

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

"Écriture féminine" and "Terri-stories": The Intricate Links between Space and Women's  
Writing in the Works of Nicole Brossard and Daphne Marlatt

by

Peggy Devaux

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
CROSS-DISCIPLINARY DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF FRENCH, ITALIAN AND SPANISH

AND

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

CALGARY, ALBERTA

JULY, 1997

© Peggy Devaux 1997



National Library  
of Canada

Acquisitions and  
Bibliographic Services

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale  
du Canada

Acquisitions et  
services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

*Your file Votre référence*

*Our file Notre référence*

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-24580-2

Canada

## ABSTRACT

This thesis is an examination of works by Nicole Brossard and Daphne Marlatt, two contemporary Canadian writers. As both are women, lesbians, feminist Canadian writers, a close comparative study of part of their work will show the characteristics as well as common aspects of their writing. Hailing from different backgrounds, but sharing comparable ideas, Marlatt and Brossard are very concerned about creating innovative practices for women's writing, "écriture féminine", or to quote Marlatt, finding "terri-stories". Their provocative writing presents a challenge for any reader for it questions, from their lesbian vantage points, the patriarchal society we live in and try to react against the current status of women in that society. Their creative use of language and struggle with established principles and perceptions lead the readers to question their own concepts and beliefs, thereby compelling the readers to be active while reading in order to decipher their writing. Their work is open to different interpretations and it carries the same desire to find spaces where women's voices could be heard, a place for them to be.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my most sincere thanks to Dr Anthony Wall who assisted and advised me in writing this thesis. I am extremely grateful to Dr Wall for his guidance and making this dream come true.

I also wish to express my appreciation to Dr Kertzer, who accepted to be my co-supervisor and whose comments were very helpful.

Thank you to Dr Dansereau, Dr McCallum and Dr Markotic for serving on my committee.

I am extremely grateful to Daphne Marlatt who accepted to meet me and whose words were very helpful.

I wish to express my most sincere thanks to Marielle, Rose and Lisa, who shared this experience with me.

A special thanks is reserved for my family for their unwavering support, help and love; and for Mohammed for his support, love and constant faith in me.

To my mother, my father and my sister

To Mohammed

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval page .....	ii
Abstract .....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Dedication.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
INTRODUCTION .....	1
Presentation of the notions of space, translation and motion, and how they relate to the works of Nicole Brossard and Daphne Marlatt.	
CHAPTER ONE .....	17
Brossard's radical feminine writing/ L'écriture féminine de Brossard et sa conquête de l'espace.	
CHAPTER TWO .....	51
"Terri-stories": an inner and outer journey in order to search for her mother as well as a women's territory/ Les "his/terri/toires" de Daphne Marlatt: la quête de la mère et d'un territoire féminin.	
CONCLUSION .....	90
WORKS CONSULTED .....	97

## INTRODUCTION

Presentation of the notions of space, translation and motion, and how they relate to  
the works of Nicole Brossard and Daphne Marlatt

Canadian literature no longer exists in the shadow of other literatures: it stands by itself. What was once the source of a fissure in Canadian literature, i.e. its bilingual context and therefore the coexistence of two literatures, is now seen as an asset, as well as the richness and uniqueness of the literatures of Canada. They coexist and pervade in, roughly speaking, English and French Canadian contexts. Therefore Canada is a country with a bipolarity, like two hearts beating. "Canadian writing is the writing down of a new place" (Kroetsch 41). If Canadians felt at some point that there was no major figure in their literature (extremely popular writers, national references acclaimed by all) compared to other countries, their literary cultures today shine through a myriad of talented writers. Numerous genres, approaches and writings are therefore to be found. Male writers used to be dominant in literature, i.e. more often published and taken more seriously. The situation has changed however, as women are also very present on the literary scene today, and their works are both recognized and highly regarded. Amongst them, I have here chosen to embark upon a comparative study of two Canadian women writers,

Nicole Brossard and Daphne Marlatt, each one belonging to a different linguistic and cultural group, whose works reflect their achievement as Canadian and lesbian women writers. Political implications are present in their work regarding the political contexts of English Canada versus a Quebec background (different identities linked to different cultural and geographical spaces), as well as women's status in society (politics that manipulate the social life). In writing and voicing ideas and feelings, Brossard and Marlatt are political or their statements have a political connotation (as they are engaged or seeking to change the way society functions and the status of women).

Du lieu où je parle, l'université, et tous les autres lieux,  
institutions privées ou publiques, sur ce point sont semblables,  
les postes de pouvoir sont occupés par les mâles...La prise de  
parole, dans cette institution et ailleurs, est donc conditionnée  
aussi par cette conjoncture politique. (Gagnon 69)

Women writers in Quebec have very early and significantly contributed to women's causes, through actions, their writing, and by very openly discussing sensitive issues; English Canadian women writers were soon to follow their steps.

Over the years, Nicole Brossard and Daphne Marlatt have acquired national and international recognition thanks to the quality and creativity of their writing. Belonging to the same generation, they have several experiences and viewpoints in common, even though they differ in many aspects. The links that can be drawn between them as human beings, and between their writings, deal with their feminist and lesbian characters, as well as their autobiographical approach. Similarly, the issue of women's identity is extremely relevant in their work.

Poets, novelists, editors, theorists: one could use all these labels to describe the nature of their work. The latter goes beyond the usage of language to tell stories and feelings; they work on language as a material to be shaped as close to their wishes as possible. In the process, they



integrate foreign languages and deconstruct their "own" native language in order to initiate an "unusual" writing. If their books do not totally resist our reading, they nevertheless imply an active attitude on the reader's part towards the text, a moving viewpoint which can be contrasted with a more passive, or "traditional" reading. By "traditional" I mean a linear reading which focuses on the transmission of the message, the content, not on how any such message is transmitted. Resulting from these manoeuvres, their writing explores (an)other space(s) that have not yet been marked or labelled by patriarchal society (or that are regarded as "other" or "wrong"). Originally, Nicole Brossard and Daphne Marlatt do not find themselves recognized and accepted in society as it is, for both who and what they are. The recognition they have as women and writers is not what they think it could or should be. Consequently, their pens become means of expressing their concerns, crossing boundaries and creating new frames or horizons.

The name "feminine writing/*écriture féminine*" is frequently associated with these two writers. In fact, the concept derives from the work of the French theoretician Hélène Cixous, although other French feminists also contributed to it. On several occasions, both Nicole Brossard and Daphne Marlatt acknowledge the influence of French theoreticians on their work. In relation to our topic, it is important to remind ourselves that for Cixous: "[w]riting...presents a 'boundless space', in which the hierarchy of masculine relations might at last be transcended and overturned" (Sellers 119). Writing is Brossard and Marlatt's way of questioning our culture and status, of proposing new directions or presenting hitherto untapped alternatives. Writing is a step in history for a book works as a testimony, a written trace one can refer to and depart from. Under these circumstances, writing can thus enable the creation of a network between women, reaching them despite their location and time. To quote Luce Irigaray:

Writing allows me to communicate my thought to many people whom I do not know, who do not speak the same language I do, who do not live in the same period I do. On these grounds, to write is to constitute a body of work with a meaning that can be memorized and circulated, and that may enter into history, etc.  
(Jardine 98)

Therefore Marlatt and Brossard's writing crosses, transgresses literary boundaries, time, as it crosses geographical lines, leaning towards a relative unity and solidarity between women while acknowledging their differences.

However, because of the nature of these two writers' work, their books are not accessible to every woman. Besides possible linguistic obstacles, the very characteristics of their work limit their readership to specific groups of people who approach their books with varying cultural preparation (university students and professors, journalists...). One of the most extreme criticisms they have encountered is probably the depiction of their writing as elitist. Perhaps critics use "elitist" to describe the fact that their way of writing cannot be read as readers usually do; understanding can be achieved as long as the attitude towards the texts changes. Moreover, each reader brings his/her own capacity to decipher a text. It seems that neither Brossard nor Marlatt intends to be elitist; they intend to write as women, according to what being a woman encompasses for them. These comments have to be acknowledged; yet, their work and goals go through this phase when their work appears as indecipherable but people need time to adapt. Because they write differently, they have to face criticisms as well as scepticism. It seems that the whole perspective becomes much more interesting when society has to understand its writers rather than when the latter have to abide by engraved rules, in order to remain in an "acceptable" sphere, one available to everybody. I would compare them to Amazons of the twentieth century, because they could be seen as female warriors, struggling to be heard, while very much

concerned with establishing their identity, as women, not in an Amazonian way (the Amazons used to cut off their right breast to facilitate the use of the bow), i.e. by giving up part of themselves in order to adapt; but on the contrary, by bringing their intact self into perspective, compelling society in general to adapt to them. The myth of the Amazon is central to Brossard's work (Gallays 178). An evolution and learning experience can then occur. One needs to transcend barriers and learn how to think in order to improve one's own knowledge. With Marlatt and Brossard, readers are presented with the obligation to learn how to read differently, and with shifting perspectives. As a matter of fact, they published books in the seventies and early eighties that could still be regarded as avant-garde today, in 1997. "C'est dans les années 70 que les femmes, jusque-là cantonnées dans la poésie, le conte, le roman, envahissent tous les genres, élargissent et déplacent les frontières" (Mailhot 221). In spite of an extensive critical body, especially in relation to Nicole Brossard's work, one is under the impression that their work has only partially been deciphered and that it still holds many ideas and keys useful for pursuing women's identities. As writers, poets, both of them are creators of (a) new space(s) and language(s): "Le poète, en la nouveauté de ses images, est toujours origine de langage" (Bachelard 4). Language is sometimes referred to as that which differentiates human beings from animals. It is language that constructs our world in our psyche; in other words, what we name exists, is. Yet, the limits of language can always be examined or extended beyond their present boundaries. Daphne Marlatt and Nicole Brossard utilize writing as a "weapon" (to write-her) as well as one of their targets (a system that has to be changed). Dealing with writers who express themselves in different languages, we will see how we are conditioned to think within French and English. For instance, French grammar recognizes two genders, the masculine and the feminine.

But it will be interesting to see what this fact really means, how women are represented in language and to study the search for a language (for women) through languages. The issue partly lies in the assertion of women as subjects within language, and not as mere objects. Once this condition is met, they will be able to acquire a voice of their own. "[I]l faut que nous apprenions à devenir des sujets capables de paroles" (Irigaray 47). Language therefore becomes both a space to explore and a tool to explore the world in the feminine.

Another space is exploited through the use of intertextuality as it simultaneously brings together and echoes the words or thoughts of other writers; we will also study the impact other writers and styles have had on the development of Marlatt and Brossard's writing. As both studied literature at university, and have worked as editors in addition to having collaborated several times in common projects, their literary culture and approaches have been shaped by their personal experiences and professional careers. The choice of combining these writers is thus explained: not only do they have common aspects in their writing and personal lives, but they have also worked together. The link I establish in comparing their work already exists in many ways.

Brossard and Marlatt provide women with a literature that touches them, texts within which women are necessarily included; they attempt to get women completely involved and they write in such a way that their words speak to women. Brossard and Marlatt abandon the accepted rhetoric used for writing about feelings and emotions. They turn writing and reading into an experience of the senses: their texts are meant to be seen and listened to. The sense of touch also plays an important role for language: words have to be felt in the mouth, as one pronounces, in order to grasp the dimension of their work. Reading becomes a physical as much

as an intellectual journey. The generic confusion of their writing which belongs to prose and poetry, i.e. the difficulty some critics express in labelling their work, probably derives from the mixture of work on language (deconstructing words in order to make other meanings appear for instance) and narration at the same time and the physical touch. Prose and poetry are two categories commonly used to define a piece of work. "Unfortunately", Marlatt and Brossard's books resist such categorizations. Should it be necessary to define their work according to categories, one could say it is a mixture of everything people think about prose and poetry. Their work inhabits a space that straddles the borders of such categories. However, for practical reasons, their books are grouped under the labels of "novel" or "poetry". Their writing exhibits their own specific style although it is not uniform from one book to the next. Hence the use of terms like prose or poetry which will allow their work to be more generally understood by potential readers. And yet their work appears to transcend people's expectations for prose and poetry. With Marlatt and Brossard, we are far from the romantic school's perception of prose as a bourgeois, utilitarian, rational language that is limited to the communication of a message; or the perception of poetry as a romantic incantation, a testimony of discomfort in society, melancholy or desire for harmony. Marlatt and Brossard offer something else to their readers, a way of writing that would become a floating category of its own.

Time, space and language are interconnected, as Anthony Burgess suggests: "Waking language is made out of time and space, the gaps between the substances that occupy the other" (this quotation is taken from an introduction to Finnegans Wake by James Joyce, a book often related to Brossard's Picture Theory). In his book, La Poétique de l'espace, the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard underlines the rapport between time and space as well ("Dans ses

mille alvéoles, l'espace tient du temps comprimé" 27). Time can also be seen as a space within which we live and move. In Brossard and Marlatt's books, it is not always the case that readers have either a precise idea of the time, or that the narration develops according to a linear pattern. Their playing with these notions is innovative and creative of new spaces, or new "regulations" for living in space. Brossard asserts that, together, women know how to invent new spaces and times (Gallays 182).

The notions of space, motion and translation are essential themes and issues in Marlatt's and Brossard's writing. These three key concepts are widely elaborated and used in their work, which rework them in order to broaden the perspective, adding or shifting meanings. Their powerful writing is enriched by possibilities that lead the reader out of understanding that can only be achieved through rules imposed by patriarchal society. Many aspects of women's lives are taken for granted. Thus, Brossard and Marlatt work at exposing facts and realities, awakening public opinion and women, and advocating that women question their situation and act upon it. Neither Brossard nor Marlatt imposes a single direction for changing perceptions and the context women live in – although Brossard is more "radical" (a term she herself frequently employs); they make suggestions. Their work could be described as an attempt to alter a woman's lot in life and gradually to gain new ground.

Their handling of space occurs at different levels. A generic definition of space allows for a dual perception of the concept: on the one hand, human beings live within a space as it contains and surrounds everything; on the other, it can be a limited area for a specific purpose. Therefore, it is either something which includes us, or that we delimit in order to either include ourselves or be outside of it. The first idea mentioned above focuses on an astronomical point of view, as it is

the immeasurable expanse in which the solar and stellar systems, nebulae, and so forth, are situated. A metaphysical definition adopts the same idea of a continuous, unbounded, or unlimited extension in every direction, but the latter extension is regarded as void of matter. On the other hand, space can also be analyzed as a linear distance (the interval between two or more points or objects) as well as a superficial extent in three dimensions (this is particularly relevant for Nicole Brossard). Three other variations relate to the linkage to time and duration, the interval or blank between words or lines in printed or written matter, and also, the dimensional extent occupied by a body or lying within certain limits. According to these definitions, space is a reality as much as an idea, or an abstract notion. This perspective acknowledges a concrete space as well as a metaphorical one, i.e. one that is the result of a transposition (a movement) where there has been a transfer of meaning. In this regard, space does seem to apply metaphorically to Marlatt and Brossard, as their objective is to achieve a mental construction acknowledging women's identity which would lead to concrete consequences. However, their work can also be described as the desire to write in the feminine, i.e. to create a space on the white page that will consequently create a space in the reader's intellect. Their goal is not simply to replace one space with another one, but rather either to find the means to settle in a brand new space corresponding to women's aspirations, or to shift towards the margins and to appropriate them.

Throughout Marlatt and Brossard's work, there is a noticeable intermingling of geographical and physical space, more precisely spaces related to the city and the body. (Re)inscribing the female body within language is one of their techniques of writing, relating the body and language as places that have to be repossessed by women. The body and the city are taken as sites, where life "develops", and that are essential to the assertion of women's identity.

An interaction between the personal and public space is also implied, both spaces being determining factors for the topic of this thesis. It is commonplace to say that children are born from women, from the most intimate part of them. Now, women have to figure out how they can give birth to themselves as women. Marlatt and Brossard undertake this quest, including a quest for their bodies in order to have a complete being, by analyzing the relationship to the mother as well as between women, and women lovers. The interest in the family microcosm is reduced to the mother/daughter "couple" in a movement designed to discover their own personal roots as women. Both being mothers themselves, they started to question thoroughly the role of the mother from an active (being mothers) and passive (being daughters) viewpoint. The body is also a key element in the attempt to understand what women are. Women have been perceived as (sexual) objects for centuries in many different cultures. Therefore certain ideas have been imposed upon them, to the point where they feel guilty if their bodies do not comply with specific criteria. This is one of the reasons why women have to assert their bodies not according to society's or men's expectations, but according to what it represents for them. Brossard's and Marlatt's personal experiences account for their deep awareness and knowledge of their own bodies. First involved in heterosexual relationships, they later decided to commit to women, within lesbian relationships.

When we theorize literature, we often overlook the author's personal or intimate life. On the contrary, in the case of Brossard and Marlatt, their intimate lives are openly referred to in their books, and serve to define these women. As they have opted for a "marginalized" way of life (one still considered taboo by a number of people), the social space with which they must cope and their personal desires collide. One can say that there is a private space of fantasy in



order to see "the woman" with both these writers. It is a desire motivated by their personal sexual preference (being lesbians), as well as an urge to see what a woman is and means, all this seen and felt by women (Nicole Brossard and Daphne Marlatt). It is a fact that, as lesbians, they belong to a "doubly oppressed group – as women and as homosexuals" (Robinson 224). Christopher Robinson goes on to say that "[t]he way in which we see the world is modified by our particular place on the sexual spectrum" (Robinson x). Therefore, they are fighting back through their writing, brandishing their words in order to open up spaces.

The linear, patriarchal tradition has defined the (female) feminine body as symbol; within such a con-text of history Canadian women writers, like many other women writing elsewhere, seek to create a space for a writing written in the feminine person which presents the feminine body as sign.  
(Kamboureli 31)

One of the directions Marlatt and Brossard's works take is therefore the exploration of a tridimensional space, one that incorporates entities (like the body), acknowledging their contours and relief. I will later introduce the methods they use to reach this particular goal.

From a feminist perspective, women do not have a space that is theirs, as they have to deal on an everyday basis with a patriarchal system of values (it has to be kept in mind that feminists represent an eclectic group and that they do not agree on the very definition of "woman", "female", "feminine" and so forth, or on how to use such words. For example, Julia Kristeva does not want to define "woman"). Writing and the body become sites to be explored, a subversive way to approach women's status and to develop a nonphallogocentric discourse. Space intrinsically allows for movement, changes to take place. Feminists want to assert the status of women, not only in terms of the procreative, reproductive space they represent (the womb) and of their role of mothers. They also advocate equality of rights, i.e. the equal sharing

of social space with men (public space) and look forward to having their own space (private). The latter advocacy goes hand in hand with an equal involvement in the political sphere, where their voices could be heard. Improvements appear to be a necessity at the dawn of the twenty-first century. In this respect, space is therefore envisaged as a place of freedom, acknowledgement, motivation, expression and well-being. Of course, not all feminists share the exact same opinions; diverse currents express their concerns and work differently. Feminist extremists do not accord a lot of space to men in their vision of the future. Such a dichotomy (men opposed to women) does not provide neutral grounds for improvement or agreement. In order to understand the treatment of space by each specific group, one has to go back to the very definition of woman according to each party, and remember that "within language women are marked by gender, and within society they are marked by sex" (Grodén 244-245).

Undoubtedly, space is far from being a fixed notion or entity. Michel de Certeau (a contemporary French historian and philosopher) points out distinctions between "lieu" (place) and "espace" (space), which clarify our understanding and use of space throughout this thesis.

His definition of a place is related to:

*l'ordre (quel qu'il soit) selon lequel des éléments sont distribués dans des rapports de coexistence...les éléments considérés sont les uns à côté des autres, chacun situé en un endroit "propre" et distinct qu'il définit. Un lieu est donc une configuration instantanée de positions. Il implique une indication de stabilité. (De Certeau 172-173)*

For de Certeau, a place is therefore an abstract notion, as the idea of stability implies no movement, i.e. no life. Conversely, by "space" de Certeau understands:

*des vecteurs de direction, des quantités de vitesse et la variable du temps. L'espace est un croisement de mobiles...L'espace serait au lieu ce que devient le mot quand il est parlé, c'est-à-dire quand il est saisi dans l'ambiguïté d'une effectuation, mué en terme relevant de multiples conventions, posé comme*

l'acte d'un présent (ou d'un temps), et modifié par les transformations dues à des voisinages successifs(...)l'espace est un lieu pratiqué. (De Certeau 173)

Space, as defined above, is thus what we will be looking at in a few of Marlatt and Brossard's books. For it is a space related to a context, an environment that is lived in, where direction, speed and time play a role. It is an inhabited environment where motion and movement occur. Examples taken from specific books written by Marlatt and Brossard will show how the definitions of space and place developed by de Certeau are essential to their work. Their quest leads to the discovery and free occupation of a space by women; in other words, not only a place but a space.

The concept of space is also often described as concentric layers of elements on earth, around or further away in the universe. In this perspective, water (sea, ocean and so forth) is then a space just as the desert or the sky is. As a matter of fact, the latter aspect is widely developed and useful to decipher Brossard and Marlatt's work. The idea of layers relates to a possible movement, a shifting from one to another. This idea is addressed in Mikhail Bakhtin's Rabelais and His World, where we are told that:

In the medieval picture of the world, the top and bottom, the higher and the lower, have an absolute meaning both in the sense of space and of values. Therefore, the images of the upward movement, the way of ascent, or the symbols of descent and fall played in this system an exceptional role, as they did also in the sphere of art and literature. Every important movement was seen and interpreted only as upward and downward, along a vertical line. (401)

Shifting allows for novelty and new possibilities; the actual shifting is made possible. Most importantly: "en changeant d'espace, en quittant l'espace des sensibilités usuelles, on entre en communication avec un espace psychiquement novateur" (Bachelard 187). Consequently, the notion of motion or movement is thus intimately linked to that of space and it is stressed that

movement provides novelty and creativity. Because of its intrinsic qualities, movement is possible, performable within any space. Motion is the process of undergoing a change of place. As such, motion is directly related to the concept of translation. As a woman, Susan Griffin wrote in Made from this Earth:

Our writing, our talking, our living, our images have created another world than the man-made one we were born to, and continuously in this weaving we move, at one and the same time, toward each other, and outward, expanding the limits of the possible. (Freedman 39)

The concept of motion/movement as an active process within space is thus a convenient metaphor for women to use in shifting preestablished stereotypes and conceptions that have restricted women right up until the present time. Movement also provides a testimony of being "alive", i.e. it involves an independent functioning of a given body or mechanism, one that allows for a change of place. Movements (to enter a room, to turn right etc) are what de Certeau calls "actions spatialisantes", i.e. actions which occupy or take place in a space. With regards to Marlatt and Brossard, their work is based upon motion/movement: from the act of filling the page to the "devices" used as media of exploration (the spiral for instance with Brossard). The link with translation is evident here, as a trans-latio, a transporting, a transference of a body, or form of energy, from one point of space to another; or, a removal or conveyance from one person, place, or condition to another. Again, the energy necessary to perform such an action, as well as the energy produced, is essential to Brossard and Marlatt. I will study how their work stands as an example of physical/geographical translations (moving, travelling from one place/city/country to another), as well as a translation toward a different sphere, an exploration of the margins, the "Other", the desire to detach themselves from the values and rules that are predominant in patriarchal society. As they develop their thinking and their writing in the margins

of the norms dictated by patriarchal society, there lies a moving power in their publications. The ambiguous term "moving" is used here to convey both a way of writing that has an impact upon the reader, and one that takes the latter to another dimension, another space.

As a consequence, a translation involves turning from one language into another, rendering something in another medium or form. On the one hand, it involves a literal passage from one linguistic system to another; on the other, Marlatt and Brossard lead their readers to a translation within the same language – an attempt to turn the metaphoric ("metaphor" meaning "transport" in Greek) mother tongue into a woman's tongue. Also, a translation of Brossard's ideas and her ways of approaching issues could be noticed in Marlatt's work and vice versa, or of any major work which influenced these two writers.

Indeed, a translation could be described as a transformation, an alteration, a change; changing or adapting to another use. The latter definition expresses Brossard's and Marlatt's purpose: to alter what exists in order to incorporate fully women and to create a space that has only been dreamt of until now. Writing about Marlatt, Pamela Banting comments: "[w]riting this (m)other tongue is a literal and a littoral translation" (Banting 209), a comment which also applies to Nicole Brossard.

The last important aspect of translation I wish to study relates to the act of reading itself, i.e. the multiple interpretations of a specific text, therefore the movement of information between the writer and the reader.

The reader as translator opens the field to new (different) representations (...) Translation is a movement "beyond", establishing a dialectics between here and there, now and then, us and them. And this expansive space where the processes of cultural difference take place, the interstitial "space of newness" ...is where the boundaries of culture are constantly

being negotiated. (Álvarez 90, 93)

Following this brief presentation of translation, the emphasis in this essay will not only be put on the mimetic transformation of one language into another, but on the displacements induced in or by words. The very purpose of conducting a comparative study is to perpetuate a movement back and forth between two or more works. Especially as far as Marlatt and Brossard are concerned, a perpetual translation/movement from one body of work to the other as a translation (English/French and vice versa) should be one of the key elements of our approach. Translation enables a connection to take place, and establishes links between different spaces; it is also a medium to superpose and create a state of symbiosis.

Throughout this thesis, I will attempt to address all these nuances regarding space, motion, translation and writing as applied to Daphne Marlatt and Nicole Brossard. I shall propose an overview of their writing. A deep and thorough analysis of parts of their work will accompany a general overview of their books which pertain to this topic. In so doing, in translating our study over the years of their writing and the publications of their works, certain evolutions in their respective viewpoints and perspectives will be emphasized. The comparison of their opinions and approaches will enlighten any woman reader's perception of the issues and help her identify herself with other women in search of a place to be. Virginia Woolf was one of the first women writers to openly advocate for financial support and privacy in A Room of One's Own in order to be able to write; Woolf realized that a space of their own was necessary. Daphne Marlatt and Nicole Brossard explore geographical and psychological territories in the modern world, where much still remains to be accomplished.

## CHAPTER I NICOLE BROSSARD

Brossard's radical feminine writing.

L'écriture féminine de Brossard et sa conquête de l'espace.

"As a lesbian and a Québécoise, I belong to minorities, but I always write as if the world belonged to me, allowing my desire to shape around me the space I need to be what I am."(Williamson, Sounding Differences 66)

"Nous entrons par l'écriture dans un terrain vaste et vague où le tout luit et se reflète."(Brossard, Double impression 58)

"Peut-être s'agit-il surtout de prendre un espace et de l'occuper."(Brossard, Double impression 65)

For many, Nicole Brossard is one of the most fascinating and inspiring writers they will ever encounter. When one reads her writing, it is impossible to ignore the impact of her "art", whether one likes her style or not. This is especially true if the reader is a woman. For Brossard is a writer / write-her who enables the reader to "read her", i.e. to acknowledge that there is a feminine writing (écriture féminine) which can reveal women, by women for women. Hers is a special approach to literature, another literature, one that has only now begun to be written and that explores new space(s) where it will be able to grow.

In the quest and acknowledgement of women's identity, Brossard has chosen to write in order to make her/ourselves heard. Writing provides the space where identities grow. It is embarked upon to decipher the inner concerns of women, and to consider what women are. It is

an attempt to get to the core of our selves and our role(s) in society, as well as a means of expression. To write is also a long lasting process, i.e. no final answer or solution is to be found: "c'est ne jamais comprendre tout à fait" (Brossard, Double impression 65). Here lies perhaps a reason why Brossard is such a prolific writer: to make up for all the years when women were silenced and to arrive at a better understanding of what it means to refuse that silence. Brossard stands as a political writer, fighting for women's cause as well as for Quebec. "The link between political activism, feminism and lesbianism is well illustrated by the case of Nicole Brossard, who helped to found Parti Pris in 1963, the journal which quickly came to be regarded as the mouthpiece of Quebec nationalism" (Robinson 192).

To claim to explain Brossard's way of writing in its entirety would be a presumptuous undertaking. As a general rule, her writing seems to be a mixture of both leaving a trace on the paper according to an established order (referring to sets of rules found in grammar or syntax), and of trying to capture a bit of space and of making it her own. In other words, one writes according to pre-established principles even if the writer adds his/her own input (visible in style and in other ways, like the use of the page, that are highlighted in Brossard's writing). Brossard's art lies in the fact that she shuns nothing when she wishes to convey her ideas and emotions: boundless words, the page, and typography. She goes beyond the expected, the approved, defying patriarchal society in every way available to her. Brossard draws links and creates a path for women. Writing could therefore be described as that which links one's own space with an external space. For Brossard, writing becomes a movement that creates meaning; it is writing that deserves to be "lived and tasted" as much as it should be read. She deliberately changes the fundamentals which ground what reading is. Were I to define her writing, I would say it is like a



heart that is beating, a space constituted of movement to and fro.

Movement is both present within her writing and created in her reader. The latter has to move, to change her attitude in order to reach an understanding of the text through that very movement.

Between the individual and the writer there is a free space,  
a mysterious landscape where one discovers and dares things  
that the individual cannot afford. It is in that space that I  
learn about myself and can transform myself.  
(O'Brien 137)

The whole process includes a mode of mobile reading that accompanies this "other" writing. The theme of translation (etymologically "translation" means a displacement, a movement across) is then particularly relevant and meaningful as far as Brossard is concerned: to translate into another language – or within the same while making meanings clearer (in a woman's language?) – is fundamentally to translate in the sense of displacement. Le Désert mauve best exemplifies that technique.

First of all, the aspect I mention above refers to language. Although it is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of the questions concerning language, the latter contains several elements that are directly linked with my study of space. In Le Désert mauve there is a translation, i.e. another version of the initial book is produced; there are also several narrative displacements (the main character, Melanie, often goes to the nearby desert; she travels to New Mexico...), and the car, throughout the novel, stands as a symbol of movement. To translate also means to go from one linguistic system/space to another one ("On... traduit toujours à partir d'une certaine position dans l'espace socio-culturel, temporel, géographique"(Folkart 14)). The movement through the spaces of language that translation is, enables people from different

linguistic groups not only to have access to a text but also to innovate within the boundaries of the source language. In other words, if we take a feminist perspective, translation involves an attempt to mobilize a woman's voice, using all available material while altering it in a particular way so that it reflects and constructs her mobility (as a human being and as a member of "women"). The obvious goal is to mobilize possible identities for women, identities that have been overlooked, misunderstood or based on purely binary oppositions (a woman is the opposite of a man, for instance).

Translation is thus used to open or to reveal spaces where women can blossom, move and therefore be. It implies that one will take a distance (look at things differently) and in so doing leave us with gaps for women to fill and bridges for women to appropriate.

Personally, I have always been fascinated by translation, as I am usually writing about acts of passage, whether it is passage from fiction to reality, from reality to fiction, or from one language to another(...)  
I like to be surprised by language. (Williamson, Sounding Differences 70-71)

There might even be a third language involved in such processes of translating as suggested by Régine Robin: "Il n'y a de traduction qu'en passant par 'une troisième langue', celle qui, au lieu de faire semblant de combler le manque, désigne l'horizon de la fissure"(Robin 17). This observation could very well be applied to Brossard who plays with spaces, liminal spaces, borders (from the perspective of language and languages). Brossard, as a Québécois author (although she tends to claim her Québécoise identity more than her being Canadian), already lives in a supposedly bilingual culture where English and French live together, sometimes in harmony, sometimes in conflict. As a result, the third language Robin refers to could be interpreted as a language for women: as one which has to be found within French and English, and also which needs its own space to exist. In the next chapter about Daphne Marlatt, the issue of translation will be once

again considered, for Marlatt and Brossard have often worked together, especially in "translating" one another's works.

To complete these few remarks about translation, I should like to stress the idea found in Brossard's works on translating one's emotions and feelings. Her work goes far beyond the purely linguistic. "Je dis qu'il faut rêver son texte comme un organisme vivant qui multiplie les apprentissages à ce que je crois être le propos de toute existence: la jouissance et la pensée" (Brossard, La Lettre aérienne 63). Emotions and feelings in her writing are linked to her being a lesbian. More precisely, in verbally assuming her lesbianism, she instills her language with the feelings needed to express what she is. Of course, the whole patriarchal system is at stake here. Once again, such a mobile understanding involves learning to adopt a new perspective: "Écrire pour une lesbienne, c'est apprendre à enlever les posters patriarcaux de sa chambre"(Brossard, La Lettre aérienne 126). I will take up this last notion further on.

My last comment about "translation" as a "displacement" concerns the fact that Brossard sees her translation as a deviant practice, i.e. a different kind of translation : "Le Désert mauve de Nicole Brossard se présente comme une pratique "déviant" de la traduction" (Simon 32). Furthermore, this translation does not seek to recreate an equivalent system (like a new patriarchal society dominated by women), but to escape from that system, or rather, to use it in order to build up something different that resembles our most intrinsically mobile qualities. As Sherry Simon explains in Le Trafic des langues, to translate is part of establishing a territory that can only be imaginary; "[l]a traduction, comme la poésie, fait partie du projet d'établir un territoire qui ne peut être qu'imaginaire" (Simon 59). She also expresses the idea that we need to search for a real redefinition of any such place. Brossard's use of translation is in the end a

translation of herself as a woman, a lesbian, a writer, a feminist, a Québécoise. Therefore like Virginia Woolf in A Room of One's Own, she desperately needs a place, her place, a locale, her space, where all can start afresh. Through this process of becoming mobile, of translating herself, Brossard changes the status of women, as it is perceived in today's society. "[M]ovement is a translation in space. Now each time there is a translation of parts in space, there is also a qualitative change in a whole" (Deleuze 8).

The concept of movement at the heart of Brossard's writing is not only evident in her use of translation, but also in her intertextuality. The latter accounts for the influence of one author on another, or even the explicit usage of passages taken from an already existing book. Consequently, intertextuality is by nature a movement of data. Ideas, examples used by a specific author, are directly taken into account by another writer and are used to emphasize his/her thought or are criticized. The result is to make different spheres of thought meet or coincide as well as to give birth to a new space.

There are evident links with one of Brossard's books in which I take a particular interest: Picture Theory. The title itself is revealing in that it refers to Wittgenstein: "To Wittgenstein and Joyce, Brossard owes the basic structure of Picture Theory" (Kamboureli 345). This was not the first time that she used this Wittgensteinian expression. Indeed, the phrase "picture theory" can be found in an earlier publication, Amantes. Brossard admits this expression was fascinating for her as she gradually became more familiar with Wittgenstein's work. Hence his noticeable influence on her work in several books. What particularly interested Brossard in Wittgenstein

was the notion of the impossibility of "saying the reality"; on the contrary, he advocates that "it is only to be shown" (Brossard, "Entretien" 178). Very much inspired by such a concept, Brossard started to develop it in her own terms. In the same interview, Brossard explains that she does not think that "theory" can be translated by "théorie" in French in the phrase « picture theory »; she tends to associate the word with "réalité" (i.e. something that cannot be theorized but shown). Therefore both "théorie" and "picture" refer to a specific space, inscribed in their very meanings or in opposition to what these meanings exclude. More precisely, on the one hand "picture" defines a representation (a painting, a photograph) within a specific frame, therefore designating a delimited space; on the other, it acknowledges the existence of another space, one to be found outside that frame. Moreover, a picture is a depiction and as such can be understood as the vision of a given space within the space it frames. The same approach could be applied to "theory", i.e. "reality" in Brossard's idiom (reality opposed to fiction). Of course, the fact that she talks about intertextuality with Wittgenstein does not imply that Brossard adopts or agrees with all his ideas. According to Louise H.Forsyth: "À l'encontre de Wittgenstein, Brossard est d'avis que les propositions et les pictures informant les discours de la culture patriarcale ne sont que des fictions monstrueuses qui annihilent le réel vécu des femmes" (preface of Picture Theory 15). Although it is not my purpose here to study in detail the relationship between Wittgenstein and Brossard, these few comments aim at emphasizing the role of intertextuality. It also relates to a larger scope: it sets and situates *a* literature within Literature.

An intertwining intertextuality in Picture Theory is also noticeable regarding James Joyce and his book Finnegans Wake. Obviously it is no accident that Brossard continuously relates to an Irish writer. We see her intertextual approach when she explicitly cites his name ("Joyce ou

Dublin" on page 146 in Picture Theory for example); or when she refers to him in her notes (Brossard, Picture Theory 225). To Cotnoir, Guévremont, Beausoleil and Corriveau with whom she conducted an interview on Picture Theory, Brossard acknowledged her debt to Finnegans Wake as far as its complexity and different styles are concerned. She commented that: "C'est comme une obsession d'un questionnement ultime de la forme ou de l'expression (...) du sens et du non-sens" (Brossard, "Entretien" 192). Something as trivial as James Joyce's citizenship evokes another context, a different geographical origin. Materially speaking, Brossard and Joyce did not experience the same space (he is from Ireland and she is from Quebec), and yet their explorations in writing are similarly profound. Joyce's innovations in language and style profoundly influenced twentieth-century writing. Brossard underlines the "obsession" stimulating their respective writing. Whereas in Joyce's case it was Ireland, for Brossard, it was Woman. In my view one's homeland and biological identity constitute fertile spaces for emotions. Thus it would seem that the territory of emotions is part and parcel of Joyce's and Brossard's writing.

Throughout Picture Theory, Brossard is also inspired by Djuna Barnes whose poetic language transmits perspectives, aspirations, and spaces that Brossard decided to display in her own work. Forsyth also mentions Gertrude Stein, Michèle Causse, Louky Bersianik, Monique Wittig and Adrienne Rich as sources for Brossard (the same names appear in La Lettre aérienne on page 127). This choice of authors comes as no surprise: poets, women, lesbian or Québécoises, they all have something in common with Brossard. This is why I would say that each personal space contributes to "a space" for Women. Poets are not the sole source of inspiration for Brossard. French theoreticians (Simone de Beauvoir and Jacques Lacan) are cited as well in "De radical à intégrales" (La Lettre aérienne 89) for instance. Brossard is a write-her, a

thinker, a theoretician and above all a "womanist foreseer – for/see/her" for many women. Intertextuality constitutes a necessary ingredient on the way to her goal, each reference being a new stone to build up Women's house. For Brossard, in order to move forward one needs to remember (re-member) the past (to keep or avoid in the future). As a consequence, she describes intertextuality as follows: "c'est se rappeler la sueur de l'écriture. La sueur qui 'perle'" (Brossard, "Entretien" 193). Elements from her previous books arise in Picture Theory for she keeps on working on the same basic concerns.

Winfried Siemerling introduces the notion of "intratextuality" and remarks that:

[Brossard] explores the space opened between the same and the other it becomes by repetition and by contextual alteration (...) In this process, Brossard often underlines the displacement operated by these *intratextual* references by inserting them into violently clashing 'contexts'. (193)

The use of English by Brossard stands as a perfect example for Siemerling's comment. For instance, on page 186 in Picture Theory she writes:

(...) tout devenait visible de la fiction en chaque cellule et  
la peau travaille skin I win the double glory of ses seins  
 sont miens et grammatrice look at the double you de l'état que  
 nous formulons belle marée dans la cité. My *mind* is a woman.

Two pages later, the same technique reappears in "[l]e poème hurlait opening the mind." The latter example was quoted by Siemerling in order to make an important point about Brossard's way of writing: "this irruption of English into the French phrase both refers to, and enacts an opening of the mind toward a different context" (Siemerling 193). English and French are supposed to be the languages spoken in Canada. She therefore employs them as a transcription of the reality which is at the same time a fiction, for bilingualism is not common to all Canadians.

These two languages do not function in the same space (even when they actually do, it is not in the same way) and do not reflect the same realities (historical, cultural, linguistic). As a result, one needs to open, to adapt her reading and approach, and in so doing, to invade the new space(s) created. The movement back and forth between the two languages engenders an energy, which develops parallel to the read-her's thinking by enabling the latter to perceive what is usually embedded in our environment, the possibility of imagining another space.

A characteristic element of Brossard's fiction is her use of deconstruction. It is that technique which allows movements and changes. By deconstructing the established order, she opens up and makes her way through the space she needs. There is an obvious desire, not only for Brossard, but of course for other women writers as well, to subvert language, to tear it to pieces and re-member them according to their own desires. As they do not consider language as a tool which necessarily takes women into account, women are willing to transform it instead.

It seems to me that woman "derives", diverts, or shifts meaning in such a way that meaning can be curved and redirected towards her experience and to *what matters*. In other words, postmodern women writers seem to re-route words in such a way that words will provide new meaning rather than a jab in grammar or the syntax. (Williamson, Sounding Differences 64)

Altering language through deconstruction is an attempt to change outer perceptions while making inner feelings appear. Language communicates, says the world, so that if women are not satisfied with their role in society, they have to attack the patriarchal system. Paradoxically, deconstruction leads to a construction because deconstructing will lead to the existence and recognition in society of women; "si le patriarcat est parvenu à ne pas faire exister ce qui existe, il nous sera sans doute possible de faire exister ce qui existe" (Brossard, La Lettre aérienne 87). In other words, Nicole Brossard "évacue le sens des mots pour ensuite



resémantiser le langage"<sup>1</sup>. In allowing for new spaces within language to be engendered, what language alludes to will be changed. Gail Scott, a lesbian Canadian writer provides the following concepts that neatly encapsulate the situation: since women have to deal with a "mothertongue" (the language of the body) and a "fathertongue" (the language of the law) they constantly have to shift from one to the other, from one space to the other (Dybikowski 12).

A polyvalent writer, Nicole Brossard does not restrict herself to words. She conjures up images, she envisions. For example the recurring themes of the spiral or the hologram are essential in this perspective. The spiral, for example, is definitely linked to the notion of movement addressed earlier. It expresses the constant search for what is buried and unapparent, while it endlessly tries to come as close as possible to the centre ("le centre blanc"). Brossard describes the spiral as the gradual conquest of space. The spiral is in a certain sense her perception of feminine writing, of how women locate themselves in space.

J'imaginai ce jour-là ma pensée: attentive aux mouvements  
qui se déroulent en spirale dans les livres écrits par des  
femmes. J'étais comme saisie par la logique interne qui appelle  
sans cesse des femmes à se fondre/à s'expulser de la forme  
première du coquillage, emportant avec elles le rythme et le  
bruit des vagues, se répétant, se modulant, s'arrachant des  
eaux, fertiles et assidues dans le cycle des naissances et  
de la renaissance. Cherchant loin des eaux la bonne fréquence.  
(Brossard, Le sens apparent 14)

La Lettre aérienne provides us with a further emphasis on the spiral, which embodies the movement towards a feminine culture. The spiral appears on the paper but refers to another dimension, in space, related to an aerial view (i.e. a shift of perspective). Therefore the spiral naturally detaches itself from the page, as our vision goes deeper and further than the lines on the

---

<sup>1</sup>idea mentioned by Dr A.Wall

sheet of paper are able to do. Brossard wants us to see the volume. In her representation, she puts "le sens" (=meaning and direction), the meaning, in a circle: it then can hold different aspects within delimited boundaries. Still, even the blank spaces are not empty ones, but rather spaces to be filled, ready to give birth and to engender different points of view by their mere presence. Brossard proposes six diagrams (La Lettre aérienne 102-103) which gradually move towards incursions into the territory of what used to be thought of "non-sens" (no meaning). Reality (le réel et la réalité) and fiction eventually offer new configurations.

The "spiral" or "spirale" has been identified by feminist theorists as an appropriate narrative model for contemporary feminist writing (different from traditional linear circular narrative structures)(...) The spiral offers the possibility of repetition without sameness, the celebration of difference along with return. (Brandt 45)

In her fourth diagram, Brossard associates what is outside the circle with a dangerous zone where madness, delirium and genius are located. The French word for "delirium" is extremely interesting when applied to Brossard's work: "délire" can also be understood as "dé-lire", i.e. to undo the reading process, to learn how to "counter-read". Women writers seem to have developed a taste for extracting new meanings from words, in stressing parts of them that convey a different meaning. In his Poétique de l'espace, Bachelard devoted a whole chapter to the analysis of the shell (la coquille). A shell exemplifies a spiral surface and is analyzed as a space by Bachelard. According to him, the movement of turning is life, it is a dynamic image. Brossard uses the spiral as a way to explore space; in this regard, it is interesting to point out the Scandinavian word "skalp", which means "shell", and which is etymologically speaking one of the roots of the French word "scalper" (to scalp). It refers to the skin and also to the erosion of a space, a personal, physical one. The shell also relates to a very interesting aspect: there is an

unclassification (it is neither male only nor female only) of male or female character, as it is the mixture of both (e.g. a snail). There is an hermaphrodite character linked to that space. In Greek mythology, Hermaphrodite was Hermes and Aphrodite's son, an androgyne. The sexual aspect here reflects the issue of being out of the norm, as far as sexual preferences are concerned with Marlatt and Brossard. Hermaphrodite animals present particularities of both the male and female sex. Marlatt and Brossard are not part of this category physically speaking, but the shell reflects the ambiguity of being marked and behaving differently. The shell is also linked with the sea, another space (water) which is dear to the writers we are interested in here.

Brossard has often commented on her use of the spiral:

I like the metaphor of the spiral because it means energy, because it is a dynamic shape and it is also a shape that you find at the bottom of the seas and in the cosmos. For me it is a *moving* metaphor. I think that we women invent, curve after curve, our destiny. (O'Brien 132)

Once again, the genuine character of a "metaphor" in Greek is used by Brossard ("moving"). Presenting her interview with Brossard, Clea Notar comments that "the concept of the spiral and its movement through a space is integral to Nicole Brossard's literary politics. It is the spiral which ultimately explores the text without penetrating it" (O'Brien 123). In the same interview, Brossard declares that she tries to open a path or make space for a new perspective on reality, a new vision on reality, on fiction, on language (131).

If Nicole Brossard's writing often turns towards the concept of the spiral, it also widely uses the concept of the hologram (from "holos"=whole and "gramma"=something written). Again, this pattern focuses on the volume in space and space itself, thus referring to a tridimensional perspective newly available to writing. The hologram is interesting for it exists in opposition to reality, as it is inscribed in a space that is comprehensible yet resistant to our

understanding that what one sees is not what is. The last part of Picture Theory, which is introduced as an entirely new book (although part of the same), is called "hologram". Brossard declared that each sentence of Picture Theory before this last "chapter" was aimed at realizing this chapter : "Tout le livre est structuré pour arriver à écrire cet Hologramme" (Brossard, "Entretien" 180). The hologram enables new perspectives to appear just as it opens up horizons with virtual images. The hologram also seems to embody the traditional perception of women in a patriarchal society: sometimes they are seen, but they are not given a status that would totally acknowledge their existence as women (other than that of womb/men). Through the hologram, Brossard aims at writing about herself as a woman. For that purpose I would say it is the perfect vehicle. The contours of women, invisible for society at large, are gradually given some relief and enlightened. The hologram functions as a wonderful metaphor for seeing the establishment of women's identity;

(...) pour concevoir dans sa langue le mobile qui l'exposerait  
entre le mental et la pensée à l'idée qu'une femme puisse être  
une phrase sonore complète songeant qu'une source de lumière  
cohérente s'apparente au projet de la voir venir c'est la  
rumeur peau la langue monte c'est réel et déroule le vertige d'y  
voir. (Picture Theory 213-214)

Brossard's introduction of the hologram into literature is remarkable. She innovates, transgresses, invades spaces like no other writer. For instance, the hologram is linked to the body and sensuality: "Tout corps porte en lui un projet de haute technologie sensuelle; l'écriture en est son hologramme (La Lettre aérienne 45). As writing of the whole, the hologram includes women. Brossard represents and expresses many wishes shared with other women, and her work has a tremendous impact on our lives, my (me/I) life. Her writing and concerns echo intelligently other women's situations. "Il m'arrive donc de m'imaginer hologramme, réelle, virtuelle,

tridimensionnelle dans la nécessité d'une lumière cohérente" (La Lettre aérienne 83).

Space is sometimes associated with darkness (especially when one thinks about the universe, i.e. what extends beyond the last layer of the atmosphere around the earth) and with the unknown. Yet in Brossard's writing, space can be seen as a light shining on women, in other words, where women can have an identity and live in full consciousness of themselves. "Dans le lieu qui la cerne, la femme n'existe pas, c'est-à-dire qu'elle ne fait pas sens. Hors du lieu qui la cerne, elle apparaît comme non-sens" (La Lettre aérienne 94).

The notion of "Utopia" (from the Greek "ou"=not and "topos"=place) is also actively present in Brossard's work. Claude Beausoleil commented that Picture Theory was the book in Brossard's oeuvre where the desire for utopia was most strongly felt. In a way, a hologram can be seen as a utopia. Obsession is expressed in her writing in the recurring appearance of utopian notions, in the fact that there is no place for women. Women's space must be imagined and imagination gives the mobile possibility to find and invent that space. In that utopia, the spiral or the hologram are both means of trans-lation (movement) and expressions of emotions.

Feminist utopian envisionings are finally about imagining a place where women have power to determine their own sexual, economic, imaginative, psycho-spiritual destinies- the interface of cultural symbologies and material reality.  
(Carr, "Daphne Marlatt's Salmon Texts" 79 )

There is a "trajectoire" to be taken, "FEMME SKIN TRAJECTOIRE" (La Lettre aérienne 105), that will transform reality, that goes through space(s) and leads to (an)other one(s). A trajectory is precisely the path of a body in space, the body being in that case not anybody but women. Nicole Brossard clearly shows in her books that her trajectory is a thoughtful process to arrive at a women-owned space (compared to men who would go for a

physical fight). Both trajectories and the spiral imply a direction and a focus. Excess in her writing does not mean nonsense, especially since nonsense is what she is struggling against:

De l'excès, du cercle (comme somme des fragments accumulés par les ruptures répétées) et du vide, j'en traduirais les effets au féminin par un glissement de sens allant de l'excès au délire, du cercle à la spirale et du vide à l'ouverture comme solution de continuité. (La Lettre aérienne 48)

Because women have mostly been eradicated or more or less obliterated from powerful positions in society, it is now high time to walk on that path (TRAJECTOIRE) and use it to drift (dériver) from initial social conditions.

"Dériver" is at the heart of Brossard's writing. There are at least two sets of occurrences where it is noticeable. The first one is the syntax which drifts, the meanings of words themselves adrift. This process involves unfinished sentences that push the reader to drift in the void of the page in order to confront a different space. Her writing includes drawings, and sometimes photographs that have the same kind of impact. In Le Sens apparent, on page 49, we are presented with a rectangle with an "o" printed in the upper left-hand and the lower right-hand corner (i.e. even turning the book upside down, one will see the same picture). The "o" could be seen as drifting from one corner to the other (as opposite); "o" is surprise (Oh!) as well as "eau" in French, i.e. "water". These spaces on the page are related to other ones (water) and the two "Os" could be assimilated to two openings (like two eyes) on a deeper space in a frame (like a window). A few pages later (53), the same frame is reproduced without the "Os". We begin to comprehend the variety of forms that the notion of drifting can assume in Brossard's writing.

The second occurrence of Brossard's *dérive* is an onomastic one. In Picture Theory, two characters are called Florence Dérive and Claire Dérive. The name "Florence" leads to the isotopy of water : "Flots"=waves, while Claire gives us "claire"=clear. The verb "dériver" is often

used to describe a boat moving away from its trajectory. Water is both opposed to outer space (meaning sky, the atmosphere) and a particular space. And in the surname Florence Dérive, "Florence" reminds of the Italian city, a different place and country. Borders seem to gradually disappear in Brossard's books as they are transgressed.

All these elements lead us to take a closer look at how the page functions in Brossard's work. The page itself works as a space within a space (in the book), one which is both delimited and open. The most striking element in her writing is probably the void, the emptiness (the non-writing) on the page. The whiteness that appears on the page is an open space for thinking, a potential space representing light upon which one can build. The void allows a shift towards a new perspective, and creates pauses, which compel the reader to read the text like a poem and not merely in a strictly linear way (see page 69 in Picture Theory as an example). By doing simply what could be described as something trivial, Brossard makes a decisive point: the possibility of controlling and appropriating.

"The 'blanc' opens the space for a neutralization of meaning in a body that is, in this [Picture Theory] text, still highly decontextualized... The 'blanc' occurs here as a blank of memory, as an emptying of remembered meaning. (Siemerling 185)

The void is inserted on purpose; it is by all means a serious part of Brossard's writing. For her, emptiness favours some sort of echo in space: "c'est sérieux le vide! Comme une solution de continuité qui assure qu'un corps a beaucoup de retentissement dans l'espace" (Le Sens apparent 60). The void could be associated with the status of women: on the one hand it is the absence of elements, and on the other hand it is undeniably there. The blanks on the page end up attracting attention for themselves (the reader wonders what motivated the writer) and

emphasize what is around them, i.e. the text itself. "[L]e vide dévore de larges sections de papier. Les mots s'entassent de chaque côté de ce vide" (Drapeau 91). Throughout Picture Theory, blanks appear on the page, most notably in the chapters entitled "La Perspective" and "Hologramme"; whereas "L'ÉMOTION" contains traditional printing, i.e. no unexplained spaces. The text stands out from the page and "breathes" when surrounded by blanks. Moreover, the reader feels part of the book because it seems like she (the reader) is entitled to create what works for herself in these blank spaces. "Le centre blanc" appears to be a leitmotiv in all of Brossard's books. An earlier publication was even named after that concept. The usage of "le centre blanc" is a reminder that, to quote Bakhtin, "[l]a création du poète ne se situe pas dans le monde de la langue, le poète ne fait que servir de la langue" (Bakhtine, Esthétique de la création verbale 197). The artistic aspect matters as much as what is signified. The "blanc" is an opportunity, a clear space: "Le livre est blanc, la préface fait rêver" (La Lettre aérienne 127). Brossard explains in "Lesbiennes d'écriture" (La Lettre aérienne 126) that writing is learning how to live with "white walls" and to avoid the ghosts (by the latter I understand patriarchal influence, what women had to go through). "Le centre blanc" could be understood as the heart (i.e. something that sustains life) of women's existence, and also as what puts women in the middle, making them stand under the spotlights on stage (the page). The colour "white" embodies what is yet to be written; it is usually associated with purity and innocence as well (not yet perverted by any system), and underlines the necessary distance separating us from a maybe more objective viewpoint (thanks to a new perspective). The void is represented through the usage of ellipsis (the omission in the syntax or style of one or more words, ones which the mind spontaneously supplies). Brossard does not only narrate a story; the text is full of power and dynamism thanks



to her thoughts, which are put to action when she writes. As a consequence, the reader is under the impression that the writing is "alive", thereby creating a space of communication and exchange between the writer and the reader. Especially when the reader is a woman, she feels completely involved, as if it were the first time that she were directly addressed. Of course Nicole Brossard broaches issues that involve women, even though men are not excluded.

In Picture Theory, a "scène blanche" is very often mentioned (40, 43, 46, 47...). It is in fact a love scene between two women lovers. Brossard focuses on the highly charged energy level of the scene, energy that opens up a new space: "le livre est là, entre mes mains, les lèvres sont prêtes à parler d'une manière inattendue" (Picture Theory 40); "nous existons dans la laborieuse création du désir dont on n'a pas idée. Ou de l'Idée, tout ce qui parvient à métamorphoser l'espace mental" (43). The use of the word "scene" connects the text to drama, thereby introducing an additional context and placing the reader between reality and imagination. Brossard encroaches on sensual territory and is able to elicit our innermost feelings, to unveil them and to show their beauty. "Textuellement, je peux dire que sans cette scène, je ne sais pas si je serais parvenue à faire surgir 'celle par qui tout peut arriver', celle qui fait 'signe'" (Brossard, "Entretien" 190). Brossard further explains in her interview that the "scène blanche" stands for the origin, as it is able to give birth to a female writer and it can occupy all the space. She suggests that the same motive lies hidden behind "le centre blanc" and "la scène blanche": they both represent a desire to say what is essential. The relationship between two women creates words that will later give birth to this woman who is "abstraite, réelle, fictive, concrète et charnelle" (Brossard, "Entretien" 197).

Nicole Brossard innovates in many ways in her writing. The white on the page is only

one example amongst many others of her versatile art. Another is the typography, and her use of printed characters on the page. It is rather striking just to look at Brossard's books: the print (impact and printing) does not resemble any other book (although more writers tend now to employ similar techniques). The textual presentation does not abide by any rules. The typography, has another meaning. Capital letters are usually used in the beginning of a sentence for instance but, with Brossard, they have a direct role in conveying and underlining different meanings (attracting attention). Although an exhaustive look at everything Brossard does in her writing is not proposed here, a few things can nevertheless be pointed out: in Picture Theory (pages 99 and 101), the reader first notices the way "h<sup>h</sup>omme" is written. The "h" printed like this has blank spaces in it, as if it were disappearing. It is mainly a mixture of "h" (as in "homme"=man) and "H" (as in "Homme"=mankind). Significantly, no space is made for women in that word. Brossard implicitly invites the reader to think about such a strange fact. Later on, she uses italics: here again she plays with different levels of understanding. Our eyes automatically start playing and are surprised by the change; the words have a greater impact. Bold characters intensify the effect by providing a stark contrast with the white on the page. Brossard also writes in capital bold letters :"**TO BE A GOOD GIRL**", almost as if we were reading the transcription of another voice, that of patriarchy (expressed in English in the text). In spite of the impersonal character of the printed letters, we have access to her writing, i.e. not only to her text but also to how she writes (a wink from her handwriting so to speak). Brossard uses every minute detail, making virtually everything meaningful. Passages are sometimes underlined (either a word, part of a sentence or a whole sentence). Even though my purpose here is not to explain each of these instances, I would like to explain "Aveuglement" (Picture Theory

101): the effect of underlining that word is remarkable as Brossard makes two sides of a paradox coincide. The French word means "blindly" and underlined, it shows the word better. Besides, a few lines later "Jouvrais les yeux" is printed in bold italics, which comes to reinforce the idea of seeing; it opens up a new space. Around words, Nicole Brossard resorts to dots (Picture Theory 172), dashes (Picture Theory 165, 188 etc), slashes (Picture Theory 37, La Lettre aérienne 144) or asterixes (La Lettre aérienne 144). All these signs invade spaces that are not always occupied and as such call for attention. Inevitably, the reader cannot pursue her reading without stopping, thinking, figuring out new outcomes for her reading strategies. Brossard's books are like open doors to a new life.

Another outstanding feature is Brossard's ability to dig up the obvious, to highlight elements we take for granted or, rather, that we have internalized to the point where we do not see them anymore. In French there are two genders in grammar (masculine and feminine); whereas the sexual difference is expressed in English through pronouns (he/she or him/her) and no specific gender agreement occurs in English. On the other hand, in French, adjectives, nouns and verbs agree whenever the subject happens to be feminine. As a native French-speaker, she had probably been speaking her mother tongue for a long time before realizing the impact and discriminations about gender such grammatical agreement conveys. In a way, the fact that the feminine is taken into account and recognized reinforces Brossard's position (although the "e" seems to be the only way to show the feminine). But she nonetheless stresses this aspect (instead of adding an "e" to the masculine to show the feminine, maybe there would be a way to find a feminine that is based on something else). Here we see her will to break up (deconstruct) and to question everything. She underscores the "e" in order to promote the feminine, something found

in official documents from Quebec (see Quebec universities' publicity documents for example). It can be found in La Lettre aérienne on page 145-146 for instance, in texts that were written more than ten years ago. Brossard is definitely ahead in women's awareness of their situation and their struggle to change that situation.

The final note about Brossard's use of the page is her inclusion of drawings and photographs. In the two books I am the most interested in, Brossard seldom includes these elements in her writing. However, I think it is important to underline these graphic elements since they are related to the topic of space. On page 165 in Picture Theory (Picture), there is a geometrical figure that functions not as an illustration, but which is printed on the same lines as the other words on the page. Elsewhere Brossard also widely uses this printing technique. Le Désert mauve, one of her most recent publications, shows that photographs are an integral component of her book. Right in the middle, there is a reproduction of a file with black and white photographs (which have been retouched so as not to unveil a man's face, but to make it appear more generic). The spaces contained within the book are like the pages you turn: each one reveals another one, and so on and so forth. In Amantes (which can be described as the pretext of Picture Theory), there are black and white pictures as well (pages 47, 48, 51...). Sometimes words are added to them, like a voice talking to us. Most of the time the picture reflects parts of elements (a hand, parts of buildings). This technique enables the reader to envision, to look at things differently (even colours have disappeared for us to allow us get to the core of objects and people). All the reader's senses are at work while we read Brossard, which make the experience of reading worthwhile and unique. Finally, there are indirect references to paintings in Amantes: two chapters have the noun "Barbizon" in them (on pages 53 and 55). In fact, the Barbizon

school was a group of French naturalist painters, the name also being associated with a village near Fontainebleau in France. Other arts are thus related to literature as different art forms nourish one another.

The representation of city buildings and even the mention of a French village leads us to deal with geographical spaces. "[D]epuis toujours l'espace nous manque" (*La Lettre aérienne* 32). Brossard mainly focuses on urban spaces in many of her books, on the city (the cité-cité-site). Montreal is the city par excellence for Brossard. She seems to cherish this place ("mon réel") where languages and spaces are a reality, maybe more noticeable due to the acknowledged diversity and separation. The city embodies the place of conditioning (by society and men) and, as a consequence, is a site where there is a need for women to fight back. The city is the place of the possible, the impossible and the make believe. At the same time, it is the place where one is likely to remain anonymous and to succeed. The liveliness emerging from the city stands for the energy Brossard is seeking. Otherness gradually makes its way into the city, a creative and fertile space. It is interesting to stress that "city" is often understood as a man-made and male-dominated space – ironically the French word is feminine (women being connected to the home). Therefore "the city is a 'foreign' place, the space of the Other" (Gould, "Spatial poetics" 3).

Brossard comments:

Il faudrait entendre deux sens au mot ville: le lieu et cela rejoint le sentiment que l'on a à se sentir vivante parmi les bruits et les corps, le sentiment du lieu, bref une sorte de sensualité culturelle; et puis bien sûr, la ville comme cité ce qui renvoie aux institutions. (Brossard, "Entretien" 182-183)

In an interesting article, Karen Gould argues that "it is precisely th[e] confusion over contemporary urban life that has placed the city at the center of woman's search for identity"

("Spatial Poetics" 3). The city is both dangerous and the carrier of hope: "loneliness, dehumanization, frustration, defenselessness, imprisonment" (Gould, "Spatial Poetics" 4) might be waiting between the walls. However, Brossard considers the city differently, transforming it into an expression of feminine concerns. "[R]ecent texts by Nicole Brossard have succeeded in poetically transforming the image of city sidewalks, avenues, and alleyways into a spiraling center of feminine pulsations and desires" (Gould, "Spatial Poetics" 5). According to Barbara Godard, her "space is that of the big city, but transformed in the imagination by the fluid fertility of a woman's passionate presence" (Collaboration 337). Picture Theory is a perfect example of such a use of the city. Montreal, Paris, New York form a triangle of sorts, or three dimensions: Paris (Picture Theory 42), the French capital is a reference to Europe; New York (Picture Theory 45), the American megalopolis, and Montreal, a bilingual and bicultural crossroads. This geographical deployment acknowledges the cultural differences while abolishing the frontiers (by linking them on the same level). It also reinforces the movement of drifting, of not being settled (women themselves have been settled and are trying to free themselves from the chains of patriarchy). The subway is often cited in Picture Theory which evokes the idea of an underground world, in a space characterized by movement. This is a parallel world that is linked to the one we live in but nonetheless functions according to different rules. And of course there is the overwhelming presence of Montreal throughout Picture Theory, its streets and boulevards (here women are depicted as always on the move, itinerant). "La ville me distrahit des écritures qui me donnent à penser. La ville est cet excès qui me prend comme une vitale exubérance et qui me fait juxtaposer la mer et les buildings au moment où j'essaie...d'écrire" (Picture Theory 49). Also, according to Elizabeth Grosz: "[t]he city brings (...) an aesthetic/economic organization of

space and place to create a semipermanent but ever-changing built environment or milieu" (Colomina 244). Using Montreal as a centre, Brossard asserts her Canadian and more precisely Québécoise identity, a step in the direction of asserting her identity as a woman. Moreover, if the urban space stands for civilization, then it is there that something has to be done. Although she considers cities as wholes, Brossard gradually erodes them (the streets of Montreal, Central Park in New York City); cities are dazzling places but they can still be taken to pieces; even their aspects change over time.

Urban spaces are predominant in Brossard's writing, but one should not overlook the presence of other spaces. Amongst them is the island in Picture Theory ("Islet-sur-mer, Long Island" page 205, "au-dessus des Îles" page 146, "l'Île est aujourd'hui visible" on page 108 and so forth). The choice of Paris, Montreal and New York was thus not fortuitous: an island is part of each of them. In a way, the island is the symbol of women in society, almost engulfed, without direct links to the rest of the world. The island is a space in itself, separated and surrounded by water (an element dear to Brossard as I will point out later in my analysis). In French, "île" is a feminine noun and it is interesting to notice the homonym "il" (he), the presence of masculinity here as well.

L'île est un lieu privilégié parce qu'elle renvoie à l'utopie  
 et que l'imaginaire travaille en procédant et de l'utopie et des  
 livres que les femmes ont apportés avec elles dans l'île (...)  
 Dans l'île le temps agit autrement et l'écriture en témoigne  
 par sa fluidité. (Brossard, "Entretien" 185)

Another significant geographical space is the desert (another symbol of where women stand). In Picture Theory, a few references are made to the desert, or more particularly to Arizona (45 and 165). Le Désert mauve focuses even more on the desert (and Arizona as well). The desert is an open space, one ready to be built up: it is also a hot space, which can be

understood as a sensual environment. The desert also enhances the horizon (the future), which clearly detaches itself (note the similarity between "Arizona" and "horizon". I would even suggest the presence of "zone" and "reason" in these words). "The horizon means open your eyes on the unknown. It connects earth and sky, sea and sky. It reminds you of your real height and dimension. The horizon is invitation" (O'Brien 134). The colour "mauve" is associated with the desert and light, an association lesbian writers long adopted. The desert is also inhabited: it is a challenge to live in such a space and to appropriate it. Even though it is an infertile environment, it might nonetheless conjure up some hope and become a women's territory (women are generally defined according to their giving birth to children).

The last geographical space I would like to mention here is the continent (i.e. "qui contient"). Again Brossard works on a large scale, and she changes the grammatical genre of the word in French (masculine) to a feminine one. Moreover she uses the possessive to make the concept hers: "Ma continent". In Amantes, a whole section of the book is devoted to the exploration of a similar idea: "(ma) c'est un espace/une hypothèse" (105).

ma continent femme de tous les espaces  
cortex et flot: un sens de la gravité  
qui me met au monde  
(Amantes 106)

The search for a place of her own is obvious here. If geographical places are naturally associated with space, there remain other options of what "space" could be in Brossard's writing.

Nicole Brossard often establishes connections between the city and the body. Such an assertion can be found in Picture Theory (page 177):

Tango, texte-----la ville. Les livres nous répètent  
quelles que soient les villes, ils prennent la forme de  
nos émotions. La nécessité de certaines postures en amont  
de la pensée féministe. Oui ce corps se porte stratégiquement



dans les rues de la Polis des hommes, oui, ce corps déplace  
l'horizon de la pensée, s'il le veut, ce corps est générique.

On the one hand there is the body as an entity while, on the other, we have the human body made of flesh and bones. The city is a body on the first level since it contains bodies. Of course, when I talk about the physical aspect of the city and the body, I do not intend to eliminate the psyche, an integral part of our bodily nature. The body is a corporeal space: one that you can touch, feel and see. It is the territory of feelings, of sexuality. "Tout corps porte en lui un projet de haute technologie sensuelle" (La Lettre aérienne 43). Women need to dominate, to know and to be at ease within their own bodies (they are their most private spaces) before being able to conquer other spaces. Brossard's writing is often described as the writing of the body precisely because she is in favour of a total awareness of the female body, as an understanding of themselves for women. For Brossard, writing

c'est de tout temps faire émerger les inavouables, produire  
à partir du territoire imaginaire collectif que nous occupons  
(...) c'est concevoir un lieu entre l'espace mental, le corps  
et la réalité. (La Lettre aérienne 80)

Le lieu du texte est devenu le dépositaire du corps, du sexe,  
de la ville, de la rupture et de la théorie qu'il génère et qui  
le régénère. (La Lettre aérienne 45)

The body has volume in space: it already occupies space by being. There remains however, in the case of women, the problematic way patriarchal society tends to objectify female being.

Le corps féminin, longtemps figé (saisi) dans la glace du  
système d'interprétation et de fantasmes que le sexe patriarcal  
n'a cessé de renouveler, traverse aujourd'hui, dans son  
rapprochement à d'autres corps de femmes, les dimensions  
inédites qui le rendent à sa réalité. (La Lettre aérienne 61)

Therefore women have to go through a process of repossessing their own bodies and making

them more than just a material reality. The name itself of "women" sounds inappropriate: some feminist writers analyze the word as "womb/men", i.e. the woman is the mother, she is defined according to a role, not according to her (her whole self, personality, characteristics as well as other roles she is given in society) or what she can be. That is not the only way Brossard refers to the body: the skin is a recurring element in her writing as well (using both the French and the English word). It is a space which works like a screen (Picture Theory 181) or a veil, a sensual territory, that Brossard connects with the idea of a link; from the inner to the outer and from the private to the public space (Picture Theory 204). Moreover, the skin is what is seen by others, so there is a need to work on its perception by others. Picture Theory would be the best example (see pages 148, 163, 167, 181, 184, 186, 212, 221 etc.) of a text that forges associations with skin (i.e. something that covers, a layer on the top). "[C]'était épidermique ce vouloir de la circulation aérienne des gestes spatiaux que la lettre avait initiés. Skin" (Picture Theory 185). Our skin also changes many times during our lifetime: as a living body, our skin is naturally replaced without our noticing.

Besides the skin, Brossard plays with the concepts of "livre" (book) and "lèvres" (lips). The latter are extremely important on the level of touch and feelings, particularly in conjunction with the idea of articulating speech or sounds (language, communication), and of eating (survival). There is an obvious sensual reminder here; in fact, it is a symbol of lesbianism. The latter comes from "Lesbos", where Sappho was born. Thus, even in that *lèvre/livre*, there is a suggestion of place. The lips are also "borders", i.e. they form the contour of the mouth, therefore highlighting the border between two spaces. Moreover, they can move in various ways and display various levels of energy. More importantly, all these elements are linked together in

an effort to provide a total female body. This last point is crucial for it is the first step in changing the present situation steeped in patriarchal perspectives. Brossard commented that if women had built our cities, then the architecture would be completely different because women would have projected a part of their bodies, shapes of their bodies, their minds and emotions (Williamson, Sounding Differences 65). Throughout her work, there is an undeniably deep consciousness of the body.

Finally, the tongue is evoked both in the mother/tongue (a language of the origin and a language belonging to women) and in the tongue used to convey an erotic act of lesbianism. It is a key element for women to voice their ideas. Elizabeth Grosz provides a useful comment on this subject:

The body can be regarded as a kind of hinge or threshold: it is placed between a psychic or lived interiority and a more sociopolitical exteriority that produces interiority through the inscription of the body's outer surface (...) The body becomes a text, a system of signs to be deciphered, read and read into. (33-34)

The body has more than just physical strength, female power. "[D]ans son corps c'est une sensation qui ne s'oublie pas dans la représentation de l'espace lorsque l'idée voit le jour cingle au cerveau les métaphores là où le coeur y est s'enflamment sous l'effet d'une lumière cohérente" (Picture Theory 218).

The concrete space of the body contrasts with a more abstract or general one; the two can be linked with what I would call the aerial approach. The latter provides a different perspective and is also a basic element that constitutes life (the air). I purposely return to the notion of perspective: it is a key word for understanding Brossard's work. The title of Brossard's book The Aerial Letter reveals the importance in the concept. "Je regarde la cartographie d'un

ensemble de réalités qui m'ayant traversée, m'initie à l'idée d'une vision aérienne, au projet d'une écriture de fiction qui lui répondrait comme en écho" (La Lettre aérienne 63). The issue here is not only writing, but a tridimensional aspect is even more prominent. This dimension allows us to see each side of something or someone without fooling ourselves with a single surface or a single aspect. Brossard aims to achieve tridimensional writing by reflecting different perspectives. Because she avoids a linear vision, she opens space and discovers-hers new spaces. The aerial letters detach themselves from the page.

La lettre aérienne, c'est ce qu'il advient de moi (par écrit)  
 lorsque lentement se met à l'oeuvre une émotion qui m'ouvre à  
 d'autres formes existentielles (...) c'est le fantasme qui me  
 donne à lire et à écrire en trois dimensions, c'est mon laser.  
 (La Lettre aérienne 65)

There is a fascinating passage in Picture Theory where each word seems to jump off the page and extends its meaning, prose to be read like poetry, with a lot of spaces that make sense:

Cosmos osmose cosmos annule, avive, a-vide, gravite, l'affame  
 la mère la femme la femme: (human mind)(...)Aérienne. Décembre  
 la neige. Visible pour une fois; vie-cible. (Picture Theory 133)

The punctuation alters a traditional rhythm of reading, surprises us, and extends certain spaces in the sentence while erasing others. Almost an obsession in her writing, the expression "la lettre aérienne" can be found in Picture Theory on page 148: "C'était donc cela qu'elle cherchait au coeur de la lettre aérienne, cela cette phosphorescence dans la nuit comme une permanence féminine prenant relief dans la pierre". Details such as those found on page 151 in Picture Theory ("Flight 743") are connected to aerial space. However, the new concept Brossard develops in relation to aerial space is what she calls "Skywriting" (given in English in her French publications). Skywriting accompanies the recurring idea of writing differently, with a new perspective, volume, and occupying another space ("a not her" space that would become hers).

The sky is vast and its boundless height enables an endless upward movement; ambition has no limit ("Étoile filante au-dessus des îles de l'aride zone" (Picture Theory 146). Her Sky (sk-I) writing embodies the intricate links between space and writing.

La voix humaine: SKY-WRITING. La vision est aérienne ou ne sera pas. Car l'instant appelle la fluidité comme un courant d'énergie transforme la réalité en "un cantique astral". Falaises. Météorites dans le texte. Ouverture. (Picture Theory 147)

Brossard reaches for the whole universe, hoping to find a better place while doubting at the same time the worth of such an entreprise. "Sky-writing: (...) Les yeux interrogent le ciel, fous de doute" (Picture Theory 168). She endlessly crosses borders as she navigates. This translation accounts for the wide use of the isotopy of air and water. Air and water permit a certain freedom of movement while our bodies attempted to adapt. These elements are essential for sustaining life. Nicole Brossard is performing women's own conquest and exploration of space.

In Brossard's work, there is also a development about a space/time continuum. "The kinds of world we inhabit, and our understanding of our places in these worlds are to some extent an effect of the ways in which we understand space and time" (Grosz 97). Brossard establishes a link between the two concepts just as she questions our relation to them:

Espace-temps-mobilité dans l'histoire à même sa peau, de manière à pouvoir distinguer les moments où nous en sortons, ceux où il nous est nécessaire de la réintégrer, si possible pour en changer le cours. (La Lettre aérienne 66)

Some feminists refer to "herstory" instead of "history"; maybe that is what Brossard aims at too, in her own terms. She considers that space and time have been altered by our way of life and by the way we "fantasize" them (in La Lettre aérienne pages 81-82). She also links that perception of space and time to her identity as a lesbian. If today's society has fewer taboos than that of the past, it is still rather cautious or not very accepting as far as homosexuality is concerned,

especially amongst women. That is the reason why space and time have to be changed to incorporate lesbians in the world at the dawn of the twenty-first century, to be part of history and not held back. "La lesbienne crée espace et temps; elle est toujours d'un autre temps" (La Lettre aérienne 108). For Brossard, lesbians make sense according to their own terms, they de-terminate the old ones.

Space throughout Brossard's work is therefore very often associated with an "emotional territory", which I would link to a mental space as well. These aspects are of the utmost importance and typical of Brossard's approach to space. The process of becoming women ("on ne naît pas femme, on le devient" (De Beauvoir 13)) includes the need to grasp fully the meaning of what we are. Of course language is closely related to the notions I am dealing with here, as it is one way to express them.

[L]es mots représentent l'enjeu quotidien d'une écriture de combat. De manière à étendre l'espace mental qui alimente le corps, nous forçant ainsi à redéfinir des mots tout aussi simples que: sommeil, vertige, mémoire, intelligence, expérience.  
(La Lettre aérienne 59)

The idea of a gender-specific mental space can mean that men and women think and perceive differently (their logic, rationality and imagination are supposedly divergent). Brossard often refers to "memory" (the mental faculty by which recalling takes place), which differs for men and women as they have not experienced life in perfect symbiosis. They therefore evolve in separate spheres, encountering common events as well as facing problems arising from a basic dichotomy.

The mind is also the place where fiction, the imaginary and reality live together.

[C]elui ou celle qui n'a jamais pu parler la réalité de ses perceptions (...) à qui l'on empêche politiquement ou patriarcalement la conquête de son propre territoire émotionnel (...) saisira que l'identité est à la fois quête et conquête du sens. (La Lettre aérienne 44)

Brossard implies that emotions are a key element in solving women's dilemma. "M.V. est entrée dans le processus de l'émotion infinie (...): résoudre l'énigme" (Picture Theory 166-167). In order to give her writing a special emotional charge, Brossard uses unusual images, such as a "Sphygmogramme" (Picture Theory 167), the graph of someone's pulse. That accounts for my saying earlier that her writing feels like a heart beating. I have never realized and felt "being a woman" to such an extent before reading Brossard; this is because she talks to and about me as a woman, and appeals to emotions that are familiar to me. In doing so, Nicole Brossard actually creates a space, that of understanding. She deconstructs the mindframe in which we are conditioned.

This is not a simple Manichean point of view, for the process calls for a redefinition of the space in which a woman can be. Here I am writing about her, she who lives in a place east of where I stand today, and still, I feel we are in a common space, not because we know each other, but because we are both women. We may even be extremely different.

As most of her writing is autobiographical, Brossard opens up her private space to reinforce her intellectual position, basing her discourse on factual experience. She says that the fact of being a lesbian "gives you much more freedom to express the essential in you because you are not restrained by sexual or spiritual bondage to men. That gives you an enormous space to explore, analyze and dare statements" (O'Brien 131). The autobiographical space in writing is startling for it is not a genre as clearly defined as the other ones. It is therefore the ideal vehicle to pass between fiction and reality (an opposition that interests her so deeply), and between the personal and the universal. Everything works like a symbol with Nicole Brossard, like the fake title of a book she gives before "HOLOGRAMME" (in Picture Theory): "Faire exister ce qui

existe, essai". The latter word also means "a try" in French, and undoubtedly, Nicole Brossard tries. Although Brossard comes across as a decisive write-her, there is still a long road ahead of us. To imagine ourselves. To be. Nicole Brossard's work with her words lets her readers dive into her powerful and sometimes breathtaking writing.

L'essentiel c'est ce qu'il y a de l'autre côté de la ligne  
sémantique patriarcale et cela nous devons l'imaginer avec  
nos corps rayonnants et tridimensionnels, portées vives comme  
de fluorescentes citées dans la nuit patriarcale.  
(La Lettre aérienne 75)



## CHAPTER II DAPHNE MARLATT

"Terri-stories" : an inner and outer journey in order to search for her mother as well as a women's territory.

Les "his/terri/toires" de Daphne Marlatt: la quête de la mère et d'un territoire féminin.

imagine opening the gate...

i want to imagine being in my element, she said  
(Marlatt, Salvage 17)

where women meet where the words face up, are heard-i  
know what you mean-in these small houses walls are  
falling.  
(Marlatt, Salvage 26)

The discovery of Nicole Brossard's work can be a fascinating and astonishing step, one which leads to the development of a lasting taste for her writing. A similarly captivating experience awaits the readers of Daphne Marlatt. When I first read Marlatt's work, I was startled and bewildered. Whenever I refer to her "work", I mean the totality of her publications, although one has to acknowledge the changes and evolutions in each of her books. Therefore « work » is not considered as one piece but rather like a puzzle which creates an ongoing "work" out of very different pieces. The reason for my bewilderment lay deeper than in the simple fact that I was encountering a work written in a language that was not my native tongue. The very concepts of reading and understanding were suddenly out of my reach. For one has to halt and think, then learn how to adopt a different approach and to posit new methods for deciphering a text so different from standardized ones, in order to grasp their meanings.

Brossard and Marlatt, two Canadian women of the same generation, stand among those women who have taken a decisive step towards difference, one that would be perceived not as alienation but rather as awakening, awareness and recognition. Their art consists in creating and questioning. They write (right) about women, their status, feelings and desires. Given their similarities, my choice to study them together seemed obvious. Their writing attracted me as they both tackle comparable issues. Moreover, each respects the work of the other and has collaborated in a number of projects; either with Marlatt translating Brossard's poems or in working together in journals and conferences.

Daphne Marlatt's work relates to the issue of space in both a similar and a different way than Brossard's. Two major differences lie in the linguistic discrepancy as well as the geographical one (Marlatt lives in Victoria, in the Western part of Canada, whereas Brossard lives in Montreal). My study will show how these basic elements affect their writing, on the one hand emphasizing their uniqueness, and on the other drawing links with one another.

As women, our social space is that of patriarchal society: it is where women live. Whatever space women occupy would be challenged at some point by a male order; however, Brossard and Marlatt can be considered as spokespersons whose enlightening words open doors and fissures in which women would give birth to another social system or hierarchy. Let us now enter Marlatt's "terri-stories" (Marlatt, *Salvage* 72), her perception of what was, is, and could be.

Territories, space and stories are beautifully combined in Marlatt's writing as I will attempt to demonstrate throughout this chapter. Her writing is characterized by wit, powerful words, images, and creativity. Therefore it could be described not only as dazzling, but also as difficult to handle. It stands as a challenge to decipher and to appreciate, although once the

reader embarks upon the intellectual journey Marlatt offers, discoveries of hidden or unknown aspects of what it takes to be a woman, as well as new knowledge, await in the depth of her books. Yet, she brings her readers to these impressions in different ways from Brossard.

First, it is important to underline Marlatt's background to understand how her writing has been influenced. She was born in Melbourne, Australia (the daughter of British parents), then the family moved to Penang, Malaysia (where she grew up), and finally they emigrated to Canada. Her British roots appear through language and colonialism – prevailing in all these places. As a consequence, "home", the place where one feels one belongs or which inspire warmth and pleasant memories, has always been a vague notion. Marlatt's parents kept referring to Great Britain as "home" although she never associated herself with it. On the contrary, she often declares that Vancouver is the place she first felt she belonged (she still lives in British Columbia). "I never feel located as I do here, it's physical as much as anything – familiar" (Marlatt, What Matters 152). Vancouver Poems, Steveston, What Matters and many of her publications reflect her attachment to this region. The lack of a space that she would call home explains her desire to find her own space, which would also be women's. Because she arrived in Canada relatively young, she better adapted to the country. But her previous places of residence filled her with sounds, dialects, colours, smells, landscapes that were to have an impact on her writing. The multiplicity of languages and places she faced as a child enabled her not to be caught in one system, and awakened her to the diversity and richness of different spaces. Her fascination with languages will later be echoed in Zócalo and How Hug a Stone, when undertaking both an inner and outer journey, shifting places and spaces, experiencing writing off limits. As a student, Marlatt also lived in Wisconsin for a while, never feeling quite comfortable

in the United States (see What Matters). Living in different places and encountering different mentalities, as well as reading extensively, gradually shaped her writing. In a recent reading in Calgary, she stressed the fact that there are certain books she could not write now. It seems that each place and experience gave birth to a book and then she moved on, with both her life and her writing. Her moving (outer journey) was accompanied by a personal evolution (inner journey).

There is no linearity, in either Marlatt's life or writing: both are characterized by displacement, irregularity, breakdown and deconstruction. She writes against a linear concept of our existence" ("There's This and this..." 32). Marlatt's writing flows in spiral, a feature she shares with Nicole Brossard. "[T]he blaze of light we are, spiralling" (Touch to My Tongue in Thesen 197). Circles, spheres, spirals are shapes women associate with. Furthermore, Marlatt establishes links with other women's works and "l'écriture ne se termine pas avec le livre, mais se poursuit en spirale dans Open is Broken de Betsy Warland" (Godard, " Mon Corps" 94-95). Marlatt also uses the image of the shell (the latter notion has been developed and linked to the spiral in the previous chapter) to express the idea of a spiralling space inside of which she feels caught; "i feel lost, layer on layer of place, person. dramatis personae. the nameless creature i am at the heart of this many-chambered shell is getting overlaid, buried under " (Marlatt, How Hug a Stone 65).

How Hug a Stone not only refers to places, but each part is illustrated by a map, clearly indicating the route. In that case, space is definitely material, real, something we can name and draw on a sheet of paper. Similarly, Marlatt is always searching for "a nameless space (pre)occupied by names" (Marlatt, Taken 129). This book presents itself like a journal, recounting each step and impression.

Zócalo and Month of Hungry Ghosts (which can be found in Ghost Works) are accounts of other travels, respectively to Mexico and Malaysia. Zócalo means "square", i.e. a meeting place, and the narrative is "invaded" by Spanish words and expressions, which help the reader to feel the atmosphere of the place. In Zócalo, Marlatt travelled to Mexico with a friend, a photographer. Once again, different "eyes" and feelings filled the place. They visit several monuments as well, which also trans-late the reader into the past. Symbolically, she mentions an island called "Isla Mujeres", which stands for what she strives to attain: a space for women, detached, as well as connected to the rest of the world, recognized and valuable. It was named after the shape of the island looking like a woman's body (the link between women's body and space is once again established). Zócalo is also punctuated by passages entitled "night": the night, darkness, is a symbol of danger and possibilities, as well as a symbol of where women stand at the moment, gradually moving out of the night.

In Month of Hungry Ghosts, the recurring image of the snake stands for a renewal, a change of skin and appearance: that is exactly what Marlatt attempts to do with language and women's status. It is also a recurring image in her life ( "I can't get past the snakes in my life" (Marlatt, Ghost Works 83)) and in her writing (see the first paragraph of Month of Hungry Ghosts (Marlatt, Ghost Works 76), or How Hug a Stone on page 38). Being in such a place highlights her inability to translate certain things: "How can I write of all this? what language or what *structures* of language can carry this being here?" (Marlatt, Ghost Works 82). This takes us back to the unspeakable, the space Marlatt is trying to reach.

Both Brossard's and Marlatt's works embody a new wave of writing (that has been changing with time), sometimes referred to as "fiction/theory", i.e. a writing influenced by

European and North American theoreticians, which, in their hands, turns into a novel implementation of such theories or into theories in their own right. "This fictive/theory cross genre writing is a practice shared by a number of contemporary lesbian writers whose theoretical texts provide a framing critical context" (Williamson, "It gives" 177). They do not write with the sole purpose of telling a story or expressing specific feelings. Writing is a tool for searching out an identity, one to claim and to share with other women. Marlatt openly uses fiction, i.e. the imagination, to build:

The imagination is a carpenter, basically. I still go back to a very early sense of what the poem is, & that was a house that one constructs, with doors & windows & different rooms & perspectives inside it, that any reader can walk inside. If the poem stands, it stands like a house. That one can walk inside of & look out this window, look out the door, look thru the halls, into this room, into a whole vista of rooms. But the reader has to be able to move around inside it, & the solidity of that structure is the work of the imagination. (Bowering, "Given This Body" 87-88)

Thus the poem is an open space thanks to imagination (what Bachelard calls "la maison cosmos") within which the writer and the reader connect, a sort of delayed discussion where each visits the other's thoughts and finds herself refreshed and educated through such a process. Each woman, hailing from different backgrounds and experiences, can relate to Marlatt's writing and feel an entire range of emotions. This genuine feeling of recognizing a thought or an emotion that has always been there is especially well articulated by Marlatt. Her writing is a process, a gradual building up of a structure within which women could hear the echo of their voices, and feel comfortable and free. At the same time, she does not write to assert thoughts or vehemently prove points. Rather she engages in a process through which her thoughts develop, never knowing in advance exactly where she is heading. Marlatt constantly works and evolves. The publication of Salvage in 1991 is an example of her continuous work, as she took some of her

earlier poems and "these poems were subsequently exposed to a second 'take' based on [her] feminist reading and thought of the late eighties and re-read in that light" (Marlatt, Salvage foreword). She does not only move on, but she also goes back and forth, a Janus-faced movement which allows her writing to evolve perpetually. The intermixing of her work and others' makes her more recent publications ever stronger. Through this moving growth, her work has gained an undeniable maturity.

She acknowledges that her writing:

has always been from a women's perspective, but a change occurred in its focus, which used to be largely on what men thought and how i stood in relation to that. Then i began to be aroused by women – aroused on all levels, the intellectual, the erotic, the imaginative, the spiritual, the domestic, all at once – the focus shifted entirely. (Warland, InVersions 131)

As a consequence, her writing now encompasses more elements that deal mainly with women, and thus belongs to feminine, feminist and lesbian writing. Due to her personal shifting from one position to another, her writing asserts her identity through movement.

To read Marlatt is an unsettling process for she is on a quest. She struggles with language, and just as Brossard does in her work, deconstructs to reconstruct, hence the strength and power of her writing.

finding a way to write her in, her and her, write she, write  
suck and rush, high and daring to be, attaches her body to  
words where they stick to her licking at old holes, tongue  
lashings, lashings of rain as at no one. writing their all,  
splashing around in the muck, allure of the current she  
rides their rushing out, her and the words all/uvial.  
(Marlatt, Salvage 25)

What is at stake is not only writing, but writing her in. In other words she seeks to create a place for "her" and "she", i.e. women, to find space(s) that would be women's. Her reflections expand

from her perception of "experience' as a western white woman in patriarchal culture" to a western feminist lesbian in society. As such, "her writing develops autobiographically" (Williamson, "It gives" 178). Autobiographical elements can be found in her work that highlight her opinions, or explain why she is concerned with specific issues; and this, despite the fact she claimed on several occasions that her work was not autobiographical. The reader has access to several books written by Marlatt, several autobiographical works rather than entire autobiographies. Each one gives an idea of the whole but does not cover her entire life and nor give all her personal viewpoints. In the preface of Ghost Works she writes: "None of this is fiction" (VII), in other words not imagination; however both life and fiction overlap. Her books deal rather with aspects of her life without being an exhaustive portrait of her thoughts and deeds. Yet, Marlatt's life, or what we know of it, reflects the type of exotic and unusual events that people most often imagine they will encounter in the most romanticized of novels. Her unusual destiny accounts for both her originality and her ability to perceive facts from different perspectives.

Among the characteristics shared by Brossard and Marlatt, there is a basic inability, or the critics' inability to label her works as prose and/or poetry (although such labels are not required to categorize whatever is published). Marlatt and Brossard play with genres, write in the margins, and their work therefore becomes another genre. To accept the rules of either prose or poetry would mean to accept their systematic patterns, and to be judged according to those principles. By establishing different trends, these writers shift standards. Their work does not allow for any judgment based on commonly accepted sets of rules. A true appreciation of their writing, although a somewhat idealistic appreciation, therefore depends on the reader's ability to



approach this writing with an innocent eye and an open mind, free from indoctrination. If in what follows I sometimes refer to "prose" and "poetry", these references are made only for practical reason since we must always bear in mind what I have just discussed about these generic difficulties.

Whether in her novels or in other books published by Marlatt, her writing seems to be closer to what we normally call poetry rather than prose. Although a subjective reaction, this statement allows us to see form and content as an inextricable mixture, probably because of the density and power of her writing. The way she and Brossard write has not yet received a name, except under the general reading of "feminine writing". As far as the notions of prose and poetry are concerned, it seems that Marlatt is herself confused. In an interview with George Bowering she explained that:

both of them have nothing to do with the way they look on the page, but with the way the language is moving. A particular kind of attention to language. Simply that standard prose is written as if language was transparent. You're not seeing it. Poetry is written with the awareness that it's not transparent, that it is in fact a medium, & that you are operating in it thanks to it. (Bowering, "Given This Body" 62)

To be sure, this explanation defines her work in general. "It is poetry which pushes the limits of this system, speaks in corresponding differences (differences which speak to each other)" (Scheier 189).

Marlatt always acknowledged the impact of the Black Mountain poets on her work. Duncan, for instance, left an important mark on her writing regarding rime. "Rime is part of the body of language (...) is a mode of thinking, is one of those non rational modes of thought" (Bowering, "Given This Body" 84). She avows that her mentors were Charles Olson, Robert Duncan, Robert Creeley and their masters, William Carlos Williams (whom she studied for her

M.A.), Ezra Pound and Louis Zukofsky (Scheier 191).

Marlatt's texts do not abide by any generally accepted rules or rhythms, meaning she does not stick to one accepted pattern but transgresses what exists (i.e. she transgresses patriarchal rules). It is left to the reader to find within herself the way to comprehend (from the Latin "comprehendere": to seize or to grasp the meaning of) the text. The whole process takes place on a level where each particular text is in the process of building something. This is the level of writing done by women for women. Daphne Marlatt definitely is a breathtaking poet or a "weaver of words" (Cole 6); an expression that is extremely appropriate to the deconstruction and construction, and that is related to the myth of Penelope (I will take on that aspect in more detail later on in this chapter). Instead of sticking to concepts like prose or poetry, critics have been using the expression "long poem form", when thinking of Marlatt. To the extent that Touch to My Tongue appears in The New Long Poem Anthology (edited by S.Thesen). It seems that many of Marlatt's texts fit in this "category", which could be described as a bridge between prose and poetry. Her writing is all the more interesting and astonishing as she works on language (each word is carefully chosen in each line) and length (like a narrative form). However, if it has the length of a short story, it still needs the attention a poem usually requires of its reader. The long poem extends the space within which writer and reader function, increasing possibilities of expression and interpretation. It is called "long poem" because one assumes that a lyric poem has to be shorter or presented differently (with a set margin and the verses altogether etc.), but why not call these texts poems and expand the concept instead of creating another one? "[W]omen are skilled at stepping into spaces (forms) created by the patriarchal superego and cleverly subverting them" (Scott 110). As writers like Marlatt are concerned with deconstructing and

constructing, it seems that they might prefer their works to be called differently than the "norm" they are seeking to alter.

Marlatt and Brossard demonstrate a moving power in their writing. By "moving", I mean the power exerted on the reader, one that takes the latter to another dimension, another space. They are striving to find the means to settle into a brand new space corresponding to our (women's) aspirations. According to Robert Kroetsch, "Canadian writing is the writing down of a new place" (Kroetsch 41) on a broad scale, an idea which implies that Marlatt or Brossard have to undertake the assertion of their (political) identities on the level of their women's identity. It is interesting to notice that Marlatt deliberately emphasizes her links with women in Quebec, despite the fact that they may be moving in different directions (focusing on issues that are specific to Quebec) in Quebec due to their linguistic and cultural differences. However, Marlatt includes works written in French in her references and frequently uses them. Moreover, Marlatt understands the French language very well (she translated a book by Francis Ponge for her M.A. thesis, and closely worked with Brossard as I mentioned earlier). Janice Williamson remarked that the two epigraphs to Touch to My Tongue "suggest how Marlatt has come to write at the intersection of two traditions in the bi-national Canada/Québec connections which circulate in some contemporary feminist writing" (Williamson, "It gives " 171). Such moving interaction is essential to her work. As a writer in an officially bilingual country, Marlatt crosses linguistic borders in her collaborative works. She translates Brossard and trans-lates (movement as a shifting across). In other words there is a double focus on language and movement. A translation is never a simple copy of a text in a different language as there is always an elaboration of form and perception as well. Even where it is accompanied by a few visible changes, translation

always involves a movement from one linguistic system to another. "[T]ranslation is a kind of rewriting which at the same time creates difference" (Homel 44). This phenomenon occurs in Marlatt's translation of Brossard's MAUVE where the latter is entitled MAUVE a reading by Marlatt. In this specific text, Marlatt both performs a translation and an interpretation. Very often, a translation cannot be limited to a literal adaptation of one language by another: the translator must first convey the ideas even if this obligation implies not using the equivalent words in another language. In the case of Brossard and Marlatt, the collaboration goes even further, on the level of understanding and learning, as it moves beyond a set of data made available to a group of people. Marlatt took the liberty to add certain elements in her "reading" of MAUVE for she uncovers important points that cannot otherwise be expressed in English. Each language fosters particular mindsets or perspectives. Translations must therefore deal with these moving perspectives where culture plays a fundamental role. Marlatt deliberately adds spaces, words, even an entire passage (in a part where Brossard had used English words Marlatt replaced "for real" by "For (the) real") or plays with grammar to get closer to Brossard's meaning. They also collaborated in "Character/Jeu de lettres" (Marlatt, Salvage 103-110) and Brossard's Le Désert mauve focuses on the issue of translation within the same language (an issue that is also tackled by Marlatt between British and Canadian English). The concept of translation as movement between perspectives therefore appears to be at the core of their concerns. Marlatt is not restricted to French and English. Growing up in Malaysia, she encountered different dialects, and later sensed the gap between British and Canadian English. Spanish is also widely used in Zócalo. She "writes in the spaces between and among languages" (Banting 163). Brossard's and Marlatt's personal evolution could be described as a trans-lation, a

shift which resulted in their being involved in completely different spheres. Their works reflect this difference: for instance, one of Marlatt's novels, Ana Historic , "is about the shift that can happen in a woman who has thought of herself as heterosexual but who discovers that she has entered another space, a marginal space in our culture, where her passionate relationships are with other women" (Warland, InVersions 128). These women tend to translate each other and to trans-late themselves, both individually and together. In the foreword of Salvage, Marlatt wrote:

The Quebecoise poet and novelist, Nicole Brossard, initiated our exchange of "transformances" with "Mauve" which i translated, adding a coda on the intimacy of the experience of translating. (Salvage 11)

Trans-lation is here referred to as "transformances", i.e. changes and/or movements or shaping something differently. In this respect, Marlatt is a creator/create-her. Trans-lation is also a performance as an action takes place. For Marlatt, "all writing is a kind of translation" (Bowering, "Given This Body" 57). In a captivating article, Susan Holbrook analyzes further Marlatt's technique: "it is crucial that [she] be unfaithful to words that delimit her experience, that she use translation and aggression to galvanize a trans-gressive practice" (Holbrook 12). With "-Gression" standing for step, a march from the Latin "gradi", Holbrook's perspective stresses not only the shifting but also the moving forward. Along the same lines, "trans-" means "across" and emphasizes a crossing of borders, thus drawing a link between two spaces either by linking them or by establishing significant parallels. Although Marlatt dwells on margins, there is also a trespassing of the lines drawn by patriarchal society. An earlier publication of Marlatt was entitled Frames, in which she openly distorts and crosses the frames normally applied by our society. Trans-lating, trans-forming, and trans-gressing enable Marlatt to reach the ot/her side where the otherness will fade away or disappear in people's consciousness for her to remain and be recognized.

The patriarchal version was always the version, and now we know that's not true. We can throw out that powerful little article. When we change language, we change the building blocks by which we construct our reality or even our past "reality", history. (Williamson, Sounding Differences 188)

Linking and moving back and forth movements between two different spaces are also present in Marlatt's and Betsy Warland's publications of love poems addressed to each other. This "couple" of books represents a premiere in North America: it was the first time that such a work was published by two lesbian lovers. Touch to My Tongue and Open is Broken are a series of poems written during the first year of their relationship, poems that were not meant to be published. After "[their] manuscripts were (...) solicited by a publisher (...) [they] began to realize the importance of creating a literary space for books like Open is Broken and Touch to My Tongue" (Dawn 250).

"We cross over many borderlines, we inhabit many borderlands" (Scheier 193). The shifts from one place to another, from one self to another, are crucial to these women's quest. Marlatt's involvement in many collaborative or "plural" works perpetually refreshes her vision and gives her the impetus for a writing in progress. Furthermore, as J. Williamson explains:

The 1983 Women and words/Les femmes et les mots Conferences, more public readings in feminist bookstores and women's spaces, women writers' workshops and retreats, women-only anthologies, feminist participation in government granting agencies, the extension of feminist book distribution networks, and increasing interventions by feminists within the academy to identify sexist critical and institutional practices. All of these activities enabled and were enabled by women like Marlatt who worked to make possible a feminist public sphere through editorial, organizational, teaching, and creative work. (Williamson, "It gives" 173)

Of course, the spaces created through such actions by and for women are due to individual and collective efforts. There is a need for solidarity among women in order to achieve a new status acknowledging the disparities and discrepancies between women. That step had

long been taken by Marlatt who, questioning the pronoun "I", wondered how she could translate herself as a woman. She realized that "when we write I we discover that this singular column with its pedestal and cap, this authorized capital letter, far from being monolithically singular is full of holes a wind blows through, whispering contradictory images, echoing others' words" (Scheier 192). Therefore, she states her dissatisfaction with language as we have inherited it. As a woman and a poet, the focus on language is consequently of the utmost importance, an urgent priority.

In musings with mothertongue, beginning with the very first paragraph, we sense that language is a living body "we enter at birth" (45). At first, one could perceive language as a space in which we are all immersed (a linguistic space we grow into, a body of sounds and the way we transmit messages). For Marlatt, it is also a body of sounds, i.e. something that surrounds us and can be perceived, but not fully grasped. We can then wonder whether it is possible to escape language as it is, or make a compromise with language the way it already is. Language is as much a tool as it is a target. It has the magical capacity of allowing endlessly different writings and creating new space(s). It can be shaped and subverted and paradoxically appears to be both, heterogeneous and homogeneous. Marlatt cleverly points out that "consciousness is constituted by language, so you have to look at the language first of all" (Williamson, Sounding Differences 190-191). Marlatt's genius is to use language in many ways, to work it as a material without being afraid of altering what we have been told to respect. She is a poet to the fullest.

In her texts, "[w]ords lift from the page into a sky that is huge and blow away" (Marlatt, Ghost Works 55). Marlatt artfully connects the space of the page to the whole world, crossing

material boundaries, enlarging her scope. Her poetry is at once deep in its meaning and light because the words reach the reader without remaining too much of an abstract statement stuck on the page. "Marlatt's personal shift from passivity to activity is echoed in her language to the extent that she claims to 'have a sense now of a new language [she is] groping towards' "(Bowering, "Given This Body" 67) (qtd in Cole 7). Before starting to manoeuvre language, a task which implies more or less to master it in order to direct and use it, Marlatt underwent a personal interrogation of how she was functioning with/in language. This basic starting point accounts for her later focus on specific sensitive areas of our linguistic system. "The history of my development as a writer has simply been on one level, coming to decode my own language, coming to understand what language is really telling me" (Bowering, "Given This Body" 39). Her attention to language also reflected her perception of form as a determining factor. Every aspect intermingles in her work. As far as language and translation are concerned, she declared that "as soon as you get into linguism, language, humming it, uttering it, you get back into the problem of translation" (Bowering, "Given This Body" 58). Notions normally associated with words overlap so that the accuracy of the work becomes less easy as one moves on.

It is interesting to keep Marlatt's perception of language in mind. She sees it as a place, a locale. Initially, her work was largely influenced by male poets from the Black Mountain group before she started to read more writings by women, especially from Quebec, and female theoreticians. Language is a place of expression, creation, and an essential means of communication; it is a place where things happen. Her work builds bridges between the word and the world. Commenting on Leaf leaf/s, Robert Lecker states that she "speaks in images as sharp and precise as photographs" and later adds that "words stand alone as poems within



poems, or as precious moments related to the whole through imagistic suggestion" (Lecker 60-61). An exposition of the inner and the outer is presented to us by Marlatt through her capacity to describe landscapes and create powerful images as well as her ability to reach the most intimate of emotions and feelings. Through her words, the reader has a strong sense of "liveliness" because this writing involves and touches her. For Marlatt, language is alive in that it is "pure movement when it's working" (Bowering, "KEEP WITNESSING" 34); "language is [Marlatt's] element, that where [she] move[s]" (Bowering, "KEEP WITNESSING" 32). Through her use of the page, typography, words, and etymology (digging up obsolete or forgotten meanings of words), Marlatt makes writing move, which is a proof of her art.

Although it may sound like a commonplace to underline a poet's work with language, the latter takes on another dimension with Marlatt. She does not only arrange the words in a beautiful manner, she elevates us, sculpturing language as a material. One of her remarkable assets is to dig up meanings, and use prepositions and articles in order to take the reader to several places at once. Another contemporary lesbian Canadian writer, Erin Mouré (whose books Marlatt especially likes to read) describes the role of the preposition as such:

It is the force of the preposition that *alters place!*...make a fissure through which we can leak out from the "real" that is sewn into us, to utter what could not be uttered in the previous structure. (95)

She later argues that "the preposition, & what is prepositional...defines space and time, by relation-ship" (97). With Marlatt, "[a] calling to, becomes a calling up, becomes a calling into speech of the unspeakable" (Thesen 364). Marlatt knows exactly how to manipulate language using minute touches that change whole perspectives. Her deftness of touch requires the reader to go over and over the text in order not to miss anything. Her investigations through etymology



space (also emphasized by the use of the italics as waves) is linked to "mère" (mother), a physical and emotional space. Both are feminine words in French. It is also interesting to notice that "murmur" exists in French with a different spelling, and could also be read as "mur/mur" (wall/wall), a combination which would then take the reader from a closed space to an open one (the sea). As far as the pronunciation is concerned, the French words are articulated with the mouth more open, allowing the inner and the outer spaces better to connect. The isotopy of water (a basic element) is very important as well, as it is for Brossard. Water provides a space where movement is smooth. Furthermore, it refers to birth as well (the growing of a child in the mother's womb, in the amniotic fluid, as well as the metaphoric birth of women here). Just as a murmur fades into the air, the words "mer"/"mère" melt together in water. Paradoxically, Marlatt's "murmur" has the effect of giving voice to women.

These two quotations from Salvage exemplify what the reader encounters in Marlatt's poetry. Her work is typical of how contemporary women writers proceed, i.e. by attacking a patriarchal use of language little by little, initializing new perspectives, filling up words with a feminine "nature" that directly relates to women. Marlatt, like Brossard, initiates radical changes through a radical approach, a provocative naming of women (although Brossard's texts appear to be more radical and more difficult to decipher). The use of etymology provides a re-membering of words as it is "the branch of the study of language dealing with the origin, derivation and development of words, from Latin, from Greek "etumos": true + "logos": word" (Webster's dictionary). Through etymology, quite invisible on the surface, the text unfolds other meanings, revealing its different layers. Thanks to etymology, one can refer to other places and times, and previously hidden links reappear between words that have been forgotten. "Wordplay, the

etymological breakdown of words, the story of language within language, has allowed many women to establish a newly found intimacy with language (Lemire Tostevin 35). "Marlatt is in a lexical struggle, the effort to name aright" (Cooley 77). Gail Scott mentions that "language has always been a political issue" (Scott 38), i.e. language is used as a way to keep people out of power structures, or to establish a hierarchy, relations of superiority. Etymology is not only used in order to shift the word's focus but also to describe a sensuality (between women), one usually not found in language as people normally utilize it. "The lesbian body, through the use of word play and etymology, reclaims the existing sexual vocabulary of intimacy" (Warland, InVersion 178). Although this quotation comes from an article written by Betsy Warland, its meaning is indeed applicable to Marlatt's poetry. Marlatt does not seem to feel she, as a woman, is "captured" in language, hence her incessant work on language. Etymology is an acknowledgement of the root(s), the origin (beginning), uncoloured by our present linguistic view. It thus has the potential to uncover unsuspected meanings for the future. The search for who women are, should be a journey through his/her/story. However, the fact that Marlatt is not seeking the ultimate Truth through that process ought to be underlined. Her personal search is rather part of the work, it does not stop at a predetermined destination that everybody already knows. What she is doing is:

more playful than that. It's a way of calling up an absolutely departed  
from or an ignored and forgotten meaning and recycling it as a variant  
slant on, a new fracture of, the current meaning, which after all still  
stands, though it's now no longer dominant. It's a form of polysemy.  
(Carr, "Between continuity" 104)

Marlatt's work is indeed characterized by an open-mindedness, a voluntary interest in what is generally considered to be "ab-normal"(out of the norm) or taboo. "[I]nside language she [the new woman writer] leaps for joy, shoving out the walls of taboo and propriety, kicking

syntax, discovering life in old roots" (musings with mothertongue 48-49). Her expression cannot be regarded as "straightforward" since the use of such a term would imply judging with a set of values installed by patriarchal society. The reader must momentarily forget as much as possible the principles she has been brought up to hold, in order to attempt a different reading, a feminine one. Marlatt undertakes a work of "casse-te(x)te", to borrow B.Godard's words ("Mon corps " 98).

How then to get below the white spaces of the surface, to strip off layers as we move towards expressing the deepest complexities of our emerging culture in-the-feminine? No doubt each writer finds her own devices. Some play with words, using etymology; some bounce off the flat surface of patriarchal ways-of-speaking towards a deeper place. (Scott 73)

Marlatt and Brossard share this approach to language even though Brossard mainly deals with French and Marlatt with English. It is even more striking in Open is Broken by Betsy Warland, a book dedicated to "Daphne" which echoes Touch to My Tongue (dedicated to Betsy). Warland uses similar techniques, both playing with words, etymology and syntax ("scentext" from "sentence, sent, sense, scent..." and "text" page 13). In musings with mothertongue, as well as Touch to My Tongue, Marlatt clearly states that "words call each other up, evoke each other, provoke each other, nudge each other into utterance" (45).

In her detailed study of language, Marlatt is not only interested in works by feminist theorists, but she also mentions anthropologists and ethnolinguists. In musings with mothertongue, she particularly refers to the American anthropologist, Benjamin Lee Whorf: "we know language structures our world and in a crucial sense we cannot see what we cannot verbalize, as the work of Whorf...has pointed out to us" (47). What is known as the "Whorfian hypothesis" is a theory that language determines our perception of the world. Marlatt presents

the reader with other fields of research, which opens up the spaces of knowledge. She therefore does not provide us with poetry as one unique space, but as a crossroads of spaces which cross (trans) one another's path.

Marlatt's work on language also appears in the presentation of her text on the page as well as in the typography. One of the fundamental characteristics lies in her frequent adoption of abbreviations. For instance, she purposely writes figures instead of using letters: "7 heads"/ "4 yrs"/ "3 months" (Ghost Works 76-77). In the latter example, we notice the usage of "yrs" for "years" or "wch" for "which" (Ghost Works 82) or "gvt" for "government" (Ghost Works 94). Abbreviations are usually regarded as non-literary, used to take notes, for practical reasons, convenience. Therefore Marlatt is crossing boundaries, mixing the personal sphere/space with the public/literary one. It also surprises and compels the reader to question, read and look at things differently. She sometimes mixes abbreviations and writing according to the pronunciation of the word: "& if they 2 were invaded" (Ghost Works 77). Language literally becomes an image. Marlatt dares not adhere to established principles, and that is precisely what opens up spaces. A recurring element in her work is the use of "&" instead of spelling "and". The result is that the force of this conjunction is stronger with the ampersand, it better links the words. In resisting academic models, her text becomes more organic, it resembles a body, a body of language, an expression she praises. The letters and graphs "move", seem more alive than in a traditional text more constrained by literary rules.

Whether it is in her texts or in her poems, Marlatt pays attention to punctuation. The astonishing absence of the latter gives total freedom to the reader to wander through the text, adopting her own paths, favouring different interpretations, highlighting the many ways the

words can be associated thereby leading to different meanings. For example, her poem entitled "street opera" (Marlatt, Ghost Works 101-103) has no punctuation except two dots here and there. Words are given, never more than five at a time, so that the reader has to make associations which will make sense. Just like walking in a street, it is up to the reader to select the elements that are important to her and to understand them. "[L]e marcheur transforme en autre chose chaque signifiant spatial" (De Certeau 149); "La marche affirme, suspecte, hasarde, transgresse, respecte, etc., les trajectoires qu'elle parle" (De Certeau 150). Walking is the action of occupying as well as transgressing a space; and also the lack of a place (De Certeau 155). The title itself works like a pun since an opera is to songs what poetry is to literature. In an opera, the lyrics are articulated and sung differently than in other songs, more powerfully, the work being just as focused on the content as on the form. It operates on a different level. The words on the page detach themselves since a lot of space, blanks surround them. As in the case with Brossard, spaces on the page lighten the perception and attract attention to what is written and what is not. *"How when the line is written there is blank page below, into which the signs are moving"* (Mouré 90). Marlatt does not always use capital letters after full stops, the effect being to emphasize continuity and once again to give the appearance of a continuous body flow. She also shows skill in using punctuation to convey the orality of a discourse instead of a purely written aspect. For example:

Said that young men as monks are all taught to meditate & that meditation "makes you happy because you do not want food or clothes or objects, you are all the time happy inside" & that when you have meditated a lot you leave the city which is full of "objects" & go to the jungle where you have nothing because that is where you are happy.  
(Ghost Works 77)

Unconventional typography is particularly noticeable with the pronoun "I", which she

always writes "i" (eye). Going against the mainstream is difficult and challenging; nevertheless Marlatt works language out of a fixed grammatical context. Her non-traditional use of the page gives the reader a pleasure previously unencountered. Marlatt's texts grow across frames: if the margin is respected on the left-hand side of the page, all the lines starting at the same place, drawing a vertical line, the right-hand margin is irregular. Therefore the text is constantly moving, free. Marlatt also starts new paragraphs pushing the text to the right-hand side of the page, thus leaving more space than a writer usually does. As a consequence, the reader has to "go and meet" with the text, make an effort to enter the writing. This technique enables the reader to foresee new territories where we, as women, will be able to go.

Regarding typography, Marlatt employs everything she needs to convey her ideas, from bold characters, to italics, capital letters, and graphs (Ghost Works 73). In her texts, even regular fonts (as italics) become unusual for she tends to vary and deviate from conventional uses. She unceasingly sketches possible space(s). Marlatt came to the long poem because she:

felt too confined by the short line and by absolute attention at every step to the word, so I decided to open up the line deliberately and to use that extended line which looks like prose-left margin to right margin on the page (...) Like I wanted to move in larger units, in paragraphs, and I wanted larger rhythms than those very short lines would allow. (Godard, "Body I" 482)

However, Marlatt introduces spaces on the page even in the long poem form, a device which would traditionally be more expected in "regular poems". In How Hug a Stone, the next to last page (78) stands as an example: blanks and holes make the text breathe differently as it begins communicating a conversation using different typography. Marlatt has an extraordinarily delightful asset, which is to subvert the most simple and "accepted" aspects of how we write, changing the whole perspective in the process. In subtle ways, she keeps provoking the reader's



reactions and actions. Marlatt avows using "periods in two ways (...) as long pauses, partly for effect. By effect [she] mean[s] wanting to space things, to articulate" (Bowering, "Given This Body" 62); of course periods are also a way of breathing, imposed by the writer.

Another striking habit in her texts has to deal with parentheses. She often uses the first one without the second one which is supposed to isolate words from the rest of the sentence. Such practice allows an opening, an open space just as it links words together instead of separating them. Marlatt shapes the text differently (see in Ghost Works pages 19, 32, 48 and in Salvage pages 52-53). It gives the impression that she is using existing signs but with a different purpose while opening up new possibilities for interpretation. This technique also delays meaning, which gives space for thinking, interpretation and other readings (her writing differs as well as defers); for instance:

trans  
posing relics into dis  
ordered sense or  
(Marlatt, Salvage 49)

The richness of her work is apparent on the page. Her feminine writing includes all aspects from content to form.

Another point to be mentioned, is her use, in Zócalo, of small graphs (all identical) at the beginning of each "chapter" (pages 36, 48). They combine art in different forms as they remind us of ancient texts which presented a similar device (a letter embroidered in it); they are journeys in space and time. On page 73 (Ghost Works), Marlatt also reproduces somebody's handwriting, thereby mixing regularly typed characters with a personal way of forming the letters on the page. The presence of such handwriting might be seen as a symbol of a "different writing". There is another interesting aspect linked with this reproduction of handwriting. This is the writing of a

man (Manuel, "manual", with the hand) in a foreign country, apparently a man who does not know how to write very well (not very literate). The scene could be regarded as a metaphor for women teaching men how to write, the foreign country standing for what could replace the patriarchal system. Moreover, he writes about a place, his place "Donmicilio" that he misspells, which becomes a gift house ("don"=gift and "domicilio"=house). On page 74, he goes even further, writing his address. Marlatt's writing is therefore sprinkled with depictions and searches for places.

The last few remarks on the presentation and composition of Marlatt's work have to do with her wide use of alliteration and ellipses. The former is not surprising in poetry as it is generally perceived. Basically, it is an effect of sounds, repetitions and rhythms. Alliteration is related to an "overuse" of the same consonant in the same line/ sentence. The recognition of feminine writing has to be more than an intellectual fantasy, that has to be experienced. A few examples of alliteration are: "sand sea sky one great cycle in the dance they dance" (Ghost Works 15); "remake the bed, begin at the beginning" (Ghost Works 49) or " burning behind the kitchen of the Lone Pine Hotel" (Ghost Works 106). Janice Williamson quotes Marlatt's words about alliteration, as "words on the move. A word on the move (named thing moves across the stage) changes its relationships with other things, other aspects of the scene. The dynamics of change echo in sound" (Williamson, Citing Resistance 155). Marlatt is concentrating on consonants in a delimited area (one sentence); this space of the text renders the text insistent and empowering.

Along with such techniques, Marlatt employs ellipses as well. In other words the reader has to be an active part of the creation, filling in the blanks. Nothing comes as a pure coincidence

in her writing, just as nothing is going to happen or change as long as people do not act upon it. Finally, although Marlatt has particular taste for dealing with verbs (ideally to imply sensations, actions, movements and life), in an interview with George Bowering ("Given This Body" 67), the choice and emphasis on certain nouns has to be acknowledged; "transport, Eleni said, is one of the nouns i like that move across borders, it's subversive, a mini-truck of pure delight" (Marlatt, Salvage 80). For Marlatt, language is most definitely a living body, a being and a place. Of course this is essential in her writing the woman, and the lesbian woman. As Hélène Cixous explains, each woman needs to "write [herself]. Your body must be heard. Only then will the immense resources of the unconscious spring forth" (Dawn 210). Consequently, the study of the role of the body, the physical aspect, is at the core of Marlatt's work, as well as being an integral part of it.

The body is so very present in Daphne Marlatt's texts that it has to be acknowledged. As an intrinsic element of what a woman is and feels, it also encompasses an ultimate sensual and sexual aspect in the context of lesbianism (not that it does not in an heterosexual relationship, but between lesbians there is a double focus on women's bodies). For Marlatt, our bodies and souls are intimately linked, one affecting the other. In order to exist completely, there is a need to acquire a full awareness of both. First of all, there is the body, our ways of understanding it, the roles it plays in our life and writing, and the female body. The body is not just matter, an organic cover which a person's soul inhabits. The body is ultimately a place, a physical space which is overwhelming (not in a pejorative sense) in Marlatt's writing. The saying goes that human beings are made of flesh and bones: this statement is an acknowledgement of one part of us, while

leaving another one aside (the soul). Very often, one aspect is put forward while the other one is momentarily forgotten. With Daphne Marlatt, as with Brossard, there is a deep consciousness of both. In other words, there has to be a recognition of the body, followed by a distinction between a man's and a woman's body. "The concept of the feminine as a different way of relating to space and to physical otherness" lies in the fact that a "woman's body is open, whereas man's is closed; she experiences a physical permeability which he does not, and has the capacity to relate to the other (mother or child) as both container and thing contained" (Dawn 263). In this perspective, the female body has a genuine relation to space, allowing more contact between the outer and the inner spaces. As a matter of fact, a traditional metaphor in patriarchal society for women lies in the use of natural imagery. Women are perceived to be at the source, origin of the world ("mother"), giving birth and undergoing cycles (seasons); the feminine is indeed traditionally associated with nature. Marlatt co-opts such imagery for her own purposes:

imagine mountain giving birth to speech, imagine! She sinks smiling  
under water language our horizon (o breath) & medium  
(here and there in "held")

As Mary Russo states, we must remember that: "just as inner space has been classically identified with feminine containment, so outer space – foreign, explorable, empty – has been marked off as feminine" (Russo 26). The result is an unclear identification of what a woman or the feminine is. "Feminity is a mask which masks nonidentity" (Russo 69). There is no definition and no recognition without comparison and contrast with something else. Brossard and Marlatt attempt to lead women away from a Manichean perspective for they write not only of woman, but of lesbian's identities. One is a gender issue, the other one tackles sexual preference.

Marlatt and Brossard successfully involve their bodies in their writing, a "daring" practice

that, even in the twentieth century, few women (and men) have attempted. In their hands, the use of the body testifies to its spatial nature, i.e. its being a space. They involve not only the female body as a womb (womb/man) and place of birth, but a place with other resonances, implications. Marlatt has clearly exposed her beliefs that body and language are interconnected. She translates the/her body in her writing. The act of writing itself is linked to the body (the hand, the arm, the mind enabling the movement and realization). It also "remains, as always, committed to the proprioceptive moment" (Barbour 8). It has to do with receiving stimuli from within the organism, through muscles, tendons and joints. To read Marlatt is a very "physical" experience; we catch her in the act of writing, but also, and mainly, in the feelings resulting from her powerful lines. She wants language to be "the transmitting itself" ("Given This Body" 68) not only a means. Marlatt gained an understanding of her body when she gave birth to her son Kit; this experience "finally located me in a tangible & therefore absolute way in my own body. I'd been lost from my body until that point" (Bowering, "Given This Body" 68). This statement explains Marlatt's evolution and her maturity after she came to terms with her body. Only after undergoing physical changes, pains and mothering did she "find" her body, as a mother, as a woman. Her book What Matters is a wonderful reflection of what and how it all happened for it "is written from inside" (back cover page).

Marlatt (...) ground[s] her writing as a physical product of her own body, but she also expresses Olson's dictum for the projective poet to go 'down through the workings of his own throat to that place where breath comes from, where breath has its beginnings, where drama has to come from, where the coincidence is, all act springs'. Marlatt's punning exploration of 'what matters' in the preface of her book of poems by that name demonstrates her two fundamental concerns: language and tangible substance: the body.  
(Cole 15)

Daphne Marlatt, at a recent reading at the Alberta College of Art in Calgary, reasserted that parenting is a turning point in a woman's life and body. From the point of view of several lesbian critics, mothering appears to be essential in coming to terms with their bodies and sexual difference.

Much lesbian writing invokes the female body, even if it is to deconstruct its gendered meanings, and it often concerns thinking through intimate care-giving relations with women, including, for many lesbians, the memory of the maternal as the site of primary affiliation. (Williamson, "It gives " 187)

In her journal, Marlatt realizes when feeding her son that she "never felt so plentiful, never been so delighted with [her] body, that it was more than adequate" (What Matters 116). By speaking of trans-lating the body, Marlatt deals with the grounding point of women's identity, the physical aspect that makes us visible in the world. After a long confinement and conditioning of women in patriarchal society, of the most intimate part of ourselves, i.e. our body, women like Marlatt are trying to alter this perception of themselves as it is determined by what men expect and desire. Finding a place, a "room of their own", women need to accept and feel their bodies as theirs and get satisfaction out of it. This space would thus allow women to define their identity through personal motivation.

i am here, feel  
my weight on the wet  
ground  
(Marlatt, What Matters 168)

Both in her poetry and in her novels, Marlatt has to translate (tell) the body but also to construct it: "her poetics is not a method of composition as much as it is a way of translating the body, of composing and reorganizing it" (Banting 208). Her writing becomes feminine writing for it comes from a woman's perspective and tackles women's issues. This is lesbian writing in its

erotic evocation, love between two women. As a lesbian, Marlatt developed a sensitivity and experience which focus on the woman's body, hence her ability to point out aspects that are not enhanced by a heterosexual context: the woman's body becomes apparent, palpable in her texts.

Marlatt's writing is as soft as the touch of skin, a whisper of pleasure.

knotting and unknotting ourselves by candlelight...we submerge in hunger searching out the soft parts, undoing nipples, lips with tongue talk, parading it, for that long final shout. Then gone in our own foetal curl, soft gone and long gone, impossible to know where each of us ends. (Marlatt, Taken 15)

The lesbian body is a site to explore both from the feminine and the lesbian perspective, i.e. lesbians experience their partners as the other, but the other as a different person as well as similar (similar body characteristics) at the same time; somebody with lots of common physical traits with whom they feel comfortable for they know and anticipate reactions and feelings. "[L]esbian eroticism involves this incredible fusion, this merging of boundaries, because our bodies are so similar in their way of touching, of sensing each other" (Williamson, Sounding Differences 187). It is a discovery, an encounter, but with known elements right from the beginning. However, in getting to know their partner, they may better the knowledge they have of themselves, as women. Marlatt voices situations and feelings in a way that she conveys sensuality. Hence her emphasis on the skin (like Brossard) and the mouth. The former can be regarded as a place in the terms defined in the previous chapter. Furthermore, skin provides the place of contact between the body and the outer space, the landscape. In an interview with George Bowering, Marlatt was commenting on Stevenston that:

[t]here's a constant wind off the sea, which you feel as a coolness, & it tightens the skin. But you're also constantly getting this kind of humid heat in the summer rising up from the earth, so that the edges of your body begin to merge with the landscape.  
(Bowering, "KEEP WITNESSING" 31)

The use of the skin emphasizes the sensual and emotional rather than the rational. As such, it provokes a shifting in our reading. The reader has to read with her mind but also with her body, i.e. to feel the text, to echo it in her flesh. There is no taboo in Marlatt's writing for it is not inscribed in a patriarchal pattern but blossoms in the margin, in a "no man's land". The human skin is self-repairing, heat and water-resistant and elastic. Therefore the skin is a protection, a frontier (connected to the outside pores) as well as a living element. Marlatt's use of skin is interesting especially in the fact that it is open to the outer world, as the female body is.

Similarly, Marlatt reiterates the words "mouth" and "tongue" in most of her work. Mouth "is such a powerful word for [her]" (Bowering, "Given This Body" 49) as it is for Nicole Brossard (see MAUVE for instance). The mouth is an aperture, where language is articulated and pronounced, the place which is the first step in the eating process (survival) as well as a sensual place; "it is the open gate leading downward into the bodily underworld (Bakhtin, Rabelais 325). With the tongue, Marlatt plays on the physical organ (of the utmost importance for lesbians when making love), and on the idea of our "mother tongue", language. The two best works to reflect these notions in her writing are musings with mothertongue and Touch to My Tongue.

These two works explore both the form and the content of feminine and lesbian writing further than any of her other texts. Touch to My Tongue is a collection of poems all linked together, and addressed to Betsy Warland, her partner at the time. These poems were written in the first year of their relationship, in the absence of the other and were not intended to be published. Musings with mothertongue establishes a connection between language and women, especially the mother figure. Quoting Julia Kristeva and Mary Daly, Marlatt suggests a journey



into the unconscious to call for "a language that returns us to the body, a woman's body and the largely unverbilized, presyntactic, postlexical field it knows" (48). She advocates a movement backwards and forwards, suggests a place where women could find their selves. The unverbilized and the unspeakable are spaces that attract her greatly. She expresses her fascination for the unspeakable, the limits of language, as a unique place.

An overview of the titles of the poems in Touch to My Tongue, offers many instances of places (sometimes in their absence): "place", "houseless", "canyon", "prairie", "hidden ground", "where we went", "season's avenue", "coast", "underground". Moreover, in the poems themselves, certain nouns or adjectives indicate, explicitly or implicitly, places. The latter can be both physical or geographical. "Woman (...) is figured dialectically in the spatial representation of the body in the landscape and in the sonoral play or 'experience' of language itself" (Williamson, "It gives" 178). For instance, in "this place full of contradiction", one reads "Danish tearoom-The Indonesian or Indian": there is an obvious movement in time and places, a "confusion"; Marlatt also refers to Sappho, a name which takes the reader to Lesbos (the island where the latter used to live), origin of the word lesbianism. This island embodies a territory women will make theirs, and Sappho is, for some, a symbol, as she was a writer as well (Marlatt lived on Salt Spring Island for quite some time and now lives in Victoria). An implied reference to Sappho and Lesbos can also be found in Salvage (119). There is an evolution in Marlatt's work from a feminine writing to lesbian writing (Marlatt, Salvage 118). The latter expression can be interpreted as a different way of writing, transposing characteristics of lesbianism, and also writing in a different place, a context that is a new space.

Throughout Touch to My Tongue, Marlatt keeps mentioning places (a street, a bar),

cities and regions (Boston, Florida), lots of places dealing with water (pool, river), places which connect other places (highway, Trans-Canada), and the words "place", "territory", "land", "space" are present on almost every page. An extreme sensuality arises from the metaphors she employs, which expand the reader's perception of the world, of her world. There is a reversal of accepted behaviours and a movement, a trans-lation, a pushing towards both the inner and outer: "i felt the river pushing through (...) where rivers run in opposite direction i am carrying you with me" ("climbing the canyon" in The New Long Poem Anthology 191).

Marlatt's text is pregnant of wordplay, "tongue" implying both the physical organ and language, which eventually gives birth to a new vision and concept, a place she explores.

perverse in that, having to defend myself from attack, encroachment on that soft abyss, that tidal place i knew as mine, know now is the place i find with you, not perverse but turned the right way round, redefined, it signals us beyond limits in a new tongue our connection runs along. ("yes" in Thesen 187)

It is the connection to another woman, in a lesbian context, that is the origin of this new place, enabling two women to love each other without pressure and constraints. The bringing together of women, as a source of strength and power to achieve their goals, has similarly been suggested by other women writers. As a matter of fact, one can think about Luce Irigaray and her "When Our Lips Speak Together", which might have influenced Marlatt, as it is close to her title Touch to My Tongue. Marlatt's writing expresses desire, sexual desire as well as a desire for women to be recognized. Furthermore, she states: "when I was working on Touch to My Tongue and heard the rhythms moving like the rhythms in Steveston I realized they were orgasmic" (Carr, "Between continuity" 103). In the same interview, Marlatt underlines that :

what it comes down to in Touch is that I'm speaking from within a lesbian culture that is a sub-culture within the patriarchal culture we're all embroiled with. And lesbian culture tries to do something

which, as Nicole Brossard has said, is unimaginable from within the dominant culture. (Carr, "Between continuity" 105)

As Douglas Barbour says, her book "challenges the cultural representation of woman 'as an object'...[i]t defies the representation of woman as a body fractured into fetishized bits and pieces, or, woman as mute nature" (Barbour 16).

The original publication of Touch to My Tongue (Longspoon edition) is accompanied by photographs of Cheryl Sourkes's sequence entitled "Memory Room". The presence of her pictures mixes the work of one woman with the work of another, and it also enlarges our scope of vision. Moreover these photographs do not resemble "traditional" ones. They embody women's quest. Representations, images, and suggestions in the writing create a tridimensional space within which women can move. The title of Sourkes's sequence, "Memory Room", echoes Marlatt's viewpoint, i.e. that memory is a place, connecting space and time. To re-member is indeed a key concept throughout her publications. For Marlatt,

There is in memory a very deep subliminal connection with the mother because what we first of all remember is this huge body which is our first landscape and which we first of all remember bodily.  
(Williamson, Sounding Differences 185)

Memory is supposed to be the space where we find the origin of who we are. The journeys Marlatt undertakes in her writing as well as the geographical ones she made in the past (going back as an adult with her son Kit to England, to Malaysia, and so forth) are manoeuvres to understand her mother ("she is what we come through to & what we come out of, ground & source" [Marlatt, How Hug a Stone 73]), family history, and herself, to revive the memory and to re-member. In How Hug a Stone, several titles of passages give the impression that she is looking for something, she is searching ("Combe Martin, house martin, Martinmas, Saint Martin, martial swords & plow shares" (48) or "Lynmouth, mouth of the Lyn, mouth of the precipice"

(52)). "Memory, it turns out, is an open vehicle we also move in. And an 'act' of memory-speech translates us, carries us across, from here to there" (Thesen 364). Marlatt constantly remembers more than she invents or fictionalizes, hence the autobiographical nature of her work. Moreover, memory is also closely related to the body: "To remember (what is memory, what invention?) seems to involve re-listening (...) Memory, a flash, flush of sensation through the body" (Taken 42-43); "Marlatt uses language in Touch to My Tongue to access not only cognitive recollection but the body's memories as well" (Banting 183). Memory is tackled by Marlatt on different levels, one of them being the "ghost(s)". Needless to say that memory, as a reservoir of events through time, deals with history. On a personal level in How Hug a Stone, Marlatt went to England to trace her mother's memory (66); "to go back, but the wheels go on" (18). As a consequence, it is linked for "a woman writing autobiography, history itself becomes a ghost, one that is always disappearing only to reappear on the page ahead." Marlatt later compares women writers to ghosts "who are hungry for recognition" and "return, return..." (Ghost Works VIII). Ghosts haunt places, change reaction, inspire fear and apprehension, move and function differently: another metaphor of what women could/should/will be.

Memory and history also appear in Marlatt's wide use of mythology in many of her publications. Mythology stands as another source of time and place, and her references to myths involve legends shared by members of a society. It is thus crucial for Marlatt to reappropriate myths in order to establish a memory, a history that can be preserved for women. She "explicitly connects mythology with the reclamation of geography, terrain, habitat, and a sense of place" (Banting 184). Of course Marlatt focuses on myths that involve women. In her article, Christina Cole claims her perception of "three mythic weavers standing behind Marlatt: Penelope, Arachne

and Ariadne" (Cole 6). Cole compares Penelope's unweaving (she would unravel her day's work each night) to Marlatt's use of deconstructionism as a "perpetual state of process" (6); and she later mentions Arachne and Ariadne as relevant personae. The latter is also linked to the notion of the labyrinth, which plays a significant role in Marlatt's work. The labyrinth refers to a place and works as a metaphor for women's quest as well. It symbolizes the loss and non-recognition of their status of women and the search for an open space, one that will make sense. It is a representation of patriarchal society, where women evolve freely but always find themselves prevented from going further. It is both a mental and a physical space where our identity and survival are challenged.

Marlatt...becomes an Ariadne who rather than leading Theseus out of the labyrinth leads herself into it by way of the line of poetry. Much like the Mexican journey to Zócalo, Marlatt's exploration of Steveston becomes a 'travel book about getting lost'.  
(Cole 12)

The use of mythology therefore resonates in many instances and appears to be an efficient way of subverting patriarchal society at its origin. What also prevails are the roots of "mythology", which derives from "muthologos" (from the Greek "muthos"= mouth and "logos"= speech), which associates the concept with the body once again (Cole 16).

In Touch to My Tongue, the poem entitled "kore" exemplifies Marlatt's use of mythology. "[K]ore" refers to Persephone and is "the story of the relationship between daughter (kore, maiden) and mother (De-meter, earth mother)" (Thesen 199). The attention given to the links between mother and daughter, a matrilineal emphasis, is characteristic of Marlatt's work. She personally felt estranged from her mother for many reasons, hence this need to "find" her again. The myth is therefore essential as a way to recall both her mother and women's image. It creates a space and time relation that is important in establishing women's identity and space.

How Hug a Stone, Ana Historic or Taken are examples of Marlatt's attempt to write "about her [Marlatt's mother]" and get "to a place where [Marlatt] can feel some of that affection and empathy and understanding" (Williamson, Sounding Differences 184). How Hug a Stone can be read as a desire to get closer (hug) to her dead mother (the stone symbolizing her tomb); while Ana Historic and Taken are the first two volumes of a trilogy which is a more or less fictionalized account of the life of Marlatt's mother. Marlatt never felt close to her while she was alive. "[K]ore" thus has explicit meanings. It is a sensual poem, where light and touch (skin) are extremely important between two women. One could interpret the title in other ways: we could read "core", i.e. at the heart, the centre, or even, with a French accent, "corps" and "coeur" which both relate to the body and emotions, mixed in language. "the resurrection of the woman's body is of Kore, not the phallic king-dom" (Mouré 91). Moreover, it refers to Kristeva's concept of "chora".

The endless flow of pulsions is gathered up in the chora (from the Greek word for enclosed space, womb)...[it] is neither a sign nor a position but 'a wholly provisional articulation that is essentially mobile and constituted of movements and their ephemeral stases' (...)  
[it] is a rhythmic pulsion rather than a new language.  
(Moi 161-162)

Etymologically speaking, the chora is a space, more precisely a feminine one (womb). Irigaray argues that the formless and amorphous *khora* or cave, metaphor for the matrix or womb, is perceived by Plato as a place of error and non-differentiation" (Sellers 8). Such a reference also places Marlatt in the intellectual space evolved from French feminism, in a writing in process, a dynamic. However, the mythical, historical, linguistic, and physical narrative space the reader encounters in Marlatt's writing, is also echoed by what one first generally thinks of when space is mentioned: geographical references and spaces.

For me, a woman reader, when Marlatt tells about these places that do exist, even the more remote one, i.e. "our" space, ceases to be utopian and starts growing inside of me. Then I feel like it is our role to project it in order for other women to relate to it and make it expand. With Daphne Marlatt, women wake up in another world.

## CONCLUSION

Throughout this thesis, I have attempted to present the characteristics of Brossard's and Marlatt's works, and to show how many of the ideas developed in their books can be useful for other women in their own works and lives. The notions of space, motion and translation, so very active in their writings, can be highlighted, as important issues for women.

If I read Brossard and Marlatt with equal enthusiasm, I nevertheless hope the reader will have felt the differences that make them distinct from one another.

Both of them have played an important role as far as feminine writing in Canada is concerned. Brossard and Marlatt have been writing and publishing for more than twenty years and their writing is striking. It seems that they have anticipated a number of social and artistic developments in their work. As readers struggle to decipher their latest books, we should not forget their earlier publications since each of their books is different in content, and each author presents a personal style, motivated by a persistent will to explore, to deconstruct and to create. Brossard and Marlatt work as researchers, moving beyond the mere appeal of telling a story. They unceasingly question, looking deep inside of themselves. Marlatt can be analyzed as more "personal" than Brossard; i.e. her quest goes through telling about herself, her life, trips she made and her mother. Conversely, Brossard manages to include herself in her writing and to present her readers with texts that are generally



speaking either more fictionalized, or in which other women can identify themselves with the subject in the text or situation. Brossard could be seen as a spokesperson for many Québécois and lesbian women. She also appears to be more radical than Marlatt, openly declaring: " Pour moi, il est clair que les femmes ne peuvent être pensées que par elles-mêmes " and " Les femmes doivent être à l'origine du sens qu'elles donnent à la vie, à leur vie " (O'Brien 186 and 191). She is radical in her thoughts and writing, which makes her writing difficult to decipher. With both Brossard and Marlatt, the reader has to be active in order to grasp the meaning of their texts.

In this thesis, I have tried to present a detailed study of the means each writer uses in her writing, and have attempted to show how the notions of space, motion and translation were fundamental to their quest. The space on the page and in the text provide new perspectives and perceptions: by shifting accepted rules and references, Brossard and Marlatt suggest something *else* and open the readers' minds and eyes. They allow the reader to move within the text and to express ideas that she had on the tip of her tongue.

Both Brossard and Marlatt can be said to be political writers inasmuch as they claim specific viewpoints and would like women, especially lesbians, to be recognized in society. Brossard also stands up as a Québécoise, an identity that seems to prevail over her Canadian identity.

As often mentioned throughout this thesis, Brossard and Marlatt belong to the same generation. Not only do they share similar experiences in their lives, but they live at the same period of time (although in different places in Canada). Moreover, they have met and worked together on several occasions, a fact which emphasizes already existing links. I have

shown the similarities in their experiences as well as discrepancies, and the influence they had on one another. The different linguistic space in which each one was living became an asset in opening new horizons in relation to one another instead of a barrier to communication. Language therefore turned out to be a powerful tool, creating possibilities in spite of its many syntactic, grammatical and vocabulary restrictions regarding women. Brossard and Marlatt have always dared to promote a way of writing that is not "correct" or "acceptable". The novelty of their vision and expression was eventually accessible to others when they managed to get published. However, it is still hard to find some of their books, especially as far as Marlatt is concerned, which have been out of print for many years.

It seems that Brossard's and Marlatt's situation is unique, as they were among the first women to develop a writing style of this sort. Therefore their task was innovative for the time, as they were not really following in anybody's footsteps. Consequently, they are an example of what feminine writing can be, and seek to inspire other women (lesbian) writers. For instance, Marlatt was among the first to refer to etymology and to use it widely in her writing: this method of working is quite common to many writers today (both English and French Canadian authors). Besides, new generations of writers who attempt to adopt Marlatt's and Brossard's way of writing often appear less creative since they must position themselves within a specific frame or tradition instead of suggesting and creating as Brossard and Marlatt do.

It seems that Brossard and Marlatt have initiated a new awareness of what the status of women could be. As lesbians, they live outside patriarchal society, although they do not

completely condemn men. One can notice that Marlatt kept her husband's name as a penname (her maiden name is Buckle), which may appear somewhat surprising. It is a proof that she does not eradicate men from her public or private life. Their feminism does not stand in opposition to men but it recognizes, involves and pushes women forward. However, many men probably feel excluded when reading these two writers, as they find words that touch women and speak of very intimate aspects and feelings that only women share. Similarly, my not being a lesbian reader probably prevented me from fully grasping the meaning of some passages. If I could *understand*, I might not have been able to *feel* what they intended to portray. Yet, women mostly feel included, involved, directly talked to when reading Marlatt and Brossard, which enable them -us- to gradually perceive and define their identity and status as women.

This is where the issues of space, motion and translation become all the more important. In their work, space is envisaged according to geographical and physical elements, especially through the city and the body. Both are sites, places, spaces which can not only be occupied by women, but must become intrinsically feminine. The city represents the social and public space where they live, a place allowing for transformations, encounters, exchanges and possibilities. The physical dimension in their writing acknowledges and praises the feminine body, for the role of the mother it enables, but mostly for what it is, claiming all the senses, the material aspects and functions of the body. Therefore the body is shown and taken into account within their writing in many ways. The most intimate and private parts are mentioned and used in the text, very beautifully exposed, sometimes erotically. Both Marlatt and Brossard trans-late their bodies out of patriarchal

social patterns and translate their bodies in their texts. Their feminine writing em-body not only a different approach to writing, but the very feminine characteristics inside of them.

The physical and geographical spaces are intertwined, spaces that are or that they turn into feminine ones. The issue of gender is thus at the core of Marlatt's and Brossard's work, one that they relate to their quest of (a) space(s). A space, as Michel de Certeau defined it, i.e. a "lieu pratiqué", a "lived-in" place where speed, direction and time play an important role. As lived-in place is compared to a stable place, a marked place is implied. In the context of Brossard and Marlatt, it will thus be a markedly gendered place since they emphasize their gendered beings in their books. Whatever the sexual preference of women, they remain « women », that is belonging to a specific gender which creates at least one link between all of them. Consequently, as Brossard and Marlatt look for spaces where women could be themselves and live, these spaces are gendered spaces. For their utopia, i.e. their idea of a perfect society, is there for all women.

This point is also explained by Marlatt's constant reference and search for her mother. By trying to understand her mother, to know what she has lived through and to become familiar with her aspirations, Marlatt is interested in comprehending the space(s) women have occupied through the years, in order to reach a better understanding of the present situation and be able to alter it if not to depart from it. Most of all, she needs to know in order to find out who she is, her identity.

Until now, women have been sharing spaces with men, within which either men or women might have had their own space(s); however, women have always felt the pressure of living in a patriarchal society and the latter accounts for their desire to have their own

space(s), without feeling the power of patriarchal society above their heads.

Brossard often uses the French word « citées », which calls for the city and also means quoted/ mentioned, the last two letters underlining the feminine and plural according to French grammar. This is how Marlatt and Brossard fight for the recognition of women. For our society to become aware of certain issues and eventually change certain conceptions, women writers like Marlatt and Brossard intend to attract people's attention.

Brossard and Marlatt are artists even more than writers as they search, discover, work languages as a material, and combine drawings and pictures with their writing. Besides, when either Marlatt or Brossard uses another language in her text, an "accent" appears through this process. Brossard considers the "accent" as something out of the norm. It represents a way for women to recognize each other, as it seems to represent this space between language in patriarchal society and their language that they are about to speak (Brossard, *La Lettre aérienne* 89-90). Another fact to keep in mind is that being a lesbian creates space and time according to Brossard (*La Lettre aérienne* 108).

By constantly moving, trans-lating, translating and searching for spaces, Marlatt and Brossard enable women's mentality to evolve; they also offer women a new way to express themselves. The energy that one feels in their texts is a gift for all women to pursue. They will assert their status as women and get to know themselves. Brossard and Marlatt imagine what could be and propose a new perception of women and their environment; their work is a source of inspiration and reflection for many, and it is very positive to know that these writers already have a large readership, that may gradually gain more space. Their writing describes gendered spaces, and it is very likely that these new perspectives will continue to

**inspire new generations of women to come.**

## WORKS CONSULTED

- Álvarez, Róman and M. Carmen-África Vidal, eds. Translation, Power, Subversion. Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters Limited, 1996.
- Bachelard, Gaston. La Poétique de l'espace. Paris: Quadrige/PUF, 1994.
- Bakhtine, Mikhail. Esthétique de la création verbale. Trans. Alfreda Aucouturier. Paris: Gallimard, 1984.
- . Esthétique et théorie du roman. Trans. Daria Olivier. Paris: Gallimard, 1978.
- . Rabelais and His World. Trans. Helene Iswolsky. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.
- Banting, Pamela. Body Inc. Winnipeg: Turnstone Press, 1995.
- Barbour, Douglas. Daphne Marlatt and Her Works. Toronto: ECW Press, n.d.
- Bennett, Donna. "Their Own Tongue." Canadian Literature 107 (Winter 1985): 152-155.
- Bentley, John Mays. "ARIADNE: Prolegomenon to the Poetry of Daphne Marlatt." The Open Letter 3.3 (Late Fall 1975): 5-33.
- Blaise, Claire. "The Border as Fiction." Borderlands Monograph Series 4 (1990): 1- 54.
- Brandt, Di. Wild Mother Dancing. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1993.
- Bowering, George. "Given This Body: An Interview with Daphne Marlatt." The Open Letter 4.3 (Spring 1979): 32-88.
- Bowering, George, and Daphne Marlatt. "KEEP WITNESSING: a review/interview." The Open Letter 3.2 (Spring 1975): 26-38.
- Brossard, Nicole. Amantes. Montréal: Quinze, 1980.
- . A tout regard. Montréal: Éditions NBJ, 1989.
- . Le Centre blanc. Montréal: Éditions de l'Hexagone, 1978.

- . Le Désert mauve. Montréal: Éditions de l'Hexagone, 1987.
- . Double impression. Montréal: Éditions de l'Hexagone, 1984.
- . "Entretien avec Nicole Brossard sur Picture Theory." With Louise Cotnoir, Lise Guèvremont, Claude Beausoleil and Hugues Corriveau. La Nouvelle Barre du jour 118-119 (nov 1982): 177-201.
- . Langues obscures. Montréal: Éditions de l'Hexagone, 1992.
- . La Lettre aérienne. Montréal: Les Éditions du remue-ménage, 1988.
- . La Partie pour le tout. Montréal: Les Éditions de l'Aurore, 1975.
- . Picture Theory. Montréal: Éditions de l'Hexagone, 1989.
- . Le Sens apparent. Paris: Flammarion, 1980.
- and Daphne Marlatt. Mauve. Montréal: Éditions NBJ, 1985.
- Buss, Helen M. Mapping Ourselves. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993.
- Butling, Pauline. "Magazinning: Interview with Daphne Marlatt." The Open Letter 8.5-6 (Winter-Spring 1993): 113-124.
- Carr, Brenda. "Between Continuity and Difference: an Interview with Daphne Marlatt." "West Coast Line " 25.1 (1991): 99-107.
- . "Daphne Marlatt's Salmon Texts-Swimming/ Jumping the Margins/ Barriers." Diss. The University of Western Ontario, 1989.
- Cole, Christina. "Daphne Marlatt as Penelope, Weaver of Words: a Feminist Reading of Stevenston." The Open Letter 6.1 (Spring 1985): 5-19.
- Colomina, Beatriz, ed. Sexuality and Space. Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992.
- Cotnoir, Louise. "S'écrire avec, dans et contre le langage." Room of One's Own 8.4 (January 1984): 47-49.
- De Beauvoir, Simone. Le Deuxième sexe. Paris: Gallimard, 1949.



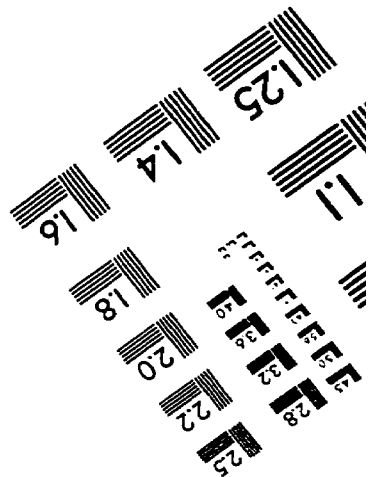
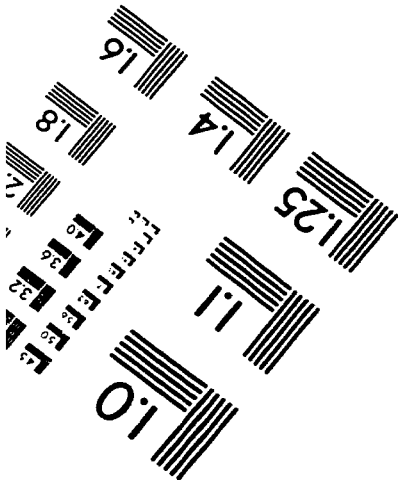
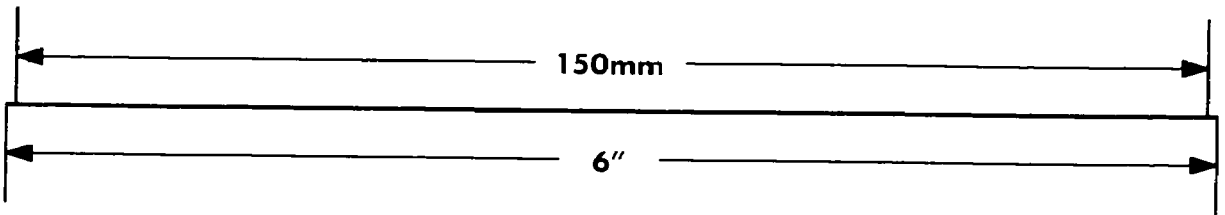
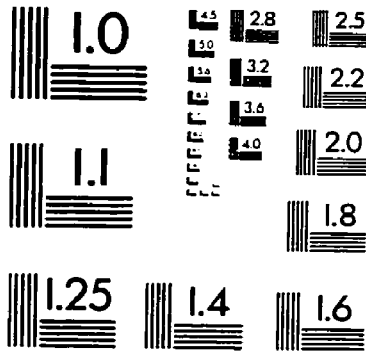
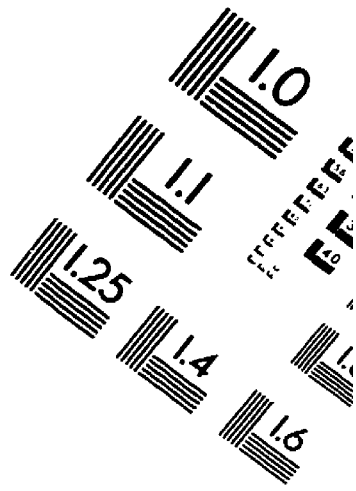
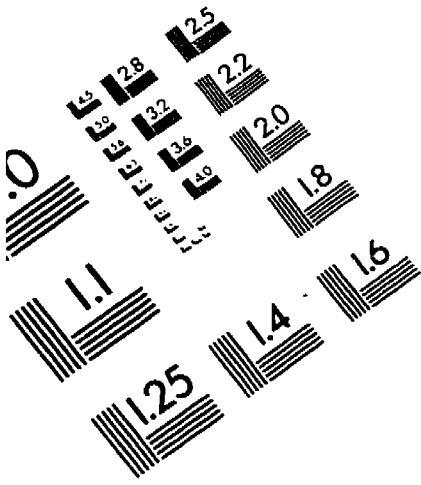
- De Certeau, Michel. L'Invention du quotidien. Paris: Gallimard, 1990.
- Deleuze, Gilles. Cinema 1 The Movement Image. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.
- Dorscht, Susan Rudy. "Wanting It Other/Wise." The Open Letter 9.2 (Spring 1995): 5-10.
- Dragland, Stan. The Bees of the Invisible. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1991.
- Drapeau, Renée-Berthe. Féminins singuliers. Montréal: Éditions Triptyque, 1986.
- Dybikowski, Ann, et al., eds. In the Feminine Women and Words Les Femmes et les Mots Conference Proceedings 1983. Edmonton: Longspoon Press, 1985.
- Folkart, Barbara. Le Conflit des énonciations. Quebec: Les Éditions Balzac, 1991.
- Freedman, Diane P. An Alchemy of Genres. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1992.
- Gagnon, Madeleine. Toute Écriture est amour. Montréal: VLB Éditeur, 1989.
- Gallays, François, et al., eds. Le Roman contemporain au Québec, 1960-1985. s.l. : Fides, 1992.
- Godard, Barbara. " 'Body I': Daphne Marlatt's Feminist Poetics." Canadian Review of American Studies 15.4 (1985): 481-96.
- , ed. Collaboration in the Feminine. Toronto: Second Story Press, 1994.
- . "'Mon corps est mots': l'écriture féminine de Daphne Marlatt." Ellipse 33-34 (1985): 88-200.
- Gould, Karen. "Spatial Poetics, Spatial Politics: Quebec Feminists on the City and the Countryside." American Review of Canadian Studies 12.1 (1982): 1-9.
- . Writing in the Feminine. Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 1990.
- Groden, Michael and Martin Kreiswirth, eds. The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. Space, Time and Perversion. New York: Routledge, 1995.

- Harasym, Sarah. "Opening the Question: A 'Political' Reading of Texts by J.Derrida, Gayatri Spivak, Roland Barthes and Daphne Marlatt." Diss. University of Alberta, 1988, 145-150.
- Harel, Simon, ed. L'Étranger dans tous ses états. Montréal: XYZ Éditeur, 1992.
- Holbrook, Susan. "Striking Words: Daphne Marlatt's Trans-gressions in Salvage." The Open Letter 9.2 (Spring 1995): 10-18.
- Home, David and Sherry Simon, eds. Mapping Literature. Montréal: Véhicule Press, 1988.
- Irigaray, Luce. Le Temps de la différence. Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 1989.
- Jardine, Alice A. and Anne M. Menke. Shifting Scenes. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.
- Kamboureli, Smaro and Shirley Neuman, eds. A/ Mazing Space. Edmonton: Longspoon Press, 1986.
- Kroetsch, Robert. The Lovely Treachery of Words. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Lecker, Robert. "Daphne Marlatt's Poetry." Canadian Literature 76 (Spring 1978): 56-67.
- Levy, Eric P. "Strategies." Canadian Literature 82 (1979): 89-91.
- Mailhot, Laurent. Ouvrir le livre. Montréal: Hexagone, 1992.
- Marcotte, Gilles and Pierre Nepveu, eds. Montréal imaginaire. Montréal: Éditions Fides, 1992.
- Marlatt, Daphne. Ana Historic. Toronto: The Coach House Press, 1988.
- . "Entering In." Canadian Literature 100 (1989): 219-223.
- . Frames. Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1968.
- . Ghost Works. Edmonton: Newest Publishers Limited, 1993.
- . Here and There. Lantzville: Island Writing Series, 1981.
- . How Hug a Stone. Winnipeg: Turnstone Press, 1983.
- . Salvage. Red Deer: Red Deer College Press, 1991.
- . "SP/ELLE: Spelling Out the Reasons." Tessera Editorial. Room of One's Own 8.4 (January 1984): 4-18.

- . Taken. Concord: House of Anansi Press Limited, 1996.
- . Touch to my Tongue. Edmonton: Longspoon Press, 1984.
- . What Matters. Toronto: The Coach House Press, 1980.
- and Betsy Warland. Double Negative. Charlottetown: Gynergy books, 1988.
- Moi, Toril. Sexual/ Textual Politics. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985.
- Mouré, Erin. Furious. Concord: House of Anansi Press Limited, 1988.
- O'Brien, Peter, ed. So to Speak. Montréal: Véhicule Press, 1987.
- Robin, Régine. Le Deuil de l'origine. Saint-Denis: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 1993.
- Robinson, Christopher. Scandal in the Ink. London: Cassell, 1995.
- Russo, Mary. The Female Grotesque. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Saint-Martin, Lori, ed. L'Autre lecture tome II. Montréal: XYZ Éditeur, 1994.
- Scheier, Libby, Sheard, Sarah, Wachtel, Eleanor, eds. Language in Her Eye. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1990.
- Scott, Gail. Spaces Like Stairs. Toronto: The Women's Press, 1989.
- Sellers, Susan. Language and Sexual Difference. New York: St Martin's Press, 1991.
- Shek, Ben-Z. French-Canadian and Quebecois Novels. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Siemerling, Winfried. Discoveries of the Other. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994.
- Simon, Sherry. Le Trafic des langues. Montréal: lesÉditions du Boréal, 1994.
- Smart, Patricia. Écrire dans la maison du père. Montréal: Éditions Québec/ Amérique, 1990.
- Thesen, Sharon, ed. The New Long Poem Anthology. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1991.
- Warland, Betsy, ed. InVersions. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1991.
- . Open is Broken. Edmonton: Longspoon Press, 1984.
- Williamson, Janice. "Chapter VII: Amorous Sites: The Embodied Language and Double Signature of Daphne Marlatt's Lesbian Love Poems." Citing Resistance: Vision, Space, Authority and Transgression in Canadian Women's Poetics Diss. York 1987, 149-

- "It gives me a great deal of pleasure to say yes: Writing/Reading Lesbian in Daphne Marlatt's Touch to My Tongue." West Coast Line 25.1 (1991): 171-193.
  - Sounding Differences. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993.
- Woolf, Virginia. A Room of One's Own. 1929. San Diego: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1989.

# IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



**APPLIED IMAGE, Inc**  
1653 East Main Street  
Rochester, NY 14609 USA  
Phone: 716/482-0300  
Fax: 716/288-5989

© 1993. Applied Image, Inc., All Rights Reserved