

distributive justice must lead to the destruction of the Rule of Law" (*Road to Serfdom*, p. 79).

21. Once again, Hayek serves as an example. He criticizes socialist planning for exercising control over the economy, but he excuses authoritarian political forms as long as they do not interfere with the economy. Indeed, the implication is that such a political form may be necessary in order for a truly "liberal" economy to operate efficiently. As in Kant, though, that coercion is generally associated with the ideal, formal universality of "law": "What we need . . . is . . . a superior political power which can hold the economic interests in check, and in the conflict between them can truly hold the scales, because it is itself not mixed up in the economic game. The need is for an international political authority which, without power to direct the different people in what they must do, must be able to restrain them from action which will damage others. . . . It is essential that these powers of the international authority should be strictly circumscribed by the Rule of Law" (*Road to Serfdom*, p. 232.)

22. Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (New York: Collier, 1962), p. 27. Hereafter cited in text as *OS*; all succeeding references are indicated parenthetically in the text.

DISPLACEMENT AND THE DISCOURSE OF WOMAN

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

WHEN IN *The Philosophy of Right* Hegel writes of the distinction between thought and object, his example is Adam and Eve:

Since it is in thought that I am first at home (*bei mir*), I do not penetrate (*durchbohren*) an object until I understand it; it then ceases to stand over against me and I have taken from it its ownness (*das Eigene*), that it had for itself against me. Just as Adam says to Eve: "Thou art flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone," so mind says: "This is mind of my mind," and the alienness (*Fremdheit* as opposed to *das Eigene*; alterity as opposed to ownness) disappears.¹

It would be possible to assemble here a collection of "great passages" from literature and philosophy to show how, unobtrusively but crucially, a certain metaphor of woman has produced (rather than merely illustrated) a discourse that we are obliged "historically" to call the discourse of man.² Given the accepted charge of the notions of production and constitution, one might reformulate this: the discourse of man is in the metaphor of woman.

I

Jacques Derrida's critique of phallogentrism can be summarized as follows: the patronymic, in spite of all empirical details of the generation gap, keeps the transcendental ego of the dynasty identical in the eye of the law. By virtue of the father's name the son refers to the father. The irreducible importance of the name and the law in this situation makes it quite clear that the question is not merely one of psycho-socio-sexual behavior but of the production and consolidation of reference and meaning. The desire to make one's progeny represent his presence is akin to the desire to make one's words represent the full meaning of one's intention. Hermeneutic, legal, or patrilinear, it is the prerogative of the phallus to declare itself sovereign source.³ Its causes are also its effects: a social

structure—centered on due process and the law (logocentrism); a structure of argument centered on the sovereignty of the engendering self and the determinacy of meaning (phallogocentrism); a structure of the text centered on the phallus as the determining moment (phallocentrism) or signifier. Can Derrida's critique provide us a network of concept-metaphors that does not appropriate or displace the figure of woman? In order to sketch an answer, I will refer not only to Derrida, but to two of Derrida's acknowledged "creditors" in the business of deconstruction, Nietzsche and Freud.⁴ I will not refer to *La Carte postale*, my discussion of which is forthcoming.⁵

The deconstructive structure of how woman "is" is contained in a well-known Nietzschean sentence: "Finally—if one loved them . . . what comes of it inevitably? that they 'give themselves,' even when they—give themselves. The female is so artistic."⁶ Or: women impersonate themselves as having an orgasm even at the time of orgasm. Within the historical understanding of women as incapable of orgasm, Nietzsche is arguing that impersonation is woman's only sexual pleasure. At the time of the greatest self-possession-cum-ecstasy, the woman is self-possessed enough to organize a self-(re)presentation without an actual presence (of sexual pleasure) to re-present. This is an originary displacement. The virulence of Nietzsche's misogyny occludes an unacknowledged envy: a man cannot fake an orgasm. His pen must write or prove impotent.⁷

For the deconstructive philosopher, who suspects that all (phallogocentric) longing for a transcendent truth as the origin or end of semiotic gestures might be "symptomatic," woman's style becomes exemplary, for *his* style remains obliged to depend upon the stylus or stiletto of the phallus. Or, to quote Derrida reading Nietzsche:

She writes (herself) [or (is) written—*Elle (s')écrit*]. Style amounts to [or returns to (*revient à*)] her. Rather: if style were (as for Freud the penis is "the normal prototype of the fetish") the man, writing would be woman.⁸

A lot is going on here. Through his critique of Nietzsche, Derrida is questioning both the phallus-privileging of a certain Freud as well as the traditional view, so blindly phallogocentric that it gives itself out as general, that "the style is the man." Throughout his work, Derrida asks us to notice that *all* human beings are irreducibly displaced although, in a discourse that privileges the center, women alone have been diagnosed as such; correspondingly, he attempts to displace all centrisms, binary oppositions, or centers. It is my suggestion, however, that the woman who is the "model" for deconstructive discourse remains a woman generalized and defined in terms of the faked orgasm and other varieties of denial. To quote Derrida on Nietzsche again:

She is twice model, in a contradictory fashion, at once lauded and condemned. . . . (First), like writing. . . . But, insofar as she does not believe, herself, in truth . . . she is again the model, this time the good model, or rather the bad model as good model: she plays dissimulation, ornament, lying, art, the artistic philosophy. . . . (*Ep*, p. 66)

At this point the shadow area between Derrida on Nietzsche and Derrida on Derrida begins to waver. "She is a power of affirmation," Derrida continues. We are reminded of the opening of his essay:

The circumspect title for this meeting would be
the question of style.

But woman will be my *subject*.

It remains to wonder if that comes to the *same*
(*revient au même*)—or to the *other*.

The "question of style," as you no doubt have recognized, is a quotation. I wanted to indicate that I shall advance nothing here that does not belong to the space cleared in the last two years by readings that open a new phase in the process of deconstructive, *that is to say affirmative*, interpretation. (*Ep*, pp. 34, 36; italics mine)

Quotation in Derrida is a mark of non-self-identity: the defining predication of a woman, whose very name is changeable.⁹ "Give themselves" is thus distinguished from "give themselves" in Nietzsche's description of woman. The reader will notice the carefully hedged articulation of the deconstructive philosopher's desire to usurp "the place of displacement": between the reminder of an appropriate title and the invocation of the complicity of the same and the other (philosophical themes of great prestige), comes the sentence: "Woman will be my subject." We give the "subject" its philosophical value of the capital I. In the place of the writer's "I" will be woman. But, colloquially, "my subject" means "my object." Thus, even if "le style" (man?) "*revient à elle*" (returns or amounts to her) is an affirmation of "ce qui ne revient pas au père" (that which does not return or amount to the father), the author of *La question du style*—that displaced text that does not exist, yet does, of course, as *Éperons*—having stepped into the place of displacement, has displaced the woman-model doubly as shuttling between the author's subject and object. If, then, the "deconstructive" is "affirmative" by way of Nietzsche's woman, who is a "power of affirmation," we are already within the circuit of what I call double displacement: in order to secure the gesture of taking the woman as model, the figure of woman must be doubly displaced. For a type case of double displacement, I turn to "Femininity," a late text of Freud certainly as well known as the Nietzschean sentence.¹⁰

II

Freud's displacement of the subject should not be confused with Freud's notion of displacement (*Verschiebung*) in the dream-work, which is one of the techniques of the dream-work to transcribe the latent content of the dream to its manifest content. The displacement of the subject that is the theme of deconstruction relates rather to the dream-work in general; for the dream *as a whole* displaces the text of the latent content into the text of the manifest content. Freud calls this *Entstellung* (literally "displacement"; more usually translated as "distortion").¹¹

Freud expanded the notion of the displacement of the dream-work in general into an account of the working of the psychic apparatus and thereby put the subject as such in question. One can produce a reading of the "metapsychological" rather than the therapeutic Freud to show that this originally displaced scene of writing is the scene of woman.¹² Let us consider Freud's description of woman's originary displacement.

"Psycho-analysis does not wish to describe (*nicht beschreiben will*) what the female (*das Weib*) is . . . but investigates (*untersucht*) how she comes into being, how the female develops out of the bisexually disposed child" (*F* xxii, p. 116; *GW* xv, p. 125). The name of this primordial bisexuality is of course unisex. "We are now obliged to recognize," Freud writes, "that the little girl is a little man" (*F* xxii, p. 118; *GW* xv, p. 126).

Here is the moment when woman is displaced out of this primordial masculinity. One of the crucial predications of the place of displacement—"the second task with which a girl's development is burdened"—is that the girl-child must change the object of her love. For the boy it never changes. "But in the Oedipus situation the girl's father has become (*ist geworden*) her love-object." The unchanged object-situation and the fear of castration allow the boy to "overcome (*überwinden*) the Oedipus complex":

The girl is driven out of her attachment to her mother through the influence of her envy for the penis and she enters the Oedipus situation as though into a haven . . . (She) dismantle(s) [*baut ab*] it late and, even so, imperfectly [*unvollkommen*]. (*F* xxiii, p. 129; *GW* xv, p. 138)

Through the subject-object topology of the I (ego) and the it (id), Freud displaces the structure of the psyche itself. The beginning of sexual difference is also given in the language of subject and object. The boy child is irreducibly and permanently displaced from the mother, the object of his desire. But the girl-child is doubly displaced. The boy is born as a subject that desires to copulate with the object. He has the wherewithal to make a "proper" sentence, where the copula is intention or desire. The sentence can be

S (subject) — desires —> O (object)

The girl child is born an uncertain role-player—a little man playing a little girl or vice versa. The object she desires is "wrong"—must be changed. Thus it is not only that her sentence must be revised. It is that she did not have the ingredients to put together a proper sentence in the first place. She is originally written as

(masquerading subject) — desires (temporarily) —> ~~X~~ (wrong object)

I have made this analysis simply to suggest that a deconstructive discourse, even as it criticizes phallogocentrism or the sovereignty of consciousness (and thus seeks to displace or "feminize" itself according to a certain logic), must displace the figure of the woman twice over. In Nietzsche and in Freud the critique of phallogocentrism is not immediately evident, and the double displacement of woman seems all the clearer:

There is no essence of woman because woman averts and averts herself from herself. . . . For if woman *is* truth, *she* knows there is no truth, that truth has no place and that no one has the truth. She is woman insofar as she does not believe, herself, in truth, therefore in what she is, in what one believes she is, which therefore she is not. (*Ep*, pp. 50, 52)

Here Derrida interprets what I call double displacement into the sign of an abyss. But perhaps the point is that the deconstructive discourse of man (like the phallogocentric one) can declare its own displacement (as the phallogocentric its placing) by taking the woman as object or figure. When Derrida suggests that Western discourse is caught within the metaphysical or phallogocentric limit, his point is precisely that man can problematize but not fully disown his status as subject. I do, then, indeed find in deconstruction a "feminization" of the practice of philosophy, and I do not regard it as just another example of the masculine use of woman as instrument of self-assertion. I learn from Derrida's critique of phallogocentrism—but I must then go somewhere else with it. A male philosopher can deconstruct the discourse of the power of the phallus as "his own mistake." For him, the desire for the "name of woman" comes with the questioning of the "metaphysical familiarity which so naturally relates the *we* of the philosopher to 'we-men,' to the *we* in the horizon of humanity."¹³ This is an unusual and courageous enterprise, not shared by Derrida's male followers.¹⁴

Yet, "we-women" have never been the heroes of philosophy. When it takes the male philosopher hundreds of pages (not to be able) to answer the

question "who, me?," we cannot dismiss our double displacement by saying to ourselves: "In the discourse of affirmative deconstruction, 'we' are a 'female element,' which does not signify 'female person.'" Women armed with deconstruction must beware of becoming Athenas, uncontaminated by the womb, sprung in armor from Father's forehead, ruling against Clytemnestra by privileging marriage, the Law that appropriates the woman's body over the claims of that body as Law. To the question: "Where is there a spur so keen as to compel to murder of a mother?" the presumed answer is: "Marriage appointed by fate 'twixt man and woman is mightier than an oath and Justice is its guardian." The official view of reproduction is: "the mother of what is called her child is not its parent, but only the nurse of the newly implanted germ."¹⁵ This role of Athena, "the professional woman," will come up again at the end of the next section.

III

Let us consider briefly the problem of double displacement in Derrida as he substitutes undecidable feminine figurations for the traditional masculine ones and rewrites the primal scene as the scene of writing.

My first example is the graphic of the hymen as it appears in *La double séance*, Derrida's essay on Mallarmé's occasional piece "Mimique."¹⁶

The hymen is the figure for undecidability and the "general law of the textual effect" (*Dis*, p. 235) for at least two reasons. First, "metaphorically" it is the ritual celebration of the breaking of the vaginal membrane, and "literally" that membrane remains intact even as it opens up into two lips; second, the walls of the passage that houses the hymen are both inside and outside the body. It describes "the more subtle and patient displacement which, with reference to a Platonic or Hegelian idealism, we here call 'Mallarméan' by convention" (*Dis*, p. 235; I have arranged the word-order to fit my sentence). The indefinitely displaced undecidability of the effect of the text (as hymen) is not the transcendent or totalizable ideal of the patronymic chain. Yet, is there not an agenda unwittingly concealed in formulating *virginity* as the property of the sexually undisclosed challenger of the phallus as master of the dialectics of desire? The hymen is of course at once both itself and not-itself, always operated by a calculated dissymmetry rather than a mere contradiction or reconciliation. Yet if the one term of the dissymmetry is virginity, the other term is marriage, legal certification for appropriation in the interest of the passage of property. We cannot avoid remarking that marriage in *La double séance* remains an unquestioned figure of fulfilled indentification (*Dis*, pp. 237–38).

We must applaud Derrida's displacement of the old feminine metaphor

of the truth as (of) unveiling: "The hymen is therefore not the truth of unveiling. There is not *aletheia* (truth as unveiling), only a blink of the hymen."¹⁷ Yet desire here must be expressed as man's desire, if only because it is the only discourse handy. The language of a woman's desire does not enter this enclosure:

the hymen as a protective screen (*écran*), jewel case (*écrin*; all reminders of writing—*écriture*— and the written—*écrit*) of virginity, virginal wall, most subtle and invisible veil, which, in front of the hysteron, holds itself *between* the inside and the outside of the woman, *therefore between desire and accomplishment*. (*Dis*, p. 241; italics mine)

Even within this sympathetic scene, the familiar topoi appear. The operation of the hymen is the "outmanoeuvring (*déjouante*—literally 'unplaying') economy of a seduction" (*Dis*, p. 255). We are reminded of Nietzsche as we notice that, in commenting upon the pantomime of a hilarious wife-murder (Pierrot kills Columbine by tickling the soles of her feet) that Mallarmé comments on in *Mimique*, Derrida writes as follows:

The crime, the orgasm, is doubly mimed. . . . Its author in fact disappears because Pierrot is (plays) also Columbine. . . . The gestures represent nothing that had ever been or could ever become present: nothing before or after the mimodrama, and in the mimodrama, a crime-orgasm that was never committed. . . . (*Dis*, pp. 228, 238–39)

The faked orgasm now takes center stage. The Pierrot of the pantomime "acts" as the woman "is" ("Pierrot is [plays] Columbine") by faking a faked orgasm which is also a faked crime.

Derrida's law of the textual operation—of reading, writing, philosophizing—makes it finally clear that, however denaturalized and non-empirical these sexual images might be, it is the phallus that learns the trick of coming close to faking the orgasm here, rather than the hymen coming into its own as the indefinitely displaced effect of the text. Thus the hymen is doubly displaced. Its "presence" is appropriately deconstructed, and its curious property appropriated to deliver the signature of the philosopher. Hymen or writing "gets ready to receive the seminal jet (*jet*; also throw) of a throw of dice" (*Dis*, p. 317; the last phrase—*un coup de dés*—is of course a reference to Mallarmé's famous poem; but, following Derrida's well-known signature-games, the passage can also read, "the hymen gets ready to receive the seminal J. of a blow of a D"). In terms of the custodianship of meaning, the philosopher no longer wishes to engender sons but recognizes that, at the limit, the text's semes are scattered irretrievably abroad. But, by a double displacement of the vagina, dis-

semination remains on the ascendant and the hymen remains reactive. It is "dissemination which *affirms* the always already divided generation of meaning" (*Dis*, p. 300). Textual operation is back to position one and fireworks on the lawn with a now "feminized" phallus: "Dissemination in the fold (*repli*—also withdrawal) of hymen" (*Dis*, p. 303).

One of the many projects of *Glas* is to learn the name of the mother.¹⁸ There is an ideological phallocentrism in Freud that works to control some of his most radical breakthroughs. Derrida has traced this phallocentrism in Lacan, who has written in the name of the "truth of Freud."¹⁹ Now in Lacan's gloss on the Oedipus complex, it is through the discovery of the "name of the father" that the son passes the Oedipal scene and is inserted into the symbolic order or the circuit of the signifier. Upon that circuit, the transcendental signifier remains the phallus. Is it possible to undo this phallocentric scenario by staging the efforts of a critic who seeks to discover the name of the *mother*?

Within the argument from double displacement, this might still be a version of Freud's account of the right object-choice: the son's perennial longing for the mother. Whether interpreted this way or not, it remains the undertaking of the right-hand column of *Glas*, where Derrida writes on some writings of Genet. He needs an eccentric occasion to ask the oblique question of the name of the mother: Genet is an illegitimate homosexual son whose name is—if such an expression can be risked—a matronymic.

(This particular concern, the name or status of the mother, remains implicit in the left-hand column of *Glas* as well. Explicitly, Derrida learns to mourn for fathers: his natural father, Hegel, Nietzsche, Freud. Yet the subject-matter is the matter of the family, the place of mother, sister, wife in the Holy Family, in Greek tragedy, in the early writings of Hegel and Marx, in the story of Hegel's own life. Derrida comments repeatedly on the undisclosed homoeroticism of the official discourse of these phallogocentric philosophers—a discourse supported by the relegation of public homosexuals like Jean Genet to criminality.)

I will not attempt an exhaustive description of this search. Let us consider two sentences toward the end of the Genet column:

I begin to be jealous of his mother who has been able to change her phallus to infinity without being cut up into pieces. Hypothesis Godcome father in himself (*en soi*; without gender differentiation in French) of not being there. (G, p. 290b)

The best way to deal with these lines would be to gloss them as mechanically as possible. Derrida has not been able to articulate the name of Genet's mother. The most he has been able to do is a great L made by the

arrangement of the type—"elle" being French for "she"—cradling or being penetrated by a wedge of emptiness.²⁰ The lines I quote follow almost immediately.

Derrida is jealous because she can *displace* herself ad infinitum. She has stolen a march on the false pride of the phallogocentric Idea—which can merely repeat itself self-identically to infinity. She has taken the phallus out of the circuit of castration, dismemberment, cutting up (*dé-tailler*). With her it is not a question of having or not having the phallus. She can change it, as if she had a collection of dildos or transvestite underwear. The Genet column of *Glas* has considered a phantasmagoria of such items, as evoked by Genet in his own texts.

Such a mother—the outcast male homosexual's vision of mother—is different from the phallic mother of fetishism. If Derrida is re-writing the text of Freud here by suggesting that the male homosexual is *not* caught in the fear of castration by regarding the phallus itself as a representation of what is not there—a theme of self-castration carefully developed in *Glas*—he must also suggest that the "feminization" of philosophizing for the male deconstructor might find its most adequate legend in male homosexuality defined as criminality, and that it cannot speak for the woman.

Such a recognition of the limits of deconstruction is in the admission that the shape of *Glas*, standing in here for the deconstructive project, might be a fetish, an object that the subject regards with superstitious awe. The book is divided into two columns—Hegel on the left, Genet on the right, and a slit in between. Derrida relates these two pillars with the fleece in the middle to Freud's reference "to the circumstance that the inquisitive boy sought out (*gespäht*) the woman's genitals from below, from her legs up" (*F* XI, p. 155; *GW* XIV, p. 314). It is the classic case of fetishism, a uniquely shaped object (his bicolumnar book) that will allow the subject both to be and not to be a man—to have the phallus and yet accede to dissemination.

And indeed it is in terms of the concept-metaphor of fetishism that Derrida gives us a capsule history of the fate of dialectics. I can do no more here than mark a few moments of that "history." Hegel remarks on the fetishism of the African savage, who must eat the fetishized ancestor ceremonially. (*Glas* also is an act of mourning for fathers.) Hegel accuses Kant of a certain fetishism, since Kant sees the Divine Father merely as a jealous God, and must thus formulate a Categorical Imperative. (Derrida supplements the accusation by pointing out that, in French at least, the Categorical Imperative has the same initials as the fetishistic notion—saving the mother jealously from the father's phallus—of the Immaculate Conception: IC.)

The negation of the negation (*Aufhebung*, or sublation), at once denying

a thing and preserving it on a higher level, Hegel's chief contribution to the morphology of the self-determination of the concept, was itself, Feuerbach suggested, the absolutely positive move. It may be called fetishistic because it allowed Hegel to keep both presence and its representation.

Marx then exposes Feuerbach's critical movement. . . . The speculative unity, the secular complicity of philosophy and religion—the former being the truth and essence of the latter, the latter the representation of the former. . . . is the process of sublation. (G, p. 226a)

Marx also relates *Aufhebung* to supporting the Christian "desire for maternity as well as virginity" (G, p. 228a).²¹ The distance between deconstruction's project of displacement and the dialectic's project of sublation may be charted in terms of the son's longing for the mother. "If *Aufhebung* were a Christian mother" (G, p. 225a)—at once marked and unmarked by the phallus—deconstruction looks for a mother who can change her phallus indefinitely and has an outcast homosexual son. Crudely put, a quarrel of sons is not the model for feminist practice.²²

The project of philosophy, Derrida continues, as each philosopher presents a more correct picture of the way things are, is not merely to locate the fetish in the text of the precursor, but also to de-fetishize philosophy. "If there were no thing—the thing itself par excellence—in this case the truth of philosophy), the concept of the fetish would lose its invariant kernel. For the fetish is a substitute—of the thing itself" (G, p. 234a; I have modified the order of the sentences to make a summary). Rather than negating the thing itself—that would merely be another way of positing it—deconstruction gives it the undecidability of the fetish. The thing itself becomes its own substitute. Like the faked orgasm, the thing itself its own fake. Yet the fetish, to qualify as fetish, must carry within itself a trace of the thing itself that it replaces. Deconstruction cannot be pure undecidability. "It constitutes an *economy* of the undecidable. . . . It is not dialectical but plays with the dialectic" (G, p. 235a).

Thus *Glas* must end with an erection of the thing, not merely the oscillation of the phallus as fetish. The distance from the dialectic is measured simply by the fact that "the thing is oblique. It (*elle*) already makes an angle with the ground" (G, p. 292b). Its relationship with the ground (of things) has the obliqueness of an originary fetish. The graphic of that angle can be that large L on page 290b. In French, the "it" of the second sentence above is "*elle*." Cradled in that angle between the fetish and the thing itself is the word *déjà* (already), separated out of the sentence by two commas. *Glas* makes clear that *déjà* is also a bilingual yes (*ja*) to the D (de)—the initial letter of Derrida's own patronymic—in reverse. It is the assent to the self that one must already have given (an assent at best

reversed, never fully displaced.) If the project of *La double séance* finally puts the phallus in the hymen, *Glas* is obliged to put the son with the patronymic in the arms of the phallic mother.

"Hypothesis Godcome father in himself of not being there" (*Hypothèse dieuvenue père en soi de n'être pas là*). This is the mother of whom, simply reversing Kant's position vis-à-vis the jealous father, Derrida begins to become jealous. As the possessor of the fetish, she carries a substitute of the thing itself—that father in himself; yet as the deconstructed fetish she also carries the trace of the thing itself; through not being there she *is*—one presumes, since the verb of being is strategically suppressed in the sentence—the father in himself. Here again that curious displacement—her separation from Athena or Mary. She allows the philosopher to question the concept of being by having no verb of being; she cannot be named. Yet she remains the miraculous hypothesis—"the supposition, i.e., a fact placed under a number of facts as their common support and explanation; though in the majority of instances these hypotheses or suppositions better deserve the name of *hypopoiesis* or suffictions."²³

IV

One must, then, remember *La double séance* and *Glas* as one reads *Éperons*. In the last the project to feminize philosophizing can be understood in the following way. If a man is obliged to perform by means of a single or singular style (stylus, phallus), he can at least attempt a plural style, always try to fake his orgasms, never speak for himself, be forever on the move away from a place that might be locatable as his own. Like the two other pieces, *Éperons* is an exercise in the plural style, a displaced reversal of what Nietzsche would call the "grand style." Ever complicit with his subject-matter, Derrida tries this plural style to comment on the plurality of Nietzsche's style.

As in the case of *Glas*, my method here will be a mechanical decoding. As one attends to the stylistic orchestration in this decoding spirit, one notices among all the subtleties and indirections and ore-packed rifts a set of four triads:

1. *Le voile/tombe*
L'érection tombe
La signature/tombe
(*Ep*, pp. 59, 105, 127)
2. He was, he dreaded such a castrated woman
He was, he dreaded such a castrating woman
He was, he loved such an affirming woman
(*Ep*, p. 100)

3. Perhaps it was cut out (*prelevée*) somewhere
Perhaps it was heard here or there
Perhaps it was the sense of a sentence to be written here or there
(*Ep*, p. 97)
4. the three final steps of the essay: *un pas encore*
(yet another step; or, one not yet), P.S., and P.S. II
(*Ep*, pp. 135, 138, 140)

Each of these triads stages a self-dislocation and thus connotes heterogeneity. I have repeatedly pointed out that a structural (not natural or biological) description of heterogeneity (not being homogeneously "in place") in intention and signifying convention might be woman:

The heterogeneity of the text manifests it well. Nietzsche did not give himself the illusion, analyzed it on the contrary, of knowing anything of these effects, called woman, truth, castration, or of the *ontological* (being-related) effects of presence or absence. (*Ep*, p. 94)

The second triad is a summary of what Derrida thinks "The History of an Error" (a chapter in Nietzsche's *The Twilight of the Idols*) reflects. The sentences describe three psychoanalytic "positions," three subject (man)-object (woman) relations. As Derrida explains (*Ep*, p. 96), the first two sentences are reversals, the third a displacement. The displaced "position" sees the woman as "affirming." Deconstruction "affirms" (*Ep*, p. 36). Deconstruction is or affirms the other (woman) after its simple alterity (otherness) has been reversed and displaced.

"How the 'True World' Finally Became a Fable: History of An Error" is Nietzsche's version of what I have called the feminization of philosophizing. In order to prove that the remark "she becomes female" within this chapter can be unpacked into the triad above, Derrida claims that Nietzsche's bitter thoughts are not about woman's essence, but about a historical change in it owing to the ambiguous status given it by Christianity, the ideology of the castrated. "Thus the truth has not always been woman nor is the woman always truth. They both have a history; together they both form a history" (*Ep*, p. 86).

If one attended to the pronominal genders in the chapter, a different story is read. That so meticulous a reader as Derrida does not attend to them is in itself curious. This other story would be the story of the male philosopher's relationship to and birth from woman as such, the story of sexual difference retold.

Since the world—*die Welt*—is feminine in German, the first words to describe the philosopher's relationship to the true world—*die wahre Welt*—describe the child in the womb or at the breast (as if part of the mother's

undifferentiated body): "he lives in her, *he is she* (*Er lebt in ihr, er ist sie*)." Next, this feminine world has become the *idea* (of the true world), and as such, progressing, "she becomes female (*Sie wird Weib*)." This is the first naming of the female as such. Before this she is merely *sie*, the pronominal referent to the true world. Here, at the moment of sexual differentiation, she is desexualized, she becomes neuter; for *Weib* in German is not only contemptuous but neuter in gender. The rest of the chapter is the story of how to abolish "the true world" (Derrida reads the quotation marks as the mark of the woman). In the final paragraph this displaced and neutered woman is indeed abolished—and through a double displacement: both the true world and the apparent one (both the woman and her representation) are abolished. "Highpoint of mankind; INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA" (*PN*, p. 486; *CM*, p. 75).

As usual in Nietzsche's plural style it is hard to decide if he is endorsing "truth" or "error," or indeed what perspective will allow us to make that distinction. The title of the chapter is subject to that well-recognized Nietzschean reversibility. "The history of an error" could be "the error of a history" just as "Zur Genealogie der Moral" could be "Zur Moral der Genealogie," or expressions like "die Bildung der Begriffe" (the growth of a concept) or "Das Erkennen erfanden" (invented understanding) could in context be read "der Begriff des Bildes" (the concept of the image) or "die Erfindung erkannten" (understood invention).²⁴ This is the gesture of putting the author's "place" in question.

If Hegel in the *Aufhebung* wishes to conserve both presence (philosophy) and representation (religion),²⁵ and if, at the end of *Glas*, Derrida wishes to keep a representation (fetish) that substitutes for a presence that is bent, Nietzsche's problematic desire here seems to be to abolish both the woman (the true world) and her representation (the differentiated female—"the true world"). That curious model of philosophizing he cannot practice but leaves rather for a Zarathustra who is merely announced. I have suggested that, paradoxically, when Derrida follows Nietzsche's lead, it results not in an abolishment but in a distanced embracing, of a doubly displaced woman.

If the pronominal charge of the chapter as a whole and especially of *Sie wird Weib* is noted, Zarathustra is seen to become possible through the desexualization of woman as truth or idea. Zarathustra does not speak in this chapter; the author's "place" is once again in question, for he may be no more than a foreshadower; Nietzsche displaces himself even as he doubly displaces the woman.

It is this last move that Derrida presumably describes as "he was, he loved this woman."

I have tried to show and applaud how Derrida seeks to affirm through

the (doubly displaced) figure of the woman. I should like, with some trepidation, to suggest that to keep that deconstructive affirmation intact, Derrida must ignore that the third psychoanalytic position in Nietzsche emerges as a violent negation. Whereas in the case of the other three triads in *Éperons* Derrida stages the heterogeneity and displacement in his text, this triad is given as a continuous one. The negation that would mark the heterogeneity between the first two positions and the third is not disclosed. Negation is a mark of the ego's desire to deny heterogeneity or discontinuity. As Freud writes:

A negative judgment (*Verurteilung*) is the intellectual substitute for repression; the "no" is the hallmark of repression, a certificate of origin—like, let us say, "Made in Germany." With the help of (mediated by; *vermittelt*) the symbol of negation, thinking frees itself from the restrictions of repression and enriches itself with material that is indispensable for its proper functioning (*Leistung*). (*F* XIX, p. 236; *GW* XIV, p. 12–13)

If the peculiar and uncharacteristic nature of Derrida's protestation of continuity is not noticed, the identification and love for the affirming woman that Derrida finds in Nietzsche can be given a brutal reading. One can then ask: is the displacement-affirmation of deconstruction merely that the man-woman reversal, the scene of "castration," need no longer be seen as a battleground? That "dread" can be turned into "love" by realizing that the clitoridectomized/ hysterectomized neuter woman might just as well be an animal? (The woman whose sexual pleasure is originarily self-(re)presentative in a way *different* from man's might just as well not have a clitoris: the hymen that remains forever (in)violate, upon which the seed is forever spilled afield in dissemination, has no use for the hysteron.) Is this the scene of violence that is called love in the transformation contained within our only perfect triad? If women have always been used as the instrument of male self-deconstruction, is this philosophy's newest twist?

One can then bring forward Derrida's explanation of the third position:

Woman is recognized, beyond that double negation [the negation of 2 negation in *Aufhebung*], affirmed as affirmative, dissimulative, artistic, dionysiac power. She is not affirmed by man, but affirms herself [or is affirmed—*s'affirme*—herself], *in herself and within man* [*en elle-même et dans l'homme*]. (*Ep*, 97; italics mine)

Further:

And in truth, those women feminists so derided by Nietzsche, they are men. Feminism is nothing but the operation of a woman who wishes to

resemble a man, the dogmatic philosopher, claiming truth, science, objectivity, that is to say all the virile illusions, and the castration-effect that attaches to them. Feminism wishes castration—also of the woman. Loses the style. (*Ep*, p. 64)⁶⁶

The scene changes if one notices Derrida's rider to the consequence of the "indeterminability of castration" if woman is identified with "the question of style" and opposed to "the strict equivalence between the affirmation and the negation of castration": "To be developed later, perhaps, in terms of the argument of the *athletic support-belt* [*gaine*—an extremely important theme in *Glas*] in Freud's text on fetishism."⁶⁷ Perhaps Derrida speaks from the irretrievably compromised position of a man with a self-diagnosed fetish (can there be such a thing?) that substitutes nothing but the trace of a truth (if there could be such a thing). Under the guise of a description of the problematics of being a feminist woman, he might be describing the problematics of being a "woman's man." Then we might remark that, in the lines immediately preceding our passage, where man and woman are within quotation marks, if the woman is predictably described as elusive, the man is given the full blast of the critique of phallogentrism. It is at least within that frame that feminists are derided as women who wish to resemble men. It is at least possible to read this as a lament that in the place of phallogentrism a mere hysterocentrism should be erected:

The "woman" takes so little interest in truth, she believes in it so little that the truth of her proper subject no longer even concerns her. It is the "man" who believes that his discourse on woman or truth *concerns*—such is the topographical problem that I sketched, which also slipped away, as usual, earlier, relating to castration's undecidable contours—the woman. (*Ep*, p. 62)

The voice is at least not given as disinterested or Olympian. As much as at the end of *Glas*, this is a son caught in the desire for the mother, a man for the woman:

The questions of art, of style, of truth do not let themselves be dissociated from the question of the woman. But the simple formation of this common problematic suspends the question "what is woman?" One can no longer seek her, no more than one could search for woman's femininity or feminine sexuality. At least one cannot find them according to a known mode of concept or knowledge, even if one cannot escape looking for them. (*Ep*, p. 70).

This might indeed be a bold description of the feminist's problem of

discourse after the critique of the old ways of knowing. To avoid the problem is to "make a mistake." Yet, with respect, we cannot share in the mysterious pathos of the longing: for a reason as simple as that the question of woman in general, asked this way, is *their* question, not *ours*.

Perhaps because we have a "different body" the fetish as woman with changeable phallus is *on her way* to becoming a transcendental signifier in these texts. As the radically other she does not *really exist*, yet her name remains one of the important names for displacement, the special mark of deconstruction. The difference in the woman's body is also that it exists too much, as the place of evidence, of the law as writing. I am not referring to the law in general, the Logos as origin, Speech as putative identity of voice and consciousness, "all the names of the foundation, of the principle, or of the center (that) have always designated the invariant of a presence (*eidos*, *archè*, *telos*, *energeia*, *ousia* [essence, existence, substance, subject], *aletheia*, transcendentality, consciousness, God, man, and so forth)."²⁶ I am speaking in the narrow sense, of the law as the code of legitimacy and inheritance.

One version of this "simple" law is written on the woman's body as an historical instrument of reproduction. A woman has no need to "prove" maternity. The institution of phallogentric law is congruent with the need to prove paternity and authority, to secure property by transforming the child into an alienated object named and possessed by the father, and to secure property by transforming the woman into a mediating instrument of the production and passage of property.²⁷ In this narrow but "effective" and "real" sense, in the body of the woman as mother, the opposition between displacement and logocentrism might itself be deconstructed. Not merely as the undecidable crease of the hymen or envied place of the fetish, but also as the repressed place of production can the woman stand as a limit to deconstruction.

V

My attitude towards deconstruction can now be summarized: first, deconstruction is illuminating as a critique of phallogentrism; second, it is convincing as an argument against the founding of a hystero-centric to counter a phallogentric discourse; third, as a "feminist" practice itself, it is caught on the other side of sexual difference.³⁰ At whatever remove of "différance" (difference/deferment from/of any decidable statement of the concept of an identity or difference)³¹ *sexual difference is thought*, sexual *differential* between "man" and "woman" remains irreducible. It is within the frame of these remarks that I hope the following parable will be read.

Within this frame, let us imagine a woman who is a (straight) decon-

structivist of (traditional male) discourse. Let us assume that her position vis-à-vis the material she interprets is "the same" as that of the male deconstructivist. Thinking of the irreducible sexual differential, she might say: in order to have used the discourse of the phallus as a sign of my power, I was obliged to displace myself from what has been defined as my originary displacement by that very discourse and thus (re)-present for myself a place. Should my gesture of deconstructive practice be a third-degree displacement so that, on the other side of the sexual differential, I can "be myself"? Yet, the project of the critique of phallogentrism-logocentrism is an exposure of the ideology of self-possession—"being myself"—in order to grasp the idea—"the thing itself." Should I not have an attitude parallel to the deconstructive philosopher's attitude to the discourse of the phallus towards any discourse of the womb that might get developed thanks to the sexual differential? What about the further problem of creating "purposively" a discourse of the woman to match an official discourse of the man whose strength is that it is often arbitrary and unmotivated? Deconstruction puts into question the "purposive" activities of a sovereign subject.

A certain historical "differential" now begins to suggest itself. Even if all historical taxonomies are open to question, a minimal historical network must be assumed for interpretation, a network that suggests that the phallogentric discourse is the object of deconstruction because of its co-extensivity with the history of Western metaphysics, a history inseparable from political economy and from the property of man as holder of property. *Whatever their historical determination or conceptual allegiance*, the male users of the phallogentric discourse all trace the itinerary of the suppression of the trace. The differential political implications of putting oneself in the position of accomplice-critic with respect to an at best clandestinely determined hystero-centric subtext that is only today becoming "authoritative" in bourgeois feminism, seems to ask for a different program. The collective project of our feminist critic must always be to rewrite the *social* text so that the historical and sexual differentials are operated together. Part of it is to notice that the argument based on the "power" of the faked orgasm, of being-fetish, and hymen, is, all deconstructive cautions taken, "determined" by that very political and social history that is inseparably co-extensive with phallogentric discourse and, in her case, either unrecorded in accessible ways, or recorded in terms of man.³² Since she has, indeed, learned the lesson of deconstruction, this rewriting of the social text of motherhood cannot be an establishment of new meanings. It can only be to work away at concept-metaphors that deliberately establish and cast wide a different system of "meanings."

If she confines herself to asking the question of woman (what is

woman?), she might merely be attempting to provide an answer to the honorable male question: what does woman want? She herself still remains the *object* of the question. To reverse the situation would be to ask the question of woman as a subject: what am I? That would bring back all the absolutely convincing deconstructive critiques of the sovereign subject.

The gesture that the "historical moment" requires might be to ask the "question of man" in that special way—what is man that the itinerary of his desire creates such a text? Not, in other words, simply, what is man? All the texts in the world are at our disposal, and the question cannot flounder into the delusions of a pure "what am I?" Yet it restores to us the position of the questioning *subject* by virtue of the question-effect, a position that the sexual differential has never allowed women à propos of men in a licit way. This gesture must continue to supplement the collective and substantive work of "restoring" woman's history and literature.³³ Otherwise the question "what is man's desire?" asked by women from the peculiar *sub rosa* position of the doubly-displaced subject will continue to preserve masculinity's business as usual and produce answers that will describe themselves, with cruel if unselfconscious irony, as "total womanhood".

As a literary critic she might fabricate strategic "misreadings," rather than perpetrating variations on "received" or "receivable" readings, especially upon a woman's text. She might, by the superimposition of a suitable allegory, draw a reading out of the text that relates it to the historico-social differential of the body. This move should, of course, be made scrupulously explicit. Since deconstruction successfully puts the ideology of "correct readings" into question, our friend is content with this thought.³⁴ Even more content because, since she has never been considered a custodian of truth anyway (only its mysterious figure), this move seems to possess the virtue of turning that millennial accusation into a place of strength. To undo the *double* displacement, as it were, and to operate from displacement as such, if there can be such a thing. To produce useful and scrupulous fake readings in the place of the passively active fake orgasm.

VI

In the recently-published "Law of Genre," Derrida/Blanchot (the identities are, as usual, blurred) steps into the Mother/Daughter relationship.³⁵ The daughter is the Law (*la loi*), in French always in the feminine. Instead of the Law being of the Father, the irreducible madness of the Law-as-daughter is seductive ("one time she had me touch her knee," writes

Blanchot) of the male mother, who by this means accedes to a "neuter" voice that is "doubly affirmative," "guarding the opportunity of being woman (*garder la chance d'être femme*) or changing sex" (LG, pp. 194, 196, 222, 223).

The Law's proffered knee (*genou*) provides the first person with a bisexual "I/we" (*je/nous*)—the rewriting of the "we-men of the total horizon of humanity" that was sought in 1969 in "Ends of Man." All the verbs of seeing and saying at the end of Derrida's essay are given to an "I" within quotation marks. The crucial verb of being lets the *je/nous* enter the story "where I/we are (*ou je/nous somme*).³⁶ What this "I," on its knees (*à genoux*), but also as I/we (*je/nous*), sees is indeed the Law, in sum. But, playing with *somme* ("sum" as well as "are" in the first person plural), the previous sentence would allow the *je/nous* to be in the place of the Law: *la loi en somme*. If the situation of the Law is written into the situation of father-daughter incest, Athena the Law (giving) daughter can be produced, and the phallic mother circumvented; especially if, changing sex, I myself become a mother:

he wishes to seduce the law to whom he gives birth [there is a hint of incest in this] and . . . he makes the law afraid. . . . The law's female element [which does not signify a female person] has thus always appealed to: me, I, he, we. (LG, pp. 225, 198, 197)

The female element does not signify female person. There is no *elle* among the *je*, *nous*, and *ils* who accede to voice and being at her expense in the last paragraph.

The father-daughter fantasy is not to be found in the companion piece "Living On/ Border Lines."³⁶ There the narrator operates the hymen "or the alliance in the language of the other" (LO, p. 77) by "speak(ing) his mother tongue as the language of the other" (LO, p. 153).

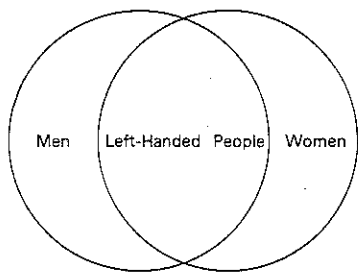
Mixing of the sexes is one of the chief concerns of "The Law of Genre." Before actually beginning his commentary on Blanchot's *La folie du jour*, Derrida reminds us that "in French, the semantic scale of *genre* is much larger and more expansive than in English, and thus always includes within it the gender" (LG, p. 221; not in the French version). On the next page we are shown how, by invoking "beautiful creatures" who are "almost always"—but not invariably—"there is no natural or symbolic law, universal law, or law of a genre/gender here"—women, the man accedes to a bizarre quasi-performative:

In this risky (*aléatoire*) claim that links affirmation almost always to women, beautiful ones, it is then more than probable that, as long as I say yes, yes, I am a woman and beautiful. Grammatical sex (anatomical as well, in any

case, sex submitted to the law of objectivity), the masculine genre (gender) is thus affected by the affirmation through a risky drift that could always make it other. (*LG*, p. 223; pp. 195–96)

Let us remind ourselves that when this sex-change seems to go the other way, from woman to man, the fetishized phallic mother causes a good deal of anguish, as at the end of *Glas*. We might also say, following Derrida in "Limited Inc," that there is "something like a relationship" between such a point of view about becoming a woman at the stroke of a word and the men who legislate and adjudicate against abortion because they believe they can speak for the woman and her body.³⁷

The name of the double displacement that allows the double affirmation is now not merely hymen but double invagination, a double turning-inside-out. This creates a space which is larger than the whole of which it is a part, and allows "participation without belonging" (to the female sex?). As in the customary illustrations of the set theory, Venn diagrams, where the men- and the women-sets intersect, there is the left-handed-people set which is larger than either the men-set or the women-set.



Only here we have fake-frame accounts and fake-interior accounts intersecting (invaginating) to form a "left-handed-people" set where the account-effect can both be and not be a legally answerable account by virtue (if that is the word) of the seductive daughter-law.



(*LG*, p. 218; p. 191)

However stubbornly Derrida might insist that female personhood must be reduced out of the female element or the female silhouette, that the

vagina has only a figural connection with invagination, the strength of his own methodology will not allow such a totalizing exclusion and binary opposition to stand. "The opposition of fact and principle . . . in all its metaphysical, ontological, and transcendental forms, has always functioned within the system of what is."³⁸ It is not the question of "a feminist leader" finding it "hard . . . to bear that a 'man' should have dared (such a) 'mad hypothesis'" (*LO*, p. 167). It is rather that other question: what is man that he should, even as he argues deconstruction of the substance-form opposition, need so vehement a negation of woman?

The mathematico-sexual metaphors of invagination seem even to supersede the self-diagnosed "fetishism" of *Glas*. The telegraphic language allows for great indeterminacy in syntactic connections:

no piece, no metonymy, no integral corpus. *And thus no fetishism.* Everything said here about double invagination can be brought to bear—a labor of translation—on what is worked out in *Glas*, for example, on the subject of fetishism as the argument of the *gaine* [to be translated "vagina"?]. (*LO*, pp. 137–38; italics mine)

To want to speak for the phallus would, of course, be hopelessly mystified. Fetishism can apparently be circumvented by the morphology of set theory. Perhaps the indefinitely trans-sexual I/we can still not speak for the clitoris as the mark of the sexed subject.

Is it too fanciful to claim that, at the end of "Living On," when Derrida begins the discussion of the "arrêt between the two deaths," one can discern a vague legend of the doubly vaginated clitoris (*LO*, p. 163)? "Of course, nothing [or very little] on the manifestly readable surface of the *réçits* makes it possible to sustain such a mad hypothesis" (*LO*, p. 170).³⁹ Yet, it is not the first time Derrida has coupled writing and masturbation:

at the very place where the *relationship* of the "book" to itself, in its fragile binding, is formed, the *relationship* of the "I" to himself, his alliance with himself, his ring, his anniversary, the *alliance* that joins him to himself. This *very* place, the very *same* place, being the place, the locus, of interruption, is also the place where double invagination gathers together what it interrupts in the strange *sameness* of this place. (*LO*, p. 166)

But perhaps this is circular reasoning. I might see this vague clitoral legend because the space between these two women, two vaginations, or two folds, when the man is not there, has a "terrifying *figura*, figure, face. . . . inter-dicted in the quasi-middle of it, over above beyond its double inner border" (*LO*, p. 166), and is an "uncrossable glass partition" (*LO*, p. 169). Perhaps I am thinking back from passages such as the following and remarking upon the calculable impact of a "different body":

But the woman touches herself by and in herself without the necessity of a mediation, and before all possible decisions between (*départage entre*) activity and passivity. A woman "touches herself" all the time, without anyone being able to forbid her to do so, in fact, for her sex is composed of two lips which embrace continually. Thus, in herself she is already two—but not divisible into ones (un[es])—who affect each other.

The uncertainty (*suspens*) of this auto-eroticism is effected (*s'opere*) in a violent break-in: the brutal spreading apart of this two lips by a violating penis.⁴⁰

I haven't a different conclusion to offer. Although, I must repeat, it is a bold and helpful thing to restore the female element when it is buried in gender-conventions (I remain surprised that Derrida does not do it in *Éperons*), the displacement of the originarily faked orgasm into the mark of the double affirmation in the interest of man's accession to provisional androgyny cannot lead us very far. It is excellent to posit this female element as the irreducible madness of truth-in-law, but we are daily reminded that a little more must be undertaken to budge the law's oppressive sanity. It is not really a question of the "institution" being able to "bear" our more "apparently revolutionary ideological sorts of 'content'" (*LO*, p. 95) because we do not threaten its institutionality.⁴¹ It is rather an awareness that even the strongest personal goodwill on Derrida's part cannot turn him quite free of the massive enclosure of the male appropriation of woman's voice, with a variety of excuses: this one being, it is not really woman.

If my present conviction is that to sublimate the natural or physiological evidence of motherhood into a prospective historical or psychological continuity is the idealist subtext of the patriarchal project, what then do I propose? I have discussed this question at length in "French Feminism in an International Frame."⁴² Here suffice it to indicate the line of my argument somewhat cryptically:

The clitoris escapes reproductive framing. In legally defining woman as object of exchange, passage, or possession in terms of reproduction, it is not only the womb that is literally "appropriated"; it is the clitoris as the signifier of the sexed subject that is effaced. All historical and theoretical investigation into the definition of woman as legal *object*—in or out of marriage, or as politico-economic passageway for property and legitimacy—would fall within the investigation of the varieties of the effacement of the clitoris.

The social text of motherhood is inscribed within this inquiry. For if an "at least symbolic clitoridectomy has always been the 'normal' accession to womanhood and the unacknowledged name of motherhood, why has it been necessary to plot out the entire geography of female sexuality in

terms of the imagined possibility of the dismemberment of the phallus?"⁴³

And when we ask: what is man that the itinerary of his desire creates such a text?—it will help us to remember that the text (of male discourse) gains its coherence by coupling woman with man in a loaded equation and cutting the excess of the clitoris out.

VII

I began this essay with an invocation of great passages. I shall end by going back to the classics as well, and summarize my suggestions as an undoing of the *Eumenides*. I have already written of the immaculate Athena finding against Clytemnestra. Now I speak of another part of her judgment: her defeminizing of the Furies, pursuing Orestes the matricide, and bidding them be "sweet-voiced" (*Eumenides*) by the stroke of a word. If we take the discourse of the "patriarchy" as a straw monster, and pursue it mightily, our role as Furies will lead to little more than self-congratulation and euphoria. We must use and attend to "the patriarchy's" own self-critique even as we recognize that it is irreducibly determined to disable us. It was after all a man who pointed out that the real charge in Hegel's picture of the subject appropriating the object—sweetly metaphorized by Adam and Eve—was a deep hostility:

The appropriation (*die Aneignung*) of estranged objective being on the sublation (*die Aufhebung*) of objectivity in the determination (*Bestimmung*) of estrangement—which must proceed from indifferent alienness (*Fremdheit*) to real hostile estrangement—has for Hegel at the same time or even principally the significance of the sublation (*aufzuheben*) of objectivity, since it is not the *determinate* (*bestimmte*) character of the object but its *objective* character which constitutes the offense and the estrangement for self-consciousness. The object is therefore negative, self-sublating (*sich selbst Aufhebendes*), a nullity.⁴⁴

Although Derrida and deconstruction, because of their overt critique of phallogentrism, rather than Marx and materialism, have been my example, the entire business of my essay might still be summed up a) in the suggestion that a feminist reader would see in Marx's correction of Hegel a gesture useful for feminism, and b) in the definition of such a reader, such uses.

NOTES

1. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Sämtliche Werke*, vii (Leipzig: F. Meiner, 1920–55), p. 47; Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942), p. 226. Throughout the essay I have modified all quotations from texts in translation when necessary.

2. I do not use the word "patriarchy"—the rule of the father—because it is susceptible to biologicistic, naturalistic, and/or positivist-historical interpretations, and most often provides us with no more (and no less) than a place of accusation. I am more interested in the workings of a certain "discourse"—language in an operative and abyssal heterogeneity. I should add that the absence of Marxist issues in this paper signifies nothing that cannot be explained by the following conviction: as women claim legitimation as agents in a society, a congruent movement to redistribute the forces of production and reproduction in that society must also be undertaken. Otherwise we are reduced to the prevailing philosophy of liberal feminism: "a moralistically humanitarian and egalitarian philosophy of social improvement through the re-education of psychological attitudes" (Charnie Guettel, *Marxism and Feminism* [Toronto: Women's Press, 1974], p. 3). As a deconstructionist, my topic in the present essay is—can deconstruction help? That should not imply that I am blind to the larger issues outlined here.

3. For literary critics, the most recent articulation of this "official philosophy" is in the concept of the hermeneutic circle. Digests can be found in Sarah N. Lawall, *Critics of Consciousness: The Existential Structures of Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968); and Robert R. Magliola, *Phenomenology and Literature: An Introduction* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1977).

4. See Jacques Derrida, "Speculations on 'Freud,'" trans. Ian McLeod, *Oxford Literary Review* 3 (1978):78–97.

5. Spivak, "Love Me, Love My Ombre, Elle," forthcoming in *Diacritics*.

6. Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Werke; kritische Gesamtausgabe*, v, vol. 2, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Berlin: W. De Gruyter, 1970), p. 291, hereafter cited in the text as *CM*; Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter J. Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), p. 317.

7. I do not believe Nietzsche's passage is necessarily read this way by everyone.

8. Jacques Derrida, *Éperons: Les Styles de Nietzsche; Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*, trans. Barbara Harlow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 56, hereafter cited in the text as *Ep*. This is a bilingual edition of *Eperons*; I have used my own translations.

9. For a discussion of "citationality," see Jacques Derrida, "Limited Inc," trans. Samuel Weber, *Glyph* 2 (1977):162–254. For a discussion of citationality in Derrida, see Spivak, "Revolutions That As Yet Have No Model: Derrida's *Limited Inc*," *Diacritics* 10 (Winter 1980):29–49.

10. Sigmund Freud, *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works*, trans. James Strachey, xxii (London: Hogarth Press, 1964), hereafter cited in the text as *F*; *Gesammelte Werke*, xv (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1940), hereafter cited in the text as *GW*. Citations indicate volume and page number.

11. For definitions of psychoanalytic terms, consult Jean Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, *Le Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967); *The Language of Psycho-Analysis*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Norton, 1973). For a cautionary viewpoint against such a sourcebook, see Derrida, "Moi-la psychanalyse," introduction to Nicolas Abraham, *L'Écorce et le noyau* (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1978); "Me-Psychoanalysis: An Introduction to the Translation of *The Shell and the Kernel* by Nicolas Abraham," trans. Richard Klein, *Diacritics* 9 (March 1979):4–12.

12. Derrida produces such a reading, using *Beyond The Pleasure Principle* as his occasion, in "Speculer-sur 'Freud,'" in *La Carte postale* (Paris: Aubier-Flammarion, 1980), pp. 237–437. The full French text has not yet been translated.

13. Jacques Derrida, "Les fins de l'homme," *Marges de la philosophie* (Paris: Minuit, 1972), p. 137; "Ends of Man," trans. Edouard Morot-Sir et al., *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 30 (September 1969):35.

14. Since I wrote this essay, Michael Ryan and Jonathan Culler have published studies of deconstruction that include chapters on feminism. See Ryan, *Marxism and Deconstruction: A Critical Articulation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), pp. 194–212; and Culler, *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982).

15. *Aeschylus*, trans. Herbert W. Smyth, II (London: W. Heinemann, 1936), pp. 311, 293, 335.

16. Jacques Derrida, "La double séance," *La dissémination* (Paris: Seuil, 1972); *Dissemination*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), hereafter cited in the text as *Dis*. Page references are to the French edition, and the translations are my own.

17. *Dis*, p. 293. The hymen is here also substituted for the imperious eye, whose blink measures the self-evident moment (in German *Augenblick*, literally the blink of an eye), in Husserlian philosophy as in the general Western tradition; see "Le Signe et le clin d'oeil," *La Voix et le phénomène* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967); "Signs and the Blink of an Eye," *Speech and Phenomena*, trans. David Allison (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

18. Jacques Derrida, *Glas* (Paris: Galilée, 1974), hereafter cited in the text as *G*.

19. Jacques Derrida, "Le Facteur de la vérité," *Poétique* 21 (1975):96–147; "The Purveyor of Truth," trans. Willis Domingo et al., *Yale French Studies* 52 (1975):31–114.

20. This particular reading of the capital L has been independently developed by Geoffrey Hartman in *Saving the Text* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), p. 75.

21. In "Freud and the Scene of Writing," in *Writing and Difference*, and in *La double séance*, Derrida suggests that both in Freud and in Mallarmé the desire is to find a surface both marked and virgin. In *De la grammatologie* (Paris: Minuit, 1967); *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), he suggests that Rousseau wanted a category that was both transcendental (virgin) and supplementary (marked). An interpretation of Derrida's interpretation of the intellectual history of European men, in terms precisely of sons' longing for mothers, can perhaps be made.

22. I should make it clear that Derrida himself, like the Nietzsche of *Ecce Homo*, is, at least in theory, suspicious of discipleship. This particular "feminist" charge would probably seem a mark of excellence to him.

23. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, ed. J. Shawcross, I (London: Oxford University Press, 1907), p. 72.

24. The last two examples are from "Über Wahrheit und Lüge im äussermoralischen Sinne," *CM* III, 2, Berlin, 1973, p. 373, 369; "Of Truth and Falsity in An Extramoral Sense," *Essays on Metaphor*, ed. Warren Shibles (Whitewater, Wisc.: Language Press 1972), p. 41.

25. This could be related to the idea that Marx saw in Hegel "a double inversion" (first of subject and predicate, and next of idealism and an unexamined empiricism), which Lucio Colletti develops in *Marxism and Hegel* (London: New Left Books, 1973).

26. "The style" of course continues to allude to the phallus, whose status in Derrida is precarious precisely because castration cannot be taken as the all-or-

nothing threat, and the question of the style (phallus) remains "the question of woman."

27. For elaboration upon Derrida's argument from the *gaine*, see my "Glas-piece: A Compte Rendu," *Diacritics* 7 (1977):22-43.

28. Jacques Derrida, "La Structure, le signe et le jeu," *Écriture et la différence*, p. 411; "Structure, Sign, and Play," *The Structuralist Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man*, ed. Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), p. 249.

29. Although Engels' strict progressivist-dialectical account of the stages of marriage with matching sexual relations of production would be indefinitely complicated by a deconstructivist analysis, his pioneering statement is worth quoting here: "The first class antagonism which appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamian marriage, and the first class opposition with that of the female sex by the male." In Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1972), p. 75. The distinction between patrilineage as passage of property and so-called matrilineage would also be open to a deconstructive reading. It should also be remembered that much of Engels' work in this book owes an unacknowledged debt to Flora Tristan.

30. From this point of view, it is worth noting that in Julia Kristeva's more mainstream or masculinist celebration of motherhood, the child remains male ("Hérétique de l'amour," *Tel Quel* 74 (Winter 1977):30-49. "Maternité selon Giovanni Bellini" and "Noms de lieu," in *Polylogue* (Paris: Seuil, 1977); "Motherhood According to Bellini" and "Place Names," in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, trans. Thomas Gorz et al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980).

31. Derrida, "La Différance," in *Marges*; "Différance," *Speech and Phenomena*.

32. I have tried to develop such a program since this essay was written. See especially Spivak, "Feminism and the Critical Tradition," forthcoming in a collection of essays edited by Paula Treichler, to be published by the University of Illinois Press.

33. Eleanor Fox-Genovese has written a pathbreaking essay on the subject that appeared after my own essay was completed. See her "Placing Women's History in History," *New Left Review* 133 (May-June 1982).

34. I have attempted to use this method of criticism in "Unmaking and Making in *To the Lighthouse*," in *Women and Language in Literature and Society*, ed. Sally McConnell-Ginet and Nelly Furman (New York: Praeger, 1980).

35. Jacques Derrida, "The Law of Genre," tr. Avital Ronell, *Glyph* 7 (1980). Both English and French versions appear in *Glyph*; hereafter cited in the text as *LG* with page reference to the English version followed by reference to the French.

36. Jacques Derrida, "Living On: Border Lines," trans. James Hulbert, in *Deconstruction and Criticism*, ed. Harold Bloom et al. (New York: Seabury Press, 1979), hereafter cited in the text as *LO*.

37. In "Limited Inc," *Glyph* 2 (1977), Derrida points to the relationship between the normativity of speech act theory and the repressive State apparatus of official psychiatry.

38. Derrida, *Grammatologie*, p. 110; *Grammatology*, p. 75.

39. My apologies to David Carroll, who has quite appropriately chastised me for my tendency to imitate Derridian gestures: "Spivak's attempt (and failure) to imitate Derrida's style is precisely the problem with her very long 'Translator's

Preface' to *Of Grammatology*, which I would advise any reader not totally familiar with Derrida's writing simply to ignore." Cf. "History As Writing," *Clio* 7 (Spring 1978): 460.

40. Lucy Irigaray, *Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un* (Paris: Minuit, 1977), p. 24; tr. in *New French Feminisms*, ed. Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), p. 100.

41. Roland Barthes brought a comparable charge against "a group of revolutionary students" in "Écrivains, intellectuels, professeurs," *Tel Quel* 47 (Autumn 1971): 8; tr. Stephen Heath, "Writers, Intellectuals, Teachers," in *Image/Music/Text* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), pp. 198-99. Given the tradition of academic radicalism in France, and our experiences with the old New Left, "feminist" should not be taken as a subset of "revolutionary." For the institutional recuperation of feminist criticism, see Spivak, "A Response to Annette Kolodny," forthcoming in *Signs*.

42. Spivak, "French Feminism in an International Frame," *Yale French Studies* 62 (1981): 154-84.

43. This passage and the preceding one are modified quotations from "French Feminism in an International Frame."

44. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Berlin (1960-68). *Ergänzungsband*, T. 1, p. 579-80; *Early Writings*, tr. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton, (New York: Random House), p. 391.