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### Cyber-Jouissance: A Sketch For A Politics Of Pleasure

In this work I am attempting to outline a politics of pleasure for/as Russian (cyber)feminist(s). Mainly I base my approach on Foucault's "ethics of the self" and Irigaray's "ethics of sexual difference", also influenced by works of Donna Haraway, Rosi Braidotti, Lou Andreas-Salome and cyberfeminists. My main argument is that cyberspace can be explored and created as a source of pleasure for and among women, as a means to share female genealogy based on embodied subjectivity, and that would imply an invention of new forms of politicization.

#### Cyber-politics

Cyberspace is as much a web of power relations as other spaces, and it plays out existing gender politics. In his work on communicative action, Habermas applied democratic liberal principles to the realm of communication, suggesting that there can be a future with an "equal access to communication". Foucault is strongly against such utopian futures: "The idea that there could exist a state of communication that would allow games of truth to circulate freely, without any constraints or coercive effects, seems utopian to me. This is precisely a failure to see that power relations are not something that is bad in itself, that we have to break free of. I do not think that a society can exist without power relations, if by that one means strategies by which individuals try to direct and control the conduct of others. The problem, then, is not to try to dissolve them in the utopia of completely transparent communication, but to acquire the rules of law, the management techniques, and also the morality, the *ethos*, the practice of the self, that will allow us to play these games of power with as little domination as possible" (Foucault, 1996: 446-7).

I would like to stress a need for such new forms of feminist power games, and argue that cyberfeminism is in a special position here. Cyberspace as a political place which is new, still in the process of establishing itself and controlled differently from, say, Academia, is and can be effectively used for feminist politics. It is also necessary to stress here that politicization of cyberspace can benefit from already existing spaces of established relations by women and among women - arts and feminist political activity, for example. Now we must politicize cyberspace by creating possibilities for new relations of force, that change the face of power, "showing its potentialities no less than its dangers". To say that cyberspace is just a residue of the late capitalist economy, or that virtual reality is dangerous for feminism since it reproduces patriarchal imagery and full of male fantasies, would only mean that feminism is poorly conceived by such critics, and power is always evil for them. On the other hand, if we consider cyberspace as a flow of unrestrained desires or unconscious, where one can build a cyber-society without power and domination, we put ourselves into another trap: it implies that to "avoid reality of power" (which is bad and polluted) is to "get free" from it in virtual reality, which is good and innocent, that corresponds to libertarian utopia. Thus, sooner we understand that we cannot "avoid" power relations in cyberspace, sooner we start using it for our purposes. We must try and

reduce the potential of domination implied in power relations, and employ it as a means for inventing new forms of female subjectivity, based on a politics of pleasure.

Why politics? For Foucault 'the political' is not something external to what underlies elementary relations, which are "neutral" by nature. "All relations of force imply power relations, which can be referred to the political sphere of which it is a part, both as its effect and its condition of possibility." To say that "everything is political" is to acknowledge this presence of relations of force and their immanence to the political field. We must try to avoid two common responses to the political domain: it should not be crushed in individual guilt (self-flagellation, like "each person is responsible for everything", we are accomplices to all evil in the world, etc.) or displaced by general theories - all this derives from the market economy, capitalist exploitation, or rotten human nature/society, etc. "Political analysis and critique, for the most part, have to be invented", just as strategies of modifying these lines of force and making out of them something new. Thus, instead of defining our political "position" that would always be in old political terms, we have to "imagine and to bring out new schemas of politicization" (Foucault, 1996: 211).

I argue here that the ground for such new forms of politicization in cyberspace most effectively can become an embodied female subjectivity. It has been suggested by many that the notion of an embodied subject and female identity is ultimately essentializing and totalizing, especially for cyberspace. It is, if we look for a solid ground and do not take into account sexual difference. However, we do not need definitions in order to "become", for these can restrict such inventions of ourselves. We need, rather, new practices to seek new pleasures, based on the ethics of (sexual) difference. In this process we do not look for any kind of "true" identity based on our sex, it is not an individual liberation of our desires or some kind of inherent sexual energy. It is a political social choice, albeit a risky one, in balancing within a particular disposition of power relations, which are not stable or given, with an aim of modeling and inventing. There is no "true feminine self" to be discovered:

"I think there is a danger in thinking of identity and subjectivity as quite deep and quite natural and not determined by political and social factors. The psychological subjectivity that the psychoanalysts deal with - we have to be liberated from this kind of subjectivity. We are prisoners of certain conceptions about ourselves and our behavior. We have to liberate our own subjectivity, our own relation to ourselves" (Foucault, 1996: 298).

The word "liberate" here refers to "liberate from" [essentialized self], not "liberate towards [essentialized self]". What does it mean for women, who are not even subjects, as Lacan and Irigaray argue? If for Lacan there is not much to be done, since he sees this order of things as the Law of the Father (Lacan, 1982), for Irigaray, on the contrary, there is an urgency to change this situation, if the human/female *genre* is to survive at all (Irigaray, 1987). For her women are *not yet* subjects. Sexual difference has to be developed within an ethical relationship, where difference is recognized in its own right, without a relation to any kind of sameness. In order to liberate ourselves, we have to create different kinds of political and social factors, according to Foucault, not to look for definitions of our natures. Irigaray takes psychoanalysis in the same direction, showing that "women are prisoners of certain conceptions of themselves and their behavior", paraphrasing Foucault, and she charges psychoanalysis of Freud and Lacan in endorsing "female prisons" which they accurately describe. Only through establishing social and political links between themselves women can create their own subjectivity, and an ethics of

*difference*, not *sameness*, must be a very important aspect of this process.

## Subjectivity and Pleasure

Irigaray in "Je, tu, nous" (1990, 1993) shows that the topic of sexual difference can not be reduced to the issues of sex and sexual act, as it has been done so far. It is about subjectivity understood as an intersection of our embodiment and the world. In this sense virtual reality is not virtual as in *non-real*, it is a space for creation of very real links, origins of new relationships, range of new pleasures. Probably, cyberfeminists were the first openly political communities in cyberspace to play out their differences into new forms of cyber-organizations without programmes and restrictions, which invite other people for collective pleasure, which is not *l'un(e)*. We are obviously "making it work" and "inventing new games" of power relations in cyberspace. In doing it, we move beyond our cultures of sexualization, we "desexualize" pleasure, being fully aware that it is necessarily (though *not exclusively*) a political gesture: 'For thousands of years, we have been made to believe that the law of all pleasure is, secretly at least, sex. ... It was this codification of pleasure by the "laws" of sex that ultimately gave rise to the whole arrangement of sexuality. And this makes us think that we "liberating" ourselves when we "decode" all pleasure in terms of sex finally brought into the open. Whereas we should be striving, rather, toward a desexualization, to a general economy of pleasure that would not be sexually normed' (Foucault, 1996: 212).

It is important when trying to relate to our "womanness" not to ask questions like "Who am I?" or "What is the secret of my desire?" We better ask "What relations, through femininity, can be established, invented, multiplied and modulated"? (Foucault, 1996: 308). Here femininity is not reduced to any kind of "truth in sex", but rather is seen as an opportunity to create multiplicity of relationships. We must use it not as "a form of desire", but as "something desirable". Foucault says of relations between men that there are no words, no terms, no institutions that can embody intimate relationships between them. At the same time he insists that men are much more privileged in their social life than women. Here we recollect words of Irigaray on female genealogies and their cultural absence in misogynist and matricidal imagery that founds our societies. There is an urgent need for female relations, ties and friendships outside "allowed" spaces. What is the pleasure for women in 'being together'? Share our time, our ideas, our experiences? To share our grief, knowledge and confidences outside institutional relations that construct us in patriarchal cultures? These are not easy questions, and cannot be answered by utopian female essence. We have to be careful not to celebrate our 'being a woman' as there are many differences among women that have to be acknowledged. While creating new spaces for ourselves, for example, a cyberspace, we must work not so much on liberating our desires, but rather to create and look for new pleasures, that will make a way to new desires and new selves. Foucault and Irigaray warn us against the common ideal of a 'fusion of liberated identities' that implies a possible digestion of or a violence against the Other.

This pleasure-seeking is not some irresponsible 'enjoying oneself'. In this sense it is a call for a responsible enjoyment and is not an "operation of the superego", as Slavoj Žižek argues. Žižek says that contemporary society is characterized by even enjoyment - seemingly the pure and exclusive pleasure of the subject in reality pre-determined by the influences of the superego which demarcates certain pleasures as more or less pleasurable. And the question here is if the operations of the superego in a patriarchal society follows the parameters set by it, is there any

hope that there would be an adequate allowance for a female pleasure - especially since the management of female *jouissance* as the 'necessarily unmanageable' has been one of the primary anxieties of many cultures? Firstly, no one here refers to the possibility of 'pure pleasure'. There is no 'jouissance' outside a 'political', though it cannot be reduced to an *only* political dimension and that is its strategic strength. To assume that our all pleasures are pre-constructed is to miss the point of 'productive power' and that resistance 'comes first'. Second, as Foucault has shown in his "History of sexuality" (Foucault, 1984a), in our societies there has been much more governmental investments and normalizations in the realm of desire and its embodied forms, than in the domain of pleasure, that makes pleasure more amenable for a political (feminist) intervention and strategic resistance. Invention of new pleasures is not 'safe', as nothing can be 'completely safe' and it is not an issue here at all, but rather seems more effective and promising for feminist politics and female subject inventions, especially in the Russian context.

Women's space-time was used to build the house of Being, as Irigaray shows in her analysis of Heidegger (Irigaray, 1983). If women are to become subjects, they will be different from male subjects, they will redefine for themselves the meaning of subject-position. Women cannot be anchored in a house of the Father, God or another man - they disappear there, they are sacrificed in closed spaces. As Margaret Whitford stresses, for Irigaray women are always becoming, but it is not an empty repetition, it is an evolvment. They are nomadic subjects (Irigaray, 1985; Braidotti, 1993), moving in accordance with their rhythms. If men achieve a passage from sensible to intelligible, from mortal to immortal in the rhythm of *fort-da* game, discussed by Freud, Lacan, and Derrida, "which gives them enclosure of the movement in and out, to and from, from the highest to the lowest" (Whitford, 1991: 164), women cannot use this rhythm, that corresponds to male subjectivity, though Freud and Lacan claim its sexual indifference and universal applicability. Here sexual difference should be put in the centre of subject development. So far women had nothing for themselves, with the choice to become like men, or to jump into abyss of being without any limits. Irigaray speaks of the urgency to create such grounding axis for women, that will allow them to move freely as nomadic subjects. This axis will allow their movements from hell to heaven, without being fixed or being lost: "What [women] do need is to stand centered about their own axis, an axis which passes microcosmically from their feet to the top of their head, macrocosmically from the center of the earth to the center of the sky. This axis is present in the iconographic traces left by traditions in which women are visible. It is on this axis that women find the condition of their territory, of the autonomy of their body and their flesh, and the possibility of an expanding *jouissance*" (Irigaray, 1987: 114).

## Our Body

The fact that we are bodies has been productively used by feminists but only recently the notion of the body has been allowed into feminist theory in its own right. I argue that in her use of the body *morphology*, Irigaray is much more political than reductive or essentialist as many have claimed (Shcoor, 1989; Christian, 1989; Moi, 1985). To ground the creation of female subjectivity in a shared corporeality among women can be read as a strong political gesture. It is a move toward a possibility of incarnated ethics of sexual difference and respect for female subject position. It does not mean to reduce women to their so-called sexual organs. It does not suppose that "anatomy is destiny". However, it stresses the importance of embodied political action (Foucault claimed that only what touches the body can be considered political) for the project of feminism.

Today more and more male thinkers try to take on "female place of enunciation" in order to shake foundations of the modern subject. One of the famous examples here is Derrida's deconstructive use of the 'feminine' in "Spurs" (Derrida, 1978). For Irigaray, "there is nothing new about man wanting to be both man and woman", since "as soon as something valuable appears to be coming from the side of women, men want to become women" (quoted in Whitford, 1991: 131). Men claim that they suffocate in cultures which they have built for themselves. They want to become women to help themselves, though they still express no need and no respect for living women, only for their "simulacrum". However, this attempt means nothing more than another kind of refusal to give space to (sexual) difference of the Other. Such philosophers try to be both - men *and* women, thus, to be One and the Same, to annihilate sexual difference and not to see or hear living women around them. On the contrary, Irigaray thinks that the best what they can do *for women* and for themselves is to openly acknowledge their male subject positions - as men, and thus to leave women the space for creation of their own subjectivities. However, this requires "letting go" of a (visible) mastery over discourse that is not an easy move for a male subject: "...the 'masculine' is not prepared to share the initiative of discourse. It prefers to experiment with speaking, writing, enjoying 'woman' rather than leaving to that other any right to intervene, to 'act' in her own interests" (1985: 157). Any politics of the subject is rooted in its corporeality since indeed the body has been the main focus of productive power. The bodily dimension of subjectivity is also effectively expressed in Foucault's notions of governmentality and biopower (Foucault, 1984b; 1994: 582-83, 728-29, 785, 213-18, 38-389).

Irigaray also stresses the importance of a body and its potentialities for friendship and amorous exchange among women and between women and men, which can be very affective (meaning that it involves the potential for expressing themselves emotionally) and effective for cyberfeminists. Women's destiny is unknown unless *women speak and live through it themselves*. Unless they speak as women, for women *and* men, openly, creating a space for the Other to enter and exchange ideas, dreams, pleasures, lives. For Irigaray it is strange if *woman* claims that she does not write *as* a woman, but as a neutral (person). There is no neutral - it conceals *him*, the Same. It means she feels uncomfortable to be a woman, she suffers in culture where woman is *not*. She wants to be a man, to be human, to be neutral. Who is she, asks Irigaray, if not a woman? "Not to contribute to making language and its writings sexed is to perpetuate the pseudo-neutrality of those laws and traditions that privilege masculine genealogies and their codes of logic" (1993: 53). Women must learn how to love themselves and each other, if they want *to become*, to be born. Pleasure is about the body. When Irigaray grounds the creation of female subjectivity in the body and its morphology, the most effective way to relate to it is to use it as a political move, since it is the body that allows us to live and love as women and share it between ourselves.

There is not virtual reality prior to/without our bodies and those relations of force that our embodiment allows to pass through. To see cyberspace bodiless is as much a political choice as to see it embodied. Instead of seeing cyberspace as a place "free of a body" and its politics, where one can (at last!) take a relieve from that non-ideal (overweight, digesting or aging) materiality, we can give back this somatophobia to Western reason. We can politicize cyberspace as a place where our bodies meet, not by extending themselves in our dreams into wires, but by typing, massaging our hands in-between, smiling in front of the screen, enjoying words and responses from each other, that embody our pains and pleasures, deriving from new encounters, relations,

sensations, friendships. These intensities contribute to a creation of our *female* subjectivities, that are ours and corporeal. In this case this meeting that we are in today gives us another, new kinds of sensations, possibilities of new pleasures and developments, that are not a break from or extension of virtual reality we are working in, but another form of embodiment, that is full of potentiality of pleasure. We are pleased in being here due to various reasons and despite of so many more other reasons. We are pleased in being in cyberspace with women and as women, though it is not all unproblematic: Irigaray through her analysis of European philosophy and sexual order that it represents, shows that "women's relationships with their mothers and daughters and with each other" have been traditionally sacrificed to the patriarchal economy and that "all the norms of existing culture and society ...rest ... on the separation between women" (Whitford, 1991: 182-183). It makes clear why a shared sociality and joined symbolic work between women - as it is expressed in virtual space as one of new spaces - is highly political, since it creates pleasures of women and for women, also making visible female lines and genealogies of creation. For us our differences are becoming another source of mutual pleasure, that we are discovering, and not a matter to absorb.

## Born Together

"The amorous exchange represents in the most corporeal and the most intimate terms Irigaray's vision of the new world, deploying the erotico-transcendental vocabulary of mysticism, and the language of the imaginary body." It links together the carnal and the transcendental. "It attempts to emerge from the immobility and stasis (death) of the solipsistic male subject to the mobility and fertility (life) of the couple. ... The amorous exchange, it will be argued, is a fantasy of exchange in general, the basis of human society." (Whitford, 1991: 168)

There is no fixed "you" in Irigaray's texts. 'You' is always changing, it is mobile, nomad, fluid. The relation and articulation of female identity is possible outside his house since we do not need solid ground to express ourselves. We do need a ground, rigidity kills us, stops our movements. Our bodies do not have fixed contours, they know flows and wetness and multiplicity without disappearance or horror. We do not need to leave the body in order to become fluid and fly in cyberspace. It is ours "by nature" of its multiplicity and by the fact that women assemble computers with their eyes, fingers, and their life. In 1977, just a few years before "Manifesto for Cyborgs" by Haraway (Haraway, 1991), Irigaray said: "We must learn to speak to each other so that we can embrace from afar. When I touch myself, I am surely remembering you. But so much has been said, and said of us, that separates us.

Let's hurry and invent our own phrases. So that everywhere and always we can continue to embrace. We are so subtle that nothing can stand in our way, nothing can stop us from reaching each other, even fleetingly, if we can find means of communication that have *our* density. We shall pass imperceptibly through every barrier, unharmed, to find each other. No one will see a thing. Our strength lies in the very weakness of our resistance. ... Although we can dissimulate perfectly within their economy, we relate to one another without simulacrum. Our resemblance does without semblances: for in our bodies, we are already the same. Touch yourself, touch me, you'll see. ...You? I? That's still saying too much. Dividing too sharply between us: all" (1977, 1985: 215-16, 218). We should not look here for a coercive attempt to reduce an existing diversity among women to the same essence, based on commonly seen sexual organs {or what is perceived to be common experiences}. Rather, it is an attempt to create a

space for a positive encounter between women *as* women not by nature, but by our decision to face and think through sexual difference. I argue it is effective to see it as a positive feminist strategy, based not only on a (powerful) critique of existing situation, but also that seeks new types of pleasure in becoming a woman. To become a subject without a need to transmute the body of a woman who is not yet existing, means to become a female subject. It is an invitation to be born together, to be women *and* subjects, to leave for ourselves a body which experiences pleasure from this process. To-gether. More than one, not identical, and still - we.

What about the patriarchal order that everyday separates us? Should we give up facing contempt and rivalry? For Irigaray there is a danger in wasting energy in trying to fight with endless representations and fetishes to which female body and women are reduced. More effective is to use our energy for positive invention and becoming, to help each other to find a way back to "us" through constructed simulations of ourselves. There was, probably, no one who gave us so much of credit as Nietzsche, in questioning us. Unfortunately, he was turning his back on us in the moment of our answer, not hearing it and - no surprise! - resenting our silence. Irigaray uses his brilliant questions to follow him, to offer him love and care while exchanging words with him, and return to him all that is not hers: "But of your contempt (I) shall make a thread to find my way back. In what you vomit up, (I) shall seek out what you're giving back to me. By interpreting your contempt, I shall find my skin again. Washing off the disguises of wretchedness" (1991: 26). Woman alone lives through her body, she does not need eternity for she is *alive*. Nietzsche wants to live, but he is too engaged with himself and *his* history in order to start living. He wants to, Irigaray says<sup>1</sup>, replace God, and in this gesture he denies the specificity of his body and refuses its sexual difference: "Eternity, that is the music of one who senses and fears decline. And, for passing beyond life and death, see how busily he is at work at this moment. To leave his body behind and fly away unburdened, isn't this always and forever the point of his creation? So, whether it be your eternity or another, what does it matter! Isn't it still a ghost's desire rather than a living being's? And to transmute beyond the body? Without stopping in this life" (1991: 27).

If we want to stop in *this* life, we must make (cyber) space for ourselves full of female corporeality as living and speaking women. Not to overcome it, part from it or leave it to not-ours discourses and artifacts, but to engage it, love ourselves in it without guilt, as Lou Andreas-Salome argued, share it with each other and find new pleasures thanks to its living.

Russian<sup>2</sup> jouissance

Tina Chanter in her book on Irigaray *Ethics of Eros* writes that "(O)ne of the most memorable moments for me, in which Irigaray uses humour to make her point, occurs in *This Sex Which Is Not One*, when Irigaray is commenting on Lacan's understanding of women and their pleasure. ... The series of questions with which Irigaray follows this quotation, which I imagine her

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<sup>1</sup>I understand that this short reference to Nietzsche might display many problematic moves in Irigarayan analysis, however, the productive usage of her ideas is what interests me here most. Kelly Oliver must be referred to for an extensive feminist analysis of Nietzsche.

<sup>2</sup> 'Russian' refers here to the Russian-speaking, and not ethnically Russian, political community. There is a necessity to start seeing and listening to a diversity among women in Russia - religious, ethnic, generational, stratificational, etc., that has to be mentioned here but must be carefully approached in a separate endeavour.

articulating with her eyebrows raised in mock surprise, accomplishes more than some writers could in a book" (Chanter, 1995: 243). Lacan says that women are not worth listening to, especially on the subject of their pleasure, since "they don't know what they are saying" and "about this pleasure, woman knows nothing". He concludes that female analysts "haven't made the slightest progress on the question of female sexuality". In order to understand something on female *jouissance*, Lacan suggests to "go and look at Bernini's statue in Rome, you'll see right away that St. Theresa is coming, there's no doubt about it" (quoted in Irigaray, 1985: 90-91). Then Irigaray puts her famous questions: "In Rome? So far away? To look? At a statue? Of a saint? Sculptured by a man? What pleasure are we talking about? Whose pleasure? For where the pleasure of the Theresa in question is concerned, her own writings are perhaps more telling" (ibid.).

We do not need religious or aesthetic excuses to make nude female statues or paintings in order to understand *female* pleasure or in order to experience it, we can leave it to those who need it for their own intellectual / aesthetic arousal, and for whom *our* words, *our* thinking bodies and our open hearts are not "beautiful" or "objective" enough. We create our own (cyber) cultures, that will embody our lines of forces, our live energy, and that changes cyberspace as a feminist space too. This space is not exclusive, it invites her *and* him. May be we have not yet existed we are just being born, here and now, and who else knows so much of being born as women know? According to Sadie Plant (1997), technology was always a feminine sphere, a web of matrices which are woven in particular ways. Who else knows so much of this pleasure of creation as *we*, who sees complex embroidery appearing under their hard-working fingers? Being cyberfeminists we should not forget those female fingers that make bodies of our computers all over the world, and who employed for they are women - it means hard-working and able, not just cheap. We know how to make knots, webs, nets and tangles. What can be more political in cultures of symbolic matricide and inferiority of female gender than collective and public weaving?

I argue that "*jouissance*" is especially relevant and appropriate as a corrective to the Russian 'culture of suffering'. Orthodox Christianity as it has evolved in Russia traditionally stresses the importance and goodness of suffering, especially for women, that has been expressed in various ways in Russian 'high' and 'popular' cultures. Thus, I see the idea of (collective) female *jouissance* as an even more appropriate "strategic operation" of the subject for Russian women that challenges ideals of "what a woman should be" in Russia. Do you think that our mothers, Mother-Russia and we, their daughters, have suffered enough? Or still it needs a bit more? Who needs? For whom? For what? Women in Russia seem to have fulfilled their lot of suffering. Last (?) time in Chechnya. We must be angels by now. And we are. We leave this world of suffering to "become". We are cyberangels. We use cyberspace to speak to each other "from afar", to embrace "Others". We carry out rites of passage between earth and sky, heaven and hell, and it is *our* pleasure.

There are other spaces where women are already finding possibilities for an embodied politics of pleasure: art groups, friendship clubs, etc. A limited scope of this paper does not allow us to elaborate on them and their relation to cyberspace. However, we can pose some questions for a future analysis: "What differentiates them from cyberspace? To what extent have the potential of a feminist politics of pleasure within / through cyberspace been prefigured by earlier spaces / practices / discourses of feminist pleasure? What are there continuities and contradictions if at



all?" My experience of a participation in one of women's organizations - Committee of Soldier's Mothers (Moscow brunch) - suggests that there can be no easy answers to such questions, though it is obvious that women in the Committee use strategically their *embodied* stereotyped positions as "women/actual/potential mothers" to challenge the most (literally) phallogocentric institution: an army, which Foucault considered as a heart of modern societies, together with prisons. Though it is not necessarily pleasure that is aimed at in these spaces that women create among themselves, they do feel "to-gether", they share everyday tears and humour and it gives them energy. It is that kind of "de-sexualized" pleasure that was discussed earlier. We *are* comfortable among ourselves, despite of many problems and cultural stereotypes and we use it for highly effective and productive resistances. Russian women share their lives with each other, and more often today - with other women on the earth. Their collective joyance from shared actions gives birth to / labours a new political situation. Moreover, covered with dust and forgotten joyance of our mothers, grandmothers and grand-grand... mothers enjoys its rebirth too, being newly articulated thus giving us an opportunity to discover and continue creations of our female genealogy.

It is a political statement that celebrates power of pleasure. This positive energy of cyberfeminism in Russia in joined action with other feminist practices creates new forms of subjectivities for Russian women, establishing women's genealogy in Russian-speaking culture, leaving the mentality of suffering and violent sacrifice to those who needs solids. It also creates new joyful faces of feminism, *covering* huge Russian distances without repressing our differences. With many women we 'keep in touch' only through cyberspace, establishing very much material contacts and embodied relations. More and more Russian women, different ethnically, generationally, socially, make steps towards each other - that is, towards themselves. One might live very far from another, and usually we have little chance to meet in a Levinas' relation "face-to-face" (Levinas, 1980). At the same time, post-Soviet women are said to be highly literate and educated and their lives taught them to think fast and have a kind of "fuzzy logic" so much celebrated today. What I am saying here is that for Russian women Internet and cyberspace provide an opportunity to start a relation among themselves "body-to-body" (Irigaray, 1987), that is multiplied in other spaces and that weaves a Russian thread into a rich colorful cloth of world feminism today.

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