AN IRIGARAYAN READING OF SELECTED NOVELS OF EMILY AND CHARLOTTE BRONTË, ALICE WALKER AND ANAÏS NIN

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2018

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THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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KUALA LUMPUR

2018

ABSTRACT

Though Irigaray's theories of 'feminine divine' and 'sexual difference' have been discussed by many feminist scholars, I found Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within duality remarkably interesting in reading women novelists' works from different ages, namely, Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1848), Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (1982), and Anaïs Nin's *A Spy in the House of Love* (1954), in terms of exploring women's self-consciousness and liberation. In exploring non-duality within the dualities of body/mind, self/other, and male/female, this study is grounded on Irigaray's notions of 'feminine *jouissance*,' 'feminine divine,' 'sexual difference,' 'sensible transcendental,' and love, which are interrelated throughout her work. Irigaray's concepts introduce female body as divine, and challenge the established dualities and the oppressive male-dominated structure of patriarchal society. My reading of non-duality within duality through Irigarayan concepts in the selected novels introduces alternative ways of approaching women's subjectivity, self-realization, and self-consciousness, and offers a new insight in the analysis of the gendered experiences of female characters. It shows how the rebellious female characters struggle with the hierarchical traditional dualities of the patriarchal world and challenge social knowledge about women. While the female protagonists in Emily Brontë and Anaïs Nin's novels are entrapped within the defined dualities of the patriarchal world, the female characters in Charlotte Brontë and Alice Walker's novels counter the traditional dualities, speak clearly of their female desires and

experiences within the social constraints, and achieve autonomous subjectivity, self-consciousness, reciprocal love, and liberation within the oppressive structure of patriarchal society. These female characters are successful when they discover their self beyond the traditional dualities of the patriarchal world through their love affairs.

ABSTRAK

Walaupun teori-teori Irigaray seperti "kedewaan feminin" dan "perbezaan seksual" telah digunakan oleh ramai sarjana feminis, saya mendapati pemahaman beliau berkenaan ketidakdualan dalam kedualan amat berguna dalam mengkaji karya-karya novelis-novelis wanita daripada zaman-zaman yang berbeza, iaitu *Wuthering Heights* (1847) oleh Emily Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (1848) oleh Charlotte Brontë, *The Color Purple* (1982) oleh Alice Walker, dan *A Spy in the House of Love* (1954) oleh Anaïs Nin, berkenaan kesedaran diri dan pembebasan wanita. Untuk tujuan mengkaji ketidakdualan dalam kedualan tubuh/minda, diri/orang lain, dan lelaki/wanita, kajian ini telah dibuat berdasarkan konsep-konsep Irigaray seperti "*jouissance* feminin", "kedewaan feminin", "perbezaan seksual", "transendental sensibel", dan cinta, yang sering berkait-rapat dalam penulisan beliau. Konsep-konsep Irigaray mendewakan tubuh wanita, dan mencabar struktur masyarakat patriakal yang didominasi lelaki menindas seperti sedia ada. Irigaray dalam teori-teori beliau meminta ruang untuk setiap subjek, menghormati batasan yang disediakan oleh pergerakan orang lain sebagai cara-cara alternatif untuk mendekati kesubjektifan wanita, realisasi diri, dan kesedaran diri. Beliau secara langsung menghubungkan keseksualan wanita dan kerohanian mereka. Tafsiran saya berkenaan ketidakdualan dalam kedualan melalui konsep-konsep Irigaray dalam novel-novel terpilih menunjukkan bagaimana watak-watak wanita yang memberontak menempuhi dunia patriakal yang penuh kedualan-kedualan tradisional yang berhierarki dan mencabar pengetahuan sosial tentang wanita yang

telah disalahgambarkan. Watak-watak wanita ini menzahirkan dengan jelas keinginan-keinginan dan pengalaman-pengalaman mereka dalam lingkungan kekangan-kekangan sosial, dan cuba menuturkan dan mendefinisikan kesubjektifan mereka merentasi kedualan-kedualan tradisional. Mereka mencapai kesubjektifan berautonomi, kesedaran diri, cinta resiprokal, dan pembebasan dalam lingkungan struktur menindas masyarakat patriakal. Walau bagaimanapun, watak wanita Anaïs Nin tidak berjaya membongkar dirinya sendiri apabila dia ditelan oleh tubuh seksualnya dan diri-diri berganda yang dicipta hasil beberapa hubungan cinta yang tidak memuaskan.

DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation to my family. A special feeling of gratitude is dedicated to my loving parents whose words of encouragement pushed me throughout the entire doctoral program. My sisters Zhila and Parisa have never left my side and are very special. I will always appreciate all my family for helping me to develop my study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am extremely grateful to the people who helped me during the writing of this dissertation. I am especially indebted to my supervisors Assoc. Prof. Dr. Susan Philip and Dr. Surinderpal Kaur for their constant assistance, advice, and guidance that molded me into a researcher armed with the skill and knowledge to carry out my research with great perseverance.

I am deeply indebted to the members of my thesis committee, for their patience, knowledge and expertise in the field. Your constructive feedback and suggestions added great value to my work. I truly admire your dedication and scholarly attitudes as academicians and researchers. I only hope that I can emulate some of your exceptional qualities.

In addition, I owe a special thanks to the staff of the University of Malaya, Postgraduate Division, members of English Department and Arts and Social Sciences Faculty, especially Associate Prof. Dr. Shanthi Thambiah, Deputy Dean, for her kind cooperation and support in completing my thesis. I also thank Mrs. Rozita Othman, Mrs. Asiah Long, and Mrs. Azlina Rasip for their guidance and help. I thank Mr. Ahmed Hilmi Mohamed Noor and Mr. Azahar Ahmad Nizar who kindly and humbly accepted to translate the abstract into Bahasa Malayu.

And the last but not the least, special thanks and appreciation go to my dear family, my father and mother, as well as my sisters, Zhila and Parisa, and my brothers, whose patience, cooperation and emotional support are admirable. Without their gentle encouragement, this work would have surely remained undocumented.

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ABBREVIATION

An Ethics	An Ethics of Sexual Difference
BEW	Between East and West
CP	The Color Purple
JE	Jane Eyre
SHL	A Spy in the House of Love
Speculum	Speculum of the Other Woman
This Sex	This Sex Which is Not One
WH	Wuthering Heights

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Overview

This study examines the notion of non-duality within duality as a new way of analyzing female characters' subjective and gendered identity in the following novels: Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1848), Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (1982), and Anaïs Nin's *A Spy in the House of Love* (1954). The idea of non-duality within duality, which I infer from reading Irigaray's notions and ideas, is not about overcoming the dualities nor is it purely about the union of two individuals; rather the union must embrace the nature of beingness of both dualities. In this way of reaching to non-duality within duality, there is no reconciliation as a unity; there is instead a recognition of the dualities, a respect of other as other – as a totally distinct yet necessary dynamic element. Non-duality within duality respects the subjectivity of two subjects as partial, not the whole, to constitute the call of the other; a gesture toward an irreducible and limited other. Irigarayan sexual difference and love as an interval create a differential and relational moment for the two different subjects to deconstruct the defined culture which has repressed a positive relation between sexual subjects. "Man as humanity comes to presence through his capacity for entering into relation" (Irigaray, *The Way of Love* 85). In non-duality within duality, there is two-ness without "one simply overturning the other" (19).

The study of non-duality within duality in the selected novels allows us to figure out the autonomous yet interrelated subjectivity of characters in terms of self-consciousness, self-love, the ethical relationship, and poetics of love, as Irigaray addresses these ideas in her 'feminine divine', 'sensible transcendental,' 'sexual difference,' and dual subjectivity. To explore non-duality within duality in the selected novels, a number of Irigarayan notions will be examined to explore female characters' subjective identity and their ethical relations beyond the hierarchical dualities.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Most studies of the selected novels of Emily and Charlotte Brontë, Alice Walker and Anaïs Nin have focused on feminist studies which examine the repression of women's bodies and desires and their position as objects of male desire in the patriarchal society in terms of their class and race. However, this study fills a gap which is not covered by other scholarly works and acknowledges Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within the dualities of body/mind, self/other, and femininity/masculinity in these novels, allowing for better understanding of the texts through Irigarayan notions. It brings the selected women writers' works together despite the differences in their social, cultural and historical backgrounds, to explore how the rebellious female protagonists from different centuries in women writers' novels take an active role to appreciate their gendered identity-as-woman by challenging the traditional dualities, through expressing their own voice, their feminine desire, and having an ethical relationship.

Looking at the novels through this particular frame of non-duality within duality, the study attempts to bring a new and useful addition to the scholarship on these novels. The reason for selecting the women authors and texts from different cultures and centuries is to show how the dualities in the selected novels lead to non-duality, which is the basis of the main characters' self-development. Although the selected novelists come from different cultural, socio-historical, and moral backgrounds and the issues they face within that order are different according to their era, race/class and geography, all are struggling against patriarchal oppression. So while each author works within certain cultural/social/historical specificities, they are bound by patriarchal domination. All these writers point in more or less subtle ways to the need of their female characters to explore their erotic/sexual natures, though they are placed in the restricted and hierarchical world of patriarchal tradition. Their works provide outstanding examples of how non-duality within duality in terms of Irigarayan concepts of sexual difference and love, have a significant influence on literary productions that should not be categorized by geographical, social and historical backgrounds and boundaries, and can only be fully understood by linking one to another through the frame of feminism, gender studies, and the concept of non-duality within duality.

I try to link the selected novels through Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within duality to bring new depth of understanding to these novels in spite of their differences in history, society and culture. The selected women novelists tell the stories of women who have relationships with other men and women, and also try to express their desires and needs to achieve their subjective identity

through the relationships. They create female characters who have the power to write, rebel against dualities and hierarchical love relations, and struggle with gender inequality to achieve their subjective identity.

By reading the selected novels through Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within duality, I explore how the selected women writers try to create a space for their female characters in love relationships, to define their feminine desire and subjectivity beyond the cultural boundaries of the patriarchal world, to sustain the creative visions of love which tend to appropriate the power of "other" as a source of creative impulse, and to seek co-existence with the "other" which is quite in line with Irigaray's concepts of love and sexual difference. In fact, love is considered valuable in as far as these women writers and Irigaray set it up between two autonomous subjects. The study shows how the selected female novelists allow their female characters to take an active role to define their own subjectivity and to discover their selves towards liberation in the patriarchal society, just as Irigaray attempts to "revise the masculine discourse in relation to 'the other', which has been repressed since the early stage of modern times" (Zecevic, *The Speaking Divine Woman* 121).

The selected women novelists, the Brontës, Alice Walker and Anaïs Nin, introduce passionate and unconventional heroines in their novels, who rebel against social norms and patriarchal symbolic order. They focus on the sexual nature of women and male oppression. They offer non-duality within duality in different ways through the images of embattled females seeking victory over cultural and social oppression, although they present this victory in very different ways. There

is a close affinity between Walker, Nin, and the Brontës who display an interfusion of social realism with the romantic tradition and depict social reality with a keen awareness of woman's psycho-social oppression, and erotic nature. I investigate the emancipation of each heroine from socio-economic restrictions for the fulfilment of their erotic nature. I show how the selected women novelists create works which refuse to embrace conventional models of femininity, and insist on the heroine's transgression as a permanently liberating force, by introducing a passionate heroine who is threatened by social and cultural codes that seek to deny her the possibility of achieving self-possession.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The aim of this thesis is to examine the notion of non-duality within duality in the selected novels, and to show how the characters in these novels transcend the hierarchical dualities of self/other, body/mind, and femininity/masculinity. To argue non-duality with duality, I take ideas from Irigaray's notions of 'feminine divine,' 'sexual difference,' 'sensible transcendental,' and dual subjectivity (and to a lesser extent, her version of Tāntrism) in interpreting the female characters' subjective and gendered identity, and their ethical relationship, based on both alliance and freedom. Irigaray's conceptualization of the ethical relations between two distinct subjects helps us to show how the selected women novelists challenge the traditional Christocentric representations of female desire and subjectivity and the conceptualization of binaries and the Western singular subject. Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within duality highlight the space between dualities of

self/other, feminine/masculine and body/mind to respect the beingness of dualities in spite of their shared space. Irigarayan notions reject the rigid split between dualities and the repression of a relation between two previously-defined beings, offer the possibility of a new transformative, positive, and reciprocal relation to the other whose otherness is respected, and determine a place between the "two" subjects; a new place for female needs, desires, and subjectivity within the masculine discourse in a culture dominated by only one subject. Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within duality not only challenge the erasure of "feminine" subjectivity and female needs, but also offer more precisely the repression of the possible relation between two positively-defined sexual subjects. In fact, the identities of both men and women are reconfigured through this relation, and the relational transformation is a necessary prerequisite for the transformation of identities.

1.4 Research Questions

In arguing non-duality within duality through Irigarayan concepts of sexual difference, sensible transcendental and divine love, the following questions arise:

1. How do the Irigarayan concepts of sexual difference, sensible transcendental, and divine love help the readers in achieving a deep understanding of non-duality within duality in the selected novels?

2. How and to what extent do the dualities of self/other, sensible body and spirituality, and femininity and masculinity move towards non-duality in the selected novels?

3. How does the notion of "non-duality within duality" offer a new insight in the analysis of the gendered experiences of characters?

To answer these questions, I will analyze non-duality within the dualities of self/other, body/mind and male/female in the selected novelists' works in terms of Irigaray's ethical relation and 'sensible transcendental' to argue how these novelists defy the duality of the masculine discourse which opposes women's self-development, and create a place for their female characters who are internally enabled and limited by the place of the other, as Irigaray defines love as a space between two distinct subjects in her 'sensible transcendental' and 'sexual difference'. Through non-duality within duality, I argue how the female characters in these novels challenge the traditional binary oppositions by expressing their own female desires and articulating their subjective and gendered identity by having an ethical relationship with others within the constraints of the oppressive structure of the patriarchal society.

1.5 Literature Review

To argue non-duality within duality in the selected novels, this study draws upon Irigaray's theories, which disrupt the traditional hierarchical dualities of self/other, body/mind, and female/male. I develop this argument by reviewing the scholarly studies on the selected women novelists and their selected works to show that many issues are proposed in these novels by many scholars surrounding the concept of love and feminine desire; however, none of them explore non-duality

within duality and the poetics of love within an ethical framework in the novels which is the focus of this study.

1.5.1 Studies on Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*

Some scholars have worked on Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* through social and feminist studies. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar in *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1976) analyze Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* to explain the concept of 'angel in the house' and the dangers of passionate desire of Bertha Mason in *Jane Eyre* who is called mad in the Victorian restrictive society. They read "Bertha as Jane's truest and darkest double.... The ferocious secret self Jane has been trying to repress" (360). Cornelia Peters in *Gender Roles in Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre* takes a close look at the social and economic conditions of Great Britain in the 19th century which makes Charlotte Brontë's choice of characters and events more understandable. Harold Bloom in *Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre* describes how the madwoman secreted in the attic made *Jane Eyre* a sample of Gothic Literature. Kimberly VanEsveld Adams in *Our Lady of Victorian Feminism: The Madonna in the Works of Anna Jameson, Margaret Fuller, and George Eliot* describes Charlotte Brontë's feminist view in women's sexual power beyond religious experiences. Judith Mitchell in *The Stone and the Scorpion: The Female Subject of Desire in the Novels of Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, and Thomas Hardy* delineates female characters of the selected Victorian novels who are passionate in their erotic heterosexual relationship. She concludes *Jane Eyre* (1847) is "the most erotic

English novel written in the nineteenth century" (44) because it "leaves intact the basic structure of male domination and female submission" (*Ibid*).

De Groot in *Equal We Are – Jane Eyre Versus the Victorian Woman* describes Charlotte Brontë's adherence to the morality of her time in *Jane Eyre* and displays the status of women during the Victorian age through some feminist elements. Eithne Henson in *Landscape and Gender in the Novels of Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot and Thomas Hardy* expresses gender attitudes in the description of metaphorical and physical nature in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Thomas Hardy and George Eliot's novels. Elizabeth Imlay in C*harlotte Brontë and the Mysteries of Love* addresses the mythical stories and their relation to Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. Harold Bloom in *How to Write about the Brontës* describes the narrative style of Charlotte Brontë through her female character's voice and narration for expression her own desire according to the standards of her time.

Among the feminist scholarly works which have been done on Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Stockton's *God Between Their Lips: Desire Between Women in Irigaray, Brontë, and Eliot* gave me more insight into how to read Irigaray in relation to the Victorian women writers. Stockton in her book explores the desire between women as a form of 'spiritual materialism' (1) in writings by Luce Irigaray, Charlotte Brontë, and George Eliot. Reaching to these relations, Stockton brings poststructuralist feminists, in particular Irigaray, and Victorians together, and discusses Irigaray's idea of spiritualizing material relations to elaborate desire without being bound to the lack that denies the pleasure. One important aspect of relations between Irigaray and these Victorian women writers is spiritual discourse

and the figuration of god as the invisible and unseen body of women as well as desire between women. Irigaray in her earlier writings on desire between women powerfully exposes the Victorian fixation of women's mirrored relations. She clarifies these mirror relations as a result of self-love, as 'god' between their lips. The link between Irigaray, Charlotte Brontë, and George Eliot is thus to cast god (lacking) as a form of pleasure. Through a shared cultural heritage - Evangelicalism - the selected Victorian women writers explain the versions of 'god' that Irigaray's theories imply. Stockton's review of Victorian women writers' view of female characters' desire and their resistance to conventional norms and loves in Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* and George Eliot's *Middlemarch* gave me the idea to bring Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* and Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* into the channel of non-duality within duality, in the light of characters' ethical relationship by preserving their individuality in their alliance. I found non-duality within duality exemplified in the selected Victorian writers' novels, and will bring this idea out by examining Irigaray's notions of 'sexual difference', 'sensible transcendental,' and the ethics of love which converge on the notion of non-duality within duality.

It can be concluded that so many critics and scholars have worked on Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* through feminist studies; however, none of them address the issue of non-duality within duality in their examination of this novel. Therefore, I will analyze non-duality within duality of self/other and body/mind in the novel to show how Charlotte Brontë rejects the hierarchical binary oppositions of body and mind and traditional distinctions between self and other in the ethical love relationship of her female character, Jane, with her counterpart, Rochester.

Charlotte Brontë creates a free space and a new gender identity for her female character at the expense of traditional womankind. Her attempt to invert the male discourse is nowhere more powerfully evoked than in her female character's expression of her desire by writing her own life-history.

1.5.2 Studies on Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*

Some social, psychological and feminist studies have been worked on Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar in *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1976) analyze Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* in terms of Catherine and Heathcliff's initially vital and joyous love in the form of "undivided self". For them, such wholeness, however, is ultimately disallowed, "conquered by the intensive forces of patriarchy" (276). Harold Bloom in *How to Write about the Brontës* describes the narrative style of Emily Brontë who gives voice to her female character to narrate her own desire and need according to the standards of her time.

Derek Traversi's "The Brontë Sisters and *Wuthering Heights*" in *From Dickens to Hardy* explains religious experience within the Christian tradition in Emily Brontë's novel. He refers to Emily Brontë's mindfulness to the finite human's longing for a direct experience of God, a higher reality, infinity, eternality, and wholeness beyond the emptiness of this world. Traversi refers to death as a way of reaching to the transcendental unity when Heathcliff says; "My soul's bliss kills my body" (*WH* 254). Similarly, Cecil in *Victorian Novelists* addresses to the immortal soul in this world in Emily Brontë's novel: "the disembodied soul

continues to be active in this life. Its ruling preoccupations remain the same after death as before" (46). Jibesh Bhattacharyya in *Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights* discusses some critics' perspectives on Emily Brontë's novel. Some consider it a Gothic novel while the others regard it as a novel of revenge. Some others find it a dramatic way of narration by different characters. Some address to the tragic romantic tale of main characters. In *Bloom's Guides to Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights*, Melvin Watson and Bernard Paris review Heathcliff's complex personality in the novel; Hillis Miller addresses to the significance of animal imagery; Muriel Spark and Derek Stanford examine the characterization of the novel. U.C. Knoepflmacher refers to the narrator's unreliability in the novel; Carol Jacob regards *Wuthering Heights* as a metafiction; Marianne Thormahlen examines Catherine's self-obsession, and Lisa Wang reviews spirituality and immortality.

Richard Chase in "The Brontës, or Myth Domesticated", Jeffrey Berman in *Narcissism and the Novel*, Thomas Moser in "What is the Matter with Emily Jane?", and Elaine Hoffman Baruch in *Women, Love, and Power* study Emily Brontë's Catherine and Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights* through the Freudian psychoanalytic perspective. They see Heathcliff as an embodiment of the id, of pure sexual energy or potency, which Catherine both desires and fears. These scholars try to address characters' psychic fragmentation due to the social restrictions which stand in the way of Catherine and Heathcliff's union.

It can be concluded that many works have been made by many scholars on Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* based on feminist and psychoanalytic studies; however, none of these scholars address non-duality within duality in this novel,

which is the focus of this study. It will be shown how Emily Brontë's main characters, Catherine and Heathcliff, resist the traditional restrictions and the hierarchical binary oppositions of self and other in the Victorian society by expressing their desires and needs in their intersubjective love relation and preserving their autonomous and interrelated identity. They cannot tolerate their separateness since they are soul-mates and inseparable part of each other. Their beingness and self-development is defined when they appreciate their non-possessive love beyond the hierarchical dualities. However, they do not achieve the full measure of non-duality at the end of novel when their love turns to revenge and betrayal according to the social circumstances.

1.5.3 Studies on Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*

Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* has generated an abundance of feminist readings. It has drawn the attention of many scholars to focus womanism and racial issues such as the repression of black women's body and identity and sexuality. Angela Davis in *Women, Race, and Class* (1981) and Kimberle Crenshaw's "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics and Violence against Women of Color" discuss black women's race and class. Daniel W. Ross in his essay, 'Celie in the Looking Glass: The Desire for Selfhood in *The Color Purple*' (1988) illuminates the ways in which Walker develops the formation of Celie's identity through her bodily consciousness. Rine in *Irigaray, Incarnation and Contemporary Women's Fiction* discusses a range of contemporary women writers - from Margaret Atwood to Alice Walker. According to Rine, "Walker consistently

uses fiction to express her religious views… She shows that Shug's spirituality in *The Color Purple* is her own" (171). Linda Abbandonato in "Rewriting the Heroine's Story in *The Color Purple*" regards Walker a womanist. She writes that Celie in *The Color Purple*, like every woman, tries to find her identity out of patriarchal definition, but it is no easy task for her to approve herself as a woman, to free her feminine identity from "the ideological master narratives that inscribe it" (298). Kheven LaGrone in *Alice Walker's The Color Purple*, a collection of essays, stresses analyzes Walker's female protagonist, Celie, the black female, through bildungsroman, love and womanist resistance, theology, and language. Patricia Collins in *Black Feminist Thought* (2002) addresses the works of African-American feminist scholars, in particular Angela Davis, Bell hooks, Audre Lorde, and Alice Walker, who explain the gender and racial discrimination. She remarks that; "Womanism seemingly supplies a way for black women to address gender-oppression without attacking black men" (9).

Recently, Cynthia Robinson in "The Evolution of Alice Walker" affirms Alice Walker as "the first and foremost womanist" whose "literary works and political activities emanate from this identity" (293-4). Jacqueline Grant, a prominent womanist theologian, draws on Walker's *The Color Purple* to explain key elements of the womanist 'spirit'; she describes how "Celie's transformation unfolds as she reclaims her body, her black vagina and her black breasts" (*Perspectives on Womanist Theology* 111). Grant's description of Walker's womanist religious perspective presented in *The Color Purple* is also reflected in Walker's *By the Light of My Father's Smile*, as it confronts the violent effects of a

body-disdaining spirituality. Although some womanist theologians have adapted womanist spirituality to the paradigm of Christianity, it is important to recognize that Walker's conception of 'spirit' exceeds the boundaries of Christian Orthodoxy.

Some other scholars study Alice Walker's novel in terms of queer theory. Diana Fuss in *Inside/Out Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* (1991) reads the bisexual and lesbian relation of Shug and Celie in *The Color Purple* (179). Adrienne Rich, with an effect on Walker's womanist idea, studies Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* through the concept of the 'lesbian continuum,' the erotic love of women in "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence" (1980). According to Rich, women, through sexual orientation, can reject to become objects of exchange between men and refuse to be co-opted into a system of compulsory heterosexual paradigm of the conventional marriage, which enforces their suppression of sexual desire, and erases their subjectivity. She introduces Celie's lesbianism as an alternative model of sexuality which subverts masculine cultural narratives of femininity and desire.

In spite of many scholarly studies on Walker's *The Color Purple*, none of these scholars refer to non-duality within duality of sensible/transcendental in the novel through women's self-love and genealogy, which is the focus of this study, to show how Walker disrupts the duality of sensible and transcendental by turning the symbolic male discourse to the divine female discourse by describing her heroine's narrative in the form of letters. Walker's turning to the second wave feminism, in interrelation to Irigaray's thoughts of 'feminine divine' and 'sensible transcendental' can be a case to find her preference for feminine *jouissance* in *The*

Color Purple. As Irigaray in *Between East and West* offers the women's body as divine and a means of spiritual insight, Walker defines her heroine's physical body as a path of her self-realization and spiritual fulfillment. "[Walker] sees physical form as a manifestation of a larger spiritual principle" (Dresser, *Buddhist Women on the Edge* 1996). The gradual self-awakening of Celie, the heroine, is a way of distancing the patriarchal masculine god through the appreciation of her body in relation to other women, especially Shug as a maternal figure and representation of female genealogy, who helps Celie to appreciate her potential for maturation into a distinctly female subjective identity, as Irigaray explains the relations between mothers and daughters, and among women as the process of becoming woman, and as a mediation in the communication between women.

Walker's significant work, *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens* (1983), including a collection of essays, articles, reviews, and speeches, is of tremendous help in providing a better handle on exploring non-duality with duality in her novel. I have also found Judy Elsley's essay "Nothing can be sole or whole that has not been rent" written in *Fragmentation in the Quilt and The Color Purple* (1999) very interrelating with Irigaray's ideas of 'feminine divine' and 'sensible transcendental' in analyzing non-duality within duality in Walker's novel. Elsley studies Walker's novel from a feminist perspective. She talks about the interrelation of Walker's idea and Irigaray's notion of fragmentation in the development of her female protagonist, Celie, in *The Color Purple*. Her reading posits that Walker rejects the traditionally masculine boundaries and offers fragmentation as a form of empowerment and as the beginning of sexual identity. Here, Irigaray's theory of

'feminine divine' on continuous contact of two lips of women's sexual body in *This Sex Which is Not One* comes into play. Irigaray wants women to accept their fragmentation since the oneness and wholeness of men is alien to them. "The rejection, the exclusion of a female imaginary certainly puts woman in the position of experiencing herself only fragmentarily, in the little structured margins of a dominant ideology" (30). Only by rejecting the model of the contained, totalizing 'I' and rejecting masculinity as a whole can Celie attain emotional and sexual fulfillment. Here, Elsley's view helps us in understanding Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within duality which emphasize women's multiplicity in their desired body. Elsley's idea helps us to understand Irigaray's thoughts on the specificity of women's gender and her ideas of the two sexually different subjects and of women's body as a way of spiritual consciousness, which are the main frameworks of this study.

1.5.4 Studies on Anaïs Nin's *A Spy in the House of Love*

Anaïs Nin's erotic writing in her novels and diaries has been studied by many feminist scholars who examine the concepts of feminine sexual erotic body, the lesbian relationship, and the psychological issues. Clare Taylor in *Women, Writing, and Fetishism, 1890-1950*: *Female Cross-gendering* explores the problem of gendered embodiment, cross-gendered women, and women's erotic relationship in the writings of Anaïs Nin, Djuna Barnes, Sarah Grand, and Radclyffe Hall through sexology, female fetishism, psychological and gender studies. Anne Salvator in *Anaïs Nin's Narratives* reads Anaïs Nin's novels in light of feminist,

psychoanalytical, reader-response, semiological, and narratological theories. She describes Nin's shifts of the boundaries of traditional concepts of narrativity.

Julie Karsten's essay "Self-realization and Intimacy: the influence of D.H. Lawrence on Anaïs Nin" in Philip Jason's *The Critical Response to Anaïs Nin* addresses the influence of D.H. Lawrence in Anaïs Nin's several novels, short fiction, erotica, and her diaries. Helen Tookey's *Anaïs Nin: Fictionality and Femininity* offering a new study of Anaïs Nin (1903-77), focuses the cultural and historical contexts of Nin's works, and regards Nin herself as a modern writer and an active figure in the women's liberation movement. Suzette Henke in her essay "Psychoanalyzing Sabina: Anaïs Nin's *A Spy in the House of Love* as Freudian Fable" reviews Nin's *A Spy in the House of Love* from the psychological perspective in which Sabina, Nin's female protagonist, is known as Freudian fable. It can be inferred that most studies of Nin's *A Spy in the House of Love* have been on eroticism and psychoanalytical issues; however, there is no reference to non-duality within duality in their studies of Nin's novel which is going to be discussed in this study through Irigarayan theories. My study of this novel attempts to trace the signs of non-duality within the dualities of sensible and transcendental and self and other through Irigarayan 'feminine divine,' 'sensible transcendental' and ethics of love, but it will be shown that there is no threshold and interval between the dualities of sensible and transcendental as well as self and other in main character's relation with men, as a result, it leads to her failure of identity. Unlike Irigarayan 'horizontal transcendence' and 'sensible transcendental', converging on non-duality within the dualities of sensible/transcendental and self/other, and irreducible

and non-possessive love between dual subjects, Nin's view of love is based on vertical transcendence, erotic and ecstasy, which is basically sexual.

Sabina, Nin's female protagonist, expresses her feminine sexual desire in her relationship with several men but she cannot create a balance between dualities of sensible and transcendental and self and other, thus, she encounters the multiple fragmented selves instead of discovering her distinct subjectivity as Irigaray defines in her 'sexual difference' and 'sensible transcendental'. Sabina feels disfiguration when she cannot recognize her self in the mirror due to her fragmented and multiple selves. Unlike Irigaray's 'sexual difference' as an irreducible difference which transforms the traditional binary oppositions and gives a shape to the alterity of woman's embodied subjectivity, Nin's definition of woman as an erotic being engulfs women in their embodied self.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study focuses on non-duality within duality as the main framework of the study, an angle not previously addressed in the assessments of feminist scholars of these novels. It tries to show how female characters in the selected novels challenge the split between dualities of mind and body, self and other, and male and female typical of Western thought. It can be said that these dualities are not discrete substances and there is no rigid dualism between them. It can be noted that the aim is not overcoming the dualities nor is it the union; rather the relationship has the nature of beingness of both dualities. In this way of reaching to non-duality within duality, there is no reconciliation as a unity; there is instead a recognition of

the dualities, a respect of other as other – as a totally distinct yet necessary dynamic element. Therefore, the study of the selected novels addresses the embodiment of female desire, necessary for the divinity, or union, involving the maintenance of individuality-in-union through the ethics of love between two subjects, as the primary way for realization of women's spiritual potential. These women novelists exceed the duality not by striving to place women in equality to men; rather they define women as the other of men through an ethical relation which calls upon women's subjectivity and becoming. Therefore, in the analytical chapters, I take insights from Irigaray's transformative concepts of feminine divinity, dual subjectivity, intersubjective and non-possessive love, and interrelation between the sensible/transcendental and self/other to explore non-duality within duality and to call for each subject to have a place, an autonomous yet interrelated identity, respecting the limitations provided by the motion of the other. The notion of non-duality within duality inverts the hierarchical binary oppositions constructed through the culture of traditional dualism, and destabilizes the dualisms themselves and more specifically proposes a threshold between binarily opposed terms, across which differences can be recognized and appreciated.

1.7 Irigarayan Key Concepts

In order to explore the notion of non-duality within duality in the selected novels, in opposition to the traditional hierarchical dualities, I first need to describe Irigaray's key concepts of 'feminine divine,' 'sensible transcendental,' 'sexual difference,' and dual subjectivity which have inherent links to the notion of non-

duality within duality. As will be explained in the sub-sections below, Irigaray tries to disrupt the traditional hierarchical dualities of sensible/transcendental, self/other, body/mind, and female/male by reconsidering the traditional masculine god, explaining the repression of the mother and the exclusion of women from the symbolic order. For her, there is union in two-ness without one simply overturning the other, that is, the self persistently pursues the other, and yet there is a distance between the self and other.

1.7.1 Irigaray's 'Feminine Divine'

According to Irigaray's 'feminine divine' and 'sexual difference', male sameness and masculine divinity repress sexual difference when women serve male desire as desire for the self-same; thus, women are not able to love themselves and externalize their interiority and desire via their body: "Women have *less capacity for sublimating their instincts than men*" (*Speculum* 113). Irigaray contends that the woman remains only 'the other of the same', as the mirror which makes possible male sameness and her desire is repressed for the advances of patriarchy where god is an "infinite" projection of the self-same masculine subject, and the social construction of the masculine is divinized whereas "relations between women lack spiritualization, which, according to Irigaray, is the necessary condition for transcendence" (Ingram, *Toward an Ethics of Racial and Sexual Difference* 73). The one identity that the symbolic and phallocentric discourse offers is that of maternity, as a mother for reproduction who is deprived of her sexual and cultural identity as woman-as-lover. For Irigaray, patriarchy or what she calls the 'between-

men culture' is a historical construct, and as such, susceptible to change (*Je, Tu, Nous* 45). She therefore transforms the traditional binary oppositions and makes a change towards a distinctly female subjectivity and an autonomous gendered identity for women's becoming, for without it women will continue to be repressed into the dominant symbolic order. Irigaray in *Sexes and Genealogies* says:

> Man is able to exist because God helps him to define his gender, helps him to orient his finiteness by reference to infinity. … To posit a gender, a God is necessary; or at least a love so attentive it is divine, guaranteeing the infinite. And man, clearly, is able to complete his essence only if he claims to be separate as a gender. If he has no existence in his gender, he lacks a relation to the infinite and, in fact, to finiteness. To avoid that finiteness, man has sought out a unique male God. God has been created out of man's gender. (61)

Irigaray challenges the monopoly of masculine sex by creating the possibility of a different space of divinity and a mirror image for woman according to her sex and gender specificity "in search for her identity in love" (*Elemental Passions* 4). She refers to woman's self-love, "to establish and maintain one's integrity and autonomy as a sexuate being; it is to secure a space for oneself while remaining open to others. Additionally, self-love calls for the cultivation, or spiritualization, of one's embodied experiences as these are shaped by one's sexual

nature and one's encounter with the sexuate other" (Haynes, *Immanent Transcendence* 116). For her, women's self-love is an essential precondition to their becoming and forming an identity in the sexually indifferent (male) symbolic and social order of the dominant culture which restricts woman's subjectivity. According to Irigaray, women's absence of self-love and lack of subjective identity is due to their "lack of a god to place inside as well as outside [ourselves], and to love and will themselves and one another" (*An Ethics* 63). She claims:

> [Woman] remains outside, without access to divine female discourse, her female voice ineffectual, unable to bridge the gap… The only diabolical thing about women is their lack of a God and the fact that, deprived of God, they are forced to comply with models that do not match them, that exile, double, mask them, cut them off from themselves and from one another. (*Sexes and Genealogies* 64)

Irigaray asks the rhetorical question: "Are we able to go on living if we have no will?", and she continues that "women have to will, because it is the condition of becoming. This becoming asks for a goal to direct the becoming" (*Sexes and Genealogies* 61). Irigaray's feminine divinity necessitates women's gendered identity, their becoming; the ideal-images of their own: "Women need an economy, a language, a religion of their own" (79). For Irigaray,

> Divinity is what we need to become free, autonomous, sovereign....God forces us to do nothing except become. The only task laid upon us is: to become divine women, to become perfectly, to refuse to allow parts of ourselves to shrivel and die that have the potential for growth and fulfillment....And yet, without the possibility that god might be made flesh as a woman, no real constructive help can be offered to a woman. If the divine is absent in woman, and among women, there can be no possibility of changing. (*Sexes and Genealogies* 62)

Irigaray creates a kind of female self-love which is a counterpart to masculine religious ideals to bring to light women's hidden, unconscious, and repressed desire by freeing them from the hegemony of masculine discourse, and by allowing them to have access to their own desire, their female specificity, their place in the symbolic order, their desire for origin, and their essence as a horizon, as a gender. "Essence is not a given, behind us, but a collective creation, ahead of us, a horizon. God forms a horizon, a mirror for becoming, for developing into perfection…. In order to become, it is essential to have a gender or an essence (consequently a sexuate essence) as a horizon" (Irigaray, *Sexes and Genealogies* 61). Irigaray creates the possibility of a divine horizon, a discourse and universe for the embodied female subjects, "a place for the 'other' as feminine" (Irigaray, *This Sex* 135) for and among women to experience their own subjectivity, self-love and embodiment. For woman to truly become woman, that is to truly embody the

potential of her gender which has lain dormant for so long, she must celebrate the dualities of body as well as the transcendental in herself. For Irigaray, the masculine should no longer be everything. "I am a woman, I am a being sexualized as feminine, I am sexualized female" (*This Sex* 148). That is, being sexed or gendered puts an end to the myth of a universal subject, and creates the possibility of an other subject:

> Being a man or a woman already means not being the whole of the subject or of the community or of the spirit, as well as not being entirely one's self.... Therefore I am not the whole: I am man or woman. And I am not simply a subject…. I belong to a gender, to a sexed universal.... I am limited by this belonging. (*Key Writings* 10)

Irigarayan 'feminine divine' which is the product of sexual difference celebrates woman's difference through their sexed body as a vessel of divinity, as the base of women's liberation from the patriarchal society where sexual activity is reduced to its "natural" role in reproduction or to the status of an instinct. For Irigaray, the feminine carnal specificity is not a raw, primitive, and untouched territory, rather it is private and honored, and women's ultimate consciousness is achieved in their physical body; thus, Irigaray creates a female 'world,' a female symbolic which is not constructed by society. She changes the content of bodily conceptions, and allows women to express themselves and relate to cultural forms. She proposes the female imaginary as a social process, involved in the symbolic,

which is not an attempt to impose a constricting definition on women, but rather the attempt to create a space in which women, in all their multiplicity, become subjects in their own right; the producers of "cultural, political, and religious truth" (*An Ethics* 137).

Irigaray's 'feminine divine' does not reconcile the dualities of male/female and self/other as a unity; there is instead a recognition of the other as other – as a totally distinct yet necessary dynamic element. Irigaray defines 'feminine divine' to transform the logic of same, the otherness of the same, and to create non-duality within the dualities of male and female as well as self and other with respect to the autonomy of dual subjects.

1.7.2 Irigaray's 'Sexual Difference' and Dual Subjectivity

Irigarayan 'sexual difference' transforms the male subject's position, the masculine image of God, and the repetition of the same, and creates the possibility of the other symbolically. The other has always been seen by men as God, but never as the other sex. The 'You' is always addressed to the transcendental, never to women. In Irigarayan 'sexual difference', each sex assumes its own 'I' and addresses its 'you' to a transcendent other. According to Irigaray, 'sexual difference' must be understood in binary terms. The subject is not an isolated existent; rather the subject is its relations. A subject cannot be seen as singular unless she is recognized as relational and sexed. Irigaray argues: "The human species is made up of two genders, irreducibly different, attracted to one another by the mystery that they represent for one another" (*BEW* 83-84). In Irigaray's ethics

of 'sexual difference,' there can be no encounter with human nature without a recognition and a perception of sexual subjects, because human nature is at least two. She writes: "Approaching the other requires perceiving him as other. Thus, the other remains a living subject, perceived in his becoming and his appearance is not separated from his matter, nor is it a fabrication which is foreign to his reality" (*To Be Two* 45). Irigaray's 'sexual difference' avoids the dangers of the traditional connotations of the divine by conceptualizing the corporeal divine as sexuate, either male or female, subject to becoming. In fact, Irigarayan 'sexual difference' is "the means of escaping fusion, which is reducing or subjecting of the one to the other in response to the imperative of vertical transcendence, and in this escape remaining 'two' (sexed subjects)" (Irigaray, "Toward a Divine in the Feminine" 23). In Irigarayan 'sexual difference', based on non-duality within duality, there is eternal union of two subjects, yet each is other to the other, and the other differs from the self. For Irigaray, the other can never be completely known, that is, there is a "resistance to assimilation or reduction to sameness" (*An Ethics* 64). She believes in the otherness of other and same: "Recognizing you means respecting you as other" (*I Love to You 104*). According to her, women need to revise their relationships with others and their gender and the divine in themselves and respect it in each other.

Irigaray is more concerned, among other things, with the possibility of exchange between radically different and dual subjects, who are capable of interacting together. For her, the encounter between two subjects is unknown and mysterious, and is based on the recognition and respect of the irreducible difference

of the other in love relation with the other of the different sexed subject. The other of sexual difference for Irigaray will always be unknown, opaque and mysterious: "We respect the mystery and the irreducibility of the other" (*Key Writings* 183). Irigarayan dual subjectivity in light of the Hindu idea of the subtle body and subtle subjectivity challenges the conceptualization of the singular subject of Western ontology and provides the groundwork for the concept of the body and self as being comprised of an energetic anatomy. Influenced by the subtle body in Eastern philosophy-religion, Irigaray incorporates the concept of body-mind. Irigaray's notion of dual subjectivity opens the space for a consideration of subtle bodies in Eastern tradition with reference to the Western tradition. This study links together selected strands of Irigaray's thinking in an examination of the types of relations with difference that a radically open and creative form of subjectivity proposes. Irigaray's *To Be Two* and *Between East and West* are engaged with Eastern religious and philosophical traditions related to subtle subjectivity. *Tāntric* yoga's idea of the subtle body, more directly observable in Irigaray's *Between East and West* and then in *To Be Two*, has suggested the idea of embodiment being considered as energy: "Each, faithful to him or herself, would bring to the other his or her own energy and his or her manner of cultivating it" (*To Be Two* 55). Irigaray's interest in Hindu *Tāntric* yoga is for the transmutation of energy from carnal to spiritual for both the participants (*I Love to You* 137-8).

The study of Irigarayan dual subjectivity through the lens of the Hindu subtle subjectivity and subtle body helps us to re-conceptualize the binaries which are implicit in dominant Western discourse and to reach to the concept of non-

duality within duality which creates a transcendental space between the two distinct dualities for an ontological being/becoming. This way of observation enables the binaries to be considered in non-oppositional relations that neither privilege one term over the other nor erase the difference of either. The dual and relational subjectivity is marked by boundaries and intersubjective relations between selves. Irigaray defines energy and breath, taken from the Eastern idea of the subtle body, as a between of sensation/perception, self/other and body/mind. The Irigarayan sensible transcendental creates an ontological distinction between sensation, or the body, and perception, the soul. Sensation as a blind feeling attempts to draw body and mind together without cultivation, but perception can see the invisible. Reason and thought will not emerge if only the emotive aspect is active. In Irigarayan non-possessive love, "it is a relating that allows me to respect you because I perceive you as an other. To respect you requires that, in my perception of you, I do not limit myself to the merely felt, that I refuse to be only moved by you" (*To Be Two* 45).

In Irigarayan dual subjectivity, two subjects are not of a similar type, but rather two subjects of radical difference. Irigaray critiques the singular subject so readily assumed in Western discourse by proposing dual subjectivity. Irigaray's dual subjectivity and Eastern religious traditions related to the subtle body enable us to recognize the radical, new, unique idea that an Other is not a different repetition of the singular subject but an altogether Other, outside the bounds of the singular subject. The very ethical recognition of self and Other is understood as reliant on the perceptual practices of Hindu yoga that have informed Irigaray's most

recent work, *To Be Two* and *Between East and West*. For Irigaray, subjectivity is both dual and relational; it is an intersubjectivity. Irigaray in *To Be Two* says:

> To be Two would allow us to remain in ourselves, and would permit gathering,…, the kind of presence which remained free of bonds: neither mine nor yours but each living and breathing with the other. It would refrain from possessing you in order to allow you to be – to be in me, as well. (16)

For Irigaray, the relation to the other is one of interiority not exteriority. For her, the between or "breathing is a medium for women's coexistence with the other *in* and *with* nature" (*The Forgetting of Air* 47). Her concept of the caress which happens between two autonomous and breathing subjects and genders in an intersubjective relation traces the ethics of *Tāntric* yogic breath by binding mind, consciousness and body internally as a mystery called an instasy. Rather than seeing female responses as the "unfocused outpouring of instinct and emotion" (Joy, *Continental Philosophy and Philosophy of Religion* 106), Irigaray develops the idea of perception, affected by *Tāntric* yogic breath, for female identity to encourage accessing and expressing female erotic needs which are not a mere reflection of or response to male desire. This identity will allow a woman to "express her desires" not by sacrificing her identity to the needs of the other but "through her spiritual exercises into a non-possessive love" (*Continental Philosophy and Philosophy of Religion* 108) – this points, again, to the possibility of non-duality/duality or autonomy/relationship. Irigaray's labor of love develops an ethical relationship for

the divine becoming of the two sexes. To elaborate the idea of divinity in the body, Irigaray posits that "I was born a woman but I must become the spirit or soul of the body I am. I must open out my female body, give it forms, words, knowledge of itself, a cosmic and social equilibrium, in relation to the environment, to the different means of exchange with others, and not only by artificial means that are inappropriate to it" (*Je, Tu, Nous* 116).

1.7.3 Non-duality within the Dualities of Sensible/Transcendental, Self/Other, and Feminine/Masculine

From *I Love to You* (1996) onwards, specifically in *Between East and West* (2002), and *To Be Two* (2002), Irigaray's ideas on the embodied relations of the two distinct subjects as well as the relation between dualities of sensible and transcendental and body and mind, inspired by insights from Eastern conceptualizations of the body/mind in the spiritual practices of *Tāntric* yoga and Tibetan Buddhist Vajrayana, refuse the rigid split between mind and body typical of Western thought, prize the body as well as the spirit and internalized desire of the female and the male. What is very similar between Irigaray's 'sensible transcendental' and *Tāntra* is the fundamental concept of matter-consciousness. Irigaray's focus on the body as an energetic base of spiritual realization indicates the methods of physical and mental control:

> Through practicing breathing, through educating my perceptions, through concerning myself continually with cultivating the life of

> my body through reading the ancient texts of the yoga tradition and *Tāntric* texts, I learned what I knew: the body is the site of the incarnation of the divine and I have to treat it as such. (*BEW* 62)

The *Tāntric* traditions of yoga have taught Irigaray that "the body is itself a divine place – the place or temple of the divine in harmony with the universe – or rather they have taught [her] how to cultivate [her] body, and to respect that of others, as divine temples. [She] knew that the body is potentially divine" (*Ibid*). She considers the infinite divinity in the material body for individuals' becoming. She points out that "the body is cultivated to become both more spiritual and more carnal at the same time" (*I Love to You* 24). The conceptions of 'communion in pleasure,' the flesh as an infinite source of creativity, and breath as an energy for the union and autonomy of two distinct subjects are formed by Irigaray's study of the Hindu tradition of yoga: "The approach of Far-Eastern traditions, (...) have taught me another way, a way leading not to a discharge, but to an energetic recharge, to a regeneration and a culture of energy" (137). Yogic breath creates energetic and non-possessive love between lovers for offering their erotic nature as Irigaray defines the respectful love relation between the two distinct subjects as the accession to another energy, neither that of the one nor of the other, but an energy produced together as a result of the irreducible difference.

The idea of non-duality within duality is highlighted in Irigarayan concepts in the union of the spiritual and carnal when 'female *jouissance*' is introduced as a pleasure that does not transcend the body, but is rooted in the sensible flesh of each

of the lovers, and that also transcends each of the lovers because it is a pleasure and an energy that is produced together. She refers to the necessity of recognizing the female divinity alongside the male divinity and "does not oppose a feminine truth to a masculine truth" (*Marine Lover of Friedrich Nietzsche* 92). For Irigaray:

> It is not a matter of changing this or that within a horizon already defined as human culture. It is a question of changing the horizon itself—of understanding that our interpretation of human subjectivity is both theoretically and practically wrong. (*I Love to You* 20)

In her books since the 1990s Irigaray refuses the rigid split between the dualities and seeks the divinity and empowering model of the female energy in the lived body of the embodied gendered subjects, to challenge the established, oppressive male-dominated structure of patriarchal society and to find the answers to the questions left open by the Western masculine tradition (Roberts "Sensible Transcendental" 27). Just as the subtle body in Eastern religion is comprised of matter–consciousness which addresses the body-matter as a corporeal ground of divinity, Irigaray's idea "confounds the opposition between immanence and transcendence" (*An Ethics* 33). Irigaray in 'feminine divine' re-appropriates women's creative body, and addresses the divinity in the physical body, as "the body in *Tāntra* becomes a vehicle for the divinity and spiritual consciousness. The body is thus an exemplar of the sensible transcendental" (Joy, *Divine Love* 128).

Irigarayan 'sensible transcendental' (immanent ecstasy), adopted from the ethics of *Tāntric* yogic breath, divinizes the world through the body and the senses to overcome the traditional Western duality of transcendence (spirit) and sensibility (body) and self and other. Irigaray's 'sensible transcendental' emerges as an important resource for imagining both divine otherness and sexual difference and exploring non-duality within duality, beyond rigid separations between the self and other, immanence and transcendence, female and male. Irigaray's definition of love is a transcendental space between the lovers: "Love, even carnal love, is therefore cultivated and made divine. The act of love becomes the transubstantiation of the self and his or her lover into a spiritual body. It is a feast, celebration, and a renaissance, not a decline, a fall to be redeemed by procreation" (*I Love to You* 139). Irigaray's 'sensible transcendental' as privileged site of corporeal spirituality is enhanced by the cultivation of the breath as an interval space between dualities. Irigaray defines energy and breath as the space between self and other, and body and mind. She focuses the body as energetic and the base of spiritual realization which indicates methods of physical and mental control.

Irigarayan 'sensible transcendental' refers to "a transcendence which now remains alive, sensible and even carnal" (*Key Writings* 148), where "the female body is recognized and symbolized in such a way that women are no longer sole guardians of the corporeal, so that men can incorporate their own corporeality into their sublimations, so that women can sublimate as women" (Whitford, *Luce Irigaray* 142). In Irigaray's 'sensible transcendental,' the 'sensible' would no longer be the body of a woman as it figures in the male imaginary, but reworking

the fantasy of the body conceptualized by men, freeing women for their own subjectivity and self-love. Irigarayan image of the two lips, in touching each other, represent women's subjective identity. Women seek home and a different place for themselves in the social order through two lips engaged in a dialogue which refers to woman's pleasure, "as it increases indefinitely from its passage in and through the other" (*This Sex* 31).

Irigaray considers woman the other pole of discourse to challenge the traditional hierarchical duality of masculinity and femininity as well as the symbolic distribution of roles, in which women's bodily experience has been neglected, and women are deprived of cultural space. Woman is more acutely disabled in her 'becoming' (as Irigaray calls it), for she is only allowed to be fertile in the body, while men are fertile intellectually and spiritually. "She lacks a sense of herself as more than finite flesh, more than bodily self. In other words, she lacks a sense of herself as simultaneously transcendental and immanent, as divine" (Zecevic, *The Speaking Divine Woman* 48). Irigaray's 'sensible transcendental' facilitates women's individuality and their communication among themselves and with others. "[This transcendence] remains in me but ready to meet with the other,…, without sacrificing sensibility" (*I Love to You* 105). With this transcendental ideal, "women would have an interiority of their own in their own image so that they could love themselves as a woman" (Martin, *Luce Irigaray and the Question of the Divine* 118).

Irigaray's 'sensible transcendental,' a shared space between the material and the transcendental, challenges the dominant discourse of symbolic order.

However, for Irigaray, it is not necessarily the overcoming of dualities that is of primary importance, nor is it the union of dualities (*BEW* 63). For Irigaray, as Joy notes, "The union must be one of both a spiritual and a corporal nature" (*Divine Love* 128). It can be said that the union involves the beingness and autonomy of dualities. Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within duality help us in analyzing the selected novels through the idea of a dual subjectivity that can lead to a non-dual relation between body/mind and self/other.

Irigaray tries to free women from merely fulfilling men's bodily needs by relying on the embodiment of feminine creative energy as a progressive potential and the process of becoming divine through the sensibility: "When we recognize our bodies as spiritual vessels, we acknowledge that our connections with others cannot be reduced to bodily need" (*The Way of Love* 82). She implores women to imagine a god in their own image and to reclaim the possibility of "God made flesh" as a woman (*Sexes and Genealogies* 70). In her works, she is more concerned with the way women experience the divine as an energy, an awareness of transcendence, a presence that illuminates the world and the reaches of cosmos, yet remains a mystery (*The Way of Love* 144-74).

Irigaray in her later works, especially in *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, *I Love to You*, *To Be Two* and *Between East and West*, turns to secondary sources on *Tāntrism* as one inspiration for her work, for example the work of Mircea Eliade, using his reading of yogic breath as a revered symbol of enlightenment and of women's divine feminine creative energy, *Śākti*. Irigaray develops her understanding of gynocentric culture, and supports her claims for "the gynocentric

period in India" (*Je, Tu, Nous* 90). She says; "Gynocentric traditions should not be restricted to matriarchy but should include areas when women reigned as women" (24). As Joy notes, "Irigaray is interested in two interrelated aspects of Hindu culture on the subject of a female divine, and of a divine couple. One aspect is the *Tāntric* yoga where women are revered in the act of sexual union, the other is the existence of a gynocentric society" (*Divine Love* 126). Irigaray links two aspects in her works which exemplifies "a distinct form of relationship to other people and the cosmos" (*Ibid*). According to Irigaray, "in certain Asian countries, ritual and individual prayers consist in bodily exercise that is either personal or collective: yoga, tai chi,…. There is no sacrifice of the other, and yet there is a much richer spirituality" (*Sexes and Genealogies* 77). She considers this Eastern idealization in "her quest for images that would be suitable for the new era of spirit that she envisages with figures of male and female lovers who are both sexual and spiritual" (Joy, *Divine Love* 126). She develops the notion of divine and the way it could find expression in a relation between two sexually different subjects. She focuses the relation of the cultural to the natural, and the spiritual to the material.

Irigaray's notion of *Tāntric* tradition makes an image of divinity in men and women's relationship marked by their gender. According to Irigaray, God enables wo/men to make sense of their experiences in their (collective) existence. In her 'sexual difference,' she considers 'divine love,' the body as the 'divine place' of the ethical relation between dual subjects, and constructs in-between space and an intersubjective and respectful relation between two subjects of radical difference, between self and other. Irigaray's interest in "horizontal" relationships and dual

subjectivity with regards to an essentialist energetic dualism in her recent work is highlighted by focusing on Hindu tradition. She emphasizes the transcendental aspects of carnal elements. Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within duality focus on both the spiritual and carnal as 'horizontal transcendence', and 'inbetweenness' as an intersubjective relation of two different subjects based on a spiritual foundation of energy. Her ideas necessitate the recognition of singular self through a mutual relation. Irigaray claims that:

> The expressions of transcendence require different modalities on the part of man and of woman. For a woman, what matters is to withdraw or to limit herself in order to open within herself a place of hospitality for the other, without appropriation, fusion or confusion. (*Sharing the World* xiv)

Love or desire offers a dynamic relation that enables individuals' becoming, and includes the invisible of each subject. In Irigarayan double desire and non-dual relationship between dualities of sensible/spiritual, self/other, and visible/invisible, there is a double movement in relation: to "return to myself" and to "be with you" (*To Be Two* 28). However, Irigaray's between desire or unknowable and invisible "between-us" which is not entirely attributable to either subject preserves the individuality of subjects even in relation: Irigaray "longs for an existence of a between-us" (*To Be Two* 28). As breath or energy in *Tāntrism* creates a shared place between subjects, this shared and double desire in Irigarayan 'sexual difference'

allows a "subject" to move towards the "place" of the other and back into the "place" of the self, motivated and restricted by the irreducible love relationship. Irigaray's "being in relation with the other" (*Key Writing* 6), repressed throughout the history of Western metaphysics, offers self-consciousness by moving to the other and backing to the self. The interval which Irigaray defines between the two different subjects is a "place for love" (*Elemental Passions* 28), that is, "a transformative, generative space affording to the reciprocal, creative becoming of two differently sexed subjects in affective, non-appropriative relations with each other" (Haynes, *Immanent Transcendence* 118). Irigaray's sexual difference is a radical difference of dual subjects in the movement of different desires.

It needs to be noted that the notion of non-duality within duality is traced in all of Irigaray's theories which emphasize the recognition and respect of the dualities in their difference as well as their union. Therefore, Irigaray-inspired ideas of non-duality within duality will allow us to analyze the selected novels' female characters through appreciating the dualities and differences beyond the traditional hierarchical dualities.

1.8 Irigaray and Feminist Studies

Since Irigaray wrote primarily in French, the English translations leave some uncertainty for other scholars in interpreting her works. On top of this difficulty, further study led to encounters with a few feminist critics. Irigaray's works, in particular her later ones, discussing her ideas on 'divine love' and the ethics of 'sexual difference,' have been studied by many feminists such as Elizabeth

Grosz, Drucilla Cornell, Judith Butler, as well as by religious feminists such as Ellen Armour, Grace Jantzen, Amy Hollywood, and Pamela Sue Anderson. They acknowledge that Irigaray is right in suggesting that the traditional symbolic discourse does not provide women with the resources for creating subjectivity or collective identity for the female other.

Elizabeth Grosz in *Sexual Subversions* (1989) studies Irigaray's view of the inherent instability of the body. She has commented that "in Irigaray's view, God shows the possibility of a perfection, an ideal goal for the subject, but only on condition that this God is one's own" (160). Margaret Whitford in *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine* (1991), Tina Chanter in *Ethics of Eros: Irigaray's Re-Writing of the Philosophers* (1995), and Emma Jones in *Speaking at the Limit* (2011), support Irigarayan ethics of 'relation' and 'feminine divine' in a feminist evaluation. As Jones notes, Irigaray addresses "the transformation of the relation of sexual difference through dialogues with all sexual others" (31). Whitford believes that "Irigaray creates a subject-position for women to reflect the inconsistencies within masculine discourse" (*Luce Irigaray* 36). Tina Chanter concurs with Whitford that Irigaray's works do not directly critique the Western philosophical tradition; rather, Irigaray destabilizes the main expectations of this tradition and shows up a difference which has previously been unrecognized by that tradition. Both Whitford and Chanter support Irigarayan critiques of "the dominant discourse" (*This Sex* 119), the single masculine subject of Western tradition. Chanter remarks that:

> We cannot afford to ignore the legacy of the Western tradition that has shaped our very ways of thinking [...] [Irigaray's] critical deployment of the resources offered her by the tradition owes its energy not only to that tradition, but also to her difference from that tradition. (*Ethics of Eros* 216)

Despite Tina Chanter's *Ethics of Eros: Irigaray's Re-Writing of the Philosophers* (1994) and Margaret Whitford's *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine* (1991), invaluable readings of Irigaray's works, and Elizabeth Grosz's *Sexual Subversions* (1989) on Irigaray's view on the inherent instability of body, most scholars refuse Irigaray's thought of the specificity of women's gender, and question her ethics of 'sexual difference'. Judith Butler and Drucilla Cornell see Irigaray's "relation" between sexual subjects as being confined to sexual relations between men and women (Grosz *et al*., "The Future of Sexual Difference" 27-34). They perceive a shift in Irigaray's works from an earlier, more radical, to a more "conservative" one. They regard Irigaray's 'sexual difference' as "essentialist" in the old sense of a de-contextualized definition of woman. Drucilla Cornell points to the Irigarayan utopian articulation of sexual difference as essentialist at best (Grosz *et al*., "The Future of Sexual Difference" 32). Although Judith Butler supports Irigaray's subversion of patriarchal discourse by discovering the feminine excluded from all constructions of identity, she criticizes Irigarayan "heterosexual studies" as ontologically problematic (*Gender Trouble* 19-25) based on normative differences.

Margrit Shildrick (1997) writes that "Irigaray's later work is far more problematic with respect to the charge of essentialism, and her deployment of sexual difference has seemed increasingly to suggest certain pre-given and determinant qualities of the feminine" (*Leaky Bodies and Boundaries* 227). Weil in *Androgyny and the Denial of Difference* negates Irigaray's idea of sexual difference which is based on the simultaneous duality and difference, and unity, of sexes. She points out that the androgynous mentality transcends the boundaries and limitations of sexual difference. However, when Irigaray talks about the "relation" of sexual subjects, she does not only mean a particular intimate relation between men and women, but rather, the relation that happens between two limited subjects. Irigaray does not merely emphasize heterosexual relations when she says "Although generically, to be woman requires a relation to the other man, just as to be a man requires a relation to the other woman, becoming a woman at the level of the individual is not dependent upon a heterosexual love choice" (*To Be Two* 34). Since the Irigarayan ethics of "relation" in terms of non-duality within duality allows each subject to constitute her/himself in reference to her own gender limits and to those of the other, insofar as limits are shared between the two subjects, it is not confined to heterosexual love relations, a love between sexually-different subjects, and is rather applicable to all human relationships and concerns the relation between male and female "genders" as a whole. Therefore, "Irigaray transforms the relation of sexual difference through dialogues with all sexual others" (Jones, *Speaking at the Limit* 31). Indeed, Irigaray's works often offer a positive definition of sexual difference where men and women, on the whole, share the world together, with

regards to their own subjectivity. It can be said that "these relations will not flourish without a transformation of subjectivity and this underlying relation" (46). As Whitford writes "[women] need images and representations of their own.... Women need a religion of their own" (*Luce Irigaray* 135).

Irigaray's statements that "any theory of the subject has always been appropriated by the masculine" (*Speculum of the Other Woman* 133), and that "the articulation of the reality of [the feminine sex] is impossible in discourse" (*An Ethics of Sexual Difference* 206) have led some to view Irigaray as an anti-essentialist. Monique Plaza (1978) reads Irigaray as, in Margaret Whitford's words, "an anti-feminist who echoes patriarchy's recuperation of feminist subversion" (*Luce Irigaray* 9). Naomi Schor in "The Essentialism which is not one" argues that Irigaray's sexual difference as an exemplar of 'negative essentialism' (xiv) considers the specificity and materiality of the woman's body, rather than the man's body, as the norm (88);

> Essentialism threatens the vitality of the newly born women of feminism … Feminist anti-essentialism shares with deconstruction the conviction that essentialism inheres in binary opposition (62).

Some other critics question the natural, cultural, and essentialist foundation of Irigarayan 'sexual difference' through which women are fixed, unchanging, and ahistorical by their anatomy (biological essentialism) or by their position within the symbolic order - as Lynne Segal calls it, "psychic essentialism" (qtd. in Whitford,

Luce Irigaray 9). Armour in *Deconstruction, Feminist Theology, and the Problem of Difference* (1993), Janet Sayers in *Sexual Contradictions: Psychology, Psychoanalysis, and Feminism* (1987), and Lynne Segal in *Is the Future Female?* (1987) accuse Irigaray of celebrating traditional gender ideologies of fundamental biological difference between women and men. They argue that Irigaray insists on the ontological primacy of the feminine body and its *jouissance* (qtd. in Whitford, *Luce Irigaray* 9). Segal argues that: "the writings of Irigaray are most readily interpreted as strengthening and celebrating traditional gender ideologies of fundamental biological difference between women and men" (*Is the Future Female?* 133). Toril Moi (1985) reads Irigaray as an "essentialist" in the gynocentric sense since Irigaray tries to limit women's position from the start by making it exclusionary. She argues that "Irigaray falls into an esssentializing position in being tempted to define woman" (*Sexual/Textual Politics* 139). Jane Gallop reads Irigaray as essentially a Lacanian who believes all identity construction to be framed within a necessarily symbolic order ("Irigaray's Body Politic" 81). Alison Stone refers to essentialist readings of Irigaray throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s:

> One might imagine the works of philosophers like Chanter and Whitford to have decisively superseded discussions of Irigaray's essentialism, which, one might suppose, were insufficiently philosophically framed to yield insight into her work. Actually, though, preceding debates over Irigaray's work have generated a network of now-standard assumptions about

essentialism which continue to inform the otherwise diverse ways in which she is currently read (*Luce Irigaray and the Philosophy of Sexual Difference* 18).

Stone recognizes Irigaray as a "strategic" and "realist essentialist" who emphasizes that "natural differences between the sexes exist, prior to our cultural activities" (19). For Stone, sexual difference (as cultural, spiritual, or relational) is predicated upon the prior existence of the natural bodies. She claims that the Irigarayan 'sexual difference' is framed independently of human beings' cultural activities. She believes that this "realist essentialism" is progressively seen throughout Irigaray's works; in particular her more recent writings which propose a certain "natural" sexual difference (22). She claims that Irigaray's philosophy of nature based on natural elements, namely, on "kinds of entities" or "definition" functions as the basis of sexual difference, which must be understood at the cultural level (21). "Stone interprets Irigaray's relational subjective as sexual difference on the cultural level" (Jones, *Speaking at the Limit* 22). For Stone, sexual difference has to do with the body or nature while the relational "subjective" aspect has to do with the psyche and with culture (Mader, "Somatic Ontology" 128). Stone argues that "Irigaray's transcendental theory gives the priority to the sensuous conditions of human embodied life by way of the lived experiences of nature" (*Luce Irigaray and the Philosophy of Sexual Difference* 30). She writes that "Irigaray refers to material bodies which have inherent 'forms' that call for spiritualization or cultivation" (41). According to Jones, "Stone and Mader show the depth of the

problem of the relation between the prior natural sexual difference and relational, subjective sexual difference in Irigaray's works" (*Speaking at the Limit* 22).

Stone's view of Irigaray's "realist essentialism" stands in opposition to the reading of Penelope Deutscher which argues that, "for Irigaray, there is no fact of sexual difference that would be the basis of a cultural elaboration or cultivation, but rather that Irigaray's later texts serve as a reminder of the non-existence of such difference" (*A Politics of Impossible Difference* 2). Deutscher's major argument on the impossibility of sexual difference is that Irigaray offers neither equality nor a "difference" that could be recognized, but rather "a politics anticipating difference" (1). She interprets Irigaray's proposed reforms as "negative [reminders] of just how much cultural change would be necessary for a society to evolve into a culture of sexual difference [...] a rhetorical reminder that we live in a culture in which they are impossible" (41). According to Deutscher, Irigaray does not ask a question of "is there sexual difference really?" (108). Rather, for her, "there is no sexual difference; there might be sexual difference" (*ibid*). For Deutscher, the "relational" difference has no "being" (*Ibid*).

Morny Joy in *Divine Love* introduces Irigaray's ideas as "ontological essentialism" in terms of placing the foundational reality in women's lives. "Sexual difference becomes reified in a way that privileges women and their feminine spirituality and identifies them with affirmative ontological ideas" (140-1). In fact, Irigaray's sexual difference, for Joy, is based on the natural and essentialist identities of men and women. Alison Martin in *Luce Irigaray and the Question of the Divine* emphasizes Irigaray's "question of the divine" (2). According to Martin,

Irigaray seeks to locate the source of the divine in the passionate, maternal existence of the two sexes. However, she is not fully in accordance with Irigaray's concept of the divine. She seems to focus merely on the material world, and to deny the transcendental nature of Irigaray's idea based on emotions, feelings and thoughts. But if women alone continue to represent the body, the sensible, then they are excluded from the transcendent. Pamela Anderson in *Feminist Philosophy of Religion* introduces "a new horizon of the imminent divine" (36). Her question in relation to Irigaray's idea of 'divine love' challenges the disembodied God of masculine world; "To what extent, if any, can one say that the female or feminine divine exists?" (226). Marie-Andree Roy reviews Irigaray's argument that women need to reconceive divinity in the feminine in order to find a specifically feminine subjectivity and to provide a basis for the reverence of female embodiment. Jantzen in *Becoming Divine* (1998) returns to Irigaray's 'Divine Women' and 'becoming divine' in which women need a feminine divinity to serve as the foundation for especially feminine subjectivity. She supports Irigaray's view of 'becoming divine,' and sees Irigaray's way of relating to the divine as "the divine horizon for our gender" which can be attributed to womanhood in many ways (xiv). She gives women "an opportunity to get involved in the suffering of women and compassion for and solidarity with human suffering", which "is not separable from 'becoming divine'" (263).

It can be seen that Irigaray's thoughts of the specificity of women's gender, and her ethics of 'sexual difference', as well as feminine divinity have been studied and criticized by many feminists; however, Irigaray's theories of the two sexually

different subjects and of women's body as a way of spiritual consciousness and Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within the dualities of spirituality/sexuality, body/mind, feminine/masculine, and self/other, as the main framework of this study, are overlooked. I thus discuss Irigaray's ideas of the two sexually different subjects and of women's relational identity preceding the mind/body, self/other, male/female and nature/culture distinctions by disrupting the binary oppositions; this approach has not been given as much focus in the studies of feminist scholars and critics. Irigarayan embodied divinity, 'poetics of love,' ethical relationship, and dual subjectivity emphasize the duality and difference yet the unity of sexes in the dialogue between two distinct subjects. In fact, Irigarayan 'sexual difference' does not refer to a "natural" existence of men and women and cannot be exclusively understood through the question of definition, or the "identity" of woman, which is already conditioned by the repression of sexual difference. It means that "women" and "men" are not entities whose definitions precede the relation between them, but rather that the status of the relation of sexual difference produces these "definitions". In fact, Irigaray's ethics of sexual difference addresses the gendered and subjective identity of two beings by challenging the traditional dichotomies, while the disagreements within Irigarayan essentialist debates stem from the questions of the definition of sexual difference. Thus, Irigaray has concerned herself with the question of relation and the importance of poetics of love over the question of identity. Her theories are based on non-duality within duality, and the in-between space called breath and meditation in *Tāntrism.* Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within duality

deepen the readers' understanding of the selected novels by considering female characters' ethical relations with others rather than focusing basically on their identity.

1.9 Methodology

The methodology employed in this study is grounded in textual analysis of the selected novels of the Victorian and modern ages, Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1848), Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (1982), and Anaïs Nin's *A Spy in the House of Love* (1954), to explore non-duality within duality through the ethical and philosophical theories of Luce Irigaray and to conceptualize subjectivity as relational, which necessitates a radical revision of the dichotomies of sensible/divine, mind/body; reason/emotion, self/other, men/women at the heart of dominant Western discourse. This study thus privileges the conceptualization of non-duality within duality in Irigarayan philosophical theories, based on autonomous gendered subjectivity and a dynamic, ethical and intersubjective relation. It attempts to illuminate Irigaray-inspired ideas of non-duality within duality in the female characters' dual yet interrelated relations in the selected novels of the Victorian and modern ages.

1.10 Summary

This study explores the notion of non-duality within duality in analyzing the female characters' autonomous and subjective identity as well as their dynamic relations with the other of the other and the other of the same in the selected novels.

This way of recognizing the union within dualities is offered in Irigaray's notions of 'feminine divine', 'sexual difference', dual subjectivity, and 'sensible transcendental' which offer a way for the fulfilment of female erotic nature and propose a threshold and space between binarily opposed terms, across which differences can be recognized and appreciated. In Irigaray's theories, dualities are unified yet their autonomy is kept intact. The next chapter will discuss how my reading of Irigaray's key notions have inspired my use of the idea of non-duality within duality, to pave the way for deep understanding of female characters' gendered identity and their ethical relations. I thus draw comparisons/contrasts among the selected novelists, their works and Irigarayan thought in the following chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

NON-DUALITY WITHIN DUALITY IN IRIGARAY'S THEORIES

To trace non-duality within duality in the selected novels, it is necessary to elaborate on Irigaray's key notions of 'sexual difference,' 'feminine divine', dual subjectivity, and 'sensible transcendental,' common throughout her work, for better understanding of their inherent link with non-duality within duality.

2.1 Irigaray's Three Philosophical Thoughts

Irigarayan philosophical thoughts are divided into three periods which are interrelated: the first is the radical criticism of the Western philosophy of masculinity in establishing female subjectivity. In the second period, the emphasis is on gender difference and female subjectivity within the frameworks of language, culture, politics, and religion. The last and third period of her thought introduces the topics of ethical sexual difference and the dialectics of relationship between the two subjects. In these two last periods, the influence of *Tāntrism* and ethics of yogic breath is expressed more strongly. Irigaray in all of her work emphasizes the feminine place and the intersubjective and irreducible relation of "masculine" and "feminine" subjects. She does not support the rigid split between dualities and the repression of a relation between two previously-defined beings; rather she offers the possibility of a new transformative, positive, and reciprocal relation to the other, a place between the "two" subjects, and a new place for female subjectivity within

the masculine discourse in a culture dominated by only one subject. She does not simply challenge the erasure of the "feminine" subjectivity, but more precisely, the repression of the possible relation between two positively-defined sexual subjects. In fact, the identities of both men and women are reconfigured through this relation. Thus, Irigaray's ideas point to the possibility of non-duality within duality, which offers relational transformation as a necessary prerequisite for the transformation of identities.

Irigaray's principal concern from the beginning is for a new relation between sexual subjects in sexual difference, the union of dualities of the natural and the cultural, and of the spiritual and the material rather than merely of a definition or identity (Jones, *Irigaray* 14). In her early period, primarily *Speculum of the Other Woman* (1985a) and *This Sex Which Is Not One* (1985b), as a framework for her later work, Irigaray offers the possibility of an "other" sex, of female subjectivity and erotic nature which are reduced to the "lack", and of the positive sexual relation which is restricted and repressed within the dominant symbolic system of the singular masculine subjectivity. Irigaray challenges women's repressed erotic nature and their confined role as well as the male logic of the feminine as "lack, deficiency, or as an imitation and negative image of the subject" (*This Sex* 78), and criticizes the masculine God of Western religious tradition, the logic of the Same; the monocentrism of the Western subject which has repressed the possibility of a relation between two subjects. She transforms the patriarchal stereotypes of "the unified subject" as "male" and the "feminine" as the "outside" and "other" (Irigaray, 'The Question of the Other' 129) by elaborating

the idea that a "human being is not one but two, male and female as dual being, to signify this irreversible, corporeal difference between the two as an irreducible difference in the symbolic order" (*The Way of Love* 89). Irigaray tries to create a possibility for women to enter into ethical relations as autonomous subjects – this underscores the idea of non-duality (autonomy) within duality (relationships). In order for this to occur, women must be represented in terms different from their traditional construction into men's opposites and reflections. The recognition of two types of sexually specific being and two positive subjects entails for Irigaray a new conception of space, place, and, above all, the divine, "since it is only in refusing a positive relation that masculine identity is set up" (Jones, *Speaking at the Limit* 77).

Irigaray tries to re-evaluate and revise feminine divinity in terms different from its traditional (Christocentric) representations by focusing on the female's erotic nature. She says: "If women are such good mimics, it is because they are not simply resorbed in this function. They also remain elsewhere: another case of the persistence of 'matter,' but also of 'sexual pleasure' [*jouissance*]" (*This Sex* 76). That is, a woman is invisible in a world where she reflects a man's sexual desire, and is not able to maintain her own subjective place. "Woman can only 'mimic' the masculine discourse, because she has no positive discourse, no representation of her own sex and subjectivity" (Jones, *Speaking at the Limit* 67). This kind of relationship where women are mere reflections rather than autonomous subjects, is antithetical to the concept of non-duality within duality.

Irigaray in *This Sex Which is Not One*, and in the first section of *Speculum of the Other Woman*, "The Blind Spot of an Old Dream of Symmetry," challenges Lacan and Freud's writing on the singular model of sex and non-representable and non-phallic feminine sexuality, on the rejection of feminine sexual desire and a woman's (mother's) place as an object from the masculine point of view, which "would not serve to articulate the difference between the sexes, but to ensure the passage of the (socio-symbolic) law of the father" (*Speculum* 31). Irigaray tries to define a relation between the sexes through their difference, unlike Lacan and Freud who conclude that "there is no relation between the sexes", and that this lack of sexual relation "reduces all alterity to the economy of the 'same'" in the masculine discourse (Jones, *Speaking at the Limit* 43). Freud reinforces his perception of "sexual sameness" instead of discussing sexual difference by depicting the development of "womanhood" as one that originates from the masculine position (71). According to Irigaray, however, a woman should no longer love herself through men; rather she loves herself through her female specificity, her erotic nature, and her female body which is infinitely open, nonlinear, unfinished, fluid, and fragmented with unbounded pleasure in spite of the stable, immutable, and singular Christian masculine God. "[A woman] cannot be identified either as one person, or as two. She resists all adequate definition" (*This Sex* 26). Irigaray emphasizes "the most specifically female pleasures" (*This Sex* 28) through touch to identify "the plurality of the erogenous zones" (63) when she notes that "by our lips we are women" (209-10). In fact, Irigaray imagines the divine as multiple and more 'complex' internal and external spaces and sites of arousal, contact, and desire in

women's corporeal bodies. For her, "[Woman] is indefinite and in-finite" (*Speculum* 229). She claims that the man's pursuit of his desire actively interrupts a woman's communion with her own female body, which is represented by the genital lips "constantly touching" each other (*This Sex* 29). Irigaray creates a world for women through their sexual body; "Women must construct a world in all its and their dimensions; a universe, not merely for the other. . . A world for women; something that at the same time has never existed and which is already present, although repressed, latent, potential" (*An Ethics* 109). The female imaginary is "[the] contact of at least two (lips)" as plural, non-identical, multiple, and "neither one nor two" (*This Sex* 26) or the notion of mucous as neither solid nor fluid. For Irigaray, breath as quasi-material and quasi-spiritual, neither and both at once (*BEW* 63), is the opposite of substances that remain fixed. It crosses boundaries "between inside and outside", between multiple spaces and subjects (*An Ethics* 15). Irigaray addresses the importance of feminine *jouissance* not as "pleasure-giving" to men but as "self-embracing" (23). Her conceptual horizontal god refers to the continual self-touching of two lips:

> This immanent god is both matter and movement within which subjectivity coalesces in time-space-the infinite that resides within us and among us, the god in us.... Becoming with and in us. (*Sexes and Genealogies* 63)

Irigaray attempts to empower women's repressed sexuality and their erotic nature by creating feminine divinity within the woman's sexed body. She

introduces the woman as a sexed subject who cannot be reduced to a single homogenous subject because of her complex and dynamic female body which has a history and changes through time and across cultures. Irigaray prepares a journey towards the female divinity through sexual difference. For her, the divinity is experienced when men and women recognize each other in their difference. She describes the possible deconstruction of subjectivity as follows:

> The "subject" henceforth will be multiple, plural, sometimes di-formed, but it will still postulate itself as the cause of all the mirages that can be enumerated endlessly and therefore put back together as one...A de-struc(tura)tion in which the "subject" is shattered, scuttled, while still claiming surreptitiously that he is the reason for it all. (*Speculum* 135)

Irigaray's second phase examines women's self-awareness, their self-affirmation, and their spiritual consciousness with reference to feminine desire. Irigaray in *Sexes and Genealogies* (1993a), *An Ethics of Sexual Difference* (1993b), *Je, Tu, Nous: Toward a Culture of Difference* (1993c), *Thinking the Difference* (1994), *I Love to You* (1996), and *Democracy Begins Between Two* (2000) explores the possibility of a feminine divinity, subjective and gendered identity, emphasizes the female erotic nature as well as a new mode of relationship between the two different subjects, and provides a cultural place for the feminine subject, whereas in the early stage of her work she had often spoken of "masculine discourse" and

the "feminine," disrupting the subject/object distinction and the defined meaning of subjectivity within the scheme of the masculine discourse and the masculine self-same subject.

Irigaray's studies on *Tāntric* yogic breath are highlighted in the "third" stage of her writings, especially in *Between East and West: From Singularity to Community* (2002), and *Key Writings* (2004), to frame dual subjectivity and the ethical relation between 'two different subjects', to challenge the female's repressed erotic nature, and to revise and disrupt the mono-logical masculine definition of subjectivity and dominated 'masculine' discourse of Western thought. Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within duality address the ethical relation and the recognition of self and other which is necessary for bringing about autonomy in each person (*BEW* 47-9). She refers to yogic practice as a different understanding of unity, as "exercising a practice of unification on a disparate origin or being" (Škof and Holmes, *Breathing with Luce Irigaray* 92). *Tāntric* yoga considers the body as a microcosm of the larger macrocosmic generative force (Johnston, "Angels of Desire" 39; White, *The Alchemical Body* 4-5). In *I Love to You*, she highlights the centrality of cultivating perceptive practices in the *Tāntric* tradition where "the physical, the vital and the mental, all react harmoniously to the spiritual expression and a deeper harmony is established in them" (Bandyopadhyay, *The Goddess of Tāntra* 66). In fact, Irigaray acknowledges the energetic capacities and the intersubjective shared space of self and other. Irigaray affirms the body as an empowering energy to connect the self with the other, the two distinct subjects.

She refers to the relation between sensible and transcendental through *Tāntric* yogic meditation.

Irigaray's later work emphasizes the figure of breath "as a natural and spiritual principle of human being and as an issue of relationship between two subjects" (Škof, *Breath of Proximity* 183). Irigaray's divining of the self and other is described "in the sharing of transcendence in the intersubjective relationship between the two subjects or two autonomous singularities through their touch and listening to the others, in a new economy that Western thought has not adopted yet" (187). Irigaray views the notion of breath as showing respect to everything that lives and to the greatest gift of Nature, the breath of love, which radiates through individuals' bodily sensibilities. As Škof and Holmes note, "Irigaray suggests that though we know how to breathe we neglect to breathe 'consciously,' which is to say that we fail to inquire into the meaning of breathing or to develop the connections between breathing and other spheres of human life and action" (*Breathing with Luce Irigaray* 171). Through breathing, Irigaray embodies sexed subjectivity, the female erotic nature, and the interdetermination of sexual subjects, and problematizes the dichotomies of mind/body, culture/nature, self/other and universal/singular that have traditionally structured the Western notions of subjectivity.

Irigaray draws on *Tāntric* notion of breath' as a distinguished space between dualities to represent the possibility of a form of spirituality that is embodied. Irigaray creates a deep intimacy, unity, reciprocity that is grounded in breath within the individuals. She says, "For a dialectic of the couple to occur we need an art of

perception" (*Sexes and Genealogies* 144). It can be said that "an art of perception simultaneously promotes self-love and love of the embodied other, both of which are needed for the creation of two sexuate cultures" and "copulative space between them, where copulative refers less to sexual intercourse and more to a creative act of mutual becoming" (Haynes, *Immanent Transcendence* 116). Irigaray in *To Be Two* claims that:

> To respect you: to perceive you through the senses, leaving an extra cloud of invisibility. I perceive you, but what I perceive is not the whole of you, and the whole of me is not perception. I perceive what is already apparent. I perceive it with my eyes, my ears, my nose, my touch, my taste. What can I say of what is not perceptible in this manner? (Irigaray 47)

Irigarayan 'sensible transcendental,' based on non-duality within duality and the space between the body and spirit, relies on the individuals' spiritual consciousness and the divinity of bodies to allow for the creation of a harmonious relationship with the other. For Irigaray love between the two subjects is the primary way of realizing women's spiritual potential as well as their erotic needs. For Irigaray, the body is not just a material reality, not a universal ontological truth, nor natural given, or not a culturally constructed phenomenon, rather it elevates to the status of spirituality, that is, where the body and the mind form an interdependent self. In the same way, in *Tāntrism*, "body and spirit, erotic love and

transcendence, emotions and reason are wedded" (Khanna, *Yantra* 69). The body and its energy are thus viewed as the path of spiritual enlightenment and bliss, and one's awareness of the soul is through the material body, as Irigaray suggests: "Body is no longer just a more or less fallen vehicle, but the very site of where the spiritual to be cultivated resides. The spiritual corresponds to an evolved, transmuted, transfigured corporeal" (*BEW* 63). Irigaray's ideas which correspond with the ideas of non-duality within duality of the corporeal and spiritual, as well as her central concern with an ontological gendered dualism, are reflections of Hindu philosophy in which there is no struggle for primacy between the sensorial and the spiritual, between the masculine and the feminine energy. According to Irigaray, the energetic dynamic allows two sexes the possibility of entering into an irreducible relation with another. It creates the "limit" and "difference" between two subjects who are not pre-defined:

> In this dimension of ourselves where Being still quivers, identity is never definitively constituted, nor defined beforehand. It is elaborated in relation-with, each one giving to the other and receiving from the other what is necessary for becoming. The base and the horizon of the relation to the same are from then on questioned as a stage of History which masked Being as a relation to or with the other. (*The Way of Love* 93)

Irigaray develops the horizon of the difference of the sexes and "affirms the importance of sexual difference as a dimension of the culture of yoga (*BEW* 65). She acknowledges non-oppositional difference in the relation between two as a path to intimacy. Irigaray exemplifies the simultaneous sexual and sacred relationship of *Tāntric* couples as a microcosm of creative divine relations (315-6). She conceptualizes the intersubjective relations and conscious self-cultivation through divine "breath," as mediating the relation, presented in *Between East and West* (277). For Irigaray, "macrocosm and microcosm in this way remain dialectically linked with the spiritual becoming of each one" (*The Way of Love* 148). Through breath, "each sex or gender is a mystery for the other, provided this other is not imprisoned in a category of one's own logic" (Irigaray, "What Other Are We Talking About?" 76).

Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within duality emphasize 'the between' which is attributed to an energy of its own, as both of and not of two subjects and is associated with spirit/consciousness, and corporeal/subtle bodies. Irigarayan interval and 'between' space enable the ethical relations between subjects of radical alterity. "Irigaray's radical difference enables subjects to reserve their uniqueness of subjectivity" (Johnston, "Angels of Desire" 108). Irigarayan dual subjectivity is defined as follows:

> There is then neither a single round dance nor a single play of the world but a constitution of subjectivities that try to dance or to play together through—and despite —different unfoldings and

> refoldings. In this sense, an unfolding that would be only peaceful cannot exist, including ecstatically, except as a suspension of the movement toward proximity. Only in such a movement may ecstasy be concrete. (*The Way of Love* 21)

2.2 Irigaray's Ethical Relation and Poetics of Love

Irigaray proposes the 'divine love', and the transformational thinking of an embodied human subject in *Marine Lover of Friedrich Nietzsche* (1991a), *The Elemental Passions* (1992), *I Love to You* (1996), and *The Forgetting of Air in Martin Heidegger* (1999) for the development of a relation, the 'imaginary reality' to enable women to express their own desires, to hear a voice different from their own, and to remain "faithful" to their own becoming (*I Love to You* 30). Irigaray embraces the idea of 'divine love' as a sensible transcendental space between the two sexes as the ultimate otherness.

Irigaray in her most recent work, in particular *The Way of Love* (2002b), and *Sharing the World* (2008), emphasizes 'sexual difference' as an infinite relation of a subject to another kind of subject and a different sexual other, which opens up possibilities for women's subjectivity and for the fulfilment of their erotic nature. She refers to the reformulation of sexual subjectivity as two inter-related places and mutual relation between two different subjects with a shared boundary. For Irigaray, "the intertwined place" is an image of mutual relation between two different subjects (Jones, *Speaking at the Limit* 177). For her, this kind of relationship does not yet exist and there is an attempt to cultivate an unprecedented

relationship between the two subjects and "to listen to the present speaking of the other in its irreducible difference with a view to the way through which we could correspond to it in faithfulness to ourselves" (*The Way of Love* xi). Irigaray emphasizes a love which reflects the interrelation yet also emphasizes autonomy based on 'sensible transcendental' and 'relational limitation'; "a loving between us, to prepare for a wisdom of love between us" (vii).

In her most recent paper, "Ethical Gestures Toward the Other" (2010), Irigaray states: "From the beginning, the aim of my work is to try to favor the ethical relations between human beings. A thing that proves impossible in a culture or tradition in which the subject appears as neuter or neutral" (3). The quotation implies that Irigarayan ethical relations between two subjects throughout all three stages of her work cannot come into being in this mono-logical condition. Irigarayan 'sexual difference' does not describe a static state of identity for men and women; rather it speaks from a relational space between male and female subjects to make mutual recognition possible. It stresses women's particular experience and their specific feminine identity as "the other of the other" distinct from "the other of the same" and "not-man", and gives them an irreducible and authentic space in the patriarchal culture to express their erotic needs.

Irigarayan 'sexual difference' as a relationship between the two sexes is reinforced in her notion of 'divine love'. The divine in the feminine is shown as an ideal for women's becoming through the love of the other by expressing their erotic desires. For Irigaray, love as the shared breath and intermediary between pairs of opposites allows a place for the other and for a relation between the two. Love

creates a balance of opposites, a balance between the masculine and feminine, and the flesh and spirit. I view Irigarayan Love as the mediation between the two genders, as a dynamic movement towards the other for mutual relation which nonetheless sustains the difference between them. Irigarayan love allows for true intimate connection with oneself and the other. "[It] helps us to develop fully into ourselves, and to live fully our relation to the other, to others, and to the world around us. In that case, there would be no more being, fixed once and for all, but rather a changeable, perfectible way of being, thus an indeterminate absolute that determines us nonetheless" (*Key Writings* 172). For Irigaray:

> *Love*, the mediator, is a 'shared outpouring', a 'loss of boundaries', 'a shared space', 'a shared breath', bridging the space between two sexes; it does not *use* the body of the other for its *jouissance*; each is irreducible to the other. The loss of boundaries does not lead to fusion in which one or the other disappears, but to a mutual crossing of boundaries which is creative, and yet where identity is not swallowed up. (Whitford, *Luce Irigaray* 166)

Irigarayan love creates a free attractive space of separation and alliance between two irreducibly different subjects, when the caress does not transgress the boundaries of the beloved, while "abiding by the outlines of the other" (*An Ethics* 186). In the idea of non-duality within duality, the recognition of the one through the other and the communication between the sexes is made possible by "the labor of the negative," developed in *I Love to You* (36), that is, the limitations between

the two sexes are recognized by the negative in the self: "I am sexed" implies "I am not everything"" (*I Love to You* 51). Irigaray refers to 'the labor of negative' which addresses "the recognition of the limits" and "of the self and its spirit", and "let the other be and become" (56). This differentiation, this "becoming woman," this "constructing …. the ideality of the gender I am" (144-145), this negativity between a man and a woman, which will never reach the point of the true union, is the prerequisite to enter into a relationship with the other of the other. Irigaray stresses women's subjectivity through differentiation of their sex and gender from men in light of a sexed universal: "I recognize you, thus you are not the whole… and I am not the whole" (103). In *To Be Two*, Irigaray also writes about women and men's subjective becoming. Appreciating the self-limitation creates the condition for the possibility of recognizing and respecting the other's alterity. Irigaray writes on the recognition of different genders. She believes that before being able to recognize the otherness of the other, the self needs to accept its limits to respect the mystery of the other: "Neither I nor *you* are everything, that each of us is limited, non-hierarchically different" (*I Love to You* 117).

Irigaray describes sexual difference as a "living universal" (50) which is to say "each man and each woman is a particular individual, but universal through their gender" (51). She exceeds duality not by striving to place women in equality to men; rather she defines women as the other of men through a place which calls upon women's subjectivity and becoming, because "It is certainly not thanks to naming that I will succeed in entering into a relation [with the other]" (*The Way of Love* 65). For Irigaray, divinity is the other of which the relations are open to

recognize sexual difference which provides a limit between genders. In fact, sexes produce energy together as a result of the irreducible difference of sex and gender. To respect the other, the self must acknowledge its limitations.

Irigarayan 'sexual difference' involves the relation between the self and the other as the possibility of being with the other and being separate. The self has always been presumed masculine and women are automatically equated with otherness. Irigaray seeks an ethics based on the recognition of alterity, the otherness of the other, whether male or female, which cannot be understood on the model of self-same. The other is irreducibly other, different, and independent. She challenges the patriarchal logic of the masculine as "one" and the feminine as "lack" and speaks about the subjective relation between "men and women". She writes in *The Way of Love*:

> I discovered that we cannot be without such a becoming an essence, or falling back into a simple substance, outside of a being in relation with an other who is different, and first of all with the other of sexual difference. (xiii)

Irigaray's 'sexual difference' creates a relation between the two subjective sexes and provides "a re-thinking of women's relation to a truly other subject and thus transformations of relations between subjects" (Jones, *Speaking at the Limit* 48). In other words, 'sexual difference' provides a shared space between two subjects who are limited by the place of the other to prove the female erotic nature

and subjective existence, and to adjust a relationship to the sexual other. For Irigaray, "the interval between two human beings and the re-thinking of relational limitation develops their subjectivity" (160). Irigaray's writing of "relational limitation" throughout all phases of her work, notably *I Love to You* and *Sharing the World*, "establishes a limitation to a masculine discourse that had thought itself to be unlimited, and that had refused and unrecognized the possible relation to a different kind of subject" (36). In Irigaray's sexual difference, subjectivity is internally limited by its two-ness, and the risks of remaining one. In other words, "the male subject would fetishize becoming-woman for his rebellion, without entering into a relation with a true feminine other" (*Ibid*). Irigaray says:

> An interval must be provided, a neither the one nor the other where each finds oneself again and finds the other again while avoiding the one simply overturning the other through what is revealed of them. This interval—and this medium—is first of all nature, as it remains left to itself: air, water, earth, and sun, as fire and light. Being par excellence -matter of the transcendental. (*The Way of Love* 18-19)

In Irigaray-inspired notions of non-duality within duality, the other is transcendent and different to the self, and subjectivity is dependent on relating to the otherness of the other and the recognition of the irreducibility of the other. The movement of self towards the other is captured through sexual difference. In *An*

Ethics of Sexual Difference, Irigaray addresses this ideal relation between the two sexual subjects:

> Each returns to his or her place to find his or her cause again and then returns toward the other place, the place of the other, which would mean that, at each phase, there were two places interdetermining each other, fitting one in the other. (40)

The Irigarayan definition of subjectivity and gendered identity, present everywhere in her theories, creates an image of a reciprocal intertwining of places and boundary between two sexual subjects with "a motion toward the other and back into the self" (Jones, *Speaking at the Limit* 177). In Irigarayan thought, to be a "subject" is ultimately to be in relation to the other, and to "move toward the other" (*This Sex* 207) and return to the self. Irigaray depicts love of "women and men who recognize and respect their singularity and try to discover a way of being in relation with each other whilst retaining their own individuality" (Irigaray and Green, *Luce Irigaray* 60). Irigarayan shared desire between two sexed subjects points to the movement of self toward a sexual other, motivating their intersubjective relations. For Irigaray, the male and female as the two different subjects are autonomous and yet reconciled. For Irigaray, as Škof notes, "breath is a space in which two subjects are empowered to restore their subjectivities and are thus prevented from relating to one another in an attitude of continuous appropriation" (*Breath of Proximity* 147).

2.3 Irigarayan Self-love

Irigaray proposes women's self-love for reconciliation of polarities in a union of the spiritual and the sexual and to free them from the symbolic roles which confine them to nurturing and physical motherhood and womanhood, and channeling female desires towards fulfilling male ends. She insists on cultural transformation to bring female desires and bodies to a level of self-expression and 'spiritualization' equivalent to that available to men. She theorizes 'feminine divine' through the Hindu divine images as goals for the process of woman's becoming divine:

> There is no woman God or the female trinity: mother, daughter, spirit. This paralyzes [woman's relation with the infinite without which] sharing implies fusion-confusion, division and dislocation with themselves, among themselves….But as long as woman lacks a divine made in her image she cannot establish her subjectivity or achieve a goal of her own. She lacks an ideal that would be her goal or path in becoming… If she is to become woman, if she is to accomplish her female subjectivity, woman needs a god who is a figure for the perfection of her subjectivity. (*Sexes and Genealogies* 62-3)

According to Irigaray, women need a divinity of and for their gender to appreciate self-love, express their erotic desires, and realize their true selves as

human-divine subjects. She refers to women's desire as woman-for-herself instead of being subjected to an order of discourse which reduces her subjectivity to that of woman-for-man. Irigaray asks: "This God, are we capable of imagining it as a woman? Can we dimly see it as the perfection of our subjectivity?" (63). These statements point out that women need a god to love themselves and to function as a mirror for themselves, gathering their fragmented images and offering an imaginary "one" with which to identify: "How is our God to be imagined… If there is not just one, how will we choose among them to conceive our perfect being?" (67). Irigaray's idea of 'feminine divine' looks for "God according to our gender" (71), and offers a horizon to the subject and protects women against neglect, because by loving God the female subject loves herself as belonging to the female gender. As Lee notes, "for Irigaray, God is not an abstraction but an *interiority*; a journey into the inner world of a feminine soul to represent God as the ultimate otherness that woman should have to reclaim, and a journey of self-knowledge and self-discovery" (*Divine Love in the Philosophical works of Luce Irigaray* 16). In Irigarayan 'feminine divinity,' women's self-consciousness, then, is necessary to their subjective identity to ensure they are not determined by another gender.

> [Women in Western culture] lack the horizon and the foundation needed to progress between past and future … There is no transcendental made to their measure … they have to make it for themselves (*An Ethics* 69).

In Irigaray's sense, speaking as a woman is the social and symbolic existence of a maternal genealogy. Redefining the female identity by the experience of the divinity is an issue of women as a gender and a female subject, not of the individual-woman. "It is the female gender that generates and constitutes the horizon for the becoming of a female subject" (Mulder, *Divine Flesh* 28). Irigaray's God refers to "a projection or perfection of the sexed subject" (Grosz, *Sexual Subversions* 159). Irigaray suggests paths towards women's autonomous gendered identity, to have an inward relationship with themselves, to appreciate their gender potential and their erotic nature, and to see the other as someone deserving of spiritual freedom. After recognizing and appreciating their autonomous gendered being, women are able to have a love relationship. Irigaray gives privilege to women's self-love and tries to free them from sacrificing themselves to others, as they have done before: "woman loves herself through others such as her father, husband, or children, and thus has always served the self-love of man" (Irigaray and Green, *Luce Irigaray* 89). Through self-love, women can have their own place which the symbolic discourse deprives them of, only by a "return to the bodily-fleshly values" (Irigaray, *An Ethics* 122). She says:

> Women can no longer love or desire the other man if they cannot love themselves. Women are no longer willing to be the guardians of love, especially when it is an improbable or even pathological love. Women want to find themselves, discover themselves and their own identity. (*An Ethics* 66)

Irigarayan 'self-love', beyond "a love in which the female self is sacrificed or dissolved" (Mulder, *Divine Flesh* 187), creates a new identity for women as subject, and justifies the need of women to have their own genealogy.

2.3.1 Irigarayan View of Women's Genealogy

Irigaray creates a socially valorized identity for women and revalues bodily matter through feminine divinity to restore their repressed genealogy. "This collective identity as an essence of all women empowers them and frees them from all the restraints imposed by the symbolic order, and opens the way to the harmonious relationship between the two sexes" (Lee, '*Divine Love*' *in the Philosophical Works of Luce Irigaray* 93). According to Irigaray, women need to be for-themselves and love themselves and each other as an indispensable step towards autonomy (*This Sex* 164). She symbolizes the mother-daughter relationship and a perfect relation among women in the social imaginary to uncover the reality of the non-existence in the cultural tradition(s) of such a truly female divine (*An Ethics* 68-9). While the woman/wife has been given a function as the mother of the male God who engenders the male god in the Western male genealogy, the relations between mothers and daughters have been effaced and there is no female 'genealogy'. Thus, woman's divine-human potential – her genealogy, and the mother-daughter line – have remained obscure and undeveloped within the symbolic order. They cannot "escape from the sameness of man or from an uninhabitable sameness of their own, lacking a passage from the inside to the

outside of themselves, among themselves" (114). Due to the ongoing identity debates on women's difference from men, the differences among women themselves are ignored. Irigaray sees this as "a result of women's position in the symbolic order", which "does not distinguish between the mother and woman and that the mother is never positioned as a subject" (Whitford, *Luce Irigaray* 46). That is, "women suffer from an inability to individuate themselves" (79), from "the confusion of identity between them," from "lack of respect or, lack of perception of differences" (Irigaray, *An Ethics* 63), and from the non-differentiation and non-symbolization of the relation among themselves, especially between mother and daughter which lead to neglect of the relations between women in the masculine discourse.

> The lack of differentiation between the daughter and the mother or the maternal function… is inevitable when the desire for origin is not referred back to a relation between a man and a woman – a relation that implies in turn a positive representation of femininity (not just maternity) in which the little girl can inscribe herself as a woman in the making. (Irigaray, *Speculum* 36)

The idea of non-duality within duality emphasizes women's differences despite their similar gendered identity and forms a genealogy of mothers and women not in the singular first person ('I'), nor a second person ('you'), but as 'we', attempting to displace the father's central place, a history that has been thus

invisible and ignored by the burial of women under the masculinity within patriarchy. Irigaray in *Why Different?* posits the autonomy of women in relation to, and beyond, men.

> To talk to one's mother as a woman presupposes giving up the idea of maternal omnipotence… To accept that one's mother is not all protective, the ultimate amorous recourse, the refuge against abandonment… Which then allows us to establish with her ties of reciprocity, where she could eventually also feel herself to be my daughter. (13)

Irigaray in 'When Our Lips Speak Together' and 'And One Does Not Move Without the Other' restructures a new and different relation between mother and daughter in which their identities defy the binary oppositions that patriarchy demands. The reorganization of mother and daughter's desire, thus, means they can be represented as self-referential subjects not as exchangeable objects for men. Irigaray seeks women's foremost need and yearning for self-love and expressing their erotic needs in a collective act of calling god into being, requiring a continuing dialogue and reflection among women on the values symbolized. Joy supports Irigaray's view;

> Irigaray focuses on a new mode of relationship – to oneself and to other women. This provides the opportunity for women to

> appreciate that their route to autonomy, their becoming divine, is not subject to transcendental norms, but it is rather an incarnate process that affirms their experiences as women. (Joy *et al*., *French Feminists on Religion* 41)

According to Irigaray, it is essential to theorize women's relationships, especially the mother-daughter relationship, along with the consequence of the female's self-love (Whitford, *Luce Irigaray* 81-84). Because of men's obsession with procreation, women are always in a "state of narcissistic insecurity in sexual relations" (*An Ethics* 63). Irigaray's idea, that "a female subject becomes woman if she can unite the maternal/feminine aspects within herself, implies that the love of an other woman is a love of an other who also unites the mother and daughter within herself" (Mulder, *Divine Flesh* 313). This idea of non-duality within duality means that the love between women takes the form of an encounter with the maternal-feminine in other women, as Irigaray calls the female genealogy or 'maternal genealogy' (*Key Writings* 203). Stone concurs with Irigaray's description of female genealogy and suggests that "women always become women by reworking pre-established cultural interpretations of femininity, so that they become located together with all other women within a history of overlapping chains of interpretation" ("Essentialism and Anti-essentialism" 137). Once one genealogy has been reduced to the other's, it becomes impossible to define two different sexes; the genealogy of the woman has been collapsed inside the man's (3). According to Stone, women's genealogy "allows women to pursue concerns that are specific to

them as women, yet which differs from one another as well" (152). Irigarayan women's genealogy provides powerful voices for women as a gender yet differentiate them in a culture where the oppression of women is the norm.

2.3.2 Love of the Other Same: Woman's Relation to the Maternal Feminine

Irigaray makes possible love between women, "love of the other same" on the woman's side (*An Ethics* 99) beside the love of the other. The love for the other of the same sex depends not only upon the love of the female subject for herself, but also upon the existence of a female genealogy. For Irigaray, the relation of female subject with the other female, and the relations among women are rooted in the relation with the mother "to engage in inter-subjective relations and to be able to situate ourselves in a female continuum that links us to the origins of life" (Burke, *et al*., *Engaging with Irigaray* 322). Burke affirms Irigaray's self-love, or love for "the same," essentially a woman's love for her mother, which is the necessary precondition for any love for the other, or love between women and men. Thus, Irigaray's insistence on a female genealogy is closely related to women's need to images and representations of their own to become a woman, as mentioned previously. Irigaray explains the relation with the mother in an interview with Kiki Amsberg and Aafke Steenhuis: "recognizing your mother as a woman means distancing yourself from motherly omnipotence (*Hecate* 198). She adds: "What you can sometimes discover with a woman... in the first place you rediscover and re-experience the mother relation anew. That's very shocking" (201). Irigaray creates

a new kind of relation among women to experience their own autonomy despite their similar genealogy.

Irigarayan female genealogy, as the necessity of the mother-daughter relation, answers to the difficulties among women and the love of and for the other woman, and recalls the Mother Goddess images and Mother Nature as the source of life in Hinduism which represents the cause of the world's creation. *Tāntric* tradition sees the universe "as an interconnected whole in which each part is interdependent with every other part…. The presence of the divine is in everything" (Wallis and Ellik, *Tāntra Illuminated* 148). In the same way, Irigaray refers to women's specific feminine drives which return them to the reality of the maternal body and feminine divine, to the elements which have been forgotten.

> In fact this desire for re-presentation, for presenting oneself in desire is in some ways *taken away from woman at the outset* as a result of the radical devalorization of her 'beginning' that she is inculcated with, subjected to – and to which she subjects herself: is she not born of a castrated mother who could only give birth to a castrated child? This shameful beginning must therefore be forgotten, "repressed"…. Even if woman is sexually repressed, this does not mean that she actively achieved this repression – in order to defer to a valid representation of origin. (*Speculum* 83-4)

Irigaray argues that women's relationship has been relegated to taboo-status in the patriarchal economy, and that it must be brought to light and given its

representation and recognition in the symbolic culture. According to Irigaray, women need to accede to cultural autonomy. She tries to change the perspectives on the relations between women as well as mothers and daughters. Thus, the representation of the relations between women notably is for the representation of the differences and the fecundity of the relations between women. This kind of non-duality within duality describes the distinction between the maternal-feminine in a woman and her mother who gave her life as the necessity 'to conceive of our mothers as women' (Irigaray, "Corps-a-Corps: In Relation to the Mother" 62). In the love of same, the female subject learns to love the maternal-feminine resource in herself, that is, she loves her flesh as the elemental and invisible resource of her life and being, and respects her mother as an other. Irigaray says:

> Mother is she who in shadow is in possession of the subterranean resource; daughter is she who moves about on the surface of the earth, in light. She becomes woman who can in herself unite in her body-womb the most secret, the deepest energies, to life in the light of day. Then no longer is the alliance attraction in an abyss, but an encounter in the flowering of a new generation. (*To Speak is Never Neutral* 241)

The love of the same other explicates the love of mother as she who gives life. "In order to be able to encounter the mother as an other woman, the female subject has to mourn the loss of the mother" as the origin and source of life, "as well as to discover, to find, to turn to, the substrate of life and being within herself"

(Mulder, *Divine Flesh* 313) and "in those natural matters that constitute the origin of our bodies, of our life" (*Sexes and Genealogies* 57). Irigaray in *Marine Lover of Friedrich Nietzsche* suggests the desire for the divine or motherly love as one way of reassuring the female presence:

> Isn't it by forgetting the first waters that you achieve immersion in your abysses and the giddy flight of one who wings far away, perched at such heights that no sap rises there and no thread secures his way? … No doubt they promise new discoveries… For today no God holds you up from heaven. (37-38)

In the second period of her thought, especially in her books *An Ethics of Sexual Difference, I Love to You* (in the chapter 'A Breath That Touches in Words'), *To Be Two, The Age of the Breath*, as well as in her late philosophy (*Between East and West* (a dialogue with yoga), *The Way of Love* and *Sharing the World*), Irigaray has introduced breath as the fundamental element for the individual to share with others in a motherly way. This aspect is equally open to either gender. "Woman is also more capable of preserving the breath in herself, with a view to sharing it with another in amorous love or in motherhood" (*The Mystery of Mary* 10-11). According to Irigaray, "the air we breathe entails an unpaid debt to the maternal" (*An Ethics* 127). It means that each person who breathes on her own does so thanks to the mother who initially breathed for her. In her later work, Irigaray offers the composite of air /breath /spirit as the generative life-force, as a natural substance,

with a vital role in the movement from a simply carnal to a spiritual union (*I Love to You* 148-9). Irigaray introduces mother as the life source for spiritual transformation; however, the mother and air have been forgotten:

> As we move farther away from our condition as living beings, we tend to forget the most indispensable element in life: *air*. The air we breathe, in which we live, speak, appear; the air in which everything 'enters into presence' and can come into being. This air that we never think of has been borrowed from a birth, a growth… that the philosopher forgets. (*An Ethics* 108)

Christianity always projected transcendence into God, forgetting the importance of the breath and body, original gestures of motherly love and, finally, sexual difference. According to Joy (2006), Irigaray's assertion of individuals' way of being has formed through the cultivation of mothers' breath. This feature "renders them more receptive to the natural world and Eastern religion" which connects breath to the materiality of the body (*Divine Love* 136). For Irigaray, as Joy notes, individuals with breathing, "are closer to the Nature" which disrupts the dualities of men/women and culture/nature (140). In an interview with *Il Manifesto*, Irigaray says; "There is neither life nor relation without autonomy, and there is no autonomy without air" (*Why Different?* 137). Irigaray in *The Way of Love* proposes the air and touch for developing a different place for women within the patriarchal symbolic to offer a relation with a different other; as *Tāntrism* seeks it through

breath. Irigaray emphasizes the feminine-mother as the first other – with whom both sexes are in relationship. According to Irigaray, these relationships through the sense of touch have been left without representation in the society, which makes it impossible for women to have an identity independent of being-for-men.

> This is the sense that travels with us from the time of our material conception to the height of our celestial grace, lightness, or glory. We have to return to touch if we are to comprehend where touch became frozen in its passage from the most elemental to the most sophisticated part of its evolution. This will mean that we need to stay both firm and mobile in our cathexes [incarnation], always faithful, that is, to the dimension of touch. ('Divine Women' 59)

Irigaray introduces the mother-daughter relationship, maternal genealogy, and Mother Goddess, as influential factors in the formation of women's subjectivity and their self-discovery. For Irigaray, as Zecevic notes, the status of feminine-divine-elemental and the fundamental relationship with the mother and Great Nature Goddess are forgotten and neglected (*The Speaking Divine Woman* 48). In non-duality within the dualities of nature and culture as well as body and spirit, breathing becomes a figure for recalling one's debt to the natural world and to maternity in remaking culture. Indeed, woman engenders life with breath, and is thus the forerunner of a new age of the spirit:

> This passage to another epoch of the reign of spirit depends upon a cultivation of respiration, a cultivation of breathing in and by women. They are the ones who can share with the other, in particular with man, natural life and spiritual or divine life, if they are capable of transforming their vital breath into spiritual breath. (*BEW* 91)

This evaluation of woman's position in the history of the philosophy as a forgotten being tends to lead to the conclusion that a rather different interaction begins between "the other of the same" and "the other of the other". Irigaray thus introduces the breath as a shared space between "the other of the same" and "the other of the other" to create non-duality within duality where each subject's difference is recognized and appreciated. In the following chapters, non-duality within the dualities of body/mind, self/other, and male/female will be discussed in the selected women writers' novels, using Irigaray's key notions to show how the female protagonists in these novels challenge the hierarchical traditional dualities for expressing their erotic needs and achieving their autonomous gendered identity in the encounter with others in their ethical relationships. Even though the selected novelists are not directly influenced by Irigarayan theories, this study attempts to create a link between their thoughts and works through exploring non-duality within duality.

CHAPTER THREE

NON-DUALITY WITHIN THE DUALITIES OF SELF/OTHER AND NATURE/CULTURE IN EMILY BRONTË'S *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*

3.0 Introduction

This chapter examines the dualities of self/other and nature/culture in Emily Brontë's masterpiece *Wuthering Heights* (1847) through Irigarayan notions of 'sensible transcendental' and love to argue how Brontë's main characters, Catherine and Heathcliff, challenge the traditional hierarchical dualities of self/other and nature/culture in patriarchal society. Catherine and Heathcliff's love relationship in the early part of the novel is based on Irigaray's notions of love and 'sensible transcendental' which address a shared space between the two subjects beyond dualities. As romantic lovers, they act upon their feelings and desires in contrast to Victorian restrictions and Christian religious traditions that give importance to the soul rather than the body (Bloom, *The Victorian Novel* 253). In the early part of novel, Catherine and Heathcliff discover their erotic nature and autonomous being with each other by sharing the same air in the natural landscape of Wuthering Heights, the moors, which allow them the possibility of love. However, they cannot achieve the full measure of non-dual love at the end of the novel due to Catherine's marriage to Edgar and her acceptance of patriarchal dualities represented by the Lintons' world.

3.1 Catherine's Feminine Desire and Irigarayan Feminine *Jouissance*

Emily Brontë's novel, although written during the Victorian era, has its roots in the early "romantic impulse," as Terry Eagleton claims (*Myths of Power* 109). Brontë stands against the Victorian norms which condemn women's passion and regard man's home as ideal and sanctuary (Mitchell, *The Fallen Angel* 83). She reveals "a romantic sensibility" which gives her novel the characteristics of passionate love "although she is generally classed with the Victorians" (Bhattacharyya, *Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights* 1). *Wuthering Heights* is "a romantic narrative of passionate love that reaches the heights of poetry" (67). It is filled with "the effusion of tumultuous passion and high-pitched emotions. In fact, the romantically poetic rendering of elemental passions of Catherine and Heathcliff makes the novel almost akin to a lyrical poem" (*Ibid*).

Emily Brontë is a Victorian novelist, not completely free from the conventionality of the age, but with a mind overshadowed by the emotions and sentiments which are typically romantic in character. Her descriptions of nature and the love of Catherine and Heathcliff contribute greatly to the romantic aspect of the novel. *Wuthering Heights* is "the love story of wild violent passions" in which "the emotional energy rushes in with the turmoil and elemental force of a storm" (3). Brontë describes her heroine's feeling and desire throughout her childhood, adolescence, and adulthood through her diary as well as the eyes of Nelly Dean, the only maternal figure and one of the most influential characters in Catherine's life. Readers learn from Nelly what kind of character Catherine is. Catherine Earnshaw, in her childhood, is introduced as an embodiment of desire and passion.

Independent and domineering, she is never presented as a retiring little girl who obeys her elders and places the feelings of others above her own. She is proud, arrogant, and wild. She often bursts into feelings of stormy passions: "She was so proud it became really impossible to pity her distresses, till she should be chastened into more humility" (*WH* 73).

Nelly describes Catherine in her youth as a wild girl who cannot be tamed, "a wild, wicked slip she was" (60); a girl who is gifted with energetic power: "Certainly she had ways with her such as I never saw a child take up before. Her spirits were always at high-water mark, her tongue always going--singing, laughing, and plaguing everybody who would not do the same" (83). Her father is unable to control or discipline her according to social conventions. He displays his disapproval and attempts to limit her rebelliousness after Catherine teases him: "Catherine, I cannot love thee... Go, say thy prayers, child, and ask God's pardon. I doubt thee and I must rue that we ever reared thee!" (*Ibid*). Catherine's rebellious behavior at this stage of her life overwhelms the defined, trapped, and essentialized definition of womanhood within masculine society. Emily Brontë tries to revise the traditional notion of a silent, domesticated and submissive woman in patriarchal society, thus allowing Catherine to find her social standing beyond the defined gender roles, just as Irigaray determines a special place for women in the community by retaining their own individuality. Irigaray in *Sexes and Genealogies* says:

> How can a woman maintain a margin of singleness for herself, a non-determinism that would allow her to become and remain herself? This margin of freedom and potency gives us the authority yet to grow, to affirm and fulfill ourselves as individuals and members of a community. (72)

Here Irigaray intends to deconstruct the repressive and defined culture of "one" male subject which has alienated women from their erotic nature, while also trying "to discover and preserve the singularity of [her] nature and allow [her] to elaborate its culture" (*Sexes and Genealogies* 148). As Irigaray lets women find their autonomous identity through their own culture and feminine *jouissance*, Emily Brontë allows Catherine to express her feminine desire within the restrictive Victorian society and to claim her autonomous individuality by being with Heathcliff.

3.2 Duality of Nature-Heathcliff and Culture-Edgar

Emily Brontë describes Catherine's movement towards life in nature, the moors, and in being with Heathcliff rather than in the conservative social and cultural life of Edgar. She shows how Catherine tries to challenge the nature-Heathcliff and culture-Edgar binary to find a balance between these two dualities. Clearly, nature plays a significant role for the lovers' solace throughout the novel. In their childhood, Heathcliff and Catherine's happiness comes from the time they spend together all day on the moors, the locus of liberty, far from the social reality

of the Heights. They struggle unendingly to free themselves from society and to find their spiritual fulfillment through nature. The natural landscape of the moors embodies the maturation of the characters.

Brontë uses the metaphor of nature to illuminate the internal nature of both Catherine and Heathcliff who enjoy their free life on the moors: "It was one of their chief amusements to run away to the moors in the morning and remain there all day, and the after punishment grew a mere thing to laugh at…They forgot everything the minute they were together again" (*WH* 87). Brontë describes Catherine and Heathcliff as a part of nature and their being-in-nature as an important factor in their love relation at the level of being. This shared and reciprocal love of Catherine and Heathcliff through their unity with nature is comparable to the Irigarayan 'sensible transcendental' which argues for a share of nature, being-in-nature, and a symbolic redistribution:

> I am carrying the other within me. Nature will thus become the new medium of the dialectical relationship between I and you: I would need to be enveloped by her [i.e. nature] to be able to keep him in myself. Thus he would be sheltered and fed by nature through me. (Irigaray, *Sharing the World* 43)

This being-in-nature, for Irigaray, means sharing breath and vital energies of the cosmos between subjects, and divinizing the world through the body and the senses: "We, men and women, are divine; even more, we are like a part of Creation

– now as a world of the intersubjective – and nature: Divine is the love for the other as other, divine is the praise of nature as nature" (*Key Writings* 170). In the same way, Emily Brontë describes the universal Mother Nature as a shared breath in Catherine and Heathcliff's love relation. Catherine and Heathcliff dwell in nature, accept that part of themselves which is nature. "Catherine and Heathcliff seek to preserve the primordial moment of pre-social harmony, before they fall into history and oppression" (Eagleton, *Myths of Power* 109). They owe their existence not to social and moral assumptions, but rather to their bonds to nature as the most powerful tool of expressing their feelings. This kind of dynamic love and desire between Heathcliff and Catherine is beyond instinct and drive-motivation.

Catherine and Heathcliff experience being-in-the-world and self-consciousness through their inward perception and shared experience with nature in Wuthering Heights, as the lovers in Irigaray's ethics of love enter a transcendental universe where "the two sexes give each other the seeds of life and eternity, the growing generation of and between them both" (*An Ethics* 14). Heathcliff and Catherine appreciate their autonomous individuality in the reciprocal love relationship, beyond social restrictions. Pearce points out that Catherine-Heathcliff's love stands outside of, or anterior to, the constraints and corruption of the Lintons' symbolic world (*Romance Writing* 93). Catherine and Heathcliff's love is beyond earthly ties and possessive love, as is proposed in Irigarayan non-possessive love: "carnal love becomes thus a spiritual path for energy, the flesh becomes spirit and soul thanks to the body itself, loved and respected in its difference, including at the level of breathing" (Irigaray, *BEW* 90).

Catherine and Heathcliff share a mutual love, beyond social custom, yet social custom works to keep them apart: "There might as well be the Atlantic to part us, instead of those four miles" (*WH* 113). Catherine and Heathcliff cannot achieve their individuality once Catherine enters into the conventional Victorian world which functions by male-female binaries and restrictive gender roles. Heathcliff also changes socially and his love turns to revenge after Catherine's acceptance of patriarchal hierarchical dualities by her marriage to Edgar. In her last meeting with Heathcliff, Catherine says of Heathcliff, "That is not my Heathcliff. I shall love mine yet; and take him with me - he's in my soul" (*WH* 260).

Catherine and Heathcliff's love in the natural world of Wuthering Heights is beyond the hierarchical binary opposition of self and other which is constructed through the patriarchal world. She knows that her ties to Heathcliff are stronger than earthly bonds. She does not love Heathcliff superficially; they have shared a childhood which is "half savage and hardy, and free" (126). Catherine identifies her subjective identity in being with Heathcliff when she says "[Heathcliff] shall never know how I love him: and that, not because he is handsome Nelly, but because he is more myself than I am" (*WH* 82). The mutual, reciprocal, and romantic passionate love of Catherine and Heathcliff is shaped in being together. Catherine sees a reflection of her identity in Heathcliff: "What were the use of my creation, if I were entirely contained here?"(*WH* 82).

Catherine's love of Heathcliff is so strong that she loves everything related to him; "I love the ground under his feet, and the air over his head, and everything he touches, and every word he says. I love all his looks, and all his actions, and him

entirely and altogether. There now!" (*WH* 80). Catherine identifies Heathcliff as part of her self and recognizes her own identity in being with Heathcliff: "Nelly, I am Heathcliff! He's always, always in my mind: not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself, but as my own being. So don't talk of our separation again; it is impracticable" (*WH* 82). Catherine's statement shows that she has a shared affinity with Heathcliff and her hidden energy draws her to Heathcliff. They transcend the traditional duality of self and other by their non-possessive love. Catherine's "self-naming and self-reflection", when she calls herself 'Heathcliff,' is "a declaration of identity" (Jacobs, "*Wuthering Heights*" 61), and an act of self-reinvention (Eagleton, *Myths of Power* 103; Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman* 265). Catherine and Heathcliff's love is not based on ecstasy, "leaving the self behind toward an inaccessible total other, beyond sensibility" (*I Love to You* 105); rather, it is "[breathing] together, [engendering] together, carnally and spiritually" (124) as Irigaray defines. Catherine and Heathcliff's energetic love is based on their instasy and inner motivation for being with each other.

Catherine's love of Heathcliff by asserting her own being in Heathcliff is comparable to Irigarayan love which is "the motor of becoming, allowing the one and the other to grow. For such love, each must keep their body autonomous. The one should not be the source of the other nor the other of the one. Two lives should embrace and fertilize each other without either being a fixed goal or end for the other" (*Elemental Passions* 27). The most-often quoted explanation of Catherine's

love for Heathcliff, explained to Nelly, is an example of Irigarayan intersubjective and non-possessive love:

> I cannot express it; but surely you and everybody have a notion that there is or should be an existence of yours beyond you….My great miseries in the world have been Heathcliff's miseries, and I watched and felt each from the beginning: my great thought in living is himself. If all else perished and he remained, I should still continue to be; and if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the universe would turn to a mighty stranger: I should not seem a part of it. (*WH* 82)

Brontë valorizes Catherine and Heathcliff's non-hierarchical love relation. They are missing part of each other, and their love relationship in the early part of novel, in the natural world of Wuthering Heights, is addressed as neither instinctive nor drive-motivated, and not merely based on their sexual needs; rather it is described as a kind of mutual, reciprocal and intersubjective love relationship based on their shared breath and autonomous gendered subjectivity beyond the hierarchical dualities and social and cultural norms.

Catherine is Heathcliff's "idol" (*WH* 204). Similarly, Catherine idolizes Heathcliff, as Nelly observes: "She was much too fond of Heathcliff. The greatest punishment we could invent for her was to keep her separate from Heathcliff" (*WH* 83). They grew up together, and each needs the other as a source of comfort.

Catherine is Heathcliff's only source of pleasure; he finds solace only in the time he spends with Catherine. Likewise, Catherine finds her relief in Heathcliff's company, and seeks her enjoyment in her relationship with him, as Nelly expresses their true love: "The little souls were comforting each other...together" (*WH* 85). Heathcliff's love for Catherine is so strong that she becomes the solitary purpose for his existence: "[Heathcliff]'s soul comes to belong not to that world but to Catherine" (Eagleton, *Myths of Power* 113).

Catherine and Heathcliff's being are bound by their similar natures and shared breath. They recognize in each other the same characteristics and nature through non-possessive love relationship when Catherine imagines herself on the moors with Heathcliff and feels at ease in being with Heathcliff rather than in Edgar's house. Heathcliff and Catherine's very being and their gendered identity are founded on their mutual and intersubjective love relationship, as Irigaray defines love which makes possible the lover's alliance and becoming: "You don't find yourself reduced to a factual thing or to an object of my love" (Irigaray, *Key Writings* 14). Catherine and Heathcliff search their autonomous identity in togetherness. "They seek identity even in, and beyond death; they strive to nullify the natural law and merge in oneness, an oneness that is personal, distinct, and unique – not abstract" (Polhemus, *Erotic Faith* 85). Their "personal, distinct, and unique" (*Ibid*) oneness is similar to Irigarayan non-hierarchical dual subjective relationship; "We are body and soul for each other. I want to live in harmony with you and still remain other. I want to draw nearer to you while protecting myself for you" (*To be Two* 13).

3.2.1 Catherine's Relationship with Heathcliff and Edgar and Irigarayan Love

Emily Brontë embodies Catherine and Heathcliff's emotional desire and their non-possessive love beyond the restrictions and boundaries of the patriarchal world, and beyond the love conceived as a social and conventional matter, in the same way that Irigaray defines love beyond the duality of self and other which "limits the reabsorption of the other in the same" (*An Ethics* 169). Irigaray's non-dual love of dual subjects is figured in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* when Brontë rejects the patriarchal logic of the same and addresses the non-possessive love of Heathcliff and Catherine in opposition to the conventional, normative, and heterosexual standards of the Victorian love which is "one of purity….devoid of sexuality and passionate longing" (Mitchell, *The Fallen Angel* 63). Heathcliff and Catherine's love, akin to Irigarayan love beyond dualities, has haunted them from the first time Heathcliff takes the young Catherine in his arms, to their final lasting embrace beyond the grave. Cecil holds that the deeper feelings and love relationship of Emily Brontë's characters are the expressions of their spiritual sameness (*Victorian Novelists* 47). Mary Visick in *The Genesis of 'Wuthering Heights'* (1967) refers to their love "as a metaphor for a communion of the individual being with vitality itself" (41). Although Catherine and Heathcliff see in each other the reflection of their autonomous identity in the natural world of Wuthering Heights, they cannot achieve the full measure of non-dual love when Catherine marries Edgar Linton and enters into the conventional Victorian world, which functions by male-female binaries and restrictive gender roles. Catherine's being a socially

acceptable lady and finally Heathcliff's revenge for Catherine's marriage and betrayal lead to Catherine and Heathcliff's isolation.

Having married Edgar, Catherine conforms to the patriarchal world of the Lintons, performing what Irigaray defines as a "masquerade of femininity", a social construct imposed on women by men (*This Sex* 134). By her marriage, Catherine is separated from her childhood nature and her soul-mate, Heathcliff; is engulfed in the cultural world of the Lintons; and is transformed into an isolated character in Thrushcross Grange. Catherine cannot live torn between the denial of "passion" with Heathcliff and the loveless marriage to Edgar. Her real death occurs when she is separated from Heathcliff. Catherine's marriage to Edgar "tore their souls asunder as surely as if that had been one soul" (Braithwaite, *The Bewitched Parsonage* 179). She cannot live without Heathcliff when the imposed social factors and gender roles create obstacles in the way of her self-development. She feels regret and unhappiness in the social world of the Lintons; required to abandon her passion and desire for Heathcliff, she confesses that "in my soul and in my heart, I'm convinced that I'm wrong!" (*WH* 56).

Catherine's relations with Heathcliff and Edgar are in conflict. She finds her subjective identity through her intersubjective love relationship with Heathcliff, a man free of all conventions and limitations of social norms: "Her conflict is that in the dark-skinned gypsy Heathcliff she finds an equal, she finds the other half of her own wild self who should never fully express itself freely" (Kettle, "Brontë: *Wuthering Heights* (1847)" 205-6). While Heathcliff accepts Catherine as she is, Edgar Linton wants to change her into a socially accepted lady, a defined woman.

Catherine with her energetic feminine power in the early parts of *Wuthering Heights* is now changed to an isolated individual. At Thrushcross Grange, Catherine performs the role accepted socially. She is engulfed in the prison of patriarchy, "in a trap that was set by her own fear of facing society and herself" (Kettle, "Brontë: *Wuthering Heights* (1847)" 206). She cannot release herself from the social imprisonment, from the artificial bondage and restriction of Edgar Linton's patriarchal world which vitiates her self-realization. She has been posited within a space framework which has been formulated according to the Lintons' expectations, which denies her love of Heathcliff. Catherine thinks that marrying Edgar will make her an acceptable lady and "the greatest woman of the neighborhood" (*WH* 55), while she starves her body and soul by her separation from Heathcliff. When Nelly asks Catherine, "Have you considered how you'll bear the separation, and how [Heathcliff will] be deserted in the world?" (58), Catherine responds that her decision to marry Edgar will not affect the love that she and Heathcliff share. She believes that the bond of her love with nature, Heathcliff, is stronger than her relation to culture, Edgar Linton. It originates from their early childhood lived beyond social conventions in the natural landscape of Wuthering Heights.

In contrast to Catherine's loveless relationship with Edgar, love between Catherine and Heathcliff is the most extreme instance of self-consciousness, as Irigaray addresses the divine love: "We are perhaps confronted with the unveiling of another relation with the divine than the one that we already know, a divine not only living with humans but in them, and to be greeted and listened to between us"

(Irigaray, *The Way of Love* 50). Catherine explains to Nelly her true love of Heathcliff by responding to the distinction between Edgar and Heathcliff, and confessing her love of Heathcliff to Nelly; "Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same, and Linton's is as different as a moonbeam from lightning, or frost from fire" (*WH* 82). Here, Brontë describes Catherine and Heathcliff's shared and mutual love, as Irigaray's non-possessive love offers the respect of the natural and spiritual life of self and other.

Catherine compares her loveless relation with Edgar and her unconsummated love relationship with Heathcliff. While Heathcliff's love is fire-like, Edgar's love lacks depth and his soul is as a moonbeam and frost. It is the difference between heat and cold, and passion and indifference. Catherine tells Edgar, "your cold blood cannot be worked into a fever; your veins are full of ice-water, but mine are boiling" (*WH* 107). Contrasting Heathcliff with Edgar, Nelly says: "The contrast resembled what you see in exchanging a bleak, hilly, coal country for a beautiful fertile valley" (*WH* 81). Catherine's relation with Edgar does not bring fulfillment in her life. She wants a love based on mutual participation and not on submission and possession. Catherine distinguishes the non-possessive love of Heathcliff with the submissive and possessive love of Edgar Linton in terms of natural phenomena:

> My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods. Time will change it, I'm well aware, as winter changes the trees — my love

> for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath — a source of little visible delight, but necessary. (*WH* 82)

"The foliage in the woods" is subject to change but Heathcliff and Catherine's love as "the eternal rocks" stands firm and immutable. When Catherine is absorbed into the patriarchal world of the Lintons and becomes "the lady of Thrushcross Grange," "a very dignified person" in "fine clothes" (*WH* 46), she cannot embrace her natural part, Heathcliff. She wishes to join the culture, and civilized society of the Lintons, yet she has the desire of returning to her childhood, to nature, of being with Heathcliff. Nelly describes Catherine's firm hold on her relationship with Heathcliff: "I vexed her frequently by trying to bring down her arrogance… she had a wondrous constancy to old attachments" (*WH* 65). Desiring to "come home," Catherine asserts that she will return to Heathcliff, to Wuthering Heights, to her childhood nature to "be myself" (*WH* 126) once again as Heathcliff's companion, by "a rough journey" (122). She wishes to unite with Heathcliff: "I'm not wishing you greater torment than I have, Heathcliff, I only wish us never to be parted. You are my soul" (*WH* 137). Heathcliff's love is stronger than Edgar Linton's, as can be seen when he expresses his pleasure in being with Catherine as follows:

> Two words would comprehend my future--*death* and *hell*: existence, after losing her, would be hell. Yet I was a fool to fancy for a moment that she valued Edgar Linton's attachment more than mine.

> If he loved with all the powers of his puny being, he couldn't love as much in eighty years as I could in a day. And Catherine has a heart as deep as I have: the sea could be as readily contained in that horse-trough as her whole affection be monopolized by him. (109)

Heathcliff's love for Catherine in the early part of the novel is beyond restrictions, beyond the master-slave relationship, and beyond social conventions, as Irigarayan non-possessive love is beyond the hierarchical and traditional dualities of the patriarchal world. Irigaray's 'sensible transcendental' as "a spiritual path can lead us to love, to thought, to the divine" (Irigaray, *BEW* 83). Iriragay shows the non-hierarchical dualities of nature and culture, and self and other as follows:

> The link uniting or reuniting masculine and feminine must be horizontal and vertical, terrestrial and heavenly…. It must forge an alliance between the divine and mortal, such that the sexual encounter would be a festive celebration and not a disguised or polemical form of the master-slave relationship. (*An Ethics* 17)

Reading Emily Brontë's work through Irigarayan theories indicates that Brontë's characters demand the recognition of their awareness by transcending the boundaries and dualities of society, such as when Catherine and Heathcliff express their erotic love beyond the cultural world of Linton. Catherine confesses her love

of Heathcliff to Nelly, "striking one hand on her forehead, and the other on her breast" and feeling regret in her soul and in her heart for selecting Edgar for marriage instead of Heathcliff (*WH* 156). Heathcliff also affirms his strong love for Catherine by telling Nelly:

> You suppose she has nearly forgotten me? Oh, Nelly! You know she has not! You know as well as I do, that for every thought she spends on Linton she spends a thousand on me! At a most miserable period of my life, I had a notion of the kind: it haunted me on my return to the neighbourhood last summer; but only her own assurance could make me admit the horrible idea again. (*WH* 109)

Heathcliff is unable to tolerate the separation from Catherine after she leaves the Heights and marries Edgar. He struggles with Edgar's patriarchal bourgeois society to reach his beloved, Catherine. Nelly tries to persuade Heathcliff by describing Catherine as a noble lady in the house of the Lintons and says:

> I'll inform you Catherine Linton is as different now from your old friend Catherine Earnshaw, as that young lady is different from me. Her appearance is changed greatly, her character much more so; and the person who is compelled, of necessity, to be her companion, will only sustain his affection hereafter by the remembrance of what she once was, by common humanity, and a sense of duty! (*WH* 118).

Heathcliff, forcing himself to seem calm, answers Nelly, "That is quite possible that your master should have nothing but common humanity and a sense of duty to fall back upon. But do you imagine that I shall leave Catherine to his *duty* and *humanity*? and can you compare my feelings respecting Catherine to his?" (*Ibid*). Here, it is clear that Heathcliff sees in Catherine something more than humanity and duty. Heathcliff confirms that his love of Catherine is prior to socialization, existing before gender roles have been imposed upon them.

In the cultural world of Thrushcross Grange, Catherine feels loneliness, and tries to find an opportunity to be with Heathcliff, to release herself from the social restrictions of the Lintons and to join her lover, Heathcliff. However, her transformation into a socially accepted lady, and her motivation of being a respectable, well-mannered and civilized woman of the Grange lead her to the loss of self-identity, her separation from nature and her earlier consciousness, and the destruction of her and Heathcliff's mutual love. Catherine cannot free herself from the hierarchical duality of culture and nature and is engulfed in cultural restriction which is an obstacle in the way of her and Heathcliff's non-dual love. This confusion about her own self is apparent when, in her delirium at the Grange, Catherine is incapable of recognizing her own face in the mirror, unable to recognize her own reflection. Gilbert and Gubar refer to "the mirror image of [Catherine]", as well as "the oak-paneled bed" (*WH* 110), as a "symbol of the cell in which Catherine has been imprisoned by herself and society" (*The Madwoman* 284). In the cultural world of the Lintons, Catherine cannot discover her

autonomous identity, and therefore becomes an other to herself, fractured into an alterity that is not resolved in identity. She is engulfed by the symbolic mirror of Victorian society, as Irigaray defines man-made mirrors:

> [Mirrors] give access to another order of the visible. Cold, icy, frozen-freezing, and with no respect for the vital, operative qualities of laterality. I see myself in the mirror as if I were an other. I put that other that I am in the mirror between the other and myself, which disconcerts this experience of the inversed laterality of the other. Making me more passive than any passivity of and within my own touch. Forcing me into the within and the beyond of my horizon. Of all possible mastery. (*An Ethics* 170)

Like an Irigarayan frozen-freezing image in the mirror, Catherine's dark image of existence in the single mirror drags her into the void. She loses her autonomous identity in the restrictive patriarchal society of the Lintons and is bewildered and haunted by her antithesis, Catherine Linton, who is repressed in patriarchal society. In the mirror, it is Catherine Linton whose desire for standing in the visible and cultural world, in the role of motherhood and defined womanhood, now stands between her and Heathcliff. Catherine's shattered image in the mirror is the result of adaptation to given and traditional gender roles which have alienated her. Her shattered identity recalls Irigaray's view of a mirror or 'speculum' that reflects the masculine back to himself, confirms his desire and his

identity, and shows women's repression of desire and declined function in the patriarchal world. Irigaray posits that "women as 'the other' excluded from the symbolic exchange can be visible with a 'mirror' (*speculum*) reflecting their own experience and voice in the 'sexual difference'" (Irigaray *et al*., "'Je-Luce Irigaray'" 98). Catherine cannot reflect her own voice in the man-made mirror when her difference is not appreciated in relation to Edgar Linton. She gazes at the mirror and tells Nelly, "Don't you see that face? It is behind there still! Who is it?" Shortly afterward, she suddenly interprets her own error: "Oh dear! I thought I was at home ... lying in my chamber at Wuthering Heights. Because I'm weak, my brain got confused, and I screamed unconsciously" (*WH* 120). She observes herself as an 'other' in the mirror, yet she cannot deconstruct the patriarchal image of mirror. In Thrushcross Grange, Catherine cannot achieve her self-love, as Irigaray describes women's self-love as "the return to oneself, into oneself …from terrestrial to the celestial inner spaces" (*Key Writings* 28). Wion in "The Absent Mother in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*" explains Catherine's disintegration of identity at gazing in the mirror when she cannot recognize herself:

> What seems to be happening to Catherine in this episode is a disintegration of an identity composed precariously of partially incompatible identifications.… But the depth and intensity of her confusion suggests that her dilemma of choosing between Edgar and Heathcliff …. screens a deeper problem, that of accepting the fact

> that she is indeed a separate, individual person, unable to find again the primal oneness with the symbiotic other she has lost. (146)

Catherine is caught between the dualities of culture, accepted by Edgar Linton who attempts to make her over according to conventional female role-stereotypes; and nature, Heathcliff, who represents her desire and love but whom society does not accept. The abyss into which Catherine falls is the disjunction and duality between her self and other, Heathcliff. Rather than beholding the unitary image as an extension of herself, she sees the image as an alienated being. She is not able to create a balance between the duality of culture and nature. Deliriously, having married Edgar, 'Catherine Earnshaw' is alienated and separated from her autonomous identity, from her nature, Heathcliff, and is attached to the patriarchal world of Edgar Linton as 'Catherine Linton'.

> But, supposing at twelve years old, I had been wrenched from the Heights, and every early association, and my all in all, as Heathcliff was at that time, and been converted, at a stroke, into Mrs. Linton, the lady of Thrushcross Grange, and the wife of a stranger; an exile, and outcast, thenceforth, from what had been my world; You may fancy a glimpse of the abyss where I groveled! (*WH* 121)

Catherine in Thrushcross Grange addresses herself as Catherine Earnshaw, her girlhood name in Wuthering Heights where she appreciates her autonomous

identity, experiences freedom, and has a love relation with Heathcliff, who is part of her soul. She does not desire to be called by her married name, Catherine Linton, because she cannot find her autonomous identity in the patriarchal world of the Lintons. Catherine deprives herself of her own being with Heathcliff, from her romantic love with him in the natural landscape of Wuthering Heights, by entering into the social and cultural world of the Lintons. "I'm tired of being enclosed here. I'm wearying to escape into that glorious world, and to be always there: not seeing it dimly through tears, and yearning for it through the walls of an aching heart: but really with it, and in it" (*WH* 160). Catherine wishes for her love, Heathcliff, in Wuthering Heights, but suffers a stifling life in Thrushcross Grange. Her mental, physical, and emotional health deteriorate, and she longs for the romantic childhood she willingly gave away. She begs Nelly to open the window to free herself from the restrictions of the Lintons' world to feel herself in nature beside Heathcliff.

> Oh I am burning! I wish I were out of doors. I wish I were a girl again, half-savage and hardy, and free . . . I'm sure I should be myself were I once among the heather on those hills . . . Open the window again wide, fasten it open! (126)

Catherine tries to release herself from the hierarchical duality of nature and the cultural world of the Lintons by going through the window to return to her childhood, to nature, and to her lover; Heathcliff. Being with Heathcliff and the bond with nature will bring her back to her 'self', opposed to social conventions

and restrictions. This is something that ties her with the Romantic sensibility. Catherine and Heathcliff as earthly beings are "the creation of a powerful romantic imagination" supported by their companionship with nature (Bhattacharyya, *Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights* 8).

Catherine's childhood happiness is lost by adopting the restrictions of culture and civilized society of the Lintons within a stifling room. "The confining spaces of her life become so restricting that even her own body becomes a prison to her, in trying to erase boundaries to find freedom from her marriage and everything that confines and restricts her" (Apter, "Romanticism and Romantic Love in *Wuthering Heights*" 215). Her marriage to Edgar is due to her temporary submission to the attraction of culture, as a possible means of providing support for Heathcliff. However, Catherine cannot achieve her gendered identity in being with Edgar because she must accept social restrictions. "Catherine seeks death as a release from the undesirable tension created by her inability to synthesize a fragmentation necessitated by the constricting environment which provides no outlet for her psychic energy" (Gold, "Catherine Earnshaw" 70–71).

The underlying cause of Catherine's death lies in "her rage against the restrictive bonds…. the role of conventional wife and mother" (Thaden, "Gender Roles in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*" 307). It can be said that Catherine's separation from her soul-mate and from her own nature is due to accepting the hierarchical duality of nature and culture and entering into the conventional Victorian world which functions by male-female binaries, by restrictive gender

roles. Heathcliff also cannot tolerate his separateness from Catherine even after her death. He wants her to haunt him to be with him forever;

> I know that ghosts *have* wandered on earth. Be with me always--take any form--drive me mad! only *do* not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! Oh, God! it is unutterable! I *cannot* live without my life! I *cannot* live without my soul! (*WH* 354)

Nelly describes their love relationship as existing even on the deathbed: "An instant they held asunder; and then how they met I hardly saw, but Catherine made a spring, and he caught her, and they were locked in an embrace from which I thought my mistress would never be released alive" (*WH* 197). Nelly also narrates: "He bestowed more kisses than he ever gave in his life before… but then my mistress had kissed him first" (192). In their silence, "their faces hid against each other, and washed by each other's tears" (194). At her deathbed, Heathcliff begs Catherine "Kiss me again; and don't let me see your eyes! I forgive what you have done to me. I love *my* murderer--but *yours*! How can I?" (*Ibid*). Catherine and Heathcliff's love in their silence can be compared to Irigaray's in-between love. When Irigaray answers, "I am listening to you" and "I give you a silence" (Irigaray, *I Love to You*), integral to this listening and gift of silence is the space between lover and beloved: "It is a silence made possible by the fact that neither I nor you are everything, that each of us is limited," (58) marked by non-hierarchical difference and non-possessive love. This kind of mutual love of instasy between

the two distinct subjects through the function of interiority and silence is reflected in Catherine and Heathcliff's interior relation and silence at the deathbed.

Heathcliff's love of Catherine is so strong that he prays her soul haunts him after her death when he says; "I won't rest till you are with me. I never will!" (105). Heathcliff explains his strong love for Catherine when he cannot live without her: "I have to remind myself to breathe – almost to remind my heart to beat!" (*WH* 354). When Nelly reports Catherine's death to Heathcliff, he "endeavored to pronounce the name, but could not manage it; and compressing his mouth he held as silent combat with his inward agony" (*WH* 353). On hearing the news of Catherine's death Heathcliff beats his head against a tree until blood comes out of his head. Heathcliff seems to have been maddened by the passion of his love for Catherine, and the outburst of which can be witnessed in his last meeting with Catherine before her death in chapter 15. His strong love for Catherine, who is now dead, makes him see hallucinations. "He cried, with frightful vehemence, stamping his foot, and groaning in a sudden paroxysm of ungovernable passion" (276). At the last part of novel he says:

> Why, she's a liar to the end! Where is she? Not *there*--not in heaven—not perished--where? Oh! you said you cared nothing for my sufferings! And I pray one prayer--I repeat it till my tongue stiffens--Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest as long as I am living; you said I killed you--haunt me, then! The murdered *do* haunt their murderers, I believe. (*WH* 254)

Heathcliff is eager to die due to Catherine's death, to "be lost in one repose" (282). Likewise, Catherine is unable to rest in her 'eternal bed' and is forced to fight her way back through the small opening to her "natural paneled bed" (225) in her room at the Heights and to return to Heathcliff. It is her ghost that seems to seek him even after death to make her desire lie beside him. In the last part of the novel, their souls wander the moors, as reported by a passing shepherd boy: "There's Heathcliff and a woman yonder, under t' nab, he blubbered, 'un' I darnut pass 'em" (*WH* 285).

After death, they desire "to escape into that glorious world, and to be always there: not seeing it dimly through tears, and yearning for it through the walls of an aching heart; but really with it, and in it" (*WH* 147). After Catherine's death, Heathcliff feels her mysterious body beside himself: "I felt her by me - I could almost see her, and yet I could not! I ought to have sweet blood then from the anguish my yearning" (248). Heathcliff wants to be haunted by Catherine's ghost after her death when he tells Nelly: "In every cloud, in every tree filling the air at night, and caught by glimpses in every object, by day [he is] surrounded with her image!... The entire world is a dreadful collection of memoranda that she did exist, and that [he has] lost her" (*WH* 178). Heathcliff sees her ghost besides the window and he sobs: "Come in! Come in!.... Catherine do come. Oh do. Oh do – once more! Oh! My heart's darling! Hear me this time, Catherine, at last!" (220). While Catherine was alive, Heathcliff warns Catherine before she dies, "what kind of living will it be when you – Oh, God! Would you like to live with your soul in the grave?" (117).

Brontë shows Heathcliff's strong desire for Catherine when he exhumes Catherine from the grave on the night of her funeral, when he becomes driven to touch her corpse: "I'll have her in my arms again! If she be cold, I'll think it is this north wind that chills me; and if she be motionless, it is sleep" (*WH* 330). Heathcliff "breaks down the barrier surrounding her body, opening her coffin" (349-50) and embraces the cold corpse of his beloved sharing a moment in the wild wind and cold earth. Brontë displays another perspective of their love after eighteen years when Heathcliff exhumes his beloved for the second time: "Of dissolving with her, and being more happy still!" he answered, "Do you suppose I dread any change of that sort? I expected such a transformation on raising the lid, but I'm better pleased that it should not commence till I share it" (*WH* 429). Heathcliff believes that Catherine survives, in flesh as well as in spirit, and according to his declaration for upwards of twenty years her face was "hers yet" (*Ibid*). Catherine cannot truly die while Heathcliff lives and Heathcliff cannot truly live with Catherine dead. Catherine Earnshaw haunts Wuthering Heights with her unreconciled and unquiet desire, and her soul wanders between Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights in the quest for her lover Heathcliff.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter examines the duality of self and other in terms of Irigarayan non-possessive love and 'sensible transcendental' in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. Like Irigarayan love between the female subject and the other as a harmonious coming together, Catherine and Heathcliff's erotic desire and

reciprocal love relation in the natural world of Wuthering Heights were shown as existing beyond the stifling confines of Victorian patriarchal society. The non-possessive love of Catherine and Heathcliff in the early part of the novel was free of a master-disciple relationship and beyond the given and hierarchical duality of self and other in patriarchal society, in an age that human experience was patterned according to the predefined male and female roles.

Although Emily Brontë's female protagonist, Catherine, was able to release herself from patriarchal definition of femininity by expressing her desire and love to Heathcliff in the early part of the novel in the natural world of Wuthering Heights, she did not achieve the full measure of non-duality with Heathcliff at the end of novel, because she marries Edgar and accepts the gender dualities and the restrictive social norms of the Victorian age.

CHAPTER FOUR

SELF-LOVE AND LOVE OF OTHER IN CHARLOTTE BRONTË'S *JANE EYRE*

4.0 Introduction

This chapter examines non-duality within the dualities of body/mind and self/other in Charlotte Brontë's masterpiece *Jane Eyre* (1848) through Irigaray's notions of love and the feminine divine in order to argue how Charlotte Brontë's main characters achieve their autonomous gendered identity and the irreducible and non-possessive love by expressing their erotic desire. It discusses the resistance of Charlotte Brontë's female protagonist, Jane Eyre, to the dichotomies of active subject/passive object, self/other, body/mind, passion/intellect, and the domination/submission through her ethical and intersubjective relationship with Rochester, her counterpart, rather than being an object of his desire. It is argued how Jane challenges these dualities of patriarchal society and the logic of the same by expressing her erotic nature. Her liberation from these dualities can be read through the lens of Irigaray's notions of love and feminine divine which focus on women's autonomous gendered identity and dual subjective interrelation. Charlotte Brontë indicates how women are able to achieve individuality, social standing, and dual yet interrelated subjectivity by expressing their erotic desire.

Charlotte Brontë, "a social revolutionary of her time in the realm of English fiction" and "the pioneer of the novel of emancipation" (Singh, *Charlotte Brontë*

4), revolts against sexual repression. According to Nestor, she asserts that "women not only experience sexual desire but have a right to expect sexual fulfillment" (qtd. in Nestor, *Charlotte Brontë* 34). She believes in the triumph of love for women: "Love was the breath of life to Charlotte Brontë; the be-all and end-all of human life" (Rickett, A *History of English Literature* 521). Unlike most of her predecessors such as Jane Austen and William Makepeace Thackeray, who stress the necessity of chastising and controlling women's desire, Charlotte Brontë shapes the love relationship of her main characters, Jane and Rochester, within a romantic context beyond social limitations and restrictions of Victorian society, and beyond the traditional marriage and binaries of passion and reason by endowing her main characters with overwhelmingly passionate desire.

Charlotte Brontë's writing offers a struggle and violation against socially prescribed conventional roles and dualities, as she allows her heroine, Jane, to express her feelings through her writing and narration. She describes Jane's quest for the liberation and autonomous identity through self-expression and love, just as Irigaray depicts women's becoming-for-themselves and their subjectivity as central to the ethics of sexual difference to free women from the symbolic order in which "female sexuality has always been conceptualized on the basis of masculine parameters" (Irigaray, *This Sex* 23). Brontë posits women in equality with men. She has Jane Eyre tell us that:

> Women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; […] and it

> is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings. It is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex. (*JE* 117)

Brontë introduces Jane Eyre as a passionate figure, and tries to free her from being "the angel of the house" by giving free rein to her feminine desires. Helen Moglen in *Charlotte Brontë: the Self Conceived* (1976), and Gilbert and Gubar in *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1976) show how Charlotte Brontë tries to expose women's desire through their love relationship. Nudd in "Rediscovering *Jane Eyre* through its Adaptations" introduces *Jane Eyre* as "one of the most passionate of romantic novels" (140). Jane challenges the externally imposed "definitions of the self and establishes her own" (Noble, "Burns, Blake, and Romantic Revolt" 199).

Throughout the novel, Jane struggles with dualities to liberate herself from social restrictions, displacement, and repression within the patriarchal social context of the Victorian age when women were dominated, mainly confined to their homes, forbidden to express their feelings and sexual desires, and regarded as "inferior to men and were therefore to be submissive" (Mitchell, *The Fallen Angel* 17). Jane becomes able to express her desire and to reject the labels imposed on her by men like John Reed and Mr. Brocklehurst, who insist on her sacrifice, submission and obedience and endeavor to master her in accordance with Victorian norms. She turns against her aunt, who has been trying to control her in the light of

Victorian norms, and finds freedom in doing so: "Ere I had finished this reply, my soul began to expand, to exult, with the strangest sense of freedom, of triumph, I ever felt. It seemed as if an invisible bond had burst, and that I had struggled out into unhoped-for liberty" (*JE* 237). Jane tries to free herself from the restrictions of erotic desire in creating a balance between her passion and spirit. She also resists complying with the expectations of passionate Edward Rochester, and escapes from the rational domination of St. John Rivers. She resists accepting externally imposed perceptions by maintaining "the authority of her own perceptions, feelings, and experiences. . . , an essentially Romantic authority" (Lanser, *Fictions of Authority* 183). Jane's self-development is begun in her second engagement and love relation with Rochester, in opposition to the strict Christian beliefs of Puritanical desire which mortify the body for the sake of the spirit, as Brocklehurst, Helen Burns and St. John Rivers recommend. Charlotte Brontë describes Jane's final success in relation to Rochester, in the same way that Irigaray explains the ethical and dynamic love beyond dualities.

4.1 Jane's Self-development, Self-awareness and Self-love

Jane Eyre's self-realization happens throughout the different stages of her life - early childhood, adolescence, and adulthood - in relation to family, friends, and lovers. "Jane undergoes a voyage of self-discovery, retains some of her initial characteristics from her early childhood; she also develops further by acquiring characteristics as an adolescent and young adult which transfigure her into a new person" (Bloom, *Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre* 28-29). In these stages, Jane

attempts to free herself from mastery and oppression within the confines of Gateshead, Lowood, Thornfield and Moor House (Santos, "Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*: Working to Escape Feminine Exile" 1). In her childhood at Gateshead, Jane lives in a household that represses candid expression of her desire. At this stage, she describes herself as an alien and isolated being who has not come to terms with herself, her environment, or society in general:

> I was a discord in Gateshead-hall: I was like nobody there: I had nothing in harmony with Mrs. Reed or her children, or her chosen vassalage. If they did not love me, in fact, as little did I love them. They were not bound to regard with affection a thing that could not sympathize with one amongst them, a heterogeneous thing, opposed to them in temperament, in capacity, in propensities; a useless thing, incapable of serving their interest, or adding to their pleasure; a noxious thing, cherishing the germs of indignation at their treatment, of contempt of their judgment. (*JE* 16)

At this stage, Jane does not behave in the way society expects of her in the restrictive Victorian age, to be 'an angel in the house'. Rather, she feels the need to experience and express love. She replies to Mrs. Reed: "You think I have no feelings, and that I can do without one bit of love or kindness; but I cannot live so" (*JE* 63). She is punished for her rebellious stubborn behavior and then is placed in

the red-room. Brontë displays an internal conflict within Jane in the red-room, as Irigaray in *An Ethics* refers to women's entrapment in patriarchal society:

> [She lacks] the power to clothe herself [...] in something that would speak her jouissance, her sexuate body, and would offer her the clothing and protection *outside* of that home which she is *inside*. Tradition places her within the home, sheltered in the home. But that home [...] places her in *internal exile*. (65)

In the red-room, the two sides of Jane's psyche, her passion and reason, are in conflict; thus she suffers a kind of "internal exile", unsure of who she is. The shock of imprisonment in the red-room teaches her to come to terms with what she must do in her quest for self-actualization, to control her rebellious behavior and passionate desire, and to discover her true self, while her reason makes her aware of unjust and insupportable oppression in red room: "'Unjust!—unjust!' said my reason, forced by the agonizing stimulus into precocious though transitory power: and Resolve, equally wrought up, instigated some strange expedient to achieve escape from insupportable oppression—as running away" (*JE* 23). Jane articulates "her rational desire for liberty" and her "passionate drive toward freedom" (Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman* 348, 342).

In the first passage from Gateshead to Lowood School, Jane tries to free herself from the restrictions and loneliness of her cruel aunt's house. Learning from Helen, she changes her attitude to life. However, she moves from the darkness and

the spiritual unconsciousness of Lowood to Thornfield, and from dependence and obedience to independence and self-knowledge, only when she enters into a love relationship with Rochester. She is forced to leave Rochester when he begins to threaten her self-development, in order to resolve the tension she has experienced throughout her relationship with him. She escapes from Rochester's possessive passionate desire in Thornfield, from patriarchal society, through meditation in nature, towards self-realization, taking "a road which led from the sun" (*JE* 373). Jane tries to find her identity through nature; this can be connected to Irigaray's ideas about "the particular female interaction with nature" which "empower[s] women instead of perpetuating the relegation of women to the subordinate sphere in the culture/nature binary" (Irigaray and Green, *Luce Irigaray* 3).

Jane's move from Thornfield to Moor House and her encounter with St. John help her to discover herself and her true love and to feel real freedom. Her journey of self-discovery through leaving the passionate Rochester and living at Marsh End is an internal experience. It is a connection between her nature, her feelings, perceptions and passions, and the culture in which she lives. In her quest for self-awareness, Jane distances herself from her sensual pursuits, and goes through the different stages of identification like intellectual awareness and meditation. She describes her inner journey as follows:

> I can live alone, if self-respect and circumstances require me so to do. I need not sell my soul to buy bliss. I have an inward treasure born with me, which

> can keep me alive if all extraneous delights should be withheld, or offered only at a price I cannot afford to give. (*JE* 277)

Jane escapes from Rochester's possessive love through her meditation in loneliness to reach a level of awareness. She discovers her deep inner relationship with nature and being in tune with the natural elements. She looks for solace through "the universal mother" within her inner self. She "seeks her breast and asks repose" (*JE* 163). Jane seeks the path of spiritual consciousness and self-love through embracing "Mighty Mother" (*JE* 223), just as Irigaray refers to women's relationship to the mother, to origin, offering female desire in contrast to the universalizing single sex model of the Christian masculinity: "[Woman] remains within oneself… to communicate with the soul of the world… and afterwards to return to the solitude and silence of her soul" (*Key Writings* 167). Charlotte Brontë describes the role of "Mighty Spirit" (*JE* 262) in shaping Jane's identity and self-awareness in a way strikingly similar to the way in which Irigaray addresses feminine divine as a potential female transcendental relation and a total identification with Her. For Irigaray, women's prolonged and unresolved bond with the mother is essential in establishing their relational sense of identity, while Brontë sees this female power as a "sympathetic extension . . . of the personality" (Moglen, *Charlotte Brontë* 131). Jane leaves Rochester by drawing upon an "inward power" (*JE* 266), a universal feminine divine energy, a source of her feminine spiritual strength and fulfillment. Jane hears the whispers of the universal Mother, "My daughter, flee temptation," and she replies, "Mother, I will" (*JE* 281). Nancy Pell

has claimed that Brontë is articulating an alternate religious system: "She is replacing God the father with the universal mother, Nature" ("Resistance, Rebellion, and Marriage" 402). Heilman in "Charlotte Brontë, Reason, and the Moon" (283-302) interprets the goddess as an emblem of intuitive or imaginative aspects of the universe. Brontë intentionally locates divine power internally as an "inward sensation" in "the Nature-Imagination-God" through Jane's transition from patriarchal "God" to "Mighty Spirit" (*JE* 262).

During her three days of rambling in an unsocialized setting, the center of the universe shifts to Nature which allows Jane to love herself, when she looks at the pure sky and feels how "the dew fell with propitious softness" (163). She expresses her love of Nature when she says: "Nature seemed to me benign and good; I thought she loved me, outcast as I was; and I, who from man could anticipate only mistrust, rejection, insult, clung to her with filial fondness. To-night, at least, I would be her guest, as I was her child: my mother would lodge me without money and without price" (*Ibid*). Jane's desire of nature and her self-love are fundamental to her love relation; as Irigaray points out "it would be desirable that personal becoming, accompany the becoming of the other" (*Key Writings* 188). The fundamental relationship of Jane with Mother Nature as the female genealogy and the lost sense of touch is rediscovered, revalued, and reaches its fullest expression in this part of the novel. Jane's knowledge of her inner self as a result of divine assistance "in the open air" (*JE* 268) helps her to return to Rochester when she hears his voice crying "Jane" three times, asking her to come back to him. "I recalled the voice that I had heard … It seemed in me—not in the external world" (*JE* 266).

Jane says to herself: "[I]t is the work of nature. She was roused, and did - no miracle - but her best" (*JE* 262). It is as if another part of her is reminding her of what she really needs. Jane describes this intense awareness of her self as follows:

> My heart beat fast and thick: I heard its throb. Suddenly it stood still to an inexpressible feeling that thrilled it through, and pressed at once to my head and extremities… it acted on my senses… they were now summoned, and forced to wake. They rose expectant: Eye and ear awaited while the flesh quivered on my bones. (*JE* 369)

Nature allows Jane to achieve self-awareness and self-knowledge and to cultivate her imagination, her private fantasies for the encounter with Rochester. Jane says:

> [Nature] allow my mind's eye to dwell on whatever bright visions rose before it—and, certainly, they were many and glowing ... and best of all, to open my inward ear to a tale that was never ended—a tale my imagination created, and narrated continuously; quickened with all of incident, life, fire, feeling, that I desired and had not in my actual existence. (*JE* 269)

Jane's self-identification by resisting the duality of feeling and reason directs her toward her lover, Rochester. "Jane's imagination takes her beyond the

limits of her present knowledge" (Glen, *Charlotte Brontë* 130). The seeds of Jane and Rochester's love flourish in their isolation, through the appreciation of nature. Jane's self-awareness and self-knowledge are awakened when she experiences a direct relation with nature, as she prays in solitude of nature: "I desired liberty; for liberty I gasped; for liberty I uttered a prayer … then I cried,…, grant me at least a new servitude! (*JE* 374). Abrahams says, "Nature tends towards celebrating the divinity of humanity rather than reaffirming an otherworldly deity" (qtd. in LaMonaca, *Paradise Deferred* 40).

Charlotte Brontë brings to light a new way of looking at the natural world, in contrast to patriarchal society which tries to usurp and dominate Nature and define it as the Other to masculine world. In this novel, Nature is internalized and is considered a part of the feminine Self. Her heroine tries to maintain harmony with nature and to subvert patriarchal definitions of womanhood. Brontë creates a connection between women and Nature, and proves that society's expectations of woman as Nature have to be rethought and reworked, and that a close relationship with the natural world empowers women and femininity more than was previously thought and believed. Brontë shows Jane's resistance to the accepted norm of society through Jane's experience in the exploration of Nature and her female nature. Where the patriarchal society tries to confine women in the patriarchal culture, Brontë develops Jane within and against those confines and allows her to experience her female desire by exploring the interal and external nature. Santos points out, "[Jane Eyre] presents a series of oppressive situations in which continue a dynamic process that embodies the struggle for identity" (*Charlotte Brontë's Jane*

Eyre 1). It is with this self-knowledge that Jane decides to marry Rochester when she is able to differentiate the true love of Rochester from St. John's passionless love.

4.2 Jane and Bertha's Sexual Desire and Irigarayan Feminine Divine

Charlotte Brontë, like Irigaray, proposes feminine desire for expressing women's feelings and their self-knowledge. "Brontë was a woman whom we know from her writing was full of passionate desires and impulses" (Fraser, *Charlotte Brontë* 186). She endows her heroine with desire and passion. While patriarchy reduces desire between sexes to procreation, Brontë overcomes social conventions, traditional dualities, and religious barriers by introducing Jane as a passionate as well as rational girl. Jane describes the integration of her thought and imagination as follows:

> I looked into my heart, examined its thoughts and feelings, and endeavored to bring back with a strict hand such as had been straying through imagination's boundless and trackless waste, into the safe fold of common sense. (*JE* 140)

Brontë reconciles the polarities of the spiritual and the sexual to free Jane from the symbolic roles which confine her to nurturing and physical motherhood and womanhood and channel her desires into fulfilling male ends. She proposes Jane's feminine desire in a society where religion plays a role to suppress feminine

sexuality and the patriarchy is dominant. She gives Jane the freedom of voice to express her feelings, as Irigaray offers "becoming the woman" as an alternative to "completely masculine" ideal of becoming: "becoming God" (*To Be Two* 92). Jane rejects both elements of passion and spirit in their extremities and manages to find a balance between the dualities to develop her individual identity. She finds the union of what at first appears to be opposites. She finds an outlet for her passionate intensity in imagination which carries her beyond the constraints of physical sensation.

In contrast to Jane who tries to manage her desires, Brontë portrays Bertha Mason, with her strong passionate desire, as a "goblin" and "demon" (280), to suggest how passionate sexual instinct taken to an extreme is horrifying and the manifestation of madness; thus, she shows the forbidden potentials of human instinct. Bertha's madness is represented by her extreme passionate desire which must be controlled to be a good Victorian woman: "Bertha is the suppressed self which all women writers experience" (Gilbert and Gubar, *Madwoman in the Attic* 223). She shows the danger of giving free rein to passion with balance. Rochester suggests that it is Bertha's "excess" of sexuality and passion that develops "the germs of insanity" (*JE* 270) and her insanity originates in a tendency to be "intemperate and unchaste" (*Ibid*). Noticeably, Rochester's accusations are intended to deny Bertha as a proper wife. Rochester does not accept an "infernal union with her" (268) and calls her female passionate desire a "crime" (*Ibid*). Bertha's madness is offered as a consequence of uncontrolled and unchanneled fiery energy, and is associated with the strong sexual appetite of the unruly flesh

which leads to "moral insanity" (Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own* 120). Showalter creates "the connection between madness and the body, fiery emotions, and sexual passion in Victorian ideology" (*A Literature of Their Own* 113). She proposes two extreme elements of the mind and the body in *Jane Eyre* in spiritual and angelic Helen Burns and passionate Bertha Mason. Jane refuses to conform to the self-denying image of Helen Burns, and resists following Bertha's passionate desire which leads to her madness and exclusion from society.

Bertha is a distorted mirror-image of Jane, a kind of warning to Jane to control her passionate desire. She becomes the agent of freeing Jane from the taboo of passion and sexuality, representing the projections of the suppressed or totally unconscious tendencies of the psyche itself. Jane sympathizes with Bertha as "that unfortunate lady" and criticizes Rochester's behavior with Bertha. Bertha is a victim of patriarchal imprisonment, yet she in turn becomes the agent of the fall of patriarchy. While Rochester views Jane as a good woman in the conventional images of patriarchy, "a fairy, an elf, a sprite", and an angel (*JE* 241), Bertha represents the antithesis of this conventional feminine image.

Bertha's condemnation to madness and her psychological conflict in confronting patriarchal norms is comparable to Irigaray's interpretation of women's madness and hysteria, and the corporeal suffering of female insanity as the effect of women's incorporation within a symbolic order. For Irigaray, "women's madness and hysteria,…, is the effect of women's subjection to a symbolic order which is alien to the female flesh" (Mulder, *Divine Flesh* 3). These women suffer in their bodies, because they lack the symbolic means to express and

channel their desire. This interpretation implies, however, that Irigaray sees this suffering as an indication of a desire which cannot be recognized in the dominant symbolic order. She indicates how society cannot eliminate the innate disruptive, revolutionary desire force of the female, and therefore labels mad any woman who tries to express her feminine desire. Irigaray accepts the figure of the madwoman as liberating and redemptive. She changes the symbolic thought of corporeal suffering of mad and hysterical women by constructing a divine female, a feminine social position, and by defining a gendered identity for women. Irigaray says:

> Thus [...] woman remains the place for the inscription of repressions. All of which demands that, without knowing it, she should provide a basis for such fantasies as the amputation of her sex organ, and that the 'anatomy' of her body should put up the security for reality. [...] She will therefore be despoiled, without recourse, of all valid, valuable images of her sex/organs, her body. She is condemned to 'psychosis,' or at best, 'hysteria,' for lack—censorship, foreclusion, repression—of a valid signifier for her 'first' desire and for her sex/organs. (*Speculum* 55)

As Irigaray offers the balance of dualities, Brontë attempts to show the balance of conflicting extremities and dualities of passion and reason in Jane's feelings and experiences. Jane's inner struggle between dualities of sense and

sensibilities, and passion and reason is clearly visible in the way she controls her feeling in these following extracts:

> Sense would resist delirium: judgment would warn passion. (*JE* 133)
>
> I was actually permitting myself to experience a sickening sense of disappointment; but rallying my wits, and recollecting my principles, I at once called my sensations to order. (*JE* 141)
>
> Ere long, I had reason to congratulate myself on the course of wholesome discipline to which I had thus forced my feelings to submit. (*Ibid*)

Jane struggles with the traditional dualities and extremities of passionate desire and rationality since her early rebellious nature has taught her to resist the dominant passion. As a result, she learns to manage her body and mind as Irigaray emphsizes the balance between dualities.

4.3 Lack of Balance between Dualities in Jane's Encounter with St. John

Jane's encounter with St. John Rivers is a threat to her identity and power of self-determination. Jane's relationship with St. John is different from that with Rochester. In contrast to Rochester, St. John represses all passionate desires in favor of more spiritual and rational considerations. He tries to suppress Jane's passionate flame, and asks her to be his rational wife and to help him in his missionary duty. Jane cannot envision the submission of her desire, and the denial of her own self. Jane struggles with St. John's superimposed feelings of duty as she did with the

passionate Rochester. Jane says to St. John: "I have a woman's heart; but not where you are concerned; for you I have only a comrade's constancy" (*JE* 359).

Jane tries to find a balance between the extremes of rationality and passion, between the confused sense of love of God and the passionate love of Rochester. She says of St John that she "cannot receive from him the bridal ring, endure all the forms of love and know the spirit was quite absent" (*JE* 356). She struggles with the apparent benefits of the offer he makes her, telling herself, "Is not the occupation he now offers me truly the most glorious man can adopt or God can assign?" (*Ibid*). She tells him, "I freely consent to go with you as your fellow-missionary, but not as your wife; I cannot marry you and become a part of you" (*JE* 357). She confesses, "I can do what he wants me to do," but she adds, "Alas! If I join St. John, I abandon half myself" (*Ibid*). If she goes to India with St. John, accepting continual repression and constraint as his wife, she will be subordinate to him, be compelled to abandon her passionate and emotional part of her own self, and will be separated from Rochester. St. John not only suppresses his own desire but also seeks to deny Jane's longing entirely. He tells her; "You are formed for labour, not for love" (*JE* 384), in his attempt to persuade her to marry him. Jane cannot accept the male-centered love that obliterates her self-development and individuality. When St. John attempts to bring Jane's identity in line with his aspirations, Jane prevents him from repressing her sexual needs. She defends passionate romantic love and holds contempt for St. John's emotionless love: "'I scorn your idea of love' I could not help saying, as I rose up and stood before him, leaning my back against the rock. 'I scorn the counterfeit sentiment you offer: yes,

St. John, and I scorn you when you offer it'" (*JE* 359-360). Jane rejects St. John's "imperious masculinity" and his ideas of love which consist of reason and practicalities, and insult Jane's identity and love (Eagleton, *Myths of Power* 21). St. John counters Jane's argument with the following statement:

> Once you wrench your heart from man, and fix it on your Maker, the advancement of the maker's spiritual kingdom on earth will be your chief delight and endeavor; you will be ready to do at once whatever furthers that end. You will see what impetus would be given to your efforts and mine by our physical and mental union in marriage. (*JE* 357)

For St. John, there is only one love, the dedication to the masculine God. He denies Jane's desire, and prefers pure rationality. His religion "serves only as a vehicle of masculine domination" (Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman* 366); therefore, Jane rejects a life devoid of sensuality, and refuses his "patriarchal religious value-system for an earthly paradise of marital equality with the reformed and chastened Rochester" (*JE* 366). Unlike St. John's spiritual love, Jane sees carnal desire as a vital part of herself and desires a non-possessive love, just as Irigaray points to the feminine desire as well as women's ethical relation with others for developing their subjectivity. Jane clearly refuses the loveless marriage to St. John whose first kiss is an "experimental kiss" (*JE* 397), as he is pleased with her

grave obedience. His kiss is like that of ice or marble, devoid of passion. St. John says of himself:

> I am simply, in my original state - stripped of that blood-bleached robe with which Christianity covers human deformity - a cold, hard, ambitious man.... Reason, and not Feeling, is my guide: my ambition is unlimited; my desire to rise higher, to do more than others, insatiable. (*JE* 330)

Jane challenges St. John's goals which repress his own passions by demanding a balance of feeling and reason, and sense and sensibility. She comes to this conclusion in her own reflections on St. John's words: "Feeling without judgment is a washy draught indeed; but judgment untempered by feeling is too bitter and husky a morsel for human deglutition" (*JE* 258). St. John is equipped with "probing eyes difficult to fathom. He seemed to use them rather as instruments to search other people's thoughts, than as agents to reveal his own" (*JE* 398). These eyes "search [Jane] through and through" (*JE* 403), for St. John is sounding out her inner nature, seeking a means to bend her to his will. He denies Jane's sense of subjectivity and, like Mr. Brocklehurst of Lowood, usurps her drives and imposes his will. By degrees, Jane admits, "he acquired a certain influence over me that took away my liberty of mind. . . . I fell under a freezing spell. When he said 'go,' I went; 'come,' I came; 'do this,' I did it.... I could not resist him" (*JE* 374). Jane, however, recognizes that the acceptance of St. John's offer of a loveless marriage would be

to lose her sense of self. She knows that to allow herself to be transformed into his "useful tool" would be to succumb to a miserable, passionless existence:

> It would be to disown half my nature, stifle half my faculties. . . . As his wife - at his side always, and always restrained, and always checked - forced to keep the fire of my nature continually low, to compel it to burn inwardly and never utter a cry, though the imprisoned flame consumed vital after vital - this would be unendurable. (*JE* 347)

Jane tries to free herself from possessive love of St. John who forces her to obey an image of masculine god. She rejects this patriarchal view because her soul and body would be imprisoned by St. John's male-centered thoughts. She rejects entering into a love based only on reason and repression of her feelings. Jane's refusal is "the last necessary affirmation of her own identity and integrity" (Nestor, *Charlotte Brontë* 64). Sally Shuttleworth points to the conflict between St. John and Jane in their relation (*Charlotte Brontë and Victorian Psychology* 178). Jane is lowered to an object position under St John's severe gaze of authoritative patriarchy, thus, she battles for self-definition and to reverse the male-centered definition of womanhood. St. John's proposal forces Jane to ponder the questions of love and selfhood. She insists on the value of the self and refuses self-sacrifice and St. John's mission of love for "higher purposes" (*JE* 373).

St. John, as a missionary devoted merely to serving a masculine God, sees Jane as the perfect complement to his mission and attempts to transform her in a spiritual sense. His faith has been shaped by obeying the masculine God. He is truly an example of hyper-masculinized stoicism. Jane realizes that the martyrdom she has temporarily embraced from St. John destroys her character and would be an act of self-destruction. St. John has replaced love of Jane with love of his masculine God who supports men. Jane cannot affirm her subjective identity in relation to the patriarchal figure, St. John, who sees Jane as an object, in contrast to Irigarayan subjectivity which "avoid(s) falling back into the horizon of the reduction of the subject to the object" (*I Love to You* 111). St. John identifies her passion as dangerous and represses her desires in reaching God. His love, in the forms of bondage and male control, imposes over Jane and robs Jane of her sense of self. St. John masters his own passion and subjugates Jane by the force of his will.

> He laid his hand on my head [like Jesus] as he uttered the last words. He had spoken earnestly, mildly: his look was not, indeed, that of a lover beholding his mistress; but it was that of a pastor recalling his wandering sheep - or better, of a guardian angel watching the soul for which he is responsible. All men of talent, whether they be men of feeling or not... provided only they be sincere - have their sublime moments: when they subdue and rule. (*JE* 368)

When Jane declares that "domestic endearments and household joys" are the "best things in the world!" (*JE* 393), St. John exhorts Jane to look beyond the "transient objects" of "ties of the flesh" (396) to be more ambitious in employing the talents given to her by her Creator, her God. St. John's possessive manner reflects Victorian patriarchal order, in which wives were practically owned by their husbands. This order violates Jane's autonomy. St. John and Jane obviously have very differing ideas of love, as shown by St. John's words to Jane: "Jane, you would not repent marrying me – be certain of that; we must be married. I repeat it: there is no other way; and undoubtedly enough of love would follow upon marriage to render the union right even in your eyes" (*JE* 346). Neither the loveless conventionalism with neglect of personal aspirations offered by St. John nor the extreme passionate desire offered by Rochester can satisfy Jane's needs for self-fulfillment at this stage. The impassioned Rochester tempts Jane to passion, and the passionless St. John prefers reason over emotion. Jane resists accepting conditions that do not allow her to follow the inclinations of both reason and passion.

At this stage, Jane cannot accept either St. John or Rochester, both of whom attempt to impose masculine expectations upon her. She learns that the masculine God forces humans to follow certain patterns, so instead, she looks for a divinity within herself, and for an ideal romantic love: "I do not want a stranger – unsympathising, alien, different from me; I want my kindred: those with whom I have full fellow-feeling" (*JE* 343). It is not masculine God that has answered her heart's call but a deity that she prays to inside. Nature as Mother Goddess helps Jane to appreciate her autonomous identity and the deity within herself. She states

that "I broke from St. John, who would have detained me. It was MY time to assume ascendency. MY powers were in play, and in force" (*JE* 370). In accordance with Irigaray's notion of divinity, Jane turns to feminine divinity for her individuation and self-realization before she can form a reciprocal and mutual relationship. To experience the true love of Rochester, Jane resolves her crisis of identity and the conflict between intimacy and isolation. As Irigaray explains, "If women do not have access to society and to culture", they remain in a state of neglect and they neither recognize nor love themselves/each other; they lack mediation for "the operations of sublimation"; "love remains impossible for them" (*An Ethics* 67). Therefore, Jane tries to achieve a personal autonomy and symbolic and cultural position before love of Rochester.

4.4 The Intersubjective Love of Jane and Rochester and Irigarayan Love

Charlotte Brontë challenges Victorian norms by going beyond patriarchal limitations and expectations in an imagined space of cultural neutrality, and portrays Jane and Rochester's romantic and emotional expressions of love and their ultimate self-fulfillment through their words in their second engagement, similar to ways in which Irigaray's ideas of feminine discourse based on the touch and the voice suggest the senses should be used to explore the interval (love). Jane and Rochester express their desire and love through their words. From the start, Rochester sees in Jane a certain wisdom, and reads Jane's mental replies in her countenance, and he is able to "read the language of her eyes" (*JE* 138). This idea of the eyes as windows to the soul is clearly a reflection of Jane and Rochester's

knowledge of each other. Rochester secretly idolizes Jane; indeed, he attempts to make an "idol" of Jane (*JE* 270-2), as Heathcliff idolizes Catherine in the early part of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. Jane also sees Rochester as an ideal love when she says:

> [Rochester] is not to them what he is to me, I thought he is not of their kind. I believe he is of mine;--I am sure he is, --I feel akin to him,--I understand the language of his countenance and movements; though rank and wealth ever sever us widely, I have something in my brain and heart, in my blood and nerves that assimilates me mentally to him…For when I say I am of his kind, I do not mean that I have his force to influence, and his spell to attract: I mean only that I have certain tastes and feelings in common with him I must, then, repeat continually that we are forever sundered:- and yet, while I breathe and think, I must love him. (*JE* 203)

Jane considers herself akin to Rochester in terms of their nature and "tastes and feelings" (*Ibid*). Rochester discovers Jane's feelings about himself when he asks "are you anything akin to me, do you think, Jane?" (*Ibid*). Jane also discovers an inner world of imagination and passionate attachment to Rochester, realizing that "we are forever sundered; and yet, while I breathe and think, I must love him" (*Ibid*). Rochester reveals his equal nature to Jane as follows:

> I sometimes have a queer feeling with regard to you- especially when you are near me, as now: it is as if I had a string somewhere under my left ribs, tightly and inextricable knotted to a similar string situated in the corresponding quarter of your little frame. (*JE* 317-18)

Rochester's reference to his "left ribs, tightly and inextricable knotted to a similar string situated in the corresponding quarter of your little frame" (*Ibid*) addresses their similar and equal natures. He tries to share his thoughts and secrets with Jane:

> You, with your gravity, considerateness, and caution were made to be the recipient of secrets. Besides, I know what sort of a mind I have placed in communication with my own… It is a peculiar mind: it is a unique one. Happily I do not mean to harm it: but, if I did, it would not take harm from me. The more you and I converse, the better; for while I cannot blight you, you may refresh me. (*JE* 168)

Rochester tries to conquer Jane not by force, but by the love games he indulges in with her: "look wicked, Jane… coin one of your wild, shy, provoking smiles: tell me that you hate me - tease me, vex me" (310). These love games are in effect, power games, and Jane uses her power to both arouse and control his passion; "Yet after all my task was not an easy one," Jane admits, "often I would rather have pleased him than teased him" (302). In the early stage of their

relationship, their expression of love is not based on non-duality within duality of reason and mind; rather it is based on Rochester's passionate desire which is described as a "marriage of the senses" in his "Byronic wake" (*JE* 305). He is, "rather like Vulcan" (*JE* 328), repeatedly associated with images of fire. "His presence is sunshine," "more cheering than the brightest fire," and there is "strange fire in his look" (*JE* 171). Jane likens his "active energy" to "a thunderbolt" (*JE* 222). Rochester talks of "a fervent, a solemn passion [that] fuses you and me in one" (*JE* 307). He appeals to Jane's latent passion: "You are cold," he tells her; "no contact strikes the fire from you that is in you. . . I have seen what a fire-spirit you can be" (*JE* 297, 302). Rochester describes Jane as "the object I best liked to see" (*JE* 178). But she recoils from his passionate desire, shunning it "as one would fire, lightning, or anything else that is bright but antipathetic" (*JE* 135).

In her relationship with Rochester, Jane attempts to react as "the shade" (210), because she knows that "the fire scorches [her]" (243). Finally, when he proposes that Jane become his mistress, Rochester threatens to overwhelm her: "forth flashed the fire from his eyes. ... He seemed to devour me with his flaming glance: physically, I felt. . . Powerless as stubble exposed to the draught and glow of a furnace" (*JE* 365). Since Jane fears the destruction of her identity in the blaze of Rochester's passion, she struggles against being engulfed by the passionate feelings in order to maintain her independent identity and self-consciousness. Jane perceives that the extreme attachment she feels for Rochester threatens the survival of her own essence even before the entanglement with Bertha, Rochester's mad wife, comes to light. Jane and Rochester's initial attempt at a marriage is

unsuccessful because Jane is threatened to become another Bertha, a wife "sold" into marriage and identity loss. In her first engagement with passionate Rochester, Jane cannot accept and marry him as an equal partner. There is a danger that Rochester's fire would consume Jane, and she would allow it. That is what she has to step back from. She realizes that if she continues on the path she has chosen, her life with Rochester, as it stands now, would ultimately destroy her. At this stage, Rochester and Jane's relation is based on possessive love as Rochester says to Jane:

> Jane, you please me, and you master me…. And while I am twining the soft, silken skein round my finger, it sends a thrill up my arm to my heart. I am influenced – conquered; and the influence is sweeter than I can express; and the conquest I undergo has a witchery beyond any triumph I can win. (*JE* 229)

In the reply to Rochester, Jane says; "You don't talk very wisely just now; any more than those gentlemen acted very wisely" (*Ibid*). Jane understands that Rochester's love at this stage is a master-servant relation based on the dualities of mind and passion.

Jane proves her individuality in the second encounter with Rochester by her return to him when she is able to affirm that "I am" (*JE* 414-16). Now, she is ready for intimacy and love of Rochester in her independence and self-confidence. Moglen maintains that Jane resolves her inner conflict between passion and reason (*Charlotte Brontë* 142). She returns to find that Rochester is now a "broken idol"

(*JE* 386), whose "flaming glance" of passion which had nearly "devoured" her, is now "rayless" and "the fire burns low in the grate" (*JE* 393); and the "hand of fiery iron" which once "grasped [her] vitals" (*JE* 383) has been severed. Rochester has also been chastised for his passionate excesses. "I was proud of my strength," he tells Jane; "but what is it now? . . . I experience remorse, repentance. . . I humbly entreat my Redeemer to give me strength to lead henceforth a purer life than I have done hitherto!" (393). As Rochester had been "a fierce falcon" (*JE* 215) and Jane a vulnerable "dove," "linnet" or "sparrow" (383, 394), he is now a "caged eagle. . . Chained to a perch" (*JE* 393). His possessive power has subsided. Now, Jane's relationship with Rochester is beyond the egotistic, narcissistic and possessive nature of the early part of the novel. Jane describes their love as follows:

> There was a pleasure in my services, most full, most exquisite, even though sad. . . . He loved me so truly that he knew no reluctance in profiting by my attendance: he felt I loved him so fondly that to yield that attendance was to indulge my sweetest wishes. (*JE* 476)

Jane defies social and gender restrictions by referring to Rochester's "pleasure in my services" (*Ibid*), a pleasure in physical as well as spiritual intimacy with Rochester in their utopian woodland. Her imagination, emotion, intellect, and desire are evoked in her love relationship with Rochester, and transcend the possible social configurations. Her reason and emotion battle within her though at first, the passion overcomes her reason: "Oh, comply! … Tell him you love him

and will be his. Who in the world cares for you?" But reason replies, "I care for myself. The more solitary, the more friendless, the more unsustained I am, the more I will respect myself" (*JE* 302). What is achieved at the end is the balance of the duality of mind and passion.

> Every atom of your flesh is as dear to me as my own: in pain and sickness it would still be dear. Your mind is my treasure, and if it were broken, it would be my treasure still: if you raved, my arms should confine you, and not a strait waistcoat--your grasp, even in fury, would have a charm for me: if you flew at me as wildly as that woman did this morning, I should receive you in an embrace, at least as fond as it would be restrictive. I should not shrink from you with disgust as I did from her: in your quiet moments you should have no watcher and no nurse but me; and I could hang over you with untiring tenderness, though you gave me no smile in return; and never weary of gazing into your eyes, though they had no longer a ray of recognition for me. (*JE* 348)

The love of Jane and Rochester in the form of two different becomings with the integration of duality of passion and reason is in accordance with the Irigarayan definition of love based on perception rather than sensation. Irigarayan perception emphasizes the creation of divine love between two distinct subjects by acknowledging the two subjects' autonomous individuality. Irigaray creates the

invisible aspects of the subjectivity and disrupts ideas of mastery and slavery in light of perception not sensation. In the Irigarayan definition of love beyond sensibilities, each partner is ecstatically transformed into a state of angelic embodiment and an infinite divine becoming, but as Brontë points out, Rochester and Jane's love in the form of sensation in the early part of the novel would have separated Jane from her subjectivity and true self. Jane's attraction to Rochester and the confession of her feelings for him are clarified in the garden of Thornfield Hall when she says: "Do you think I am an automaton? A machine without feelings?" (*JE* 296). Jane describes her becoming in being with Rochester; "His presence in a room was more cheering than the brightest fire" (*Ibid*).

Jane and Rochester's non-possessive love is based on perception and instasy. Their final perception of respectful love allows them to go beyond the early hierarchical relation of mastery-slavery, and beyond the instinctual, possessive and reducible love, just as Irigaray describes an unconsummated love relation of two distinct subjects. Brontë creates a condition beyond the traditional dualities of self/other and mind/body in Jane and Rochester's love. Jane no longer is an object of Rochester's desire, but a speaking subject who discovers her subjective autonomy and self- knowledge in a journey towards her true lover, Rochester. She expresses her non-possessive love as follows:

> There was no harassing restraint, no repressing of glee and vivacity with him; for with him I was at perfect ease, because I knew I suited him: all I said or did seemed either to console or revive him.

> Delightful consciousness! It brought to life and light my whole nature: in his presence I thoroughly lived; and he lived in mine. (*JE* 485)

Charlotte Brontë describes Jane and Rochester's ethical, irreducible, mutual and intersubjective love relation when Rochester offers his love to Jane by saying, "I offer you my hand, my heart, and a share of all my possessions" (*JE* 319). He appreciates Jane's subjective identity and longs for her love: "I longed for thee, Janet! Oh, I longed for thee both with soul and flesh!" (*JE* 396). Here, Rochester urges Jane spiritually and physically to share her love with him, as Irigarayan love refers to a shared, dynamic, mutual, and intersubjective space between the two different subjects. This shared space does not allow for the appropriation of one to the other; rather the lovers have experienced their autonomous yet interrelational identities through their own space of freedom.

Jane and Rochester's self-realization and their dual desire which occur through their expanded minds and throbbing bodies is comparable to Irigarayan 'double gesture', a movement toward the other, and a return to the self; a movement between two subjects that maintains an interval. Rochester confesses his passionate feelings to Jane, "You – you strange – you almost unearthly thing! I love you as my own flesh" (*JE* 320), and Jane declares her love to Rochester "face to face, with what I reverence, with what I delight in, with an original, a vigorous, an expanded mind" (*JE* 265). Jane confesses her passionate love for Rochester even in dreams:

> At this period of my life, my heart far oftener swelled with thankfulness then sank with dejection.… I used to rush into strange dreams at night….dreams where, amidst unusual scenes, charged with adventure, with agitating risk and romantic chance, I still again and again met Mr. Rochester, always at some exciting crisis; and then the sense of being in his arms, hearing his voice, meeting his eye, touching his hand and cheek, loving him, being loved by him—the hope of passing a lifetime at his side, would be renewed, with all its first force and fire. Then I awoke. (*JE* 405)

Whereas previously interchanges with Rochester left Jane merely "flushed and feverish" (*JE* 147), their irreducible love at the end leads to being "ever together" (432). Brontë's description of Jane and Rochester's mysterious and non-possessive love is comparable to Irigarayan love full of the respect and mystery of the other subject: "Although the other must be respected absolutely as other, that doesn't mean we should consider him or her as the absolute we seek" (*Key Writing* 183). Jane and Rochester appreciate their subjective and interrelated identity through the experience of their mystery when Rochester sees in Jane a divinity: "I have received the pilgrim — a disguised deity" (*JE* 120). Jane claims her autonomy by being her own mistress in her second stay with Rochester at Ferndean Manor: "I told you I am independent, sir,…, I am my own mistress" (*JE* 385), without becoming either "a clothed hyena or a sacrificial lamb" (*JE* 257-8). Gilbert and Gubar suggest that the novel offers "an optimistic portrait of an egalitarian

relationship beyond the medium of the flesh" (*The Madwoman* 223). What Jane discovers through the climax of self-consciousness is that "the paradise for which she longs is not St. John's heaven of spiritual transcendence but rather an earthly paradise of physical and spiritual fulfillment" (*Ibid*) in relationship to Rochester. Brontë makes the paradise of self and other in equality on earth, not in a "heaven yonder" (*JE* 235); a union of "healthy-minded" individuals in an earthly paradise within "an alliance which does not oppose a genuinely human and creative life lived in this world" (Qualls, *The Secular Pilgrims of Victorian Fiction* 46).

Charlotte Brontë's characters achieve their subjective gendered identity and intersubjective love in the same way as Irigaray addresses genders' divine love: "We are faithful to our own self as a gender, and that we only experience one part of spirit, limited as we are to our generic identity" (*I Love to You* 144). At the end, Rochester expresses his love to Jane beyond the power of his social and cultural status in patriarchal society.

> I have for the first time found what I can truly love—I have found you. You are my sympathy — my better self—my good angel—I am bound to you with a strong attachment. I think you good, gifted, lovely: a fervent, a solemn passion is conceived in my heart; it leans to you, draws you to my center and spring of life, wraps my existence about you- and kindling in pure, powerful flame, fuses you and me in one. (*JE* 307)

Rochester does not call Jane an object of his desire, but a unique and independent individual as his "better self" and a "good angel" (*Ibid*). Rochester tells her: "I ask you to pass through life at my side - to be my second self, and best earthly companion" (*JE* 352). Rochester asks her to be his equal by expressing his feelings to Jane when "his face was very much agitated and very much flushed, and there were strong workings in the features, and strange gleams in the eyes" (*JE* 398). He says to Jane: "come to me—come to me entirely now…. Make my happiness — I will make yours" (*JE* 399). This episode addresses Irigarayan non-possessive love beyond hierarchical dualities of patriarchal world. Jane expresses her desire and love to Rochester in the other part: "I turned my lips to the hand that lay on my shoulder. I loved him very much—more than I could trust myself to say—more than words had power to express" (*JE* 389). Jane pridefully asserts that she has "just as much soul as [Rochester does]" (*JE* 323), claiming that in a "medium of custom" (*JE* 355), they would be equal. Jane says to Rochester; "It is my spirit that addresses your spirit; just as if both had passed through the grave, and we stood at God's feet, equal,—as we are!" (*JE* 396). Here, Rochester "encloses [Jane] in his arms, gathering [her] to his breast, pressing his lips on [her] lips" (*Ibid*).

The silenced and isolated Jane who was denied her subjective identity in the early part of the novel, now at Ferndean, a pastoral safe haven far from the dominant culture and social restrictions, stands in the equality 'in spirit' and mutual love with Rochester. Rochester accepts Jane as his new bride in equality. "My bride is here. My equal is here, and my likeness. Jane, will you marry me?" (*JE* 395). They form

their subjective identities not through their common social position, rather through self-exploration and intimate relation. Eagleton suggests that Jane's autonomy and self-sufficiency keep Rochester attracted to her; subsequently, the continuous interplay of dependency and autonomy draws Jane and Rochester together (*Myths of Power* 18). *Jane Eyre* offers "a new vision of mutuality between men and women" (Foster, *Victorian Women's Fiction* 87). Jane and Rochester's love is beyond social restrictions. "The truth of this relationship is an interior truth, as remote from social reality" (Moglen, *Charlotte Brontë* 145). Jane expresses her true love to Rochester when she says: "I love you better now, when I can really be useful to you, than I did in your state of proud independence, when you disdained every part but that of the giver and protector" (*JE* 393). At Ferndean, Jane achieves self-knowledge, autonomous position, mutual and non-possessive love with Rochester. She says:

> I know what it is to live entirely for and with what I love best on earth. I hold myself supremely blest – blest beyond what language can express; because I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine. No woman was ever nearer to her mate than I am: ever more absolutely bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. I know no weariness of my Edward's society: he knows none of mine, any more than we each do of the pulsation of the heart that beats in our separate bosoms; consequently, we are ever together. To be together is for us to be at once as free as in solitude, as gay as in company.

> We talk, I believe, all day long: to talk to each other is but a more animated and an audible thinking. All my confidence is bestowed on him, all his confidence is devoted to me; we are precisely suited in character – perfect concord is the result. (*JE* 431)

Jane and Rochester's mutual love and "supremely blest" union (*Ibid*) become possible through respecting their individuality and transcending the traditional dualities, when they share a heartbeat within their separate bodies, "bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh" in a "perfect concord" (*Ibid*), and unify their minds within a shared mental space, "mentally shake hands" (*JE* 468). It is an image of a new heaven and earth — a paradise regained on earth. While Brontë attempts to move heaven to earth, the divine to the earthly, Jane and Rochester are not part of the real, conventional world; as Moglen has noted, *Jane Eyre* is an attempt to find "spiritual meaning in human experience" (*Charlotte Brontë* 139). Jane and Rochester undergo a quest for a paradise of non-possessive love, described by "mutuality" and "sharing of thoughts, work, feelings" (*JE* 428). They feel autonomous and positively dependent, "as free as in solitude, as gay as in company" (*Ibid*).

Brontë creates an autonomous individuality and dual subjectivity for her characters just as Irigaray portrays each sex's freedom and mobility according to each subject's gender, yet with the touch of the other's universal. Irigaray refers to the 'otherness of sexes' and being unknown in 'sexual difference' when "the development of each encounter is with the other as other. The development of the

other is towards their absolute" (*Key Writings* 173). In the same way, Brontë shows Jane and Rochester's dynamic love when Jane says;

> My future husband was becoming to me my whole world, and more than the world: almost my hope of heaven. He stood between me and every thought of religion, as an eclipse intervenes between man and the broad sun. (*JE* 277)

Jane and Rochester develop their identities in each other's presence. The intimate and emotional relationship that exists primarily between Jane and Rochester appears to be a kind of "pure relationship" (Giddens, "The Trajectory of the Self" 258–264). Giddens acknowledges that:

> In a pure relationship, the individual does not simply 'recognize the other' and in the responses of that other find his self-identity affirmed. Rather. . . self-identity is negotiated through linked processes of self-exploration and the development of intimacy with the other. Such processes help create 'shared histories' of a kind potentially more tightly bound than those characteristic of individuals who share experiences by virtue of a common social position. (264)

Rochester and Jane's early master-servant relationship changes to the irreducible and non-possessive love relationship on making "shared histories" (*Ibid*). Rochester does not attempt to change Jane's true self; he respects the otherness of Jane, just as Irigaray claims that "I recognize you means that I cannot know you in thought or in flesh. The power of a negative prevails between us… You are transcendent to me, just as I am to you… I cannot completely identify you, even identify with you. You are irreducible to me, inaccessible in a way" (*I Love to You* 103). This recognition requires two distinct subjects who are not master and slave, but two different sexes, inaccessible to each other, and yet able to communicate because of what is between them; love.

Charlotte Brontë describes the mutual love of her characters as an "equivalent center of being" (De Groot, *"Equal We Are"* 48). She depicts Rochester and Jane's self-consciousness and unconsummated love as being distinct from its meaning within Christian discourse, as Irigarayan love is "establishing a chiasmus or double loop in which each can go toward the other and come back to itself" thanks to the inter-determination of the two places or, in other words, thanks to the fact that each place contains a place for the other through its own limited nature (*An Ethics* 9). Jane and Rochester enjoy the "paradise of union" (*JE* 321); they become the mirror images of each other. They enhance their energetic power through their irreducible love. Rochester recognizes in Jane his own possibility for transformation: "my heart was a sort of charnel; it will now be a shrine" (*JE* 168). At the end of the novel, Jane and Rochester accept each other as distinct gendered subjects when Rochester moves beyond "instinctual or drive-related attraction and

natural immediacy" (*I Love to You* 147), as Irigaray defines. Rochester expresses his non-possessive love of Jane as follows:

> Never was anything at once so frail and so indomitable. A mere reed she feels in my hand! I could bend her with my finger and thumb: and what good would it do if I bent, if I uptore, If I crushed her? Consider that eye: consider the resolute, wild, free thing looking out of it, defying me, with more than courage – with a stern triumph. Whatever I do with its cage, I cannot get at it – the savage, beautiful creature! If I tear, if I rend the slight prison, my outrage will only let the captive loose. Conqueror I might be of the house; but the inmate would escape to heaven before I could call myself possessor of its clay dwelling-place. And it is you, spirit- with will and energy, and virtue and purity – that I want: not alone your brittle frame. Of yourself, you could come with soft flight and nestle against my heart, if you would: seized against your will, you will elude the grasp like an essence - you will vanish ere I inhale your fragrance. Oh! Come, Jane, come. (*JE* 405-6)

Rochester's insistence on Jane's staying with him and his strong love for Jane are shown in his respect to her as a separate gender. He does not merely want "[Jane's] brittle frame" (*Ibid*), her body, but he wants to share her heart and spirit as well.

4.5 Conclusion

Charlotte Brontë made endeavors to create a world where no hierarchical system of domination or oppression operated. Her heroine, Jane, healed her fragmented psyche by expressing her desire beyond the imposed patriarchal world of the Reeds, Brocklehurst, the immature Rochester, and St. John Rivers, all of whom demanded her subjugation within an androcentric social structure. She challenged the dualities of matter and spirit and discovered her autonomous subjectivity by expressing her female desire and love of Rochester within the restrictive Victorian patriarchal world, as Irigarayan love and 'feminine divine' liberated women from the phallogocentric structure of Western masculinity beyond dualities of body and mind, and let them love themselves and others. As Irigaray notes, women's subjective autonomy, individuality, self-love, which were repressed within the patriarchal world, could be reappreciated through expressing desire in the intersubjective relation with the other distinct subject. Brontë portrayed Jane and Rochester as separate genders who experienced their self-awareness in relation to each other, as defined in Irigarayan dual subjectivity, in which the self persistently pursued the other, and yet there was a distance between the self and other.

CHAPTER FIVE

NON-DUALITY WITHIN DUALITY OF SENSIBLE AND TRANSCENDENTAL IN ALICE WALKER'S *THE COLOR PURPLE*

5.0 Introduction

I have found Irigaray's 'feminine divine' and 'sensible transcendental' applicable to Alice Walker's masterpiece and epistolary novel *The Color Purple* (1982) to argue how Alice Walker rethinks the traditional religious discourse and masculine models of subjectivity towards non-duality within duality of body and divinity. Like the Brontës' female characters who express their feminine desire through their narrations, Walker's African-American female character, Celie, struggles to achieve her self-knowledge and liberation through writing letters, narrating her own sufferings and repression within patriarchal world, and acknowledging her body and her erotic needs. While the female characters in the Brontës' novels appreciate their subjectivity in an intersubjective relation to their male counterparts, the sense of self-discovery and subjective identity in Walker's novel comes through a reconnection with women's genealogy.

There is an interaction between Alice Walker's private and social life with second wave feminism, beginning in the early 1960s and continuing to the present time and coexisting with third wave feminism, with a focus on resisting social, political, and cultural problems, injustices, sexism and women's repression. Alice

Walker, an African-American womanist and a black feminist writer, talks about the African-American world and the lives and experiences of black women during second wave feminism in the United States. As a revolutionary writer, she gives voice to black women who are oppressed by black men (hooks, "Reading and Resistance" 93). She raises not only the question of race, but also gender oppression in her novel as "it had been the crucial issue against which black women were protesting in the 1970s" (Moore, *In the Life and in the Spirit* 8). She discusses her own life, the second American wave of feminism, the oppressed black women who fight to reconstruct their own world and their own subjective identity and to achieve self-consciousness and liberation.

In a racist and sexist world that devalues black women, Walker celebrates women-to-women relationship and gives them more inner and spiritual power and physical beauty, thus, encouraging them to love themselves and other women, in the same way as Irigaray emphasizes women's genealogy: "When you say I love you - here, close to yourself, close to me - you are saying I love me. You don't 'give' me anything in touching yourself, in touching me: touching yourself again through me" (Irigaray, "When Our Lips Speak Together" 206). Irigarayan woman-to-woman relationships based on certain commonalities which exist among women fits into the study of Walker's novel to prove non-duality within duality of sexual body and spiritual consciousness. "What need, attraction, passion, one feels for someone for some woman, like oneself.... But the need, the charm felt for one's like will be repressed, denied, turned into their opposites in what is labeled 'normal femininity'" (Irigaray, *Speculum* 103-4). Walker's characters struggle against these

impositions of 'normal femininity', to find duality within non-duality among women.

In contrast to the West's symbolic system which associates the male with lightness and reason and the female with darkness and body, Walker in *The Color Purple* revises the deep symbolic meanings embedded in patriarchal culture, and appreciates the feminine desire for the black women's self-love, self-consciousness and liberation, as Irigaray's feminine divinity and 'sensible transcendental' acknowledge women's self-development and their empowered divine body within patriarchal society. Celie, the female protagonist in *The Color Purple*, articulates her body and her *jouissance* without continuing to be the mirror image of the universal gender. Her black female body becomes no more a silent witness to all actions of men, but a sign of her authenticity.

5.1 Walker's Womanism

By the early 1970s, African-American women began forming black feminism to fight the oppressions that black women faced. Only in the 1980s did the situation for black women begin to improve mainly because many African-American writers began writing more seriously on the freedom, liberation, and the equality of black women (Moore, *In the Life and in the Spirit* 8). Among them, Alice Walker was influenced by women's spiritual movement of the late 1970s and early 1980s when black women were routinely oppressed by black male society (*Ibid*). Walker has described the high rate of sexual violence on black women, and the male's control over their sexuality (Walker, *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens*

171). She emphasizes the need for women's support and protection of other women to achieve their identity and self-awareness. She introduces the term "womanism,' a gender-crossing view, to resist the dominant culture, beyond the essentialist models of male and female, marking black women's differences from mainstream white American feminism. Walker defines a black woman's subjective awareness and knowledge differently from cultural constructions of her gender and sexuality. She claims that women cannot discover their subjective identity and cannot participate in patriarchal discourse or escape from it when they are situated in a negative space by the male gaze as the object of desire.

In her womanist idea, Walker describes a woman who "loves the Spirit", thus presenting spirituality as an integral part of the womanist project (*In Search of Our Mother's Gardens* xi-xii). For Walker, 'spirit' is a concept rooted in her African-American heritage, as she states, "if there is one thing African-Americans and native Americans have retained… it is probably the belief that everything is inhabited by spirit" (252). Walker, a womanist, speaks about the interrelation and interdependence of sexism, racism, and class oppression in her books. In fact, her ideas about womanism began to develop after she noticed that other feminist movements, led especially by white middle-class women, ignored the oppression of black women. Her womanism responds to both racism within the feminist movement and wider society, as well as sexism and the oppressive tendencies within the black community itself.

Walker, a significant voice of African-American queer studies in the 1980s on womanism, criticizes the masculine God, privileges the integrity of spirit, and

disrupts the binary assumptions of two defined genders, of man/woman and white/black. Her womanism is about the black women's strengths and love of themselves emotionally; establishing women's friendship and sisterly unity, and validating "women who love women and stand behind all black women in their quest for self-definition" (Bates, *Alice Walker* 288-9). Walker tries to create opportunities for women to access power that has historically been denied in mainstream religion constructed around the dominance and power of the 'father' and the masculinist ideals. She creates new frameworks within which to conceive a positive vision of the female body and sexuality. For her, female friendship, as a form of courage and confidence, allows women to stand against oppression, to narrate their own stories, and to find their position as equal to men. Walker describes the plight of "black women whose spirituality was so intense, so deep, so unconscious, that they were themselves unaware of the richness they held" (*In Search of our Mother's Gardens* 231).

Walker's queer approach further deconstructs the fixed and essential conceptions of sex and gender, and breaks down the dominant roles of patriarchy and the biological and universal gender roles. Her queer theory questions patriarchal social and cultural norms, notions of gender and reproductive sexuality. She eliminates the prevailing and traditional dualities and the social constructions of male power and female powerlessness. "Social and sexual domination and submission in *The Color Purple* are interrogated with reversing the genders of the subject and object" (Jordon, *et al*., *A Companion to African-American Studies* 314). Walker rejects the hierarchical and rigid distinctions of gender and sex and the

conventional tradition of male domination to create a spiritual equality. She explains non-duality within dualities as follows:

> You have a female and male spirit, [and] you have a male and female sexuality… This Western duality of restricted gender roles that we have, that we are really burdened by… this need to be sure that every woman is locked into femininity and every man is locked into masculinity is destructive to women. (qtd. in Simcikova, *To Live Fully* 43-4)

Walker's view of the body as the spiritual mean is a reflection of Irigarayan 'feminine divine'. Walker, like Irigaray, creates a balance between body and spirit and transforms the idea of universal dichotomies of male/female, mind/body, and spirit/matter by rejecting biological essentialism as destiny in favour of spiritual consciousness. In the same way that Irigaray proposes body as a spiritual way, Walker introduces the body as a pathway to spiritual enlightenment. Body, intellect, and spirit are integrated into a non-dominating relationship. For Walker, women's spiritual awakening begins with their bodies. Despite the fact that Walker was raised Christian, "her 'eclectic spirituality' is a blend of 'Buddhism, and shamanist-influenced experience'" (Floyd-Thomas, *Deeper Shades of Purple* 169). Her womanism highlights the emotional, physical, and mental union. "Her emphasis is always on the inherent unity in all life – of body and mind, of flesh and spirit, and especially of male and female" (Weston, "Who Touches This Touches a Woman" 156). Walker believes that "despite our differences in gender, ethnicity and class,

individuals are spiritually equal" (qtd. in Simcikova, *To Live Fully* 58). Simcikova notes, "for Walker, desires, feelings, and emotions are the expression of our soul, our spirit, and to repress them is to be dishonest with ourselves, to deny parts of ourselves, and to close ourselves off from our freedom" and "when you express the true emotion, you feel incredibly liberated" (*To Live Fully* 35). As a womanist, she resists the dominant culture of patriarchy not simply for expressing women's physical and bodily desire; rather she "loves individual men and women, sexually and/or nonsexually, committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female" (Walker, *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens* xii). She believes that individuals achieve wholeness by challenging the duality of body and spirit through interaction with the others of the other sex or the same sex.

5.2 Celie's Sexed Body in *The Color Purple* and Irigaray's 'Feminine Divinity'

There is an interrelation of the Irigarayan notion of 'feminine divinity' with Walker's view of feminine *jouissance*. Walker believes that women need to segregate themselves from male discourses and map out their gender identity on their own terms, to learn to love themselves. It is only through self-love that a woman is capable of entering into a relationship. In *The Color Purple*, Alice Walker highlights Celie's sexual power to develop her spiritual wholeness, just as the Irigarayan 'feminine divine' shows the female body as a powerful creative force in women's enlightenment. Walker introduces Celie's body as a site of her spirituality and a means of awakening the divinity within her, just as Irigaray claims: "it is

desire itself that awakens us to a life generally asleep in us. To desire really represents an awakening" (*BEW* 82).

At the novel's beginning, Celie, a fourteen-year old marginalized black woman, experiences and endures sexual abuse by her step-father and later by her husband. At this stage, Celie could not appreciate her feminine body since she only seems to have experienced male abuse of her body, and was unaware that she was more than an object. She has been conditioned to believe that she has to be obedient to men. Here, Celie is deprived of her own voice to express herself. She begins writing letters to the masculine god whom she thinks may provide her with a voice. The key sentence in the beginning of the novel strongly shows the dominance of men: "You better not never tell nobody but God" (*CP* 1). This statement is uttered by Celie's step-father after he rapes her. This threat is meant to silence her in the face of the sexual injustice she endures. This sentence follows the oppression which Celie faces as an abused woman in her relations with men, as a black woman in relation to a masculine god whom she envisions as "all white…like some stout white man work at the bank" (*CP* 91). She reports only to this masculine god about the cruelty she endures in her life. She is told to obey the masculine god and knows the consequences of not obeying her step-father's commands.

Celie's conceptualization of God is directly linked to her experiences with men such as Pa. Her step-father, manifestation of the masculine image of God, silences her body which is offered to the male world. Male-centered society enforces Celie's subjugation and erases her subjectivity. She lives in a patriarchal world where men have everything in control and God the Father is introduced as

the most powerful man. Thus, she learns to fear men, yet is forced to be dependent upon them as well.

Trapped in patriarchal society, Celie appeals to God: "Maybe you can give me a sign letting me know what is happening to me" (*CP* 11). When she is asked whose baby she is carrying, Celie tells us that: "I say God's. I don't know no other man or what else to say" (*CP* 12). When she expresses her sufferings to the masculine god, she does not receive any response and sign from God; therefore, she stops worshipping and writing letters to the masculine God, saying "you must be sleep" (*CP* 151). She condemns the masculine God for all her miseries and indifference towards her life. When the Christian masculine god restricts and represses her feelings and she does not have any pleasure with the opposite sex, she stops her private letters to masculine god.

Patriarchal power represses Celie's sexual desire and inscribes upon her body a masculine domination and desire which renders the feminine "supplementary" (Irigaray, *This Sex* 96), that is, patriarchal society puts value on women only to the degree that they serve the purpose of commodities of exchange between men (31). Irigaray invites women to self-love and feminine divinity by asking the question; "[W]hat if these 'commodities' refused to go to 'market'?" (196). In the same way that Irigaray describes women's lack of self-love in patriarchal society, Walker depicts the negative effects of the masculine image of god, both psychologically and socially, in her novel.

As Irigaray in her 'feminine divine' describes the "shared, scattered remnants of a violated sexuality" (*This Sex* 30), Walker depicts Celie's early shattered

experience of sexuality in patriarchal society as Pa and Albert make their forced entries, and the babies she gives birth to are forced out. Male powers such as Pa and Albert repress Celie's sexual body and regard it as an object of desire, thus, they obliterate any sexual identity she might have based on her own wants and desires. This patriarchal system of oppression forces Celie to deny her bodily desire within the confines of the Christian society. Her step-father's abuse of her sexual body violently interferes the development of her self. Pa as a masculine god controls Celie's sexuality, disassociates her from her body, and suppresses her feelings. His imposed power enforces her submission. These limitations isolate her from relationships with other women. Celie is deprived of her sexual desire which is defined for men, thus, she cannot reconstruct her subjective identity at this stage of her life. According to Walker, as Bates notes, "the Christian tradition has made men the images of God and avoided women from coming to terms with their sexuality" (*Alice Walker* 37). In a similar way, Irigaray describes women's repression in a patriarchal society: "There is, for women, no possible law for their pleasure", and "women's enjoyment is-for them, but always according to Him" (*This Sex* 95).

As a silent unrecognized woman, cut off from social and sexual recognition, Celie is not able to acknowledge her gendered identity. She lacks the awareness of her body due to her submission and conformity to her identity as a body for men's pleasure. When Celie marries Albert, he becomes another symbol of oppression in the male-centered system of Christianity, and appears as another masculine god, like Pa, who suppresses and displaces Celie's sexuality and identity, and

subordinates her feminine body. To her husband Albert, Celie is simply body as if she were a commodity and her body is used as an object of his desire. She describes her lack of satisfaction as follows:

> He git up on you, heist your nightgown round your waist, plunge in. Most times I pretend I ain't there. He never know the difference. Never ast me how I feel, nothing. Just do his business, get off, go to sleep" (*CP* 89).

Celie has no pleasure in her sexual relationship with Albert who satisfies his own sexual needs and undermines Celie's feminine desire and love. Albert restricts Celie to a phallocentrically constrained maternity, and alienates her from her sexual body and blocks her mind and spirit from development. Celie is not able to achieve Irigarayan non-possessive and irreducible love relation with Albert. Irigarayan love is based on "the redemption of the flesh through the transfiguration of desire *for* the other (as an object) into desire *with* the other" (Irigaray, *I Love to You* 139). Celie's confession to Shug, mistress of Albert, on her dissatisfaction with Albert's emotionless and unfeeling sexual relationship and her unawareness of her feminine energetic body reveal that Celie has never experienced sexual pleasure and desire in a patriarchal world in relation to Albert, and her body is separated from her spirit; therefore, she tries to free herself from the masculine god which alienates her from her body and spirit, through self-love and love of other women.

As the novel progresses, Celie's conceptualization of god changes from the Christian model of a punishing white male figure to a sense of self-love, self-expression and spiritual consciousness by appreciating her feminine sexual body and acknowledging other women. Celie begins to regain her imaginative power and to discover new images of god by writing letters to her sister (instead of to the distant and unavailable masculine god) and describing the cruelty of her husband, her step-father, and the difficult life she tolerates. She seeks an existence which is free from the impositions of a male-dominated society. Through writing letters to her sister and through relationships with other women, Celie questions the repressions and boundaries of patriarchal society and expresses her feelings and desires and gradually achieves her subjective identity and self-realization as an independent black woman.

Walker's description of Celie's self-consciousness and her transformation from male-focused theology towards feminine divinity through acknowledging her physical body is comparable to Irigaray's notion of creative and divine femininity: "The feminine breath seems at once more linked with the life of the universe and more interior. It seems to unite the subtlest real of the cosmos with the deepest spiritual real of the soul" (*Key Writings* 166). Walker tries to deconstruct male visions of femininity and sexual oppression within a patriarchal Christian tradition in her novel by transforming Celie from the embodiment of passive and stereotyped femininity into a self-conscious woman. She describes that women's alienation from their body through men's domination in a patriarchal world is due to their lack of self-love and women-to-women relationship, just as Irigaray claims that

women's position in culture is not as female divine-subject, but as object, restricted to and imprisoned within the material-maternal realm. Women are prevented from coming to a love of self as a result of the lack of a 'bridge' to the transcendental and a lack of subjective identity in culture (*An Ethics* 59-71). Irigaray portrays women's sexual body as a source of strength for communication with themselves in terms of the multiple parts of their bodies:

> Woman 'touches herself' all the time, and moreover no one can forbid her to do so, for the genitals are formed of two lips in continuous contact. Thus, within herself, she is already two - but not divisible into one(s) - that caress each other. (*This Sex* 24)

As Irigaray tries to find a way towards women's liberation through self-love and women's genealogy, Walker displays women's bodies as a potentially creative energy for enlightening their spiritual lives. Celie's energetic body directs her towards spiritual consciousness, as the body in Irigaray's feminine *jouissance* and 'sensible transcendental' "is educated to become both spiritual and more carnally sensitive at the same time" (*I Love to You* 24). Celie's complex negativity turns into positivity of life-forces and she acquires freedom – physically and emotionally. Her evolutionary journey is a move from victimization to consciousness, escaping from restrictive existence to an awareness of a new relationship, and breaking away from the defined sex and gender roles of the oppressive society to a self-knowledge through her feminine body. Celie tries to

disengage herself from cultural traditions of sexuality that restrict her body and makes her the object of male desire.

Walker introduces the female body as the site of consciousness rather than as a cultural construction, thus, she considers body before social determination. While the masculine image of divinity has desacralized and demonized women's bodies, Walker seeks to resacralize women's bodies as the means through which they can achieve their spiritual consciousness. "Celie's body is transformed from a social to a spiritual body when she effectively displaces the injustices that have marked her torture" (Bloom, *Alice Walker's The Color Purple* 37).

Walker gives a voice to Celie's oppressed body and shows how men have mistreated her and beaten her down both physically and spiritually. Celie begins discovering her self by questioning her identity, when she says "who I am" (*CP* 176), and finally finds out who she really is when she says "I'm poor, I'm black, I may be ugly and can't cook, a voice say to everything listening. But I'm here" (*CP* 242). She refuses to accept her social position as a repressed woman in the phallocentric culture. She challenges patriarchal constructions of her female sexual identity, rises up against the violence, recognizes and appreciates her feminine body, her hidden energy, as a powerful means of self-consciousness. Her changing attitude of affirming her female body moves her towards self-realization.

Celie appreciates her creative feminine energy as a source of spiritual consciousness and a sense of relatedness to the universe, as Irigaray in 'feminine divine' offers that "a woman would not have to quit her body", to leave herself, her breath. Her task would be, rather, to make divine this world - as a body, as cosmos,

as relations with others (Irigaray, *Key Writings* 134). Irigaray's feminine divine deals with women's divine becoming, that is, potential in women. The image of Celie's body in the mirror facilitates her first recognition and her self-awareness through embracing, touching, and caressing the different parts of her body. "Celie's starting point in her journey takes place when, with the help of Shug, she looks at her genitals in the mirror for the first time" (Ross, "Celie in the Looking Glass" 69-84). She glances at her body as the metaphor of a "wet rose" (*CP* 69) by making visible a complicated reflection of her body, as Irigaray describes "specificity" of female desire in her 'feminine divine' (*This Sex* 69). Celie draws upon a deep source of power that enables her to appreciate her divine wholeness. Once she discovers her feminine body as sacred, loving her multiple parts of her sexed body, with the help of Shug, and reconceptualizes the Christian man-centered god, her new faith in a benevolent "it" allows her a shift from the masculine god, who is forced upon her, towards the feminine divinity and spiritual consciousness. Shug introduces God to Celie as follows:

> When I found out I thought God was white, and a man, I lost interest … Here's the thing. The thing I believe. God is inside you and inside everybody else. You come into the world with God. But only them that search for it inside find it. And sometimes it manifest itself even if you not looking, or don't know what you looking for. Trouble do it for most folks, I think …. God ain't a he or she, but a It. It ain't something you could look at apart from anything else, including

> yourself. I believe God is everything. Everything that is or ever was or ever will be… And when you can feel that, and be happy to feel that, you've found It… any God I ever felt in church I brought in with me. And I think all the other folks did too. They come to church to share God, not find God. (*CP* 202)

The new conception of divinity that Shug defines in everything gives a new perspective to Celie, thus, she changes her view of the masculine god and is driven toward her inner deity. Walker subverts the masculine point of view on women's body, and rewrites it from a woman's perspective. She changes "the images of god, to enter into the imaginative act of leaving androcenter," to tell "new life stories of God… the many sacred presences of God in history and established religion" (Simmons, "Reflections on *The Color Purple*" 354). Celie's healing emerges from the reconciliation of sexuality and spirituality, from transforming an oppressive and distant God to an immanent Spirit who permeates the world. Shug's statement that "God is inside you and inside everybody else. You come into the world with God" (*CP* 202) affirms the spirit as a feature of Black femaleness, as Grant describes womanist spirituality as "embodied, incarnational, holistic, a challenge to injustice, and a liberating and healing praxis" (*Perspectives on Womanist Theology* 103).

5.2.1 Non-duality within Duality of Celie's Body and Spirit

Walker depicts a vision of the religion that reconciles the duality of spirit and the flesh. Her description of Celie's new vision of God in the form of divinity

within her and in nature as the Mother Goddess, far from the Western patriarchal image of God, is comparable to Irigaray's feminine divinity in which women recover their own unique conception of the divine body as a process of discovering their own uniqueness as women who are given the gift of the incarnation in the very beginning. Women need to gain their own gendered subjectivity by becoming divine in their feminine body. Irigaray's 'feminine divine' and 'sensible transcendental', emphasizing women's gender specificity and the divinity of their bodies, introduce women's most fundamental relationship to their female sexed body as the place of a divine incarnation.

> If women lack a God, there is no possible communication or communion between them. One needs, they need, the infinite in order to share a little. Otherwise, the distribution leads to fusion-confusion, division and conflict in (each of) them, between them. If I cannot be in relation to some sort of where my genre is accomplished, I cannot share while protecting my becoming. (*Sexes and Genealogies* 74)

In the same way, Walker indicates that women need to acknowledge the specificity of their gender through experiencing their body for the development of their spiritual consciousness (*In Search of Our Mother's Gardens* 67). Celie comes to understand the destructive nature of a male-defined deity, thus, she personifies an alternative for her exploited and marginalized existence. She seeks her self-

development by awakening her hidden female energy, not merely for her physical pleasure, but as a creative power.

Walker tries to ease the painful experiences of Celie, a colored women, through appreciating her feminine creative body as the way of her spirituality. For Walker, body is the basic transformative power which allows African-American women to find spiritual consciousness. The emphasis on gradual awakening and self-realization through Celie's body has provided a way for her movement towards liberation. Her growth into the consciousness of her body enables her to realize the spirituality within herself and in the world. This spiritual wholeness is a consequence of loving her self and others. Celie frees herself from a patriarchal repression of her female sexuality, and transforms her vision of deity by appreciating her creative feminine power. Her physical and spiritual awareness and freedom arise from her transcendence of social norms which act as a limitation to her self-development. In fact, Walker does not make her protagonist, Celie, deny her physical body behind religious ideas, but allows Celie to express a conscious recognition of bodily desire beyond the expectations of the patriarchal masculine god. Celie's inert feminine energy at the beginning of her spiritual enlightenment and the consciousness of body is awakened when she first sees Shug's naked body: "I thought I had turned into a man" (*CP* 53). She sees Shug's body as sacred when she bathes Shug: "I wash her body, I feel it like I'm praying. My hands tremble and my breath short" (50). With this awareness, Celie begins to appreciate the potential of her own body. She gains contact with her sexual body after refusing the traditional masculine god. Shug reveals to Celie that one reason for her

independence from Albert and from males is through appreciating and awakening her feminine energy hidden within her body.

Walker introduces Celie's energetic body as a way of her self-development and self-consciousness and her liberation from being the object of male desire and from the repressive imagery of the masculine god. Dresser points out that Walker is a devotee of Buddhist practice, where the physical form is a manifestation of a spiritual principle (*Buddhist Women on the Edge* 107). According to Hakutani, "Alice Walker not only has paid her respect to African religion, but she has also expressed her strong interest in cross-cultural tradition of Buddhism in which the body, mind, and soul are integrated" ("Private Voice and Buddhist Enlightenment in Alice Walker's *The Colour Purple*" 171). Celie appreciates her subjective identity and her inner divinity through her friendship with other women, by breaking away from stereotypical gender roles, and by subverting strict masculine religious tradition and social rules. Her realization of her body does not remain simply at the physical level; rather it leads to spiritual development. She acknowledges god within herself, just as Irigaray in 'sensible transcendental' creates a balance between body and spirit and refigures god as immanent and spiritualizes the sexual body. This god of flesh and sex is figured as the material resistance of Celie's body to representations that have neglected her pleasure. Walker criticizes patriarchal oppression of feminine desire and the female body through her womanist idea of women's genealogy, women-to-women relationship, self-love, and the existence of a divine love through the empowered feminine body.

5.2.2 Irigarayan 'Feminine Divine' and Celie's Relation to Nature

Alice Walker's description of Celie's quest for divinity and her connection with nature and humanity, and with god as part of 'everything,' through Celie's own voice and writing letters to new god, is comparable to the Irigarayan notion of 'feminine divine' which is concerned with "the forgetting of the nature or the Goddess, as woman" (Irigaray, *Key Writings* vii). For Walker, "divinity exists in nature only if the person is intuitively conscious of divinity in the self" (Hakutani, "Private Voice and Buddhist Enlightenment in Alice Walker's *The Colour Purple*" 175). Walker proposes the vision of God both within Celie and everywhere, "a God who affirms and encourages sensual pleasure and enjoyment of beauty. The emphasis on beauty and harmony echoes a long strain of feminist spirituality" (Porterfield, *Feminine Spirituality in America* 78-79). Celie's journey to an inner divinity, to her spiritual consciousness, beyond the patriarchal Christian God, begins with her new view of nature as the maternal goddess when she says; "Dear God, dear stars, dear trees, dear sky, dear people, dear everything" (*CP* 285). Since divinity is everywhere, everything in nature has the potential to function as a symbol of the divinity, and there is no separation between humans and other forms of beings. Celie realizes her self-consciousness as a part of the universal self, as she says;

> I am an expression of the divine, just like a peach is, just like a fish is. I have a right to be this way...I can't apologize for that, nor can I change it, nor do I want to... We will never have to be other than who we are in order

> to be successful...We realize that we are as ourselves unlimited and our experiences valid. It is for the rest of the world to recognize this, if they choose. (*CP* 284)

This statement of Celie's addresses a newly imagined God who is everywhere and in everything and encompasses the connections of nature and individuals, as imagined in Irigarayan cosmic and dynamic power, Mother of the Universe and creation, the maternal soul or womb of the world; the Great Goddess. This feminine dynamic, cosmic divine energy is the concentration of divine and human prowess, the divine consciousness, which has the potentiality of conciliating body and spirit, of the essential unity between the microcosm and the macrocosm. This kind of non-duality within duality appears in the novel when Celie appreciates her inner deity and develops her spiritual consciousness through her body and the abandonment of the male-centered notion of God. Her spiritual journey through her sexual body allows her to leave behind the frightened young girl she was in order to become a self-assured woman.

Celie's spiritual consciousness develops through the love of her body, nature and other women, far from the masculine god. For her, god becomes an immanent power, as Irigarayan 'feminine divine' and self-love define woman's own place which the symbolic discourse deprives them of, only by a "return to the bodily-fleshly values" (Irigaray, *An Ethics* 122). Celie appreciates the new god within her self, as Irigaray defines god in everything as the awareness of the inner presence.

Instead of the male figure she once conceptualized, Celie begins to think of god in everything when she says:

> My first step from the old white man was trees, then air, birds, and finally other people. But one day when I was sitting quiet and feeling like a motherless child, which I was, it come to me: that feeling of being a part of everything, not separate at all. (*CP* 203)

Celie's knowledge that cutting a living tree is the same as cutting her arm suggests that Celie achieves her conscious existence from the spirit of nature (*Ibid*). She sees more than just her "knothole view of the world" (*CP* 264) when she compares her single life to all of nature around her. Celie tries to create a relation between her body and spirit through connecting to nature. Walker highlights the importance of Celie's relationship with nature and other women in recognizing her divine self. She claims that this kind of non-duality within duality of body and spirit as well as "self-realization come[s] with a realization of the connectedness to all, the inseparability of the self and the all. That leads one to understand oneself as an earthling ... Beyond that I realize myself as the cosmos, the universe, the whole thing" (*The World Has Changed* 214).

Celie achieves her self-enlightenment through her union with all creation, through meditation in nature as a place of experiencing the divine. It can be said that "Walker's god is different from the god of church. Walker's god is within individuals, spirit who is everywhere and inside everyone" (Hampson, *Theology*

and Feminism 120). Like Irigarayan manifestations of divinity in 'sensible transcendental,' "Walker portrays the God/ess as located in the foundations of being, both matter and spirit, in harmony with self and body" (32). She speaks of the divinity within individuals, involving a connection with nature and other people and an affirmation of the incarnate power in the universe. Donna Haisty Winchell has pointed out that "for Walker the physical and spiritual wholeness of each person is not complete until one sees himself or herself in relation to and as part of other people" (*Alice Walker* 21). The only path to wholeness for Walker, as Tomm notes, is the way of relationship with others when the recognition of one's self is inseparable from the recognition of others (*Bodied Mindfulness* 22). Erricker rightly contends, "Spirituality does not lie in some nether region of transcendental deliverance but must be grappled with in the politics of this world" (*Contemporary Spiritualities* xv). Walker depicts Celie's self-knowledge and spiritual consciousness through her relation with her body, nature, and other women.

Celie undergoes the process of spiritual rebirth and subjective redefinition by freeing herself from the constricting and exploiting patriarchal world, and by accepting her own body as worthy of love. She realizes her body as a reflection of divinity. Her transformative experience and awareness of her body correlates with her changing image of god. Celie achieves her self-knowledge and recognizes her connection with nature through appreciating her body, as Irigarayan 'feminine divine' and 'sensible transcendental' promote divinity through the bodily consciousness. This journey to psychic integration involves an encounter with the

world of Celie's existence. "It is an experience of creating and finding God" (Rizutto, *The Birth of the Living God* 179).

5.2.3 Irigarayan Women's Genealogy and Shug's Effect on Celie's Self-awakening

Walker describes women's genealogy and self-love as a necessary condition for her female characters' subjectivity and divinity, as Irigaray advocates women's active subject-to-subject relation instead of being the objects exchanged between men. Walker refers to the sisterly love of Shug and Celie in *The Color Purple*. She says; "If you are not free to express your love, you are a slave, and anyone who would demand that you enslave yourself by not freely expressing your love is a person with a slaveholder's mentality" (*Living by the Word* 91).

In the early parts of the novel, Celie's feminine energy is repressed by men such as Pa; later this desire is directed towards self-knowledge in relation to other women such as Shug. Celie discovers her spiritual wholeness and her sense of subjective identity by awakening her feminine desire in light of the love she experiences with Shug who attempts to personalize the inner god inhabiting the whole of a black woman's experience. Through the relation with Shug, Celie refuses to be co-opted into a system of male-domination and become an object of men's desire. "Shug not only helps Celie to change her attitudes toward Albert, she also helps her to change her attitude toward God" (Alsen, "Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* as a Transcendentalist Romance" 211). Shug helps Celie to empower her weakened femininity, and to see the spiritual wholeness beyond the old-white-

man-God, when Celie says; "Shug tries to chase the old white man out of my head" (*CP* 240). Once Shug explains her belief in the feminine divine, Celie reevaluates her prior beliefs in divinity.

Through Shug's help, Celie changes her attitudes about the masculine god, acknowledges her sexual body, and discovers her subjective and gendered identity. This new-found sisterhood liberates her from the male-oriented world. Shug, a famous blues singer with an autonomous identity helps Celie to free herself from being oppressed, to achieve self-awareness, to appreciate her body, and to find her voice and gender identity by identifying completely a new divinity, totally different from the masculine God who was introduced at the beginning of the novel, as the only one whom Celie talks to. Celie rejects patriarchal duality of divine/body by rejecting the 'old white man' and acknowledging her non-dual self and both her spirit and body. Shug's subversive faith in deity pushes Celie to redefine her image of god and achieve her self-knowledge.

Through Shug, Celie realizes the importance of love in her life and the divinity within her self. Celie's spiritual consciousness is recognized and awakened as she begins to love and be loved by women such as Shug. She acknowledges that God can mean something entirely unique to her, in everything and within her. Shug acts as a black woman who becomes an emotional pillar and foreshadows the spiritual impact on Celie's life. She arouses the power of feminine energy and life-force in Celie. "Shug's presence brings a change in Celie's spiritual awakening" (Heywood, *Touching Our Strength* 37). With Shug, Celie moves out of nothingness and numbness toward the recognition of her feminine *jouissance* and the liberating

power of body, and experiences her spiritual development and freedom by the power of her energetic body in patriarchal society.

Shug, a symbol of motherhood, opens Celie's eyes to spiritual consciousness through appreciating her creative body. Celie expresses her feelings by touching and combing Shug's hair; "I work on her like she a doll or like she Olivia, or like she mama. I comb and pat, comb and pat. First she say, hurry up and git finish. Then she melt down a little and lean back gainst my knees. That feel just right, she say. That feel like mama used to do" (*CP* 57). Shug provides Celie with the opportunity for self-realization; helps her to empower her repressed female body and her sexual identity in patriarchal society, and proposes the image of a feminine divinity. Celie reshapes her religious understanding of the image of a white male God, and loves her sensual body in its blackness - a necessary step in her liberation and self-realization. By telling Shug about her sexual repression by her step-father as well as her husband, Celie rejects the masculine god, and acknowledges her passionate desire. Her raised consciousness of body empowers her spiritual consciousness. "*The Color Purple* is a sign of indomitable female spirit" (Abbandonato "Rewriting the Heroine's Story in *The Color Purple*" 306). Celie stands against the patriarchy and strengthens the bonds of her emotional and intellectual life, and awakens and validates her bodily desire, her feminine creative and dynamic power through her relationship with Shug. "The final vision is only able to resolve Celie's conflict between sexual and personal autonomy" (388). Shug simultaneously invokes Celie's inner and outer realms, and awakens her sexual and spiritual realization. hooks states that:

> Celie's desire for women and her sexual encounter with Shug is never a controversial issue even though it is the catalyst for her resistance to male domination, for her coming to power. Walker makes the powerful suggestion that sexual desire can disrupt and subvert oppressive social structure because it does not necessarily conform to social prescription, but this realization is undermined by the refusal to acknowledge it as threatening, dangerous. ("Reading and Resistance" 285)

Walker focuses on women's subjectivity through the relationship with and among themselves: "Celie may realize she desires women" and may "express that longing in a passionate encounter with Shug" (289). Ellen Barker in "Creating Generations" defines women's relationship and women-identified structure of *The Color Purple* as "the unifying bond between black women" (55). In *The Color Purple*, woman-identifying relationships lead women to self-consciousness. Celie describes her relationship with Shug as follows:

> Just cause you never had any [happiness] before Shug, you thought it was time to have some, and that it was gone last. Even though you had the trees with you. The whole earth. The stars. But look at you. When Shug left, happiness desert. (*CP* 263)

Celie and Shug's relationship subverts the masculine cultural domination of feminine desire. "The womanist model of Walker is depicted in bisexuality as embodied by Celie and Shug" (Meyer, *Literature and Homosexuality* 126). Celie owes most of her vision to Shug, her symbolic mother, as Irigarayan women's genealogy and mother-daughter relation support this interpretation. In a passage from 'A Chance for life' in *Sexes and Genealogies*, Irigaray develops the idea of a woman-to-woman sociality in the form of a mother-daughter relationship:

> How could women unite when they lack any representation or example of that alliance? This lack has not always existed. There was once a time when mother and daughter formed a paradigm for nature and for society. This couple was the guardian of nature's fruitfulness in general and of the relation to the divine. (191)

Irigaray refers to the mother-daughter relationship and women's genealogy which make it possible for a woman to act as a subject, and consequently, to love her self. For Irigaray, as Burke affirms, "self-love, or love for the same, essentially, a woman's love for her mother, is the necessary precondition for any love for the other, or love between women and men" (*Engaging with Irigaray* 322). Celie's self-love through appreciating her sexual body is evoked by the interplay between her and Shug as two mutually supportive women, as Irigaray views women's self-love as a basis for the openness of love to others; that is, without that basis, love involves "a loss of self" (*An Ethics* 69). There is an image of mutual respect between these

two women, as Irigaray points out that "women must love one another both as mothers, with a maternal love, and as daughters with a filial love. Both of them" (105). Irigaray establishes "a woman-to-woman relationship of reciprocity with our mothers" ("Corps-a-Corps: In Relation to the Mother" 86). Shug as a maternal figure awakens Celie's sexual power. Celie accepts the fragments of her sexual body as a part of her womanhood and begins to realize her self, and moves from patriarchal world towards a spiritual consciousness. She tries "to accept her own fragmentation, embrace those fragments, and thus validate herself. Recognizing rather than denying her pieces is often a woman's way to becoming "sole or whole" in a more feminocentric way" (Torsney and Elsley, *Quilt Culture* 69). Celie tries to create a balance between her body and spirit through self-love and woman to woman relationship.

5.3 Conclusion

Walker as a womanist insisted on Celie's self-realization and her divine body through her relationship with other women, just as Irigaray's notions of 'feminine divine' and 'sensible transcendental' proposed the body as the site of spirituality. Celie's female body became the site of her self-awareness and spiritual transformation. Her appreciation of her body empowered her in the struggle against the masculine God. Her first step to liberate herself from logocentrism toward spiritual consciousness and self-acceptance was through the recognition of her womanly body which resembles other women's bodies. In fact, her spiritual consciousness is deepened through the gradual realization of her body in her

relationship with other women such as Shug, and through appreciating nature as the Mother Goddess. This kind of non-duality within duality of body and spirit is comparable to Irigarayan 'feminine divine' and 'sensible transcendental' in which the body is a pathway towards spirituality, and god became an immanent power in the universe. Celie discovered her divine body through her relationship with nature and other women such as Shug.

CHAPTER SIX

FRAGMENTED SELVES IN ANAÏS NIN'S *A SPY IN THE HOUSE OF LOVE*

6.0 Introduction

Largely ignored by mainstream readers for the first thirty years of her career, Anaïs Nin (1903-1977) finally came to fame with the publication of the first part of her diary in 1966, and later for her novels. This chapter tries to examine how Nin, in her novel, *A Spy in the House of Love* (1954), offers the dichotomies of self/other and body/spirit through the Irigarayan concepts 'feminine divine,' feminine *jouissance*, and 'sensible transcendental'. Anaïs Nin, the first forerunner and the prominent modern female writer of eroticism, explicitly tries to express female desire and sexual awakening in her novel as a creative power for women's liberation from patriarchal society. Unlike the other female protagonists in the thesis, however, Nin's heroine, Sabina, is not successful in discovering her autonomous self through her passionate desire. She is not able to create unity between her body and mind, the ideal world of art, music, and dreams and the real world, and a successful relationship with men. Sabina cannot achieve the full measure of non-dual love because she relies merely on sexual passion and desire.

6.1 Anaïs Nin's View of Female Desire and Irigarayan 'Feminine Divine'

Anaïs Nin rejects the Christian formulation of woman that denies sexuality and represses desire for the sake of God the Father. She vividly illustrates that a

certain discourse about feminine sexuality has been heretofore imposed upon women, and men have separated and alienated women from their bodies. She creates female characters who rail against those formulations, signifying that the feminine identity is more than simply a construction of masculine discourses. She celebrates female erotic energy, and revises the figure of female sexual body as mute. She perceives sexuality as one of the ways of women's liberation from the patriarchal world. "She strives to strength[en] and reveal the pattern of women in the area of creativeness, which was considered a male domain" (Karsten, "Self-Realization and Intimacy" 38). For Nin, "only the united beat of sex and heart can create ecstasy" (Nin, *Novel of the Future* 74). She considers eroticism as a basic trait for the development of women's bodies. She mentions "the crucial significance of the female sexual activity for changing the male-usurped foundations for a balanced and life-sustaining living" (Brennan, "Anaïs Nin: authorizing the Erotic Body" 68). She reveals that "women's erotic love as well as art is a form of feminine expression and freedom" (Evans, *Anaïs Nin* 304) to destabilize the male portrayal of the erotic experience that has reinforced the oppression of women's sexuality. Nin's novel, as Reynolds notes, "was the first study of a woman who tries to separate love from sensuality as man does, to seek sensual freedom" (*Erotica* 5). As Reynolds goes on to say, Nin tries to free women from the distorting mirror which men have created for them:

> Nin's erotica seeks to return women to their bodies by offering a looking glass and not a distorting mirror. Here women can speak for

> themselves and by doing so deliver a valuable counter argument for the lies, secrets and silences that typically pass for a woman's sex life. (*Erotica* 81)

Nin tries to rediscover many beliefs of modernism "exploring the nature of the feminine and of women's passions, sexual desires, and their own freedom, including reproductive freedom" (29). Nin's view parallels many French feminists' ideas about breaking out of an ordered symbolic system which is imposed upon women. She shares with Irigaray "an interest in describing the multiplicity of the female sexuality" (*Erotica* 5, 11). Nin's philosophy reflects the Irigarayan idea of the 'feminine divine', as she believes that women have been denied a connection with their bodies through male sexual universality. She writes in her diary of her feelings regarding women's sexual desire and a distinguishably feminine creative force within herself and other women. She writes about the "conflict between my feminine self who wants to live in a man-ruled world, to live in harmony with men, and the creator in me capable of creating a world of my own and a rhythm of my own which I can't find anyone to share" (*Diary II* 62). Like Irigaray, Nin tries to create a special place for women to have active roles through their specific and creative feminine sexual power.

> Woman never had direct communication with God anyway, but only through man. She never created directly except through man, was never able to create as a woman. . . . Woman's creation far from

> being like a man's, must be exactly like her creation of children, that is it must come of her own blood, englobed by her womb, nourished by her own milk. It must be a human creation, of flesh, it must be different from man's abstractions. (Nin, *Diary II* 233)

Nin believes that women and men have different sensibilities and experiences, just as Irigaray argues that "woman's desire would not be expected to speak the same language as man's" (*This Sex* 25). Nin writes of women's self-development in their own terms, not as the imitations of men:

> The effort of woman to find her own psychology and her own significance is in contradiction to man-made psychology and interpretation. Woman finds her own language, and articulating her own feelings, discovering her own perceptions. Woman's role is in the reconstruction of the world. (*Diary IV* 25)

Anaïs Nin questions the traditional male-constructed paradigm of woman as part of the weaker sex and transforms the traditional dominant and submissive roles that have repressed women's sexual bodies. She tries to resituate and necessitate the specificity of women's sexual body as a creative force. She asserts that "woman must sever herself from the myth man creates, from being created by him" (Brennan, "Anaïs Nin: authorizing the Erotic Body" 70). She openly writes about female body and women's sexual desire in her novels. She tries to release

women from traditional repression by focusing on the specificity and creativity of their sexual energetic body and desire, as Irigarayan 'feminine divine' defines the multiple sexual parts of women's bodies. Nin remarks that "women's body enables them to express the unconscious and instinctive elements that constitute a great deal of their nature" (*A Woman Speaks* 75).

Nina uses the body as a central element of perception and expression of the senses. She focuses on women's relationship to their bodies (Christmass, "Dismaying the Balance" 210). According to Nin, women's sexual body not only points to the inherent difference between men and women's nature, but also implies that a woman's body is more complex than a man's. As Salvatore notes, Nin emphasizes both the difference of the sexes and the mediating role of the woman (*Anaïs Nin's Narratives* 13). Nina remarks that "women have operated with a combination of instinct, emotion, intellect, and observation, a diffused awareness…. They are sensory, they feel things with their whole bodies" (*A Woman Speaks* 76, 77). Nin's description of a woman's "diffused awareness" (*Ibid*) and her eroticized body is comparable to Irigaray's depiction of the multiple sites of desire in a woman's body in which "the geography of [female] pleasure is far more diversified, more multiple in its differences, more complex, more subtle, than is commonly imagined" (*This Sex* 28). For both Irigaray and Nin, female desire requires a different, more complex language than that which is adequate to express man's one-dimensional desire and mode of awareness. The domineering sexual male potency also denies women their own space, with men inhibiting them in their search: "man is forever searching for, building, creating, homes for himself

everywhere" (An *Ethics* 141). She further adds that "what is sometimes difficult for women is to provide themselves with a periphery, a circumference, a world, a home" (106). Irigaray tries to create a space for women to affirm their own specificity. In Irigarayan feminine desire:

> Woman derives pleasure from what is *so near that she cannot have it, nor have herself.* She herself enters into a ceaseless exchange of herself with the other without any possibility of identifying either. (*This Sex* 31)

In the same way, Nin believes that "woman's sensuality is much more different from man's and for which man's language was inadequate" (*Delta of Venus* 146). Nin tries to discover women's individuality through their bodies. However, her description of women's feminine *jouissance* based on feminine erotic *jouissance* reflects women's biological distinctions from men by believing that "the female body reflects the female mind" (Salvator, *Anaïs Nin's Narratives* 214). While Irigaray's 'feminine divine' is based on the interiority and divinity of women's body, Nin's ideas pivot merely on a vision of feminine passion and sexual desire and instinct, "the most ardent frenzy of desire" (*SHL* 414). For Nin, as Reynolds notes, "women have wanted to reveal the facets of their sensuality, but their sexual desire has been suppressed and women have been discouraged from revealing their sensual nature" (*Erotica* 5). In Nin's fantasy of sexual awakening, women sexualize all parts of their female bodies. Although Nin refers to the

predominant feminine sexual desire by asserting that "a woman can use the appearance of eroticism to tip the balance of power between the sexes in her favor" (64), women in her novels cannot free themselves from phallic pleasure and being the objects of men's desire.

Whereas Nin confuses 'love' and 'lust' in her representation of women's bodily sexual desire and feminine (hetero) sexuality, Irigaray in 'feminine divine' offers women's bodies as a means of spirituality and a powerful element in life, and the embodiment of change and transformation. Irigaray asserts that while men have their own god to achieve their subjectivity, women need a feminine divinity, their own religion, their own language, their own imaginary and their own symbolic representations, in short, a "generic identity" (*I Love to You* 144). Irigaray insists on a gendered subjectivity and cultural transformation to bring women's bodies a level of self-expression and 'spiritualization' through appreciating their divine-human potential, their genealogy, and their power. Therefore, Irigarayan spiritualized desire is enlivening. For Irigaray,

> Desire is a subtle subjective affect, demanding perhaps our subtlest cultural elaborations. But we have confused desire with instinct and, in the name of this confusion, repressed desire, a specifically human dimension, and source of our greatest cultural wealth. (78)

Nin's view differs in some ways from Irigarayan feminine divine which is based on instasy rather than ecstasy. While Nin focuses merely on feminine sexual

desire, Irigarayan feminine energy grows beyond the limitations of the traditional male discourse and dualities of body/spirit and self/other. Nin's protagonist, Sabina, does not achieve the full measure of non-dual love because she is still tied to men's desire and is engulfed in her sexual body in her relation with men.

6.1.1 Sabina's Sexual Desire and Irigarayan 'Feminine Divine'

Anaïs Nin revises the male-centered perspective of a patriarchal society by giving her female protagonist, Sabina, sexual freedom and by placing her at the center of desire and artistic meaning through her creative art of singing, acting and dancing in relationship with men who are actors, dancers, singers, and musicians. Nin makes an allusion to the creative side of Sabina's empowered and energetic sexual body. Sabina demands desire through the creative work of art and emotional love. Her talent for singing and dancing renews her feminine power. Dance and Music are creative and vital parts of Sabina, like breathing (Nin, *Diary III* 284, 286). Music represents "a symbol of the kind of perfection unattainable in human relations" (Evans, *Anaïs Nin* 158). The lie detector in the novel tells Sabina: "You sought your wholeness in music" (*SHL* 116-117).

Sabina is described as a woman on fire, a woman about to be consumed by the raging fever of her sexual desire (Evans, *Anaïs Nin* 149, 158; Papachristou, "The Body in the Diary" 66). Her sexual desire is described as "feverish breathlessness" (*SHL* 63). Anaïs Nin asserts that "Sabina seeks wholeness by the fever of desire" (Evans, *Anaïs Nin* 160-1). She refers to sex in the indirect metaphors of "sensual cannibalism," "a carnal banquet" and "tasting every

embrace, every area of her body" (*SHL* 29, 68, 77). She describes vaginal lubrication as "honey flowing between the thighs" and mentions Sabina's feeling, the need to "wash away the lasting odors of her illicit intercourse" with one of her lovers, Philip (*SHL* 36, 43). In describing the multiple facets of Sabina's female sexuality, Nin appropriates the archetypal conventions related to the female body, such as water, flowers, and fruit. She is interested in these images as expressions of female sexuality. She uses "flower imagery to describe the female sexuality and genitalia" (Reynolds, *Erotica* 4). She describes Sabina as scattering her sexuality like a flower "exfoliating pollen," and displaying "hothouse" charms (*SHL* 68, 77). The traces of 'womanly' pleasure with "pollen and honey" gathered from Sabina's parted legs (69) highlights the multiple nature of body as Irigaray refers to it in her feminine *jouissance*. Nin describes the fire-like images of Sabina's passionate sexual desire when the eroticized Sabina wears a mask of "primeval sensuality" and attempts to live "outside" (*SHL* 65) the boundaries of conventional femininity. "Her dress in red and silver with a hole in its sleeves" (*SHL* 66) is representative of her firy hotness: "The first time one looked at Sabina one felt, *everything will burn*!" (*Ibid*). Sabina's feminine sexual power is offered "in the presence of men, either in response to the man's desire or, quite as often, as the expression of her own desire to conquer him" (Harding, *Woman's Mysteries* 58). She has a multiplicity of mysterious and desirable female aspects drawn from various fantasies of her erotic body. Her sexual and powerfully erotic body satisfies men in her physical relationship. However, Sabina fails in her love relationships with men

who regard her as an object of desire according to the expectations of the patriarchal world.

Sabina's relation to one of her lovers, Mambo, is through his singing: "Sabina loves Mambo's music rather than himself. She sought only pleasure that she loved in him only through music" (*SHL* 60). Sabina and Mambo fulfil their sexual desire through their dance:

> When they danced he changed. Mambo held Sabina firmly, so encompassed that every movement they made was made as one body. He held her head against his, with a physical finiteness, as if for eternity. His desire became a center of gravity, a final welding… her eyes into his, his eyes thrust into her very being….Fever shone in his face like moonlight. She knew he had desired her. (*SHL* 59)

In relation with Mambo, Sabina is not recognized as an individual and her sexual needs are developed to fulfil Mambo's passionate desire, unlike Irigarayan notions of love based on the creative encounter of autonomous and independent subjects who are capable of giving and receiving energy. Philip, another lover of Sabina, tries to satisfy her and his own desires through singing:

> There is a jazz drummer. Drum-drum-drum-drum- upon her heart, she was a drum, her skin was taut under his hands…. [Philip's] singing showered upon her heart and body, and the drumming

> vibrated through the rest of her body…. She felt possessed by his song…. Desire flowing between them…. Wherever he rested his eyes, she felt the drumming of his fingers upon her stomach, her breasts, her hips. (*SHL* 67)

Like Sabina's other lovers demanding a joyous and sexual relationship with her, Philip's physical relationship with her is explicitly offered for satisfying his sexual needs.

> They fled from the eyes of the world, the singer's prophetic, harsh, ovarian prologues. Down the rusty bars of ladders to the undergrounds of night propitious to the first man and woman at the beginning of the world, where there were no words by which to possess each other, no music for serenades, no shows to court with, no tournaments to impress and force a yielding, no secondary instruments, no adornments, necklaces, crowns to subdue, but only one ritual, a joyous, joyous, joyous, joyous impaling of woman on man's sensual mast. (*SHL* 63)

Nin shows how Philip pursues his own sexual desire in the statements such as "impaling of woman on man's sensual mast" (*Ibid*) and "Caresses . . . Acutely marvelous, like all the multicolored flames from an artful firework, bursts of exploded suns and neons within the body, flying comets aimed at all the centers of

delight, shooting stars of piercing joys" (*SHL* 68). Sabina is treated as an object of Philip's desire in his service for fulfilling his own sexual needs; as Philip says to Sabina:

> You appear as something beyond the actor who can transmit to others the power to feel, to believe… Why we love actress….the one who is only revealed in the act of love… the one who understands only one part of us, is the miraculous openness which takes place in whole love. (*SHL* 104)

Nin's description of the lovers' relationship for fulfillment of their male desires is in contrast to Irigarayan love as a shared space of lovers and an ethical proximity; "Holy breath as an atmosphere of ethics is thus a place in individuals where they secure for others, which is not reachable" (Škof, *Breath of Proximity* 28). While Nin emphasizes vertical transcendence and love as an ecstasy, Irigaray focuses on horizontal transcendence between subjects, and love as instasy, irreducible and non-possessive. Irigaray creates a form of desire that respects the otherness of others in sexual difference by "accepting that the subject is not the whole, that the subject represents only one part of reality and of truth, that the other is forever a not I, nor me, nor mine: not yet I, not yet mine to integrate into me or into us" (*Key Writings* 26). Irigaray in *Conversations* says that:

> [T]he feminine subject does not relate to the self, to the other(s), to the world as a masculine subject does. This does not depend only on bodily

> morphology and anatomy or on social stereotypes, as many people imagine. Rather, it is a question of relational identity that precisely realizes the original connection between body and culture. (77)

Irigaray focuses on the relational identity and connection between body and culture. Her 'feminine divine' and 'sensible transcendental', beyond bodily morphology and anatomy and social stereotypes, as a way of spiritual enlightenment, transcend the hierarchical dualities of body and mind and self and other, while Nin's idea pivots merely on bodily desire in the realm of social stereotypes which are limited to the dualities of body and mind, and self and other.

6.2 Sabina's Fragmented Selves and Non-duality within Duality

Anaïs Nin believes that the role of the novelist is similar to that of the psychoanalyst. "The novelist today works parallel to the psychologist, recognizes the duality of the human personality" (Nin, *The Novel of the Future* 9). She explores the issues of fragmented and multiple selves in the first volume of her *Diary*: "I have always been tormented by the image of multiplicity of selves. Some days I call it richness, and other days I see it as a disease" (54). She admits, "Sabina caused me a great deal of trouble, because I wanted to describe the fragmentation without the disintegration which usually accompanies it. Each fragment had a life of its own. They had to be held together by some tension other than the unity we are familiar with. […] if she had no center to hold on to, she could be destroyed" (63). Sabina seeks her identity through a series of lovers, each of them speaks to one

aspect of her, but none of them help her to coalesce the fragments of herself into a whole self, thus, her multiple selves are created through a series of unfulfilling love affairs: "She was tired of pulling these disparate fragments together" (*SHL* 129). She seeks to act out her fantasies and is caught in "a web of multiplicity" (Nin, *Novel of the Future* 68). Her identity changes according to her position in relation to others. Nin explores "the contrast in behavior of the same character toward many others, in intimacy, in contrast to behavior in the world" *(*64). She portrays Sabina's psychological struggles and the chaos within her: "There was in her no premeditation, no continuity, no connection... She carried herself like one totally unfettered who was rushing and plunging on a fiery course" (99). Sabina is unable to visualize precisely who she might actually be within the framework of 'woman' and 'other' that men desire. "[She] appears to be an erotic fantasy of 'woman' projected by men onto the bodies of women" (Michael, *Embodied Borders* 142). Thus, her identity splinters into those of many women, both real and imaginary:

> Sabina appeared as the woman with gold hair, and then altered to a woman with black hair, and it was equally impossible to keep a consistent image of whom she had loved, betrayed, escaped from, lived with, married, lied to, forgotten, deserted. (*SHL* 100)

Sabina tries to escape an unsatisfactory marriage to her husband, Alan, who is unable to relate to her as a lover. She takes one lover after another in a hope of finding her subjective identity, but she cannot recognize and appreciate her self.

Each of her affairs ends miserably because all the men whom she engages with, Mambo, Philip, Donald, John (the aviator), add to her dilemma by demanding only her feminine sexual body. Sabina pursues men's sexual pleasure "to arrive at the enjoyment without dependence which might liberate her from all anxieties connected with love" (*SHL* 63), but is unable to do so because she focuses only on physical pleasure. In John, a war-crazed young pilot, Sabina sees merely an image of her own compulsion toward erotic flights. "His airplanes were not different from her relationships, by which she sought other lands, strange faces, forgetfulness, the unfamiliar, the fantasy and the fairy tale" (*SHL* 66). John has no real love to Sabina, and treats her as an object of his own sexual desires, something for him to grasp: "[His] lithe fingers into her shoulders, into her hair, grasping her hair as if he were drowning to hold her head against his as if she might escape his grasp" (*SHL* 83). Through John, "she wanted to rescue... from a distortion she knew led to madness. She wanted to prove to him that his guilt was a distortion, that his vision of her and desire and of his hunger was a sickness" (*SHL* 91). Having achieved in "his vicinity a long, prolonged, deep thrusting ecstasy" (*Ibid*), she cannot save herself from passionate sexual desire. Although Sabina goes beyond the traditional restricting and confining image imposed on her by expressing her feminine sexual power, she is much more in the service of men for their sexual fulfillment. Unsuccessful in establishing her identity in relation to men, Sabina is admonished: "Yours is a story of non-love" (*SHL* 117).

Sabina cannot find her subjective identity and full measure of non-dual love in a male identity-quest society through the loveless relationships with men who

seek to discover her essential conformity to their own conception of woman; they seek commonality among the multiplicity of Sabina's multiple selves. She tries to make love, but realizes that what she desires cannot be achieved through an embrace in the encounter among Sabinas and her lovers. Sabina, collapsing "because she has no center" (Spencer, "The Music of the Womb" 85), becomes lost "somewhere along the frontier between her inventions, her stories, her fantasies, and her true self" (133). She glimpses her own inner chaos: "Sabina, who [has] many selves, is also self-less because she is too frightened to live from the deep core or center of her self" (85). She struggles constantly against her own imperfection through her passionate sexual desire. "Half of you wanted to atone, to be freed of the torments of guilt, but the other half wanted to be free. Only half of you surrendered, calling out to strangers: 'catch me!' while the other half sought industriously to escape final capture" (*SHL* 137).

Nin's depiction of Sabina's lack of ability to discover her subjective identity through solely sexual love and Eros is in contrast to Irigarayan 'feminine divine' and 'sensible transcendental' which are physical and spiritual interchanges of cosmic and material energies and open a new circle of love. While Irigarayan 'feminine divine' and 'sensible transcendental' celebrate the female body, mind, and spirit as an unbreakable union necessary for women's creative imagination, transcending the traditional limitations of human expression of the body, Nin's ideas pivot merely on Sabina's passionate sexual desire. Sabina is engulfed in her sexual body, as an object of male desire and a mirror image of men, for the fulfillment of their sexual needs, thus, she cannot achieve her self-realization and

spiritual consciousness. Sabina's identity and subjectivity are transformed into multiple selves, that is, the inward Sabina is weakened and the outward becomes a mere shell of her.

Sabina's various selves make Sabina recognize her failure in the final scene, when all the motions come to a complete stop: "Sabina slid to the floor and sat there with her head against the phonograph, with her wide skirt floating for one instant like an expiring parachute; then deflated completely and died in the dust" (*SHL* 118). Her phallocentric love relations which do not let her grow and consume her are in contrast to Irigarayan love based on the union of two different subjects. Irigarayan dual subjectivity proposes "the irreducibility of the other" which "cannot be overcome, but it gives a positive access neither instinctual nor drive-related to the other" (*I Love to You* 13).

Sabina's love-making with other men cannot protect her against their dominance. She backs away from the relation with Alan and other men because the resulting state of *jouissance* would kill her desire. For instance, John tries to grasp Sabina's sexual power in his hands. "Pleasure he had given her ignited her body like flowing warm mercury darting through the veins….as if he had thrown a net around her by the pleasure she wanted again" (89-90). In fact, the desire exchange between Sabina and her lovers is not interchangeable. She cannot achieve self-consciousness through her sexual bodily needs, her physical desire, and her multiple selves: "Some parts of me tear off like a fragment I lose vital parts of myself" (*SHL* 122). She cannot achieve the balance of her spiritual, emotional, and physical consciousness through merely erotic and passionate sexual relationship to

her lovers, thus, she is dispersed into multiple selves. "I could step out of my ordinary self or my ordinary life into multiple selves and lives" (*SHL* 132). She cannot find true love through her multiplicity. Her sense of self is constantly on the move and her wandering sexuality drives her to roam public spaces in a search of the next lover.

Sabina as a woman is torn between the love she feels for her husband and the love she feels for a series of other men. "She wants to live in all directions, the problem lying in the fact that the different selves will not coexist harmoniously. She understood why it angered her when people spoke of life as One life. She became certain of myriad lives within herself" (*SHL* 34). The existence of many different Sabinas leads her to several conflicting directions and yet all of them remains as separate parts of her. Her internal conflict is expressed as a struggle between her need for stability on one side, and her need for mobility on the other side. Alan and home would represent her need for stability, for he is described as being very calm, "a photograph in her mind", "a snap-shot", "a static pose" (*SHL* 10), "a fixed point in space", "having a calm face" (*SHL* 9), as having "a rock-like center to his movements" (*SHL* 12), "his emotions, his thoughts revolved around a fixed center like a well-organized planetary system" (*Ibid*). And, "in the two snap-shots she carried he showed two facets but no contrasts: one listening and waiting, wise, and detached, the other sitting in meditation as a spectator" (*SHL* 10), a description which once again stresses the figure of the actress in the midst of a performance, in movement, in contrast to Alan's fixed image. Alan's stability is expressed in detail:

> He was there. Five days had not altered his voice, the all-enveloping expression of his eyes. The apartment had not changed. The same book was still open by his bed, the same magazines had not yet been thrown away. He had not finished some fruit she had bought the last time she had been there. Her hands caressed the overfull ash trays, her fingers designed rivers of meditation on the coats of dust on the table. Here living was gradual, organic, without vertiginous descents or ascents. (*SHL* 43)

As totally opposed to this static situation, Sabina's need for mobility is stressed throughout the novel: "She could not sit still. She talked profusely and continuously.... She sat as if she could not bear to sit for long and when she rose to buy cigarettes she was equally eager to return to her seat" (*SHL* 99). Sabina is the "firebird" (*SHL* 78) which her lovers want to capture, a bird in perpetual motion to avoid confrontation with herself.

The conflict of stability-mobility is taken even further by a parallel between Sabina's relationships with her husband and with each one of her lovers. Alan calls her "My little one" and "total woman" (*SHL* 13), in this way expressing his partial view of only one Sabina. There are many other Sabinas under many layers, and each one of her lovers is invested with a particular symbolic quality which clearly establishes the distinction between the different kinds of love she feels for each one of them, while she "could only see Alan as a kind father who might become angry at her lies and punish her" (*SHL* 57). Sabina, as a woman of many lovers, is

permanently looking for something in several different men and never finds what she seeks.

Art refers to the mobility and the existence of many Sabinas: "During a visit to an ancient city ravaged by an earthquake, the remaining facades of the houses remind her of De Chirico's paintings, in which doors and windows are not closed, and people are protected from strangers only by one wall and door, but otherwise completely free of walls or roofs from the other three sides" (*SHL* 55). De Chirico's painting is an image which expresses the possibility of innumerable escapes from the stability represented by home in search of "this illimitable space she had expected to find in every lover's room, the sea, the mountains visible all around, the world shut off on one side" (*Ibid*). Sabina also sees in Duchamp's famous Surrealist painting, 'Nude Descending a Staircase,' a symbol of her own multiple selves as the trail of selves when it descends the staircase.

> For the first time, on this bleak early morning walk through New York streets not yet cleaned of the night people's cigarette butts, she understood Duchamp's painting of a Nude Descending a Staircase. Eight or ten outlines of the same woman, like many multiple exposures of a woman's personality, neatly divided into many layers, walking down the stairs in unison. (*SHL* 124)

Sabina's other lover, Jay, as a painter, adds to the ideas of multiplicity. Her fragmented and dismembered self is reflected in Jay's paintings which indicate that

Sabina is suffering from a state of fragmentation; her fragmented selves are too far apart to be gathered and linked back together again.

> She recognized his paintings instantly…. His figures exploded and constellated into fragments, like spilled puzzles, each piece having flown far enough away to seem irretrievable and yet not far enough to be dissociated. One could, with an effort of the imagination, reconstruct a human figure completely from these fragments kept from total annihilation in space by an invisible tension. By one effort of contraction at the core they might still amalgamate to form the body of a woman. No change in Jay's painting, but a change in Sabina who understood for the first time what they meant. She could see at this moment on the wall an exact portrait of herself as she felt inside. (*SHL* 441)

What Sabina sees in these pictures is her fragmented self. "He had painted Sabina, or something happening to all of them as it was happening in chemistry, in science. They had found all the corrosive acids, all the disintegrations, all the alchemies of separateness" (*Ibid*). Jay's relationship with Sabina is basically sexual and strengthens his own sexual needs. "In Sabina's fluctuating fervors he met a challenge: she gave him a feeling of equality" (*SHL* 103). He usurps Sabina's sexual body for his own pleasure:

> Her behavior always aroused in him a desire which resembled the desire of a man to violate a woman who resists him, to violate a virginity which created a barrier to his possession. Sabina always incited him to a violent desire to rip all her pretenses, her veils and to discover the core of herself which, by this perpetual change of face and mobility, escaped all detection. (*SHL* 135)

In trying to portray a woman who is 'active' in her sexual desire, Nin still shows Sabina as being the passive recipient of or participant in these sexual encounters. This passivity comes through very clearly when Sabina appears as a woman whose sexual energy is for the desire of men. The more she enters into the relationship with men, the more she distances herself from her subjective identity and creates multiple selves for herself. Through the relationship with men, her fragmentation is intensified: "All her seeking of fire to weld these fragments together, seeking in the furnace of delight a welding of fragments into one total love, one total woman had failed" (*SHL* 114). Sabina is depicted as torn by her desire for the endless multiplications of desire itself:

> Sabina … felt germinating in her the power to extend time in the ramifications of a myriad lives and loves, to expand the journey to infinity, taking immense and luxurious detours as the courtesan depositor of multiple desires. (*SHL* 39)

The wholeness she wishes for can only be another role, staged for the benefit of her husband: "Play the role of a whole woman, at least you have always wished to be that, it is not altogether a lie" (*SHL* 21). Nin imagines her own desires in Sabina who struggles to free herself from the restrictions of sexual body in a patriarchal world, to find a space for herself by expressing her sexual desire. But eventually, Sabina experiences a dissolution and loss of identity which is more frightening than pleasurably liberating:

> The entire sky a warm blanket of eyes and mouths shining down on her, the air full of voices now raucous from the sensual spasm, now gentle with gratitude, now doubtful, and she was afraid because there was no Sabina, not One, but multiple Sabinas lying down yielding and being dismembered, constellating in all directions and breaking…. [S]he was weeping: Someone hold me – hold me, so I will not continue to race from one love to another, dispersing me, disrupting me…. Hold me to one. (*SHL* 439)

Sabina envisions herself making this plea directly to her husband, Alan. She imagines herself dispersed in multiplying new selves over time. She could not find her autonomous identity by being dependent on lovers. She faces the horror of fragmentation, experiencing it as a splitting.

> Each year, just as a tree puts forth a new ring of growth, she should have been able to say: Alan, here is a new version of Sabina, Add it to the rest,

> fuse them well, hold on to them when you embrace her, hold them all at once in your arms, or else, divided, separated, each image will live a life of its own, and it will not be one but six, or seven, or eight Sabinas who will walk sometimes in unison…. Sometimes separately. Was this the crime to have sought to marry each Sabina to another mate, to match each other in turn by a different life? (*SHL* 453)

All of men serve only to crystallize the multiplicity of Sabina's different selves, preventing their fusion into one whole self. They contribute to Sabina's fragmentation. Her fragmented selves and her defined sexual identity are formed by her relations with different men in her life, which lead to her disfiguration. Nin reveals Sabina's duplicity and deceitfulness as "twistedness, distortion, deformations" (*The Novel of the Future* 27). Sabina sees herself as a fragmented woman with multiple selves, all held in her body. She does not know who the real Sabina is; she is the woman whom her lovers wish her to be, thus, she feels she is a spy in the 'house of love,' the house of her own multiple loves. Her lovers attract her into the misrecognition of her subjective and gendered identity. Through her relationship with many men, Sabina engages only with one part of her personality, and she has been "evaporated through the spaces between each layer of the personality" (*SHL* 128). When Sabina realizes that she cannot find her fulfillment and liberation through sexual desire, she begins to lose symbolic "withered leaves" from the "tropical growth" of her desire, from the "purple-bell-shaped corolla of narcotic flesh," the "purple flower" of her genitalia (*SHL* 93, 104). Hence, she feels

unfulfilled and can no longer reach her "core" (*SHL* 132) because of the constant fragmentation and dissembling needs. Sabina cannot find her core through her different and multiple selves so that she constantly wonders, "Where was Sabina?" (*SHL* 109).

6.3 Sabina's Essential and Social Identity

When Anaïs Nin comes to an understanding that "woman never created directly, except through a man and was never able to create as a woman" (*The Diary of Anaïs Nin Volume II* 233), she lays out the 'universalist' possibilities of female identity within the symbolic order. The only symbolic identity of women then is the engagement in defined wifehood and motherhood. For Nin, "the woman was born mother, mistress, wife, sister. Woman was born to be the connecting link between man and his human self. .... Woman's role in creation should be parallel to her role in life" (Evans, *Anaïs Nin* 87). A woman seemingly cannot identify herself beyond those essential identities while remaining within the dominant discourse of the symbolic order, and continually denies the possibility of a feminine subjective identity. Geismar cites Nin in *The Diary of Anaïs Nin Vol. V* as "one of the few women in our literary tradition to affirm the centrality of the biological impulses for her own sex, and on the same terms, as for men" (108). In fact, Nin establishes a discourse that reifies gender differences into permanent, even biologically given aspects of the human condition (Jay, qtd. in Nin, *Conversations with Anaïs Nin* 540). She defines women according to the traditional gender roles,

and her difficulty in separating the womb from woman's traditional role as man's support has led her to have women entrapped in patriarchal society.

Throughout her work, Nin is "driven into the subconscious to search for the essence" of things (*Novel of the Future* 55), but she never resolves the enigma of the essence of the Woman. She acts in accordance with Lacan who states that Woman with a capital W, woman as singular in essence doesn't exist; Woman as an all-encompassing idea is an illusion. There is multiplicity of women but no essence of "Womanhood" or "Womanliness" (*On Feminine Sexuality* 7). Unlike Irigaray who provides a cultural place for the female subject with a gendered and subjective identity, beyond the pre-defined cultural history of the patriarchal world, Nin is unable to capture a total essence of womanhood and defines woman as the product of history and culture; therefore, woman is alienated from the possibilities in the masculine discourse. Her protagonist, Sabina, never manages to have a balance in man-ruled society. She is torn between her search for self-realization, and her feeling of needing to conform to social orders.

Sabina is offered as the primordial and traditional woman; a mother and a wife who fails in her relationship with men especially her husband when she "wants to be the woman Alan wants her to be" (*SHL* 83). Also, "she wears the clothes which stayed in the house, which are his (Alan), baptized by his hands, played a role of a whole woman" (*SHL* 84). Sabina remains fragmented and metamorphoses into another role - mother, seductress, and wife - and never develops her full potential as a woman with a subjective and gendered identity - as each lover appears to her in his role of masculinity. "The new self she offered (Alan), created for him,

appeared intensely innocent, newer than any young girl could have been, because it was like a pure abstraction of a woman, an idealized figure, not born of what she was, but of his wish" (*SHL* 83-4).

Sabina plays the role of a mother in her relationship with Donald, a feeble yet passionate man whose "manhood is trapped and captured" (*SHL* 98). In fact, "Donald's voice was passive, he was gently clowning by his parodies of women's feathery gestures, by a smile so deliberately seductive" (*SHL* 93), and "his dress, a shirt the color of her dress … a woman's billfold, or a strand of hair dyed silver gray on his young luxuriant gold head.… His wax figures of women were an endless concentrate of treacheries" (*SHL* 95), and "he made [Sabina] doubt her femininity… His love of small roses, of delicate jewelry seemed more feminine than her barbaric heavy necklaces" (*SHL* 94). Sabina and Donald's mother-child relationship is apparent when "he kneeled at her feet to relace the sandal which was undone, an act he performed with the delicacy not of an enamored man, but of a child at a statue's feet, of a child intent on dressing woman, adorning her… it was a caress not to Sabina's feet…. Touching his mother's body" (*SHL* 96). As a mother does a child, Sabina begins to see Donald not as an object of desire, but maternal desire. Thus Sabina transforms her desire from her own satisfaction to the fulfillment of Donald's needs. By touching Sabina's body, Donald's passionate desire is invoked: "by touching her naked foot he had felt a unity resembling the first unity of the world, unity with nature, unity with the mother**,** early memories of an existence within the silk, warmth and effortlessness of a vast love" (*SHL* 97). Donald's powerful desire in the form of dependence demands Sabina's passionate

desire: “He became aware of all his fragilities at once, his dependence, his need” (98).

Sabina exists in a fantasy of mother for Donald. Since Sabina identifies her relationship with Donald as one of mother and child, this maternal fantasy sacrifices her desires, leaving them unaddressed: “When I see that I have let him be aroused, it seems natural to let him release his desire between my legs. I just let him out of pity” (*SHL* 98-9). She cannot address the nature of her love relationship with Donald while drawing on the maternal fantasy of womanhood.

Sabina is represented as the object of desire that functions only to satisfy the desire of men and, therefore acts within a primarily masculine and patriarchal construct. She is victimized by such definitions for the only desire allowed her is her desire to fulfill the others’ sexual needs. Without an autonomous identity and Irigarayan self-love, she cannot have sexual differentiation. Sabina functions as a maternal figure and sacrifices her body for a masculine other. Thus, motherhood forecloses Sabina’s own subjectivity and desire. When Nin then attempts to write about her own erotic nature, she begins to become aware of the boundaries of the symbolic construction of the feminine. Sabina does not seem able to define her own subjectivity, and to express her own desire with falling into the role of wife and mother in her relationship with her husband, Alan, and other men especially Donald. Her desire for men places her within a hierarchical and symbolic structure which is attributed to the traditional heterosexual relations. She is not able to free herself from conformance to the world of men, especially her husband, Alan:

> [Alan] is the only one I trust, the only one whose love is infinite, tireless, all-forgiving… This love you need, Alan has given you… you will lose him one day, for there are other Alans exactly as there are other Sabinas. (*SHL* 135)

Sabina realizes the instability of such interactions that her desire does not fit within the symbolic order. She embodies one of the primal fantasies of womanhood symbolized in a patriarchal world. She exists as a desirable object with multiple selves drawn from various masculine fantasies of the erotic woman: "How all the other loves clung to Sabina's body... How they made her heavy with the loss of her self, lost in the maze of her gifts. How the lies, the loves, the dreams, the obscenities, the fevers weighed down her body" (*SHL* 114). None of these selves are really her own, so Sabina clings to a multiplicity of forged identities to hide the absence of a real one. She plays the role of fantasy woman for so long that she forgets the reality of who she is and what she desires. But she has no other way of coming to terms with the natural eroticism which is such a major component of her personality. Rather than being obsessed with sex, Sabina desires love and searches for an ideal lover, but a mutual love relationship does not happen. "Her love with Alan displays the bondage of the traditional husband/wife love" (Rogers, *The Troublesome Helpmate* 106). For Alan, Sabina acts as a traditional wife and shows "a collective, or universalized picture of woman as she has appeared through the centuries of human experience in relation to man" (Harding, *The Way of All Women* 8-9). She fulfils Alan and other men's wishes but it is unsatisfactory because she

fails to function as more than being an object of male desire. Harding notes that Sabina becomes aware that her husband and lovers "do not really love her but is always seeing something over her shoulder, as it were" (20). Indeed, when Philip turns his "glacial blue" eyes on Sabina, they seem "to gaze beyond her at all women who had dissolved into one, but who might, at any moment again become dissolved into all" (30). Sabina knows that the sensation will "vanish like the ecstasies of drink, leaving her the next day even more shaky, even weaker at the core, deflated, defeated, possessing nothing within herself" (32). She condemns herself to being the one Philip will call on when he wants "fever" (41). Sabina is not able to achieve the full measure of non-dual and irreducible love in relation to men.

In the last part of the novel, the lie detector attempts to set Sabina on a path toward self-awareness by adjusting her conception about men and love. "You've only been trying to love, beginning to love. Trust alone is not love, desire alone is not love, illusion is not love… All these were paths leading you out of yourself" (*SHL* 136). The Detector shows that sexual desire alone is not adequate for love relationship, as Irigaray defines irreducible love in *To Be Two*:

> Neither body nor language simply, but incarnation *between* us…Thus I and you, she and he, speak to each other and each one forms a subjectivity denying access to the self and the other prior to all speech. Between us are the world and the word and the universe and the word. One is, in part, common to us while the other remains unique to each of us. You remain a

mystery to me through your body and through your word, and our alliance will always involve a mystery" (12).

Sabina's relation with men as the object of their desire isolates her from herself. Philip says about Sabina's silence: "If you had spoken then I would have walked away. You had the talent of letting everything else speak for you. It was because you were silent that I came up to you" (*SHL* 128-29). Sabina allows Philip and other men to continue their dreams. She eventually becomes aware that men do not really love her. Whilst Sabina is identified by various positions – as an actress; a wife; an adulteress; and a liar – none brings any closer to defining exactly who she is. The narrator notes that, '[t]he faces and the figures of her personages appeared only half drawn' (*SHL* 364). Sabina is never identified through her multiple selves, as she refuses to contain her multiplicity within one single identity. "The more she is pursued, the more skins she sheds abandoning like a disguise, shedding the self he had seized upon" (*SHL* 407).

6.4 Conclusion

Anaïs Nin attempted to break away from patriarchal discourse in exploring the female sexual body as a creative power for awakening women's feminine desire in accordance with Irigarayan 'feminine divine' and 'female *jouissance*'. However, her female character, Sabina, could not achieve her spiritual enlightenment and full measure of non-dual love through her passionate sexual desire, her bodily needs, and fragmented selves. Rather than creating a balance between dualities of

body/spirit and self/other, Nin focused merely on women's sexual desire which led them to disfiguration.

Anaïs Nin was not completely able to grasp an essence of the Woman, either for herself or her female character due to the sociocultural-historical constructions of womanhood imposed upon herself and other women such as Sabina. She was aware of the sacrifice of women's subjective identity, and showed her own resistance to the boundaries of these constructions which limited a woman's identity. She refered to the erotic nature of women without being completely aware of the fact that as long as an erotic emerged through the fantasy of motherhood and wifehood, it generated masculine constructions of eroticism based on masculine fantasies. Thus, Sabina could not be held as an accurate picture of womanhood in her fragmented selves. In contrast to Irigarayan intersubjective and non-possessive love based on dual subjectivity, Nin's female protagonist could not achieve her subjective identity and non-dual love because she was engulfed within her multiple selves created through a series of unfulfilling, possessive and reducible love affairs. In fact, she was entangled in her sexual body, as an object of male desire and a mirror image of men, for the fulfillment of their sexual needs.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

What has made this thesis unique was exploring non-duality within duality in the selected women writers' novels from Victorian and modern ages within different social circumstances, namely Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, and Anaïs Nin's *A Spy in the House of Love*, through Irigaray's notions of 'feminine divine,' 'sensible transcendental,' love, and 'sexual difference'. To explore non-duality within duality in the selected novels, I covered most of Irigaray's concepts, especially the later ones which disrupted the presumptions of masculine subjectivity, and proposed re-thinking of categories of identity and subjectivity as such as relational. Irigaray's conceptualization of the ethical relations between two distinct subjects has helped us to analyze the novels from the place of the excluded feminine not to "define" female characters, rather to explore women's autonomous subjective identity as well as a non-dual relation between them and the other of same or different sex as two distinct subjects. This kind of study of selected novels concurred with the Irigarayan view of women's subjectivity and a dual subjective relation that respects difference. Irigarayan dual subjectivity is exemplified in the following statement:

> In order to ethically relate to the other, I must gather with myself and present myself as a unity—in a way as oneness, but a concrete, singular, and

> embodied oneness. This prevents us from appropriating the other or being appropriated by the other, a necessary condition for our entering into presence, communication and relation with a mutual respect. (*Sharing the World* 22)

This vision of relation could not come about in a culture where one subject (the masculine) had control over the feminine. I have argued that Irigarayan ethics of relation in the study of selected novels offered ontological gendered dualism, mysterious and the unknowable difference of each gender and intersubjective relation which were not 'natural', 'biological' or 'instinctual'. It can be said that these relations did not flourish without a transformation of subjectivity and the underlying relation. Therefore, it was noted that the failure of the masculine subject to recognize the feminine as a subject in its own right was not a failure in definition but a failure in relation. It was because the masculine subject imagined himself to be the only subject, and that women were defined as the opposite of the masculine, its deformation. It can be noted that a relation on the traditional model of subjectivity based on hierarchical dualities prevented women from their own subjective becoming and from expressing their female desire.

Throughout the analytical chapters of this thesis, it has been investigated how non-duality within duality can be explored in the selected novels of the Victorian age and the twentieth century through Irigaray's notions of 'feminine *jouissance*,' 'feminine divine,' 'sensible transcendental,' dual subjectivity, and love, and how the readers can appreciate much better the richness of the novels

under discussion. Reading the selected novels through Irigarayan concepts gave the readers a better understanding of the female characters' self-consciousness and liberation within the oppressive structure of patriarchal ideology, and of the possibilities of a better world for both men and women.

I discussed how the selected female writers gave voice to their oppressed female characters to define their subjectivity, without which they would continue to be absorbed as lesser males into the dominant, phallo-centric society. Irigaray's theories helped us to argue non-duality within duality as a means of producing the female characters' subjective and autonomous identity and their interchangeable relation with others in the selected novels, rather than merely defining women as the opposite of men. The female characters appreciated their existence as a separate gender, and recognized the other as other before conscious love occurred, just as Irigaray believed in women's relation with other women and men after the recognition of their divine self. She focused on women's need for self-love, and the specificity of their sex for their liberation from "a loss of self" (*An Ethics* 69). Self-love, as Irigaray conceived it, depended on creating a symbolic among/between women (*An Ethics* 103), women's genealogy, and the spiritualization of the female body: "Only a god can constitute a place where we can meet, which will leave us free" (*Sexes and Genealogies* 80). For Irigaray, as Whitford noted, "The ideality of a woman's identity-for-herself depended upon the divine woman, the ideal self which transcends the particularity of individual women" (*Irigaray the Reader* 15). Irigaray's concept of two lips provided a model of divine femininity that allowed

for the establishment of sexual difference. "[Irigaray's] essential goal is to secure a place for the feminine within sexual difference" (159).

Irigaray's notions of 'sensible transcendental,' 'sexual difference' and dual subjectivity underscored the idea of non-duality (autonomy) within duality (relationships) and helped us in analyzing the selected novels to show how the selected women writers addressed the significant difference of female characters from the men's image of them; that underlies the tendency of the male-figures to ignore the female voice and desire. These female characters rebelled against the traditional hierarchical dualities, the constraints and the unjust way of patriarchal society, and developed their self-consciousness and gendered identity by expressing their female experiences, their feelings and desires, and by re-constructing their genealogy, very much in the way Irigaray in 'feminine divine' urged women to do.

Irrespective of the differences between the selected novels, the similarity I found between the women writers' views was that they tried to posit women on the way to self-development and liberation, and create better worlds for women as well as men, eradicating women's repression within patriarchal society. They created a text and a society for women through giving voice to the long-silenced and controlled women and through criticizing the single-sexed masculine subject of Western world. Their female characters attained their subjective identities and positions to speak as women through appreciating their feminine bodily desire in their exchange relationships. Their identities were constructed in different ways which did not degrade their femininity but led to their liberation.

The reason that I found the Brontës' novels interesting in arguing non-duality within duality through Irigaray's theories was that, in spite of Victorian social restrictions, the Brontës brought to the surface the unconscious feminine passion, expressed their female characters' sexual experiences, and offered women as the creative subjects of desire. As late as 1942, no woman writer had the courage to "tell the truth" about the body and women's desire (Woolf, "Professions for Women" 249), but the Brontës created an ideal state of social, psychological, and spiritual equality for their characters. Charlotte and Emily Brontë's female protagonists transcended the traditional patriarchal boundaries of the hierarchical dualities of mind/body and self/other, and freed themselves from the suppression and silencing of their feminine power. However, their self-discovery occurred through managing their passionate desire in relation to others. They knew that mere sexuality was inadequate in the development and fulfillment of their identities.

Modern critics counted the Brontës ahead of their time in writing feminine passion as well as love relationship. However, the importance of love in the Brontës' scheme was never sentimental. For them, "the love-union is sacred - both a means of self-discovery and a chance for freedom, not an end in itself" (Platt, "The Female Quest in the Works of Ann, Charlotte, and Emily Brontë" 113). In fact, "love has involved the expansion of self-intellectual stimulation as well as emotional satisfaction" (*Ibid*), as in Emily and Charlotte Brontë's works, the earthly love was a kind of mystical experience, the communion of two souls that resulted in Irigarayan love based on the instasy which bound together mind, consciousness and body internally and mystically.

The female character in Charlotte Brontë's novel, Jane, was engaged in a reciprocal love with her counterpart. She did not limit herself to the conventional and hierarchical love and marriage that some other writers had seemed unable to escape from. This rebellious female character struggled to gain equal subjective position and self-consciousness through appreciating her feminine energetic power and transcending the limitations of patriarchal norms, just as Irigaray created an awareness for women to enter a new spiritual epoch of their development and to share the breath of life with others and ultimately with everything that lives (*Key Writings* 146).

Charlotte Brontë's female protagonist, Jane, found "the way of enlightenment" (Bloom, *Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre* 12) in love relation with her male counterpart after realizing her self-consciousness. She achieved her subjectivity by bringing into light the latent fires of her passionate desire beyond the restrictions of patriarchy; however, she tried to manage her feminine desire in balance with her mind. From her childhood, Jane wanted to express her desire; however, her self-realization could not be achieved merely through her longings. She tried to free herself from being an 'angel in the house' and from the confined realm of patriarchal society where her sense of being was "humbled by the consciousness of her physical inferiority" (*JE* 17). She attempted to create a balance between her passion and mind, in relation with her counterpart, Rochester, who tried to dominate and control Jane when they were first engaged in the early part of the novel, but later Jane's self-awareness was reinforced in her second engagement with Rochester when Rochester realized her as a gendered subject. Both Jane and

Rochester experienced an irreducible love and intimacy in appreciating their subjective identity in an Eden; a utopian woodland.

Emily Brontë's female protagonist, Catherine, like Charlotte Brontë's Jane, acknowledged her subjective identity in relation to her male counterpart and soul-mate, Heathcliff. Gilbert and Gubar in *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1976) have shown Emily Brontë's view by highlighting Catherine's rebellious desire for love of Heathcliff. Carol Jacobs argued how the passion between Heathcliff and Catherine in the novel appeared to be the last refuge of identity (*Uncontainable Romanticism* 2, 7). Catherine's self-development was shown in her relationship to Heathcliff in the natural world of Wuthering Heights when she said "I *am* Heathcliff" (*WH* 82), but she lost her autonomous identity and non-dual love in the patriarchal world of Thrushcross Grange. In fact, Catherine and Heathcliff could not achieve the full measure of non-dual love after leaving the natural world of Wutheirng Heights because of Catherine's betrayal and marraiage with Edgar Linton and acceptance of patriarchal social dualities.

In spite of the differences of setting, time, and race between the Brontës' novels and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, there were obvious affinities between these novels in terms of their female characters' narration. Alice Walker, an African American novelist, like Charlotte and Emily Brontë, gave voice to her female character to express her feelings and develop her self. In fact, the Brontës and Walker strived to reconstruct a traditionally male-oriented discourse of power by bringing Jane, Catherine, and Celie to the center, thus necessitating the emergence of rebellious women. Jane and Catherine within Victorian culture and Celie in the

African-American community promoted their potential for depicting their passionate desire by expressing their pleasure in the form of narration, writing a diary, and letters.

Jane's narration in *Jane Eyre*, Catherine's diary in *Wuthering Heights*, and Celie's writing letters to God and later to her sister, Nettie, in *The Color Purple* were forms of rebellion against traditional hierarchical dualities of body/mind, self/other, and female/male, and social restraints, repressions and injustices imposed on them. Jane, Catherine and Celie expressed their feminine feelings in patriarchal society through their narration to avoid being a woman constructed by the traditional hierarchical dualities and patriarchal social norms, to find a way for transforming the dualities, and to achieve their self-knowledge and subjective gendered identity.

At the beginning of Charlotte Brontë's novel, Jane narrated her miseries and punishment by the Reeds. Later, she was able to express her feelings by creating a balance between dualities. In *Wuthering Heights*, Catherine narrated her own life, and her relationship with Heathcliff in a diary, and described the injustices of herself and Heathcliff, "scrawled in an unformed, childish hand in the margins of an old religious book and stowed away in the confines of the cabinet bed" (*WH* 2). She challenged the traditional hierarchical dualities to achieve a union with her male counterpart, Heathcliff. Celie in Walker's *The Color Purple* wrote letters to God, her first confidant, and then to her sister, expressing her miseries. Pa's opening statement, "You better not ever tell nobody but God. It'd kill your mammy" (*CP* 1), referred to the power of masculine god. Celie had to obey Pa as a masculine god

for her survival, thus, she began writing letters to God, telling her story and misery to him, and tried to have confidence in this masculine god. But later, when she did not receive any answer from God, she gave up writing letters to the masculine god, and began writing to her sister, appreciating her feminine desire, and recognizing the divinity within herself and in everything.

I found an interaction between Alice Walker's social life and the second wave feminism mirrored in what she produced in her novel. Both Irigaray and Walker had a preference for feminine *jouissance*, and regarded body as the way of spirituality. Therefore, her novel was read through Irigaray's theories to prove non-duality within duality of body and spirit. Walker's protagonist, Celie, found her lost sense of self, through her divine body and achieved her self-consciousness and spiritual wholeness in black women's community by "seeking and uncovering an inner type of identity" (Dieke, "Toward a monistic idealism" 509). The transformation of her view from the masculine god to feminine divinity was facilitated by the support of other women of the black community. By the end of the novel, Celie was an empowered black woman who spoke her mind and realized her gendered identity in a safe space of black community.

As a womanist, Walker tried to go beyond the traditional hierarchical dualities and social norms, and characterized a female figure who appreciated her feminine desire and finally achieved her self-consciousness through other women. Walker acted against patriarchal expectations that women attended to men's needs and desires, thus, she resisted patriarchy by giving Celie the chance to discover her self, awaken her sexual power, and to postulate her spiritual consciousness, just as

Irigaray referred to women's experience of their own subjectivity, self-love and embodiment in her 'feminine divine'.

Walker celebrated the female body, mind, and spirit as an unbreakable union necessary for the creative imagination. She reconsidered the essence of female desire and self-realization within the masculine discourse showing a strong-willed female character who tried (even if unsuccessfully in the earlier part of the novel) to find her spiritual consciousness through her feminine body. Just as Irigaray created a balance within duality of body and divinity in her 'feminine divine,' Walker reclaimed the body as a carrier of the soul/spirit, as "an essential instrument that expresses its passions" (*In Search of Our Mother's Gardens* 67), and celebrated the body's infinite potentiality. She brought Celie to the self-realization by showing that God is not a form outside of herself, that in fact "God is everything" (*CP* 202) as Shug said. Celie broke away from the traditional dualities and social restrictions and defined gender roles, and discovered divinity within her self and in everything. The psychic rebirth of Celie was a journey towards a spiritual wholeness. She achieved her gendered subjectivity through appreciating her mind, body, and emotion, and through awakening her sexual energetic power hidden within her. Her eventual reconciliation was a part of coming back to the blissful state of self-consciousness and divinity through her body, just as Irigaray referred to the body as a means of spiritual consciousness.

The reason I found Anaïs Nin's novel interesting for analysis was that Nin, a French woman writer with the same cultural background as Irigaray, brought to light women's sexual desire in her novel. Nin in 'Eroticism in Women' (1976), in

accordance with Irigarayan idea of female desire, proposed the concept of 'female *jouissance*' and wrote about women's sexual experience through breaking patriarchal norms. Although she had been criticized for her ideas on eroticism, she stimulated readers to think about feminine *jouissance* for expressing women's desire. Nin's female character, Sabina, expressed her erotic desire through her body, and tried to free herself from the restrictions and repressions of patriarchal society, as it was discussed in Irigarayan 'feminine divine,' and 'the multiplicity of female desire.' However, unlike Irigaray who separated women from social stigma that insisted they were natural beings whose proper domain was the earthly body, Nin focused merely on women's sexual desire as ecstasy. Sabina was the female protagonist whose identity and subjectivity failed due to her instinctual sexual power in the male-created paradigm of values which formed the role-image of motherhood and wifehood. She suffered from physical and mental division, and was engulfed in her passionate sexual desire, and in her fragmented selves, as Nin represents self as "fragmentary" (*Conversations with Anaïs Nin* 47) in duality with other. Since one half of duality was valued over the other, this mode of conceptualizing allowed the one to devalue, violate and exploit its opposite. Unlike Irigarayan 'feminine divine' and 'sensible transcendental,' in which the body was the way of spirituality, Sabina's freedom was not possible because she focused purely on her sexual body.

Although feminine sexual desire as a form of creative vision moved beyond the impediments of social boundaries in Anaïs Nin's novel, the female character's relation with men was based on ecstasy and instinctual desire rather than Irigarayan

instasy and irreducible and non-possessive love. Sabina's passionate sexual desire could not subvert the traditional and hierarchical binaristic thoughts of the masculine world. In fact, she could not achieve the full measure of non-duality at the end of novel when her relationship with others repressed her erotic needs and subjective identity according to the social circumstances and patriarchal domination. Her subjectivity, spiritual and psychic wholeness were not achieved in the context of the others who reflected their own desire and had pleasure with her as an object of desire. She could not move against the normative constructions of womanhood and could not give an end to her own sense of fragmentation by collecting all pieces of her personality.

Nin's focus on women's individuality was criticized by Alice Walker in a *Ms. Magazine* article published in April 1977, shortly after Nin's death. Walker commented negatively on Nin's erotic writing on the grounds that "the core experiences were not imagined" (46). Although Walker praised Nin's erotica for urging women toward self-exploration, she objected to the fragmentary selves in Nin's works. Walker pointed out that Nin's erotica was "self-indulgent and escapist….. mere romantic constructions useful to very few" (*Ibid*). Unlike Nin's emphasis on women's instinctual desire and ecstasy, Walker showed women's sexual power as a spiritual way of their liberation from the restrictions of patriarchal society and proposed the loyalties and the triumphs of black women (Walker, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens* 250). Unlike Nin's essentialist view of women, Walker stressed the social context of her novel by making her female protagonist, Celie, a representative of all people. Walker was "preoccupied with the spiritual

survival, the survival whole of [her] people" (*Ibid*). A "wise innocent (208)," Celie moved from individualistic knowledge towards collective and spiritual consciousness.

The significance of this study was arguing non-duality within duality in the selected novels through Irigarayan concepts of 'feminine divine,' divine self and other, 'sensible transcendental,' 'sexual difference,' love, and dual subjectivity, to show how the Brontës, Nin, and Walker's female characters challenged patriarchal society in achieving their spiritual consciousness and subjective identity through relationships with others. It showed how the selected women writers inverted the hierarchical binary oppositions constructed through culture within the traditional dualisms, and destabilized the dualisms themselves and created a threshold between binarily opposed terms to appreciate the differences. They sought a divinity and an autonomous female subjectivity for their female characters outside the binary oppositions, outside the dominant discourse of symbolic order which placed women in the negative space where there was no access to an authentic voice for them except through the passage of the other sex. Through the rejection of binary oppositions, they created a free space and a new gender identity for women at the expense of traditional womankind.

Still there is a strong potential for each of the analytical chapters to be extended further and be discussed according to different Irigarayan theories. A discussion of intersubjectivity, for instance, would also be quite interesting, exploring the notions of 'sexual difference,' love and 'feminine divine' in other works in terms of scope. As for further research on the themes of love, subjectivity,

and feminine *jouissance*, one can work on other novels through Irigaray's above-mentioned concepts in which women's subjectivity and self-consciousness are defined through their divine female body and their dynamic love relationship.

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- 2nd international conference of Social Science and Humanity, *Female Creative Energy*, Taiwan, June 2009.
- International interdisciplinary Social Inquiry Conference, *Divine Self according to Irigarayan Theory and Hinduism*, Turkey, 2012.
- International Conference of Social Science and Humanity in Singapore – ICSSH, *Feminine Creative Energy and Tantric Śaktism*, 2010.
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- International Conference of Social Sciences. *The Breath in West and East.* UPM, Putra Jaya, Malaysia, 2012.
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- International Conference of Debordering the Borders: Towards a New World Culture of Hospitality, *Union of Self in Rumi's Mathnavi*, Ljubljana, Slovenia, June 2016.

- International Conference of Sacrifice, *Sacrifice in Islam*, Celje, Slovenia, November 2016.
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