

# Writing Ourselves With, In and Against Language

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## 1. Women Invited to Unlearn

*On the margin of glimmerings of the possible, we are going to dream meaning backwards, wrong way round, without approval or signature.<sup>1</sup>*

What is it that hurts when I speak in the feminine? Memory of abduction. Words flying off with the meaning. Very distinctly insinuated, *self-denial*. Only women faint in the verbs of disappearance; adjectives and past participles signal our state: *outside ourselves*. Transparent women who can't make themselves seen or heard. Complete *strangers* yet totally *concerned*. Intangible. All gummed up in family and social ties. Life as a mummy, like the "e", silent. A precipitate of memory through training where the language of the oppressor swallows me up and vomits me forth.

*Discourse* is an *illusion* for us, words are traps. Speech distorts lived experience. Language by the *bias/biased*. Screwed, we are, by institutional rules, male dictates, the sub-basement of language, the confiscation of our memory. So puncture the eyes. Bring *Discourse* down

to the ridiculous. Expose the scandal, the symbolic assassination. Stop being the one *they* talk about near and far in the exclusion of the feminine.

## 2. Women Summoned to Assert the Feminine

*Get out of their language. Try to make your way back through the names they have given you. I am waiting for you, I am waiting for me. Come back.*<sup>2</sup>

The act of writing is a form of strike against sexist myths, phantasms, propaganda. It involves jamming the *machinery*. The fraud of *Discourse*. Oppose the syntactic Order, make it unrecognizable. Deviate the meaning of words learned from the *univocal-male*. Stop being the prey of their discourse. It's a matter of establishing herself in the socio-symbolic order as a fully constituted subject, as her own object of what she is writing. In truth and in her name. Stop ignoring herself in her quest. In search of the identical other. Mix up our first names which make us related. A mode of expression, a manner of writing, a name<sup>3</sup> which forges her identity. With tangles, semantic distortions, big intervals, dislocate the models, linearity, law. In repeating other texts in the feminine find an unique and valuable representation of her sex. The implicit of our verbal exchanges. Take ourselves seriously, think about ourselves, invent ourselves in order to flesh out the feminine and to know myself by heart. Women's desire must be brought forth onto the page, their reverie be heard, be shaped into reality. A signifying practice of a woman as a woman. Very suddenly to take the subject between my thighs and surprise myself with my audacity.

## 3. Language is Not Immutable

*Since it will always be the case in this story to write, not to stop or restrain oneself. To be at the service of one's text, as of one's energy: delight of daring.*<sup>4</sup>

Arrested vigour, detoured, today she disseminates the interruption of codes. She begins to say what she is feeling without having the

words. The feminine enters representation, the symbolic, names herself. A woman inscribed in the extraterritoriality of language. She expounds the subject just as you expose yourself to death. Because it's a matter of her life. She gives a reading of her skin and sees trembling there.

Extravagant words which go beyond innate madness. She explores new registers. Successive stages and variations on a word become *essential*. The play of phrases unrolling to infinity which etch into the meaning. Rhythm, drives. Tell all our women's stories at once because they come mixed up together. The violence of the gesture of writing because she puts all her woman's body into it. It is her skin that's at stake. Somebody says I am lying, I say I am inventing. So that reality will no longer be a fiction. Get out of the language disaster, write about the speakable like the word "Adventuresses."

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Louise Bouchard, "Des voix la même," *La Nouvelle barre du jour*, 72-73 (1978), p. 21.

<sup>2</sup>Luce Irigaray, *Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un* (Paris, 1977), p. 205.

<sup>3</sup>Translator's note. The word "vocable" means both word and the name of one's patron saint.

<sup>4</sup>Nicole Brossard, *Les stratégies du réel/The Story So Far 6* (Toronto, 1979), p. 9.