

ouvrage pour saisir cette centralité de la logique au sein du système et permettre une meilleure compréhension du développement constant et du dynamisme de la pensée de Hegel au cours des années passées à Heidelberg.

Néanmoins, malgré la qualité générale de la présentation et la clarté de la traduction offerte par Jean-Marie Lardic, Alain Patrick Olivier et leurs collègues, l'ouvrage reste d'abord un document d'intérêt pour le lecteur spécialisé, intéressé à saisir le déploiement de la pensée hégélienne dans ses moindres développements et ses rapports, souvent critiques, avec les philosophies concurrentes de l'époque. Il sert bien davantage à nuancer, compléter ou corriger la connaissance de Hegel chez le spécialiste qu'à y introduire un lecteur non initié. L'ouvrage n'en reste pas moins un document précieux pour les études hégéliennes de langue française.

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### ***Through Vegetal Being: Two Philosophical Perspectives***

LUCE IRIGARAY AND MICHAEL MARDER

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In *Through Vegetal Being*, Luce Irigaray and Michael Marder deliver a two-voice meditation on our relationship to the natural world and express a common concern with the general condition of forgetting in which the significance of vegetal being is held. In this series of exchanges, spanning the course of two years, Irigaray and Marder engage in a work of shared thinking *in* and *through* the vegetal world. The book forks into two series of 16 identically titled chapters, in which the authors navigate contiguous concerns in response to each other's thoughts. Irigaray's and Marder's contributions harmonize into an insightful, sensitive, and intellectually complex investigation of the fecundity of the natural world for contemporary existence. The mirror-like dialogue between the two weaves together the personal, the philosophical, and the political implications of our embeddedness in nature, and questions our departure from this primary belonging.

In Chapter 1, "Seeking Refuge in the Vegetal World," the authors propose the idea of nature as an originary dwelling and as a refuge from the human world. As Marder suggests, the series of "increasing and merciless" (117) displacement and uprooting caused by human migration, personal histories, or political violence stand in stark contrast with the rootedness and the constancy of the world of plants. Against these displacements, Marder suggests that plants come to play the role of "mnemonic centers of gravity" (117). Hence, Irigaray recalls the garden of her childhood, stretching for miles behind the family home in a small mining village between Belgium and France. Marder, in turn, remembers a tall birch tree planted by his grandfather outside his window in Moscow, shrunk to adult-scale proportions when he finds it again after many years, standing in the same place, still "clothed in layers of personal and cultural significance" (118).

The notion of nature as a shelter is further explored in Chapters 2 ("A Culture Forgetful of Life"), 3 ("Sharing Universal Breathing"), and 4 ("The Generative Potential of the Elements"), in which Irigaray and Marder recover the significance of a mindful "cultivation of breath and life" (25). Operating as a passage into the generosity of the world we share with plants, breathing offers a means of communication with vegetative

life and it marks our inscription into “the biggest share of elemental exteriority” (132). The breathing of plants endlessly restores and renews the circulation of energy on earth, extends the breath of animals, including human beings, and makes possible the transcendence of natural being into cultural, intellectual and spiritual life. Our inestimable indebtedness to the breathing of plants is illustrative of Marder’s insistence on “the unpayable debt we owe [them]” (133). As both Irigaray and Marder argue, the value of the “invisible dwelling” (28-29) afforded to us by the natural world can only be appreciated through a renewed sensitivity to the sensuousness of sensory perception (Chapter 7), to the organic temporalities of vegetal being (Chapters 5 and 12), and to the fruitful cultivation of living energy between all beings (Chapter 12). The richness and diversity of the blessings offered by the natural world, however, stand “outside the circuits of exchange” (208) of conventional economies. As suggested by Chapters 12 (“Wondering How to Cultivate our Living Energy”), 15 (“Becoming Humans”), and 16 (“Cultivating and Sharing Life Between All”), the offerings of the natural world largely exceed what we may attempt to give back to it and elude conventional notions of reciprocity and trade.

The Western metaphysical tradition and its seemingly insuperable methodological presuppositions stands as a recurring sparring partner in Irigaray’s and Marder’s trajectories. Working against the grain of traditional metaphysics, *Through Vegetal Being* introduces the space of our connection with the natural world as the irreducible interweaving in natural becoming of unity and multiplicity. Early in her contribution, Irigaray offers the notion of sexuate identity as the “framework” (99) and starting point for an investigation of life that begins not “from the neuter or neutralized, and presumably universal” (5), but “from life itself and its necessary sexuation” (5). As Marder formulates it, “the vegetal deconstruction of metaphysics” (112) opens the way to modes of thinking and to living practices rooted in a reappraisal of the singular multiplicity and particular modes of existence expressed by natural life. To this end, the rhythmic alterations and alternations of seasonal being and the specific modes of self-expression of plants are most explicitly addressed in Chapters 5 (“Living at the Rhythm of the Seasons”), 6 (“A Recovery of the Amazing Diversity of Natural Presence”), and 13 (“Could Gestures and Words Substitute for the Elements?”).

For both authors, the pressing need for modes of living that “start from life again” (93) is dependent on a reconception of many deep-running beliefs about human existence and its relation to natural belonging. In conceiving of plants as “either incapable or undeserving of self-possession” (125), humans have both contracted the scope of their own existential possibilities, and violated the autonomy of the vegetal world. Moreover, the human logic of assimilation, consumption, and appropriation of vegetal life (Chapters 2, 5, 7, and 13) is responsible for the impending devastation of its fecundity and incredible diversity. Although they ultimately suggest different ways of caring for nature, Irigaray and Marder agree that only a heightened sensitivity to the dynamic and relational dimensions of sharing that stand between us and the natural world can override a human tendency to dominate and destroy it. To this end, both authors give great weight to the transformative promise and potential for growth afforded to us by an in-depth reevaluation of our relation with natural beings and relay an urgent call for a “culture of caring for and cultivating life” (127). Pressed as we are with the impending devastation of the natural world due to anthropogenic degradation, Irigaray’s and Marder’s work fosters new possibilities for a much-needed dialogue between philosophical reflection and ecological thought.

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