PHIL 463/563
Author: Luce Irigaray

Spring 2012
10.00 – 11:50, T & TH

Instructor: Professor Beata Stawarska
Office Hours: TH 2-4 pm & by appointment
Office: PLC 330
E-mail: stawarsk@uoregon.edu

Description

We will discuss key writings by the contemporary Belgian/French feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray (1932-). Following Irigaray’s own presentation of her work as falling into three main phases: an immanent critique of the canon, a new theory of sexual difference, and a new understanding of being in terms of a relational ontology, we will read a representative selection from each phase, situate it within her philosophical trajectory as a whole, and relate it to texts by other thinkers she explicitly engages within her own writing. Specifically, we will be reading Speculum of the Other: Woman, in conjunction with a sample of writings by Sigmund Freud, and This Sex which is not One, to flesh our her method of an immanent critique. We will then turn to Ethics of Sexual Difference, read in conjunction with selections by Merleau-Ponty and Levinas, and I Love to You, as exemplary of Irigaray’s emphasis on the primacy of sexual difference. We will conclude with the theme of Irigaray’s relational ontology, as developed in The Way of Love, read in a conversation with Heidegger’s On The Way to Language. The students will thus be grounded in Irigaray’s own distinctive philosophical project, and aware of its place within contemporary Continental philosophy. Graduate students will also be exposed to relevant secondary literature, especially relative to the early essentialist critique of Irigaray’s conception of sexuality, and the more recent developments within Irigaray scholarship.

Course requirements:

ATTENDANCE: This is a small seminar style class, and you are expected to attend all the meetings and participate actively in the conversation. One unexcused absence is allowed per term.

READING. This course has a sizable reading load, and you will be required to read the assigned texts carefully, and be prepared to discuss them in class. In addition to attending the class, you will need to plan your schedule to allow sufficient time for the required reading ahead of class.

WRITING. Undergrads: Each Thursday (excluding week 1 and 10) you will submit a one to two pages typed up response to the readings assigned for the week. The response is not expected to be a polished piece of writing (but needs to be readable and free from spelling/grammatical errors); it provides an opportunity for you to actively engage the material, and raise specific questions to the reading. There will be one midterm and one term paper. The midterm is 5-7 pages long. The term paper is 8-12 pages long. Topics and guidelines for both papers will be provided in advance;
in some cases, the students may write the final on a topic of their own choice (approved in advance by the instructor).

Grads: students select their own topic for the final, and submit a 1-2 pages long prospectus with a topic outline and literature review for approval and comments. The prospectus is due in week 9. You are advised to meet with me at least once before submitting the prospectus.

All written assignments should be typewritten, double-spaced, font size no smaller than 11. They need to include the class title, your name - and my name for the midterm and final papers.

**Grade components (undergrads):**
- Participation: 10%
- Weekly response to the reading: 10%
- Midterm paper: 30%
- Final paper: 50%

Total: 100%

**Grade components (grads):**
- Participation: 10%
- Prospectus: 20%
- Final paper: 70%

Total: 100%

**Grading**
What kind of paper deserves an “A,” “B,” etc.? The following rubric reflects the general standards of the Philosophy Department at the University of Oregon.

- **A** = excellent. No mistakes, well-written, and distinctive in some way or other.
- **B** = good. No significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive in any way.
- **C** = OK. Some errors, but a basic grasp of the material.
- **D** = poor. Several errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.
- **F** = failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or a complete lack of effort.

Please note: what counts as “excellent” or “OK,” for example, depends in part upon the nature and level of the class in question.

**Late paper policy:** the overall grade for the paper will be reduced by 0.3 grade if no extension has been granted by the instructor before the paper is due.

**Plagiarism:** a failure to cite your sources and give credit to others for their work is a violation of academic honesty, and can result in an F grade for the class.

**Final Paper due at noon on Wednesday, June 13. Please submit the paper electronically as a Word document to stawarsk@uoregon.edu**

**Required Texts:**
Available at Black Sun Bookstore, 2467 Hilyard (next to Allan Bros Café):

There is also a selection of readings available on Blackboard (Bb).

**Meeting Schedule:**

**WEEK 1 (April 2-8)**
- Tuesday. Introducing Irigaray's project: French feminism and Continental Philosophy. Learning expectations in this course.

**I. The feminine in psychoanalysis, and philosophy**
- Thursday Reading: Speculum of the Other pp. 11-34; Freud: Some psychological consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes (available on Blackboard).

**WEEK 2 (April 9-15)**
- Tuesday Reading: Speculum of the Other, 34- 61.
- Thursday Reading: Speculum of the Other, 61-90.
Recommended for Week 2: This Sex which is not One, The Power of Discourse 68-85.

**WEEK 3 (April 16-22)**
- Tuesday Reading: Speculum of the Other, 90- 129.
- Thursday Reading: This Sex which is not One, This Sex which is not One, pp. 23-33 (available on Bb).

**WEEK 4 (April 23-29)**

**II. The feminine subject, and sexual difference**
- Tuesday Reading: Ethics of Sexual Difference – P. III, Love of Same, Love of Other; An Ethics of Sexual Difference, 97-129.
Recommended: Sexual Difference, 5-19.
- Thursday Reading: Merleau-Ponty: The Visible and the Invisible, Ch. 4. The Intertwining – the Chiasm, 130-155 (available on Bb).
Recommended: Romancing the Philosophers, Burke (available on Bb).

**WEEK 5 (April 30-May 6)**

**WEEK 6 (May 7-13)**
- Tuesday Reading: Ethics of Sexual Difference, The Fecundity of Caress, 185-217.
Midterm paper due in class (undergrads).

III. The essentialism debate:
- Thursday Reading: The Future of Sexual Difference. An interview with Judith Butler and Drucilla Cornell (*Diacritics* 1998), 19-40; Naomi Shor: ‘This Essentialism which is not One’, *Engaging with Irigaray*, 57-78 (available on Bb). Guest Lecture by Prof. Bonnie Mann.

WEEK 7 (May 14-20)
IV. Language and sexual difference
- Tuesday Reading: *I Love to You*, 19-33 (available on Blackboard). Guest Lecture by David Craig, PhD Candidate in Philosophy.
- Thursday Reading: *I Love to You*, 35-68.

WEEK 8 (May 21-27)
- Tuesday Reading: *I love to You*, 69-102
- Thursday Reading: *I Love to You*, 103-119; 129-150.

WEEK 9 (May 28 – June 3)
V. The way of language, and the way of love

Prospectus due in class (grads).

WEEK 10 (June 4-10)
- Tuesday Reading: *The Way of Love*, 55-95.

NOTE: The reading schedule is subject to change. All the changes will be announced in advance in class and online.