Victorian Women Writers, Radical Grandmothers, and the Gendering of God

GAIL TURLEY HOUSTON
For my grandmothers
Divinity is what we [women] need to become free, autonomous, sovereign . . . .

If women have no God, they are unable either to communicate or commune with one another.

—Luce Irigaray, *Sexes and Genealogies* 62

What does our great historical hunger signify . . . our consuming desire for knowledge, if not the loss of myth, of a mythic home, the mythic womb?

—Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* 137