

# ÉCRITURE FEMININE FOTOGRAFIJOJE: VERONIKA ŠLEIVYTĖ IR VIOLETA BUBELYTĖ

*Agnė Narušytė*

VILNIAUS DAILĖS AKADEMIJA

Maironio g. 6, LT-01124 Vilnius

anarusyte@gmail.com

Šiame straipsnyje remdamasi prancūzų feminisčių Héléne Cixous, Julios Kristevos ir Luce Irigaray *écriture feminine* („moteriško rašymo“) samprata ketinu iširti, kaip ji realizuojama dviejų Lietuvos fotografijų, Veronikos Šleivytės ir Violetos Bubelytės, kūryboje. Veronika Šleivytė daugiausiai fotografavo XX a. ketvirtajame dešimtmetyje, nepriklausomoje Lietuvoje. Jos archyve išliko nemažai autoportretų. Violeta Bubelytė pradėjo kurti autoaktus devintojo dešimtmečio pradžioje, sovietų okupuotoje Lietuvoje, ir tęsia šį projektą iki šiol. Tapdamos savo fotografijų objektais, abi fotografės tiria savo *aš*. Straipsnyje teigiama, kad šių moterų kūryboje autofotografija tampa *écriture feminine* forma, paneigiamas moteriškas pasyvumas, mimikrijos būdu sutrikdomas dominuojantis patriarchalinės fotografijos diskursas bei kuriamas savas fotografijos diskursas per kūno patirtį, dialogo su savo *aš* kūrimą, kito įtraukimą ir fotografijos kalbos trikdžius. Be to, straipsnis rašomas kaip metatekstas, tiriantis *écriture feminine* sampratos taikymo moksliniam diskursui galimybes.

REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: *écriture feminine*, fotografija, autoaktas, autoportretas, feminizmas, kūnas.

„Moteris privalo rašyti savo *aš*: privalo rašyti apie moteris ir atvesti moteris į rašymą, iš kurio jos buvo išvartytos taip pat nuožmiai, kaip ir iš savo kūnų – dėl tų pačių priežasčių, to paties įstatymo, su tuo pačiu fatališku tikslu. Moteris privalo įdėti save į tekstą – kaip ir į pasaulį ir į istoriją – savo pačios judesiu,“ – šitaip prancūzų feministė, rašytoja Héléne Cixous pradėjo savo esė *Medūzos juokas (Le rire de la Meduse)*, pirmą kartą

publikuotą 1975 m.<sup>1</sup>. Ji kalbėjo apie specifiskai „moterišką rašymą“, arba *écriture feminine*, kuris paprastai neverčiamas, kad nedingtų prancūzų kalbai būdinga moteriška rašymo kaip biologinio ir kultūrinio kons-

1 Héléne Cixous, „The Laugh of the Medusa“ (1975), in: *The Routledge Language and Cultural Theory Reader*, edited by Lucy Burke, Tony Crowley and Alan Girvin, London: Routledge, 2000, p. 161.

ÉCRITURE FEMININE  
IN PHOTOGRAPHY:  
VERONIKA ŠLEIVYTĖ AND  
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KEYWORDS: *écriture féminine*, photography, self-nude, self-portrait, feminism, body.

SUMMARY

The concept of *écriture féminine* proposed by French feminists Hélène Cixous, Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray in 1970s has been criticised for being apolitical. But the criticism has been contested with the argument that it has a potential in changing the discourse that structures gender relationships in society. *Écriture féminine* as 'writing the body' is constructed in feminist theory as an opposition to the dominating patriarchal discourse that prevents women from occupying the subject position and uses them to guarantee the subject position for men. By criticising Sigmund Freud's interpretation of female sexuality according to which a woman cannot sublimate, Irigaray claims that a woman who is prevented from realising her libido participates in discourse in two ways: mysticism and mimicry, which are both sadomasochistic. By using mimicry as a method in her philosophical questioning, however, i.e. by imitating the dominating discourse 'unfaithfully', Irigaray demonstrates its artificiality and fallacy. She suggests that women should leave the dominating patriarchal discourse by rejecting its rules and deconstructing its language. The dominating discourse, according to Irigaray, denies gender differences and is a discourse of 'oneness' pretending to be universal. In order to escape sameness, Irigaray suggests 'speaking the body' based on the relationship of gender differences where femininity and masculinity do not enslave each other, but preserve wonder with regard to each other thus creating a limit, a gap, a middle that does not allow absolute fusion and preserves difference. Writing the body is writing with the other, which creates a dialogical relationship. Thus, for Cixous, Kristeva and Irigaray, *écriture féminine* is an

expression of specificity in female body and at the same time a realisation of Jacques Derrida's *différance*.

The paper suggests that this conception of *écriture féminine* can be used to understand the significance of work by two Lithuanian female photographers, Veronika Šleivyte and Violeta Bubelyte, who 'spoke the body' without acknowledging their feminist strategies. This was caused by historical circumstances in which they created. Veronika Šleivyte photographed self-portraits during the inter-war period when the concept of *écriture féminine* did not exist and she worked in a male dominated field and society that held very traditional views regarding women. Violeta Bubelyte started photographing herself naked in the early 1980s, i.e. in the time when the concept of *écriture féminine* was very popular in the West, but it could not reach Lithuania that was under the Soviet regime. Yet when their work is interpreted through the concept of *écriture féminine*, it becomes clear how they both were opposing the dominating discourse of patriarchal photography. By photographing themselves, they used mimicry (in Irigaray's sense) as a positive method by repeating the clichés of portrait and nude unfaithfully and thus showing the artificiality of the representation of women and establishing themselves as subjects. Both photographers rejected woman's identification with nature and transferred their bodies to the sphere of culture. By 'writing the body' they both created a dialogical relationship where a woman addresses herself with Irigaray's question 'who are you?' as if her *self* were already slightly other. Yet Šleivyte also inscribed the other in two more ways: by trying on other identities and speaking about herself through love to other women. Both photographers also disturbed the familiar discourse of portrait and nude photography by using a different lighting, creating superimpositions and using the gaze to establish subjectivity. On the other hand, in their own discourse, they undermined its 'oneness' by using alternative verbal discourses and introducing the dimension of time. Both photographers used the photographic medium by positively creating the space for dialogue, but also showed that woman's self is inaccessible to photography as a medium establishing the dualist subject-object position. Additionally, this paper is written as a meta-text, exploring the possibility to use the concept of *écriture féminine* in academic writing on photography.