaret Whitford, among others, has argued, resolutely conservative or would it countenance, as Elaine Miller has proposed, a movement beyond form and the logic of representation as the means of women's discovering a new morphology and a new relation to space and time?

Keywords: self-affection; flesh; art; vision; tactility

Pitton, Camilla

Contact Zones: Plurality and Philosophical Dislocations in Irigaray's "When Our Lips Speak Together"

In "When Our Lips Speak Together," Luce Irigaray talks of the body, mentions touching another and the touch of two lips. Many have suggested that a certain refiguration of the body functions here as a basis for reconfiguring discourse. This discourse is indistinguishable from the touching precisely because it assumes neither oneness nor unity, and no terms to be compared, melted together, or cancelled out. As Irigaray puts it, "I/you touch you/me, that's quite enough for us to feel alive." (Irigaray 1985b, 209) My aim in this talk is to reconfigure touch, as articulated by Irigaray, in terms of a philosophical act, rather than simply as a symbolic category: the breaking down of an established caesura (that of sexual difference as it traditionally operates in philosophy) in favour of a new one—a plurality which can dislodge traditional philosophical categories whilst prioritising the idea of proximity. In this, I take inspiration from Catherine Malabou, who writes that "the caesura fractures the paradoxical identity of difference by revealing the multiplicity it shelters." (Malabou 2022, 8) I thus rearticulate plurality—as a conceptual category—through touch both by investigating how plurality can come to touch and affect philosophical discourse and by showing that it renegotiates or sets aside the distances at the basis of Western philosophy. In reinterpreting "When our lips," an essay nominally about touching another and touching oneself, in terms of philosophical dislocations, I will first advance that this work stipulates a plurality which problematises the separation between internal and external multiplicity. I will then argue that this plurality can dislodge the dissymmetrical acceptation of sexual difference, which Irigaray takes to subtend philosophy (Irigaray 1985a, 133), when it is understood as excluded or erased, and yet also accounted by phallocentric philosophy. This plurality can be accessed as a philosophical principle and affect philosophy precisely when one homes in on its erasure and, in a sense, doubles it discursively. Against Malabou's argument that Irigaray only highlights and exacerbates philosophical erasures in focusing on the act of erasing (Malabou 2011, 131), I will advance that Irigaray's touching lips constitute an alternative philosophical principle which remains in contact, and thus coexists, with pejorative sexual difference. This allows us to differentiate Irigaray's strategy from deconstructive critiques and other feminist treatments of 'constitutive exclusions' and 'constitutive outsides.' It suggests, moreover, that Irigaray's lyricisms in "When Our Lips" articulate a philosophically unique methodology for integrating touch, qua an excluded category, in philosophical discourse.

Keywords: plurality, constitutive exclusion, philosophical feminism, critique, deconstruction

Navarro Pérez, Margarita

Touching the World Bioethical Dilemmas in Old Age and Irigaray's Sexuate Difference in Charlie Brooker's Black Mirror

Charlie Brooker's dystopian sci-fi anthology Black Mirror presents us with alternative and futuristic, albeit sometimes unnerving, view of a highly digitized society and intricate human relations. In the episode entitled San Junipero (2016), spectators are presented with a story where eroticism, homosexual love and advance old age pose a series of bioethical questions in relation to digital cloning and the possibility of longevity within a death-defying virtual world (San Junipero). The two main characters of this episode, two women from very different contexts, race and life experience, converge in the fictional utopian beach resort town of San Junipero. Here human consciousnesses are uploaded for them to live a virtual reality, either for a limited amount of time or indefinitely, depending on each individual's circumstances and preferences. The two women initiate a romantic relationship in their digitally cloned realities which can be read from Irigaray's perspective of a relation between sexuate individuals who respect each other's differences. In this sense, the analysis will look at how the women engage in a reciprocal and mutual exploration that challenges sexual and racial hierarchies. Laura Roberts's argumentation in "Cultivating Difference with Luce Irigaray's Between East and West" (2015) will be useful to discuss how the relationship in the TV series mirrors an Irigarayan mutual and reciprocal exchange between irreducible women. This goes beyond a mere sexual relation and encompasses a broader understanding of desire, sensuality and connection. Whilst digital cloning offers a utopian prospect of longevity and youth to older, impaired, individuals close to death, the film raises bioethical questions about ageing and caring in old age which will be looked at. An idealised utopia of infinite care in old age is met out with the dystopia of being in a vegetative state, only made bearable because of the interactions in the digital world. Another aspect to analyse is the fact that the digital realisation of the intersubjective interaction between sexuate beings has a parallel in the real life of the two women protagonists: they also fall for each other in the real world. Following Irigaray, their relationship in the real world can change the economy of logic. Irigaray tells us in To Be Born that irreducible relationships between individuals can be a source of energy that enables us a becoming without having to be dependent on technology. Irigaray's views on technology will be useful in discussing the dilemmas San Junipero's women encounter in a futuristic setting, as they can only transcend their reality through technology.

Keywords: Old age, female intimacy, sexuate difference, bioethics and technology, science fiction

Zaplana, Esther

Self-Affection in Old Age: May Sarton's As We are Now and Irigaray's Path of Transcending Human Reality

May Sarton's autobiographical novel As We are Now takes the reader through a desperate, yet inspiring, intimate account of her experience at the end of her life in a nursing home. Infirm and dependable after a stroke in old age, her epistolary writing speaks to us of her determination to safeguard and cultivate the space in which she has unwillingly been compelled to inhabit. Echoing Irigaray, Sarton voices the challenge to build a threshold and reach out to the other in such space, and yet she is not deterred in her endeavours of finding a path towards other residents —this is despite the limitations and demeanours resulting from the institutionalised, binary space of the nursing home: hierarchies dominate this space which profoundly objectifies old age. The analysis in this paper will follow Irigaray's critique of the culture of the Same and its obliteration of the respect for differences, which provide an explanation for the marginalization of older people. Their 'exile' as illustrated in Sarton's novel can be found in a failure to recognise an ontology of ageing in human beings. Thus, the paper will argue that Irigaray's ideas can initiate a way forward to develop ethical relationships of care towards older people from the position of respecting the differences,

instead of the old being clouded within a culture of sameness. Sarton's narrator is situated in a rigid spacial structure that constrains individual and collective possibilities. Yet, she brings her ageing body into language as testimony of parler-femme, a woman who articulates a refusal of the culture of the objectification of the old. Drawing from Irigaray's Sharing the World, the analysis will also argue that Sarton's novel illustrates in old age the interest in cultivating the possibilities of one and the other, of self-affection and touch, and the "respect for the transcendence of the other as irreducible to one's own" (XV). Individuals approach each other instead of appropriating one another: "the transcendence of the other, of the 'you' as irreducibly different from the 'I' is not yet a habit in our culture" (Key Writings, 5). Sarton's title As We are Now renders in her pages an understanding of her reality of difference in old age as 'embodied time', and hence there is also a recognition of "the finiteness of one's own world" (XV). As Irigaray articulates, the "impetus towards the in-finite" (XV) in the relationship with others in Sarton's nursing home will enable her a becoming in the relation between two worlds and the constitution of her own world to transcend human reality (XV).

Keywords: Old Age, Autobiographical, Self-Affection, Transcendence, Irreducibility

Edwards, Erin

Breathing Through The Book of the Dead

In Between East and West: From Singularity to Community, Irigaray seeks to redress a Western philosophical tradition that separates breath and matter; cultivating breath, she claims, sustains life "better than abandoning a body-cadaver-animal to medical science and its diverse types of operations." We can see an extreme form of such "cadaverization" of the body in Muriel Rukeyser's The Book of the Dead, which recounts the Hawks Nest Tunnel Disaster of the 1930's, in which hundreds of tunnel workers, predominately African-American migrants, lost their lives through silica dust inhalation due to improper practices of extractive capitalism. One young worker understands himself as already dead, imagining himself as a cadaver that might be "opened up" to serve as evidence of corporate malpractice. As "hundreds breathed value, filled their lungs full of glass," Rukeyser describes not only the inhalation of air made lethal by silica but also a larger nexus of necrocapitalist practices that treat workers and environment alike as sites of resource extraction. This paper places Irigaray and Rukeyser in conversation in order to consider ways in which Rukeyser not only tautologically documents death but also develops a poetics of breath—cultivating formal techniques of breath as both remembrance and reparation. Drawing upon witness testimonies, court reports, and her own first-hand interviews with Hawks Nest residents, Rukeyser not only "breathes life" into dead documents but also attends to different rhythmic patterns, speeds, and techniques of breath, incorporating breath through the use of negative space. Her text evokes what Irigaray terms the "unthinkable" formlessness of air as the chemical formula for silica floats through her poetic lines, disrupting the solidity of matter as an adequate measure of either life or death. In many instances, Rukeyser emphasizes the choked utterances and labored inhalations of those poisoned by silica, but, particularly as she takes inspiration from the funerary text, The Book of the Dead, she also imagines the restorative possibilities of shared breath that is "born a second time," intertwined with human and nonhuman matter. Drawing upon Irigaray's emphasis on breath in moving from individuality to community, my paper also explores the collective nature and fate of breath in The Book of the Dead, which similarly emphasizes "one living breath / one country marked by error / and one air."

Keywords: Breath and Breathing, Poetics, Racial and Extractive Capitalism, Environmental Exploitation

Daoust, Valerie

Touching the World and Gratitude Between (at least) Two

The proposed text juxtaposes what I call the “first” and the “latest” Irigaray, around the birth of subjectivities within their relation to the world. Against the background of Judith Butler’s critique of Luce in Bodies that Matter (1993), where she denounces Luce for apparently reproducing an exclusively binary conception of humanity, I propose an interpretation of Irigaray’s adoption of Platonic chôra that reveals itself to be fundamentally inclusive and (re)productive. Indeed, in Speculum what is presented as in excess of and external to the rational thought system, at the same time grounds such a system. I argue that, for Luce, such excess is not reducible to the feminine as a possible (excluded) subject of enunciation but can be understood as a coming-into-the-world. I want then to compare this interpretation with her more recent book, To be Born, and show how in her later work, Luce articulates a notion of subjective “coming to be” in terms of a coming into the world of others. I will argue that Luce understands subjectivities in terms of a becoming, a process that never ends, which always involves at least ‘two’ and their gestures toward others. Such gestures, qualified as a double negative, allow maintaining distance toward the others in order to be closer to them. The double gesture allows us to touch others and be touched by them, thereby acknowledging and recognizing their “to be”. We will see that these two gestures of discontinuity, one relating to the culture that we are situated in and the other relating to our living experience, are only possible if we cultivate a (shared) attitude of gratitude towards the world.

Key Words: subjects of enunciation, Others, birth, Judith Butler, Speculum, chôra

Bunch, Dawn

The Fall of Redemption of the Feminine Revealed through Kore-Persephone and The Blessed Virgin Mary

As discussed by both Luce Irigaray and Carl Jung, myths are richly descriptive of the complex psyche-logical states (mental, emotional, spiritual, and embodied) experienced within the individual and collective unconscious. In dialogue with Irigaray’s A New Culture of Energy: Beyond East and West, I posit that Greek mythological figures, in their moral ambiguity and multiplicity, symbolically language the immensely complex intrapsychic states of humanity. The goddesses, by extension, are the characters of the great intrapsychic drama that unfolds within the female collective unconscious. Kore-Persephone is one of these goddesses with whom Irigaray significantly engages throughout her works, and who I posit serves as a symbol of both the spiritual and embodied suffering intrinsic to the state of womankind. In this essay, in particular, I discuss Kore-Persephone’s unbroken captivity to her eternal return to the underworld and her relationship to her virginity and to her mother. Additionally, I consider how her eternal cycling through life and death symbolize the embodied subjectivity of the menstrual cycle. I argue that Persephone is thus the ultimate symbol of forms of suffering and subjectivity particular to womanhood which ultimately yearn for redemption. Within both feminist and Jungian circles, The Blessed Virgin Mary has been characterized as a symbol of womanhood produced by an oppressively masculine, patriarchal theology which simplifies the female sex to virginity and motherhood. In The Mystery of Mary (found within A New Culture of Energy: Beyond East and West), however, Irigaray challenges this interpretation of Mary and illuminates the ways in which Mary shows to us the profound, sacred responsibility which we as women hold in bringing the divine into incarnation. In this paper, I hope to offer additional considerations from a Catholic and psychologically Jungian perspective, in dialogue with what Irigaray offers in The Mystery of Mary. In particular, I posit that Mary provides the hope of redemption from some of the particular forms of feminine suffering which are symbolized in the myth of Kore-Persephone. Furthermore, I consider Irigaray’s reflections in The Mystery of Mary on the interiority and self-containment of Mary in her perpetual virginity in contrast to the forced openness of Kore-Persephone through her abduction from virginity. Likewise, I contrast the differences between Demeter’s attempts to resurrect Persephone from the underworld and Mary serving as the vessel for the incarnation of God and the ultimate redemption of humanity into eternal life. I discuss how this unfolds on both the intrapsychic and embodied levels, with consideration of the Jungian notion of katabasis and of the theology of the womb. Finally, I argue

that, while the goddesses provide a symbolic language for female subjectivity, they fall short in our pursuit of the highest actualization of our feminine virtue. Instead, I argue that Mary exemplifies to the highest degree the fullness of both feminine virtue and feminine suffering in the closest intimacy to the divine as both spouse and mother of God and serves as a great comfort to womankind as the eternal mediatrix of grace.

Keywords Mariology, archetypal psychology, Catholicism, Greek mythology, embodiment

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What is sexual difference? Panel Discussion

Sares, James

The Ethics of Thinking With Irigaray

(A brief intro to the panel)

Miller, Elaine

Luce Irigaray's Philosophical Imaginary

(A response to Lynne Huffer and Emma Bianchi's chapters)

Rawes, Peg

This panel will address themes in the recently edited volume, What is Sexual Difference? Thinking with Irigaray (Columbia University Press, 2022). One of the editors of this volume, **James Sares**, will begin the panel by briefly overviewing the primary motivations for the project and its scope, traversing Irigaray's work across metaphysical, phenomenological, and psychoanalytic registers. The volume considers the importance of returning to Irigaray in a time when the notions of sexual and gender difference are hotly contested. It explores how Irigaray's thought opens new possibilities for understanding the complexity of gender identities, including nonbinary and trans experiences as well as alternative configurations of masculinity and femininity. It also demonstrates the continued importance of the concept of sexual difference for thinking human experience and our relations with nature. Two of the contributors to the volume, **Emanuela Bianchi** and **Lynne Huffer**, will present papers based on their chapters in the volume. **Elaine Miller** and **Peg Rawes** will provide comments directed to these two papers and to the volume as a whole.

Huffer, Lynne

Mysterics: Extinction and Emptiness

The earth is an archive, and la mystérique is its poem. The lips convulse, stuttering, spasmic, fiery. "La Mystérique," a stutter at the heart of Speculum, is also a speculum mundi: a mirror for a world that emerges through a movement of emptying in the constitutive withdrawal of earth. But as a convulsive stutter, Irigaray's mysteric introduces a breach into earth, a crack that empties it through the mass extinction of its species. In the context of what some have called the Anthropocene, Irigaray shows us that anthropos--man--has not yet ceased his specula(riz)ing work. This paper offers a snapshot of the argument developed in the final essay of What Is Sexual Difference? Composed in columns that include sentences, fragments of text, and original collages, the essay's

form reflects the fractures that mark a mysterical thinking for the Anthropocene. Situated in the logic of déraison, or unreason, that subtends Michel Foucault's History of Madness (1961), Irigaray's mysteric is constituted by a split. Like reason itself, she is born from déraison: a splitting that undoes her from the start. The essay's split form flirts with this déraison, criss-crossing its fissures like a ship of fools, navigating the winds of errancy and order. That split is also an Irigarayan slit: the catachrestic lips of the cut, or caesura, of Christ's sacrificial side wound, a labial image of mystical devotion that swallows the medieval mystic, along with her modern double, the hysteric. Drawing on the logic of déraison, the essay performs a mysterical practice of apophatic speech: a saying that unsays, a reason that errs: dé-raison. This errant, wandering, chiastic practice tracks, in the columnar disturbance of thought collage, the Anthropocene emptying that is extinction. In doing so, it also criss-crosses the vestibular emptying of a Middle Passage that, in the work of Hortense Spillers, ungenders. Framed in this way, the mysteric exposes a sexual difference whose constitutive splitting undoes it.

Bianchi, Emanuela

Irigaray's Speculum as Corporeal Philosophy

This paper condenses the argument of the chapter "Reading Speculum Again" in What is Sexual Difference, which returns to Luce Irigaray's Speculum of the Other Woman to consider its narrative structure as a source of feminist philosophical innovation. Comprising ten central essays giving a chronology of Western philosophy, bookended by Irigaray's own poetical reflections, and further framed by extended readings of Freud and Plato, Speculum's structure and progression continues to confound readers. The paper draws on the remarkable figure of the "burning mirror," found in Irigaray's citation of Plotinus and also at key moments throughout the text, and combines it with the complex and feminized typographical and geometrical figure of the ellipse. It argues that the text is structured by a "metaphysical conceit," that of the "conjugated mirrors" – a reflective device in which two elliptical mirrors face one another, and through which fire is transformed into light and back into fire. Within the narrative, we can see this function within Irigaray's own poetical and mystical discourses at the text's own "burning points." Despite the explicit absence of the well-known corporeal figure of the "two lips" in Speculum, the analysis newly reveals an invaginated and transformative feminine bodily morphology operating in the text via this specular, reflective, material technology, both animating and enacted by the text.

PANEL

The Interval: Sexual Difference, Decolonization

Including: **Rebecca Hill**, **Yvette Russell**, and **Stephen Doyle Seely**

One of Luce Irigaray's most controversial arguments is that the framework of sexual difference could provide a step toward recognition of "cultural" differences (Irigaray 2003). This claim is often understood by Irigaray's readers as asserting the primacy of sexual difference over all other forms of difference and, hence, as a profoundly Eurocentric—if not imperialist—gesture. In this panel, however, we explore Irigaray's concept of "the interval" as an ontological framework for decolonizing theory and politics.

In our separate research in (post)colonial contexts—in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa—we have persistently come up against the problem of an ontological difference

between, on the one hand, Indigenous cosmologies rooted in sexual difference and, on the other, what Irigaray calls the regime of “sexual indifference” that constitutes “Western” metaphysics. We have found Irigaray’s thought very helpful in thinking through this impasse. But we have also had to resist the temptation to simply draw on these Indigenous concepts of sexual and erotic difference since to sidestep the enormous task of ontological decolonization would merely appropriate Indigenous thought into a systematics of the Same (even one that would label itself “decolonial”).

In seeking to avoid an assimilation of Indigenous ontologies of sexual difference to Irigaray’s, we have found ourselves returning to her concept of the interval. Following Irigaray (1993) and Rebecca Hill (2012), we understand the interval as a figure of ontological irreducibility that allows for relation in difference. Without the interval, difference is subsumed into a logic of identity, since within “Western” phallocentric metaphysics, two or more things cannot be in the same place at the same time without becoming indistinguishable. The interval is therefore a being-two that implies an ontological negative: because the other is irreducible to me, I can never be the whole. Taking on this negative allows the interval to subsist as an in-between space that leaves to each its own place for becoming while also preserving a “third” space for relation. Our interest in these papers is how we might cultivate the interval in anticolonial struggles in law, politics, and philosophy in forging solidarities with Indigenous thought.

Keywords: interval, decolonization, law, sexuate rights, ontology

PAPER ABSTRACT – 1

Hill, Rebecca

The interval can never be crossed: Approaching Irene Watson’s Raw Law

Luce Irigaray argues that sexual difference is irreducible (1993). For her, the unknowability of the other sex is not a lack to be mourned, but an open place of wonder which engenders the possibility of relating to the sexuate other as other. This place is the interval, the sensible-transcendental foundation for acknowledging that human being consists of (at least) two sexes in non-hierarchical relationship. In “western” thought, there is a pervasive desire to suppress the interval and claim that there is no difference between sexes. Irigaray insists, however, that the very possibility of respect and love in life and thought demands affirmation and cultivation of the interval.

Legal theorist and philosopher Irene Watson of the Taganekald, Meintangk and Boandik peoples argues that the colonial project has grown from a denial of ‘Raw Law’ (First Nations Laws). The colonial project “…construct[s] … First Nations Peoples as beings without law – uncivilised and without society. The colonial ‘civilising’ mission was to absorb the ‘native’ into the society of the colonising state. That mission still prevails but it has failed itself.” (2014, 1). In the light of Watson’s argument, Irigaray’s postulation of the interval can be read as Eurocentric. While I agree with this criticism, I claim that the interval is an important concept for thinkers subjectified in “western” norms of thought who wish to engage with Indigenous thought without taking an appropriative approach towards those traditions. The interval is a threshold of alterity which situates a “western” woman in relation to a limited and sexuate world that is open to and respectful of the living of other worlds that always remain unassimilable. The interval might be articulated as a threshold for encountering the living and thinking of a woman of Raw Law working towards the place where her grandmothers are sitting (2014, 24).

PAPER ABSTRACT – 2

Russell, Yvette

Towards and philosophy of law grounded in sexuate being: mana wāhine and the constitutionalism in the postcolony

While there is a plethora of writing on constitutional and political questions of navigating cultural difference, there is little analysis of how different legal systems, particularly those in in postcolonial contexts, navigate profound ontological difference at the level of the sexuate. This is particularly so where sexuate difference is collapsed into 'cultural difference' to be cured via developed frameworks of legal pluralism. The limits of such a framework become rapidly apparently when faced with calls to adjudicate on the very status or nature of sexuate being in the postcolonial context. In this paper, and in conversation with Seely, Hill and Irigaray, I try to explicate this problem further by reference to a claim called mana wāhine currently being heard by the Waitangi Tribunal in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In that claim, currently in its fifth year being heard, Māori wāhine (women) seek the recognition of the denigration and erasure through colonisation of their unique place and meaning in te aō Māori (the Māori world), and the restitution of their mana (authority, being-ness, integrity). The claimants assert that the erasure of mana wāhine was the gateway to the annihilation of Māori rangatiratanga (sovereignty) and that its restitution is central to the rehabilitation of Māori peoples and of the health of the nation of which they are part. In this paper I consider the extent to which this claim has coherence in the postcolony where the dominant framework of legal pluralism, or 'interlegality', has largely sidestepped the difficult task of ontological decolonisation. The consequences of this omission are starkly apparent when a claim like mana wāhine arises because the very intelligibility of the harm being named requires a framework of coherence that is entirely absent from the metaphysics in which the postcolonial legal system sits. The paper considers the potential for mana wāhine to ground a constitutional ethos via which a philosophy of law grounded in sexuate being could be rethought.

PAPER ABSTRACT - 3

Seely, Stephen Doyle

From the War of Worlds to Sharing the World: The Interval as a Topology for Ontological Politics

In recent years, there is a growing trend in the humanities and social sciences to think against what John Law has called "the one-world world." Forging innovative links between the "many worlds" approach in quantum physics and Indigenous politics like the Zapatistas' "a world where many worlds are possible," this work challenges the singular World of Western metaphysics. Such a "world of many worlds" (de la Cadena & Blaser 2018) is necessary if we are to be able to think a politics capable of responding to the many pressing global challenges we face without reasserting the "ontological absolute monarchy" of Western thought. Thus, one of the main gestures of this work is to take other thought, especially Indigenous thought, seriously as ontology and, hence, to think politics as a struggle or "war" of between worlds and not between representations of a single world (Vivieros de Castro 2007).

This paper is inspired by the "ontological turn" in theory and politics, but I aim to challenge some of its premises drawing on Irigaray's work. Specifically, I am concerned with the way that a failure to think through the topology of this "world of many worlds" leads to a conclusion in which war—or, at best, acts of "diplomacy" by philosophers (Latour 2002)—is the only possible form of relation between worlds. If, as we know from Irigaray (1985), Western metaphysics gathers the world into a singular logos structured by a specular economy of the Same, then how can we relate to other

“ontologies” as other? And how can we approach the other as something other than a resource that already exists in “my” world? Here, I turn to Irigaray’s thinking on the interval as a topology of the between-us that is the ontological condition of relation and difference (Irigaray 1993; Hill 2011). Irigaray’s critique of Western metaphysics’s oblivion of the interval, and her proposals for cultivating the between-us, offer us a way of diagnosing the tenacious hegemony of the “one-world world” as well ways to think seriously about building bridges between worlds without subsuming one to another. Her work, I argue, helps us learn how to move beyond both the imaginary of a single world and a pluriverse of worlds at war with one another, to actually share the world (Irigaray 2008)—a necessary task for the politics of the future.

Keywords: ontological turn, topology, interval, decoloniality, being

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Panel: Reconfiguring the Cartography and Materiality of Touch

Including: **Colin Stragar-Rice**, **Athena Colman**, and **Ruthanne Kim**

Facilitator:

Panel Abstract:

This panel explores the colonial image of thought in conversation with Irigaray's rereading of the speculum. Specifically, the presenters consider how the speculum reveals the multiple facets of colonialism that alter the image and experience of touch. The panelists suggest that the colonial image of thought overdetermines how time is ordered. Consequently, it imposes violence and care as oppositional antinomies that affect our encounter of touching and being touched. In response, this panel turns toward the literature of colonial and decolonizing theorists to outline a counter-image of thought: the canvas, the mirror, and the embodied context of geometrical spaces as constitutive attributes of the speculum. To do so, this panel weaves the works of Frantz Fanon and Irigaray into a critical proximity of affection and critique to release touch from the colonial image of thought.

The first paper explores the antimony between care and violence constituting colonialism and decolonization. This presenter explores care and violence through their figurations: the speculum and tabula rasa. By naming the tensions of intramural racial and colonial violence, this paper advances an incalculable scene of care within Irigaray’s speculum to refigure this antinomy. The second paper develops Irigaray’s work to elaborate a relational ontology in terms of morphology by disclosing the anatomical assumptions subtending accounts of difference that enable and support the erasure of that difference. The third paper probes the difference between specula(riza)tion as a riza and encloses a tacit “raza” or racial analysis. Each paper challenges philosophy as predicated on a static image or masculine subject and the woman holding the mirror toward an ethics of touch and care that contests the rigidity of sexual indifference and colonial violence.

Keywords: touching, image, embodied subject, speculum, decolonial

Stragar-Rice, Colin

Presentation 1: Canvas Infinita: Outline of a Decolonial Imagining

In this essay, I perform an imaging of Denise Ferreria da Silva's concept of the canvas infinita. My objective is to show how the canvas infinita is, following da Silva, crucial for releasing decolonization from certain theoretical and practical failures. In particular, I use the canvas infinita to critique how efficient causality occludes decolonization. That is, efficient causality imposes a temporal order onto questions of violence, freedom and unfreedom. Once released, these questions are posed in an imminent relation to one another. Doing so, I argue, has important practical consequences.

The canvas infinita superimposes a blank canvas with a mirror. Critically, I read these figures through the work of Frantz Fanon and Luce Irigaray, respectively. That is, the canvas as Fanon's tabula rasa and the mirror as Irigaray's speculum. By doing so, I follow Fanon's argument that we can only understand decolonization by tracing its history-making movement to consider the conditions of emergence for both the tabula rasa and the speculum. Consequently, I show how the tabula rasa is always already an expression constituting the sociality of colonized peoples. Similarly, I trace the anti-black history of the speculum through the founding of American gynecology.

At the core of the speculum's history is an incalculable scene of care. With this scene of care, I revisit how both Fanon and Irigaray problematize revolutionary and gendered violence. Most importantly, I show how the sequence of efficient causality also imposes a practical hierarchy of violence over care. Through the canvas infinita, the scene of care recomposes this hierarchy into an immanent relationship. That is, revolutionary violence and care are mutually imbricated. In effect, tracing the history-making movement of both the tabula rasa and the speculum renews interrogations of the antinomy between violence and care in shaping decolonization as a theory and a practice.

Key Words: Canvas infinita, tabula rasa, speculum, decolonization, temporality

Colman, Athena

Presentation 2: Touching space-time: A morphological critique of anatomical thought

Abstract

This paper reads Irigaray with Fanon and in light of recent trans Black and transfeminist work in order to develop resources for thinking racialized sexuate difference without duplicating the very reification of difference, which Irigaray's work, since Speculum, has sought to resist. In particular, I draw on Irigaray to develop an account of a morphological ontology as distinct from anatomical assumptions of embodied difference, which rigidifies difference, i.e., sex and race, into additive categories of taxonomical thought, which reinscribes the sameness it covers over in the name of (solving) difference. This covering over of the morphological in the development of the scientific language of sex and race, which trans thinkers help disclose, is subtended by an imaginary of racialization and civilization that can be seen in the legacy of settler-colonialism. Colonialism relies on the anatomical reduction of bodies to objects and space-time to abstract geometrical coordinates mapped and organized under a specular distance of control – objectifying place into

the space-time of conquest. In contrast - and by way of developing a morphological ontology, I consider Irigaray's critique of the specular and her claim to recover perception from its reduction to sensation in terms of Fanon's critique of Merleau-Ponty and Lacan. In conclusion, I suggest that Irigaray's rethinking of touch reconfigures an account of space-time in terms of a morphological ontology, returning relationality to the very difference it is constituting.

Keywords: Speculum; morphology; anatomy; Fanon; Irigaray

Kim, Ruthanne

Presentation 3: The méconnaissance of the racialized sexuate subject

Abstract

In Speculum of the Other Woman, Irigaray considers Lacan's mirror stage, the méconnaissance (misunderstanding, misrecognition) and specula(riza)tion that the infant generates when the developing child misrecognizes the mother as a reflection of the self. Irigaray's theorization of the mirror stage, the confusion between self and other, draws attention to the misrecognition at play in reflections predicated upon an analysis that fails to attend to difference in all its complexity. I consider how Irigaray connects narcissism, returning to the myth of Narcissus and his reflection, as complicit with a masculinist subject's internal logic. I propose that narcissism, as a set of pathological behaviors, has an uncanny similarity to Eurocentric masculinist white culture discourse.

Drawing critical attention to the culture of sexual indifference, Irigaray, in works such as Between East and West, calls readers to cultivate sexual difference as nature with culture. She does not name the dismantling or recognition of a culture of whiteness as constitutive of this project. While such a racial analysis often remains absent in her theorizations of sexual and sexuate difference, I suggest that the specula(riza)tion that Irigaray forwards in her analysis of the mirror stage in Speculum of the Other Woman could parenthetically surround not only an enclosed (riza) but a (raza), another cognate of the word race. As such, I argue that an enclosed racial filter remains concealed within Irigaray's theorization of sexual difference, blinding how racism subtends the history of being and becoming.

Keywords: méconnaissance, melancholia, sexual difference, narcissism, antiblackness

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Jóhannesdóttir, Guðbjörg R.

Thinking with the Glacier

In my talk, I will refer to Irigaray´s metaphors of ice and burning lava in Marine Lover to discuss embodied and elemental thinking.

Embodied and elemental thinking is critical, creative, philosophical thinking of embodied, embedded, extended, enactive minds.

I furthermore base this idea of embodied thinking in aesthetic perception.

PANEL:

Facilitator:

Barker, Wesley

Irigaray, Embodiment, and Religion: a cross-disciplinary conversation

In acknowledgment of the 50th anniversary of the publication of Speculum (Les Editions de Minuit, 1974), the journal of Body and Religion is working on a special issue to explore the questions of embodiment generated by Irigaray's philosophical, political, pedagogical, and theological engagements, and to consider their significance for religion and religious studies more broadly. The essays of this special issue are currently under peer review, but we anticipate they will be forthcoming at the time of the Irigaray Circle Meeting in June.

Building on the work that has been done for the journal, we propose a roundtable discussion about Irigaray and religion, that will include exploration of Irigaray's notions of transcendence and its relation to embodiment—as evident in her ideas of the sensible-transcendental, elemental, and the extradiscursive materiality of sexuate bodies (as Judith Butler has described it), as well as in her sustained attention to the Christian language of Incarnation and the figure of Mary and her continued references to a sexuate God in masculine terms. Panelists will consider the implications of these themes in Irigaray's work in relation to therapeutic practice, aesthetics, and political justice.

The 90-minute roundtable (adaptable to 120 minutes) will be facilitated by Dr. Wesley Barker, co-editor of the journal's special issue on Irigaray and religion. Five panelists will provide summaries the work they completed for the journal (5-6 minutes per panelist). Following these summaries, Dr. Emily Holmes will serve as a respondent, briefly (7-10 minutes) presenting themes emerging from the panelists' work and posing questions to the panel for further discussion. Dr. Holmes has published extensively on Christian theological themes in Irigaray's work. Following Dr. Holmes' comments, the roundtable discussion will proceed with approximately 25-minutes of discussion between the panelists followed by 30+ minutes of discussion with the audience.

Below is a summary of the collective project of the special issue and the insights that each panelist will contribute to the roundtable conversation:

Following the journal's mission to foster diverse methodological and epistemological approaches to the study of religion and to advance critical inquiry into the very notions of "body" the essays assembled in the special issue collectively engage questions of the body, materiality, and embodiment in Irigaray's work, and situate Irigaray's thought in relation to a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary engagements with religion, broadly conceived.

The diversity of methodological approaches and perspectives presented in the issue, and that will be represented by the roundtable participants, expresses the intra/trans/multi-disciplinary scope of Irigaray's legacy as it relates to questions of religion. Most importantly, these authors think with

Irigaray to push her work into new territory. These authors/panelists use Irigarayan frameworks--philosophical, psychoanalytic, and political—to engage the body and religion together in critically innovative and constructive ways.

Kaminski, Phyllis focuses on “Belief Itself,” juxtaposing Irigaray’s sexuate ontology with Mitchell D. Murtagh’s interdisciplinary work on Irigaray and quantum physics. Prioritizing Irigaray’s ‘flesh becoming word’ the panelist posits an Irigarayan-inspired anti-metaphysical materiality that manifests an embodied linguistic expression capable of re-shaping Christian Theological conversations.

Lawler, Cheryl (joining virtually) reads Irigaray in relation to Sufism scholar Henry Corbin to theorize the divine as a ‘ternary field’ and applies this framework of the divine to interpret a case study from their psychoanalytic practice.

Alhadeff, Cara Judea (joining virtually) summarizes a series of visual images of their Irigarayan-inspired performative reimagining body-spirit relations. This panelist frames the creative exploration of their Sephardic Jewish identity as an embodiment of Irigaray’s mother-daughter idiom.

Wheeler, Andrea also considers embodied aesthetics of spirit, but through the lens of the architectural theory of regenerative design. Incorporating Irigaray’s more recent engagements with both ecology and Eastern religious traditions (e.g., “Towards an Ecology of Sharing,” A Culture of Energy, Sharing the Fire, etc.), this panelist critically examines Irigaray’s use of religious concepts, especially within the Hindu and Buddhist traditions, to imagine human-ecological connections. The panelist concludes by suggesting that regenerative architecture cultivates such a carefully theorized embodied spiritual energy.

Jolissaint, Jena discusses embodiment and religion in decidedly political terms. This panelist analyzes religious arguments in legal and political debates for and against abortion rights in the U.S. The panelist argues that, in a post Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization world, an Irigarayan turn to sexed rights is needed to transform the discourse of personhood—one that turns to the generative sharing of breath as the means to challenge the idea that personhood is constituted exclusively through either exercising their own bodily autonomy or reproducing bodily autonomy in a fetal other.

Plenary panel on the work of Mary Rawlinson, featuring her response

Including:

Sares, James

On Being Claimed by Our Relations

Hom, Sabrina

Rawes, Peg

Liveable Futures

My comments consider Mary Rawlinson's engagement with Irigaray's thinking, as found in her writing on 'liveable futures' and 'critical phenomenology', which intersect with discussions of ecology, ethics and biopolitics in architecture.

Miller, Elaine

In Defense of the Singleton

Rawlinson, Mary

Response

Ásbjarnardóttir Strandberg, Elín

Matrescence in the Light of Irigaray´s Philosophy

As both a philosopher and a new mother, I sought philosophical works that explore the transformation into motherhood but found none. I struggled to articulate my own experience and realized that traditional philosophical literature fell short in capturing this unique transformation of the self. Upon investigating the topic further, I discovered that I am not alone in this process of change. As Irigaray notes in “When our Lips Speak Together,” there are many embodied experiences and emotions that we lack the language to express.

Inspired by Irigaray´s work, I continued my search for the vocabulary to articulate the phenomenological experience of motherhood. While much has been written about pregnancy and childbirth in a philosophical sense, the profound transformation that occurs post-birth in the relationship between a mother and child remains largely unexplored. My search led me to the term “matrescence,” first coined by anthropologist Dana Raphael in “Being Female: Reproduction, Power, and Change” (1975). Matrescence captures the deep transformation and growth experienced by the self through motherhood, yet it still leaves many dimensions of this experience unexplored.

This concept nevertheless offers valuable insights into the transition of becoming a mother, a critical aspect often neglected in philosophical discussions of selfhood. My aim is to introduce matrescence into philosophical discourse as a transformative process of the self. Inspired and motivated by Irigaray´s work, “When Our Lips Speak Together” and “One Does Not Stir Without the Other,” I conducted micro-phenomenological interviews with 20 women going through matrascence. These interviewed confirmed 1) the silencing of this process in culture, as well as 2) offered firsthand insights into the matrescence experience.

Levy, Lior

Philosophical Sisters – From Antigone and Ismene to Irigaray and Beauvoir

My paper examines the manner in which the sisters Ismene and Antigone and the dialogue that unfolds between them in Sophocles' Antigone has been taken up as a theme in Luce Irigaray's philosophy. Beginning with the reception of the play in feminist philosophy, I study the interpretative shift to the figures of Ismene and Antigone against the backdrop of the almost exclusive engagement with Antigone as an individual agent admired by philosophers from Hegel onwards. In particular, I focus on how philosophical thinking attempted, by means of dialogue with the play, to articulate the promises and failures embedded in relationships between sisters – the connections between sisterhood and feminine being, meaning, and collective action. Contrary to the feminist engagement with the theme of sisterhood, Irigaray reading of Antigone seems to be centered almost exclusively on the vertical lines that run between mothers and daughters, relationships corrupted under the phallocentric order. Consequently, the literature devoted to her readings of Antigone focused almost exclusively on this theme. Here, I turn to a few surprising passages where Irigaray introduces the category of "sister" and use these passages to think about the promise of horizontal links between women in light of her work. In these passages Irigaray turns to her "older sister," Simone de Beauvoir, discussing the potential embedded in their relationship, and bemoans the failure to actualize this potential. I study these passages in relation to Irigaray's identification with the figure of Antigone, asking what can be learned from the affinities she creates between the protagonists of Sophocles' play, herself, and Beauvoir. Using this as a hermeneutical starting point, I aim to probe the potential in relationships between women that are constituted by resemblance, rather than identity, and difference, rather than alterity.

Keywords: Sisterhood, Antigone, Ismene, Irigaray, Beauvoir, Feminist Philosophy

Morild, Marianne

Marianne Morild is a Norwegian visual artist, working mainly with painting. Her work is concerned with the natural word and how our understanding of it can be guided by sensory perception.

Morild is currently a university lecturer in Fine Art Painting, at Bergen Art Academy, Norway, and her recent exhibitions include Kunsthall 3, 14, Bergen, Taipei Fine Art Museum and Centre Pompidou-Metz.

Presa, Elizabeth

Elizabeth Presa is a visual artist who lives between Naarn (Melbourne) and Dja Dja Wurrung country, Australia, where she cultivates a dye and pigment garden. She teaches in the Sculpture Department and in Critical Art Theory at the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne.

Creative Endeavors: Performance

Including:

Plichta, Emilia

Stampone, Carol

Talking with Luce (a performance)

We would like to share traces of the work we've been doing previous to the conference, reading some of Irigaray's texts and responding to it through letters. Carol Stampone will select bits of Irigaray's texts and write a performative response to them, inspired by the answers of the participants willing to share their words. We might also choose to exhibit traces of our archive in construction. The performance will be in between 20-40 min long and will be followed by a conversation in which we can both discuss our research and creative process and discuss some of the content we discussed.

Moderator: Kristian Guttesen, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Iceland

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Creative Endeavors: Writing Workshop

Including:

Plichta, Emilia

Stampone, Carol

Writing Yourself

A workshop in which we will invite the participants to write themselves, following Helene Cixous's claim that women must write themselves in relation to Irigaray's inviation to relate writing and sexuality. We will bring to the participants short bits of text, questions and provocations and will invite them to try out several different writing exercises. From erasing poems, to writing letters to their past selves or to their mothers to writing from their specific sites of speech or as if they could know what a tree thinks, we will invite the participants to think with their vaginas and play with writing, individually and in response to one another.

Moderator: Kristian Guttesen, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Iceland

Guðmarsdóttir, Sigríður

Irigarayan Mariology, Feminist Theologies and the Ecclesiastic Art of Kristín Gunnlaugsdóttir

Mariology is the theological inquiry of Mary, mother of Jesus. Mariology ponders Mary, her relationship with divinity, her role in Christian dogmas and her relevance for contemporary theology. Mariology can be viewed as an ambiguous gift to theology, offering on the one hand a discourse on women´s experiences, while also offering interpretations of that embodiment that are in many ways more beneficial to patriarchal structures than to women themselves.

For Irigaray, women cannot be reduced to motherhood, the two relations of womanhood and motherhood does not divide into ones, the same, the reality of the male. Irigaray also states that there are links between God and woman, the unfathomability of God and the uncontainability of woman, something ...quite other, as is their pleasure…" (Speculum, 236). In one of Irigaray´s more recent writing, A New Culture of Energy (2021) Irigaray revisits the Marian trope to explore theological themes of touch, relation and a reinterpretation of incarnate bodies.

In this paper, Irigaray´s Marian investigations are read through the ecclesiestical visual artwork of Icelandic painter Kristín Gunnlaugsdóttir (1963-). Gunnlaugsdóttir has during the past decades been the the most influential interpretor of Mary in Iceland. Gunnlaugsdóttir became famous for painting beautiful and idyllic icons with classical motives of Mary, which gradually became more revolutionary and the motives more erotic. The paper asks about the interpretive space for female sexual embodiment which Gunnlaugsdóttir has negotiated in her church artwork, and how the maternal bodies and images can offer new light on Irigarayan scholarship.

Söderbäck, Fanny

Fifty Years of Touch: Tracing Tactility in Luce Irigaray's Corpus

Fifty years ago, Luce Irigaray very decisively touched the world, with the publication of *Speculum de l'autre femme* (1974). It seems safe to say that her dissertation fundamentally reshaped feminist philosophy and discourse, just like Simone de Beauvoir's *Le deuxième sexe* (1949) had done twenty five years earlier. While it may seem, at first glance, that Speculum is a book about vision – the book is full of references to blind spots, mirrors, and of course the image of the Platonic cave that staged an entire tradition of linking thinking with seeing – a closer read makes clear that Irigaray's critical-mimetic analysis is one that not only deconstructs the scopophilia that renders us blind to sexuate difference, but that it simultaneously constructs a tactile approach that seeks to put us in touch with and cultivate forms of desire, embodiment, relating, and being that remain irreducible to the dominant culture of sameness. Her work not only allows us to see what has hitherto remained in the dark, but also invites us to explore the world, ourselves, and others, through tactile encounters. Such horizons of touch become ever-more pronounced in books like *Ce Sexe qui n'en est pas un* (1977) and *Éthique de la difference sexuelle* (1984), and later in *The Way of Love* (2002). Whether it be lips and folds that touch, or hands and bodies, or two who are different, or the nesting of the fetus in utero, or even a vision that touches, a carnal look, Irigaray seeks to "ask the question of the other as touched and touching," and her philosophy of sexuate difference consistently gets articulated in terms of touch. It is fitting, then, that fifty years after the publication of Speculum, her most recent book, published only weeks ago, explicitly centers the question of touch. *The Mediation of Touch* (2024) completes an arch that my talk seeks to trace, an arch of touching and being touched, of tactile encounters, of thinking the unthought by making it available to our senses. Far from being exhaustive, my talk will nevertheless point to key moments in Irigaray's work to thematize the role that touch has played for thinking sexuate difference, being two, being born, and being with.

Thorgeirsdottir, Sigridur

Invisible Women Philosophers:

How Sabina Spielrein and Lou Salomé (may have) influenced Irigaray´s Marine Lover

Sverrisdóttir, Hildigunnur

The Diagonal as a Means of Sharing Space

Irigaray has written extensively on the sexed space shared by the genders. She criticizes the male subject's superiority in production of this shared space, both in abstract and concrete terms.

Western achitecture has had a fascination with technology, logic and systematics of Euclidian space – even constraining the concept of time into arithmetic. She suggests that woman has a means in redefining spatial organization in the positive, irrational geometry in Pythagoras‘ figure of assymmetry and infinity: The Diagonal. This is echoed in her contemporaries‘ thought – e.g. Deleuze and Guattari‘s concept of line of flight.

Thus Irigary proposes an alternative way, the way of the woman, of organizing space - including architecture - shared between the sexed subjects of man and woman. In this paper, these concepts and lines of thought will be discussed and possible examples of manifestation considered.

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