

Metadata of the chapter that will be visualized in SpringerLink

Book Title	Towards a New Human Being	
Series Title		
Chapter Title	Can Our Being in the World Remain in the Neuter?	
Copyright Year	2019	
Copyright HolderName	The Author(s)	
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Abstract	<p>I read <i>To Be Born</i> as a book on ontology. It is a book about what it means <i>to be</i>, what it means <i>to become</i> who one already <i>is</i>. <i>To Be Born</i> delivers an ontological project that Luce Irigaray announces in earlier books. Irigaray's work offers an original and positive conception of human existence and the way to fulfil its destiny, in the sense that it posits a determinate way of looking at human being. Irigaray's ontology is independent—its noematic economy being self-sufficient—but it also constitutes a criticism of major figures of the Western metaphysical canon, notably Plato Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. Insofar as she calls for a new beginning, a historical rupture from metaphysics, her work can also be understood as a <i>dialogue</i> with the major thinkers of the western canon she wishes to overcome. Amongst these dialogues, her dialogue with Heidegger is, in my opinion, the most intriguing.</p>
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Can Our Being in the World Remain in the Neuter?

Christos Hadjioannou

Introduction

I read *To Be Born* as a book on ontology. It is a book about what it means *to be*, what it means *to become* who one already *is*. *To Be Born* delivers an ontological project that Luce Irigaray announces in earlier books. Irigaray's work offers an original and positive conception of human existence and the way to fulfil its destiny, in the sense that it posits a determinate way of looking at human being. Irigaray's ontology is independent—its noematic economy being self-sufficient—but it also constitutes a criticism of major figures of the Western metaphysical canon, notably Plato, Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty. Insofar as she calls for a new beginning, a historical rupture from metaphysics, her work can also be understood as a *dialogue* with the major thinkers of the western canon she wishes to overcome. Amongst these dialogues, her dialogue with Heidegger is, in my opinion, the most intriguing. For this reason, this paper glances at her dialogue with

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20 Heidegger, indicating the key ways in which her thought coincides with
21 Heidegger's, but—perhaps most importantly—the ways in which her
22 thought significantly differs from Heidegger's. Ultimately, as I will show,
23 Irigaray's critique of Heidegger's ontology relies on a notion—Being—
24 which amounts to a construction that remains in the neuter, thus asex-
25 uate, and corresponds to an ontology that exiles us from ourselves and
26 our finitude. Irigaray's ontology differs from Heidegger's in that it en-
27 ables our sexuate belonging to act as a structure which allows us to have
28 an authentic relation to our finite nature, thus to reclaim our autonomy
29 and become who we are.

30 This essay comprises two parts, each of which has three sections. Part
31 one focuses on Heidegger, while part two focuses on Irigaray. In part
32 one, section one, I sketch out Heidegger's ontological project and ana-
33 lyse it in terms of the notion of "origin" and "Being"; in section two, I
34 look at the methodological role of death in Heidegger's existential ana-
35 lytic of Dasein, in particular in relation to the notion of "authenticity"
36 (*Eigentlichkeit*); in section three, I discuss Dasein's constitutive struc-
37 tures. In part two, section one, I sketch out Irigaray's ontology in *To*
38 *Be Born*, in relation to the notions of "origin" and "Being"; in section
39 two, I consider the role of birth in Irigaray's ontology; in section three, I
40 broach Irigaray's notion of autonomy in relation to sexuation as a living
41 bodily structure and to breathing. I conclude with a discussion of key
42 ways in which Irigaray's human being differs from Heideggerian Dasein,
43 with a specific focus on the issue of sexuation.

44 Heidegger's Ontological Project

45 Heidegger enjoyed a full career, which spanned over five decades.
46 During all this time, his thought underwent various shifts. Some com-
47 mentators argue that we ought to distinguish between three different
48 periods in his thought: an early, pre-ontological period; a middle onto-
49 logical-phenomenological period; and a later post-phenomenological
50 period. Other commentators, myself included, downplay the differences
51 between these periods. But almost all commentators agree with the
52 fact that Heidegger consistently pursues one major idea throughout his



53 lifetime: the thought of “Being” [*Sein*]. It is also uncontroversial to say
54 that the only systematic treatise he wrote, was *Being and Time*. Hence,
55 it is safe to focus on *Being and Time* for the purpose of sketching his
56 ontology.

57 *Being and Time* is an ontological treatise; it is a book that raises the
58 question of the meaning of Being, and tries to answer it by focusing
59 on the “nature” of the entity that *understands* it. The entity that under-
60 stands the question of the meaning of Being is, according to Heidegger,
61 “Dasein”: a notion that refers to the peculiar way human exists. Hence,
62 by implication, if we want to further analyse the question, and the
63 implicit content which will pave the way for an explicit answer, we
64 ought to first analyse the way Dasein exists; this is what Heidegger calls
65 the “existential analytic of Dasein”.

66 Dasein, according to Heidegger, has an implicit, *prior* understanding
67 of Being, which gets covered up, and which we need to uncover. But
68 what is Being, and what does understanding it entail? Being is *at the*
69 *root* of all meaning; it is the ultimate transcendental condition which
70 enables beings to emerge as meaningful. Being is not the most universal
71 concept, because it transcends logical ordering; hence, ontology requires
72 an analysis of existence rather than simply a logical analysis of concepts.
73 Being is the ultimate *ground* from which everything exists, it is *the origin*
74 of all meaningfulness, from which Dasein has been unbeknownst cut
75 off. Hence, Heideggerian ontology involves a first step: to acknowledge
76 this abandonment of the ground, this orphaning from the origin, so as
77 to properly raise the question of the meaning of Being, before being
78 able to begin to answer it. It is in this sense that Heideggerian ontology
79 is a question of *origin*.

80 **Being-Towards-Death and Authentic** 81 **Resoluteness**

82 Part I, Division I, of *Being and Time* explores how Dasein exists in
83 the world in its everyday nature, which is the normal, familiar way of
84 being. This involves a description of how Dasein understands itself and
85 its world, how the meaning of Being-in-the-World is manifested in



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86 everyday practices. This is the way Dasein exists primarily and for the
87 most part, and in this everyday way of existing, has its own understand-
88 ing of beings, of the world, as well as self-understanding.

89 In Part I, Division I, Heidegger describes how Dasein's basic consti-
90 tution is Being-in-the-World [*In-der-Welt-Sein*], whose structure is then
91 reduced to *care*. The structure of Being-in-the-World becomes the topic
92 of analysis as the structure that needs to be further described and eluci-
93 dated. Division I is an analysis of the way in which Dasein understands
94 itself *inauthentically* [*uneigentlich*], that is, understands its Being in
95 terms of beings whose Being is presence-at-hand [*Vorhandensein*], hence
96 fails to understand itself *authentically*, owning up to its "truth".

97 In Division II, Heidegger sets about a *re-interpretation* of the basic
98 structures of everyday Dasein identified in the previous division, hinting at
99 a "transition" to a deeper, more fundamental, *authentic* self-understanding.
100 In this context, Division II investigates phenomena such as death, con-
101 science and resoluteness: it provides a phenomenological account of how
102 the self achieves *resoluteness* [*Entschlossenheit*], a particular form of *disclosure*
103 [*Erschlossenheit*] (Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 343). Resoluteness
104 involves Dasein's understanding and assuming of its freedom in the face of
105 ultimate limitations of its being-towards-death [*Sein zum Tode*].

106 Authenticity is an *ontological understanding* that is an "anticipatory res-
107 oluteness" where Dasein understands its ownmost *potentiality-for-Being*
108 [*Seinkönnen*] as *anticipation* [*vorlaufen*] (op. cit., p. 354). As Heidegger
109 writes, "Anticipation discloses this possibility [i.e. resoluteness] as pos-
110 sibility. Thus only *as anticipating* does resoluteness become a primor-
111 dial Being towards Dasein's ownmost potentiality-for-Being" (idem).
112 This anticipation is the *anticipation of death*. As Heidegger writes: "As
113 *Being-towards-the-end which understands*—that is to say, as anticipation
114 of death—resoluteness becomes authentically what it can be" (op. cit.,
115 p. 353).

116 What is the significance of death, here? What does anticipating
117 it achieve, and why is it important? Heidegger defines death in this
118 way: "*death, as the end of Dasein, is Dasein's ownmost possibility—*
119 *non-relational, certain and as such indefinite, not to be outstripped.*
120 *Death is, as Dasein's end, in the Being of this entity towards its end*"
121 (op. cit., p. 303).



122 The internal connection of resolution with anticipation, then, allows
 123 Heidegger to rethink Dasein's essential finitude, a finitude that is hid-
 124 den in the "fallen" state of everyday nature of the life of das Man.
 125 Finitude is constitutive of Dasein, and resoluteness reveals that Dasein
 126 is in essence an ecstatic standing out, an opening of, Being.

127 Dasein's Constitutive Structures

128 Everyday Dasein is essentially a being who is always "there", whose
 129 being is constituted and manifested as Being-in-the-World. Dasein is
 130 always already embedded within a World, within a complex referential
 131 system of meaningful relations. Dasein and the world are not truly dif-
 132 ferent or distinct entities, because Dasein is itself the disclosure of its
 133 "there" (op. cit., p. 171). Being-in-the-World is the basic state of Dasein
 134 (op. cit., p. 78).

135 Before we continue, let us stress that Division I of *Being and Time*
 136 analyses *everyday* Being-in-the-World. This is how Dasein exists "proxi-
 137 mally and for the most part". If we are to specifically ask *who* Dasein is
 138 in this mode of existence, we are led to acknowledge certain structures
 139 that run *parallel* to the structures of Being-in-the-World. It is crucial,
 140 though, to consider these parallel structures, in particular the structures
 141 of "Being-with" [*Mitsein*] and "Dasein-with" [*Mitdasein*]. The "subject"
 142 in everyday life is given as a "they" [das Man], a social being delivered to
 143 the inherited structures of a social/shared world, a world which belongs
 144 to anyone and no one in particular. As such, Being-in-the-World also
 145 means Being-with-others (op. cit., p. 155). It is precisely because Being-
 146 in-the-World is also a Being-with, that Dasein is encounterable for oth-
 147 ers—that is, other Daseins—and is able to concern itself not just with
 148 entities, but also with other Daseins. Dasein is able to establish relations
 149 with other Daseins, relations which are not about vulgar concern, but
 150 rather a matter of solicitude [*Fürsorge*] (op. cit., p. 157).

151 Heidegger breaks up the uniqueness of the phenomenon of "Being-
 152 in-the-World" and firstly analyzes the "worldhood" of the World. In
 153 §§28–38, he broaches the phenomenon of Being-in as such. The anal-
 154 ysis of Being-in is an analysis of Dasein's "there", the way the "there"



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155 [Da] of Dasein is constituted. According to Heidegger, Dasein's "there"
156 is ontologically constituted by four basic existential structures (*existen-*
157 *tials*): disposition [*Befindlichkeit*], understanding [*Verstehen*], fallenness
158 [*Verfallensein*] and talk [*Rede*].¹ These four structures are the transcen-
159 dental conditions of Dasein's "there". Dasein's "there" is co-constituted
160 by these basic structures. For example, the structures of *disposition* and
161 *understanding* cannot constitute a "there" of their own, since both are
162 necessary but not sufficient conditions; both of them are needed, and
163 each of these is *equiprimordial*—that is, they they operate together at
164 the same time, each of them enabling the other to act, and constitute
165 Dasein's "there" only together. Understanding is always accompanied by
166 disposition, and disposition is always accompanied by understanding,
167 and each cannot be what it is without the other.

168 *Disposition* designates the structure by virtue of which Dasein
169 always already finds itself thrown in a mood, in other words, the ways
170 it finds itself attuned to the world. For example, Dasein is in a mood
171 of fear, which organizes its world accordingly, making the world man-
172 ifest itself as fearful. Even when Dasein is seemingly mood-less, that
173 is also a way of being in a mood. *Understanding* is the structure by
174 virtue of which Dasein is able to do things in the world, to have the
175 "know-how" to interact with the world: to understand how things
176 work and use them purposefully. Even when Dasein does not under-
177 stand something, this non-understanding is only enabled to manifest
178 itself because Dasein includes understanding as a structure. *Talk* is
179 the structure by virtue of which Dasein is able to articulate the world
180 into communicable patterns of meaning, to create various signs, sym-
181 bols and languages, from ordinary spoken languages to mathematical
182 and symbolic languages, hieroglyphic scripts, etc. Even negative phe-
183 nomena, such as illiteracy, is a condition that is enabled by the struc-
184 ture of Talk. Finally, *Falling* is a structure by virtue of which Dasein
185 gets absorbed in the entities it encounters—it is like a sort of onto-
186 logical gravity, which enables Dasein to be pulled towards entities,
187 and lets it become fascinated by presence. These four elements are the
188 basic structures which determine the transcending, ecstatic, existence
189 of Dasein.



190 Irigaray's Ontological Project

191 In *To Be Born*, Irigaray tries to do exactly what the subtitle says: to
192 describe the *genesis* of a new human *being*. Keeping in line with a fairly
193 straightforward, unproblematized or conventional, definition of ontology,
194 *To Be Born* is a book on ontology since it deals with issues concerning the
195 genesis of our being and becoming. *To Be Born* is a book about the true
196 nature of humans, about the way we, as progenitors of western metaphysics,
197 have failed to assume our true nature. *To Be Born* is a book about our
198 *becoming who we are*. It is a book about giving birth to ourselves.

199 The book is interested in more than what the literal sense of “birth”
200 expresses. It is not just about birth in the everyday sense of the word,
201 what we would call the “ontic” sense. Besides, most of us already know
202 what is usually involved in the genesis of a new human being, and we
203 haven't forgotten about it: millions of humans and other animals are
204 born every year around the globe! But, as Irigaray says, we neglect the
205 ontological aspect of our genesis and, as a consequence of this, we are
206 alienated from the structures involved in genesis. This alienation hinders
207 us from becoming who we really are, hinders us from reaching and lead-
208 ing an authentic life on the basis of self-knowledge, that is, a knowledge
209 of our own natural reality. As Irigaray writes: “We would like to know
210 from where we come, from what or from whom we exist, *in order to*
211 *dwell there and grow in continuation with that from what or whom we*
212 *are*” (*To Be Born*, p. v, my emphasis). But we are “forever deprived of an
213 origin of our own” (op. cit., p. vi). As humans, “we become existent by
214 cutting ourselves off –by ec-sisting- from our origin”, but this ecstatic
215 destiny differs from the one at work in the philosophy of Heidegger.

216 Nevertheless, it is easy to become misled into thinking that Irigaray's
217 ontology is compatible with Heidegger's, insofar as Irigaray is also
218 thinking about the origin, the ground of our existence. But there is no
219 deep resemblance there. *To Be Born* is as much a new ontology, as it
220 is also a critique of old ontology, especially Heidegger's. For Heidegger,
221 as mentioned in the earlier part, Being is the origin, the ground of all
222 existence, of everything ‘there is’. But according to Irigaray, this is a
223 problematic presupposition.



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224 Irigaray exposes the problematic ontological presuppositions of
 225 Heidegger already in *The Forgetting of Air*, a book written in 1983, thus
 226 long before writing *To Be Born*. There, Irigaray wonders about a possi-
 227 ble living ground of Being, which remained unthought by Heidegger's
 228 ontology: "Of what [is] this 'is' such that it has such a power to found
 229 Being and presence, while disappearing in the very act of founding?"
 230 (*The Forgetting of Air*, p. 4) Irigaray will name this unthought resource
 231 of Being "air"—which partly justifies the stress on "breathing" in her
 232 own ontology.

233 What is thus the problem with Heideggerian "Being"? Being could
 234 only be "a fabricated air-bubble", an empty correlate of the whole (op.
 235 cit., p. 17). It could result from a *Gestell* that "organizes man's reflection
 236 and projection into a world", a "*Gestell*" which man imposes on nature,
 237 and which remains impersonal and indeterminate, suffocating the living
 238 individuation and development of autonomous human existence (op.
 239 cit., p. 18). Being is Heidegger's way of rendering "there is" [*es gibt*], a
 240 projection that eradicates the other and puts in its place the presumed
 241 universal of a neuter, and a logic based on sameness. And it can be a
 242 bridge that is meant to account for Dasein's transcendence, its ec-static
 243 outreach, but such a bridge fails to provide a real passage to any other.
 244 As Irigaray writes:

245 The bridge abides, an unceasing conveying, but at its end there is no one.
 246 With its construction, the *there is* of the bridge has carried away that
 247 other toward whom it sought to be the passage. What is left ready-to-
 248 hand is the tool, only the tool. And some already-fabricated things. The
 249 wholly other—the wholly other she—is no longer there. Being has taken
 250 her place. (op. cit., p. 23, translation modified by Luce Irigaray)

251 While Irigaray's starting point is—like Heidegger's—our uprooted-
 252 ness, she considers Heidegger's starting point, the impersonal, simple
 253 "there is", as yet another constructed root. As she writes in *Through*
 254 *Vegetal Being*: "The question of our own roots is [...] complex, and this
 255 explains the numerous myths regarding our origin, but also our con-
 256 stant attempts to provide us with constructed roots in order to master
 257 that which escapes us as our natural commencement, given that we have



258 to face both dependence and uprooting” (Luce Irigaray and Michael
259 Marder, *Through Vegetal Being: Two Philosophical Perspectives*, p. 59).

260 In line with her earlier ontological considerations, in *To Be Born*,
261 Irigaray points out that we ontologically differ from God and from
262 plants, and this ought to be grasped in terms of the way our origin *dif-*
263 *fers* from both the origin of (a) God as well as that of a plant:

264 We are for ever deprived of an origin of our own - we are neither a plant
265 nor God. We will always remain torn between the existence and the world
266 that a vegetal being is capable of procuring for itself and the self-sufficiency,
267 without beginning or end, of God. We are the ecs-tasis from a union, the
268 unpredictable advent of a not appropriate event. (p. vi)

269 This radical cut off from our origin, comprises one of the two ways in
270 which we, as human beings, are ec-static. According to Irigaray, we are
271 ec-static, in the sense that we are removed from our origin, an origin we
272 cannot internalize, an origin which remains external to us—an origin
273 that we have thus to give to ourselves. This ec-stasis with respect to our
274 origin entails an indelible finitude. In *To be Born*, Irigaray’s ontology is
275 primarily a call for taking on our ecstatic nature, that is, a call to ques-
276 tion our origin, which remains unthought as such and substituted by
277 artificial constructions in Western metaphysics.

278 Finitude and Birth

279 Whereas Irigaray shares with Heidegger the thought that human
280 existence is finite, and also seeks to establish a finite origin, the
281 way she understands our finitude and the way that will enable us
282 to re-appropriate our finite nature is completely different from
283 Heidegger’s. As presented in the first section, Heidegger’s way of
284 becoming authentic and embracing our finitude passes through
285 Dasein’s relation to one’s own death. Hence, his existential analytic
286 revolves around being-towards-death.

287 For Irigaray, what is fundamental is not to focus on our death, but
288 rather on our birth, which leads us to pay attention to the forgotten air of



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289 our breathing and to our sexuete structure. If we are to live in accordance
290 with our reality, that is, our finite reality, we would have to firstly con-
291 sider our being in terms of our origin. We would have to re-appropriate
292 our birth, our genesis. We would have, in a sense, to take ownership of
293 our birth: give birth to ourselves from ourselves. Regardless of how par-
294 adoxical this proclamation may sound, it is the recognition of our real-
295 ity and truth which inspires the position of Irigaray and not the spirit
296 of some modernist and demiurgic emancipatory idiom, as a project of
297 self-legislation and the definition of critical limits thereof.

298 Irigaray writes that, as humans, we “must take responsibility for exist-
299 ence” (op. cit., p. vi), because we are radically cut off from our origin
300 and from our conception, given that this origin and conception happen
301 outside of us and are dependent on two naturally different others, some-
302 thing that obviously we cannot be. In a sense, *we lack* an origin, save the
303 one we give to ourselves.

304 Irigaray says that “[i]f we assume our destiny *as ecstatic* regarding our ori-
305 gin, we have no longer to project something of it onto the real” (op. cit.,
306 p. vii, my emphasis). Irigaray’s ontology demands a re-appropriation of our
307 natural origin and reality, a re-appropriation which does not imagine the
308 origin of human ecstasis in reference to one constructed and in the neu-
309 ter singularity, but rather in terms of the relation between two, and two
310 who are differently sexuete. This is not to say that the human being is
311 now twofold, but rather that it is conceived only through desire and love
312 between two different beings, and is unable to fulfil its destiny if it is
313 not mediated by the other qua heteros. To exist authentically, to become
314 authentic and “give birth to oneself”, summoning oneself back from self-
315 alienation, entails a return to our transcending origin, a return to our
316 inception, which cannot be but a *sexuete* conception.

317 This calls for our faithfulness to our *finitude*, which is primarily
318 expressed through our sexuation. As Irigaray writes: “Such faithfulness
319 requires each individual to correspond with a concrete finiteness through
320 its sexuete belonging. The specificity of its sexuation is what acts as a
321 finiteness inherent or immanent in nature which provides each with lim-
322 its, measure and economy” (op. cit., p. 3). Then, “by acknowledging and
323 living itself as sexuete, a human being solves the question of its finiteness
324 without necessarily having to resort to death” (idem).



325 **Becoming Autonomous and Embodying Our** 326 **Sexuate Structure**

327 Irigaray's ontology turns human existence away from the neuter, the sex-
328 less—thus from Heidegger's everyday Dasein, *das Man*—towards sexu-
329 ate being. As she writes:

330 humans must not give up their natural properties, especially their sexuate
331 belonging, in order to authentically inhabit the world. Thinking of their
332 relation(s) to the world as relation(s) in the neuter amounts to an exile
333 from themselves and prevents them from maintaining an authentic rela-
334 tion to the real. Indeed, the apprehension of the world is not neuter but
335 sexuate. (op. cit., pp. 28–29)

336 The notion of “sexuate stucture” is central to *To Be Born*—it is a major
337 notion that organizes the entire ontology of Irigaray. It is a structure that
338 is completely absent in Heidegger's ontology, since, as mentioned in part
339 one, Heidegger identifies four basic structures that constitute everyday
340 Dasein, none of which touches on sexualization.

341 In *To Be Born*, Irigaray very often calls for the determination of sexu-
342 ation as a “structure”, a “setting”, a “frame”. As she writes,

343 Our sexualization supplies us with a setting - a *Gestell*, Heidegger perhaps
344 would say - for the organization of the living, a *frame* which makes pos-
345 sible a return to, and a living within us, without going no further than
346 an abstract and undifferentiated universality of life. [...] Which removes,
347 from our experience of nature, its chaotic or abstractly universal aspect, to
348 which only death or laws extraneous to life are able to bring a configura-
349 tion or a shape. (op. cit., p. 3, my emphasis)

350 And further on: “Sexuate belonging is both the place and the mediation
351 which permit the passage of nature and spirit, the one into the other, in
352 each individual, and in this way ensure a real link between one individual
353 and another, between one individual and community” (op. cit., pp. 4–5).

354 Irigaray invites us to initiate a process of rethinking the structures by
355 virtue of which we relate to the world, and the most basic way that this
356 will take place, is by acknowledging sexualization as a basic constitutive



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357 frame, which will allow us to experience our $\varphi\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$ in a more genuine
358 manner (op. cit., p. 27).

359 The absence of sexuation as a constitutive frame in Heidegger's ontol-
360 ogy, means that our social nature, what Heidegger calls being-with
361 [*Mitsein*], is abandoned to the impersonal and the inauthentic. It is as if
362 our sociality, the elements that constitute our social existence, are not con-
363 sidered in their reality and, one could say, their authenticity. Thus, our
364 transcendental potential becomes alienated notably because what struc-
365 tures our being-with, what frames it, is not correctly determined. And this
366 is not merely a *philosophical problem*, or a conceptual problem, but more
367 generally a cultural and also an ethical problem. The fact that Heidegger's
368 existential analytic does not identify sexuation as a constitutive frame is a
369 symptom of such cultural lacks that he perpetuates. It is this cultural tra-
370 dition that Irigaray addresses, and tries to change. This leads her to turn
371 to the child, to childhood. Indeed, If we want to radically modify our cul-
372 ture, it is suitable to embody these changes as early as possible in human
373 life. Thus, we need to change the formative years. As Irigaray writes:

374 In reality, our cultural tradition amounts to what Heidegger would call a
375 global modality of being in the world which is not presented as such and by
376 which the transcendental potential of the child is alienated. The plans corre-
377 sponding to its own aspirations are subjected to a general vision, including
378 regarding itself, which does not let it either perceive or embody them. *It lacks*
379 *structure for such processes. The frame from which it must envision the real is*
380 *imposed on it as a certain mode of being in the world*, thus as external and even
381 ecstatic with regard to the one it is. *In order to realize that it is, or at least has,*
382 *by itself a frame which allows it to approach the real, it ought to be initiated*
383 *into the capacity for calling into question the way in which any being of the world is*
384 *presented to it*, instead of being forced to become well integrated into a cer-
385 tain sort of world. (op. cit., pp. 59–60, my emphasis)

386 Furthermore,

387 *it is not made clear to it that its sexuate belonging represents a structure that*
388 *can act in passing from the self to the world*, that it determines a universe
389 of its own which must be *considered and cultivated* for situating itself and
390 finding its own bearings not only in the pre-given world but also in the
391 constructed world where it is. (op. cit., p. 60, my emphasis)

392 **Concluding Remark**

393 Insofar as Irigaray asks us to acknowledge and embody a *structure*
 394 that is nowhere to be found in Heidegger's ontology, her ontology
 395 moves beyond the Heidegger's one. Irigaray offers an ontology in
 396 which the human being realizes and assumes its finitude without nec-
 397 essarily resorting to death, like Heidegger, but rather by acknowledg-
 398 ing and embodying its own sexuete structure. As it has been made
 399 clear, for Irigaray, sexuation is not an accidental feature of human
 400 beings, nor is it an addendum or an epiphenomenon, regarding their
 401 beings, but it is instead the most fundamental structure that acts as
 402 a self-determination, that enables us to achieve our natural finitude
 403 through a double ecstasis: one in relation to our origin and one in
 404 relation to the other as differently sexuated. It is for this reason that
 405 Irigaray's ontology opens a new ontological path, beyond our tradi-
 406 tional ontology in the neuter. Our Being in the World cannot remain
 407 in the neuter as it is still in the work of Heidegger.

408 **Note**

- 409 1. Heidegger is not consistent on whether talk is one of the existentials,
 410 sometimes excluding it or exchanging fallenness with talk. In §68 he lists
 411 all four.

412 **Bibliography**

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