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# The Space That Claws And Knaws: **Topoi** of a Critical Discourse on 'Home'

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A Thesis

in

The Faculty

of

Arts and Science

Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec, Canada

August 1991

ISBN 0-315-73644-5

## Abstract

### The Space That Claws And Knaws: Topoi of a Critical Discourse on 'Home'

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With the rise of academic interest in objects of inquiry such as 'space', 'the family', 'woman', and 'the child', the discursive circulation of 'home' has seen an equal boom in the production and reproduction of academic texts. However, while the theoretical autonomy of such related concepts as gender, the family, and the household has been challenged, the 'home' as that space within which gendered subjectivity, the family, and the household unfold, remains a kind of unitary vat, an undifferentiated container of problematics, rather than a problematic category in itself.

It is, therefore, my aim in this dissertation to engage with 'home' as an object of academic knowledge and inquiry in itself; an object to be directly investigated and placed squarely on the theoretical agenda.

As a preliminary step in that direction, this work examines how 'home', both as a lived and a constructed space, is the effect of historical and ideological relations of power and gender and looks at how these relations of power and gender are represented, neutralized, contested, and inverted in critical discourses ranging from philosophy and history, to feminism, cultural studies, media studies and postmodernism

## Preface

When I first began preparing for this study, some seven years ago, I thought that I would be looking into female constructs of ultimacy, constructs which I proposed to myself (and to the Ph.D. in Humanities Program Committee at Concordia University) to locate somewhere in Classical Antiquity--that immortal time and almost place-less place which, being Athenian born, I have always immodestly constructed as my very own ancestral 'home'. After having read Jean-Joseph Goux's article "Vesta, ou le sanctuaire de l'être" in L'interdit de la représentation (1984), I singled out Hestia, 'goddess of the hearth' and one of the six female Olympians. I was happy with Hestia as my subject of inquiry since of gods of the Pantheon, she was the least known. Moreover as I learned from Goux, of her alone, there were no representations.

As a background to the historical period of Antiquity within which Hestia held her role, a role which I now assumed to be a relatively minor one, I was given to read The Ancient City by Fustel de Coulanges. However, hardly several pages into the book than I began to see foregrounded by every line of every page, none other than the very object of my study--Hestia. Only it was not as a construct of ultimacy that Hestia emerged in the pages before me, but as a lived popular reality. Thus it was that the legendary 'fascination' which this masterpiece is purported to hold (Glotz 1969, 4) began to work its celebrated magic upon me and on my project. Fustel de Coulanges' structural analysis of the 'hearth' in the social and political life of Greek and Roman Antiquity had shifted the focus of my proposed plan of study.

At this point I have to say that that 'magic' was all the more powerful given that I

was reading the 1956 edition, to which there was no introduction, no disciplinary frame through which to contain its scope. This has had its own drawbacks as I myopically struggled with often dated texts in search of some kind of critical footing, which I never really found. It was only after having recently stumbled upon the Humphreys and Momigliano prefaces to the 1987 edition (an edition which appeared in the Concordia bookstore but which was never held at the library), that I realized that not only did such a 'footing' not really exist, but that the tentative hold that I had created for my purpose was not only adequate, but had placed this masterpiece within the theoretical horizon of a feminist interpretation.

For, elated as I had been at the prospect of grounding female ultimacy within patriarchal, rather than matriarchal or pre-patriarchal, social reality, (I did not suspect that it was but the nether side of the same coin that I was looking at), I had resolved, as a consequence of my encounter with The Ancient City, to study 'the hearth' in Classical Antiquity itself. However, it was not until three years later and several hearth-projects down, when I came face to face with the necessity of making my research on Fustel de Coulanges available to the kinds of questions that were appropriate to interdisciplinary work and to the feminism I wanted to practice, that my project took on the form that it has today.

It was out of a Cultural Studies Seminar and out of another piece of equally important reading--the seminal essay by Meaghan Morris "At Henry Parkes Motel" (1988a)-- that the thesis I have engaged in here, has grown. For it was in the context of writing a paper on Morris' theoretical incursions into the hinterlands of postmodernity that it dawned upon me that what in fact I had been studying was neither a female construct of ultimacy, nor a male social reality, but a space--that very space in which we

live; the space 'that claws and knaws' (Foucault 1986, 23) and that we are accustomed to call 'home'.

It was, strangely enough, once I had already investigated that space that I began to question its theoretical autonomy, conceiving of it as the possible subject of academic investigation and inquiry. For through what had turned out to have been my various preparatory research exercises, I now began to see this as a heterogeneous space, a site of complex social relations in which the operations of powers politics are manifest. In this way I also began to perceive the unproblematized nature of my previous conception of 'home', a conception of 'home' as an immutable, pre-given, and unproblematic geographical location--a kind of 'void' into which I, as theoretician, might just 'place' the critical objects of my inquiries. Foucault, I later had occasion to learn, was grappling with the same idea when he made the theoretical discovery that the space in which we live is not a 'homogeneous' and 'empty' space, but one "thoroughly imbued with quantities" (Foucault 1986, 23). Thus in his essay "Of Other Spaces", he writes:

> we do not live inside a void into which we can place individuals and things, or which we could color with diverse shades of light, we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another. (Foucault 1986, 23).

As this reference suggests, it has taken a Michel Foucault, and the raising of the problematic of 'other' spaces, to bring critical attention to something as fundamental as the problematic of the one in which we live'--the space which, in his words, "claws and knaws", which "draws us out of ourselves", and in which "the erosion of our lives, our time and our history" occurs. To contextualize further, it is perhaps thanks to Foucault's own outstanding use of spatial metaphors, what Fredric Jameson calls his "**cognitive mapping** of power", his "construction of spatial picture-models", and his "transfer of

conceptions of social power and its forms onto powerful spatial figures" (Stephanson 1988, 6-7), that space is now an analytic term and a theoretical category in itself. Thus it has become possible to assert even more confidently than did Foucault in this essay, that ours is indeed "the epoch of space" (Foucault 1986, 22).

However, today, to look at space is also to look at politics and powers (Soja 1989, 126), as the equivalence 'space/power/knowledge 'becomes increasingly recognized not only by Foucault (Foucault 1980a; 1980b; 1986), but also by others. We have only to consider, for example, Lefebvre's emphasis on the 'politics of space' (Lefebvre 1976; 1979), Soja's introduction of 'geographical materialism' (Soja 1989), de Certeau's analysis of 'practices of space' and 'spatial stories' (de Certeau 1984a, 117), Bourdieu's study of binary 'male and female spaces' in Kabylian society (Bourdieu 1977, 89), and others. As Soja puts it in Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory "spatial fragmentation as well as the appearance of spatial coherence and homogeneity are social products and often an integral part of the instrumentality of political power" (1989, 126).

As part of a study of the spatialization of power, Foucault also even envisages the possibility of 'heterotopology', not as a 'science'--"the term", he writes, "is too galvanized now"--but as a sort of 'systematic description that would take as its object "the study, analysis, description and 'reading'" of those everyday sites. These are places that, in a given society, have the curious property of being outside all places even though it is possible to indicate their location in physical reality (Foucault 1986, 24). Foucault calls these places 'heterotopias' to distinguish them from 'utopias', which are spaces which exist nowhere in reality. Thus, for example, he discusses the existence of such 'heterotopias', or everyday sites of the production of meaning, such as the garden, the

library, the sauna, brothels, colonies, ships.

In keeping with this unstoppable emphasis upon the problematics of the space of everyday life, recent years has seen the rise of a cluster of works, cultural studies in fact, that look at everyday sites of cultural production such as museums (Fisher 1989), shopping malls, (Morris 1988b), motels (Morris 1988a), and of course many others. However, amongst these sites of the everyday production and consumption of meaning, there is one universal to all cultures and common to all people, at the same time as it is particular to each. It is the one most "throroughly imbued with qualities" and most "thoroughly fantasmical as well" (Foucault 1986, 23). It is that space in which, if we are women, the erosion of the most part of our life and of our history occurs. It is the space of our most precious dreams and of our deepest passions (Foucault 1986, 23). It is the "spot of earth" which, in the hearth-hugging words of the perennial jingle, is most "blest" (Myers 1986, 4). A spot of earth "dearer and sweeter than all the rest", this is a 'spot' that has been celebrated, in these and many other words, as the site of a concept and a desire in which we all share--for, it is likely that there is not a single culture in the world that fails to constitute 'home' in mythic and utopian terms.

If we look up **home** in the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language we find that this is a term that slides easily from the concrete 'lived' spatial dimension of home to the abstract or figurative (ideological), or discursive one. We find a scale of possibilities ranging from 1. "a place where one lives; residence; habitation" and 2. "the physical structure or portion thereof as a house or apartment", to 3. "one's close family and one's self; a person's most personal relationships and possessions: **house and home**"; 4. "an environment or haven of shelter, of happiness and love"; 5. "any valued place, original habitation, or emotional attachment regarded as a refuge or a place

of origin"; and 6. "the place where one was born or spent his early childhood, as a town, state, or country" (Morris 1971, 629). What this definition leaves out, however, is almost more important than what it includes. This is a reference to the complex web of relations of domination and power or the relations of gender that have invested this site with meaning and been so crucial to this definition.

For it is important to keep in mind, as Foucault certainly does (1986, 23), that 'home' is but the name we give to that fantasmical yet real space in which our dreams and our nightmares unfold, that space which is neither an internal or phenomenological space of the type we encounter in Bachelard, for example, nor an entirely external space either. Thus we might begin with the supposition that the 'home' is a slippery and elusive term which means more than just a fixed place of residence. On the one hand, it is the quintessential "placeless place" that exists nowhere in reality, an invisible place outside all places. On the other it is the one that touches us all, the one in which we live our daily lives, in which--especially for those of us who are women, but increasingly for us all--'the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs' (Foucault 1986, 23). Yet of all the sites of academic investigation, this is the one that, as an object of the investigation and research of meaning production, remains the most neglected. The problem is compounded by the fact that today, this history is expanded into the theoretical, as 'home' becomes the suppressed term, the concealed space of a new emphasis upon gender, space, and the everyday and that space that underwrites all others. Consequently, it becomes doubly important to pry open this term, expose its ubiquitous history.

Indeed there are two methodological difficulties that present themselves at the outset. On the one hand, given the universality of this concept (both historically, culturally, and cross-culturally) and its cross-disciplinary references, the enormity of the

task is sufficient to discourage any further interest. On the other hand, to slice off but a segment begs the question of the meaning of 'home' and fails to produce the foundations for a systematic description. This study looks to establish a basis upon which to approach the problem of how the 'home' can be described, what meaning it has within a given society. In this respect, it does not work within disciplinary bounds--indeed it resists the comforts of a disciplinary 'home'. Thus I have allowed myself a free range over both historical and disciplinary bounds in an effort to pull together a disparate body of work which can, and does, provide a critical basis for proceeding in this description.

This is not to say that my study will not describe; only that, necessarily, this description is incomplete and, for this reason, preliminary. While each of the filaments that I hope to set forth can be further developed, in bringing them together here, I have sought the idea of a **topos**, or indeed **topoi**, of discourse. While I had conceived of this in terms of opening up for further research the field of a Foucaultian heterotopology of the 'home', this appeared almost too ambitious a task to reasonably entertain. Thus what I do hope to have done, is to have mapped out at least some of its critical domains. This could be construed as a heterotopology of the discourse on 'home', though I have by now come to shy away from the constitutive aspect of even such a less overwhelming gesture.

It is for this reason that I have chosen instead to look upon my object of study through the lens of the spatializing effects of discourse (Stephanson 1988, 6; Foucault 1980b, 69-70) and of the production of discourse. Looking thus upon 'home' as a discourse, what I have named "the discourse on 'home'", I have focussed my attention upon its emergence not in the discourse and the language of everyday speech, but in the language and discourse of academic texts, what I have named "the critical discourse on 'home'". In this way, I have chosen to look upon what I am looking upon (rather than

upon my looking upon it) as constitutive, although in the course of the thesis I will have occasion to reflect upon the nature of my own constitutive critical act.

I employ the idea of a 'critical discourse', not in any strict disciplinary sense, but rather as an umbrella term which serves to distinguish the discourses (definitely plural here) that I will be considering in terms of an analysis (mine) which does not reveal the universality of meaning, but seeks, rather, to neutralize and reflect what in "The Order of Discourse" Foucault calls "the action of imposed scarcity" (1981, 73). In this respect, I am borrowing from Foucault's study of the order of discourse in order to make incisions into the action of an 'imposed scarcity' where the ideological and mythological circulation of 'home' is concerned. While in most cases I am depending upon the preliminary research of others, it is putting these isolated segments together in the interest of a map that charts the **topoi** of the critical discourse of 'home', its rarefaction as well as reproduction, that constitutes the value of my project. For, in many cases valuable insights, in so far as they are not focussed upon the problematic of discourse or of 'home', have hitherto gone unnoticed and undiscovered.

It is thus in 'reading' these analyses of ofter differently constituted objects of study that a new sighting and the production of a new theoretical problematic (Althusser 1979, 25) can emerge. For this reason I look upon the series of essays collected here as a 'bricolage' and a 'collage' (of assorted notes) rather than a full-fledged systematic study. I think of Wittgenstein's preface to the Philosophical Investigations, in which he describes what he has done as a an "album" or "series of sketches", as the same points are made from different directions, so that "if you looked at them you could get a picture of the landscape" (Wittgenstein 1963, vii); or of Proust who is said to have declared: "Treat my book as a pair of glasses directed to the outside; if they don't suit you, find another pair"

(Deleuze 1977, 108); or of Gilles Deleuze who compares a theory to a 'box of tools' (Deleuze, 1977, 108). Thus it is not a theory about 'home' as a transcendental signifier/signified that I propose here. Rather I have hoped to gather 'tools' with which to look upon it and in so doing have compiled a series of sketches which give a picture of this domestic landscape.

Looking upon the 'home' as essentially a 'lived' space--Levebvre's **'espace vécu'** (Lefebvre 1979; cf. Soja 1989, 18), or de Certeau's 'practiced place' (de Certeau 1984, 117) which, concrete and abstract at the same time (cf. Soja 1989, 18), takes the form of a relation among sites--it becomes possible to approach a number of different problems theoretically. In addition looking upon it thus permits us to group together material developed in different domains, all of which individually contribute to our understanding of 'home' as a concept and a desire. For the 'home', along with other sites of cultural production, is at an intersection of theoretical convergences. There is 1) the growing contemporary emphasis upon spatial rather than temporal categories in theoretical practice; 2) the submerged history of space in Western experience; and 3) emerging theoretical perspectives upon the relation between abstract notions of place and the concrete reality of 'lived' space, gendered place and domestic space in feminist scholarship.

While it would indeed be equally possible to study 'home' from the perspective of time,[1] in focussing my attention upon the 'home' in relation to the problem of space I have sought instead to emphasize the topographical effectivity of discourse and the manner in which this effectivity interacts with the ideological effects of power. As Foucault points out:

> Metaphorising the transformations of discourse in a vocabulary of time necessarily leads to the utilization of the model of individual consciousness with its intrinsic temporality. Endeavoring on the other hand to decipher discourse through the use of spatial, strategic metaphors enables one to grasp precisely the points at which discourses are transformed in, through and on the basis of relations of power. (Foucault 1980b, 69-70)

In developing his idea of this new type of relation between lived space and ideal place that characterizes a 'heterotopia' as a relation among sites, Foucault enables us to work through changes in these relations across all three of these registers (historically and culturally), and also provides us with the tools with which to understand the built-in ambiguity of sites of cultural production like the 'home' on a number of levels and across a number of discursive fields. In this thesis, therefore, I have wanted to look upon various aspects of the discursive production of 'home' as a relation among sites. First, I have looked upon it in connection to discourses of space ('home' as the relation among sites in historical development of space); second, in connection to discourses of 'place' ('home' as the relation among sites of ideal place and lived space); third, in connection with the lived space of today's 'home' equipped with television (the relation among sites constitutive of TV's incursion into domestic space). As my principal data I will use material from historical, philosophical, and cultural studies discourses (the latter broadly defined to include feminism, postmodernism, as well as structuralism, post-structuralism, semiotics, psychoanalysis, marxism). Thus rather than a theory, what I bring together here is a set of loosely knit essays, or 'tableaux', that join the various provinces of the problematic of 'home'. In bringing these **topoi** together as part of a critical landscape that joins other landscapes and appears from different perspectives and from different points in history, it is always with a view to maintaining the 'home"s position within a relation among sites and a 'history of powers'.

The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and knaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space. In other words, we do not live in a kind of void....

Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces"

**Acknowledgements**

Fifteen years ago, this thesis could not have existed. Not only because I could not have written it, but also because neither the context nor the necessity for doing so were there. Thus this work represents the culmination of a personal as much as of an academic quest--it is the product of a moment in academic history which has fortuitously coincided with a moment in my own. For contributing to this coincidence I wish to thank the Ph.D. in Humanities Program of Interdisciplinary Studies in Society and Culture at Concordia University as well as the members of my Advisory Committee: Sister Prudence Allen, R. S. M., who opened up the doors to an exploratory field, Dr. F. E. Shlosser who ventured through its 'no man's land' beside me, and Dr. Martin Allor who gave it the geography of a female face. Thanks also to my friend Philip Gelinas, whose invaluable instruction in the arts of war has kept at bay the demons, real and imagined, lurking in the 'espaces blancs' of this endeavor. For many a useful editorial suggestion I thank John Antonopoulos as I thank Roy Keys for creating the document's typographical elegance and style.

This work is dedicated to my beloved parents--to my mother Mary Antonopoulos and to my father Alexander George Antonopoulos.

# Contents

## Notes

[1] There are as yet no studies of domestic time as critical category, although this it seems to me would constitute a valuable course of inquiry in itself. One attempt to bring time into relation with the spatializing effects of discourse, in this case cinematic discourse, can be found in Constance Penley's essay "Time Travel, Primal Scene, and the Critical Dystopia (on The Terminator and La Jet e)"; see her collection of essays The Future of An Illusion: Film, Feminism, and Psychoanalysis (1989).

## Introduction

> Indeed, here we touch upon a converse whose images we still have to explore: all really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home.
>
> Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space

### Introduction: sighting the 'home'

'Sighting' new objects of knowledge does not, according to Louis Althusser, take place as a consequence of the immediate vision of a pre-existent entity (Althusser 1979, 25; 1969, 33; cf. Bourdieu 1988). Rather, it takes place as a consequence of a shift in the theoretical horizon within which the knowledge of that object is produced--as a consequence, that is, of what he also calls an epistemological 'rupture'. Thomas Kuhn calls such an event a 'revolution' involving paradigm shifts (Kuhn 1970). Indeed the occurrence of such 'ruptures', or 'revolutions', has been described as today's 'crisis' in legitimation (Habermas 1973)--a crisis accompanied by the 'death' of the Grand narratives, or **grand récits** (Lyotard 1984), and the insurrection of 'subjugated' forms of knowledge (Foucault 1980c, 81 ff.).[1]

With the advent of inter- and cross-disciplinary 'isms'--feminism, post-structuralism, postmodernism--it is possible to identify an epistemological transformation, if not a rupture, or revolution, in which has emerged a new theoretical paradigm in the discursive rhetoric and theoretical production of academic texts. Along with the questioning of the 'Grand narratives' there has appeared a move, in the social sciences and humanities, to put into discursive circulation terms that have been absent

from theoretical production. In this discursive shift, there has been an explosion of rhetoric around terms such as 'Woman', 'the feminine', 'the bodily', the 'spatial', the 'local', which begin to stand in for those of Man, Truth, the Subject, History, Meaning.[2]

Along the same lines, the last few decades have seen a discursive explosion in which the 'home' is put into discursive circulation. No longer positioned as a locus outside culture, knowledge, power, and politics, it becomes its principle ground. In the rhetoric of the social science academic discourse it is now **homo domesticus** that emerges as the invisible subject. Displacing **homo sapiens**, this unspoken term that hovers silently over the Academy, invests the hearth and home with a new social-scientific meaning.

## 1. The Emergence of 'Home' as Site of Discursivity

Indeed, the proliferation of discourses around, on, and within the site of the 'home' is evidenced in a growing number of fields and traditional disciplines. Philosophy and History are particularly outstanding in this regard although new fields like Cultural Studies also draw upon its premisses.

### 'Home' as epistemological site of philosophical knowledge

In Philosophy, for example, what might be termed the 'feminization' of philosophy (Spivak 1983, 173 ff.) has seen a break with the past in a number of ways. Jürgen Habermas (1973), Richard Rorty (1976), and Gilles Deleuze (1977) all describe the breakdown of authority and the loss of legitimation that redirect emphasis upon the local, the plural and the particular nature of knowledge. Jean-Joseph Goux (1984) sees this breakdown as a crisis in representation that is emblematic of the destruction of the Phallic term. In this 'feminization', the 'home' appears as a key signifier of crisis and

change. Thus contemporary post-metaphysical thinker Jacques Derrida, for example, drawing his inspiration from Martin Heidegger, posits the dwelling/'home' ('**foyer**') as post-structuralist metaphor for language (Derrida 1981, 40, 100, n. 6; 1982b, 253 ff.; cf. Heidegger 1977, 233). In Existential philosophy the loss of 'home', experienced as metaphysical homelessness (Berger et al. 1983; Romanyshyn and Whalen 1987; Harper 1965), sets up the 'home' as metaphysical symbol of the modern condition and acts as a precursor to the postmodernist (Grossberg's) 'crisis in affect'. However, it is postmodernism that is still perhaps the most extensive 'philosophical' meditation to date on 'home' as site of crisis and change. Thus 'prophets' of postmodernism hail the 'home' as key site for the creation of a new ethical, ontological, and epistemological ensemble--one in which public/private, personal/political, outside/inside dichotomies fall away, imploding old values, structures and their conceptual frameworks and sometimes (not unintentionally) blurring theoretico-philosophical with historico-empirical problematics. It is noteworthy here that the proclaimed dissolution of these boundaries takes its cue from the imagery of communication technology's investment of the site of the 'home'. Jean Baudrillard (1983), for instance, constructs 'home' as a satellite-world and a micro-cosmic universe televisually turned macro. Lawrence Grossberg posits an affective mobility of 'home' as the subjective space and the 'nomadic' economy of today's electronically equipped self (Grossberg 1987; 1988).

**'Home' as site of historical knowledge**

In History, as well, we are seeing changes that subtend the emergence of 'home' as a key site for the development of both new research practices and new research objects. For while the standard notion of history, having developed in accordance with a binary representation of 'public' and 'private', legitimates historical objects of inquiry that

appear within a succession of public events, this binarism fades in the light of today's historical refiguration of private life as object of historical knowledge and inquiry. Beginning with a heightened awareness of 'popular' history, today's historical agenda sees the proliferation of histories of private life, analyses of cultures of domesticity along with women's histories, histories of childhood, of the family, and of sexuality.

Each year in the past decade has seen the publication of more histories of the family than can be usefully absorbed. Indeed the list has become too long to be included here. However histories that raise the 'family' as a repository of social meaning and a privileged 'place' of historical change are principally Philippe Ariès' classic Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life (1962), along with his posthumous three volume work co-edited with Paul Veyne, A History of Private Life (1987); two other general histories are Jean-Louis Flandrin's Families in Former Times: Kinship, Household and Sexuality (1979) and Edward Shorter The Making of the Modern Family (1975); histories dealing with the post-industrial changes in the family are Eli Zaretsky's Capitalism, the Family, and Personal Life (1986) and Jacques Donzelot The Policing of Families (1979); in a different vein Michel Foucault's The History of Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction (1979). To this list one might add the proliferation of feminist volumes which range from anthropological (Mead 1968), Marxist (Firestone 1971; Delphy 1984, 1988) and materialist (Hartsock 1983), psychoanalytic (Mitchell 1974; Chodorow 1978; Dinnerstein 1976), and popular (Douglas 1988; Friedan 1963, 1981; Barrett 1980, 1982) accounts of family life to debates about sexual equality and the new 'familialism' (Lasch 1975; Sennett 1977; Elshtain 1981; Eisenstein 1984).

Within these, the 'home' emerges as both object of historical inquiry and site of historical change as accounts herald the "fall" of public man (Sennett 1977) and the emergence of family life as a new "haven" in the post-industrial world (Lash 1977).

Metonymically acting as the vessel for siting 'personal life', 'the family', 'sexuality', 'the child', 'woman', '(woman's) work', '(man's) leisure', 'consumer technology', 'communications technology', and 'television technology', it is the 'home' that silently forms the substratum of these historical investigations.

As object of historical inquiry, 'home' appears as the invention of a 'Bourgeois Age' and a post-industrial capitalism (Davidoff et al. 1976, Lukacs 1970; Rybczynski 1986). In his essay "The Bourgeois Interior" (1970), John Lukacs discusses the rise of 'home' in connection with the emergence of the bourgeois idea of 'comfort' which he links to ideas of 'domesticity' and 'privacy'. A similar argument is furnished by Witold Rybczynszki's Home: A Short History of an Idea (1986). Rybczynski goes further to contextualize the history of the 'home' with respect to histories of domestic architecture from the Middle Ages to the present, locating the rise of our idea of 'home' in the emergence of a post-industrial domestic technology of 'comfort'. A historical account that explores changes in the mythologies and ideologies of 'home' is the essay by Leonore Davidoff, Jean l'Esperance, and Howard Newby "Landscape with figures: home and community in English society" (1976).

We find interesting historical counter-points to these studies of 'home' in discussions of the rise of modern communications technology. Raymond Williams, for example, addresses the status of 'home' as the site of a social and historical complex of a new and different kind. In Television: Technology and Cultural Form (1975), a study of television that breaks ground by invoking the historical significance of television technology as social force and organizing cultural principle, Williams directly addresses the refiguration of 'home' in the electronic age. According to Williams, modern communications technology, with its capacity for both centralized transmission and privatized reception, creates the historical emergence of what he calls today's mobilely-

'privatized home' (Williams 1975, 27). Linking it with post-war suburbanization and its utopian space-merging architectural strategies, Lynn Spigel discusses this emergence in the context of the incursion of domestic television technology in the late 1950s (Spigel 1988; Spigel forthcoming; Williams 1[illegible]). The 'home' as key site for the development of cultural and social transformations also finds expression in dystopic analyses such as that of Joshua Meyrowitz, for example, whose book No Sense of Place (1985) outlines the negative impact of electronic media on social behavior.

**'Home' as ethnographic site of cultural studies research**

In addition to Philosophy and History, Cultural Studies, which grounds a large part of its enterprise on the study of 'lived' cultural experience, assumes the 'home' as key ethnographic site for the study of cultural production. With the installation of a public communications technology in the private confines of the domestic interior, the 'home' emerges in recent studies of cultural meanings and cultural practices as the site at which culture is produced and reproduced. In the body of work that focusses on the decoding practices that arise from reading the texts of day-time television, studies interpret 'the home' as a transparent site of practices of reading and decoding that are particular to women (Douglas 1988; Radway 1984; Modleski 1982; Modleski 1983; Mulvey 1986; Gledhill 1987). In addition, studies of the consumption of popular domestic literature such as Ann Douglas The Feminization of American Culture (1988) and Janice Radway's Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature (1984) that rely on the investigation of women's domestic or 'home'-based consumption practices have given rise to a critical body of literature that covers the consumption (male and female) of an expanded range of domestic cultural texts, texts including those of television, video, popular music, fashion, cooking, and, of course, many others. Amongst the most

prominent in the area of television studies is Tania Modleski's "The rythms of reception: daytime television and women's work" (1983, 67-75). Other studies in which the 'home' emerges as key site for the identification and elaboration of critical methods in the analysis of domestic genres are most notably Laura Mulvey's "Melodrama in and out of the home" (1986) and the anthology edited by Christine Gledhill Home Is Where The Heart Is: Studies in Melodrama and the Woman's Film (1987).

While these two instances confine their object of inquiry to the 'home' as a female-dominated site of cultural production and consumption, more recent Cultural Studies research has produced studies that investigate the practices of consumption in line with models of masculine of domestic power and domination. Investigating the 'colonization' of domestic space by the incursion of television's leisure and entertainment technology, these studies represent the 'home' as the new seat of cultural power--the site of woman's expropriation from the province of the domestic as well as her confinement to it. In these studies, emphasis on the new domestic incursion of males reverses assumptions about 'home' as an inherently 'feminine' preserve (Morley 1986; Walkerdine 1986; Gray 1987).

In a more a theoretical vein, ethnographic research projects within Cultural Studies have developed paradigms for the analysis of reading and decoding practices in which the 'home' becomes metonymically charged with the critical interest of theories about the responses of audiences to cultural texts (Radway 1984; Modleski 1983; Brunsdon 1983, Allor 1988, 1989; Hall 1980a). In feminist Cultural Studies, the 'home' contextualizes theories about the ideological production of gender and gendered subjectivities (Kuhn 1978; Barrett 1980; Coward and Ellis 1977).

## 2. Problematic: the unitary status of 'home'

In general, as is the case with all such emergences, there are important questions to be asked pertaining to the appropriation of sites by discursive formations, questions that address the 'lived' experience of those sites as well as their status as unitary objects of knowledge. As Joan Kelly argues "woman's 'place' is not a separate sphere or domain of existence but a position within social existence generally" (Kelly 1984, 57; cf. de Lauretis 1987, 9). Questions of the latter type involve a) questions raised about the unitary status of 'home' as discursive site of academic knowledge and inquiry; and b) questions raised about the unitary status of 'home' as site of knowledge and its relation to non-discursive site of lived experience of women.

Questions of the former type are particularly pertinent to women both as subjects of an ideological positioning that takes 'home' as its principal point of departure and as subjects of a lived domestic experience. To use Meaghan Morris' phraseology, "isn't there something really 'off' about mobilizing the weapons of an elite **un**popular theoretical discourse against a major element in the lived culture of 'ordinary women'?" (Morris 1988b, 197). In view of the 'gap' between myself as a feminist intellectual and my object of study it might be objected that the academic status of my own study of 'home' makes it subject to some of the same criticisms. My response to this is that my study in no way seeks to position woman in relation to the 'home', but rather to describe woman as the target of this positioning in the history of that discourse. Indeed, how woman 'evades' such positioning, or how 'the target moves', could form a companion study that would take the history of woman's resistance to the cultural production of 'place' and its imposed constraints as its own object of inquiry. Thus, these sets of questions (that I have outlined above) are ones that need to be polemically and theoretically separated, in order that the knot of issues which attain women be untied.

In the case of the 'home', whose discursive mobility cuts across disciplinary bounds and structures, it becomes possible to see these questions in two ways. On the one hand, there is the emergence of 'home' as a bounded, spatial and historical **object** of historical and ethnographic knowledge and inquiry and, on the other, there is 'home' as a principally theoretical and rhetorical **site**. Thus I see the questions that we (as women) might ask of this discursive economy of the 'home' in current textual and research practices as falling into two categories. On the one hand, there are questions addressed to 'home' as the site of lived experience, the site of non-discursive practices and the target of institutional practices--'silent' procedures that have no discourse. These questions pertain to the status of 'home' as non-discursive site of lived experience for women. On the other hand, there are questions raised about the status of 'home' as discursive site in academic knowledge and inquiry. These are questions that address 'home' in its emergence as a principally theoretical and rhetorical site and engage in an inquiry about its status as a bounded, spatial and historical site and a container for epistemological objects such as 'women', 'children', 'the family', 'domestic television', etc.

Here, we are questioning the status of 'home' in its presence as a theoretical site. The questions raised pertain to the interrogation of a discursive current that perhaps works to essentialize, homogenize, and/or inflate the inferior term of bi-polar oppositions, thereby only re-enstating the operation of a hegemonic relation in the representations of 'home' as a stable, fixed, immutable and homogeneous space. In place of binary spaces, we are still left with 'home' as an immutable space.

**'Home' as a discursive site**

As women, we may indeed question the grandiloquence of a discourse that purports to break away from classical paradigms. Why, for instance, at the end of the

twentieth century has 'home' become such a dominant site of discursivity? Why has it suddenly emerged as a metaphor for language and theory? As with the other discursive philosophical and historical representations of subjugated terms, we are left to wonder what indeed is the status of this new incitement to discourse, study and theory.

Thus, for instance, we might ask: By what spiral have we come to affirm this site as outside of epistemological and theoretical (and cultural) production? Equally, though on a different register, by what spiral has the idea of "woman's place" become articulated with practices of domestic space? This is a question that addresses the unitary status of the 'home' as an object of inquiry and the production of that status on the basis of a unitary representation of "woman's place". On the other hand, we need to ask whether this incitement to discourse represents a new valorization of submerged knowledges and identities, a reterritorialization of boundaries, or whether this is only one more instance of the deterritorialization of women--another instance of our expropriation from power and knowledge, as subjects of study and of experience.

With the discursive refiguration of 'home' as site of epistemological and theoretical production we are accustomed to think of a 'break' or 'rupture' that interpellates certain sites as absent from the production and reproduction of knowledge. Thus the 'privatization thesis',[3] for instance, interpellating "woman's place" as structured absence, would have the site of the 'home'--as well as the 'private', the 'bodily', and 'women's experience' all function as excluded terms and subaltern segments in the proliferation of knowledge. However, as a counter to this hypothesis, it is Michel Foucault who, in three of his volumes of The History of Sexuality (Foucault 1978, 1985, 1986), reverses this principle to show how, in so far as the body and sexuality are concerned (ungendered sexuality at any rate), these have constituted objects of knowledge, sites of knowledge production, and a technology of power since the time of

Classical Antiquity.

In her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988), Spivak, for example, describes the type of epistemic deterritorialization and violence that has been perpetrated against third World women in the name of their own interests. For may it not be possible that under the banner of a proclaimed dissolution of old boundaries new ones are being erected; the death of the Grand signifier, appearing equally as the Grand displacement of one signifier (or, chain of signifiers) by another? In such a case is it not calling for even greater critical vigilance than is to be supposed (Spivak 1983; Jardine 1985).[4]

**'Home' as site of lived experience**

Together, these considerations all lead us to question some of the common-place notions of 'home' as a pre-given, unitary and bounded spatial term. In collapsing discursive and non-discursive sites (space and place) these notions naturalize ideological positioning and erase the problematic of the cultural production of 'home' as "woman's place". Addressing these common-place notions and the assumptions that prevail *within* them is particularly important for feminism, both as part of a general inquiry that interrogates the putting into discourse of all terms pertaining to Woman, and as part of inquiries addressing themselves to particular aspects of women's lives. It is even more important in the light of current debates within feminism, ones that are seeing the 'home' become a site of struggle and interpretation for, on the one hand, theorists who see 'home' as the seat of feminine power and identity and, on the other, those who see it as the seat of the reverse--that is, as the seat of women's powerlessness and oppression. While it is true that the New Right's appropriation of the former stance has done much to discredit its value for a feminist critical theory of culture and power, there are questions that remain which cannot be tacked onto political factions (cf. Martin and Mohanty 1986,

191-212), but cut into the substrata of cultural knowledge and demand to be addressed as theoretical questions in themselves.

Thus, we might ask how the 'home' has been constituted as object and as site within the concealed, neglected aspects of erudite knowledge; how it has been constructed from the earliest written records of Western civilization; as well as how this construction, or fictive, unity has been displaced, reversed, invested, involuted, etc. throughout the history of erudite, academic discourse, and why; how its production within theoretical forms of knowledge intersects with lived, historical experience? Through this type of inquiry into the **locus classicus** of woman's expression, as well as of her repression and oppression, we could (as I would hope to) take better stock of gender and the discursive production of sexual identity and look at the epistemological production of 'place'--i.e. the discursive construction of a unified, homogeneous domestic space within the epistemology of place--as part of a Western discourse on gendered place that intercalates with the non-discursive practices of domestic space. Indeed, such a project is in general conformity with a theory of power that locates its operations, procedures, and technologies within quotidian sites, in a politics of the everyday and in questions of desire and gender.

These considerations raise to visibility the relation between institutional practices of domestic space and the cultural production of gendered place that make up the idea of a unitary status of 'home'. Furthermore, they bring to attention the need for an analysis that can occupy rather than bridge or close the gap between women's experience of 'home' as a domestic space and the dominant idea of 'home' as homogeneous place. For where 'home' is concerned, this is in itself a knowledge that, while it may have existed since the construction of the first family shelter, has not been brought to visibility as such. In particular, it has not been adequately or critically distinguished from its

metonymic and heteronymic counterpart of notions of identity in place, as for instance of woman's identity in place.

## 3. Methodology: domestic space, gendered place and the methodological assumptions of a feminist historiography of the discourse on 'home'

In its insistent focus upon the analysis of everyday life, its attention to sites involving practices regularly carried out by women, (sites of domestic and familial labor, sites of leisure, shopping centers and sites of quotidian consumption), feminist theory has studied and developed tools for the critical analysis of 'myths of identity' and rhetoric of 'place' (Morris 1988a; 1988b). At the same time, its insistence upon the positioning of women as objects of knowledges and as targets for manoeuvres, has brought about a refusal to take what we see as pre-given. In polemically maintaining a "paranoid assessment" of its objects that insists upon seeing the ambivalences of knowledge, it allows for the critical space or dimension that dislocates the relation between powers that create meaning and the lived experience of it. In the words of Teresa de Lauretis, feminism is the "ongoing effort to create new spaces of discourse, to rewrite cultural narratives, and to define the terms of another perspective--a view from 'elsewhere'". In its radical critique of hegemonic discourses on gender it helps create "spaces in the margins of hegemonic discourses, social spaces carved in the interstices of institutions and in the chinks and cracks of the power-knowledge apparati." Again, to use de Lauretis' description "[i]t is a movement between the (represented) discursive space of the positions made available by hegemonic discourses and the space-off, the elsewhere, of those discourses: those other spaces both discursive and social that exist, since feminist practices have (re)constructed them, in the margins (or "between the lines," or "against the grain") of hegemonic discourses and in the interstices of institutions, in counter-

practices and new forms of community" (de Lauretis 1987, 25-26).

**The need for a feminist analysis and the theoretical interest of 'place'**

It is in this respect that a feminist perspective or analysis is essential as part of any study that takes 'home' as its object of inquiry. It alone makes sense of a discursive construction that, by investing a site with meaning, articulates with non-discursive practices to produce a site of social and epistemological conflict. It allows for the possibility of a study of the discourse on 'home' as a "hallucinatory spatial representation" that maintains, and is maintained by, the cultural and epistemological production of 'place' and permits the analysis of how this representation produces and maintains a unique sense of 'place'. Where women are concerned, this is a 'place' that constitutes both the site of an inclusion as well as exclusion from power, knowledge, and culture. Above all, it allows us, in the words of Meaghan Morris, to make relations between "competing practices of space that by investing sites with meaning make them the site of social conflict and on the other, women's discourses of memory and local history" (Morris 1988b, 206). For, the theoretical interest of the idea of 'place' extends beyond the disruptive force it brings to bear upon gender. It provides the foundations for dismantling, dissolving, and dislocating conventional associations of 'space' and 'place' and for discovering the technologies that maintain them. It enables us to strip discursive represention of space of their implicit assumptions of spatial unity, whether these assumptions be theoretically or experientially based.

**Domestic space and gendered place**

However much the critical problems posed by feminism allow us to theoretically engage in the analysis of myths of identity and the rhetoric of place, this engagement has

principally been with the management of contemporary sites, such as shopping centers (Morris 1988b), motels (Morris 1988a) or even suburban living arrangements and the like. Consequently, the methodologies it yields forth are necessarily not sufficient for an analysis of myths of identity that traverse the historical grain of a concept such as 'home'. For, what is above all required in this case, is a study of how these myths have been constructed **over time**. To do this we need to trace or account for mobile systems of relationship, those which provide conditions of possibility for the formation of certain orders and forms of knowledge/discourse of such objects--what Foucault has called the uncovering of the 'historical a priori'. This is not to supplant either conventional history. Nor is it to do what can be termed 'historical sociology' and ethnology. Rather, it is to make available to historical analysis a whole additional range of objects and relations. Those subjugated, neglected and illegitimate forms of knowledge that have been disqualified by 'globalizing' discourses and the claims of a unitary body or theory that has hitherto constituted the discourses of science, history and their objects (Foucault 1988c, 82-83).

While, on the one hand, 'home' becomes a historical object all the more because it is a constituted discursively, it does not, on the other, immediately present itself as the object of global theoretical productions. Rather, as a 'subjugated form of knowledge', it is both a) buried and disguised within a body of 'systematising theory', and b) apparent as 'naive' knowledge--popular, local, regional, and practical knowledge that has been disqualified from the ranks of cognition or scientificity, such as for example the knowledge or practices of domestic space. As I have already mentioned, the knowledge of space is one that has been devalued by the prominence that the knowledge of time has played in philosophy. This is certainly evidenced by the works of Kant, Hegel, Bergson and Heidegger, and may be evidence of the longstanding Western enchantment with the

model of individual consciousness with its intrinsic temporality that has led to the association of 'space' with the analytical, the fixed, the inert (Foucault 1980b, 69-70; 1980a, 149-50). Thus, to challenge, disrupt, dissolve the unitary notion of 'home' that is concealed by the very discourses that disqualify it is also to describe the series of conceptual and practical, as well as spatial operations that conceal the multifold operations of power and knowledge. For, it is the 'home' constituted as both 1) the object of certain forms of knowledge and cultural production in what I call a regime of gendered 'place' and 2) the target of institutional practices of domestic space that is at issue here.

This brings the historiographical task and its theoretical enterprise very close to what Foucault has called 'genealogy' when he writes: "Let us give the term genealogy to the union of erudite knowledge and local memory which allows us to establish a historic knowledge of struggle and to make use of this knowledge tactically today" (Foucault 1980c, 83). It requires an "ascending analysis of power", a meticulous analysis of starting from "its infinitesimal mechanisms, which each have their own history, their own trajectory, their own techniques and tactics, and then see how these mechanisms of power have been--and continue to be--invested, colonised, utilised, involuted, transformed, displaced, extended, etc., by ever more general mechanisms and by forms of global domination" (Foucault 1980c, 99).

As a feminist analysis, and a feminist historiography, my project is therefore to disrupt the imaginary unity of the critical discourse on 'home' by tracing its genealogy, beginning with the incitements, the sources, the procedures and techniques which have made this discourse possible. Starting from the earliest written records in premodern times it seeks to follow the mechanisms which have given rise to a unitary discourse on 'home' and have organized around it a mixed regime of gender, place and power. Thus I

will look at the construction of 'home' as mythological and idealized place via the interlacing of philosophical discourses of gendered (identity in) place with the historical and local practices of domestic space. I will study changes in the academic and philosophical discourses of gendered (woman's) 'place' in their interconnectedness with changes in the local practices of domestic space. In this way, I can describe the management of change in the 'home' as site of cultural and epistemological production, as well as make relations between this and today's competing discursive and non-discursive practices of space in the experience of women.

Given the enormity of the philosophical, mythico-religious, and historical, material on the 'home' (cf. its attendant terms--the family, kinship, woman, property) that abounds in the history of writing, as well as the hitherto undifferentiated status of its figuration as practiced space and/or identity in place, this is a project of immense proportions. I can only look to achieve a small segment of this task without compromising its historical density.

Thus I will try in separate studies to locate some of the important strategies concerning the 'home' (as "woman's place") by setting down its principal 'points of emergence', particularly as they converge, intersect around certain key discursive formations which act as 'anchorage point' for change in the discourse on 'home' as "woman's place". These are the discourses of a) History, b) Philosophy and Cultural Studies, c) feminism and postmodernism. In so doing, I have chosen to be guided by a series of methodological assumptions which express the nature of the selective process, as well as the pertinence of my selections to the study at hand.

**Methodological assumptions**

These assumptions are twofold and pertain 1) to the nature of the historiographical operation and 2) to the distinction between 'space' and 'place'. I will briefly outline what these are and bring them into relation with the methodological assumptions of other (related) studies.

a) On the nature of the 'historiographical operation'. This is an operation which in the nature of a 'surgical' operation makes a selection from an ensemble of procedures. In the words of Michel de Certeau (speaking about Foucault's methodology) this is an operation which 'extracts' from 'an immense body of historical material' the "procedures which increasingly multiply with it and discerns in them at first scattered indexes of an **apparatus** whose elements become better defined, combine with each other, and reproduce themselves little by little throughout the strata of society" (de Certeau 1984a, 47). Thus it not only becomes methodologically possible to describe the "common matrix" (de Certeau 1984a, 47) viz. a technology of power that gives rise to the articulation of gendered place with domestic space (I will shortly describe at greater length what are the implications of the idea of a 'technology of power' in relation to a critical discourse on 'home'), it also enables us to dislocate the relation between the poles that create it--the ideological positioning of women on the one hand and the naturalized fixing of the domestic setting on the other. Thus guided by the Foucaultian insight that "the purpose of history, guided by genealogy, is not to discover the roots of our identity but to commit itself to its dissipation" (Foucault 1977, 162), it becomes possible to dissolve their imaginary unity.

b) On the distinction between 'space' and 'place'. In the context of this 'feminist' push for a theoretical disarticulation and a dislocation of the naturalized equivalence between the discursive and practical, non-discursive dimensions of the site of the home, (notions of 'space' and 'place') I want to introduce a theoretical distinction between 'space' and 'place' that has been proposed by Michel de Certeau in his essay "Spatial Stories" (1984a), found in The Practice of Everyday Life (1984). His analysis is one which to date serves as the most complete guide to describing the articulation of space and place that characterize the common-sense notion of 'home'.

Using the fundamental Saussurean distinction between oral and written signifying practices, de Certeau distinguishes between space and place as follows: a "place" he writes, "is the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence." It thus 1) excludes the possibility of two things being in the same location (**place**), and 2) the law of the "proper" rules. That is, "the elements taken into consideration are **beside** one another, each situated in its own "proper" and distinct location, a location it defines". A "place" is thus not only "an indication of stability", but "an instantaneous configuration of positions". By contrast, a **space** exists when one "takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables". It is composed of "intersections of mobile elements". It occurs as the "effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities". In relation to "place", he writes, "space" is like a word when it is spoken; that is, "when it is caught in the ambiguity of an actualization, transformed into a term dependent upon many different conventions, situated as the act of a present (or of a time), and modified by the transformations caused by successive contexts." In contrast to "place", it has thus "none of the univocity or stability of a 'proper'" (de Certeau 1984a, 117). To make the

distinction even more pronounced, de Certeau coins the expression "practiced place" and proceeds to suggest the applicability of a "written" text, or "system of signs", to the idea of place. He concludes his remarks with the observation that the opposition between "place" and "space" refers to two sorts of determinations: "the first a determination through objects that are ultimately reduced to the **being-there** of something dead, the law of a 'place'...; the second, a determination through '**operations**' which, when they are attributed to a stone, tree, or human being, specify 'spaces' by the actions of historical **subjects**" (de Certeau 1984a, 118). For a movement, according to de Certeau, "always seems to condition the production of a space and to associate it with a history" (de Certeau 1984a, 118). In marking off the grounds for a theoretical disjunction between these two ideas, de Certeau has carved out the tools for a feminist disarticulation of the myths of a gendered identity in place that have hitherto so successfully served to naturalize the Western idea of 'home' and to construct its imaginary unity.

At this point, I would like to make a very brief reference to the body of literature that has attempted to give substance to the concept of space. While by no means wishing to diminish the philosophical importance of writings that address this concept in the history of philosophy, I would say that they are less pertinent here to the degree that 'space' has always been defined in relation to 'time', rather than to 'place'. Moreover, in relation to the former, it has consistently been 'time' that has been prioritized to the detriment of the conceptual and historical, political and epistemological density of 'space' itself. This prioritization could well be linked with the exclusion of other terms often associated with the 'materiality' of 'space', such as 'Woman', the 'body', the 'everyday' and others, all of which are mobilely present within the discursive figuration of 'home' and its conventional status as 'woman's place'. For this reason what is required above all is an analysis that can disentangle the knot and pry open the convergences that have

concentrated around the term 'home'. Indeed, one might even argue that notions of 'space' and 'place' have been collapsed and that failure to distinguish polemically and theoretically between these two terms has essentially erased the operations of power and gender in the construction of 'home' and has taken for granted precisely those myths of identity that a feminist perspective is politically committed to lay bare.

There is a sense in which the types of arguments in favor of making the distinction between Euclidean and post-Euclidean representations of space--as, for instance, those produced by F. M. Cornford's "The Invention of Space" (1936), Einstein's "Forward" to Max Jammer's Concepts of Space: The History of Concepts of Space in Physics (1969), and later taken up in a rather different context by Marshall McLuhan's discussion of homogenous and acoustic space in Laws of Media: The New Science (1988)--correspond to this distinction between 'space' and 'place'. However, insofar as 'place' remains critically untheorized in these accounts, they do not offer up conceptual tools with which to examine relations of space and place in a theoretical frame. This is not the case with the notion of a 'practiced space' that I propose to use here.

The notion of a 'practiced space' which derives mainly from the 'historiographical operation' and its selection of 'procedures' is a broad category that brings within its scope two other assumptions. These are 1) the decisive role of 'technological procedures' in the organization of society as 'effects of power' and their interplay with ideology; and 2) the existence of a 'silent' technology of power that operates in the obscure or 'private' stratum of society. Thus it becomes possible to treat, as a historical object, this 'zone' in which technological procedures (and 'infinitesimal procedures' not privileged by "effective" history), have specific "effects" of power. It also becomes possible, through this notion of a 'practiced space' to express the intercalation of practices of domestic with ideologies of

gendered place and to look at the conflictual tendencies that invest a site such as the 'home' with meaning.

**Domestic space, gendered place and the historiographical study of the intercalation of practices of domestic space with the discourse of gendered place**

It has been suggested that in Medieval France the 'family' and the 'home' were used interchangeably. For instance Jean-Louis Flandrin's study Families in Former Times (1979, 4,) suggests that kinship and co-residence were, in seventeenth and eighteenth century France, co-extensive. While the relationship between kinship and property has been variously examined, it crosses historical with anthropological classifications and yields a very vast field of study. The literature on the history of the family that is becoming available, while pertinent as a historical setting for my study, will not be used as principal data base. There is little indication that it is sufficient to the theoretical task of distinguishing between notions of 'space' and 'place'. However, in the course of my exposition, I will have recourse to an argument that links the cultural production of 'place' with with the practice of domestic 'space' via technological procedures that date back to Classical Antiquity. While this link can be pursued throughout the evolution of Western history--through the history of Western domestic architecture, as well as through the history of the Western family--it is not my intention in the present to outline that evolution except by virtue of extracting its principle points of emergence as a history of power and a technology of power.

In the following, therefore, I propose to perform a 'systematic dissociation of identity' and to reveal the 'heterogeneous systems' which are masked by the discourse on 'home' by looking at the various points of emergence of that discourse. Accordingly, I shall study the western discourse on 'home' as it emerges within a) discourses of

historical writing b) philosophical discourse of 'place' and, c) the discourses of feminism and postmodernism. Loosely knit around discussions of two technological systems, the religious technology of the sacred family hearth in Antiquity and that of the leisure technology of the television set in late (twentieth-century) post-industrial capitalism, my discussion of each these is bridged by a discussion of the philosophical and erudite discourses of 'place' which constitute the theoretical discourse of 'home' as woman's 'place', as these evolve from Classical Antiquity to the present.

I would like to further differentiate at this point my use of the term "technology" by way of two theoretical and discursive axes. In the first place, the idea of 'technology' borrows from Foucault's notion of technology of power that applies a physical science model of 'technology' to the human sphere. I refer, for example, to Gordon's discussion of the 'quasi-orthodoxies' regarding natural science, human science, and technology in respect to Foucault's application of the concept of a technology of power (Gordon 1980, 238 ff.). Here, aspects of the 'vexed question' of the epistemological differences between a natural and a human science are raised in the context of a 'multiple system of taboos'. While the notion of a 'technology' and its status in the relation between a mechanistic and a humanistic conception of the universe can be traced back the distinction between **techne** and **physis** in Aristotle's essay 'Mechanical Problems' (1980), I shall confine my understanding of 'technology' to the instance of Foucault's politicization of the term which forms an innovative 'break' with previous polarizations. While Foucault applies the idea of a human 'technology' to sexuality ('technology of sex', modified by Lauretis to 'technology of gender'), and to the self ('technology of the self'), I am using the term 'technology' in the broad Foucaultian sense of an apparatus of power (technology of power) because it very adequately bridges the gap between types of domination, as for instance between a cultural object, or a cultural medium or representation) all the while

maintaining its structural play of dominations between users, or practitioners, and representations (cf. cultural object-medium). For a discussion of his notion of a 'technology of power', see, for example his "Two Lectures" (1980c, 98 ff.).

In the second place, I would like to differentiate my use from that found in the study by Ruth Schwartz Cowan More Work For Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from Open Hearth to the Microwave (1983), that takes a similar interest in technology and its history as the linchpin of the western discourse on 'home' as "woman's place". For her study differs from mine in two respects. First, she locates the doctrine of separate spheres and the articulation of space and place that occurs at the site of the 'home' within the nineteenth century. Second, like other similar studies, her account does not extend into the pre-industrial period of Classical Antiquity (18 ff.). I believe that this is due to the limited and restricted sense in which she uses the idea of technology, one that does not theorize the political operations of power in a manner as to include those of a religious apparatus such as, for example, the sacred hearth. In this way, her study (along with many others) imposes its own barriers upon the task of going to the root of the history of the discourse on 'home' and to the presence of that discourse in the elaborate technological and pre-industrial systems of culture that occurred at the time of the Greeks and Romans. In addition, it prohibits us from taking stock of those residual operations of those systems that may still be in evidence today.

In this respect I should also add that there is no literature as such on the secular domestic hearth. How the transition from sacred to secular is advanced may be a matter of interpretation. There is equal evidence in favor of observing 'the fireplace', as much as 'the stove', as the dominant secular technology of domestic life. According to the study by Witold Rybczynski Home: A Short History of an Idea (1986) fireplace and stove may have held alternating primacy in the history of different ages, classes, or even ethnic

cultures. For this reason, I will confine my study to the transition from a religious to a secular technology of private life that occurred **at the time** of the mythico-religious as well historical installation of the public State Hearth in Rome at around the time of 750 B.C. Again, while there are records of a public state hearth that is pertinent to Etrusco-Greek Antiquity, see Louis Deroy "Le culte du foyer dans la Grèce Mycénienne" (1950), there is no sufficiently large data base for a study of this nature at this time. There is a body of literature that indicates the existence of a portable hearth in Minoan Crete; for example P. Demarque's exploration of the relation between fixed and portable hearths which evolved out of the study of the architecture of the necropolis of Minoan Crete "Culte funéraire et foyer domestique dans la Crète Minoenne" (1932). However, this literature does not offer up a sufficiently rich abundance of material out of which to describe the movement of change. Consequently, I shall use it more as a reference point, than direct point of study.

Although it is not my purpose to engage in a series of polemical investigations into the history of the theory of leisure, or the history of leisure technology, it may be useful to point out that in this instance, the clear-cut distinction between a 'leisure' and a 'labor' household technology seems to fade with the advent of television, as does the distinction between public/private, male/female spaces. For instance, it has been argued that the 'flow' of day-time television programming has specific effects upon the flow of woman's household tasks; see Tania Modleski "The rythms of reception: daytime television and women's work" (1983). This raises important questions about the relation of technological procedures for organizing space to the nature of leisure or labor oriented practices within that space. The difference between these, in respect to the technologies of private life that I shall be considering here, will be brought into evidence as much as possible. Theories of leisure, such as Veblen's theory of 'conspicuous consumption' that

was used to disqualify female labor in the 'home'--see his The Theory of the Leisure Class (1967)--may be recast in the light of more traditionalist theories such as those of Josef Pieper who, in his Leisure: The Basis of Culture (1963), looks for the history of the idea of leisure in classical representations of 'culture'. How a patriarchal technology of culture, for instance, such as that of the sacred family hearth blends the operations of work and leisure around representations of "woman's place" could provide valuable inroads toward the eventual understanding of how television structures and/or re-structures traditional articulations of space and place--in this case gendered place and domestic space--in respect to the dissolution of the work/leisure opposition. To what extent that opposition is traceable to a Hestian or post-Hestian technological arrangement is a question that in the course of this study I will discuss.

**Qualifications and additional methodological considerations**

Necessarily, a project of this magnitude and scope is fraught with dangers from the start. Beset as it is not only with a self-reflexive awareness of its own limitations, selectivity and in this case feminist biases, it also suffers the indignity of not itself belonging to any "effective" field, or history. In anticipation of at least some of the criticism that may be directed against it, I would like at this point to enter some important qualifications to my selection that serve at the same time to mark my study off in a positive manner from disciplinary investigations of a comparable nature. These are qualifications pertaining to: 1) the collection of data from period of 800-750 B.C., and 2) the omission of data re. period of 750 B.C. to the twentieth century.

In the first place, this is not an evolutionary history. Neither is it a period history. It is rather an attempt to grasp at the deep structure of discursive positivities that may be of use in separating types of knowledges and their objects. In the second place, it aims

particularly at reaching beyond the current idea that 'home' is the construction of the post-industrial bourgeoisie. This idea has resulted from research into the period beginning with the Middle Ages. However, more recent collections have begun to find blueprints of spatial organizations in Roman Antiquity (Thébert 1987) that suggest the possibility of redrawing the boundaries between periods and thereby challenge the over-determined, and over-determining, status of the Industrial Revolution in really claiming positive significance as birthing ground for the ideology of 'home' (cf. Lucaks 1970; Rybczynski 1986; Davidoff et al. 1976). Indeed, I would cite Jack Goody, here, whose studies into the social anthropology of the 'domestication' principle have challenged the all-too avid belief in a Great Divide between modern and primitive societies--a belief what, according to Goody, informs the application of the ethnocentric binary opposition between 'our' type of society and 'theirs'. Jack Goody, I will have occasion to remind my reader, explores the possibility of breaking down discursively constructed discontinuities between cultures by extending the notion of a "technology of communicative acts", or a "technology of the intellect" to the acquisition of language in primitive cultures. In critically interrogating the opposition 'savage'/'domesticated' in the development of 'thought' as well as social organization, his study seeks to disrupt the dichotomy between 'primitive' and 'advanced' cultures that informs epistemological production (Goody 1977, 10-11 ff.).

In the third place, I wish to point out that my particular emphasis upon the data of Antiquity is not unique or entirely original. There has been ample demonstration of the pertinence of this period in recent studies conducted in the sociology of religion, or again in historical psychology. These are studies that lay emphasis on popular forms of social and cultural experience. Jean-Pierre Vernant's essay "Hestia-Hermes: the religious expression in Ancient Greece" in Myth and Thought Among the Greeks (1983), Louis

Gernet's The Anthropology of Ancient Greece (1981), and E. R. Dodds The Greeks and the Irrational (1951) are three outstanding examples (to which I shall have occasion to return in the course of this thesis). However, perhaps the first and still most powerful subversion of the official representation of Classical culture as high Olympic culture is Fustel de Coulanges' The Ancient City (1980; 1956; 1900; 1873). These studies go a long way in disrupting official representations of Antiquity and Classical culture that derive from the study of the 'high' culture of Classical Antiquity, looking instead at the more popular and local forms of social life. However, what is inadequate about these studies is the minimal attention that they give to either the principle of gender or the play of domination that takes place within these discursive and non-discursive formations and sites of cultural production. For this reason, I have chosen to re-focus upon some of their objects of investigation as predominantly expressions of a 'technology' of domestic culture, in this case a gendered technology. I am borrowing in this fixing of a 'gendered technology' some of the principles of de Lauretis' idea of a 'technology of gender' (1987, 3 ff.) with the difference that, in the context of my interest in the discourse on 'home', it is the differential solicitation of female, rather than male and female subjects that is highlighted. While not attempting here to draw simplistic comparisons between television and religious technologies,[5] I feel that my critical expansion of the Foucaultian notion of a technology of power to include cultural objects and procedures that discipline a domestic (or 'private' space), is a useful starting point for recasting the theoretical perspective of the sociology of religion in a manner that takes into account the political and ideological inscription of gender, both in its own textual practice as well as in the practices that form the objects of its study.[6] This is a theoretical and methodological move which serves two objects simultaneously. On the one hand, it serves to give historical as well as critical depth to feminist analyses of representational strategies in

contemporary media, which (analyses) put into discourse the rudimentary theoretical concept of a 'technology of gender' (de Lauretis 1987, 12-13 ff.). On the other hand, and even more importantly, it answers to the original call for disrupting the discursive unity of 'home' and thereby dismantling its presuppositions and hidden or naturalized addresses to gender-specific sites of inquiry and/or objects of study.

Thus if my work suffers from a certain historical incompleteness, I can only suggest that these remain possibilities for future inquiries. That such studies would look to favor Classical Antiquity from the point of view of a feminist historiography of the discursive (as opposed to only historical, social, economic) formations pertaining to notions of "woman's place" may go a step further in disrupting, or dissipating, the 'common-sense' assumptions and naturalizations that silently inform a large part of today's legitimate and sanctioned forms of knowledge.

What I have hoped to accomplish here is to bring to visibility how 'home' emerges as a constructed and fictive unity through the articulation of 'space' and 'place' at different points in history, how it gains discursive unity as the effect of power rather than as a stable and homogenous or ideal point. In looking at how assumptions about gender are variously used to construct our ideas of space and place, I hope to bring the critical discourse of 'home' to a level where we can dissolve its imaginary unity and place it squarely on the map as an object worthy of academic inquiry--an object to be studied as a 'lived' domain, a positionality, and a discursive site that is real, multiple, heterogeneous and, above all, changing.

## 4. Dissertation Structure

The dissertation falls into two parts, each of which operates on a different plane, working through the discourse of 'home' on the basis of a different descriptive axis. The

first part responds to 'home' as a discourse of 'lived' and concrete space, the second to 'home' as a discourse of gendered place. These are not hard and fast distinctions, for invariably they are more deeply imbricated. However, they do serve to mark out theoretical and disciplinary spaces within which 'home' is articulated. Essentially informed by the space of discourse itself--see Foucault's discussion in "The Eye of Power" (1980a)--this seemingly rigid fixing of bounds is nevertheless not to be taken as presumed totalities any more than 'home' is to be taken as one. Indeed, it will be part of my object to show just how deep such presumed totalities really are. Thus in isolating the spatial component, I am hoping to provide an outline of the terrain, which later chapters will fill in.

In the first part of this dissertation I look at 'home' by way of the history of space suggested by Foucault. In terms of the airing of the problematic of 'home', anchorage in the history of domestic space is, if we follow Foucault, an economic-political form of the problematic that needs to be studied in detail. For metaphorizing the transformations of discourse in a vocabulary of time "leads to the utilization of the model of individual consciousness", whereas endeavoring to decipher discourse through the use of spatial metaphors "enables one to grasp precisely the points at which discourses are transformed in, through, and on the basis of relations of power" (1980b, 70-71). Accordingly, it seems to me that endeavoring to 'decipher' the discourse on 'home' through spatial metaphors, enables us to grasp the 'points' at which this discourse is transformed **in**, **through**, and **on** the basis of relations of power. Throwing into relief these processes of power means describing the 'home' in terms of spatial configurations, such as the implantation of objects and technologies, modes of tabulation, and organization of domains that make up an ensemble of spatial mechanisms and procedures.

Accordingly, the first three chapters are linked by virtue of a set of historical discourses on space. The first is a set which constitutes 'home' in terms of a history of spaces, the second in terms of a history of representations of space, and the third in those of a history of practices of space. Chapter One will examine configurations of domestic space in the relatively current history of historical writing. It will lay out historiographical maps of the non-discursive construction of 'home' in the local and practical knowledges of domestic space. It will locate the tabulation of changes in practices of domestic space at the points of emergence of the three different technologies of private life, each of which offers up different procedures for organizing domestic space and expresses competing spatial, local and historical knowledges. In addition it will focus upon the separation of a set of different historic and practical knowledges: those that emerge with 1) the installation of the apparatus of the sacred family hearth, 2) the historical and mythological installation of the apparatus of the sacred city hearth, and 3) the installation of the domestic television set. Expressing the displacement of the domestic paradigm onto civic life, the technology of **Vesta**--the public city hearth--with its conflictual practices of ritual and symbolic representations, inaugurates the topographical and symbolic arrangement of a modern binary social space, corresponding more accurately to the public/private construction of social space[7] that we know today. Here, it will be seen how changes in the social and political economy of space suggest the emergence of 'home' as the ideological effect of a secularized domestic technology, one which inaugurates procedures for disciplining domestic space as "woman's place". The chapter will describe the shifts in the historiographical terrain from Antiquity to the present. It will culminate with representations of the emergence of a twentieth century technology of private life and examine descriptions of the web of practices that figure around the installation of the domestic television apparatus. Here, the domestic televisual

set will be looked upon in its discursive status as both a domestic object and a domestic medium that organizes, shifts, and merges spatial boundaries. The procedures for viewing, exhibiting, and living with domestic television as a household object that inform contemporary studies will be described in their conflictual relation with the operations of television technology as a communications medium. The space-merging technological advances that have evolved since the mid-twentieth century, expressed in the increased expansion of domestic leisure technology, suburbanization, 'mobile-privatisation', 'commodity semeiosis', and existing alongside architectural, and other practical aspects of the new domestic space, will serve to focus the ways in which the televisual apparatus is theorized as producing oppositional practices and effects of power that position women in different ways. In conclusion the chapter will assesses the degree to which, in these discourses, domestic television technology continues to display residual premodern toponymies.

Chapter Two will discuss early historical representations of space and 'the feminine'. Jean-Joseph Goux, among others, has raised connections between space, sacred space, the symbolism of the center and 'the feminine'. Chapter Three will examine the operations of a politics of space in Greece and Rome through Fustel de Coulanges' The Ancient City. Through a rereading of this master-work, it will look at historic knowledges and spatial practices that emerge out of the installation of the apparatus of the domestic family hearth in Greek Antiquity. It will look at the disciplining of domestic space that occurs via the technology of the **estia**, the domestic family hearth. A domestic object and a domestic medium that engenders very specific topographical arrangements and spatial boundaries as between home/not-home, inside/outside, public/private, male/female, the sacred family hearth gives rise to competing practices and strategies of space. In these, the dual property/lineage

procedure[8] for disciplining domestic space (the 'dwelling') as 'patrimony' and its representation in the gendered form of a female household deity (Hestia, the eponymous goddess of the domestic 'hearth'), are examined in their status as conflictual practices of a patriarchal economy of place that includes woman as symbolic term for the landed 'patrimony' at the same time as it excludes or 'exchanges' her in its procedures of marriage and its laws of heredity and kinship.[9]

In the second part of the thesis, my study leans toward a discussion of discourses that articulate domestic space with more structured ideas of 'place' and the chapters are linked by the circulation of notions of gendered place. Thus the fourth chapter forges together a set of philosophical and theoretical discourses in which we see the operations of this intercalation of 'space' and 'place', while the fifth chapter addresses the discourse on 'home' in what have emerged as two of the most important critical discourses of the last decade--the discourses of feminism and postmodernism.

Chapter Four will look at the discourse on 'place', in particular woman's 'place', in the philosophy of separate spheres from Xenophon's **Oeconomicus** to the present. It will begin with the philosophical discourse of gendered place that presents itself in Xenophon's **Oeconomicus** and will discuss how this treatise puts into circulation dominant and popular knowledges of reproduction and biology.[10] The double-status of woman in the conflictual domestic practices of premodern space that position her as both the dominant symbol and the excluded term, will be described in terms of a reproduction of the separate spheres philosophy and a construction of a discourse on 'home' as a binary domestic social sphere, one that positions woman within one of its axes and outside the other. Following this it will examine the philosophical discourse of gendered place as it has been taken up, transformed, extended, altered, involuted by a series of changes that continue to express the binary ideological positioning of woman in which 'home' appears

as a separate and unitary sphere of activity and praxis, a homogeneous and stable domain of existence. From the Greek and Roman philosophers Plato, Aristotle, Musonius Rufus, through the social, economic, psychoanalytic, feminist, and existential discourses that have emerged from post-industrial capitalism (and the rise of the nineteenth-century middle-class), the discourse of 'place' will be discussed as the **locus principus** of a new (modern) construction of 'home' as woman's place culminating in the discourse of contemporary Cultural Studies. I will show how the initial operation of a binary social space that constructs 'place' across lines of gendered hemispheres of social practice, collapses representations of "woman's place" with those of an idealized domestic, private, and interior space, at the same time as it erases and occludes its figuration in the discursive arena of social scientificity and knowledge production. I will also show how this situation is reversed and neutralized in the approach of Cultural Studies. Chapter Four will thus describe the discursive construction of 'home' as it appears in the discourses on gendered place that remain concealed in erudite knowledge. It will look at the ideological and epistemological construction of 'home' as "woman's place" that emerges from the 'privatization thesis', or the doctrine of separate spheres of 'virtuous' activity for men and women, which is buried in the political, social, economic, and other erudite philosophical discourses. It will trace the mutations, displacements and reversals wrought upon this doctrine by the occluded spaces of today's erudite discourses of Philosophy, History and Cultural Studies and it will discuss their concatenation with the shift from a religious to a consumer technology of private life. It will also treat with those discourses comprised of popular male and female narratives (neglected in the dominant philosophical perspective) that address the 'home' as part of an economy of gendered place.

Chapter Five will look at some dominant erudite social science discourses on gendered place that intersect with the domestic installation of new communications technology. This technology's concomitant breakdown of gendered social spaces will be discussed as it crosses with the current discursive inflation of the televisual 'home' as site of cultural and theoretical production. The proclaimed dissolution of binary spaces and its attendant emphasis on practice that characterizes the social science discourses including those of post-structuralism, postmodernism, and post-feminism, and its attendant paradigm shift to Woman-laden theoretical terms and constructs, will be discussed both as an evolution of previous paradigms and as a break from them.

The last section of the thesis will attempt to stitch together the preceding findings in a series of concluding remarks that formulate certain theses about the relations of 'place', gender and power and summarize the implications of these relations for the problematic of today's discourse on 'home'. I will examine how 'home' presents itself as a discursively constructed, imaginary, and fictive unity via the operation of patriarchal technologies (religious and pre-industrial as well as consumer post-industrial) of private life, and discuss how these operations express the interplay of local, spatial, and practical operations of power with conceptual, philosophical, and discursive ones; how it manages to gain discursive unity through the articulation of 'place' and 'space' as an effect of a technology of power and the implications of this for the discursive circulation of 'home' as "woman's place" in the social scientific texts of current theoretical production, both within and outside feminism. Here I will discuss how the production and reproduction of "woman's place" in the social science discourse of current theoretical texts intersects with the particular problematic of the 'home' as 'lived' domain and as 'positionality' (or 'place') for women today. In this context, I will examine the discursive and practical operations of an epistemological technology of private life whose principal apparatus has become

the domestic installation of the figure of the social scientist. Thus, I will also discuss the possibility of 'home' as site of struggle in conflictual contemporary theoretical productions and will raise the possibility of 'home' as heterogeneous, polysemic, multi-vocal site of woman's experience and local memory--a multifold, heterogeneous space of women's discourse of memory and local history, and what Adrienne Rich (1986) has described as a feminist 'politics of location'. Finally, consideration will be given to representations of cultural change as they have centered around the positioning of 'home' as site for possibly new forms of community, both theoretical and 'lived'.

## Notes

[1] See his Reading Capital (1979, 25) and For Marx (1969, 33). A comparable interrogation of the empirical and pre-given status of academic subjects and their objects of knowledge can be found in Pierre Bourdieu's recent sociological study of the academic world; see his Homo Academicus (1988). The notions of a 'crisis' and 'revolution' in the human sciences, not unlike Althusser's idea of a rupture or 'break', have been developed respectively by Thomas S Kuhn The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1970) and Jurgen Habermas Legitimation Crisis (1973). Also, see Jean-François Lyotard The Postmodern Condition A Report on Knowledge (1984) The idea of 'subjugated knowledges' is developed by Michel Foucault in his "Two Lectures" (1980c, 81 ff.).

[2] In her Gynesis Configurations of Woman and Modernity (1985) and her essay "Theories of the Feminine Kristeva" (1980), Alice A Jardine, for example, discusses the theoretical prominence of the term 'Woman' According to her analysis 'Woman' is a term which, in the discursive rhetoric of the New French Thought, operates as dual signifier of both a sexual process and a sexual identity (1985, 41; 1980) Julia Kristeva's essay "Women's Time" (1981) draws attention to a paradigm shift that takes 'spatial' as opposed to 'temporal' metaphors for theory and argues in favor of looking upon these spatial metaphors in feminine terms Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak also addresses the existence of a paradigm shift that takes metaphors of 'Woman' as its principle in her essay "Displacement and the Discourse of Woman" (1983, 169) For a male perspective on the question of this transformation and its priviledging of the feminine principle in theoretical discourse, see Jean-François Lyotard's "One of the Things At Stake in Women's Struggles" (1978)

[3] See Parveen Adams "A Note on the Distinction between Sexual Division and Sexual Differences" (1979) and "The 'Subject' of Feminism" (1978, 54)

[4] In her Gynesis, Alice A Jardine (1985), for example, interrogates the significance of the discursive production of the term 'Woman' for feminism Looking at how 'Woman' has been put into discursive circulation by contemporary male authors, she argues that the particular crisis in legitimation that we are experiencing is a crisis in specifically male narratives and responds to the loss of 'paternal' authority and to the collapse of a 'paternal' metaphor This gendered explanation of the epistemological 'rupture', however, has a tendency to lead to overdetermined conclusions about the status of the 'paternal' order in these discourses and does not push far enough into a critical evaluation of the proclaimed dissolution of the male term More perspicaciously, perhaps, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1983) has challenged the post-structuralist claim to this dissolution and to its alleged 'freeing' of the subordinate term

[5] See for instance Tony Schwartz Media The Second God (1983)

[6] This is in keeping with a critique of traditional sociology and its methods of inquiry which has been expressed by Stuart Hall in his essay "Cultural Studies and the Center some problematics and problems" (1980, 20 ff , 25, 39 ff )

[7] I am using the notion of 'social space' in the sense of a social field defined by topographical movement, though I am aware that it can be a topographical field defined by social movement, as for instance in Edward T Hall's brilliant study of proxemics in The Hidden Dimension (1966)

[8] This dual procedure has been described in Pierre Bourdieu's study of Kabylian society, Outline of a Theory of Practice, (1977), and later taken up and reflected upon by de Certeau as the dual expression of 'home' in his The Practice of Everyday Life (1984, 215, n 24). Neither, however, make reference to this procedure in the religious rituals and practices of Antiquity

[9] The double-status of women is a problematic that has been addressed in a number of fields, from anthropology by Gayle Rubin's ground-breaking piece "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex" (1975), to post-structuralist critiques such as Elizabeth Cowie's "Woman as Sign" (1878), and more recently Teresa de Lauretis' Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema (1984, 12-36) or her "From a Dream of Woman" in Cinema and Language (1983). Again, here as elsewhere, the Western historicity of this 'phenomenon', discursive and non-discursive 'fact', has not been traced nor brought into relation with the discursive figuration and refiguration of 'home' as site and object of knowledge in the human sciences

[10] I am not drawing polemical distinctions between the 'dominant' and 'the popular' in so far as these discourses are concerned With respect to notions of woman's place, these are generally 'dominant' by virtue of a popular knowledge ie considered of subordinate interest to questions of man's place. This is evidenced to me by the lack of discussion about these knowledges in traditional histories of philosophy This state of affairs is of course, gradually being overturned A case in point being Prudence Allen's historiographical tome The Concept of Woman: The Aristotelian Revolution, 750 BC-AD 1250 (1985) This is a work which raises to visibility the altogether dominant, though unofficial, philosophical pre-occupation, from as early as the first written records of Homer and Hesiod, with questions of sex identity Describing the instance of these questions in ethics, metaphysics, philosophy of science, and epistemology, her thesis covers an immense ground in the historiographical raising to visibility of the Western discourse on Woman However, while questions of "woman's place" are raised within the context of that discussion, they are not prioritized as epistemological grounds for a discourse that extends well beyond separate spheres--that is, to the discourse on 'home'

Jean Bethke Elshtain's Public Man Private Woman (1981) is another example of the current attempt to reread classical philosophical texts from the perspective of what has been left out by traditional histories of philosophy However, her analysis does not touch upon discussions that extend outside the range of political philosophy proper, and thus suffers the exclusion of certain highly important texts The work of Mary Ellen Waithe, A History of Women Philosophers, 600 B.C.-500 A.D. (1987), is a wonderful excavation of female philosophical narratives of "woman's place" that features texts from the early neo-Pythagorean period of Antiquity However, while its focus is new it does not position these texts in positive relation to male ones Michel Foucault's study of the philosophical discourses in Greek and Roman Antiquity of the problem of sexuality, the care of self, and the uses of pleasure, performs a similar archeological task in terms of rereading classical texts as a discourse on sex Yet there is surprisingly little attention given to the operations of a technology of gender at the base of the very gender-bound articulations of 'place' and 'space' that occupy these texts

## Chapter One

## Mapping the 'Home': Configurations of Domestic Space in the Recent History of Historical Writing

> The map, a totalizing stage on which elements of diverse origin are brought together to form the tableau of a "state" of geographical knowledge, pushes away into its prehistory or into its posterity, as if into the wings, the operations of which it is the result or the necessary condition.
>
> Michel de Certeau, "Spatial Stories"

### Preliminaries and Preambles

Michel de Certeau identifies two symbolic and anthropological languages of space, or two poles of experience that, according to him, also characterize the passage from ordinary culture to scientific discourse. On the basis of C. Linde's and W. Labov's sociolinguistics of descriptions of places (Linde and Labov 1975), he discusses two types of descriptions: the 'itinerary' and the 'map'. Looking to compare the combination of 'itineraries' and 'maps' in everyday stories with the manner in which these are interlaced in literary and scientific descriptions of space, de Certeau returns to five centuries ago and the manner during which, in the course of the scientific representation of space such as the birth of geographical knowledge which took place from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, the 'map' slowly disengaged itself from the 'itinerary', which had been the very condition of its possibility (de Certeau 1984a, 118-120).

**The unwritten history of domestic space**

While, to be sure, oral description of domestic places and literary narrations concerning the 'home' represent an enormous body of information, there is as yet no adequate 'scientific' discourse of this space. There is to date no comprehensive historiography of domestic space, and for those looking to find a continuity of representations or discourses, there is only contradictions and paradox--ellipses and conjecture. For, this history does not have its own discourse. Indeed, while traces of a discourse can be found in the histories of technology, religion, architecture, the family and capitalism, and others, no one of these fields alone captures the essence of the discourse of the space that we call 'home'. Thus my object in this chapter is to isolate domestic space as an historical object and search for and describe the theoretical discourses adequate to it. Thus while the history of domestic space crosses with a number of other histories, I am not looking here to produce a comprehensive account of any of these. My object is merely to identify the 'points' of intersection in what today is emerging as a growing field of historical investigation.

It is for this reason that I like to use the analogy of the 'map'. In the same way that the heterogeneous operations of travel--be they military, architectural, political, or commercial--make up the fabrication of a geographical plan constitutive of the medieval map (de Certeau 1984a, 121) , I want to 'collate' upon the same plane heterogeneous descriptions of domestic space. Thus a series of spatial 'tableaux' mark the development of the chapter. In using the analogy of the 'map' I am, therefore, looking to "push into the wings" the operations of which these descriptions are the result or the pre-condition (such as the history of technology, architecture, religion, etc). What I am hoping to achieve is thus a 'flattening out' of the temporal articulation of the places constitutive of these

descriptions into a spatial sequence of points and a state of geographical knowledge (de Certeau 1984a, 121).

Even so, there is one other methodological precaution that I wish to entertain at the outset that has to do with the protean and polymorphous nature of the very idea of a 'domestic space'--in particular as that idea pertains to forms of dwelling and habitation. Thus, for example, a preliminary typology might distinguish between internal and external domestic spaces. In the former type, there are the phenomenological forms of dwelling discussed in the works of Bachelard (1964) and Heidegger (1977), which concern existential and/or oneiric forms of domesticity. Here 'home' becomes a major structure of the life-world in terms of 'at-homeness' (Seamon, 12). In addition, such a typology might distinguish between a variety of external forms of habitation which range from natural habitats belonging to nature, the **settlement**, to the residential sites of a peoples, or a culture (Foucault 1980a, 150). In terms of the varieties of socio-economic forms given to the latter forms of dwelling, it is possible to further break down these types in terms of the possibilities offered up by human forms of place or dwelling.

Thus we have three types of human forms of external dwelling which presume different orders of space and their histories. There is the collective dwelling in **urban space**, the public dwelling anchored in the space of **institutions**, and finally the **house**, or more specifically the private family dwelling, anchored in the history of domestic space (Seamon, 12). Cultural histories and topographies of institutional spaces have been developed, most notably by Foucault's archeologies of the prison house in Discipline and Punish (1979) and of the asylum (The History of Madness (1973). In his "Walking in the City", de Certeau has begun the task of a cultural study of collective forms of dwelling in terms of the everyday practices of walking (1984b, 91-110). What remains now is an approach to the last of these forms of external human dwelling, that which by necessity

must be differentiated via terms like the 'private' and the 'family'. As a result of its association with such a diverse set of histories, it is with some trepidation that I employ the term 'domestic' space. However it is with equal trepidation that I look upon the term 'private' dwelling, useful though this term is in marking that external site (or spatial entity) that is the 'house'--the domestic family dwelling--in which is anchored the very idea of 'home'. Taken now in its less comprehensive form, the 'home' can profitably be distinguished from other types of domestic spaces without buying into any essentialist associations of 'privacy' with 'home'. Thus it might be possible to draw cross-histories engaging in the domestic space of the hostel, the relation between institutional 'homes', 'homelessness' and 'at-homeness' as these are lived not on the metaphysical plane, but by real men and women. Given that studies have shown that 'homelessness' is lived differently by men and women (Harman 1989, 19), the very acute convergence between ideological and economic positionings of women within the 'home' is nevertheless deeply imbricated in an account of the history of domestic space that takes as its object the domestic family dwelling itself; an account that does so in terms of a sliding history of 'private' and 'public', 'masculine' and 'feminine' spaces. Indeed, as this and subsequent chapters will show, even the 'family' does not provide a stable indicator of this history of domestic space in so far as it is itself subject to spatializing determinations.

**'Tactics of the habitat'**

Thus if we are looking to map out the history of that domestic space that we call 'the private family dwelling'-- in fact a 'home'--we can begin by looking at the work of contemporary historians whose work goes as far as to cover the very first representations of domestic space, representations which themselves begin with Homer and Hesiod and the earliest written records of Western civilization. Eschewing official historiography and

its emphasis on the historical event and the strategies of institutionalized powers, these works fall within a recent historical tradition of bringing to visibility the 'subjugated knowledges' of the past. In this chapter I will focus upon these descriptions in so far as they engage with those practices that have no name, silent procedures that in Foucault's rhetoric make up the "little tactics of the habitat" (1980a, 149).

These are what de Certeau calls 'the tactics of consumption', "the ingenious ways in which the weak make use of the strong" that lend a political dimension to everyday practices (1984, xvii). These are the tactics that, according to de Certeau, invoke an 'everyday historicity' (20). Where the space in which these tactics unfold is 'closed' and 'historicised' by the variability of the strategies of instituted powers and events (22-23), these tactics invoke a kind of rationality proper to the practices of space. Contrary to the official historiography that has been passed down through the ages and has been the product of 'authors' and their discourses, a critical discourse emerges here that, while it permeates a vast number of institutions and changes and crosses with changes in social history, has nonetheless the air of 'anti-history' (Foucault 1980c, 71) and an 'anti-discipline' (de Certeau 1984, xv). For, what informs all these studies is the attention that they each give to a buried history of tactics, practices and manipulations that mark out the space that we call 'home'. These are tactics, practices and manipulations that are most often described by means of an interplay between the evolution of social history and changes in domestic technology. In effect what these writers are examining are the 'arts of practice', the 'ways of operating', and the 'ways of using space' by means of which 'users' reappropriate the space that has been organized by techniques of socio-cultural production. As de Certeau reminds us, narrated history creates and organizes a fictional space (1984, 79)--one which official historiography brings us to believe is the "national space" (1984, 125).

Thus within the spaces of these textual practices we have a double effect. On the one hand, there is the effect of an undoing of the 'home' as "proper place", "**la place propre**" (de Certeau 1984, 82); on the other, the effect of the founding of a new disposition of the 'home'.[1] For in this history, the dwelling (or 'home') is not always deemed uniquely 'private', nor necessarily 'feminine'. The historical descriptions these texts provide of the dominant role that is played by the technologies and installations of a religious or industrial nature, go a long way in dismantling residual traces of the idea that 'men make houses' whereas 'women make homes'. In the critical role these writers all assign to the technological investment of domestic space from the time of Classical Antiquity, a history of domestic space emerges in which is founded a disposition of the 'home' that is equally conditional upon today's televisual 'hearth' as it is upon yesterday's religious one. Bringing to visibility the multifold operations of power that make up the demarcations of domestic space in terms of such binary oppositions as 'private' and 'public' and 'masculine' and 'feminine', their descriptions go a long way in terms of a history of spaces.

However, while these textual practices become inextricably linked with historical discourses that themselves describe the relations between 'public' and 'private', 'masculine' and 'feminine' spaces, in terms of political and domestic positivities, I will reserve that discussion for a following chapter. I will also reserve for another chapter a discussion of the minute operations, rites and rituals that, in the context of the history of domestic space, amount to the 'little tactics of the habitat' in Antiquity. Suffice it to say that in these future contexts, it is to the history outlined here that I shall be returning, with its particular distribution of officially recorded and unrecorded historical materials. Equally, I will reserve for a subsequent chapter the very important relation of the house to two other spatial configurations--the body and the city. For it is undoubted that an

explication of 'house' requires an explication of 'body' and 'city' as well (Seamon, 12). Given that a certain amount of repetition and overlap is inevitable when dealing with a history and a discourse as segmented as the history and the discourse on and of (on/of) the 'home', there will be mention made of both these considerations in the course of my discussion here.

**Historians of domestic space**

Since the manner in which this history, what I call the history **of** domestic space, has been charted out in its various temporal segments by different historians and anthropologists it becomes a discourse **on** domestic space, more precisely a (critical) discourse on the history of domestic space. Where it becomes impossible to differentiate between these, the shorthand 'on/of' becomes a useful form for indicating that text and event have been collapsed.

Thus I will describe the documented changes and ruptures in the order of domestic space on the basis of what appear to me as three different temporal blocks in accordance with which the history of domestic space has been documented. Thus I shall argue that it is possible, through the works of different historians as diverse as the nineteenth century historian Fustel de Coulanges (1956), Philippe Ariès (1962), Michel Foucault (1980b), and others, to map the history and 'evolution' of domestic space following the operation of two significant ruptures. These ruptures can, roughly speaking, be situated 1) at around the eighth century B.C. with the appearance of the city-state (Vernant 1983b, 181)[2] and 2) at around the eighteenth century with the onset of Industrial capitalism. In what follows, I propose to outline these two ruptures with reference to certain mutations that have taken place within them. It will be seen that such a mapping of the history of domestic space presents us with a unique and complex

configuration of 'public' and 'private', 'inner' and 'outer', 'sacred' and 'profane', 'urban' and 'rural', 'family' space and 'social' space, 'cultural' space and 'useful' space, 'work' spaces and 'leisure' spaces (cf. Foucault 1986, 23). In chapter five I will discuss how it is in accordance with which these binary demarcations of domestic space, that the principles of 'masculine' and 'feminine' spheres of influence (and virtuous activity) have been defined as 'masculine' and 'feminine' spaces. In what follows, I will outline the rudimentary forms of this association along with certain instances of its disruption.

In covering a ground that blends primitive and modern cultures I am using the operational model of a 'popular culture' which cannot be confined to the past, the countryside, and primitive peoples any more than it can be confined to the strongholds of the contemporary economy (de Certeau 1984, 25). While it would be possible to be more direct and account for the sources on the basis of which these writers have developed their observations, I feel that the limits of the 'map' suggest the appropriateness of my approach here. Again, given that the writers I have chosen fall within a self-referential ensemble, I will use the formula "et al." as a shorthand that identifies the provisional totality of thought and ideas or a particular configurations of domestic space presents itself. The historical block, or time-frame, in question then suggests the particular state of geographical knowledge that marks the critical discourse of 'home'.

Following changes in the discourse of 'home' that emerge in these writings, I have grouped the works according to three topographical arrangements of the discourse on 'home'. I have concurrently used the categories of the modern, the premodern, and the postmodern 'home' not so much to indicate the **topoi** of a variety of empirical 'homes', but rather to emphasize changes in the **topoi** of this critical discourse on 'home'. For the terms 'modern', premodern' and 'postmodern' are not being used as critical te rms in the context of this chapter. Rather, they are useful historical demarcations which serve to

delimit the changes and transformations that find expression here. In this respect, they appear to me as the 'configurations' of domestic space in the history of historical writing. In so far as they offer a relation between the elements connected on a temporal axis, these three configurations represent ensembles that appears juxtaposed, set off against one another, and implicated by each other in an almost structural way.[3] Consequently, my present chapter works on both a diachronic and synchronic level to give a kind of topographical overview of the discourse on 'home' in recent examples of historical writing. In the final chapter of this thesis, I will take on the critical notion of a 'postmodern home' in discourses that define postmodernity by way of some of the historical developments that I discuss here. In this respect, the material that I will be discussing here forms the contours of the critical discourse on 'home'--a contour and an outline that the remainder of the thesis will variously color in.

However, with these preliminary preambles and generalities out of the way, I will try to be as precise as I can as pertains the descriptions, the changes, and the mutations that the space we are accustomed to call 'home' has undergone within the recent development of historical writing.

## 1. The Premodern 'Home' and the Order of Hierarchical Space: J-P Vernant et al.

Jean-Pierre Vernant (1983) is a historian whose work outlines the history of domestic space from the time of Homer and Hesiod in the eighth century B.C. to that of the appearance of the city, which has been calculated at around the late sixth century B.C. (Vernant 1983b, 181). Within this history Vernant, together with Louis Gernet (1981) and Fustel de Coulanges (1956), sees changes occurring in the very notions of space themselves. Vernant attributes these changes in spatial representations to changes in political organization and to the founding of the city-state. Accordingly, he

distinguishes between two different representations of domestic space--the one prior to the appearance of the city which he calls the "mythical" idea of space and the other following the appearance of the city which expresses the a "geometric" idea of space. In this transformation of representations the 'home', or domestic dwelling, shifts from an anchorage in a highly differentiated, segmented and hierarchical space, to one within a principally homogeneous space. Here early traces of the binarism that informs the idea of 'home' as a 'private', and essentially 'feminine' terrain find their first expression as features of a patriarchal political arrangement. In this and the following short sections, I will look at the shift in the 'home"s position within a hierarchical order of space to its position within a binary order of space. By way of Vernant's explication of changes in the role of the 'center' that accompanied the birth of the ancient city-state, I will show how the shift from a mythical hierarchical to an abstract geometric order of space corresponds to a shift from the 'home"s place at the center of a spatial (and representational) order to a place in its peripheries. My discussion will also focus upon the shift from a) the 'center' in the mythic view of space and the representation of 'home' as a space of extension to b) the 'center' in the geometric view of space and the 'home' as a space of the localization of objects.

**Extension and localization**

One could say, by way of retracing the history of space that in Antiquity there was an ensemble of places, supported by cosmological theories, in which domestic space was subject to a hierarchical ensemble of sacred places; where supercelestial places were opposed to celestial places and terrestrial to subterrestrial ones. Here 'home', or domestic space, constituted on the basis of the wall, offers a different set of relations than those of 'home' constituted on the basis of the localization of objects, people, technologies--i.e. of

objects and physical forms. However, this is not to say that this space was technology-free. For technology is in this instance one that works to separate a subject from its exteriority and that is essentially very different from a technology that localizes subjects.

In reading the material furnished by Vernant (et al.), I therefore base myself on two very important foci in the analysis of spatiality. The one is the notion derived from Foucault on the space of 'emplacement' (1986, 22-23). Although Foucault reads this as a space that arises (in the context of a history of space) in the Middle Ages generally, I would like to backtrack a little bit and further dissect this idea in terms of another. This is the second focus of my reading of Vernant which is drawn from a discussion by de Certeau on the determination of frontiers in the analysis of spatiality. Thus the frontier makes possible the isolation and interplay of distinct spaces on the basis of a differentiation between, first, distinctions that localize subjects and, second, those that separate a subject from its exteriority (see de Certeau 1984a, 123). With this dual focus in mind, it becomes possible to extract from Vernant's discussion of the 'center' in the mythical and religious idea of space in Antiquity, the formation of the nucleus of what was later to become a full-blown mythology and an ideology of what we now call 'home'--indeed the very blueprint of the idea of 'home'. It is therefore not surprising that this blueprint should rest with its most emblematic representation, the domestic family hearth.

**On 'hearth' and 'home'**

It is not certain that the Greeks had a particular word for 'home'. However, neither did they have one for 'family'.[4] Indeed, both these ideas were bound up in another which stood in for both. This, according to Fustel de Coulanges', was the 'hearth', εστια (**estia**) (Fustel de Coulanges 1956, 42). In perhaps the very first look at the anthropology of

ancient Greece, Fustel de Coulanges has produced a study that reconstructs a lost age on the basis of its immortal texts. Looking upon them as into the face of a living culture, Fustel de Coulanges was able to put together a picture of some of the most fundamental aspects of daily life in the periods preceding the birth of nations. In this picture (which I will discuss at greater length in the following chapters), perhaps the most outstanding observation is the absence of such terms as 'family' and 'home' as we know them. However, equally outstanding is the observation that this does not suggest that 'family' and 'home' did not exist within the language and the culture of the times. If we break away from the imposed polarity dictating to us that we assume either that 'family' is a biological (and predetermined) entity or that it does not exist at all, it becomes possible to identify the various points of emergence of this concept in related but not identical fields. Indeed the same is true of 'home'. Both are linked to notions of space in and through which they are founded.

**'Home', property, and kinship**

Thus Fustel de Coulanges points out to us that within every Greek and Roman house there burned a fire and that upon this fire there was an altar to which the ancients sacrificed libations and made prayers to gods who were the supposed spirits of their dead ancestors. He writes: "In the house of every Greek and Roman was an altar; on this altar there had always to be a small quantity of ashes, and a few lighted coals" (1956, 25). Located at the center of the house, its place was marked by a stone which was symbolic of the place beneath the house in which the dead ancestors were made to rest. It was also symbolically located at the center of the property surrounding the house. They called this fire '**(h)estia**', meaning hearth. The word in Greek for 'family' was εστιον (**epistion**) literally meaning 'that which is near the hearth (cf. Fustel de Coulanges 1956, 42).[5]

It is not only in Antiquity that 'family' was a term designed to reflect spatial relations. Indeed Jean-Louis Flandrin points out that in the Middle Ages co-habitation was the principle underlying family ties (Flandrin 1979, 4). Thus in the French dictionaries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, 'family' was synonymous with 'house' (Flandrin 1979, 11) and derived from the loosely ordered collective of 'those who live in the same house' (Flandrin 1979, 5). Nevertheless it was in Antiquity that was born or expressed a spatialization of the 'family' that brought the 'home' in proximity with its two component parts: kinship and property.[6] This was the meaning of 'center' that grew out of the mythic view of space.

**'Home' and mythic space**

According to Vernant, who bases much of his insightful analysis on the work of his predecessor Fustel de Coulanges, the view of 'center' that was held at the time of Antiquity (by the Greeks) was very deeply rooted in religious symbolism, in particular the symbolism of the sacred hearth (Vernant 1983b, 188-189; 1983a, 208; 1983d, 232). This symbol, a glowing fire upon a round altar, kept in a large room that the Greeks called the **megaron**, was surrounded by four columns which supported an opening in the roof--a skylight through which the smoke of the fire would pass (Vernant 1983b, 187-188).[7] It was located at the center of every house (dwelling) expressed the meaning of 'center' ('home') in virtue of its expression of, what Vernant calls, 'mythic space'(1983b, 178, 179).[8]

Mythic space, according to Vernant is not a homogeneous space, but a hierarchical space that differentiates between what emerge as three cosmic levels of space: the 'upper', the 'middle', and the 'lower' levels. The hearth, situated at the center of the house, communicated with the earth below and the sky above and was at the center

point of these three cosmic levels, establishing contact between them. It domesticated a space and gave meaning to the idea of 'home' in reference to the chthonic powers of the dead ancestors buried in the ground directly below the house (Vernant 1983b, 179). At the center of the house and the property, the 'hearth' was, on the vertical level of myth and religion, at the center between the gods of the sky above and those of the earth below (Vernant 1983b, 188).[9] Through a complex set of totemic rites and rituals, it inaugurated spatial practices that served to delineate property and kinship ties. Founding spaces and memorializing places in the name of that elusive entity that was 'home', it doubly symbolizing both the property and the lineage of the clan.[10] .

**The 'home' as space of extension**

Within this type of symbolism, 'home' and the 'domestic', anchored in notions of the sacred hearth's 'permanence', 'fixity', and 'immutability' was contrasted with the not-'home', the non-domestic and savage world of nature (Vernant 1983c, 128). Domestic space, the enclosed and defined space of the οικοσ (**oikos**), which at the same time included the pastures and the fields associated with the clan's or family's property, was born in this order of mythic space in opposition to the 'wild', un-domesticated 'open' space--the foreign and undifferentiated territory of the outside[11]--as the hearth negotiated between nature and culture on the level of its spaces. Rooted to the ground at a fixed point of contact between the higher and the lower levels of the gods and the ancestors respectively, the hearth differentiated each household. On the basis of its symbolism in mythic space, it marked each domestic center In this way, it symbolized what Vernant calls the "incompatibility" between one house and the next as different hearths cannot be 'mixed' (Vernant 1983b, 188). While the Greeks had not yet developed notions of a differentiated social, political or public civic space, the 'home', marked by the notion of

physical 'enclosure', was given meaning as a mythologized space and idealized space in terms of a 'fixed' relation to the ground below. Through a mythic space in which directions did not hold the properties that they do in material space, the symbolic center of the house, captured by the sacred family hearth, mediated between an imagined and a material site to form the basis of 'home' as an 'enclosed', 'inner' space that not only offered shelter and protection from the wilds of nature, but also tied in with a complex network of cultural relations.

In the chapter that follows I will describe those cultural relations in detail. For the moment, working diachronically through the history of domestic space, I want to focus briefly on a second mediation that was achieved by the sacred hearth--that is, the mediation between this individualized, differentiated, and fixed position of the center in mythical space and its opposite, which emerged with the birth of civic, or political, space [12] In this second mediation was born a shift from 'home' as the center of a hierarchical 'inner' space, in relation to which the 'outside' was simply a non-differentiated space, to 'home' as the binary opposite of a civic and political space--a highly structured and ordered organization of space that housed a center of its own. Thus the 'home' became newly positioned in a binary and geometric relation to the center in addition to maintaining its old position in a mythic and hierarchical relation to it. This double articulation of the 'home' in Antiquity was represented by changes in the symbolic meaning of the hearth. Later, this same articulation was taken over by other technologies on the domestic level, technologies which further differentiated domestic space itself. However, the binarism outlined above remained the same, for this was a binarism that described the 'home' not only as the 'enclosed' and 'fixed' domestic space of mythical reality, but also as a 'private' space, born now in binary opposition to the newly formed 'public' one.

While it is also possible to discern a more fundamental entrance into culture resulting from the technology of the hearth on the level of a culinary transition from the raw to the cooked,[13] it is principally as a religious technology, through its links to mythical and sacred spaces, that this entrance became articulated with clearly patriarchal structures of power.

**Gender and the 'home'**

In the symbolic universe of Antiquity that united family 'hearth' and family 'home' through mythic orders of domestic space, these were the seat and 'center' of patriarchal authority, male privilege and power. The stability and permanence of 'home' were a function of male property (the patrimony) and male lineage (patrilineage). Women, by contrast, were 'mobile' elements that circulated between 'hearths' (from the father's to the husband's) through the rituals of birth, death, and marriage. While I will go into these points at greater length in the following chapters, for the moment, suffice it to say that, following Vernant et al.'s exposition, women did not at this point express the connection with notions of either 'privacy' or 'home', both of which, as I will show in subsequent chapters, were still a function of male privilege and authority.

## 2. The Premodern 'Home' and the Rise of Binary Space: Vernant et al.

A change occurs, according to Vernant, in the seventh century with the appearance of the city-state (1983b, 181) and the transition from a mythic to a geometric view of 'center'.[14] Again, following changes in the technology and symbolic function of the hearth as largely outlined by Fustel de Coulanges, Vernant locates a transformation in the definition of domestic space that occurred with the installation of the public Hearth at the center of the city. Through this installation a binary spatial structure was born upon

which was grafted, first the idea of 'masculine' and 'feminine' spaces within the 'home' or household, and then the identification of the interior space of the 'home' with woman's space, the exterior space of politics and civic life with that of man. It is, as I will now show, in its gradual association with woman's sphere that the 'home' came to enjoy its association with post-industrial ideas of 'comfort', in addition to those of 'privacy', 'fixity' and 'enclosure'. In the next section, I will look at the emergence of binary space that occurred with the appearance of the city in terms of historians' discussions of the technology of the 'center' in the geometric view of space. I will make links between this emergence of binary space and the emergence of 'home' as a space of localization.

**The 'private' and the 'public' spaces**

As the expression of a geometric and abstract rather than a mythic and primitive view of space, the installation of the technology and symbolic apparatus of the public hearth had, according to Vernant, new implications for the definition of domestic space. Essentially, the difference was that now domestic space, or the 'private' dwelling, was not perceived in contrast to the undifferentiated, wild, savage, and undomesticated spaces of the field and country as the difference between an 'enclosed', 'interior' space and an 'open' or 'exterior' one, but took on a new meaning as the 'private', family space we know today. For this new geometric construction of the 'center' put into relief the mythic 'roots in a jar' in accordance with which domestic space embraced only vertical levels of orientation (Vernant 1983b, 180). However, it also put into relief the 'home"s position at the 'center' of a spatial order. In the shift from a vertical to a geometric representation, the 'home', as indeed all 'homes', became peripherally located in relation to a new center. This new 'center', whose dominions fanned out horizontally and geometrically, encompassed the domestic sites that dotted the surrounding urban and rural planes.

Vernant describes how the new abstract geometric order of space positioned the center in an (supposedly) 'egalitarian' rather than 'hierarchical' relation to its parts. The principal of 'center' a) as relation to the circumference and b) as equidistant from all points in the circumference is, according to Vernant, the principle expressed by the symbolic founding of the city with the raising of the sacred city hearth at its center. Through this principle, and its symbolic expression in the public city hearth, was born the opposition between the space of the 'public' sphere of political activity and that of the 'private' sphere of the family and household. Through it as well was born the idea of domestic space as an equal relation between households to the whole and to the society of which these now were a part (Vernant 1983a, 1983b, 1983f; Gernet 1981, Fustel de Coulanges 1956, 25).

The εστια κοινι (**estia koini**) was the public or 'common' hearth (Vernant 1983b, 188-189, 1983a, 208, 1983d, 232). This was not an individually held hearth but a commonly shared one. Set up at the center of the city, (in a building which the Greeks called the **prytaneum** 'prytany, **tholos, rotunda**)[15] it symbolized the entirety of a political community (1983a, 208; 1983d, 232). Not a 'private' hearth like those found in individual 'homes', its function was to represent every hearth and 'home' without being identified with any one. Vernant draws a parallel between the principles of geometry and spherical astronomy, its abstract organization of space, and the symbolic meaning of the common hearth (1983a, 208, 1983b, 189)--that is, the rational and scientific view of center as equidistant from its parts (1983b, 188) which, according to Vernant, was responsible for the emergence of 'political space' (1983d, 232). In this respect, it is revealing that the word used to describe the earth was '**hestia**', or 'hearth'. In the ancients' description of the earth as 'the hearth of the universe', Vernant identifies the vocabulary of a geometric perception of the universe (traceable, by his account, to Babylonian

astronomy), in which the earth holds a central and fixed position in relation to the cosmos (1983b, 188-9). In the following chapter I will discuss at greater length the foundations and implications of changing representations of the 'center' and I will look at some of its links to ideas about 'the feminine' in Antiquity.

**'Home' as homogeneous space**

Thus, if we follow Vernant's analysis, it becomes possible to see that:
the function of the hestia is no longer to differentiate between the different houses,nor to establish a contact between different cosmic levels. Now it is the expression of the symmetry in relationships that unite the equal citizens with the city. (1983b, 189) In the new relationship to a 'center' that is good for all individual hearths, the private dwelling gained new meaning. No longer the single center in a hierarchy of spaces, the domestic family dwelling, symbolized by the domestic family hearth, became but one individual center amongst multiple centers as the seat of power and authority shifted from the center of a domestic unity to that of a civic and urban one.

**'Home' as space of localization**[16]

Concomitantly, a new association was born identifying the 'private' space of the dwelling with the female, and the 'public', civic space with the male. However while now, with the rise of the public Hearth and the appearance of the city, an ideological notion of the separation between 'public' and 'private' as separate spheres corresponding to male and female tasks was born, this separation was not spatially 'lived' or experienced until after the Industrial Revolution. For while the domestic 'private' space of the family was clearly separated from the domestic 'public' space of a civil society, or nation, this distinction was not effectively operative in terms of the internal arrangement of the

'home' and the habitation of its interior spaces. For a description of the internal arrangements of domestic space that followed the transformation of 'home' from a male-dominated to a female-dominated sphere of influence (a transformation that I outlined above on the basis of the work of Vernant et al.), it is to the work of another historian and his followers that we must turn.

## 3. The Modern 'Home' and the Space of Localization: Philippe Ariès, et al.

For a discussion of the space in which is anchored the modern idea of 'home', we must turn to the work of Philippe Ariès, together with that of John Lucaks (1970), Leonore Davidoff et al. (1986), Witold Rybczynski (1986), Yvon Thébault (1987), Eli Zaretsky (1986), and others. In this section I will outline, through these historiographical discourses, changes that have taken place from the early Middle Ages up to the Industrial Revolution.

### The localization of work spaces and leisure spaces

In a collection of essays on The History of Private Life, edited by Paul Veyne (1987), there is an essay on the relation of the 'public' and the 'private' spheres within the Roman **domus** in which are described domestic arrangements of the domestic sphere that have continued to be in evidence, if we follow the investigations conducted by Ariès and Rybczynski, right up to the late Middle Ages and the centuries preceding the Industrial Revolution. In sum, these arrangements pertain to a domestic space that is a) itself partitioned into 'public' and 'private' quarters, and b) whose 'private' quarters remain largely undifferentiated Generally speaking, the 'public' quarters were areas of work in which a shop was set up at the street level and where business was conducted. However, what we might assume to be the 'private' area was, according to all these historians, by no

means 'private'.

The lack of differentiation in terms of the domestic and internal organization of the house during this period was demonstrated by the ambiguity of the **peristyle**, the central court at the heart of every wealthy Roman African residence Thébert 1987, 358). In his essay "'Private' and 'Public' Spaces: Components of the Domus," Yvon Thébert (Veyne 1987) discusses the ambiguity of the **peristyle** in terms of the complexity of the 'private' sphere in Roman Africa (Thébert 1987, 364 passim). This unique space which served both as an internal passageway, work space, and water supply was also the **locus** of a chapel in which stood, according to Thébert, an altar dedicated to the genius of the **domus** (1987, 365). In this area, embellished by "a combination of architectural and natural effects" (Thébert 1987, 364), a variety of activities took their place "from solitary pursuits to great receptions befitting the master's high status" (Thébert 1987, 364).

With the exception of the bedrooms and the 'private' baths (as opposed to 'common' city baths) characteristic of noble Roman African architecture (Thébert 1987, 379-80), 'privacy' was not a concept that was familiar to the times. People did not live in differentiated spaces. Children and adults, men and women, servants and masters lived a crowded collective existence in which rooms had no special functions. In this state of affairs, one did not have a room of one's own (Rybczynski 1986, 35) as even the bedroom remained a public space (Ariès 1962, 395). Life until the seventeenth century was, according to Ariès, "lived in public" (Ariès 1962, 405; cf. Rybczynski 1986, 35).

The medieval 'home' was essentially a 'public', not a 'private' place. Looking at the typical bourgeois townhouse of the fourteenth century, Rybczynski begins an examination of the history of the idea of 'home' whose minimalist differentiation of internal spaces remains within a pre-industrial (or pre-modern) order of living arrangements (Rybczynski 1986, 25). Here living quarters, attached to street-level shops,

were not even a series of rooms, but consisted in a "single large chamber--the hall--which was open up to the rafters" (Rybczynski 1986, 25). Like the **peristyle** of Roman Africa described by Thébault, this area had the ambiguous status of an undifferentiated internal space in which people ate, cooked, entertained, and even slept (Rybczynski 1986, 25), as beds or chests served as seats and clothes as mattresses. Indeed, public life was the most fully differentiated sphere of activity and while 'feminine' tasks were attributed to the governance of the domestic sphere, there was as yet no spatially structured conception of that activity besides the delineation of the kitchen which, according to Ariès, was the only differentiated space within the 'private' quarters (Ariès 1962, 393; cf. Rybczynski 1986, 73). In fact, it was the mobile movement of the often collapsible furniture that differentiated spaces for all the other activities and there was no attempt to form permanent arrangements (Rybczynski 1986, 27). According to Rybczynski, in the Middle Ages people didn't so much 'live' in their houses as 'camp' in them (Rybczynski 1986, 26).

**The ideology of 'home' and the localization of women**

It was only with the onset of Industrial capitalism and the excursion of males into the public work-place that the differentiation between 'public' and 'private' became spatially experienced and concomitantly, the ideology of 'home', 'privacy', 'comfort', as well as 'sanitation' with its association with the 'feminine' realm, fully established. Together with the birth of the age of the 'family' and that of the 'child', came the idea of 'home' as a 'moral force' (Davidoff et al 1976, 142-3), a sheltered retreat away from the 'public' life of power--political, economic, educational, scientific--an idea that became increasingly associated with "woman's place" (Davidoff et al. 1976, 140). Indeed, it was at this time that the 'home' became representative of an extreme of the kind of 'privacy' in

which individualism, and personal life could flourish (Davidoff et al. 1976, 141; Zaretsky 1986, 59). Within this representation, the theme of 'home' became both symbol and setting of an organic community and, according to Davidoff et al., the nineteenth century saw the 'temple of the hearth' become a powerfully evocative image of this community (Davidoff et al. 1976, 153).

Unlike the domestic society of the ancient family of Classical and pre-Classical Antiquity whose hearth-keeper and hearth-lord was the house-master, this was a community whose linchpin was the house-mistress (Davidoff et al. 1976, 153). In the domestic symbolism of the nineteenth century, mothering and nurturing became important elements in this new 'cult of domesticity' as the burden of responsibility for maintaining a private refuge from society began to rest upon women (Davidoff et al. 1976, 157; cf. Zaretsky 1986, xi, 14 passim).

**Technologies of sex and the family bedroom**

In the development of this 'organic community' of the nineteenth century, the 'home', elevated now to mystical levels of sanctification, demanded that sexual passion be cast out of its ideal as a 'double-standard' in sexual morality wrought a new antithesis between the utilitarian locus of sexuality in the parents' bedroom (Foucault 1980b, 3) and the promiscuous life of the city (cf. Davidoff et al. 1976, 158).

"A single locus of sexuality was acknowledged in social space as well as at the heart of every household," writes Michel Foucault (1980b, 3), who sees the nineteenth century family space as a 'point of sexual saturation' (120) for the psychiatrization of sex (120), the hysterization of woman and women's bodies (121), the pedagogization of children's sex and the socialization of procreative behavior (104), and an obligatory locus of effects (108). Here the separation between the 'private' and the 'public' becomes

historically and theoretically realigned in terms of a new ideal--that of the 'personal' (Zaretsky 1986, 15). Thus contemporary historians picture the nineteenth century 'home' as a place where are aspects of 'personal' life unfolded. In this picture, it is only in the nineteenth century that 'home' became constituted as a world apart, a private and 'psychological' realm outside society (Zaretsky 1986, 19) in which sex, the body, reproduction, and all facets of the 'personal', including women, could be contained.

**The internal order of domestic space**

Along with this identification of the 'personal' as a 'world apart' (in theoretical and historical terms), came a differentiation of the internal domestic space itself. By the seventeenth century, with the excursion of males into the work-place, the house, according to Rybczynski, came under feminine control (Rybczynski 1986, 73). Subdivided into communal rooms for leisure, the house now also included 'private' rooms for different members of the family. Activities separated the public leisure space below from the private space above (Rybczynski 1986, 110).

Rybczynski (1986), Ariès (1962), as well as Michel Foucault (1980b), have all outlined the manner in which domestic space--a largely homogeneous space in which parents, and then children, boys, and girls, were all scrambled together--became the site of a multiple set of arrangements, reflecting a number of divisions: divisions of sleeping spaces, divisions between leisure spaces and work spaces, parents' spaces and children's spaces. Indeed, the spatial arrangements of nineteenth century bourgeois society, the separation of grown-ups and children, the polarity established between the parents' bedroom and that of the children, the relative segregation of boys and girls (Foucault 1980b, 46), all made domestic space into the principal locus of a complicated network "saturated with fragmentary, and mobile sexualities" (Foucault 1980b, 46).

However, the clear geographical separation between the 'public' and the 'private' in terms of work and leisure that was wrought by the Industrial Revolution was not alone to bring about a heightened awareness of the possibilities of 'privacy' and its attendant differentiation of internal spaces. There was an additional feature of the Industrial Revolution, one that also marked the domestic sphere as a principally female-dominated sphere. This was the advent of a domestic labor technology.

**Domestic work and the feminine idea of 'home'**

In his book Home: A Short History of an Idea (1986), Witold Rybczynski outlines the manner in which it was the advent of domestic technology (principally in the form of electricity) that coded the domestic sphere as 'feminine'. In this respect the bedroom, in Foucault's discussion, offers a useful counter-point to the kitchen, in Rybczynski's, as the **locus operandi** of the structures of power in the new modern, or post-industrial, 'home'. Rybczynski locates a shift accompanying the introduction of electricity in the gendered balance of power in the 'home'. According to him, electricity coming in 'through the kitchen door', displaced the 'masculine' idea of 'home' symbolized by the centrality of the drawing room with the 'feminine' one, symbolized by the kitchen (161). Accordingly, the 'feminine' kitchen stove could be said to replace the 'masculine' fireplace as the symbolic expression of the domestic hearth.[17] However, the advent of domestic labor technology did not only, according to Rybczynski, give way to a strictly feminine organization of the domestic order, but brought along with it the very notions of 'intimacy' and 'comfort' that belong to our own contemporary notions of 'home'.

For there is a dual meaning to this idea of domestic 'comfort', which articulates a new binarism into the space of domesticity--and that is, the binary opposition of work and leisure. By the end of the eighteenth century, the development of a domestic

technology was seen through the eyes of the persons who worked there (Rybczynski 1986, 161). For Rybczynski (cf. Cowan 1983), the excursions of men into the work-place resulting from the Industrial revolution was not the only factor in the 'feminization' of the 'home'. As "woman's place", 'home' became a place that not only gained the status of a leisure exit, far from the madding crowd of industrial city streets, it also became a principle labor field in itself. With the advent of advanced post-industrial domestic technology, 'comfort' became a property of labor as well as leisure related endeavors (Rybczynski 1986, 160-1).

Thus we might say, following Rybczynski, that the 'masculine' idea of 'home' as a sedentary domain became displaced by the 'feminine' idea of work. With the advent of domestic television technology, however, this bifurcation of the idea of 'home' yields very separate, and in fact competing, internal spaces and 'comfort' as an ideology no longer subsumes their respective functions.

## 4. The Postmodern 'Home' and the Emergence of Virtual Space: Spigel, et al.

Indeed, the history of domestic space and of the ongoing definitions that 'home' has received, do not stop with the Industrial Revolution, or with the development of industrial domestic technology such as enhance the value of work. This history presents a complicated and ongoing historiographical problem. Indeed, historiographers have begun to look at changes wrought by the appearance of domestic technologies that are generally independent of the value of work. With the development of television and broadcasting technology (communications technologies) a new principle is introduced into the coding of domestic space, one that affects both the discourse on the relation between 'public' and 'private' (spaces) as well as that of the principle of 'masculine' and 'feminine' (ones). In the introduction of the domestic television set within the space of domesticity two new

axes of study present themselves that cross with the history of domestic space. These are the history of spectators on the one hand, and the construction of subject-positions for family members on the other. While both these axes are only just beginning to be explored, they nonetheless indicate significant changes in the theoretical topography of domestic space. In terms of the ensemble of relations that are set off against one another and implicated by each other these axes form new configurations in our idea of 'home'.

**Virtual space and the dissolution of binary space**

There have been two major upheavals that are attributed to television's installation into the domestic space of the newly privatized family 'home'. These are 1) its effects upon the differentiation between 'public' and 'private' spaces due to the very (ontological) 'presence' of the outside world on the domestic television screen; and 2) its effect on the differentiation between leisure and work spaces. In both cases there is potential breakdown of the male-female binary opposition that was wrought by the Industrial Revolution in its first phases (as localization and extension cross). To what extent this represents a mutation of the first phase or a new and significant rupture is a question that needs to be asked as well as answered. In the final chapter of this thesis I will look at some of the theoretical discourses in feminism and postmodernism in terms of these changes in the theoretical map of the domestic interior. For the moment, I will discuss the two upheavals that the apparent dissolution of spaces involves in terms of discourses about the history of spectators and the construction of subjects. In both instances, the introduction of the domestic television set creates the distinct topography of the 'home' as a space of the articulation of social, economic, and cultural relations.

## The 'place' of domestic leisure technology

In the field of Communication and Cultural Studies, researchers like David Morley (198[illegible]), Lynn Spigel (1988; 1989; 1990), Meaghan Morris (1988b), Patricia Mellencamp (1990), Raymond Williams (1975), Leonore Davidoff et al. (1986) and others have attempted to describe the changes that the introduction of leisure (communications) technologies into the domestic sphere have produced. On the basis of his idea of 'mobile-privatization' to describe the changes in domestic living conditions, Raymond Williams points to a paradox in contemporary experience of domesticity: the growing self-sufficiency of the technologically equipped 'home' which is coupled with an increased mobility (Williams 1975, 26-27). The 'mobility' that accompanies the new 'privatization' is a feature of advanced communication technology that has the potential of feeding from external sources. Traceable to the first developments of broadcast technology, the domestic television, displacing the cinema and the theatre as principal entertainment site, has wide ranging cultural implications in terms of the ways in which the 'home', brought now to incorporate public spaces, is being experienced.

## Extension and localization

Lynn Spigel (1988) describes at length the changes in the ideology of privacy and retreat that characterize the suburban housing boom in the post second world war period as a quasi return to a Victorian cult of domesticity. Along with Betty Friedan, whose classic study of the return of 'feminine' values of the domestic ideal, her study looks at changes in the post-war domestic economy in terms of what borrowing from Rybczynski, I shall terms the 'feminine' idea of the 'home' (Rybczynski 1986, 161). Thus the 'space-merging' technology of television, as well as architectural design, forms the foreground of a larger historic process in which the 'home' was designed and designated to

incorporate social space (Spigel 1988, 21). On the one hand, the introduction of the television object changed the internal design of the 'home' as the 'theatricalization'[18]y of domestic space was given to a new organization, an organization around the **proscenium** space of the television object. At the same time, that it represented that space by the very content of the image that occupies its own virtual and electronic spaces. In this particular design, the television brought to the middle class domestic interior, an entertainment world that unfolded in the context of the hustle and bustle of city lights and city streets. This refiguration of the spatial boundaries of the enclosed domestic interior converged specifically around the widening problematic of the domestic isolation of women and her 'confinement' within a space that was and is physically and geographically bounded

The apparent erasure of spheres that resulted from the incorporation of 'social' space by television has leant itself to both utopian and dystopian depictions of domestic space. However, at the base of these depictions is the conflict between women's domestic isolation and their integration in social life. Spigel traces this conflict to the dual nature of the television object-medium which forms two separate but intrinsically linked domestic spaces, the space within which is placed the television object, and the virtual space of the television medium itself. Within the domestic space contained by the frame of the television screen is an imaginary experience of the 'home' in terms of social integration as constructed by television. Thus the 'home', and along with it, the middle-class dream of domesticity become the principal setting in television sit-coms which themselves produce a set of popular discourses on domestic space.

**The problem of the localization of women**

In focussing upon television's 'place' in the 'home', a new articulation of women and domestic space is achieved that while it appears to overturn the boundaries between

public and private spaces, re-installs them on a different register. Not only in terms of the emergence of the 'home' as a "modern theatre of pornography" that subtends the mass subculture market of video porn (Mellencamp 1990, 62), it is, for some, also a "replication in technology of an ideology of privatized spaces of unequal economics and labor" (Mellencamp 1990, 62). Arguably taken as the function of what Morris calls a "'hallucinatory' spatial resemblance" (Morris 1988b, 221), the 'home' becomes a "life-style" space of virtual realities and 'commodity semeiosis' at the same time as the principal space consecrated to the performance of family life, women's work and leisure, a space in which women continue to lead their daily lives. In this respect, one might compare the cultural and epistemological production of 'place' that characterizes the early philosophical discourses on 'home' with those emerging in the latter half of the twentieth century in terms of changes in the articulation of binary oppositions like 'masculine' and 'feminine', 'public' and 'private' spaces. A shift to premodern forms in terms of the absence of these distinctions as chief indicators of spatial boundaries is quite evident. However, in terms of what emerge as the other aspects of these binary forms in Antiquity (which I will discuss in the following chapters) a different interpretation suggests itself. Indeed, when read in the context of the philosophical discourse of gendered place within which the cultural construction of the 'home' as a unitary, bounded and homogeneous space extends, it becomes important to apply distinctions of space and place to discursive formations that take either one of these poles as their points of departure. This becomes essential if we consider a second feature of the post-war development of communications and broadcast technology, and the introduction of television into domestic space, and that is its effects upon changes in the 'masculine' idea of 'home'.

**The masculine idea of 'home' revisited: breaking down the barriers of extension**

From the point of view of a 'masculine' idea of the 'home', the presence of a domestic leisure technology brings along with it a shift in the distribution of power. This 'colonization' of domestic space by television technology serves to relocate the site of a 'masculine' and 'public' mode of power as the extension of masculine privilege into what has for some time (though as I have shown, not always) been a feminine identified sphere. David Morley's study Family Television: Cultural Power and Domestic Leisure (1986) examines the differential power, responsibility and control within the family that occurs around the domestic television set. Here a metaphoric association of television set and family hearth (Morley 1986, 14) is characteristic of a number of cultural and media studies texts (cf. inter alia Frith 1988, 32; Morley 1990, 31; Czitrom 1982, 60 ff.; Barthes 1980, 2; Barnouw 1975, v).

Morley grounds his analysis of domestic power relations in the emergence of the 'home' equipped with television as a principal site of leisure (1986, 15). Thus he describes domestic space as an ambiguous space within which the boundaries between work and leisure spaces are no longer physically drawn. However, where these boundaries are subject to power struggles between male and female shapers of space, there are indications of concomitant breakdowns of unitary subjectivites as television summons different audiences and different subject-positions within different viewers (Spigel 1988, 41, inter alia). As a site of struggle between competing spaces, subjectivities, and activities, the 'home' enters a post-modern phase in which the localization and extension of objects are no longer separable. Donna Haraway, for example, has argued in favor of looking upon contemporary culture as a 'cyborg' culture on the basis of the idea that today's homework economy incorporates both 'masculine' and 'feminine' spaces (Haraway 1990).

## 5. Summary

In the above I have tried to outline some of the changes that the definition of domestic space has undergone and how they are attributable and attributed concurrently to changes in the discourse on 'public' and 'private', 'masculine' and 'feminine' spaces. However, I have also tried to show how both in their representations by historiographers of the history of domestic space as well as in the definitions that have permeated Western thought, these discourses have been largely articulated with representations of sex and gender.

If, in the emergence of a new definition of domestic space that is occasioned by the advent of television, there appears to be a dissolution of both the carefully defined spaces of 'public' and 'private' characteristic of the first stages of Industrial capitalism, as well as a recursion to a premodern or pre-sixth century homogeneous and masculinized 'center', it would be necessary to examine the evolution of the definitions of domestic space with a mind to a more careful identification of the operation of the principles of 'power' in the construction of space. One might focus, for instance, on the changes in the technologies of domestic space, studying variously the technologies of the domestic hearth, the fully-implemented kitchen,[9] and the domestic television set as nodal points in the operations of power through a discourse of and on space.

In the two chapters that follow, I will discuss the operations of patriarchal power as they manifest themselves in the early history of the 'home'. I will do so by way of two considerations. First, in the next chapter, I will look at narrations concerning the 'center' in Classical Antiquity (and before) with particular reference to the domestic and external spaces of the house, the body, and the city and their relation to the oneiric symbolism 'the feminine'. Second, in the chapter following it, I will discuss specific practices of

domestic space, those 'little tactics of the habitat' that revolve around the maintenance of patriarchal power in Antiquity and I will consider their effectivity in terms of maintaining the status of women. In both instances, I will focus my discussion upon the discursive historical representations of the sacred family hearth in Classical and pre-Classical Antiquity.

## Notes

[1] Michel de Certeau goes into the problem of historicity and the production of place at greater length in his L'écriture de l'histoire (1975b) and in an interview "Écriture et histoire" (1975a) See also The Practice of Everyday Life (1988, 55)

[2] M. I. Finley describes some of the political underpinnings of the phrase "city-state" in rendering the Greek word **polis**. This phrase, according to Finley, was used to apply to 'town' in the narrow geographical sense and to the state in the political sense See his essay "The Ancient City: From Fustel de Coulanges to Max Weber and Beyond (1977) 306

[3] Michel Foucault gives this definition of structuralism as the effort to establish just this type of 'configurations' amongst elements (1986, 22)

[4] It has already been acknowledged within feminism that the 'family' is a slippery term Michèle Barrett and Juliet Mitchell have produced discussions which suggest that the 'family' does not exist other than as an ideological construct (Barrett and McIntosh 1982, 7), that it remains a 'cultural creation' rather than a 'natural' object (Mitchell 1984, 18-19) This position is particularly important when considering what Barrett describes as the 'vexed place' of the family in feminism (Barrett 1982, 20) I will return to these points in chapter four of this study

[5] "The Greeks," he continues in a footnote, "called this altar estia (estia) [which] was the name by which they afterwards designated the goddess Vesta" (1956, 25, n 1)

[6] The intercalation of these two terms (property and kinship) around the 'home', or domestic dwelling, has been addressed by both de Certeau (1988, 55, 215, n 24) and by Pierre Bourdieu (1977)

[7] Georges Dumézil has drawn parallels between 'the fires of worship' in the ancient religions of the West and those of the East In his studies of Indo-European religions he finds the etymological roots of the Greek **hestia** or **estia** in the Indo-European verb 'to burn' (1970, vol 1, 311 ff )

[8] Vernant develops his idea of a 'mythic' view of space in Antiquity which he contrasts to both Babylonian astronomy and Greek geometry (1983b)

[9] Georges Dumézil describes how, in the last century of the Roman Republic, the ancestor of **Lar** becomes a common synonym for "house, dwelling place" (Dumézil 1970. Vol 2, 342)

[10] Fustel de Coulanges makes a similar point (1967, 33) Debates about the exact position of the buried ancestors have subsequently caused many of Fustel de Coulanges valuable insights in this regard to become buried in sophistical disputations that I will discuss again in chapter three below

[11] Vernant's discussion of the inside and outside spaces of the **oikos** is developed in his essay "Hestia-Hermes: The Religious Expression of Space and Movement in Ancient Greece" (1983c) I will enter into my own discussion of this essay in the following chapter below. How this same opposition is later taken up in Xenophon's **Oeconomicus** and its implications for the history of philosophy will be discussed in my

chapter four below.

[12] While I refer to a political space, this is a political space proper, i.e the space of the polis. For it must be kept in mind that in this analysis, every space is 'political' in so far as space is amenable to relations of power No arbitrary presuppositions about an opposition between the 'personal' and the 'political' is being engaged in here On the contrary, we are looking to unearth some of its less obvious roots

[13] Claude Lévi-Strauss has demonstrated this well in The Raw and the Cooked (1983) and in "The Culinary Triangle" (1966) Thus he points out how the discovery of domestic fire (as opposed to the sun's fire), with its effect upon the practices of cooking, had its impact upon the mythical relations between sky and earth (1983, 289) In his From Honey to Ashes, he remarks upon the role of the domestic cooking hearth in this transition from a state of nature to one of culture (1973, 65)

[14] According to Vernant, it is possible to locate significant changes in patterns of thought with the appearance of the city state in the seventh century A D , as well as to identify the emergence of two levels upon which life was lived the public and the private (1983b, 181). A similar point is expressed by Hannah Arendt in The Human Condition when she writes "The distinction between a public and a private sphere of action corresponds to the household and the political realms, which have existed as distinct, separate entities at least since the rise of the ancient city-state" (1958, 28)

[15] Vernant discusses the relation of these to the public hearth (1983c, 147)

[16] It is de Certeau who points out two types of spatial distinction--distinctions that separate a subject from its exteriority and distinctions that localize objects (and subjects) (1988, 123). Accordingly one might look upon the 'home' as constituted, on the one hand, as a space that separates a subject/s from its/their exteriority and, on the other, as a space that localizes objects/subjects De Certeau suggests that 'the wall' founds the basis for the constitution of the first (123) In chapter four below I will discuss how for Xenophon, a philosopher in Antiquity, it was effectively the 'roof' that founds the basis for this

In Foucault's discussion "Of Other Spaces" (1986), one finds an allusion to a similar distinction between 'extension' on the one hand, and 'localization' on the other (1986, 22-23) However, Foucault relates the space of 'emplacement' to a characteristic of the Middle Ages and suggests that it was only with the seventeenth century and the discoveries of Galileo that we see the birth of the space of localization (1986, 23) Clearly he did not consider the problematic positioning of women within the 'home' that had taken place long before In the chapters that follow, I will discuss some of the early structures of this positioning and their implications in the constitution of the 'home' both as a space of extension and a space of localization

[17] For a discussion of the history of the fireplace, see Rybczynski (1986, 19, 91, 161)

[18] Spigel describes this theatricalization on two planes first in terms of the television-object installed into the family living space, and second in terms of the television-medium that describes that space. Spigel discusses the latter in terms of family sit-coms of the fifties and their depiction of domestic space as part of their own representational strategies (1988, 12, 23 ff ).

[19] Lynn Spigel has made the interesting discovery of the phenomenon of a TV-stove (1989, 337) that preceded the full emergence of the contemporary television set

## Chapter Two

## House, Body, City, and 'the Feminine': A Metaphorics of Center

> One cannot determine the center and exhaust totalization because the sign which replaces the center, which supplements it, taking the center's place in its absence--this sign is added, occurs as a surplus, as a **supplement**.
>
> Jacques Derrida, "Sign, Structure, and Play"

### Introduction

What the map cuts up, the story, according to de Certeau, cuts across (1984a, 128). In the last chapter, my thesis l[illegible]d at the 'map' as leading paradigm for the **topoi** that occupy the critical discourse on [illegible]ne'. It is now to the 'story' that I turn and to narrations about the 'home' and **metaphorai** of domestic space as these touch upon three symbolic representations of the 'center': those of 'house', 'body' and 'city'. In fact, if we follow Seaman's typological order, any explanation of 'house' (and consequently of 'home') requires one of 'body' and 'city' as well (Seamon 1987, 12). In all three cases, however, it is a metaphorics of 'the feminine' that yields the story of 'center'. This metaphorics plays a double game, in terms of the operations of power, as women and 'the feminine' are both oppositionally constructed in relation to the 'home'. Following Meaghan Morris, whose discussion I will enter into in some detail during my last chapter, I call this a metaphorics of the 'home' (cf. Morris 1988a, 44).

In the contemporary critique of meaning that has made all reference to fundamentals, absolute and empirical 'centers'--including God, Man, Woman, and Self--a self-reflexive function of the symbolic system, the sign which replaces the 'center' has been designated as the 'Phallus', its function as 'the Phallic function'.[1] It is in opposition to the totalizing dimension of this orientation that the following has been conceived. With a view to bringing together evidence (in skeletal and preliminary form) of a counter-designation, within the same symbolic terms as the above, it has been conceived to move within the parameters of undisputed historical evidence, merely shifting away from imposed symbols[2] and what Rita Gross calls "constructs of ultimacy" (Gross 1977, 17) like the Phallus, that are by now all too familiar to us, to the suppressed ones that are not. For, as Foucault reminds us

"man is only a recent invention, a new figure not yet two centuries old, a new wrinkle in our knowledge...that...will disappear again as soon as that knowledge has discovered a new form (1970, xxiii).

In this chapter, therefore, I shall look to unknot some of the particularities of a non-phallic symbolism that circulates within the discourse on 'home' via the equation of the 'center' with 'the feminine'. I shall do so by examining the three-fold expression of this equation as it inhabits the symbolic construction of the spaces of 'house', 'body', and 'city'. My principal references shall once again be to accounts that embrace the horizons of Classical Antiquity; for it is, according to my argument in this thesis, these horizons that stand in the most need of recognition. Thus, in each of these constructions, the symbolism of the sacred hearth provides the basis for a series of narrations about the feminization of the 'center'. It is to that symbolism that my chapter will first turn, before addressing its diegetical forms.

## 1. 'Center' and the Symbolic Meaning of Hestia

There is a holy object at Delphi. Inscribed with the name "Mother Earth", it stands eleven and a quarter inches high and measures fifteen inches wide. The size of a charcoal fire, it is the limestone replica of the "heap of glowing charcoal, kept alive by a coming of white ash" that was, in the words of mythographer Robert Graves, the "archaic aniconic image of the Great White Goddess, in use throughout the Eastern Mediterranean" (Graves 1957, 75). Said to mark the center of the world, this holy object, protruding from the surface and reaching down like an umbilicus into the entrails of the earth, became known as the **omphalos**, or navel-boss, the literal seat of Hestia, goddess of the Hearth (Roussel 1911, 86-91; Audiat 1932, 299-317).[3] In his Eumenides Aeschylus describes this 'sanctuary' as "the center-stone of the earth" (Aeschylus 1926, lines 165, 168).

The association of Hestia, the Hearth-fire goddess, with the idea of 'center' was also expressed by the poets and philosophers of the times. The Pythagorean writer Philolaus writes: "The first composite (entity), the One, which is the center of the Sphere, is called Hearth" (Freeman 1956, 74:7). It is also echoed by Euripides' who, according to Macrobius, writes: "And thee, O Mother Earth,--and the Wise among men call thee Hestia--as thou sittest in the ether" (qtd. in Macrobius I, 23:8).[4] Macrobius himself maintains that if Hestia remains alone in the house of the gods, it means that the earth remains motionless at the center of the universe (Macrobius 1969, I, 23:8).[5] A similar idea is expressed in Ovid's Fasti when he writes: "Vesta (Roman Hestia) is the same as the earth" (Ovid 1931, VI: 267).

But what is the nature of this symbolism? Where does it come from? What does it give rise to? How does a hearth-fire and its altar[6] become the symbol of center as expressed by the **omphalos**? How does it compare, and how does it relate to the

symbolism of center expressed by the Phallus? In a critical age such as ours, in which the center and the entire concept of 'center' (as traditionally defined) has been put into question, an answer to this question is mandatory. For it harkens to a 'centrism' whose symbolism eludes the Phallic function and the designation of primary principles in the name of male symbols of ultimacy such as Man, God, and so forth.

It is in just this spirit of uncovering female 'constructs' of ultimacy (or female gods) buried within the tradition of the West that recent years have seen an outpouring of material looking to Hestia as the oppressed archetype of true feminine identity. However the problem facing these works is the problem facing any kind of scholarship on Hestia, that being the precise lack of documentation on this "aniconic" construct that so desperately lacks representation in both the literary as well as the visual arts. Of Vesta, her Roman counter-part, Ovid writes: "Long did I foolishly think that there were images of Vesta: afterwards I learned that there are none under her curved dome" (Ovid 1967, VI: 295-300). As a consequence, rather than breaking new ground, these studies fall back into stereotyped images of feminine identity as house-bound and inward-turning that fail to challenge the universality of the Phallic function.

Fortunately however, the sacerdotal function of Hestia is not exhausted by her limited anthropomorphism that finds expression in the equation occurring in these studies of woman with 'home', the 'private', etc.[7] Honored as one of the twelve Olympic gods, Hestia first appears in Hesiod's Theogony, the daughter of Rheia and Cronos, and sister of Zeus and Demeter (Hesiod 1982, 38: 453). There are, in addition, two Homeric Hymns dedicated to her name (Boer 1970, 140-141) and she also appears in the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite where not only is her full genealogy expounded as the daughter of Cronos and Rheia, but where also the major clues to her aniconic significance can be found. A "venerated virgin," she also "has her sit [seat] in the center of the house,"

wherein, according to Homer, she has "the richest portion," and in virtue of which she claims a double honor. For, the Hymn concludes: "In all the temples of the gods she is honoured, and among all the mortals she is a venerated goddess" (1970, 73).[8] Thus she appears under another aspect, which being by far her most influential in the Ancient World, is also her least recognized one in the contemporary world (and by academic studies). For besides the name of an Olympic goddess, Hestia--the Greek εστια (**estia**)--is also a common noun designating 'hearth' (Liddell and Scott 1925, I: 698). Thus it is predominantly in this capacity, as the seat of an ancient hearth-cult predating and concurrent with her appearance in the Greek pantheon, that Hestia acquires the most far reaching significance (Farnell 1977, 345-373).[9] Indeed, here have been a number of studies of the archaic institution of the sacred hearth, coming primarily from French historical scholarship, all of which share an appreciation of the Hearth as the seat of a symbolic function.

Fustel de Coulanges (1900), Louis Gernet (1981), and Jean-Pierre Vernant (1983c) are illustrious classical scholars who have each in their own way sought to penetrate the symbolism and sacra of a lost age--remote enough to be revealing and yet close enough to be available for study. All engaged in the historical enterprise, they have each contributed to reconstructing a substratum of our history--a substratum in which it is the sacred hearth that functions as the primary symbol of 'the center'. Together with another contemporary French historian-philosopher Jean-Joseph Goux (1984), these authors' work on the symbolic function of the hearth in Classical and pre-Classical Antiquity constitutes a rudimentary foundation for situating the contemporary metaphorics of 'center' (and its implications for the history of domestic space) within a much broader framework and larger historical context than that traditionally confined to the phallic function.

While in no way assuming to provide a comprehensive picture either of these authors' work on the subject of the hearth or of the range of topics that this subject opens, what I have undertaken in the following is to introduce the reader to the significance of the institution of the sacred hearth within the contemporary problematic of the phallic signifier. Covering only the main points of each author's contribution to the study of the symbolic function of the hearth, I shall attempt to bring together discourses in favor of prioritizing an alternative and anterior symbolic function and its signifier. For, it will be seen that what we have in the sacred hearth, is what we can call an '**omphalo**'-centric' as opposed to phallocentric symbolic function; a symbolic function whose primary signifier (or symbol), the **omphalos**, brings into new focus the metaphorics of 'center' that is posed in contemporary discourse, thereby offering a new rubric within which discussions of subjectivity--male as well as female--can be rescued from contemporary criticism's obsession with the totalizing symbolism of its own primary signifier. In this way, we might eventually look instead at how ideas about gender are used to erect religious constructs as well as how these constructs in turn affect the circulation of ideas about gender. For when looking upon the period of Antiquity, it is far from clear as to how 'the feminine', in both religious or quotidian settings, operates. Indeed, it is Sarah B. Pomeroy who notes the inherent ambiguity of the status of women when she asks the question why, "when pagan goddesses were, in their way, as powerful as gods,...was the status of women so low?" (Pomeroy 1975, ix). In this respect, what we are looking to accomplish is not so much to uncover female symbols of ultimacy, as much as to see how symbols of 'the feminine'--that is, representations of gender in religious symbols of ultimacy (like Hestia)--are actually used in the service of patriarchal power.

## 2. 'House', 'Body', 'City' and the Symbolism of the Center

In this section I propose to compare the findings of three works in traditional scholarship on the Hellenic era that together form the foundation for a picture of the symbolic function of the sacred hearth. These are 1) Louis Gernet's essay "Political Symbolism: the Public Hearth" (1981, 332-337), 2) Jean-Pierre Vernant's essay "Hestia-Hermes: The Religious Expression of Space and Movement in Ancient Greece," (1983c, 127-175) and 3) Fustel de Coulanges' The Ancient City (1900). However, due to the latent nature of content in this material, I will not treat their works in chronological order. Instead, I have chosen to pursue a sequence which demonstrates the evolution of the idea of the symbolic function of the hearth through a dialectic of alternative sites for the principle of 'center': the arbitrary and the fixed. Based upon changes in the spatial (**omphalic**) concept of 'center', this dialectic traces the evolution of the symbolism of the sacred hearth. From its more accessible site in the institution of the public city hearth in Classical times, through its more remote one as found in the institution of the domestic family hearth in pre-Classical Antiquity, my discussion will trace the evolution of the symbolism of the hearth right up to its primary site in an institution that lies at the very heart of the symbolism of the 'home' as we know it.

In the first part of this section I will discuss the article by Louis Gernet. It will be seen that this essay, focussing as it does upon the political symbolism of the public hearth, is significant in that it is the first to situate the symbolic function of the hearth in its symbolization of the 'center'. However, differentiating between the fixed nature of the center as designated by the **omphalos** and the abstract, arbitrary nature of the 'center' as designated by the public hearth, Gernet situates the origin of the symbolic function of the (sacred) hearth in an abstract concept of space. In the second part of this section I will examine Jean-Pierre Vernant's contribution to understanding the symbolic function of the

hearth. It will be seen how in this essay, which examines the symbolism of the precursor of the public hearth--the domestic family hearth--Vernant argues for (its role in) a fixed concept of 'center' as the seat of the symbolic function of the hearth. Finally in the third part of this section, I will examine Fustel de Coulanges' contribution to the study of the symbolic function of the sacred hearth. Written in the often dated terminology of an era that had not yet fully uncovered the language of structural analysis (at the same time as it anticipates it),[10] this work, taken in conjunction with that of Gernet and Vernant, offers one of the most formidable accounts of the origin of the symbolic function as demonstrated by a symbolism that lies at the heart of one of the oldest institutions (known to man). By means of his analysis of symbolism of the domestic hearth, Fustel de Coulanges gives evidence of the very arbitrary and theoretical nature of a metaphorics of 'center' and the 'home' that alone displaces the **omphalic** function.

### 'City': Louis Gernet and the metaphorics of 'center'

Described by Vernant as philosopher, sociologist, Hellenist, ethnologist, besides historian, Louis Gernet who belongs to the generation of Mauss, Granet, and Durkheim, is like his contemporaries concerned with answers to the question of how and why forms of thought and life in which the West had its origins were constituted (1981, viii). If indeed, as Foucault suggests, it is no longer possible to think in our day other than in the void left by the disappearance of "man" (Foucault 1970, 342), the research of Louis Gernet, together with the other studies mentioned above, is of great worth. It is precisely in its contribution to piercing that void that Gernet's work on the symbolism of the public hearth stands well above his other contributions.

One of eight essays, which he himself has selected from the corpus of his work to figure in the anthology that was posthumously published six years after his death, his

essay on the political symbolism of the hearth, originally entitled "Sur le symbolisme politique en Grèce ancienne: Le Foyer commun,"[11] stands out as the epitome of his accomplishment, an accomplishment which Vernant describes as being concerned not so much with "the foundations of systems as the manner in which they were successively established, modified, and destroyed" (1981, ix-x). For, the public hearth stands out, in the context of his work, as just that "turning point" in the history of our culture at which a qualitative change took place in the very concept of 'center'--a turning point which goes far to explain the evolution of a state of affairs that, as we can see, ultimately threatens the disappearance of 'center' altogether, including that of Man, Woman, and Self.

Gernet's preoccupation with the evolution of a metaphorics of 'center' is expressed in the opening lines of his essay in which he makes reference to the symbolic function (and changes within it). He writes:

> To study the "signified" in terms of the "signifier" is to study a social mode of thought that is at times actually richer, since it is not expressed in the usual sort of language....On encountering it, we discover that it is the means of making contact with some historical values that other modes of thought no longer preserve.
>
> In ancient Greece we find a number of these symbols, which by definition belong to the category of space; **they are centers**. (my emphasis; 1981, 322)

Concerned as he is with the turning points of history (though particularly in political history), Gernet sees in the institution of the public hearth one such 'center' that allows us to uncover what lay at the origin of social life and thought. In this case, as Gernet is primarily concerned with the evolution of political symbolism, he is interested in looking at the origin of the social life of the **polis** or city: "By supposition a religious symbol, the Hearth is something quite different. In a period of crisis, it had the privilege of conveying what lay at the origin of the city" (337). In keeping with the political orientation of his essay, Gernet does not seek to go beyond the public hearth. While recognizing the

existence of its predecessor, the domestic family hearth, Gernet discounts the relevance of that institution (technology) of the symbolic function by virtue of its lack of a political dimension: "It is impossible to imagine a social contract between the families of the Hearths present" (325). (In this Gernet bespeaks the Classical inability to understand the political dimension of the personal.) However, this 'social' contract that eludes the institution of the domestic family hearth is here very narrowly defined as a function of the spatial organization of the city (**polis**). It is in effect this particular facet of his orientation that colors the manner in which he interprets the symbolism of the public hearth, its origin and transformations: that being as a function of an abstract, arbitrary and theoretical, rather than a fixed and rooted concept of space. "In essence," he writes "what the symbol of the public Hearth expresses is the belief that the polis can have its own identity and presence" (328). Relating it to its function in the various rites and rituals of collective existence such as the communal meals, sacrifices, and the distribution of wealth in the ancient city, Gernet describes the Hearth as a "deliberately managed symbol" in so far as "the idea attached to the public hearth remains communal" (333).

Now although he refuses the idea of the domestic hearth as the seat of a political symbolism and symbolic function, he does not discount its value as the 'center' in an anterior form of symbolism. Indeed, Gernet goes to some length to describe the function of the **omphalos** as an originary kind of 'center' in its association with the "chthonic powers" to which the public hearth, as an evolution of the domestic hearth, nonetheless owes its origins.[12] For, he writes, "it [the public Hearth] has connections with a social creation that contributed to ancient man's beginning" without being "so remote that it is completely beyond reach" (323). That connection, according to Gernet, is by way of the **omphalos** that which he associates with the most primal geographic or spatial centers--the center of the earth, the tomb, the city (323). It is indeed by comparison to this 'center'

(far more than to its historical antecedent the domestic hearth) that Gernet describes the symbolism of the sacred hearth. It is what captures, for Gernet, "the primitive notion of a space that is structured in terms of a center," being as it was "the only symbol of a centrum which had real significance" (337).

Be that as it may, for Gernet the **omphalos** "no longer represents anything of the sort" (337), and what in fact characterizes and expresses the symbolism of the public hearth is its very departure from that symbolism, in so far as the public hearth does not derive its symbolic function from a fixed or immutable center point. "An **omphalos**," he writes "a hero's tomb, and a sacred rock are fixed on a specific site; they receive their special properties from the earth and at the same time give it value. **The same is not true of the hearth**" (my emphasis, 324). Here it is of course the public hearth that he has in mind, in its function as the symbol of collective existence and belonging; for domestic hearths are on the contrary believed to enjoy the privilege of having a fixed location (Ehrenberg 1964, 13; Demarque 1932, 60-88).[13] In the symbolism of the public hearth, Gernet finds the expression of something new, a change "in the way the symbolism functions" (327) that seems to have "disengaged itself from ancient contexts" (336). In this, "the **omphalos** of the city" (323), the "central point that was the magnet around which were established altars or the seat of civic authority" (323) Gernet finds a representation of space that has disengaged itself from ancient contexts. As he puts it: "The very representation of the social space that is bound up with its symbolism is itself something new" (336). For here "men arrange as they will the mathematical disposition of the land" (337), and the 'center', rather than being fixed, immutable and predetermined "is an arbitrary--indeed a theoretical matter" (337).

In the symbolism of the public hearth and its function in delineating social space, Gernet believes to have found the origin (and the key) to political symbolism.

Hearkening back to the creation of the city,[14] the apparatus of the hearth here functions as a primary symbol of ensuing modes of thought and social life, which Gernet ties in with the gradual evolution of a monetary economy.[15] For the writers that follow, the institution, apparatus, and technology of the sacred hearth is the first in the creation of something even more primary than this. The "social age" that the institution of the sacred hearth and its symbolic function reflect, is an anterior one to that of the foundation of the state and its politics. In the section that follows, I will consider the first of two accounts of the symbolism of the hearth, both of which deal not with the institution and technology of the public hearth, but with its antecedent and companion ones: the institution and technology of the domestic family hearth. While both of these accounts depart from a move like Gernet's to grant a primary significance to the public hearth, my reading of each shall remain informed by the great strides made by Gernet's study of the metaphorics of 'center' and of the spatial and topographical origins of the symbolic function.

### 'House': Jean-Pierre Vernant and the metaphorics of 'center'

A student of Gernet, Vernant is greatly indebted to his teacher and his essay reflects that debt. Pursuing in the essay "Hestia-Hermes: The Religious Expression of Space and Movement in Ancient Greece" (1983c) the notion of a spatial and topographical category of center as expressed by the symbolism (apparatus and technology) of the sacred hearth, Vernant uses it to describe the origin of its mythico-religious symbolism (1983c, 189, 208, 215 ff.). "Through the transformations which took place in the symbolic meanings of **hestia**," he writes, "we can thus see how the change from a mythical view to a political and geometric concept of space came about" (269). Focussing upon the domestic hearth as the site of origin for mythico-religious

symbolism, Vernant produces, in this essay, a magnificent picture of the **omphalic** imagery that lies at the heart of the symbolic function of the sacred hearth. In this way he opens the gateway to a study of the institution (apparatus and technology) of the hearth as the seat of a symbolic function that predates the Phallic one. Appearing together with three other of his essays dealing with the organization of space in ancient Greece, "Hestia-Hermes" stands out in the striking parallel that it draws between the ancient symbol of the **omphalos** and the spatial symbolism of the hearth.

Ostensibly organized to deal with the identification between Hestia and Hermes that the sculptor Phidias depicts in his ancient carving of the twelve Olympians, Vernant, who is immediately struck by Hestia's lack of representation (that is, lack of mythical and anthropomorphic content), proceeds to explore her other aspect--that religious and symbolic aspect in which she figures as the sacred hearth itself (127). On the basis of the nature of her symbolism as the domestic hearth, Vernant explores a spatial concept of 'center' that in its implication leaves Hermes well behind, bringing Hestia, and the sacred hearth for which her name stands, in line with a far greater problematic than that presented by her antinomy with Hermes; albeit that this antinomy with Hermes, based upon the traditional and stereotypical equivalence of Hermes with the phallic function, has led Vernant astray in his recognition of the extent of his own contribution to the subject of Hestia. For, as it will be seen in the ensuing section, the analogy between hearth and **omphalic** centrum that Vernant finds here, will take the 'political' symbolism of the sacred hearth (in its abstract, arbitrary, and theoretical nature) beyond the limited parameters of the **polis** and into the heart of one of the oldest institutions of social life known to man--the institution of the family and the household.

Vernant's analogy between the sacred hearth and the **omphalos** is actually best expressed in one of the parallel essays in a group devoted to the subject of space. In

"Geometry and Spherical Astronomy in the First Greek Cosmology" (1983b) Vernant states that there are two terms meaning 'center' in Greek religion: "One is **omphalos** meaning navel, and the other is **hestia**, the hearth" (1983b, 187). Accordingly, Vernant proceeds to explain the hearth by means of the **omphalos**. "Why is **hestia** a center?" he asks. The answer is: because

> [t]he house forms a clearly defined and enclosed space different from that of other houses....The hearth, established at the center of the domestic space is, in Greece, fixed, implanted in the earth. It represents, as it were, the **omphalos** of the house; it is the navel by which the human dwelling is rooted into the depths of the earth. (1983b, 187)

In "Hestia-Hermes," the omphalic metaphor in relation to the hearth's symbolic function is duly expanded. Sharing with the **omphalos** the three features of 1) a circular protrusion from the surface, 2) a center point in space, and 3) a rootedness to a point of origin, the symbolic function of the domestic family hearth is to delineate 'center' in terms of a metaphorics of space--a space that is given its symbolic content not by virtue of the abstract relation of parts to the whole (as in the case of the abstract organization of the first cities), but rather the fixed and concrete one of the foetus' relation to the female body (1983c, 146).

This is a relation which has not gone unnoticed by the literary, philosophical and memorial productions of Antiquity. On the contrary, it is borne out by them. Herodotus, for example, makes allusions to the relationship between a hearth-oven and the female abdomen when he maintains that to put bread in a cold oven meant to be joined with a woman when she was dead (Herodotus 1946, Vol. 3, V:92, 113). It is expressed by the fifth century Pythagorean, Philolaus, when he describes the navel in terms of its characteristic of 'rootedness' (Freeman 1956, 75-76: 13) and later, in his Interpretation of Dreams (1975), by Artemidorus when he writes that the **omphalos** symbolizes the mother country in which one was born, as one was born of the umbilicus:

> The navel itself signifies parents to those whose parents are still alive; but to those who no longer have parents, [it signifies] their native country, from which, as from one's navel, ones's nature and existence derive. (1975, I:43)

Furthermore, Marie Delcourt's study L'oracle de Delphes (1955) links the **omphalos** to a Delphic and pre-Hellenic cult of the 'center' (1955, 144) that blends (phallic) representations of fecundity with (**omphalic**) rootedness (1955, 149). According to Delcourt, it also testifies to the genital nature of the symbolism of the **omphalos** as the cord which joins the child to its mother (1955, 149); ie. as the center point of the female abdomen and as a counter-point to the symbol of the phallus (1955, 145). In her study of ancient symbolism surrounding the **Omphalos** monument at Delphi, Delcourt finds evidence to link the symbolism of the 'center' as much with the (pregnant) female navel as with the male penis

This analogy, based as it is upon a relation between the house and the female body, is extremely significant. In the context of Vernant's contribution to our understanding of the symbolic function of the sacred hearth, this analogy is valuable in that it radically shifts the grounds of the study away from a 'center' and a topography that is spatially and geometrically constituted in terms of the city and onto one that is organic and constituted in terms of the body. By virtue of the analogy with the **omphalos**, and its relation to a fixed, rooted and immutable 'center' such as the navel of the female body, Vernant has taken discussion of the symbolic function of the hearth out of the sterile and narrowly defined political organization of the city, political space, and geo-politics that it finds in Gernet, and into the more fundamental one of the family and its space--that is, domestic space and the yet undiscovered histories of its interior spaces. Unfortunately however, being like his predecessor seemingly unconscious of the symbol and the culture-laden nature of that organization itself,[16] he proceeds to describe the symbolic function of the sacred family hearth by means of its relation to the domestic sphere of the

household. In so doing the omphalic imagery of 'center' that he so carefully lays out becomes, by virtue of its association with the female body, placed in the service of a highly stereotyped ideal of the domestic female role. In this respect, Vernant fails to grasp the sense in which images of gender are used in the construction of space itself.

Through the traditional ideal of woman as center of the domestic sphere, Vernant takes on the task of describing the meaning of Hestia and along with that the symbolic function of the domestic hearth. Drawing copiously from Xenophon's **Oeconomicus** and its classical representation of the female sphere, Vernant proceeds along a most regrettable (and predictable) path to ascribe to Hestia the symbolic meaning of an enclosed inner space whose center point is Woman--a center point which he tidily contrasts with the diffused spatial meaning of Hermes--to whom he ascribes the symbolic coven of the 'open', the 'outer' and multiple spaces of the field and pastures (142, 153). "In Greek," he writes "the domestic sphere, the enclosed space that is roofed over (protected) has a feminine connotations; the exterior, the open air, a masculine one" (132). Showing strict adherence to truisms like "a woman's place is in the home" (133), Vernant describes the symbolic function of the hearth by way of its place in the domestic rituals of marriage, good housekeeping, and the guardianship of the family funds (cf. 144 ff. and 150 ff.). "Hestia," he writes "thus incarnates, pushed to its limits, the tendency of the **oikos** toward self-isolation, withdrawal, as though the ideal for the family should be complete self-sufficiency: total self-sufficiency economically, strict endogamy in marriage" (134). This is an excellent point. In the following section, I will discuss how Fustel de Coulanges' study actually expands this point in connection with the circulation of women and thus highlights the contradiction within the ancient world in terms of patriarchal ideas about gender.

However, while correctly recognizing the significance of the institutions of marriage and the patrimony in the symbolic function of the domestic hearth, Vernant erroneously situates the meaning of the female-laden **omphalic** imagery within it. In situating the **omphalic** function of the hearth--which he so aptly describes as the center of an immutable space--within the organization of the Greek house and the **oikos**--Vernant has placed it in the service of the phallic one. Blindly adhering to the Hestia-Hermes polarity, his description of the symbolic function of the sacred hearth would trap Woman within a tradition that denies her, when instead it could release her (and her male counter-part) from it. For, if there is anything that is particularly illuminating about the institution (and technology) of the sacred family hearth, it is the extent to which it does depart, through its goddess and her symbolism, from just that function. For through it we find, at the very center of family and civic life, a symbolic term that does not conform to the constructs of male supremacy that permeates traditional history.

However, not fully aware of the existence of a different term for 'center' nor of the inadequacies of the present one, Vernant has failed to recognize the value of the materials he has uncovered, a value particularly evident in the extent to which this material provides the grounds for a female **omphalo**-centric base for the symbolic function as opposed to the male phallocentric one. In this respect, it is Fustel de Coulanges, his predecessor by almost one hundred years, who more than any other writer to date, has penetrated beyond the Phallic function. The very first author to describe in such detail the religious and symbolic function of the sacred hearth in Classical and pre-Classical Antiquity, his memorable tome--The Ancient City--has not appeared in either text or bibliography of any of these illustrious men. In the following section I shall examine at some length the nature of his contribution to the study of the symbolic function of the sacred hearth. It will be seen that it is primarily by bringing the symbolic

function of the hearth in line with the next to negligible status of women that prevailed around it that he has touched upon the key to its significance--a symbolism buried as it is beneath the chthonic mysteries of **phallos** and **omphalos**.

**'Body': Fustel de Coulanges and the metaphorics of 'center'**

While differing in some important respects from the previous two analyses of the symbolic function of the hearth (which I will enter into shortly), The Ancient City (1900) by Fustel de Coulanges falls within the same tradition in that, along with them, it answers to a metaphorics of 'the center'. Re-read in the context of a spatial dialectic of 'center' as developed by his successors, this work abounds in the richness with which it informs that dialectic.[17] For, in keeping with the move (initiated in this chapter) to seek out the significance of the meaning of Hestia at the **Omphalos**, it is this work above all others that gives meaning to this symbolism.

In the first place, The Ancient City, as its title indicates, is, like Gernet's work, concerned with a political dimension of space that defines the 'center' as an arbitrary and theoretical, rather than fixed or grounded, immutable organization of space. Unlike Gernet, however, for whom chthonic space is synonymous with immutable 'center', Fustel de Coulanges sees in it the very site of its contrary (pushing off the site of the immutable)--the abstract and arbitrary (in terms of ground, geography, not politics) organization of space whose 'center' could be anywhere. Focussing the mainstay of his analysis of the ancient city upon the origin of the institution of the domestic family hearth, Fustel de Coulanges sees in it the origin of the symbolic (and political) function that Gernet sees in the institution of the public hearth. Furthermore, parting ways with Vernant as well, the sacred family hearth is not in Fustel de Coulanges' estimation the seat or 'center' of the immutable ideal of female domesticity (the a-political horizon of a

retreat from public life); but on the contrary, the very seat of a masculine, patriarchal authority and 'politics' within which that 'domesticity' is itself defined. Indeed, it is the very seat of patriarchy--patrilineage and the patrimony--itself.

To take, for example, Vernant's description of the public hearth as "a religion which is itself political" (1983, 215), it is easy to see that "religion" and 'politics' are not so clearly distinguishable here. While Vernant and Gernet have defended both sides of this symbolic equation in relation to the institution of the hearth, neither one of them has given testimony to the origin of its symbolic function. (To do so is not to look for origins, but to trace out some of the economic and religious foundations of this equation.) That their views should be collapsed (or united) by a study that finds the origin and foundations of the sacred hearth within the speculative realm of all symbolic activity and representation, brings the study of the symbolic function of the hearth well in line with all symbolic activity by which we organize, lay hold of, produce and reproduce, contest, representations of our experience. In this respect, the linguistic paradigm, as well as the entire philosophy of symbolic forms within which the metaphorics of 'center' is posed, come into fresh focus as the site of a 'crisis'--the crisis of all our modern interpretive systems (Kristeva 1983, 98).[18] In so far as this crisis is inherent in the symbolic function itself, the work of Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges on the institution of the sacred hearth emerges as invaluable.

Subtitled "A Study of the Religion, Laws, and Institutions of Greece and Rome," The Ancient City indeed sets out to make religion "the lever of world history" (to use Marx's phrase), and that religion is nothing less than the "religion" of the sacred hearth:

> A comparison of beliefs shows that a primitive religion constituted the Greek and Roman family, established marriage and paternal authority, fixed the order of relationship, and consecrated the right of property and of inheritance. The same religion, after having enlarged and extended the family, formed a still larger association, the city, and reigned in that as it

> had reigned in the family. From it came all the institutions, as well as all the private law of the ancients. (12)

This "religion", which Fustel de Coulanges alternately refers to as "the religion of the sacred fire" (3), "the domestic religion" (78), "the worship of the hearth-fire" (40), but most often as "the religion of the hearth" is not only at the base of the public sphere of the city, or of the private sphere of domesticity and the household, but at the very base of an institution as fundamental to cultural and social life as the family itself. For it is at the origin of culture, at the very site of the organization of human sexual arrangements,[19] that Fustel de Coulanges has located the symbolic function of the sacred hearth. Moreover, he has located it in its 'private' and domestic as much as 'public' civic forms, although in an evolutionary context these do not necessarily appear as such.[20]

However much as this idea of 'family' differs from that of the 'household' found in Vernant--that is, as a separate and 'feminine', or female-dominated, sphere of action--it is identified by Fustel with the same symbolic term--the domestic hearth. That is, the symbolic function that Vernant describes by means of the omphalic features of 'fixity', 'enclosure', and 'protrusiveness', is equally present in Fustel de Coulanges' analysis of the domestic hearth. However, the difference is that Fustel de Coulanges does not see in it the celebration of Woman, but on the contrary her most profound denial. While this brings into some question Vernant's knowledge of the status of women in Antiquity, we can only conclude that blindness to the feminine condition has colored his appreciation of any such. The same cannot be said of Fustel de Coulanges. With astounding acuity, perspicacity and eloquence he describes a times in which the condition of women was so deplorable as to make them practically absent from every facet and function of human life--with the exception of one to which I shall return shortly.

Throughout The Ancient City, Fustel de Coulanges makes scattered reference to a condition in which women were practically non-existent; ie. they had no status

whatsoever. This condition is best summed up by an extract from the Laws of Manu (based on the teachings of the Vedas) that would make latter-day feminist revel in its unconcealed appreciation of the tacit principle of phallocentrism. This extract, also found in The Ancient City, reads as follows:

> Woman, during her infancy, depends upon her father; during her youth, upon her husband; when her husband is dead, upon her sons; if she has no son, on the nearest relative of her husband; for a woman ought never to govern herself according to her own will.[21]

How this status is maintained and expressed by the institution and technology of the domestic hearth is successively demonstrated by Fustel de Coulanges on the basis of the hearth's function in delineating the laws of marriage, succession and inheritance, as well as those of adoption, emancipation and even kinship. For it is not only from every facet and function of social (mostly that is, religious) and economic life that woman is absent. She is (symbolically) also absent from the procreative one as well. A sub-theme that runs through The Ancient City and which coincides with the above, is the extent to which this "religion of the hearth" inverts, displaces, and mirrors the 'laws' of nature. In his treatment of each of those categories of social life in which it functions, including all of the above, Fustel de Coulanges describes how this function neutralizes, inverts and contests the natural order at the same time as it mirrors and reflects it; how it was "worship" and not "birth" that constituted the order of relationship, succession, or inheritance. "Religion," he writes "did not admit of kinship through women" (101). "The rule for the worship is, that it should be transmitted from male to male; the rule for the inheritance is that it should follow the worship" (96). In each of these cases, Fustel de Coulanges successively demonstrates how this "religion" is decisively the function of a male religious heritage; the sacred hearth, a function of its legacy.

Contrary to what appears in Vernant, the domestic sphere in which Hestia rules

supreme, far from resting in the hands of women, is just the place where males draw up their greatest power. "The father," writes Fustel de Coulanges "ranks first in the presence of the sacred fire. He lights it, and supports it; he is its priest" (112). By contrast a wife "could never have a hearth of her own; she was never the chief of a worship" (113). Leaving the hearth of her father to join that of her husband in marriage, the wife is always a "minor" and never "mistress of the hearth" (112).

In recognizing the function of the sacred hearth in symbolically privileging the male over the female, Fustel has touched upon the very core of the symbolic function of the hearth within the elementary structures of kinship. For, as he so aptly reflects: "The power of the husband over the wife results in no wise from his superior strength. It came [sic]...from the religious belief that placed man over woman" (114). In describing the origin of this belief, via the symbolic function of the sacred hearth, Fustel de Coulanges' work breaks away from other studies of the hearth, blazing a trail into the origins of symbolic thought that stands alongside any other that would account for the symbolic appropriation of natural phenomena. What in contemporary lingo might be described as the emergence of 'a second order biology',[22] inclusive of the appropriation and condensation of the female body and 'the feminine', is also contained by the cultural technology of the hearth.

For, by what authority did the sacred hearth gain its power? "To whom then belonged the chief authority?" asks Fustel de Coulanges. "To the father? No. There is in every house something that is above the father himself" (112); something which confers to the father his power. Examining the application of the word **pater** in the expression "**pater familias**", Fustel de Coulanges observes that this expression could be applied to a man who had no children, who was never married, and who was not even of the age to contract marriage (117). In other words, the word "**pater**" had a sense in which the idea

of biological paternity was not attached to it.[23] However, the word "**pater**" had another sense. "In religious language they applied it to the gods; in legal language to every man who had a worship" (117). Thus intimately connected with the symbolic function of the sacred hearth, this linguistic phenomenon expresses the extent to which that function structurally supplants the natural one. The symbolic equivalent of a 'natural' order, this hearth confers the 'center' with its meaning; the 'father' with his power. However, it is only by means of the symbolic appropriation of that order that it does so, and Fustel de Coulanges has brought this out well.

At the very outset of his study, Fustel de Coulanges devotes an entire chapter to the prevalence of a cult of the dead that often accompanies the institution of the domestic hearth in its domestic phase.[24] Joining the studies of Gernet and Vernant in locating the origin of the institution of the sacred hearth within a chthonic field, Fustel de Coulanges also takes these studies one step further. Through the cult of the dead, a direct line is drawn between the spatial nature of the hearth's symbolism and its abstract, arbitrary, 'theoretical', and political form--one that brings into new and very sharp focus the question of Woman and her status in the symbolic function of the phallus. Moreover, it draws this line in such a way as to cast new light upon the problem of 'center' as treated by that function.

For, writes Fustel de Coulanges, "we may suppose that the domestic fire was in the beginning only a symbol of the worship of the dead; that under the stone of the hearth an ancestor reposed" (40). Given that archeological evidence has accumulated in favor of this conjecture in the form of the excavation of tombs (which I have discussed above, n?),[25] such a view goes a long way to explain the 'political', the 'abstract' and 'theoretical' nature (to use Gernet's terminology), not only of the status that the domestic family hearth confers upon the 'father', but also of the 'center'--the enclosed domestic space, or

'home', over which it presides. Here, the spatial and the temporal aspects coincide at the origir of the symbolic function of the hearth, although not in its symbolism.

Fustel de Coulanges describes it as a (cultural) "peculiarity" that "the domestic religion was transmitted from male to male" (48). And yet, all the evidence which he brings to bear is in favor of its (cultural) necessity. What he means is that it could equally be transmitted by the female were it not for the inexplicable idea that "generation was due entirely to males" (48). But as he so aptly puts it, this idea that "the reproductive power resides exclusively in the father," and that "the father alone possessed the mysterious principle of existence, and transmitted the spark of life" was not new to the ancient world (48). Filtering its way through pre-Socratic philosophy and into the works of Aristotle (1943, 28-32: 729a), this idea in fact became the touchstone upon which the entire concept of Woman as a "misbegotten" male has taken over the West (Allen 1985; Irigaray 1974; cf. Childe 1951; Mumford 1961).[26] Founded as it was upon the Aristotelian notion that the female bears no seed--there are pre-Socratic philosophers who have argued that she does (Allen 1985)--this view has resulted in the exile of the female species from the 'center'; an exile to which the institution of the sacred hearth, symbolically erected in the First paternal ancestor, was to bear testimony.

Jean-Pierre Vernant makes the astounding observation in "Hestia-Hermes" (astounding only in the context of his otherwise lack of insight) and that it is "the dream of a purely paternal heredity that haunts the Greek imagination" and that was behind the claim in favor of male reproductive power (134). However, it is not only the Greek imagination that it haunts. In The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State, Frederick Engels makes this "dream" into the basis for the transition from mother-right to father-right (1981, 122), a transition that supplants biological necessity with a symbolic one. For, as Engels shows in his studies on group marriages "descent can only be proven

on the mother's side" (1981, 106)--her omphalic connection with the offspring assures this. Thus, the overthrow of mother-right that for Engels spells the "world historical defeat of the female sex" becomes, in his own rhetoric, co-extensive with masculine power in the 'home': "The overthrow of mother right was the world historical defeat of the female sex. The man took command in the home also..." (1981, 120).

While Fustel de Coulanges does not enter into the symbolic relation between the **omphalos** and the hearth, it is not difficult to see what it could be. The 'interior space', omphalically delineated as the ancestral 'home' of the 'gods of the interior', dead under the hearth-stone, but speaking out through its bright flame (32), now becomes voided of any fixed, immutable significance. The ancestor could, in principal, be anyone's.

## 3. House, Body, City and 'the Feminine': Jean-Joseph Goux and the Metaphorics of the 'Center'

It has been argued, probably due to the very lack of anthropomorphic and mythical evidence to the contrary, that there is nothing inherently female or feminine about the symbolism of the sacred hearth; rather that the female nomination of Hestia is merely a function of the gender of the linguistic noun (Farnell 1977, 363). While it is naive to expect that language should remain free of sex determination, there has already appeared an accumulation of evidence, if not in the anthropomorphic domain, certainly in the symbolic one, to attest to the contrary. The study of spatial archetypes, for example, has by now amply demonstrated the existence of a connection between the circle, or round organization of space, and the female body.[27] In this section, I wish to devote some attention to a very recent study of the sacred hearth in which it is proposed that we look upon Hestia as a challenge to the totalizing universe of the Phallic function by way of her incarnation of 'the feminine' and its principals.

In the article entitled "Vesta, ou le sanctuaire de l'être" (1984), in the 1981 colloquium L'Interdit de la représentation which I have mentioned above,[28] philosopher-historian Jean-Joseph Goux proposes Hestia as the resolution to the problem of 'center' that has bedeviled the critical arena (imagination). Like Plato, who in his Cratylus presents a not-so-spurious explanation of the etymological origins of Hestia's name estia (**estia**) in the third person singular of the Greek verb 'to be', εστιν (**estin**), Goux constructs an argument that connects Hestia or estia (**estia**) with ουσια (**ousia**), or essence, reality, substance (Plato 1977, 401C-E, 65-67). In this way, Goux looks to re-enstate the fundamental principal of 'center' and put back into discursive circulation metaphors of an inhabited and invariable 'center'--names related to fundamentals such as those of 'essence', 'existence', 'substance', 'subject', 'God', man, and the like, that Derridean deconstruction (along with post-structuralism, postmodernism, strains of feminism and cultural studies) has taken out of circulation.[29]

Echoing strains reminiscent of the recent feminist revival of interest in Hestia as the oppressed archetype, Goux relies on the very dearth of representational content to the image of Hestia in order to herald her as the 'center' of transcendental Being, the elixir of Self, that has been voided by the Phallic function: "doit-on s'étonner que le vocable le plus vide et le plus pur de la philosophie, le mot E/être, renvoie à la divinité la plus vide et la plus pure--sans représentation?" (82). Imbibing Parmenides' undifferentiated Being[30] with female life, Goux expects to have rescued primary principles of ultimacy and supremacy from contemporary perdition, as well as to have placed the history of Western philosophy into a new perspective. For he believes:

> Hestia permet...de penser la centralité en d'autres termes que celui de "phallus". **Il apparaît que le centre, dans un univers qui connaît et invoque Hestia, n'est pas phallocentrique.** (78)[31]

While Goux's move here to displace the primacy of the phallic function via the symbolism of the sacred hearth is promising, it fails in the manner of its execution to express the significance of this displacement. Resorting to stereotypes of femininity, in a like manner to Vernant, Goux ultimately damages the case for a new symbolic term and smooths over the crisis that is inherent in the symbolic function.

Under the proposition (presupposition) that Hestia is the feminine principle **par excellence**--"c'est Hestia le principe féminin sous sa forme la plus pur (76)--Goux proceeds to invest her with all the disembodied and fantasy-laden apparatuses that have prefigured all along in the West's concept of Woman. "La féminité désimagée" (70), or disembodied womanhood, that he expects to have uncovered in Hestia, all too directly lacking in spatio-temporal dimensions becomes inevitably the site of all too many well-worn splits (pure/impure, mother/lover, virgin/seductress) that have haunted the Western imagination, stalking Woman all the while that they have passed her by. In the end, Goux's virgin/mother Hestia no better stands up to the phallic function than does Vernant's housewife matron.

The problem is that while Goux wisely addresses the metaphorics of the 'center' as posed by the Phallic function via the symbolism of Hestia, he dismisses from the start the essentially spatial aspect of her symbolism and thereby ignores the significance of her symbolic function. "Revenons à présent, pour retrouver autrement cette question du centre (qui n'est pas seulement spatial, au sens strict), sur le mode de féminité qui est attribué à Hestia" (my emphasis, 74). In not recognizing the full import of the spatial dimension, Goux misses out on the point of Hestia at the 'center'. This point, amply demonstrated by the works on the institution of the sacred hearth as a whole, is that the symbolic function of the hearth is to displace the spatio-temporal aspect of the female body by a symbol, sign, signifier that both supplements and supplants it, in the Derridian

sense of both something missing and something additional. This is even more outstanding given that this primary signifier, expressed and contained by the symbolism of the sacred hearth itself, is not the phallus, but the **Omphalos**--the phallus historical precursor and sovereign in the symbolic order.

## 4. Conclusion

It is Claude Lévi-Strauss who, in a passing remark on the transition from a pre-culinary stage to the post- culinary stage that marks man's (I dare not say "woman's") entrance into the all-embracing state of "culture", isolates "the institution of the domestic hearth" as its beacon (Lévi-Strauss 1973, 65). As the site of a 'domestication' of thought and culture,[32] the institution of the hearth and with primary symbol the **omphalos** does not only challenge the hegemony of the phallus in the symbolic order, it also says something about its function within it; a function that conceals the symbolic appropriation of the female body that lies within it.

In the omphalic function of the symbolism of the sacred hearth lies the root of a far greater tyranny than any Phallic one. In the unmasking of a symbolic term that at last outstrips the phallus in its primacy, the crisis inherent in the symbolic function far from being smoothed over, is made even more acute. If the hegemony of the female **omphalos** can bring joy to the feminist heart, it is only to the extent that Woman still eludes the symbolic function just as much as she represents it. For the **omphalos** is the 'sign' that supplements and supplants a center even more rudimentary than that signalled by the phallus. That 'centrum' which is the very center of the female abdomen, spatio-temporally binding generations from its line, generations which, be they matrilinear or patrilinear, spring from its entrails--is nonetheless a 'surplus'. Featuring Woman all the

while that it displaces her, it leaves the 'center' wide open and just as empty, because women in their spatio-temporal presence are just as absent from it.

So what has been achieved?

Should it be feared, that the feminist quest for symbolic meaning outside the parameters of the Phallic function[33] may all too precociously resolve a crisis that has taken more than two thousand years of Western metaphysics to develop, or that women should content themselves to be the ellipsis of the symbolic order, we can rest assured that it is a question of neither of those possibilities. Making sense of the image of the **omphalos** is a different proposition altogether. As the lost image of life and death it harkens back to a primordial crisis in which the 'center' really stood for something, albeit something like the Woman, which it was not.

In so far as the absence of Woman has constituted not only the paradigm for a feminist critique of the symbolic order, but also the point of departure for a post-structuralist deconstruction of the philosophy of the subject, meaning, transcendental 'presence', and the like, the discovery that within the very heart of that symbolic order a term to express that absence can be found, points to the creation of a new paradigm. This is one in which sex/gender is not the totalizing principle that it has been made to be; but rather a paradigm, or set of paradigms, through which both man and woman can be constituted as symbolic subjects.

## Notes

[1] See Jacques Lacan Écrits (1977) for an introduction to the Phallic function in the structure of the unconscious, see Christian Metz The Imaginary Signifier (1982) for an introduction to the Phallic function in the semiotic structure of cinema, see Claude Lévi-Strauss The Elementary Structures of Kinship (1969) for an introduction to the Phallic function in the structure of kinship

[2] On the phenomenon of an "imposed" cultural heritage, see Carlo Ginzburg's The Cheese and the Worms (1982, xv ff.).

[3] On the **Omphalos** as the seat of Hestia see P Roussel "Hestia à l'omphalos" (1911), Jean Audiat "L'Hymne d'Aristonoos à Hestia" (1932)

[4] Cf the translation "the Sages call the Earth-Mother Hestia because she remains motionless at the center of the Ether" (Euripides fragment 938, qtd in Vernant 1983c)

[5] He writes "The additional words 'Hestia alone remains in the house of the gods,' mean that she (whom we understand to be the earth) alone remains motionless within the house of the gods, that is to say, in the midst of the universe, as Euripides says " (I, 23.8).

[6] The relation between fire and altar in the constitution of the religious hearth appears to be the source of some controversy Pauly's Real Encyclopadie der Classischen Altertumswissenshaft (1913, 615), gives three Greek designations for hearth εσχαρα (**eschara**), βοροσ (**boros**), and εστια (**estia**), among which estia was the one used to designate the religious hearth and its altar According to classical historian Richard Lewis Farnell, the hearth was constituted by both fire and altar, see The Cults of the Greek States (1977, 360) Nevertheless, he traces her origin to an original fire cult -"Hestia was originally a goddess of fire" (359) George Dumézil connects her etymology with the root of the verb "to burn", see his Archaic Roman Religion (1970, 312-314) and Ovid writes "Conceive of Vesta as naught but the living flame " in Fasti (1931, 341, VI 291) Nevertheless it is the view that is most satisfactory It best preserves the difference between the instrumental use of fire, as described by Sir William George Frazer in Myths of the Origin of Fire (1974) and the sacrificial one--see for instance René Girard's Violence and the Sacred (1977) This is an important distinction with relation to the early history of the hearth While kitchen hearths were found to exist as early as the seventh millennium (B C ), these have been distinguished from the great altars that formed the Megaron in the Mycenaean Empire, see Emily Vermeule Greece in the Bronze Age (1964) By contrast, in the Sumerian civilization(s), the 'kitchen' was itself the temple and site of sacrificial offerings to the gods, see Sir Leonard Woolley's Excavations at Ur (1955, 134)

[7] In archetypal psychology Barbara Kirksey finds Hestia to be the archetype of inner space and psychological focussing, see her article "Hestia A Background of Psychological Focusing," (1980) Stephanie Demetrakopoulos studies her as the archetype of the repressed feminine in "Hestia, Goddess of the Hearth Notes on an Oppressed Archetype" (1979) Other feminist interest in Hestia includes articles by Barbara Koltuv "Hestia/Vesta" (1977) and Katherine Bradway "Hestia and Athena in the Analysis of Women" (1978)

[8] Cf "In all the temples of the gods she has a share of honor, and among all mortal men she is the **chief of the goddesses**" (my emphasis)

[9] Lewis Farnell devotes an entire chapter to the cult of the hearth; see "Hestia-Cults," The Cults of the Greek States (1977) Such a cult is manifest throughout the ancient world; see Sir Leonard Woolley, Excavations at Ur (1955) and Emily Vermeule Greece in the Bronze Age (1964).

[10] This fact is regrettable in that it has caused a number of works on the symbolic function to be misunderstood See for example Frederick Engels' dismissal of works that "make religion the lever of world history" as "ending up in pure mysticism" in The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State (1981, 77)

[11] This essay originally appeared in 1951 in Cahiers internationaux de sociologie XI and later in 1968 in Anthropologie de la grèce antique

[12] The question of the chthonic origins of the sacred hearth has been subject to some debate and centers around the location of the sacred hearth within the family dwelling; see Gernet (1981, 324); see also Eliade Traité d'histoire des religions, (1959, 320) and Robert Thymélé: Recherches sur la signification et la destination des Monuments circulaires dans l'Architecture de la Grèce, (1939, 193), cf. Gernet (1981, 338, n 3), Picard Les Religions Pré-Helleniques (Crète et Mycènes (1949, 242), cf. Eliade Histoire des croyances et des ideés religieuses (1976, 459), and for additional information on changes of the hearth's location in the Greek house, see Bertha Carr Rider, The Greek House: Its History and Development from the Neolithic Period to the Hellenistic Age (1916)

[13] The relation between fixed and movable hearths in ancient history has also come under some scrutiny According to Victor Ehrenberg, the hearth "lacked any fixed center," see The Greek State (1964, 13) P. Demarque discusses the relation of fixed and portable hearths through a study of the architecture of the necropolis in Minoan Crete, see his "Culte Funéraire et foyer domestique dans la Crète Minoenne," Bulletin de correspondance Hellénique (1932, 60-88)

[14] On the Etrusco-Greek origin of Vesta, see L Deroy "Le culte du foyer dans la Grèce Mycénienne," Revue de l'histoire des religions (1950)

[15] Hestia's epithet as εστια ταμιασ (**estia tamias**) was used to connote the state treasury, see Farnell (1977, 349) It is here tied by Gernet with the notion of "public property", "'nationalization' of the 'gift ethic'" (1981, 334) In fact, he argues that the system of festivals and distributions that pervade the institution of the public Hearth offers a unique synthesis of "totalitarian" and "distributive" economies (1981, 335) For a fuller discussion of these two terms see Georges Dumézil Mitra-Varuna (1948, 155) on the contrast between them in Antiquity, cf also Gernet (339, n. 46).

In addition, these notions of the monetary significance of hearth symbolism (and along with it of the 'center') in Antiquity tie in with the idea of a linkage between economic and geographical issues--as for example we find in the 'geographical materialism' recently developed in Soja's Postmodern Geographies (1989, 70, 72-3)--as well as with that of a link between economic and symbolic ones--see for example, Goux's Economie et symbolique, Freud, Marx (1973)

[16] Cf Gernet's claim that there is no 'social' contract between the families of the hearths (n above) and Claude Lévi-Strauss' discussion of the exchange of women in The Elementary Structures of Kinship (1969, 481 ff )

[17] The necessity of "rereading" is eloquently described by Roland Barthes who believes that "those who fail to reread are obliged to read the same story every where." See his S/Z (1974, 15-16). This can certainly be said of all those who so far have failed to reread the work of Fustel de Coulanges

[18] On symbolic function and the crisis in modern interpretative systems, see Julia Kristeva "Psychoanalysis and the Polis" (1983, 98).

[19] For a discussion of human sexual arrangements and their relationship to culture we turn to psychoanalysis, marxism, and structuralism. Freud (1918), Engels (1981) and Lévi-Strauss (1956; 1969) have grounded the birth of culture in human sexual arrangements via symbolic, economic, or structural positivities respectively. I would venture that at the interstices of these three major currents, Fustel de Coulanges' work touches upon all three of these dimensions

[20] For a contemporary discussion of the family as the site of human sexual arrangements that does not take for granted kinship ties as natural, see Claude Lévi-Strauss "The Family" (1956, 261-295)

[21] In The Laws of Manu (Muller 1964) this passage reads as follows "By a girl, by a young woman, or even by an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her own house" (Muller 1964, V:147) And also: "In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons, a woman must never be independent" (1964, V.148)

[22] This would somewhat attenuate postmodernist Arthur Kroker's innovative claim that "it is a distinctively modern fate to live technology as a second biology (Kroker 1984, 128) Insofar as this now emerges as residual premodern experience, the questions lie in the relationship between them. One might accordingly conjecture upon the relationship between the postmodern condensations of (mass) culture in the form of 'the femmine' (Huyssen 1986, Modleski 1986a) in terms of the concept of 'implosion' developed for making relationships between premodern and postmodern experience such as those developed by Jean Baudrillard (1983b).

[23] On the semantic status of kinship nominations, see Jacques Lacan Écrits (1977, 66 ff )

[24] Emily Vermeule maintains that there is no evidence of a cult of the dead at the time of the Mycenaean Empire with its great ceremonial hearth at the center of the Megaron, see Vermeule (1964, 305)

[25] For details on the evidence regarding the chthonic origin of the institution of the sacred hearth, see n 21 above

[26] For a detailed history of the single-seed theory of generation in Greek philosophy and its repercussion on the West, see Prudence Allen The Concept of Woman: The Aristotelian Revolution 750 BC-AD 1250 (1985); cf also Luce Irigaray's "La Mécanique des Fluides" (1974, 49-55).

According to historian Gordon Childe, fertility rites in Neolithic times were closely bound to ancestor worship and "seed" was represented as "capital" See Childe (1951, 124) Lewis Mumford connects the birth of male symbolism with the appropriation of the very elements of reproduction," see The City in History (1961, 25 ff.)

[27] On the female-laden symbolism of the Great Round in the history of architecture, see Mimi Lobell

"Spatial Archetypes" (1977, 5-46), cf. also Erik H. Erikson's chapter "Womanhood and Inner Space" (1968, 282 ff ).

[28] See n above

[29] See especially Derrida's Of Grammatology (1976, 280). Here he lists the "names related to fundamentals, to principles or to the center as invariable presence" as "**eidos, arche, telos, energeia, ousia** (essence, existence, substance, subject), **aletheia**, transcendentality, consciousness, God, man, and so forth "

[30] For the deconstruction of primary principles in Parmenidian ontology, see Martin Heidegger "On the Grammar and Etymology of the Word 'Being'," in An Introduction to Metaphysics (1968) and Jacques Derrida "The Supplement of Copula· Philosophy Before Linguistics" (1982, 175-205).

[31] "Hestia allows us to think the center in terms other than those of the "phallus". **It emerges that the center, in a universe that knows and invokes Hestia, is not phallocentric"** (my translation).

[32] In The Domestication of the Savage Mind (1977), Jack Goody explores the idea of a domestication of thought that resists the idea of a rigid discontinuity between 'primitive' and 'advanced' societies (Goody 1977, 4, 8) It seems to me that locating the transition within a technology that moves from a culinary to a mythical and religious significance shows promise in terms of eschewing the 'ethnocentric binarism' (Goody 1977, 8) that has hitherto informed the study of culture and allows for the study of the instruments of cultural production within a broad framework of what Goody calls 'a technology of communicative acts' (Goody 1977, 11). Interestingly, in his subsequent study, Cooking, Cuisine, and Class (1982), Goody explores the comparative historical dimension of culinary cultural differences that emerge in class societies through a survey of a variety of culinary practices.

[33] Cf Shoshana Felman "Women and Madness The Critical Phallacy" (1975, 2-10); Teresa de Lauretis Alice Doesn't Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema (1984), Jacqueline Rose "Introduction II" (1982)--all of whom have brilliantly struggled with the paradoxical status of woman in the Phallic function.

## Chapter Three

## Tactics of the Habitat: Fustel de Coulanges' The Ancient City

> A whole history remains to be written of **spaces**--which would at the same time be a history of **powers**--from the great strategies of geo-politics to the little tactics of the habitat...
>
> Michel Foucault, "The Eye of Power"

### Introduction

Without lingering unnecessarily upon the nature and implications of the opposition between strategies and tactics[1] (so far I have eschewed in my own theoretical practice of representation the tendency to construct the 'home' in oppositional terms), I would nevertheless, like as a preliminary to this chapter, to introduce the theoretical significance of this notion of a 'tactics of the habitat' in terms of addressing the articulation of space/power and 'home'. For, in the distribution of power that separates 'geo-politics' from domestic struggles there are essentially two features that characterize the latter. These fall within what de Certeau calls 'an economy of the proper place' ('**une économie du lieu propre**'). Borrowing from Bourdieu's analysis in Outline for a Theory of Practice (1977), these can be summed up as follows. On the one hand, there are practices aimed at the maximization of the capital (material and symbolic wealth) which constitute the **patrimony**; on the other, there are those aimed at the development of the body (individual and collective) which constitutes the **(patri)lineage**. Thus the economy of the proper place (also 'politics of this "place"') reproduces these two forms of what

Bourdieu also calls the "dwelling"--what we may suppose to be designated by the idea of 'home'. If then such an idea is contained by land, on the one hand, and heirs, on the other, in an even more unequivocal formulation, we may say, as does de Certeau, that "in traditional societies, the 'home' designates both the house (the property) and the family (the genealogical body)" (1984, 215, n. 24). However, unlike de Certeau, I would refrain from assuming that this is "well known". For, while the presence of these two forms of (political) economy are by now fully acknowledged (within anthropology and historical anthropology) to be present in traditional societies, the nature of their particular intercalation with such real yet mythological places like 'home' is yet to addressed. In this respect, their relation to the spatialization of power remains a new sight on the theoretical horizon.

In the last two chapters, I dealt with questions arising out of this spatialization in terms of, first, the spatializing changes in the history of the **domus**--what I characterized as the historical configurations of domestic space--and, second, the circulation of certain gendered conceptions of space such as those particular to the spatialization of the 'center'. Both of these, as I showed, are directly linked to the production and reproduction of the idea and politics of 'home'. In this section, I want to address the spatializing practices, the proliferation of 'tricks', 'strategies', 'tactics' (I do not distinguish between them theoretically here) at the base of this idea of 'home' as a means of untying the 'knot' of this politics of 'home', or of the place proper (which of course founds the spatializing enterprise).

Further, I have chosen to do this through a work in historical anthropology (easily the first in its field) that has gone surprisingly unnoticed in many discussions of the above. While some repetition of material covered in previous chapters is inevitable, I have nonetheless chosen to discuss that material in greater detail here because it is

seminal. It is seminal not only by way of its actualization, in theoretical terms, of these two distinct forms of dwelling, the 'center' and the 'house'; even more importantly, it stands out because of its unusual perspicacity in identifying the presence and the role of a particular domestic object-medium in this. That domestic object-medium is, of course, the sacred family hearth and its role, a role in a) articulating these two features of the 'home', 'house' and 'center', with each other; b) articulating them with the economy of a proper place; and c) with spatializations of power that are assumed by the idea of 'home'. Having looked at how the hearth is symbolized through a genderization of space that privileges the female term, I will now address the sense in which the sacred hearth, in so far as the practices (rather than representations) of Antiquity are concerned, is used in the service of a male (patriarchal) economy of the proper place; one in which contrary to the mythical condensation of femininity into powerful spatial structures of dominance, yielded spatial practices of dominance within which women had no power at all. Through Fustel de Coulanges' unsurpassed knowledge and insights about the role of the sacred hearth in the everyday life and popular culture of Greek and Roman Antiquity, this chapter undertakes to outline the 'place' of the hearth in grounding those 'little tactics of the habitat' that have been every bit as decisive in the emergence of geo-politics as well.

This 'place', that emerged unsighted into the **Episteme** of the illustrious École Normale Supérieure as far back as 1858, was due to Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges (who was to ironically later dedicate his life to the history of the French Republic) and who presented at that time the second of two doctoral theses required for the completion of postgraduate work in the history of Classical Antiquity--a Latin thesis entitled Quid Vestae cultus in institutis veterum privatis publicisque valuerit (Westfall Thompson 1954, 364, n. 11)--On the significance of the cult of Vesta in the public and private institutions of old (my translation). According to James Westfall Thompson, Fustel de

Coulanges' Latin thesis "showed the development of what was originally a domestic cult into the official cult of the city" and "in its central idea, textual analysis, and forceful exposition...heralded Fustel de Coulanges' coming masterpiece: La cité antique" (1954, 364).

Thus Fustel de Coulanges' The Ancient City (1864), written in six months on the basis of a series of lectures given in 1862-63 at the University of Strasbourg, was according to Thompson an "instant and continuous success" (364). Today, this work is considered, in the words of Evans-Pritchard, "the most far-going and comprehensive treatment of religion" (Evans-Pritchard 1965, 50). In his introduction to Robert Hertz's Death & the Right Hand, Pritchard writes: "I regard Fustel de Coulanges' La cité antique as the dividing point between the speculative and dogmatic treatises of such writers as Turgot, Condorcet, Saint-Simon and Comte on the one side, and on the other, for example, Durkheim's detailed analyses of systems of classification, totemism, and incest prohibitions, and Hubert and Mauss's scholarly treatment of sacrifice and magic" (Hertz 1969, 11-12). Like his Latin thesis, The Ancient City[2] shows the development of a domestic cult into the official cult of the city. Unlike it, however, it does not clearly stipulate what that cult might be.

In the introduction to his work he writes: "a primitive religion constituted the Greek and Roman family...[and] formed...the city" (13). "From it," he goes on, "came all the institutions, as well as all the private law, of the ancients" (1965, 13). To quote this famous passage in its entirety:

> A comparison of beliefs and laws shows that a primitive religion constituted the Greek and Roman family, established marriage and paternal authority, fixed the order of relationship, and consecrated the right of property, and the right of inheritance. This same religion, after having enlarged and extended the family, formed a still larger association, the city, and reigned in that as it had reigned in the family. From it came all the institutions, as

> well as all the private law, of the ancients. It was from this that the city received all its principles, its rules, its usages and its magistracies. But, in the course of time, this ancient religion became modified or effaced, and private law and political institutions were modified with it. Then came a series of revolutions, and social changes regularly followed the development of knowledge. (13)

This "religion" is, according to Fustel de Coulanges, "the first religion known and practiced in the common cradle of [the] race" (29). It presented itself side by side with that of "the worship of the gods of Olympus" (122). However, while "these two orders of belief lay the foundation of two religions that lasted as long as Greek and Roman society" (122), their "dogmas", according to Fustel de Coulanges, "were entirely distinct...and their ceremonies and practices were absolutely different" (122).[3] Thus The Ancient City goes beyond an evolutionary treatise or a history of the development of a domestic hearth cult into a national cult. Indeed, on the basis of this evolution, it seeks to make a claim--and, according to his critics, propose a causal theory--about the relation between (man's) beliefs, or popular mythologies and myths, and the socio-cultural order with its structures of power, as well as one about the role of 'religion' in that.

In the following I propose to examine Fustel de Coulanges' conception of 'the religion of the hearth' as it appears in The Ancient City, and describe how it illustrates the role of the hearth in particular, and of religion in general, in mediating between man's beliefs and his social institutions. Although Fustel de Coulanges' thesis moves from private institutions to public ones, I will address only that aspect of his work that pertains to the private and domestic realm. Consequently I will discuss the ways in which the hearth, and the 'religion of the hearth', mediates between man's beliefs and those institutions and practices that govern the 'home'--the institutions and practices of property and kinship relations. In Fustel de Coulanges' thesis (according to my reading of it), this is a relation between beliefs and the social order in accordance with which the hearth encodes a system of beliefs and practices that mediates between social and natural

necessity via gender-specific representations--representations linked to male sexual and reproductive identity and consciousness. However, before I engage in these last two points, we must first begin with a clear picture of Fustel de Coulanges' conception of the role of the 'hearth' within the problematic of 'religion'.

## 1. On the Idea of the 'Hearth' in Fustel de Coulanges' Conception of Religion

While 'religion' is a term that appears in the title page of The Ancient City--in its English rendition the work is subtitled "a study of the religion, laws, and institutions of Greece and Rome"--there is no stipulative, nominal, or actual definition that Fustel de Coulanges provides for this term and we are left to glean from its position within the text and from the problematic within which it appears, what it is meant to signify and what role it plays in the relationship between the 'beliefs', the 'laws' and the 'institutions' of a given society.

As Fustel de Coulanges' work focusses specifically on an analysis, via primary literary texts,[4] of the period of Classical history, it expresses a tentative understanding of 'primitive' religion as the site at which beliefs, on the one hand, and laws, on the other, are articulated. But what is this "primitive religion" is, or what "religion" itself means, is not stipulated. Indeed there are at least two "religions"--each of which is proposed by Fustel de Coulanges as "primitive"--but neither of which, alone, can fully account for the constitution, and indeed construction, of the 'family' and private 'law', a constitution on the basis of which Fustel de Coulanges moves on to explain the historical development of the city-state. These can be, and are indeed, assumed to be "the religion of the sacred fire" (Nisbet 1976, vi; Radcliffe-Brown 1945, 177, n.1; Finley 1977, 311),[5] and the "religion" or "cult of the dead ancestors" (Humphreys 1980a, 96; Humphreys 1980b, xix; Momigliano 1980, xi; Evans-Pritchard 1965, 51; Thompson 365; Radcliffe-Brown 163

ff.; Émile Durkheim 1957, 154; Finley 311).[6]

In order to explain this it is, according to Fustel de Coulanges' own recommendation, necessary to read a third 'religion' into the text of his book, a religion which irreducible to neither the "religion of the sacred fire" nor to that of "the dead ancestors", is a syncretization of both; one such that accordingly can and does explain a) the constitution of the family and all its private laws and b) the constitution of the city-state and its evolution through the Classical period. This third 'religion' is what he intermittently refers to as "the religion of the hearth".

Taking off upon the same theme as his erstwhile Latin thesis, Fustel de Coulanges begins the third chapter of Book I of The Ancient City as follows: "[in] the house of every Greek and Roman was an altar; on this altar there had always to be a small quantity of ashes, and a few lighted coals (25). In the footnote to this passage, Fustel de Coulanges gives the Greek and Latin appellation for this "fire upon the altar" (31) He writes: "[t]he Greeks called this altar εστια...[which] was the name by which they [the Romans] afterwards designated the goddess Vesta" (25, n. 1).[7] In English, εστια **[estia]** is translated as the "hearth". While in French there also exists the equivalent of "hearth"--"**le foyer**"--Fustel de Coulanges alternately employs the religion of the "sacred fire" (29), and the religion of the "hearth" (95), to describe this phenomenon.

There is, however, a major problem in identifying the religion of the hearth in that the Willard Small's English translation, upon which all English editions of The Ancient City are based, has translated **foyer** (hearth) "sacred fire" and thereby inadvertedly blurred the distinction between the idea of 'hearth' and that of 'fire', by translating "**religion du foyer**" alternately as "religion of the hearth" and "religion of the sacred fire". We can only conjecture that Small was perhaps unaware of Fustel de

Coulanges' avowed erstwhile interest in the hearth as demonstrated by his Latin thesis, a work that has not been translated at all! This would not be nearly so misleading--as it is these 'religions' are interchangeable and Fustel de Coulanges uses them interchangeably in different places--were it not for the fact that the "religion of the hearth" is used in precisely that single instance where the "religion of the sacred fire" is not appropriate. The result is that the significance of this most original notion of the "religion of the hearth", or ancient cult of domesticity, with its role in the organization of public and private life and its position in a most innovative theoretical trajectory, has been unintentionally erased.

That this slide, collapsing as it does 'hearth' cult and 'fire' cult, has been overlooked is not entirely surprising and can be explained by a number of intersecting variables, not the least of which is Fustel de Coulanges' own failure to perceive that which his own text describes. This to some degree appears to be a problem of language which, as Ernst Cassirer reminds us, sometimes conceals as much as it discloses; in particular, it is a problem of the Greek language in this instance, which does not clearly differentiate between the idea of 'hearth' as a domestic object (**estia**) and its anthropomorphization into a domestic deity (Hestia). It is the philologist Max Müller who, cited by Ernest Cassirer, his student, describes this phenomenon in Language and Myth as the "paronymia" of words (Cassirer 1953, 4). This refers to that function of language whereby the same word comes to signify something different. Unable perhaps to grasp at this distinction, Fustel de Coulanges might have fallen prey to it, if not in his own mind, then certainly in the text of his work; for no clarification can be found, it by explanation or by his own usage, of the fact that 'hearth' in Greek, being a religious concept par excellence, is not linguistically differentiated from its eponymous deity. I will illustrate what I mean by this.

In Book I of The Ancient City, entitled "Ancient Beliefs" and ostensibly set up to lay out the founding principles of religion, there is a chapter on "the sacred fire". In a very important section of this chapter, in which Fustel de Coulanges argues for a universality and cross-cultural applicability of this 'religion', as well as for its antecedence to the Olympian religion, Fustel de Coulanges' need to differentiate between the religion of the hearth and its naturistic counterpart, brings him to bypass an equally important naturistic feature of that religion. This is a feature which, if not fully acknowledged, leads into precisely the kind of linguistic confusion to which he has fallen a prey--that is that the word for "hearth" in Greek εστια (**estia**) is also the name of the Olympian deity εστια (Hestia, in Latin Vesta), hailed by Homer, Hesiod, Ovid. He writes:

> The symbols of this religion being modified....The altar of the sacred fire was personified. They called it estia Vesta, the name was the same in Latin and Greek, and was the same that in laws and primitive language designated an altar. (30)

However, what he does not point out is that all this being so, it is impossible to distinguish between them linguistically. The same word has come to signify both the 'hearth'-object and the 'hearth'-symbol or deity. This distinction is not only important in bringing out some commonalities between this 'religion' and the naturistic (totemic) elements of the Olympian gods and the Olympian religion (one which Fustel de Coulanges does not entertain). More significantly, it is important in detecting the differences between Olympian (naturistic) religions and this antecedent primitive (and animistic) one--a religion which, as will later be seen, bears similarities to a very different set of beliefs.

The difference between animistic and naturistic beliefs, as that between hearth-object and hearth-god, is ultimately one of the chief considerations of Fustel de

Coulanges' The Ancient City, a consideration which could not have been detected by his translators. This is especially so, given the decidedly inchoate nature of his theory of religion. For, one might say that it is perhaps one of Fustel de Coulanges' most valuable contributions to have uncovered Olympian gods (like Hestia) that were living in the most intimate and domestic habitats, and in the everyday life of the people of Antiquity. Indeed, such a move is critical in detaching the received ideas of the high culture of Classical Antiquity and addressing the existence of a low culture that revolved around the worship of domestic and "subterranean" gods.[8]

For where, but from the Golden annals of the Age of Classical Antiquity, could the "aristocratic conception of culture" (Ginzburg 1980, xiv) that Carlo Ginzburg and others[9] so decry, be wrought? The idea of "Classical" culture, by its very formulation, does not permit us to think of the popular in the "high" offices of the Homeric world, and Mount Olympus excludes by definition the "low" denizens of common life. With the exception of a handful of recent works that seek to expunge this aristocratic conception of culture,[10] the culture of Antiquity remains, at least conceptually, in the thralldom of its own "high" heritage. Fustel de Coulanges' discussion of a primitive popular religion, or culture,[11] of Antiquity follows two distinct lines of inquiry. In the first instance it pursues the opposition between the Classical, "high" culture of Parthenon and the Pantheon and the popular, "low" culture of the everyday life of the people of Greece and Rome.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that in his own literal translation of Fustel de Coulanges' Latin thesis, Thompson translates the "**cultus Vestae**" into the much less forceful and insufficient "cult of Vesta" when, in truth, a much more appropriate (following Fustel de Coulanges' own remarks) and illumining rendition would have been "cult of the hearth". This oversight on the part of the translator has created difficulties in attaining to a meaning in Fustel de Coulanges' text that not even he himself could see.

Emersed as he was in the language of his forefathers, he had read all that had ever been written in Latin and saw in it what only an accumulation of epochs could have brought him to see. Lacking the terms with which to communicate his vision--a vision which depicts a transition from animistic to naturalistic belief systems and its impact on the organization of social life in both its private and public institutions--it must be teased out of his work. This can only be achieved through an appropriate and initial recognition of the precise elements of his conception of the 'religion of the hearth' and its articulation in the private laws of the Greek and Roman family. In so far as it is here that the sociology of 'religion' finds its greatest representation,[12] understanding this articulation of law, religion, and belief is essential to a fair appreciation of the extent and horizon of the field of the theoretical problematic that Fustel de Coulanges' The Ancient City has uncovered.

For besides a weak "correspondence" version of Fustel de Coulanges' theory of religion, a general claim is made by practically all accounts of The Ancient City that a stronger theory attempts to link causally the rise of social and political institutions with the beliefs of primitive religion. Thus Fustel de Coulanges is charged with holding "the idea of the primacy of [religious] belief and of a causal relation in which the religion is the cause and the other institutions are the effect" (Radcliffe-Brown, 162). According to Thompson, citing Camille Jullian (Fustel de Coulanges' favorite student as well as his literary executor): "...if we seek in La cité antique only the rapport between beliefs and social forms in Antiquity, and the role of religion in the union of human groups and in the external life of men, perhaps not a line need be changed in Fustel's book" (366). Thus, despite the acknowledged debt owed by the sociology of religion to Fustel de Coulanges' most lucid perception of the relation between religion and the institutions of social and political life, these accounts perceive Fustel de Coulanges to have held a causal theory of the relation between beliefs and social forms. However, what all these

accounts have in common, besides a privileging of functional over causal explanation, is an interpretation of Fustel de Coulanges' theory of religion that is based upon the selection of data derived from The Ancient City that suggest that the "religion" in question is the religion commonly known as the cult of the dead (Evans-Pritchard 1965, 51; Thompson, 365; Radcliffe-Brown, 163 ff; Émile Durkheim 1957, 154).

It is Radcliffe-Brown who, of all of Fustel de Coulanges' interpreters, gives the most reflected account of the cult of the dead in The Ancient City. Employing the Durkheimean definition of religion as involving beliefs on the one hand and rites on the other (Radcliffe-Brown 1956, 154-55), Radcliffe-Brown goes on to sketch out the operation of the cult of the dead in The Ancient City on the basis of a distinction between a belief in the souls of the dead ancestors, on the one hand, and the rituals and practices involved in the worship of these ancestors, on the other (163-04). In thus clarifying the distinction between beliefs and practices in so far as the cult (or religion) of the dead is concerned, Radcliffe-Brown has made a valuable contribution toward interpreting Fustel de Coulanges' work, one that clarifies applies the distinction between cause and function. For, according to Radcliffe-Brown's scheme, it becomes possible to relegate the causal element in Fustel de Coulanges' theory of religion to questions concerning beliefs in the soul of the dead and thereby salvage a functional one where questions about the rites pertaining to this belief are concerned. Displacing the Coulangean idea of religious "belief" with a more Durkheimean idea of social "sentiment" (Radcliffe-Brown, 161), Radcliffe-Brown believes to have restored sociological meaning to Fustel de Coulanges' theory of religion, a restoration on the basis of which he proceeds (with the help of Fustel de Coulanges' illustrious student and successor in the sociology of religion, Émile Durkheim) to build his own theory (163 ff.). This move to integrate The Ancient City within the traditional body of sociological theory of religion, while extremely valuable in

situating Fustel de Coulanges within the project of a contemporary social scientific enterprise, fails on two counts: first, it remains as much as The Ancient City itself, mired, despite the effort at clarity exhibited by Radcliffe-Brown's analysis of the sociological meaning of ancestor-worship, in certain paradoxical difficulties of deriving a social structure dominated by lineage ties from the veneration of tombs belonging to that lineage. This "self-contradictory" aspect of deriving the social structure of ancient society from "the cult of ancestral tombs" has already been pointed out in connection with Fustel de Coulanges' exposition of the property-relations of that society, a society whose landed territory rights were, according to Fustel de Coulanges, also regulated by cult. This point regarding the paradoxicality of "the veneration of tombs" as the mark of social and economic structures is expressed by C. S. Humphreys in an article entitled "Family Tombs and Tomb Cult in Ancient Athens: Tradition or Traditionalism?" (1980a, 96-126). He writes: "Fustel de Coulanges' thesis that ancient society was founded upon the cult of ancestral tombs has had, for a thoroughly self-contradictory argument, a remarkably successful career" (96). While focussing on the economic aspect of this contradiction, Humphreys nonetheless points to a logistically problematic aspect of the functional integration of ancestor-worship in sociology. While my argument focuses on the biological inconsistencies of doing so, the fact remains, as I also show in this chapter, that a cut and dry separation of rites from beliefs cannot so easily be achieved.

## 2. The Ancient Family, the Right of Property and the Domestic Hearth

Book II of The Ancient City is entitled: "The Family". Its first chapter: "Religion Was the Constituent Principle of the Ancient Family" is seminal to the work's thesis. In a passage leading the second to last paragraph of that chapter, Fustel de Coulanges lays out his most provocative and original proposition. In the Anchor Book edition of the Willard

Small translation, the only English translation to date, this passage reads as follows:

> The members of the ancient family were united by something more powerful than birth, affect or physical strength; this was the religion of the sacred fire...(42)

In the original French edition, "the religion of the sacred fire" appears as "**la religion du foyer**" (40). What the implications of this difference are, will be examined in detail in the last section of this chapter. For our purpose here, suffice it to point out that this is not an adequate translation of the text in question; for it blurs not only the difference between Fustel de Coulanges' distinction between "the religion of the sacred fire" and "the religion of the sacred hearth"--a distinction which eventually plays a dominant role in delineating the nature and the role of primitive religious practices and beliefs in the organization of social life, as well as of the whole field of the problematic within which that role can be perceived--but it also prohibits the actual sighting of a cult of domesticity (i.e. a 'religion of the hearth') which, articulated through private laws and customs, founds the two single most important sites for the organization of Greek and Roman life--property and the family. Closely following Fustel's text, I shall in the following short section, attempt to reconstruct that role.

**The sacred family hearth**

In the closing paragraph of this opening chapter on the family, Fustel de Coulanges makes a ground-breaking observation--one which the translation of his text does not sufficiently honor with its imposed use of the title "religion of the sacred fire". That observation is that the Greek language designates the 'family' by reference to the concept of 'hearth'. He writes:

> The ancient Greek language has a very significant word to designate a family. It is επιστιον (epistion), a word which signifies, literally, **that**

**which is near the hearth**. (42)

In a footnote to this paragraph, which appears in the French edition, and which the English translation has entirely omitted, Fustel de Coulanges corroborates this claim (Hachette 41, n. 1). In effect both Herodotus and Plutarch make use of the word "hearth" (**estia**) **in lieu** of 'family'. Herodotus writes **eptakosia epista** for seven hundred families (V:73) and **oktakosia estiai** for eighty families (I: 176). Plutarch, in his Romulus, does the same (Plutarch 1959, 9). While in the first instance this expression conforms to the first example of 'family' as "that which is near the hearth", in the second two instances 'hearth' and 'family' have been used interchangeably by both Plutarch and Herodotus.

This linguistic homology which condenses 'family' into 'hearth' and which Fustel de Coulanges has uncovered in the texts of ancient writers, is entirely absent from the English translation of The Ancient City. As a consequence, the ensuing depth of his analysis of the construction of the family and private family law on the basis of symbolic spatial, rather than natural or biological, principles becomes more elusive than necessary. For it is precisely in the sense that the symbolic order of the 'hearth'--rather than the natural order of consanguinity--earmarks the laws of the Greek and Roman family, that 'religion' and religious representation can be attested to be their founding principle. Examining each of the major constituents of that "law" or code--those of 1) marriage, 2) patriarchal authority, and 3) descent--Fustel de Coulanges' analysis in each case demonstrates the existence of a body of rules and practices, independent of the natural order and concomitant with the symbolic one, that naturalizes the family around the hearth object and that does so by way of ritual practices and spatial considerations. In order to bring this point more fully to light, I shall examine Fustel de Coulanges' treatment of each of these briefly. In each case, it is the symbol of the 'hearth' that plays a dominant role in those practices which encode the idea of the family "tie".

**Marriage**

In his treatment of marriage, Fustel de Coulanges looks at three distinctive aspects of this "sacred ceremony". These are: a) its specific relation to the hearth-object, b) the function of the symbolic technology of the hearth-medium in the rules governing the practice of this ceremony, and c) the opposition between the rules governing the practice of this ceremony and the laws of nature. I shall begin my discussion with the last of these.

a) Marriage and the hearth-object. Marriage, Fustel de Coulanges points out, is designated by Greek and Roman writers by "a word indicative of a religious act." Instead of designating it by its particular name--γαμοσ (**gamos**)--it is designated by the word τελοσ (**telos**), which according to Fustel de Coulanges "signified sacred ceremony" (44); "as if," he adds, "marriage had been in those ancient times, the ceremony sacred above all others" (44). However, he points out, "the reign that created marriage was not that of Jupiter, of Juno, or of the other Gods of Olympus" (44). The ceremony, he also writes "did not take place in a temple" (44). On the contrary, "the principal and essential part of the ceremony always took place before the domestic hearth" (44, my emphasis). Thus among both the Greeks and the Romans, the marriage ceremony consisted of "three acts": the first of which took place "before the hearth of the father, the third before the hearth of the husband" and the second in transition "from the one to the other" (44).

b) The rules governing marriage and (the technology of) the hearth. There were three sets of rules governing the practice of the marriage ceremony corresponding to each of the three acts. In the first instance a ceremony is conducted in accordance with which the father separates the daughter from the paternal hearth (45). In the second, the wife is "carried to the house of the husband" where she does not "go of her own accord into her own dwelling"; instead, the husband must take her and "simulate a seizure by force" (45).

Furthermore, "she must cry out, and the women that accompany her must pretend to defend her" (45) after which "the husband raises her in his arms, and carries her through the doorway taking great care, however, that her feet do not touch the sill" (45). In the third act, to which the preceding are but "a prelude" (45), the couple "approach the hearth". The wife is "sprinkled with water" and "touches the sacred fire", following which they share a meal that commences and ends with a libation and a prayer to the hearth (46).

c) What do these rules (rites, rituals, practices) of the marriage ceremony signify? According to Fustel de Coulanges, marriage signifies for the woman "a second birth" (147). Leaving the "hearth of her father" she now joins that of her husband; she is henceforth "the daughter of her husband" (47), for, as Fustel de Coulanges notes, "one could not belong to two families, or to two religions" (47). The fact of the matter is, for the woman, she "belongs" to neither. As he later notes on authority in the family, the wife is never "the mistress of the hearth" (86).

> This religion did not place woman in so high a rank. The wife is not the mistress of the hearth. She does not derive her religion from birth. She is initiated into it at her marriage....She herself will not become an ancestor; placed in the tomb she will not receive a special worship....
>
> She could never have a hearth of her own; she was never the chief of a worship....She never commanded; she was never even free, or mistress of herself. She was always near the hearth of another, repeating the prayer of another; for all the acts of religious life she needed a superior, and for all the acts of civil life a guardian. (86-87)

If, as Claude Lévi-Strauss suggests, women are like signs that are circulated by men (Lévi-Strauss 1969, 496; 1977, 61), then it is clearly in relation to the sacred hearth that these 'matrimonial strategies' (Bourdieu 1972), 'strategies of heirship' (Goody 1976, 86 ff.), and tactics of exogamy associated with this 'circulation', are set up. Jean-Pierre Vernant proposes the hearth in connection with an explanation of the ambiguity of the

strategies of heirship contained in the institution of the **epikleros**.[13] Their role in "the continuing existence of a 'hearth'" (Vernant 1983c, 144) explains, according to Vernant, the double-status of women whereby they are at once the outsiders or 'mobile' element and the 'stable factor' of each household (Vernant 1983c, 143-144). In these tactics of exogamy, a reversal is achieved in accordance with which "the whole system of matrimonial relations is recast according to an inverted pattern" (Vernant 1983c, 144). This is an interesting point of comparison in terms of a feminist critique levied against Lévi-Strauss's theory of kinship (de Lauretis 1984, 19-20; Cowie 1978; Rubin 1975, 176 ff.)--a theory that would explain the inherently paradoxical nature of women's position as constituted at once within and outside of culture.

**Paternal authority**

The corollary to the principle of marriage is that of paternal authority. As much as the wife is excluded from direct participation in the symbolism and technology of the sacred hearth--that of her father as much as that of her husband--the 'father' is included, whether he shares in biological paternity or not. As with marriage, paternal authority was a) derived from the religious technology of the hearth--a political technology of power and exchange of women; b) it was constituted in accordance with rules of worship that involved practices of space; and c) it operated independently of natural principles.

a) Paternal authority and the hearth. "We must remark," writes Fustel de Coulanges, "that paternal authority was not an arbitrary power like that which would be derived from the right of the strongest" (94). Neither did 'paternity' as such give the father his rights and rites (89). Instead, it was 'the hearth': "In primitive religion the father is not alone the strong man, the protector who has power to command obedience; he is the priest, he is **heir to the hearth**" (89, my emphasis).

"The father," writes Fustel, "ranks first in the presence of the sacred fire. He lights it and supports it; he is its priest" (86). According to Fustel de Coulanges, "[t]here was no other priest than the father: as a priest, he knew no hierarchy" (37). Indeed, in this domestic religion, it was he who "performed all the religious ceremonies" (37). The 'sole interpreter' of this religion he "could teach it only to his son" (38).

b) Rules. The father is "the religious chief of the domestic religion" (90). Not only does he regulate the ceremonies of worship, but he is also responsible for the perpetuity of the worship and, consequently, for that of the family. Amongst the rights that this function confers upon him besides 1) the right to give his daughter in marriage, and 2) "to repudiate his wife" in the case of sterility and/or adultery (91), he also has 3) the right "to recognize the child at his birth, or reject it" (90). This ties in with the third essential category of family law: the "order of relationship" or more plainly, kinship.

c) Culture versus nature. The title **'pater'**, Fustel de Coulanges points out "might be given to a man who had no children, who has not married, and who was not even of age to contract marriage" (89). This, as I showed in chapter two above, was a title that reflected his position in relation to the hearth--a position in which the **pater** was its keeper and chief priest. In this way it was the cultural institution of the hearth which, through its symbolization of kinship, totemically embodied the meaning of paternity.

**Descent: kinship and the "order of relationship"**

Besides the direct function that the hearth plays in the immediate concept of 'family', it has a function in two specific aspects of family law related to descent. a) birth and b) agnation. In both these instances, the hearth is the site of a displacement of natural with cultural ties.

a) Birth. As I mentioned in the previous section, it falls within the rights of the

father to recognize the child at its birth or to reject it. The offspring had to "be accepted by the father...as master and guardian of the hearth" (53). In the case that it was decided that he was accepted, a sort of religious initiation, or rite of passage, was performed in which the hearth had a principal role. In this ceremony (called the **amphidromia**) "a female carried him or her in her arms, and ran, carrying him, several times round the sacred fire" (53). The object of this ceremony, which was "to initiate him into the domestic worship (53), had a double effect, not the least of which was to determine "whether the newcomer was or was not of the family" (53)--a 'fact' which did not emerge from any biological necessity or evidence.

b) Agnation. 'Agnation' was a principle of bonding and adoption, customary in Roman times, in which the role of the hearth gave to the 'agnate' the same kinship status as a natural birth, or 'second birth'--a status which was a higher status than that of marriage. A practice that others of his time had difficulty in explaining (58), agnation, in the context of Fustel de Coulanges' conception of the "religion of the hearth", is brought very easily to light. "There has been much discussion as to what the Roman jurists understood by **agnation**," Fustel de Coulanges writes. "But the problem is of easy solution as soon as we bring agnation and the domestic religion together" (58). In Fustel de Coulanges' analysis "[a]gnation was nothing more than relationship as religion had originally established it" (58). A religion admitted to by males only, Fustel de Coulanges points out that "it was not by birth, it was by worship alone, that the agnates were recognized."

As such, agnation is perhaps the most outstanding expression of the sacred hearth's role in displacing biological necessity in so far as it is here that cultural ties took the most obvious precedence over natural ones. In Fustel de Coulanges' own words:

The son whom emancipation had detached from the worship was no longer

> the agnate of his father. The stranger who had been adopted, that is to say, who had been admitted to the worship, became the agnate of the one adopting him, and even of the whole family. (59)

Thus Fustel de Coulanges concludes that "[w]e can now understand why, in the eyes of the Roman law, two consanguineous brothers were agnates, while two uterine brothers were not" (59). But whatever this opposition between "consanguineous" and "uterine" is thought to mean, Fustel de Coulanges corrects one fundamental principle related to it: "Still we cannot say that descent by males was the immutable principle on which relationship was founded." Indeed, cannot say that descent by males (patrilineage) is based upon principles of consanguinity. However, while every page of The Ancient City is testimony to this, this is so despite Fustel de Coulanges' conscious efforts, not because of them.

In the section that follows, I will discuss how this idea emerges in The Ancient City as the most far-reaching insight regarding the role of religion in the social order yet to be arrived at: an idea of a domestic 'technology of gender' in which the sacred family hearth was its principle instrument.

**The right of property**

In addition to the above, the principle of hereditary worship through the hearth is also responsible, according to Fustel de Coulanges' analysis, for the symbolization of private property. As Fustel de Coulanges points out, there are "three things which, from the most ancient times, we find founded and solidly established in these Greek and Italian societies: the domestic religion; the family; and the right of property--three things which had in the beginning a manifest relation, and which appear to have been inseparable" (1956, 61). There are essentially three features that relate the hearth and the religion of the hearth to the representation of private property in Fustel de Coulanges' text. These

are: a) its fixity to the ground, b) its projection of an enclosure around the property, and c) its foundation for the house or dwelling.

a) Fixity. It was the custom that the hearth be placed upon the ground and henceforth not moved. Fustel de Coulanges argues that when they established the hearth it was with the idea that it would remain in the same spot for "the god is installed there" (61). In this way, writes Fustel de Coulanges, "the sacred fire takes possession of the soil, and makes it its own. It is the god's property" (62). Its **fixed** relation to the ground of the ancestral 'homes' of the dead ancestors becomes the symbolic representation of the territory that was staked out as belonging to the family or group (1956, 61). It is thus that the 'hearth', via its religious rites and rituals, comes to embody a very important aspect of the concept and the idea of 'home'--the concept of a 'fixed abode' (61).

b) Enclosure. In addition, Fustel de Coulanges points to the presence, at a certain distance, of an enclosure around the hearth--an enclosure that symbolized the parameters of the property (1956, 62). This represents the possibility of constituting an estate, 'home', or landed property on the basis of what we may call 'the wall'--a 'fence', or 'hedge', made of wood or of stone--which "separated the domain of one sacred fire from that of another" (Fustel de Coulanges 1956, 62). On the basis of the religious idea that "the sacred fire must be isolated--that is to say separated from all that is not itself" (62), the stipulation arose that there "must be an enclosure around this hearth at a certain distance" (62). In Fustel de Coulanges own words: "This enclosure, traced and protected by religion [i.e. the hearth], was the most certain emblem, the most undoubted mark of the right of property" (62-63). This was the enclosure within which the family had its house, flocks and field.

c) Dwelling. Furthermore, one finds evidence of another enclosure of which the hearth was emblematic--that of the 'solid structure' of the domestic dwelling. He writes:

"The tent covers the Arab, the wagon the Tartar, but a family that has a domestic hearth has need of a permanent dwelling" (62). Thus the house, placed within the sacred enclosure of the property housed the hearth, which was in turn placed within a second enclosure near the entrance of the house (63). Varying according to architectural design, the walls of the house were nevertheless "raised around the hearth to isolate and defend it," as the house, "consecrated by the perpetual presence of the gods," became "a **temple** which preserves them" (64, my emphasis). Indeed, it is possible to cite Cicero's De Domo Sua:

> What is more sacred, what more inviably hedged about by every kind of sanctity, than the home of every individual citizen? Within its circle are his altars, his hearths, his household gods, his religion, his observances, his ritual; it is a sanctuary...in the eyes of all. (Cicero 1979, XI, 41:109)[14]

Thus it is that this religion of the sacred hearth did not only coincide with the displacement of the natural order, but with the construction of the economic one as well. For it is in relation to these three features, the ground, the wall, and the house or dwelling that private property becomes articulated with religious representation and founds the basis of what for Fustel de Coulanges was the transition from a world of 'private' to that of 'public' laws and institutions.

## 3. The Hearth in Fustel de Coulanges' Conception of the Rise of the City-State

In the last section I discussed Fustel de Coulanges' conception of the religion of the hearth and its role in the private institution of the family. In this section I wish to resume the theme begun in the introduction of this chapter and discuss the religion of the hearth as the key site for the certification and circulation of both the beliefs and the institutions of the patriarchal social order as such. I want to suggest that the hearth illustrates a key point in Fustel de Coulanges' thesis regarding religion as popular symbolic system that mediates between the natural and the cultural order. While Fustel

de Coulanges does not explicitly describe his position, this is what I have taken him to mean when he addresses the proposition that to understand man's institutions we have to examine his beliefs. The analysis of the role of the hearth in the construction of the institution of the family and private law, conducted in the last section of this thesis, would suggest that in function of its position both with relation to the nature of public institutions and to that of primitive beliefs, it reflects a conception of religion as mediating between nature and culture. However, before the subject of what it mediates between can be broached, it is necessary to address the preliminary question of its position with respect to both primitive beliefs and public institutions, if only to complete the task that Fustel de Coulanges sets out to answer. This section will deal with each aspect of this question, albeit somewhat curiously.

The principle of the hearth, as Fustel argues in Book II of The Ancient City, is at the basis of the entire organization of the family. From it, both private as well as civic law emerges. Fustel de Coulanges describes a number of civic laws emerging from this principle and its construction of 'relationship' which I will not go into here. These are "laws" which did not extend from the city. As Fustel de Coulanges reminds us: "The family did not receive its laws from the city ....[for if] the city had established private law that law would probably have been different from what we have seen" (85). Nevertheless, such laws did appear in the city's legislations. Evidence of this appears throughout Fustel de Coulanges' discussion. It reflects a theory, set forth in the Introduction of The Ancient City, and respected throughout it, about the 'religious' constitution of legal practice in Athenian and Roman law. In this way, that theory on the basis of which man's institutions are explicable through man's religious practices and religious beliefs, takes on an evolutionist, "historical" quality and constitutes a strong pull throughout the book and its main argument.

However, there is another strain that runs through Fustel de Coulanges' argument, a strain equally important and perhaps more original in methodology and that is that a homologous relationship is manifested between the domestic family hearth and the private institutions of kinship and the patrimony on the one hand, and that of the state hearth and the public institution of the city-state, on the other. While in some respects this might appear to be a specious claim, involving a great number of variables which it is not my intention to address here, it has significant merit in the homologies in hearth symbolism that it posits between 'public' and 'private' spheres and their respective **sacra**, to merit some attention.

Very briefly, these homologies can be summed up as follows in three ways. 1) In the first place, like the foundation of the family estate, the foundation of the city (Fustel de Coulanges uses the mytho-poetic foundation of Rome as his example) was always a religious act" (1900, 177). The city arose around a hearth "as the house rises round the domestic hearth" (1900, 137). Fustel de Coulanges goes to some lengths to describe the foundation of Rome and the religious rituals and ceremonies involving the hearth. In the second place, a city hearth, "the common hearth of the city" (1900, 146), enclosed in a building which the Greeks called the **prytaneum** and which the Romans called the "Temple of Vesta" (1900, 146)--the temple in which a sacred fire was always kept burning and united the citizens of the city-state in a like manner to how the domestic hearth united the members of the 'family'. This, however, is not in the manner of a kinship, but of a sacerdotal and civic tie: only citizens of the city were allowed to congregate at public repasts and sacrifices to the common hearth. Third, the king, like the father, "was the supreme priest of the hearth" (1900, 231), though he was not the one who tended the hearth. In this aspect, the rules governing the religion of the hearth differ significantly in their 'public' civic form. Fustel de Coulanges does not comment on the

fact that the common hearth is tended by female rather than male religious figures--the Vestal virgins. Here we find an apparent reversal of the religious exclusion of women from the domestic rites and rituals pertaining to care of the sacred hearth. However, in their presence as religious figures, the Vestals underwent such intense purification rituals that gender was still a point of exclusion.[15]

In all its aspects, if one can generalize, the positivity of the religion of the hearth had a symbolic and spatial, rather than an actual political effect. Unlike its role in the family and in family law, it does not only constitute a link with natural values, but also with political ones. It does not naturalize political structures of power, but it simply reflects the ones already in place. Noteworthy in this regard is Fustel de Coulanges' remark concerning the nature of its laws--that "they are not borne out of the idea of justice but religion" (1900, 257). The difference between "justice", here, and "nature" in the case of family law very adequately (and structurally) contrasting the two realms, the realm of public laws and that of private ones, also brings them together under the same sign--the sign of the hearth. In establishing a "link" between them, albeit a symbolic link, through their share of the 'religion of the hearth', a thread is born on the basis of which we can reconstruct the evolution, if not of a religious consciousness (Fustel de Coulanges clearly states that the next set of beliefs did not evolve from institutions but actually changed them) nor of a political consciousness (Fustel de Coulanges describes in the closing section of The Ancient City how the city, its laws and institutions, gradually dissolves as the "power of the "religious principle of the hearth" loses substance), then certainly that of the evolution of a reproductive consciousness and of the operations of the principle of gender. For this is a feature that manifests itself in the essence of a religion of the hearth in so far as it deploys the operation of the principle of sexual difference.

While it would constitute another study to elaborate on the evolution of that principle that Fustel de Coulanges' conception of the "religion of the hearth" and of its role in the public and private institutions of social life entails--not in any sense untoward but outside the scope of this chapter--I will focus the remainder of this section upon the highly thought-provoking speculations that emerge in the opening chapters of Fustel de Coulanges' masterly work regarding the "primitive beliefs" on the basis of which this 'religion' has evolved.

## 4. The Religion of the Hearth and the Nature of Man's Beliefs

Approaching these chapters--in which a number of postulates are set forth, not always clearly differentiated the one from the other--from the perspective of the arguments in the remainder of the book, based as they are upon his conception of the religion of the hearth, I shall attempt to reconstruct a very concise line of reasoning that emerges with these first few pages of the book. This is an argument in favor of looking upon the "religion of the hearth" as the expression of a male reproductive consciousness.

While Fustel de Coulanges does not himself make this observation (indeed radical assertion), it is the only one that would permit us to explain, as he expects to do, the relation between man's non-generic beliefs and his institutions and social practices. For, the fact that "man's beliefs" do indeed take on a gender-specific dimension, while not specifically his intention, is, as I shall argue, the effect or "implications" of his argument. This argument is set up by his view regarding the relation of beliefs to social practices and his view regarding the centrality of the "religion of the hearth" within those practices, laws, and institutions.

However, it need not be thought that in attributing this position to Fustel de Coulanges, I am reading what is not there. Indeed, his views appear inscribed upon the

page; only not being a function of the field within which he has posed the problematic of social life, they are not "visible" to him.

Concerned as he is, above all, with refuting the idea that religious beliefs stemmed from the existence of supernatural phenomena, his object in the opening chapters of The Ancient City, as well as of the book as a whole, was to demonstrate that beliefs were a function of man's, not god's, existence: "the cause which produces them," he writes "must be found in man himself" (12), and "the principle of worship is outside of physical nature, and is found in this little mysterious world, this microcosm--man" (32). He also writes: "religion did not find its gods in physical nature, but in man himself" (33). But what was this "principle"; this "superior principle which gave the(m) authority over the minds of men" (13)?

This "principle", also characterized as "the divine principle" (13), appears under different forms in these chapters of The Ancient City and constitutes the essence of a variety of different formulations of "the primitive religion"--"the first religion" (29) to exercise its "powerful influence...upon the domestic and social institutions of the ancients" (33). It is at once a) the principle of the 'soul' of the dead that rules in Fustel de Coulanges' conception of the "religion of the dead"; b) that of the family 'ancestors' that rules the "religion of the ancestors"; c) that of the 'fire' that rules the "religion of the sacred fire".

It is true that more often than not, Fustel de Coulanges distinguishes between two primary religions: the religion of the dead and the religion of the sacred fire. Nevertheless, at times he combines, in fact collapses them around the "religion of the hearth"--"the ancients made but one religion of both" (32). However, we must bear in mind that they are nonetheless each ruled by different principles. Indeed while Fustel de Coulanges speaks almost interchangeably of the "religion of the ancestors", the "religion

of the dead ancestors" (a redundancy), and the "religion of the dead". He writes: "we may suppose that the worship of the dead was nothing more than the worship of the dead ancestors" (35). Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to distinguish between them even at this level in so far as 'the dead' are not necessarily 'the ancestors'. For if indeed the religion of the hearth signifies kinship in lieu of blood, they become even less predictably interchangeable. However, besides this, there is another most significant element that Fustel de Coulanges addresses and that, partially lost in translation, would categorically refute any notion of identification of 'ancestry' with 'death' and that is the radical exclusion of female ancestry from the sacred ranks of the cult of the dead. In other words, the religion of the dead ancestors is not a religion of the dead, but only of the male dead. If "under the stone of every hearth an ancestor reposed", it was symbolically, within the spatial practices of the ancient texts uncovered by Fustel de Coulanges, a male ancestor that did so.

**The religion of the dead ancestors**

In various passages strewn across these pages, Fustel de Coulanges makes reference to the status of women in 'death' and death ceremonies. In the first section of the book he writes: "After death women had not the same part as men in the worship" (39). Also in the section on paternal authority he writes:

> She does not represent the ancestors since she is not descended from them. She herself will not become an ancestor; placed in the tomb, she will not receive a special worship. (86; cf. Gaius 1932, I: 149, 155)

While these remarks are unfortunately so dispersed as to elude the reader's attention, perhaps the single most vital piece of documentation in favor of his assertions in this regard do not appear in the English translation. This translation has inexplicably been edited at this point.

In a lengthy footnote to a passage that reflects upon the exclusiveness of the "religious" bond as pertains to the ancestors, Fustel de Coulanges writes: "every stranger was strictly excluded" (34). Thus he proceeds to document this with textual references to the exclusiveness of these ceremonies and to woman's exclusion from participation in this ritual. Citing the Law of Solon as reported by Plutarch and Demosthenes, he points out how woman was prohibited from full participation in the funeral rites and funeral procession: "La loi de Solon n'autorisait les femmes à accompagner le mort que jusqu'au degré de cousines..." (n.d., 32, n. 1)

This double exclusion--from translation as much as from worship--is compounded by an oversight in Fustel de Coulanges' own appreciation of the problem, a problem which comes out if we bring together another passage, entirely omitted from the text, with its footnote, that has been retained although transposed. This is a passage in the French original in which Fustel de Coulanges staunchly maintained that all those not related to the family by blood ("du même sang") could not be interred in a family tomb--"Tout ceux du même sang devaient y être anterrés et aucun homme d'une autre famille n'y pouvait être admis" (n.d., 34). Evidence attesting to the strictly paternal (patrilineal) nature of the 'family' tombs reveals the extent of Fustel de Coulanges' own blindness to the insights he was experiencing.

In the footnote now appended to a line in the text describing the community of dead ancestors as an "indissoluble" family, Fustel de Coulanges makes the remarkable connection between family tomb and family tie. This footnote illustrates the role of the idea of paternity in the family worship of the dead via a number of textual references amongst which is reference to a popular custom in which Lacadaemonians would inscribe the name of their fathers upon their right arms so as to be sure that they would be transported to 'the paternal tomb' (n.d., 41-42, n. 1). While it seems obvious that if a

family is ruled by paternal descent, so would the worship of its "ancestors", Fustel de Coulanges does not make the connection overtly, nor draw the obvious conclusions. For if, as he rightly points out, paternal authority obviates the ties of blood in the organization of the living family, how could it do so less in the dead one?

Yet in this and other passages, Fustel de Coulanges makes the assumption, at least in the body of the text, that the worship of the dead ancestors was based upon a 'natural' institution and a natural bond upon which was grafted the symbolic one dictated by the worship and the institution of the sacred family hearth. It is impossible to enter into consideration of all the instances in which Fustel exhibits this mistake, sliding imperceptibly, as he does, from the one to the other. However, its most serious effects appear in the positing of "groundless and ridiculous" animistic beliefs in the soul of the dead to explain the incidence of ancestor worship, when if due recognition of the gender-specific nature of this worship were admitted, a very different explanation would be in order.

Fustel de Coulanges offers that explanation unwittingly. Tied in with a monumental shift in the terrain of the theoretical problematic from a sex-neutral to a sex-specific explanation of the principle of religious symbolization, that is a shift in accordance with which, not only the beliefs of the ancients, but also their relation to social organization takes on a new significance. For the principle that Fustel de Coulanges attributes to the religion of the sacred fire is a principle which becomes the singly most synthesizing element of all that Fustel de Coulanges' analysis of the religion of the hearth has brought to light.

**The sex-specific idea of generation**

There are a number of ideas that emerge, both in Fustel de Coulanges' analysis

and from it, regarding the nature of the beliefs suggested by the rules and rites that attend the phenomenon of the 'sacred fire'. The most obvious of these is the sacred nature of the fire and the principle of the divine that thus became associated with it: "Let us remark, in the first place, that this fire, which was kept burning upon the hearth, was not, in the thoughts of men, the fire of material nature" (31). In the fire, writes Fustel de Coulanges, "they saw...a beneficent god, who maintained the life of man" (26). They prayed to it and offered it sacrifices: "[i]n misfortunes man betook himself to his sacred fire, and heaped reproaches upon it; in good fortune he returned it thanks" (27). While Fustel de Coulanges here combines the 'sacred' principle with that of the 'divine', I shall for the moment separate them in order to address two levels of interpretation that Fustel de Coulanges here assigns to these principles in the belief system of the ancients.

On one level, Fustel de Coulanges describes the ancients' belief in the existence of a god residing in the 'sacred fire' as the expressions of a belief in the divine principle. This was the "god" which the Greeks called "hearth-master". In the words of Fustel de Coulanges: "it is that god whom the Greeks called the hearth-master,--εστια δεσποινα,--whom the Romans called **Lar familiaris**" (86). On the basis of this divinity, he projects a theory regarding the origin of the principle of the sacred in an ancient belief in "the human soul" as its source. "This divinity of the interior," he writes, is "what amounts to the same thing, the belief...in the human soul" (86). There is no evidence here cited for this claim besides Fustel de Coulanges' abiding desire to indicate that there was no supernatural power that could explain man's religious beliefs. For "religion...did not find its gods in physical nature" (33 and, as he writes elsewhere: "The cause which produces them...must be found in man himself" (12) While it is true that, as Fustel de Coulanges points out, the Latin "**Lares**" were, like the Greek "**demons**" or "heroes", "human souls deified by death" (24), there is nothing to indicate that this idea was necessarily the

cause, and not the result, of "man's" beliefs.

However, there is, besides the above, another level of interpretation of the texts that coincides with a different explanation of the beliefs pertaining to the 'sacred fire'--one which, while not in opposition with the previous one, is complementary to it. On this level, a belief that explains the 'sacred fire' and the principle of the 'divine' that the ancients attached to it, emerges from the negative rites[16] that the ancients have observed in its connection. This is a belief which rests with an idea that, according to Fustel de Coulanges, was quite pervasive in the ancient world and that is: "the idea that generation was entirely due to males" (39). Fustel de Coulanges points out that "[t]he belief of primitive ages, as we find it in the Vedas, and as we find vestiges of it in Greek and Roman law, was that the reproductive power resided exclusively in the father. The father alone possessed the mysterious principle of existence, and transmitted the spark of life" (39). This is a level of interpretation that not only looks for explanation of the principle of the divine in man himself, but in the nature of his particular sex-identity; i.e. his gender.

Accordingly, the cause which produced the divine worship of the 'sacred fire' is neither to be sought in the forces of nature nor in those of the human soul. These are the two alternatives in the study of Greek and Roman religions proposed by Fustel de Coulanges himself. He writes: "Of these two religions, the first [the 'sacred fire'] found its gods in the human soul; the second took them from physical nature [gods of Olympus]." However, what he has actually demonstrated in this work is the existence of a third alternative. By means of the paradigm of the "primitive" religion that manifests itself in the texts of Classical Antiquity, Fustel de Coulanges has inadvertently uncovered a different site for the elaboration of religious paradigms and principles. A site that rests neither with a universal human soul, nor with that of a universal nature, but with a

combination of both. In so doing, he has changed the theoretical problematic of the study of religion from a sex-neutral to a sex-specific theoretical field.

If, on the first level, Fustel de Coulanges began with an explanation of the principle of the universal human soul to arrive at an explanation of the principle of the sacred, on this level, he begins with the principle of the sacred to arrive at an explanation of the universal male one. What remains to be determined is how the representation of male reproductive power becomes fused with this principle of sacrality. In a most inconspicuous footnote at the conclusion of a chapter on "the domestic religion" appearing in Book I of The Ancient City, Fustel de Coulanges cites a Vedic reference. Employing the Oriannes translation of Mitakchara, Fustel de Coulanges addresses the fact that "[t]he Vedas call the 'sacred fire' the cause of male posterity" (39, n. 17). While this in no way implies a causal theory of primitive religion, it does suggest a primitive belief about causes and reproductive processes that invokes the existence of a male "reproductive consciousness", a consciousness with its own characteristic construction of "species continuity".[17] "Certainly," he writes, "we cannot easily comprehend how a man could adore his father or his ancestor. To make a man a god appears to us the reverse of religion....[b]ut....[t]he generator appeared to them to be a divine being; and they adored their ancestor. This sentiment must have been very natural and very strong, for it appears as a principle of religion in the origin of almost all human societies" (36).

In this case, it is not in collective representations of death that the origins of the religion of the hearth, as of all the public and private institutions of Antiquity, can be traced; rather, it is to specifically male representations of life and reproductive powers. Thus in the context of Fustel de Coulanges' most convincing exegesis of the role of the hearth in the origin, organization, and transformation of social life in Classical Antiquity, its emphasis on principles of paternal descent, the notion of a "religion of the hearth", or

ancient cult of domesticity, radically alters the entire field of the theoretical problematic within which Western primitive 'religion' is explicated.

No longer a 'cause' of social and political formations, religion becomes its instrument.[18] Mediating, via a male reproductive consciousness (ie. man's beliefs), it becomes the primary site at which the natural and the symbolic orders are articulated. As such, it has far reaching implications in terms of providing a new theoretical perspective--a theoretical perspective that answers to the necessity of accounting for specifically patriarchal structures of dominance and oppression (Hall 1980, 39). For it was in Part I of The Ancient City that Fustel de Coulanges has stated his objectives in terms of explaining the particularly 'inexplicable' oppression of women under patriarchy (12).

To the extent that "patriarchal relations are not amenable to simple extensions, marginal qualifications, or amendations to other theories" (Hall 1980, 39), only a theory which admits the structuring principle of sexual difference can respond to this necessity. In so far as Fustel de Coulanges' theory of the religion of the hearth has, inadvertedly, set reproduction, particularly male representation and discourses of reproduction, as the key site for an elaboration of social, political and economic strategies and structures, it constitutes a break with all other theories. Just as in Althusser's reading, Marx was responsible for opening what was to become a new 'continent' of epistemological inquiry when he set production as the key site of economic structures, so too, can one say that Fustel de Coulanges is responsible for opening a new continent and a new topography. If indeed "it is essential to read Capital to the letter," "line by line; [and] to return ten times to the first chapters", so too is it essential to read The Ancient City, reading as much for what Fustel de Coulanges did not see as for what he did; for in that lies an equal if not greater part of his achievement. In the meantime, it is with "the mere beginnings of **a reading**" (Althusser 1989, 13) that we must content ourselves.

# Notes

[1] Michel de Certeau (1984) elaborates at some length upon the difference between strategies and tactics (34 ff ; 38)

[2] The Ancient City was first published in France (Paris: Hachette, n.d.) It was translated into English by Willard Small and first published in 1873 (Lee & Shepard). Subsequently the same translation has been published by Anchor Doubleday (1956) The latest edition, re-issued in 1987 appears with an introduction by Arnaldo Momigliano and S. C Humphreys (John Hopkins University Press, 1980). References in this thesis, unless otherwise indicated, will be to the 1900 and 1956 editions respectively. In this chapter, references are to the 1956 edition unless otherwise indicated

[3] The opposition between this "primitive" religion in Graeco-Roman culture and the Olympian religion that Fustel de Coulanges addresses in The Ancient City is well presented by Émile Durkheim in by way of the opposition between naturistic and animist religious forms (1968, 49, n. 2)

[4] As he mentions in the introduction to his work, Fustel de Coulanges' method of arriving at the data he sets forth in The Ancient City is primarily through textual analysis of classical literary works. It is his conviction that while "ideas have been transformed, and the recollections of them have vanished;...the words have remained, immutable witnesses of beliefs that have disappeared" (14) However, I wish to point out that it is not my intention here to question his sources or the validity of his interpretation of material Accepting his reading of the texts, I will look primarily to communicate the meaning he perceives in them For this reason, and to avoid confusion, I will look as much as possible to employ Fustel de Coulanges' own words, and attempted as much as possible to differentiate places where I have imposed my categories of interpretation upon his work, from those in which he imposes his own upon the texts Needless to say, a study such as this, however limited and concise, runs the perils of mediation which no amount of caution can remove

[5] There are few acknowledgements of the centrality of the religion of the fire or of the hearth in critical responses to Fustel de Coulanges' sociological treatment of religion. In Robert Nisbet's introduction to the 1976 edition of Durkheim's The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (this introduction does not appear in any of the earlier editions of Durkheim's Elementary Forms) Nisbet proposes a hitherto unexamined notion of religion and the sacred in Fustel de Coulanges' The Ancient City Acknowledging Durkheim's debt to his teacher, Nisbet goes on to briefly summarize the contribution of this work by way of its synthesization of religious and social categories "in The Ancient City Fustel had set forth his engaging theory that the foundations of the ancient Greek and Roman city states had been strictly and exclusively religious" (vi) However, while in this Nisbet is merely echoing the traditional functional sociological interpretation of Fustel de Coulanges' theory, he parts ways with that tradition when he stipulates the "essence" of this religious foundation and the idea of the sacred that it entails Breaking protocol with the traditional interpretation of the data in Fustel de Coulanges' The Ancient City Nisbet writes " Moreover, the essence of this religious foundation was, for Fustel, the sacred, more precisely what he called the "sacred flame" that was kept alight in every household, symbol of the continuity of generations" (vi) It is noteworthy in this regard that Nisbet links these religious foundations to Fustel de Coulanges' theory of the development not only of social, but of political forms, a link that all emphasis on the data of the cult of the dead in Fustel de Coulanges' The Ancient City cannot incorporate

In addition, a footnote reference to The Ancient City at the end of Radcliffe-Brown's essay which is used to explain a religious formation, distinguishable from both Australian totemism and ancestor-worship (the two which he has focused his essay upon), and what Radcliffe-Brown calls the "national religions" of Greece and Rome. This is a reference to what Fustel de Coulanges calls the worship of the domestic altar (Radcliffe-Brown, 177 n. 1). To quote the citation itself from The Ancient City as found in Radcliffe-Brown's footnote reference "...among the ancients what formed the bond of every society was a worship Just as a domestic altar held the members of a family grouped about it, so the city was the collective group of those who had the same protective deities, and who performed the religious ceremony at the altar." It may be noted that in the one outstanding reference to Fustel de Coulanges' data concerning the sanctity of this altar throughout the collected works of Émile Durkheim, its incompatibility with the material presence of the tomb, and consequently with the ancestor cult itself, is made manifest (Durkheim 1957, 153-4) While Durkheim is here looking to discredit ancestor-worship as the cause of social structure, he has inadvertently segmented it from a different principle of religious practice to be found in The Ancient City, one which could account for a different relation between religion and society than either traditional causal or functional theoretical perspectives

[6] By and large, the consensus amongst all those who have extracted a sociological theory of religion from Fustel de Coulanges' explication of the rise of the Greek and Roman institutions of social life is that "religion" is the Graeco-Roman cult of the dead On the basis of this interpretation, whose most rigorous and eloquent propounded is Radcliffe-Brown, a "causal explanation" of the origin of the social order is attributed to Fustel de Coulanges, which, modified and rehabilitated into a more "functional" socio-logic, is then freshly presented as the true contribution of The Ancient City (Thompson, 366, Radcliffe-Brown, 161 ff, Evans-Pritchard 1960, 13-14) This move is really traceable to Émile Durkheim who was the first to attack Fustel de Coulanges' theory on the grounds that it derived cause from effect, i e that in its quest for origins, it privileged religion rather than society (Durkheim 1933, 179) Here Durkheim writes "Fustel de Coulanges . has mistaken the cause for the effect. After setting up the religious idea, without bothering to set up its derivation, he has deduced from it social arrangements, when, on the contrary, it is the latter that explain the power and nature of the religious idea "

[7] See the Liddell and Scott Greek-English Lexicon according to which "the hearth of a house, fireside" is the primary translation of the Greek estia Others are 2 "the house itself, a dwelling, home", 3 "a household, family"; 4 "an altar, shrine" (1889, 319)

[8] Expressing the belief that "the [dead] soul live[d] under ground" (15), this culture was comprised of rites and rituals devoted to the care and maintenance of the souls of the deceased (16-21). Firmly believing that "they buried something that was living" (16), these ancient people, according to Fustel de Coulanges' reading of his sources, believed that, though dead, "the person would continue to live under ground" preserving all the while "a sense of enjoyment and suffering" after death (16) Fearing retribution lest these souls not be appeased in their desires, provisions were made not only to ensure appropriate "subterranean dwelling-places" (tombs), but also to include within these places all the accoutrements of well-being such as food, objects, animals and persons that could be of service in this "second life" According to Fustel de Coulanges they even "slaughtered horses and slaves with the idea that these beings, buried with the dead, would serve him in the tomb, as they had done during his life" (17) Regularly nourished with sacrificial meals these subterranean souls and their chthonic world ruled over the life of the living "Deified by death," they became the gods to whom man prayed (24) Demons and heroes for the Greeks, **Lares, Manes, Genii** for the Latins, all comprised, according to Fustel de Coulanges, the populace of antiquity What he describes as "the religion of the souls of ancestors" (22) becomes the formula for an extended family, the "cult of the dead", a culture binding man to the low entrails of the earth and its ancestral homes

It is to this that Fustel de Coulanges contrasts a different culture, newer in history and unfolding not around the chthonic soils of life in the underworld, but rather o'er the frosty peaks of Mount Olympus. This culture, the quintessentially "classical" world of antiquity as we know it in its myth and magic, becomes, in the text of Fustel de Coulanges the product of a second-order religious idea. Its gods, the anthropomorphized counterparts of the world of physical nature, clearly distinguishable from those of human nature itself "Thus," writes Fustel de Coulanges regarding the culture of classical antiquity, "in this race [the Greek and Roman] the religious idea presented itself under two different forms. On the one hand, man attached the divine attribute to...what of the sacred he felt in himself. On the other hand...to the external object which he saw" (121-122). These "two orders of belief", Fustel de Coulanges writes, "laid the foundation of two religions that lasted as long as Greek and Roman society" (122). As clearly differentiated as those of "high" and "low" culture today, these two religions managed, according to Fustel de Coulanges, to co-exist. "They did not make war upon each other; they even lived on very good terms, and shared the empire over man, but they never became confounded....The worship of the gods of Olympus and that of heroes and manes never had anything common between them" (122). However, while their "dogmas were entirely distinct" and "their ceremonies and practices were absolutely different" (122) it was only those of the heroes and manes that permeated the everyday lives, both public and private, of the Greek and Roman populace.

[9] Ginzburg (1980, xiv), see also for example Mikhail Bakhtin Rabelais and His World (1984), E R Dodds The Greeks and the Irrational (1951) and Julian Jaynes The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind (1976)

[10] Two attempts to address the existence of a folk culture of antiquity both of which emerge out of an interest in the status of women are most notably Philip E Slater's social anthropology of the family in classical Greece The Glory of Hera Greek Mythology and the Greek Family (1971) and Sarah B Pomeroy's Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves Women in Classical Antiquity (1975) In addition, one might include the historical anthropology of Louis Gernet The Anthropology of Ancient Greece (1981) and the historical psychology of Jean-Pierre Vernant in his Myth and Thought Among the Greeks (1983), translated from the French Mythe et pensée chez les grecs. Etudes de psychologie historique (1966) as well as, most recently, the rather astounding article in the collection L'Interdit de la représentation (1984) by philosopher historian Jean-Joseph Goux entitled "Vesta, ou le sanctuaire de l'être" However, what is characteristic of all the above is that none have achieved a fundamental rethinking of the notion of "classical" culture While different aspects are brought to the fore no fundamental revision of the cultural terrain of "classical" antiquity has been achieved, but neither, for that matter, has one been proposed

[11] I do not distinguish the concepts of a popular religion and a popular culture and have used the terms "culture" and "religion" interchangeably Fustel de Coulanges himself uses the term "religion" not having had the benefit of many of the anthropological (cultural, symbolic, social as well as structural) analyses that have succeeded his own work For this reason, I have availed myself of the conceptual breadth that the concept of popular "culture" affords over that of "popular religion". However, for a more theoretical and in-depth examination of the relation of the concepts of "culture" and "religion", see Clifford Geertz's essay "Religion As a Cultural System" in his The Interpretation of Cultures (1973, 87-126)

[12] Fustel de Coulanges' influence on the sociological treatment of religion is now generally acknowledged Peter Berger, whose work on "legitimation" brings him to the issue of religious legitimation in Greece and Rome, writes that " the classic work for the sociology of religion is still Fustel de Coulanges' The Ancient City" (Berger 1969, 191, n 9) He also adds that "[t]his work is

particularly interesting because of its influence on Durkheim's thinking about religion " Radcliffe-Brown equally acknowledges that The Ancient City "remains a valuable contribution to the theory of the social function of religion" (Radcliffe-Brown 1956, 161) According to Radcliffe-Brown, who above all others has most meticulously examined the major theses of this sociological treatise "[t]he purpose of the book is to show the point-by-point correspondence between religion and the constitution of society in ancient Greece and Rome, and how in the course of history the two changed together" (161)

[13] The daughter is termed 'epikleros' in that she belongs to her father's kleros (Vernant 1983c, 144) and personifies the paternal hearth This concept gives rise to the sense in which the woman, rather than the man, becomes the chief source of life of the 'hearth and home' (Vernant 1983c, 145)

[14] While it can be admitted that conclusive evidence has emerged to suggest that the ancients did not bury their dead within household property (Humphreys 1980, xv, Momigliano 1980, xi), this does not necessarily modify the value of his claims as it is suggested If we understand Fustel de Coulanges' thesis in light of the primacy of the hearth within the texts of Antiquity, we can see how it operates to encode the symbolic presence of the ancestors

[15] For a discussion of the history of the Vestals in Rome see Worsfold's The History of the Vestal Virgins of Rome (1932)

[16] There are two types of prohibitive or interdictive rules pertaining to the 'sacred fire' which emerge in Fustel de Coulanges' analysis The first have as their object to limit exposure of the 'sacred fire' to certain acts and objects, the second, to certain people--in particular, those people that gender will characterize as belonging to the female sex I will turn to each of these individually

It is on more than one occasion that Fustel de Coulanges remarks that the fire upon the altar is for the ancients a "pure fire" (26) and a "chaste fire" (31) This idea is expressed in two different types of interdictions--the one involving the interdiction of an exposure to certain objects, the other involving the interdiction of an exposure to certain acts He writes "[i]t was also a religious precept that this fire must always remain pure, which meant, literally, that no filthy object ought to be cast into it, and figuratively, that no blameworthy deed ought to be committed in its presence" (26) Elsewhere he emphasizes the principle of 'chastity' in accordance with which it is the interdiction of sexual acts that is the primary target of the religious rule "[i]t is a chaste fire, the union of the sexes must be removed far from its presence" (31)

Which of these interdictions is primary and which is derived, is not made clear Fustel de Coulanges attributes to them equal force in the minds of the ancients However, upon close examination of the beliefs that correspond to these religious practices, both from the point of view of the analysis to which Fustel de Coulanges has put the texts of antiquity, as well as from that of the demands for a coherent theoretical perspective, the sex-specific nature of the principle of the 'sacred fire' in the religion of the ancients begins to become apparent

For, besides the above, there is a second type of rule that, according to Fustel de Coulanges, limits the exposure to the 'sacred fire' In this case, it is a gender-specific interdiction that prohibits woman from participation in the care and maintenance of the 'sacred fire' The real impact of this 'negative' rule, or interdiction, is brought out most clearly in Book II of The Ancient City In the chapter "Authority in the Family" Fustel de Coulanges writes "[t]he wife takes part in the religious acts, indeed, but she is not the mistress of the hearth" (86, my emphasis) This is specified by Fustel de Coulanges in its corollary, which assigns all responsibility for the care of the 'sacred fire' to the father "[t]he father ranks first in the presence of the sacred fire He lights it and supports it, he is its priest In all religious acts his functions are the highest, he slays the victim, his mouth pronounces the formula of prayer " (86)

While it is true that Fustel de Coulanges does not dwell on the aspect of feminine exclusion in these rites, the emphasis that they place on sexual difference is repeatedly underscored by him. Having only at his disposal the rules that stipulate male participation in sacred functions, it is highly significant that he perceived as much as he did regarding the application of the principle of sexual difference in the constitution of the realm of the sacred. Its reflection in this 'negative' rite or 'taboo' is formulated by Fustel de Coulanges in the following way: "we must notice this peculiarity," he explains "that the domestic religion was transmitted only from male to male" (38). And, he writes: "[t]he father, in giving life to his son, gave him at the same time his creed, his worship, the right to continue the sacred fire...to pronounce the formulas of prayer..." (38)

[17] For a discussion of these two concepts see Mary O'Brien The Politics of Reproduction (1981). Mary O'Brien argues that one of the chief characteristics of the "male reproductive consciousness" is indeed in its experience of "species discontinuity", on the basis of which "[m]en have erected a huge social edifice to facilitate and justify that appropriation of women's children which we call patriarchy." See her essay "Feminist Praxis" in Feminism in Canada (1982, 257).

[18] In this respect, Durkheim's The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life ignores the gender-specific aspect of religious formations and thereby ends up confusing 'cause' and 'function'; for a more detailed discussion of the pitfalls of traditional sociology that have come out of the birth of Cultural Studies see Hall (1980)

## Chapter Four

## Domesticity and Philosophical Praxis: Theorizing Woman's 'Place'

> "Woman's place" is not a separate sphere or domain of existence but a position within social existence generally.
>
> Joan Kelly, "The Doubled Vision of Feminist Theory"

### Introduction

In the last chapter, I looked at the politics of 'place' in so far as the discourse of 'home' as fixed location is concerned. In this chapter I want to look at the other side of the discursive spectrum and address the problematic of the emergence of place as 'position' within social and epistemological reality. In this respect, this chapter forms a counter-point to the three preceding ones. For, whereas all three of those have dealt with the emergence of 'home' in historical practices of domestic space, this chapter is informed by questions pertaining to how 'home' is constructed as an immutable, stable, and homogeneous space through academic discourses of gendered 'place' and addresses the processes whereby woman is associated with the inner, fixed, homogeneous, and private 'place'. This is not necessarily a circuitous argument. To quote Jean Bethke Elshtain:

> the way in which determinations about the public and the private and the role and worth of each is evaluated will gear a thinker's attitudes toward women. That is one way to put it. Another may be: a thinker's views on women serve as a foundation that helps to give rise to the subsequent determinations he makes of the public and the private and what he implicates and values in each. **It is not easy to decide which way the vectors of personal and theoretical exigency move**. (my emphasis; 1981, 4-5)

Thus we will see how ideas about gender are used to construct ideas about domesticity; how 'place' is articulated in such a way as to equate women with the 'home'. I will discuss the reversals and displacements that this equation has undergone throughout the history of philosophy from Classical Antiquity to the present in such a way as to place woman and the 'home', alternatively within and outside of social and epistemological reality.

For, in the history of philosophy, or what I call theory and theoretical writing (to include theoretical texts that extend beyond the parameters of 'philosophy' as a 'disciplinary' motif), much has been written on "woman's place". Throughout that history, domesticity as woman's 'place' and woman's separate 'sphere' of existence has been thematized around a discussion of the public/private axis in such a way as to express the opposition between two mutually exhaustive activities that are then brought into relation with two mutually distinct groups--men and women. During two millennia of cultural and intellectual history from Classical Antiquity to contemporary times, the '**domus**'/'home' appears as a concept and a desire in the religious, technological, and philosophical construction of "woman's place", and is linked to the challenging presence in women's own discourses of memory and local history. Accordingly, woman's 'place' has been theorized in relation to the 'private', the 'home', 'marriage', the 'family', and the raising of 'children'. In other words: 1) the domain of reproduction; 2) the domain of marriage, 3) the domain of labor, including such activities pertaining to the social education of children and the economic operation of the household. Anchored in essentialist notions of biological necessity, the virtuous activity delimited by each of these domains expresses a specification of difference which inscribes woman's reproductive role with a) an inferior capacity for physical strength and b) a need for protection and shelter. Along these lines, the classical (i.e. traditional) philosophical texts (mostly men's) and the commentaries upon them (often women's) have applied,

distributed, redistributed, displaced, or effaced the notion of "woman's place", and they have done so throughout a number of systematized discursive fields. These can be distinguished as follows: 1) the field of political philosophy; 2) economics; 3) social theory; 4) ethics; and 5) a type of (what I call) 'eugenics'. These are expressed and developed according to their own mutations and reversals in both men's and women's discourses.

Indeed, from the time of circa 450 B.C., when Xenophon produced the arch-classical text on the subject of "woman's place", the **Oeconomicus**, the foundations were lain for a discourse that was to have a lasting long term effect upon not only how the West has conceived of woman, but also upon the nature of the fields--philosophical and epistemological domains--that this question and its varied, polymorphous, and yet homogeneous answers, make up. The radical emergence of the space of domesticity (the domestic paradigm), its critical appearance in the interwoven fabric of space and place can be found to make up the discourse of man's ethical, social, economic, and political existence, a discourse within which the critical study of theoretical and philosophical praxis engages with epistemological aspects of domesticity. As the distinctive **topos**, or location, for the epistemological exercise of practical wisdom, the text of domesticity is a **locus principus** of social praxis and a site of social control in the reproduction of gender and the family from Antiquity to the present. In the following I hope to tease out the text of 'home' as it appears in the interwoven fabric of discourses in the history of theoretical and philosophical writing, a history that ranges from some of the very first treatises in philosophy to the most contemporary, such as Cultural Studies.

I will describe the classical positions on this issue in a selected number of significant philosophers such as Plato (1955), Aristotle (1932), Xenophon (1953), Hobbes (1968), Rousseau (1973; 1974), Mill (1985), Marx (1967), etc. and consider the

ways in which women philosophers have challenged some of these classical theorists. I will consider such philosophers as Wollstonecraft (1985), de Beauvoir (1965), Firestone (1971), and so forth. What emerges is the way in which the public/private distinction is used, inverted, neutralized and displaced with specific reference to changes in the epistemological construction of "woman's place". I will, however, not refer to all the philosophers who have commented on the question of domesticity and woman's 'place'; rather I will demonstrate the 'place' of domesticity within the theoretical domain of philosophical and theoretical praxis in general. I will focus my discussion upon a presentation of Xenophon's views and show how these views were constitutive of philosophical praxis in each of its five principal fields.

Thus I will begin my discussion with a presentation of Xenophon's Oeconomicus, then move on to a discussion of how the views expressed therein became redistributed throughout classical Philosophy within its five principal fields. This I will follow with a discussion of the female challenges to this (male, patriarchal, phallocentric) classicism, which introduce their own transformations, mutations, and reversals. The chapter culminates with a discussion of a significant rupture taking place at the present time on the subject of the 'place' of a study of domesticity and "woman's place" in the Academy today. Thus I will terminate that discussion with a general overview of the recent developments, such as the rise of British Cultural Studies, that re-articulate woman's place within theoretical practice in a positive way.

## 2. Xenophon's Oeconomicus

Xenophon's Oeconomicus (1953) is a work that lays the foundation for all further expression of domesticity in the history of western philosophy. Within this dense and complex work we can discern at least five different registers in which Xenophon

describes the domestic sphere or **koinonia** (community). Either as art (**techne**), or as knowledge (**episteme**), each of these registers redistributes the opposition between spheres of domestic and non-domestic practice along different philosophical lines. Beginning with his characterization of the difference between inside and outside that is delimited by the installation of the **stegos**, or roof, that constitutes the house proper (1953, VII:20), Xenophon builds toward a multi-layered discussion of domesticity and domestic praxis that culminates in the art of domesticity. This discussion presupposes his philosophy of a) a division of labor between the sexes and b) a discussion of "woman's place" (and of course its differentiation from man's).

As pertains the division of male and female labor, he writes. "the gods with great discernment have coupled together male and female, as they are called, chiefly in order that they may form a perfect partnership in mutual service" (1953, VII:18). He also writes: "The law, moreover, approves of them, for it joins together man and woman. And as God has made them partners in their children, so the law appoints them partners in the home" (1953, VII:30). This partnership (**koinonian**) he anchors in a stipulative definition of woman's biological inferiority and the concomitant biological necessity of receiving shelter within the enclosed space of the house (the private dwelling) . "God from the first adapted the woman's nature, I think to the indoor and man's to the outdoor tasks" (VII: 22).[1]

Upon this the law (**nomos**) of biological necessity, Xenophon builds an edifice of differentiation (binary oppositions) that takes the 'house'/dwelling, or sheltered space, as its root or point of departure. This edifice eventually forms the foundations of a philosophical discourse on ethics, political philosophy, economic theory, and social theory. While later in this chapter I shall enter into the manner in which Xenophon's differentiations and binarism are taken up, reversed or developed by philosophers within

each of these respective fields, my argument now is that the **oikos**, or domestic sphere, plays a central role in each of their presentations in the **Oeconomicus**.

The differentiations or binary oppositions that Xenophon introduces can be summed up as follows: 1) house/field; 2) house/household; 3) house(hold)/market-place; 4) house(hold)/state; 5) the domestic and womanly art of obedience/the domestic manly art of commanding In these the sexual division does not reflect a symmetrical relation, but rather the a-symmetrical representation of a eugenic theory of biological necessity on the basis of which domesticity and the art of household management are cast within the mold of a 'gentlemanly art' of commanding and a 'womanly art' of obedience, respectively.

**House and field**

It is the primary differentiation between the house (the 'inside') and the field (the 'outside') which gives rise to Xenophon's discussion of the opposition between indoor and outdoor activities While the indoor activities are characteristic of keeping house--the storing and distribution of goods within--the outdoor activities are productive agrarian works that provide the goods to be stored. Indoors, there is for example, spinning, bread making, cooking, supervision of the stores (1953, VII: 35-36; IX: 3-8). Xenophon argues that due to her inferior strength woman is biologically adapted for indoor work, whereas man's superior strength enables him to work out of doors and in the fields. However, while appearing to be a 'symmetrical' representation of a necessary division of labor based upon indoor and outdoor tasks, this primary differentiation between domestic and agricultural tasks yields a number of other differentiations-in-opposition within which the domestic and the extra-domestic spheres, as well as the male and female tasks that fall within their respective boundaries, are not contrasted in equal measure.

**The house and the house-hold**

Thus there emerges in the **Oeconomicus** the differentiation between the house and the house-hold (or **oikos**). For essentially the **Oeconomicus** is a treatise on 'household' or estate management and as an 'economic' entity the household comprises both the outdoor fields and the indoor ones--the house proper (1953, I:5-9). However, following the typical patriarchal and patrilineal principles of the anthropology of Classical Greece, the **oikos**/household unit was a fundamentally male preserve within which woman, as such, had no significant place. As an economic entity, the 'public' and social world of male activity is characteristically differentiated from the domestic male and female labor that comprises or contributes to it. However this is not the only a-symmetry within which woman's sphere is differentiated from man's. The house-hold proper is a domestic sphere, an agricultural and economic entity, to which Xenophon contrasts two extra-domestic spheres: those of the market-place with its commercial activities and those of the state with its political ones. As was the case with the agricultural and economic division of spheres, in neither one of these does woman have an equal part. At the same time, domesticity, as defined through the **oikos**, is the **sine qua non** of state politics and commercial markets.

**The household and the market-place**

The market-place represents a third field of activity produced by Xenophon in the differentiation between spheres. Here house/inner is opposed to market/outer as the domestic work of the household (**oikos**) contrasts with the commercial enterprises of the market-place. For besides the outdoor fields a great deal of man's activity was conducted making business transactions in the **agora** or market-place (1953, XI: 15). In this

differentiation of the spheres of domesticity and those of commerce--that is, of the domestic and the commercial domains--we have the appearance of a distinctly commercial domain of action to which man's domesticity and control of the **oikos** excludes woman and prohibits her a decision-making 'place'. On the basis of man's exercise of a power whose locus was the 'home', domesticity becomes the arbiter of both woman's 'place' and of her 'place'-lessness. In this way, domesticity and the 'home' acquire the double-status of both a position in patriarchal social reality as well as a separate domain of existence.

**The house(hold) and the state**

In addition to this commercial realm of public life, there is the presentation of a strictly political domain-- the life of the state, with its religious ceremonies and rituals, in which every master of the household, as citizen, was expected to participate (1953, XI: 8). In the foundation of a political realm of praxis inaugurated by the birth of the **polis**, a new form of segregation of male and female functions was to take place that delimited domains and defined 'spheres' as those of man versus woman. Thus emerged the area of difference that subtends yet another differentiation of spheres: the differentiation of the sphere of the state from that of the household. Taken up variously by the political philosophers of the West (about which I shall have occasion to say more in the next section of this chapter), the differentiation between household and state, domesticity and politics, public life and personal life, virtually dominates political philosophy and its history.

Indeed, when Xenophon describes the nature of man's authority over woman as master of the 'household' he relies on militaristic and political metaphors of domination and power, describing the 'art of commanding' (1953, XI: 12 ff.) as one exemplified by

political and military leaders and sovereigns. Thus he also calls it 'the art of war' (1953, XI: 12). Early traces of what was to develop into fervent philosophical debates about paternal authority within political theory can be detected in the use of the domestic paradigm in relation to the nature of man's commandeering arts, knowledges, and practices.

**The domestic arts of commanding and obedience**

However, it is worth noting that in addition to each of these four principal registers in which Xenophon describes the domestic sphere--which we might name the agricultural, the social, the economic or commercial, and the political, respectively--as a function of the difference between public and private, indoor and outdoor activity, there is one other register in which Xenophon describes domesticity in terms of practice--the register in which the idea of 'virtuous' activity (praxis) proper in relation to "woman's place", is born. That is the register of activities that pertains to the operations of the interior of the house proper Here differentiations are constructed solely in reference to the inner world of the **oikos** and the necessity of delimitations of space and 'place' within the house (domestic dwelling) itself. Here domesticity acts as the synechdote of "woman's place". Here, too, woman is "mistress" supreme, as the house and its domestic interior yields, according to Xenophon, the true domain of virtuous activity belonging to woman and to woman only.

However, following the structure of the other political, economic, and social differentiations that ultimately delimit what we might call man's proper place, Xenophon stipulates woman's virtue of 'obedience' as the **sine qua non** for the actual pursuit, or virtuous pursuit, of domestic activities (1953, IX: 19).[2] Conversely, as we saw above, it is in Xenophon's opinion, a virtue in 'commanding' that characterizes the man's or

master's ethical role. Though it should be pointed out that while for Xenophon it was the master who trained, via his own authority and the woman's obedience, his wife in the 'art' of running the household, it was subsequently stipulated in the texts of neo-Pythagorean female philosophers that it was through older women, not the man, that the wife learned the ars of good housekeeping, the operation of tasks in the household. Nevertheless, it has been principally in the forms lain out by Xenophon that the subsequent history of philosophy has taken up and expanded the discourse on woman's 'place' as a discourse of opposition and differentiation that extends into five different fields of separate spheres. In this, the first stirrings of an ethical domain of separate spheres--a field that delimits spheres in consequence of 'virtues' themselves--domesticity gains the type of significance as "woman's place" which has so marginalized it in terms of our appreciation of a wholesale inclusion in the development of the history of philosophy as such.

## 2. Domesticity and the History of Philosophy

Beginning with Plato's The Republic (1955) and Aristotle's Politics (1932), classical philosophy covers a period of up to two millennia of thought within which the precepts and divisions lain down by Xenophon have persisted through various redistributions, mutations, and displacements. They have in the course of time yielded the systematization of the fields of ethics, political philosophy, social theory, economic theory, and eugenics (or philosophy of reproduction). While it would be possible to provide elaborate descriptions of how each of these formations has been influenced by Xenophon's thought and how that thought has been modified in precise ways by various thinkers through the ages, the limitation of time and space can permit but a brief and very schematic approach to a very complex elaboration of networks and inter-relations. Thus I will stipulate the major categories and just only touch upon the themes that each

philosopher has contributed to the study, using only sketchy characterizations of his thought.

**Political philosophy**

There are two fundamental axes to which political philosophy has given rise. They evolve from the Xenophonian opposition between the household and the state are represented by Plato and Aristotle. In the course of Western philosophy, the Aristotelian position has been taken up by the patriarchalist Robert Filmer (1949), against which the major contractualists Locke (1980) and Hobbes (1968) have taken issue, and has ultimately developed into the humanitarian liberalism expressed by Mill's and Rousseau's political philosophies. However, in so far as the latter two are more appropriate to a discussion of development in the field of social theory, I will confine my presentation here to the others.

a) Plato. In opposition to Xenophon's radical division between the political and the domestic, a division that corresponds to the differentiation between the work of the citizen/man and that of the wife/woman, Plato's The Republic (1955) develops an alternate view. This is a view in accordance with which this division is neutralized as Plato proposes the abolition of the household as independent economic and social entity (1955, V: 457, 466). Thus in Plato's ideal Republic, the governing of the state is shared by men and women alike. However, this proposal for an equal sharing of tasks is not due to any belief on Plato's part in man's and woman's equal distribution of biological and/or natural attributes (Plato 1955, VI: 2, 211-224). It would appear that Plato has merely displaced the Xenophonian conception of biological difference (and of woman's biological inferiority) from the agricultural realm onto the political one. For, while

according to Plato the only difference between man and woman is that "the female bears and the male begets" (1955, V: 454), there is also, in his estimation, nothing woman can do that man can't do better. "It is quite true," he writes, "that in general the one sex is much better at everything than the other" and while "it is natural for women to share all occupations with men...in all women will be the weaker partners" (1955, V: 455).

While endorsing a belief in an equal distributon of tasks, a residual belief in male biological superiority, erases the significance of the domestic domain and of that space within which woman can be valorized. He thereby extends woman a 'place' of virtuous activity within the political arena at the cost of core notions of woman's identity-in-difference (cf. Elshtain 1981, 22 ff.). In this way he, too, cheats woman of a distinctly equal place.

As a companion to Plato's Republic, one might turn to Thomas More's Utopia (1965). In this piece, More encodes a similar reversal of the separate spheres hypothesis and equally neutralizes the domestic sphere of the **oikos**. In this case, a sexual division is abolished in relation to military duty, as More exhorts women to evacuate the home-front and take up station with their men upon the battle-front. However, More's concomitant endorsement of a marital code that invites severe punitive measures against a wife's infidelity (1965, 105) re-enstates the private and domestic inequalities that his dissolution of spheres in the field of militaristic duties and responsibilities suspends.

b) Aristotle. Of all political philosophers, Aristotle is perhaps the one who has most influenced the course of theory in this field. Proceeding from Xenophon's distinction between the household and the state as representative two mutually distinct and independent spheres of action (the private and the public respectively), Aristotle's Politics (1932) begins what was to become a longstanding meditation of the relation

between household authority and state sovereignty (1932, I, 1252a: 7-10). This meditation and interrogation was to become the foundation of a tradition of political philosophy that culminated with John Stewart Mill who was the first to break with that tradition.

Arguing that the authority of the master of the household (patriarch) can be compared to the authority of the sovereign, Aristotle maintains that man is a **zoon politikon**, or 'political' animal, (1932, 1253a: 3-4) and outlines three different types of rule to which this politics entitles him--the monarchical, the constitutive, and the aristocratic. While stipulating that the constitutive rule of patriarchs differs significantly from the monarchical and aristocratic rule of sovereigns, Aristotle develops a foundation of political imperatives on the basis of which male domestic rule within the household sphere of the **oikos** continues to ordain woman to the 'place' of an obedient servant within it.

Aristotle justifies his philosophy on the basis of generational principles of male superiority which did not, however, suffice in the development of later political philosophy and its discourses. Indeed the relation between natural and political rule, or domination, was the subject of a debate that evolved from the radical nominalism of Robert Filmer, whose Patriarcha (1949) argues for an identity between patriarchal and political sovereignty--an identity in which domestic and political rule is entirely collapsed under the principle that the political is the natural--through to various contractualists all of who attempt to negotiate levels of natural necessity. This negotiation culminates with John Locke's Second Treatise on Government (1980) and its discussion of contractual marriage, a discussion that posits domesticity and the household as the seat of two types of authority. Although Locke distinguishes between a) paternal authority and b) parental authority (both of whose locus of application is the 'home'), he ascribes

an equal place to man and woman only in the latter form (1980, VI: 65, 71-76).

Thus once again, a redistribution of the axes of political power does not conceal its persistent expression which invariably resurfaces in the doctrine of separate spheres. Accordingly, receding levels of 'private' and domestic power continue to re-enstate a view of the natural superiority of man and to engage woman in a series of household activities and practices that define her virtuousness in consequence of a naturalized 'obedience' to male authority, enlisting her subjection in consequence of a 'service' to mankind.

**Social theory**

Social theory takes up and expands division of spheres in respect to "woman's place" along the lines of a theorization of women's activities that incorporates the rearing of children and touches upon various idealizations of the marriage bond. Here thinkers like John Stewart Mill, in his The Subjection of Women (1985), Jean Jacques Rousseau in Émile (1974), and later Hegel in The Philosophy of Right (1967, III: 113-181), begin to theorize woman's submission to the authority of the male along other than 'contractual' lines. Carving out the domain of the 'social' as a function of personal life, these thinkers interrogate domesticity, the 'home' and woman's 'place' within it in the context of the newly theorized necessity of raising and rearing children. Whether, as in the case of Rousseau's theorizations, the woman is confined to household activities, or whether, as in Mill's, she is also encouraged to participate in public life, the principal object is the identification of a field of righteous action that enlists woman's participation in the raising, the education, and the 'socialization' of her offspring. In this respect the birth of the 'Child' into the Western social imaginary, (cf. Zaretsky 1986, 35; Ariès 1962) presents an expansion of theoretical possibilities for the doctrine of separate spheres that

were not present in Xenophon's times. However, the principles to which this birth gives rise continue to reflect the general a-symmetry that is expressed by the opposition between the male virtues of ruling a household unit and those of performing female tasks within the house proper. For while in this 'social' aspect woman's domestic 'place' has grown into a social responsibility for raising citizens, this responsibility stands in direct opposition to the possibility of becoming a citizen herself. (Mill nevertheless believed that women had to chose between the domestic life of child-rearing and the political life of the state.)

Thus, although not directly linked to Xenophon's ideal, the identification of woman's 'place' with domesticity and with the domestic 'sphere' in social theory, still conforms to Xenophon's codification of the difference between the household and the house. Indeed, a point of contrast to this theorization of domesticity as a separate and characteristically 'social' realm of existence and praxis is furnished by theorizations of what we might call the 'ethical' domain, or the realm of ethics proper.

## Ethics

The idea of woman's required obedience to male authority and rule characteristic of Xenophon's **Oeconomicus** is contrastable to Musonius Rufus' presentation of virtue (Rufus 1947; Lutz 1947; Rufus 1962; Geytenbeek 1962). Here, a very important link to future theorizations can be found in the form of Rufus' articulation of the principles of romantic love. For in romantic love, woman is fused with man on ethical grounds. This 'fusion' forms the foundation of a properly 'ethical' representation of woman's 'place', one in accordance with which domesticity becomes imbued with the Western philosophy of right.

In his treatise "Is Marriage a Handicap for the Pursuit of Philosophy?" (Rufus

1947; Lutz 1947), Musonius Rufus posits marriage as the highest, the most important, and most venerable of all the communities that can be established among humans. Thus, he writes: "whoever destroys human marriage destroys the home, the city, and the whole human race....That the home or the city does not depend upon women alone or upon men alone, but upon their union with each other is evident" (Lutz 1947, 93-95; Rufus 1947, XIV: 35). The values of 'union' (Lutz 1947, 91; Rufus 1947, XIIIB: 14) or total fusion (**krasis**) in its two-fold contribution to procreation and community life, become foundational in Rufus' description of domestic virtues, virtues which are at once conjugal and social (cf. Foucault 1986a, 153) and are later found to be echoed in the ethical philosophy of Hegel's Philosophy of Right (1967).

Foucault points out that Rufus' exaltations of the 'art of marriage' and the 'art of being together' (Foucault 1986a, 160) is not simply an exhortation of a rational way for the spouses to act. Rather marriage, for Rufus, is an ethical 'style of conduct' and a 'way of living together' in which "together they [man and woman] form a common existence" (Foucault 1986a, 160). Hegel's discussion of "the ethical aspects of marriage" equally leans upon notions of union and **krasis**. Here Hegel makes reference to "the ethical mind" and to "the identification of personalities whereby the family becomes one person and its members become its accidents" (Hegel 1967, III: 163). Thus for Hegel, as for Rufus, domesticity is man's as well as woman's access to the ethical domain. However, while man's domestic life is shared with a political and a commercial (work-related) existence, within the space of these philosophers' respective texts, it constitutes an entire "substansive destiny" (Hegel 1967, III: 166) for woman.

**Economic theory**

Besides the ethical, social and political theorizations of "woman's place" that

thematize 'place' in terms of gendered praxis corresponding to their respective fields, there is also her 'place', and her 'position', within the economic realm--the one most properly represented by the **Oeconomicus** Within this realm, the distinction of spheres that thematizes woman's 'place' is a distinction that functions in strictly economic terms. Beginning with Lenin's The Emancipation of Women (1934) and its impassioned exhortations against woman's household labor, its vivid calumniation of housework as 'domestic slavery' and as 'petty' and 'stultifying' work (1934, 63, 84), along with its urgings that women abandon this exploitatory division of labor and join the work force--a plea that saw Karl Marx advocate the entire abolition of the private family in his Communist Manifesto (1967, 100)--a break with the tradition of separate economic spheres of domestic and extra-domestic work took place, a break that was to be further developed (as I wish shortly show) by some of the more provocative feminine challenges to the male economic tradition

As an interesting reversal (a . ongst others) to this Marxian assimilation of woma n's work to the public sphere, stands Ashley Montague's proposal, in The Natural Superiority of Women (1952), that men themselves share parenting and household duties along with women. This is also a view shared by some of the more challenging female discourses to which I shall turn shortly.

**Eugenics**

Finally, I want to mention the ~ ld of what I call 'eugenics' to identify a body of theoretical work that focusses on the philosophy of woman's 'place' in relation to the means of procreation and to the reproduction of the species itself. As a theoretical field, eugenics ties the division of spheres to the means of reproduction (rather than, as do the other discourses, to its end). While fundamental even in Xenophon's treatise, this is a

field that has not been given theoretical density. Frederick Engels (following Morgan) was perhaps the first to actually stipulate the "production of human beings" as a first cause in the operation of spheres and in the delineation of activities and practices. Locating, in The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State" (1972), what he calls "the world historical defeat of the human race" in man's seizure of the means of reproduction and the control of woman's fertility (1972, 120) Engels expanded a field that was to take center stage in the majority of feminist challenges to the classical theorizations of woman's activities and the relegation of these activities to the inferior and marginalized realm of domesticity.

## 3. Domesticity and Women Philosophers

In all aspects of their thought, women philosophers represent significant reversals, and even major transformations, of the principles of identity and difference to which the classical notions of 'place', and in particular of woman's 'place', give rise. Following the major demarcations that I have used to delimit the theoretical fields of domesticity and philosophical praxis in man's discourse on woman, I will use the same division to describe the challenges posed by women thinkers to traditional Philosophy and its precepts

### Ethics

The field of ethics--that is, of virtuous action within the domestic domain of household activities and practices--characterized by male thinkers from Xenophon on as 'obedience', and rationalized as a function of woman's inferior status within the household (the **oikos**), was reversed by early female commentaries on that position. Neo-Pythagorean women (Meunier 1932; Waithe 1987), for example, extolled the virtue of

**harmonia**. This virtue offers a counterpoint to male ideas of the virtue of 'authority' and is comparable to certain Stoic notions that were instrumental in privileging female obedience as a function of the higher virtues of 'temperance' (Waithe 1987, 29).

Reversing a male-supremist discourse characteristic of the male texts, these women philosophers describe female virtues within a fabric of domestic ideals that privilege domesticity and the world of the **oikos** and prioritize the tasks performed therein. The work of these neo-Pythagorean women on virtue is echoed by later French (Medieval) writers like Christine de Pizan who, in The Book of the City of Ladies (1982), described, some twelve centuries later, woman's submission to male domination in marriage and personal or domestic life, as the expression of a higher competence for virtuous action than is to be found in man. In these cases, women philosophers accept the basic rationale of separate spheres of virtue as their frame of reference. The identification of women 'place' with domesticity and the 'home' as a separate domain of existence takes on the aspect of a privileged, rather than underprivileged, position in relation to the exigencies of ethical reality.

Simone de Beauvoir, on the other hand, refuses the dichotomy of a division of spheres altogether and, in a major transformation of the field of ethics through the principles of existentialism and its notions of the experience of the self as subject, rejects, in The Second Sex (1965), all prefabricated notions of woman's virtue and 'place'. Simone de Beauvoir argues that these are little more than the effect of woman's representation (and self-representation) within a male socio-symbolic (Kristeva's term) universe as 'Other'.

**Social theory**

Mary Wollstonecraft is perhaps the most sonorous voice to speak out against the

virtues of a service to men, a service that, in the (Rousseauian) social ideal, women are expected to perform in conjunction with the socialization of their children. In her A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1985), Wollstonecraft describes this type of virtuousness in the service of men as unwelcome in that it fuels the 'arts of coquetry'--the 'cunning tricks' that make women 'rivalrous', 'petty', and absorbed in gaining men's favors to the point of becoming 'neglectful' of their children's needs (1985, 12).

However, Wollstonecraft does not have easy alternatives at hand. Indeed, her philosophy was to be later taken up and developed by John Stewart Mill, whose humanitarian liberalism did not significantly challenge the social differentiation of virtues within the domestic field as such. As Elshtain points out about Mill, he "seeks equality within the **family** yet wishes to retain much of the traditional ambience of family life tied to women's domestication and men's assumption of public responsibilities" (Elshtain 1981, 144) Thus both Wollstonecraft and Mill ultimately embrace (Xenophonian) assumptions about the traditional division of labor within the domestic field that are based upon men being employed outside of it.

This closure within the field of social theory that an internal and domestic binarism necessitates, is expressed by Margaret Cavendish Newcastle's ambiguous position in the Orations (1668). Newcastle oscillates between a belief in the need for an emancipation of women's self-image through equal education and physical exercise and a belief in the superiority of women as they are: "Why should we desire to be masculine since our own sex is much better?" (245). Her Orations "Against the Liberty of Women" and "For the Liberty of Women" document the sterile paradox of woman's 'social' liberty, a 'liberty' that exchanges domestic virtues and liberties with political ones. These two Orations illustrate the fact that woman's 'place' within the socially-invested domestic interior is nevertheless a place that is ruled by principles outside itself--principles derived

from extra-domestic considerations that define the domestic realm and woman's social position within it.

**Political theory**

I would say that while not identified as a political theorists as such, Olympe de Gouges, who wrote Les Droits de la Femme (1791) and Mary Astell, Some Reflections Upon Marriage (1970), each draw up "social contracts"--contracts of conjugal marriage and its terms--that rival those of Locke and Hobbes. The woman responsible for the words: "Si la femme a le droit de monter sur l'échafaud...elle doit avoir également le droit de monter à la Tribune" (9), "le mariage est le tombeau de la confiance et de l'amour (16), and "la pauvreté c'est l'opprobre" (18), was also one responsible for outlining concrete proposals for change in the domestic and the public spheres alike. In the domestic domain, Olympe de Gouges' social contract emphasizes the importance of parental versus paternal authority within the family; it introduces the importance of domestic property rights for women; and it makes proposals for society's support of single mothers (17-18)

Mary Astell's reflections on the relation between the state and the family, in so far as they eschew a theory of the natural inferiority of women (123-4), exhort men to practice within the family and the household the principles that they hold to in the state (107). With the scathing words "[i]f all Men are born Free, how is it that all Women are born Slaves?" (107), Astell exposes the contradictions in male contractualist theories. In the service of a female-based contactualism that prioritizes the domestic and household exigencies of social life over the public and political ones, Astell's social contract endorses marriage as a moral duty for women--a duty that springs from woman's role in the reproduction of the species (87). Ringing with the rhetorical tones of an oftentimes

reverse sexism, Astell extols women's moral heroism in marriage. Undertaken solely as a means to an end, marriage is a union which, according to Astell, reflects the inequalities of a male-dominated world. This a world about which women, given to a domestic calling as child-bearers, can do nothng (18).

Whatever their respective shortcomings, in both the work of Astell and de Gouges, the terms for a contract that unites men and women in marriage, family, and domesticity are woven out of a positive valuation of woman's reproductive role, rather than the negative one attested to by the works of their contractual contemporary Locke, and prior to him, Hobbes.

**Economic theory**

As a reversal to the revolutionary measures for the abolition of domestic labor and the domestic sphere of activity proposed by Marx and Lenin, a feminist proposal for the actual waging of women's work, as for example Selma James' proposal in Wages for Housework (1975), opens the door to a grand-scale re-evaluation of women's labor: both productive and reproductive (Oakley 1974). This is articulated in a deep-seated transformation that looks to re-evaluate all aspects of feminine activity, from the strictly economic to the social, ethical, and reproductive as well. For example, Adrienne Rich, in Of Woman Born (1977), seeks to dissociate the institution of mothering, as it emerges within patriarchal and classical philosophies, with the actual 'experience' of this by women. Women philosophers of this new tradition--including Joyce Trelbicot (1983), Jessie Bernard (1974), Nancy Chodorow (1978), Mary O'Brien (1981), Dorothy Dinnerstein (1976), Carol Gilligan (1982), Nancy Hartsock (1983), Carolyn Merchant (1980) and others--distinguish themselves from an earlier generation of feminists who did not seek identity in difference or in the re-evaluation of women's domestic work. In

her first theoretical stage of The Feminine Mystique (1963), Betty Friedan was amongst those who, like Wollstonecraft, pursued a denigration of female 'home'-bound domestic activities on the basis of a classical and, I should say, Xenophonian argument. Following the production/consumption opposition that identifies women with consumption and men with production, Friedan's The Feminine Nystique projects a separation of male and female activity along these lines of economic differentiation.

**Eugenics**

Shulamith Firestone offers a rather unique plan for the abolition of difference and of the domestic sphere entirely in her attack of reproductive practices altogether Advocating the cultivation of test-tube babies, she stands in direct opposition to those "new" feminists who seek a re-evaluation of difference and of the domestic sphere of reproduction and the family In this connection, Michel Foucault's theory of 'bio-power' (the application of population control through sexuality) as the modern equivalent of sovereign power, a theory which he advances in The History of Sexuality, Volume I (1980b), offers a very interesting grounds for a re-theorization of the feminist debate about power, powerlessnes, and domesticity. Foucault makes no specific mention of either the identification of the domestic with woman's 'place' or of the entire question of the relation of power and 'place' that domesticity now raises. While his linking of problematics such as the hysterization of women's bodies, the psychiatrization of pleasures, and the pedagogization of children's sex, to the socialization of procreative behavior (1980b, 104-105), points to this identification, a more astute connection emerges between domestic power in pre-Industrial relations of 'blood' and post-Industrial relations of 'sex'.

**Conclusion**

In closing I would like to mention the work of Julia Kristeva and her essay "Women's Time" (1981). Carefully outlining her version of the challenges to traditional thought that feminism has to offer, Kristeva has brought to visibility the work of a third generation of feminists, women philosophers who no longer work within the bounds of a sexual division at all. Heralding the first murmurs of a real break with the past and its Xenophonic principal of identity-in-difference that has been supported and developed by the classical philosophers and challenged by women thinkers, Kristeva suggests that a new threshold in the history of philosophy is now being reached--a threshold that can best be characterized as the quiet operation of in-difference in accordance with which the discourse of woman, "woman's place", and woman's 'place' in the history of discourse in the West can best be examined As such, we are dealing with the construction and positioning of difference in 'place'. A break with traditional categories of Philosophy and patriarchal 'human sciences' and the beginning of a new analytical era in which we can re-think our tradition via non-biologistic notions of hegemony, 'place', and the problematics of gender, gender identity and gender relations. Accordingly, all notions of the 'private' can be examined in terms of the cultural production of 'place', the 'home' in terms of the classical production of woman's 'place' within the various systems of thought that the West provides, and through the discursive as well as the non-discursive practices that delineate space and 'place'.[3]

**4. Cultural Studies**

The problematic of woman's 'place', in theory and in practice, has been a determining instance throughout the history of feminism and has expressed itself in both the social practices as well as the texts and representations that have emerged from the

historically specific subjects--women. In the evolution of 'modern feminism' (I use this classification to encompass the range of representations that have emerged from the time of the first post-war feminist works beginning with that of Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex) a theoretical trajectory can be traced that articulates changes and transformations in the very representations of the problematic of "woman's place" as woman's 'place'. In what follows, I will attempt a brief description of that trajectory, which I will subsequently counter-pose with the parallel formation and evolution of Cultural Studies as a set of questions and methodological inquiries that seriously challenge the traditional disciplinary boundaries and disciplinary canons of Philosophy and History as conventionally practiced. Finally, I will try to show how the study of historical practices, along with philosophical texts and representations of domesticity, can be brought in line with a cultural study of woman's 'place' in Western discourse.

**Domesticity and the femini[illegible]oblematic**

Synoptically, it is possible to draw out three main boundaries in the contemporary evolution of feminist thinking about the question of woman's 'place' that expresses th. alternative ways of conceptualizing the division of spheres and the relation between domesticity and 'public' life.

In the first instance, we have the early contestations of woman's exclusion from the domain of public life. In Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex (1965), Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique (1963), Kate Millett's Sexual Politics (1970), Shulamith Firestone's The Dialectic of Sex (1971), and others, it was the social practices and representations that addressed the 'home' as the sole sphere of (virtuous) activity available to women. In struggles against the patriarchal essentialism that motivated this identification of domestic 'space' with woman's gendered 'place', these first feminists

sought to create inroads for women within the public spheres of action by producing counter-practices and counter-representations which contested the 'home' as woman's natural and biologically determined place.

However, as this move reached the limit of its possibilities, a new development generally identified as the 'second stage' of feminism, took shape which has been In this new phase, inaugurated as such by Betty Friedan's The Second Stage (1981), a political project was born that sought to give new meaning to the 'home'-sphere as a place where the active struggle of resistance against domination could be negotiated, resisted, produced, and reproduced. Under the new banner of the slogan "the personal is political", second stage feminists sought not only to re-enstate the 'home' as active site of cultural production and meaning production, but also to dissolve boundaries between 'public' and 'private' spheres altogether. Ranging from the political contestations of such writers as Jean Bethke Elshtain and her Public Man/Private Woman (1981) to the psychoanalytic ones of Juliet Mitchell in Psychoanalysis and Feminism (1974), feminist work from all camps began the task of contesting social, political, and other representations that ignored the dominant role that domesticity has played in shaping all aspects social life, political, economic, ethical. Within this contestation, 'home' and the world of domesticity, its practices and its ideals, emerged as the repository of cultural life, ideological production and subjectivity (personal, gender, and sexual identity) itself.

While most of the 'dominant' texts produced by women fall generally within the last categories, recent years have seen the emergence of a new type of study in feminist quarters. Influenced by both conjunctural historical developments such as the popular media, broadcasting, television and their new incursions into the 'home', as well as by theoretical developments that have reconceptualized relations between 'readers' (social entities and subjects of practices), on the one hand, and 'texts' (the representations of

subjects and social entities), on the other, feminist studies have taken place which question the separate spheres hypothesis in completely new terms. Ethnographic work informed by principles of reader-response theory has begun to question the notion of a correspondence between 'subjects' in 'texts' and the historical subjects that read them. Studies of popular cultural forms, ranging from Harlequin romances (Radway 1984) and women's magazines (McRobbie 1982), to disco dancing (McRobbie 1984), television soap operas (Brundson 1978), and television commercials (Flitterman 1983; Kaplan 1988; Modleski 1983; Hobson 1982), have all in their way contested a correspondence theory of subjectivity, developing notions of reading 'strategies' that range from 'dominant' to 'negotiated' and 'oppositional' reading practices in which the anthropological and historical female subjects construct their own meanings in different degrees of conformity to the interpellations of any given text.

These studies have not only been revealing in themselves--as indices of the social practice of reading particular to women--but have additionally expanded theoretical tools for the analysis of subject formation. This type of analysis has been applied to the study of gendered subject formations and has been instrumental in the emergence of a new representation of the problematic of 'place' in general and that of woman's 'place' in particular. Furthermore, theoretical perspectives have been expanded that take into account the 'socially located' way of making sense of experiences and the 'social location' from which that sense is made (Fiske 1987, 268-269) that re-evaluate the 'place' of domesticity and the 'home' in meaning production. These perspectives are important in reducing the prime position granted to the narratives of 'place' which socially located men and women resist, negotiate, and oppose.

I take Teresa de Lauretis' Technologies of Gender (1987) and her theorizations about the emergence of a "technology of gender" as paradigmatic of a move to displace

the theoretical primacy accorded to the instance of a concrete spatial division of spheres. In its stead, de Lauretis proposes a double articulation of the notions of a) positionality and b) social relation. With the accomplishment of this primary displacement, woman's 'place' becomes the subject of a subject-position and a social relation that exceeds the confines of a mere one-to-one correspondence with concrete spheres.

To my mind, this is an extremely valuable move, whose development opens up the possibility of a study of the representations of "woman's place" as a position and a social relation within social reality with the discursive practices of the West--those of Philosophy and History, for example--at the same time as it allows a further re-contextualization of these 'representational' practices within the 'lived', extra-discursive, conditions of existence. It is in relation to these questions--and the broader perspectives of the relations between 'place', 'culture', and 'power', that the recent work in Cultural Studies (at the Birmingham Center) provides an extremely productive frame for the study of "woman's place" as the study of a cultural problematic in its own right (Hall 1980, 38-39)

**Cultural Studies at the Center**

Cultural Studies, presently under the direction of Stuart Hall, at the University of Birmingham, does not constitute itself as a discipline as such. Rather it defines itself as a practice that engages a set of disciplines and does so in configurations that pertain to the analysis of culture as a lived experience.[4] As a definition of 'culture' that crosses traditional disciplinary boundaries, Cultural Studies emerges out of a specific historical conjuncture and addresses itself to a specific set of cultural questions. In these respects, it converges in many ways with the above-mentioned feminist themes and influences.

In the first place, it too arises in the post-war period, a response--if one is to trace its roots (Hall 1980)--to the post-war settlement in Britain, welfare capitalism, and the new types of social communication (broadcasting and television technologies) outlined by Raymond Williams (1975). With the rise of the broadcast model--its emphasis on centralized transmission and privatized, individual reception--a parallel breakdown of the spatial boundaries between 'public' and 'private' life in the new 'home-centered' way of living gave birth to what Williams calls "a social complex" that distinguishes itself from previous social formations (Williams 1975, 26 ff.). This social complex necessitated new forms of analysis corresponding to a new definition of 'culture' as such. It is in its dismantling of the 'selective' tradition characteristic of the 'humanities' definition of culture and in its erection of a definition of culture as "practice"--social practice and representational practice--that Cultural Studies was born.[5]

Schematically speaking, then, Cultural Studies has addressed and deposed the 'humanities' definition of culture on the two counts that: 1) it has tended to abstract social texts from social practices and 2) it has consequently constituted a particular cultural order as 'dominant'. Moreover, it has done so in the name of 'great art' (the 'high', 'elitist' or 'public' representations as opposed to 'popular' and more 'hidden' forms) and in the name of 'the universal human spirit' (Hall 1980, 27). It is easy to see how, in both these instances, a feminist intervention would find support. In its emphasis on the re-presentation of the dominance of private forms and their status as "subjugated" forms of knowledge and forms of culture, as well as in the characteristic feminist theoretical project of the study of the structuring principle of gender in cultural representations, contemporary feminism is compatible with Cultural Studies.

Thus duly skeptical of the classical humanities definition of culture, Cultural Studies not only developed a theoretical engagement with the notions of a 'politics of

representation' and the power/knowledge model for analyzing representations, it also used and regrouped the existing knowledges such as literary theory, social theory, and historical analysis under the sign of a new, more appropriate definition of culture. This move to a more anthropological and a more historical definition of culture as practices--"cultural practices"--has led to a further breakdown of boundaries and a reconstitution of the field of Cultural Studies as it is today. This move can best be characterized in the three-step evolution across the theoretical horizons of the notions of 1) a **signifying practice** and its engagement with the semiotic/structuralist study of texts, 2) a **social practice** and its engagements with the Marxian study of social relations, and 3) a **discursive practice** and its particular linkage of social and signifying practices--that is, the very link between social practices and social texts (Hall 1980, 29 ff.). To each of the above we can append the names of 1) Barthes (1967; 1972) and Lévi-Strauss (1963; 1966), 2) Althusser (1971) and Gramsci (1971), and 3) Michel Foucault, respectively. Each of these cultural theorists has served to redraw the map of 'culture' and to bring to visibility key questions, perhaps the most central of which are: 1) the relation between cultural practices and other (cf. representational) practices, and 2) the relation between cultural practices and subjectivity. Drawn together with the particular evolution that feminism has recently undergone, a formidable set of possibilities presents itself through which to pursue the problematic of woman's 'place' under a new cultural sign.

**Feminist cultural studies and new methodological perspectives for the cultural study of "woman's place" in the history and philosophy of the west**

There are essentially three key methodological perspectives which, in light of the Cultural Studies advances in the elaboration of strategies for the contemporary study of culture, present themselves to me. I will briefly state what they are and leave further

discussion to a future study. They are: 1) a displacement of the sovereignty of the Philosophical Text, the Historical Event, and the Universal Subject (this applies equally to the Universal Female Subject that has been constructed in the first and second stages of feminism); 2) a study of the discursive representation of "woman's place" as the positioning of female subjectivity within the classical philosophical representations of domesticity in terms of the separation of spheres of praxis; 3) a study of the discursive transformations of the social practices that have affected changes in the lived culture of domesticity and 'home' life.

A study that seeks to blend these forms and the relations between them, as they converge around the specific problematic of the cultural and theoretical-philosophical production of "woman's place" would employ a combination of methods which it would seek to integrate around its object of study--in this case the 'home'. These methods can be described as: 1) the methods of social history; 2) the methods of a (structural) analysis of texts of domesticity; 3) the methods of ethnography. While the latter is only pertinent to studies of contemporary society and culture, it can nevertheless be significantly brought to bear upon the results that have been furnished by the other two methods in yielding a Foucaultian "history of the present". This is a history which feminists and non-feminists alike, need to produce as part of a general inquiry into the emergent contradictions of today's domestic culture in its new (mobilely-)privatized forms. It goes without saying that the rise of a re-constituted 'culture of domesticity' affects the feminist preoccupation with all aspects of woman's 'place' both in its significance as a separate domain of existence and as a position in social reality. In a more highly charged theoretical way, the emergence of today's culture of domesticity presents a new imperative for studying the cultural production of 'place' and is not to be underestimated as a motive force in breaking new grounds for both feminism and Cultural Studies. In the next and final

chapter of this thesis, I will discuss this theoretical imperative as it makes itself manifest not only within feminism, but within postmodernism as well.[6]

## Notes

[1] He continues "For he made the man's body and mind more capable of enduring cold and heat, and journeys and campaigns; and therefore imposed on him the outdoor. To the woman, since he made her body less capable of endurance, I take it that God has assigned the indoor tasks. And knowing that he had created in the woman and had imposed on her the nourishment of the infants, he meted out to her a larger portion of affection for new-born babes than to man And since he imposed upon the woman the protection of the stores also, knowing that for protection a fearful disposition is no disadvantage, God meted out a larger share of fear to the woman than to the man; and knowing that he who deals with the outdoor tasks will have to be their defender against any wrong-doer, he meted out to him again a larger share of courage (Xenophon 1953 VII:23-26)

[2] It should be pointed out that while for Xenophon it was the master who trained, via his own authority and the woman's obedience, his wife in the 'art' of running the household, it was subsequently stipulated in the texts of neo-Pythagorean female philosophers (Waithe 1987; Meunier 1932) that it was through older women (not the man) that the wife learned (the art of good housekeeping) the operation of tasks in the household, but be this as it may, it is principally in the forms lain out by Xenophon that the subsequent history of philosophy has taken up and expanded the discourse on woman's place as a discourse of opposition and differentiation in five different fields of separate spheres

[3] I have not placed the works of Sigmund Freud--most notably "Femininity" (1965), "Female Sexuality" (1957a), "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality" (1953), and "Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes" (1957b). Principally because he is a complex thinker whose work has a number of points of insertion due to the variousness of the interpretations of his work. His absence here is by no means an indication of his importance. For an overview of the importance of his theories in contemporary feminism see my M A thesis (Anna Antonopoulos Dorland) A Re-Examination of Freud's Use of the Terms 'Masculine' and 'Feminine' in his Conception of Female Sexuality (1977), Concordia University, Department of Philosophy.

[4] For discussions of what is Cultural Studies see articles by Hall (1980), Johnson (1986; 1987), Fiske (1987), Williams (1965)

[5] This, of course, is a gross over-simplification, but it will have to do for my purpose here which is eventually to show how it displaces and re-articulates Philosophy and History with the new problematic of "woman's place"

[6] I would like to make one qualification to the above As pertains to both philosophy and history, there have been indications of an alternative tradition (approach) taking root. In philosophy, this is expressed in the recent focus on texts and representations of women philosophers--anthologies such as Mary Ellen Waithes' A History of Women Philosophers (1987) and Sandra Harding's Discovering Reality (1983), or Prudence Allen's The Concept of Woman (1985), for example--which look to bring to visibility a cultural tradition of representations, feminist epistemologies and methodologies that have been subjugated by the dominant model In history as well, a similar incentive is characteristic of the work on "collective mentalities" (the new historicism), popular and practical knowledges that we find explored in the works of Carlo Ginzburg (1980), E R Dodds (1951), Julian Jaynes (1976), Mikhail Bakhtin (1984), to mention a few In addition, historical research in the continental sector has focussed on popular traditions in Classical Antiquity Outstandingly, Jean-Pierre Vernant and Marcel Detienne (1974), Vernant as I have

shown in previous chapters, have both worked at length on bringing popular motifs to visibility. However, to what extent this work has successfully challenged the dominant paradigms of Philosophy and History is still questionable, although I believe that any work on "woman's place" can profitably draw from both of these alternative 'traditions' that are slowly taking shape. It may be worth mentioning that while in Philosophy the recent insurgence of female-based philosophical texts and representations has had next to no significant effect on the fundamental canonical principles of Philosophy as such (ie. as a 'discipline'), in a reverse sense, the recent appearance of work that examines more 'private', or 'hidden' social practices has had a significant impact on a general re-adaptation of Historical models (the Annals, for example), without any large measure of change by way of inroads with respect to the nature of the private practices that were engaged, for instance, in the actual operation of the home, domestic space, or, for that matter, woman's 'place' within it. All of which is further indication of the necessity of a break into the more theoretically complex field of Cultural Studies as the appropriate methodological focus for a contemporary study of "woman's place" as both a practiced space of social relations as a positional place for the representational of female subjectivity.

## Chapter Five

## Feminism and Postmodernism: Hermeneutical Spaces and the Discourse on 'Home'

> Television condemns us to the Family, whose household utensil it has become just as the hearth once was, flanked by its communal stewing pot of times past.
>
> Roland Barthes, "Upon leaving the movie theatre"

### Introduction

In his essay "The 'Uncanny'", Freud develops a discussion on the 'home' in which we are given to understand the sense in which the '**heimlich**', home-like, familiar, moves seamlessly into the '**unheimlich**', unfamiliar, secret, strange, uncanny in such a way that the same word 'heimlich' has, in the German language, been interchangeably used for both (1958, 124 ff.). Thus the master of occulted meanings obliquely touches upon the 'uncanny' nature of the very concept of 'home' itself--its capacity of assuming contradictory aspects.

So far, in this thesis, I have discussed aspects of the 'home' through various discursive foci, from its presence as a space of practices to its figuration as a position within social and epistemological frameworks. Thus in the last chapter I explored the opposition between 'home' as domestic space and 'home' as gendered place as it runs through the history of ideas from Antiquity to the present. I showed how the 'home' acted both as a stable and fixed horizon against which domestic relations unfolded and as a mutable frontier for the articulation of social, political, and economic and

epistemological change. In this chapter, I want to look at the contemporary reflection on the 'home', a reflection and a meditation in which 'home' emerges as a site of mobile and contradictory systems of meaning. Thus I will consider its emergence as a key rhetorical and epistemological space in what are now considered to be the two "most important political-cultural currents of the last decade (Nicholson and Fraser 1990, 19)--feminism and postmodernism.[1] A secondary focus in this regard, and a focus that unites these discourses and that serves to separate the discursive content of feminism in this context from that of the last chapter, is the attention that both the discourses under consideration have given to the presence of the domestic television set within the domestic ensemble. While I will not make explicit the links between this domestic technology and that of the domestic family hearth (see chapter one above), it is of note that it is by virtue of TV's occupancy of household space that these discourses are related to each other, distinguishable from their antecedents of over two million years, and at the same time dimly reminiscent of those forgotten ones before them.

Thus this chapter will undertake to look at the presence of the 'home' in the discourses of contemporary feminism (in particular, feminist cultural studies) and postmodernism. These, I shall introduce following a rather circuitous passage into one of the leading critics within feminist cultural studies, Meaghan Morris, whose essay "At Henry Parkes Motel" (1988a) remains singular in having sighted (sited? cited?)[2] the 'home' as a rhetorical and theoretical locus in contemporary academic discourse. Thus I shall begin, without further ado, with my tribute to her paper here--a paper in which 'home' is raised not only as a site of practices carried out particularly by women, but also as the concealed site of the contemporary theoretical project. This 'tribute' will be followed up by my own discussion of the theoretical projects of feminism and postmodernism and their respective discourse on 'home'.[3]

## 1. Sighting the 'Home': A Look to Meaghan Morris

It is Laura Mulvey who writes that "[i]n a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female" (Mulvey 1985, 366). In a recent wave of postmodernist solicitation of feminist **theoria**, woman's writing or the 'absence' of it has become the new object of the male gaze (Huyssen 1986, 198; Owens 1983, 61). In response to this challenge, feminist writers have produced different claims to visibility. Tania Modleski, for example, returns 'the look' by reference to its own blindspot: she argues that, on the contrary, there has been a proliferation of feminist participation in postmodernist theory only that it has remained unsighted by the male critique. (Modleski 1986a, 37). Meaghan Morris, on the other hand, transforms it.

Read as a theoretical "point of departure" (Morris 1988a, 1) for the articulation of woman's place in the postmodern, Meaghan Morris' recent "feminist essay in cultural studies" (Morris 1988a, 1) entitled "At Henry Parkes Motel", begins by assuming the look as a "marker", a "sign constructing 'a sight'" (1988a, 3). Via a critical passage through three postmodern theorists, which has named the "theorists of travel", Morris describes the metonymic chain that brings these theorists to conceptualize theory in terms of sightseeing and the (sight of the) site in terms of sexual difference.

Upon this ground, Morris performs a rhetorical **tour-de-force** that neutralizes the "(phallo)logocentric"[4] mark and proposes to look for a new paradigm of reading the postmodern, and theory in the postmodern. This is a paradigm that looks to "frame and displace, without effacing" one of the major linchpins of the rhetoric of sexual difference: the association of men with travel and women with 'home' (Morris 1988a, 2). Sighting the 'home' as the epistemological locus of the oppositional rhetoric of the travel metaphor, Meaghan Morris proceeds to deconstruct the male theoretical enterprise (and

its project of reading theory as travel) and in its **lieu** proposes the site of the home as the rhetorical space for the construction of a new epistemological paradigm. In so doing, Morris presents two theorizations of woman's place in the postmodern. The one as the site that marks the birth of oppositional rhetoric, the other as a site of its dissolution. Before I describe how each of these is articulated in "At Henry Parkes Motel", I will describe the operation by which Morris lays the groundwork for this enterprise. This is achieved primarily by a move to articulate the rhetoric of displacement with that of locale, space and place.

**The 'metaphorics of the voyage'**

Morris' eventual move to articulate the rhetoric of placement, locality and fixed situatedness with the politics of mobility, travel and displacement evolves from her deconstruction of "the classical epistemological metaphor of the voyage" (11). Morris deconstructs the "metaphorics of the voyage" (12) into the primary opposition between the sight-seer and the site-seen. Out of this deconstruction, the reconstruction of 'home' as leading metaphor for the theoretical trajectory takes its place.

a) The figure of 'modern-man-in-general'. The fundamental opposition between the sight-seer and the site-seen is, in Morris' reading, an opposition that in the postmodern travel discourses of Dean MacCannell, Georges Van den Abbeele, and Iain Chambers, becomes erased. This, according to Morris, is a consequence of the privileging of the role of the 'marker' which thereby expands the category of the 'seer' at the expense of the 'seen'. This marker, in the "travel stories" that reads tourism as the paradigm for theory, is what Morris names: "the figure of modern-man-in-general"(15). Drawing upon Van den Abbeele's debt to MacCannell who first reads the marker as the

sign constructing the 'sight', Morris "marks for critical inspection" (3) a sight of her own. This sight, embedded in the phallo)logocentric myth (3) of the "sexually indifferent him" (12), raises to visibility the "metaphysics of presence" that permeates the metaphorics of the voyage (10), and its particular articulation in the figure of "modern-man-in-general", or simply Man. Thus she writes: "[a]t first sight, it seems that Van den Abbeele's move should lead to a deconstructing of the figure of modern-man-in-general (Man). In fact, something different happens....It remains the **a priori** of the voyage" (14).

In the paradigm of the voyage that drives the analogy between theory, travel, and indeed tourism 'home', it is this figure that both marks the object of 'sight' as well as constituting its main Subject. Accordingly, it becomes Morris' principle object and project of reading to disarticulate the (phallo)logocentric equivalence between the terms voyage/ Man/theory. Her method for doing so is to dismantle the opposition home/voyage and its "lingering equations between the place and the **domus** (home), displacement and the voyage" which, in her view, have made in recent years the projects of feminist history, despite their rhetoric of the local, so fraught with "general-theoretical anxiety" (38).

b) The 'rhetoric of displacement'. In the privileging of the sight-seer (theorist) over the sight-seen, Morris reads the rhetoric of displacement that describes the "epistemological voyage" of postmodernism. In the works of all three theorists of travel, it is the epistemological Subject, the tourist/traveller, that marks the voyage as the now privileged "site" for "analyzing modernity" (1988a, 12). Iain Chambers, following Van den Abbeele, following Dean MacCannell, maintains, in the eyes of Meaghan Morris, the priority of the 'seer'-self. Be it MacCannell's "tourist" (1988a, 10), Van den Abbeele's "nomad" (1988a, 15), or Chambers' "detective" (31), it is the subject/theorist/"seer" that

gains ascendancy throughout (14 ff.). In this reading, the subject of the theorist or "seer" as sightseer inaugurates a rhetoric of displacement that coats the "classic epistemological voyage" with its new postmodernist gloss. For, as Morris reads Van den Abbeele's reading of the project of postmodernism, it is in opposition to the "totalizing concept of modernity" expressed in the "fixed position" of the theorist therein, that this projection of the tourist/theorist takes its hold (15). Indeed, if, as Morris reading Van den Abbeele reading Dean MacCannell reading theory reads the theorist or "seer" as tourist, a new paradigm for theory is born which displaces the working class with the new leisure class (12), this paradigm would inevitably efface the problematics of the "site" of analysis. Such a move is, according to Morris extremely dangerous. Marking what she calls "a positive denial of situatedness in the social" (16), this move in the postmodernist "deconstructive analysis of the politics of theory" has "the opposite result". It effectively "erases social, political, and perhaps theoretical struggle altogether" (15).

c) The rhetoric of 'place'. Critical of the phallogocentric mythology of the "metaphorics of the voyage", Morris nonetheless accepts its deconstructive premises as "a mode of cultural studies" (1988a, 2) and adopts its rhetoric in her own tour of the epistemological dimension of the postmodern. With a discourse peppered with images of road travel, Morris sets off on the project of reading "with a view on the run from the road" and discards her vestiges of totalizing modernism "**en-route**" (3). However, this move is more of a strategic acceptance of the principles of mobility, for her "destination" is already set, and the theoretical itinerary, "place-fixating" (3).

In effect, what Morris has proposed to produce, via this itinerant operation, is the identification and nomination of a new subject of sight. This is a subject which ultimately subverts and replaces the old (masculinist, phallogocentric) subject of travels in the

postmodern with a new (feminist) one. Supplanting the "seer", the ancient "marker" of the sight, with the "seen", Morris transforms the 'sight' from the phallic specificity of the Subject-seer to the feminist specificity of the sight-seen. Morris is careful in this reconstruction of 'place' as the new paradigm for cultural studies in the postmodern to maintain a critical distance from both the classical modernist construction of 'place' as a "fixed" locus of theory, as well as from its oppositional rhetoric that permeates the postmodernist travel-logic. In order to represent how she achieves this, it is necessary to retrace briefly her steps through the opening sections of her essay.

Following Iain Chambers' prescription for postmodern cultural studies, Morris submits to the edict that would have "the look" displace the "text": "[t]he past in the present," she writes, "is now a look, not a text" (2). Consequently, she resolves not to "linger too long" at an "inscription" (2). However, this does not prohibit her from constructing a singular place, the object of her project of reading, that defies the logic of mobility at the same time as it presumes it. This object, at the same time the 'site' at which Morris appropriates and redefines the project of reading and sighting and the "point of departure" for a "feminist essay in cultural studies", is the reading of a legend "**in-situ**" (1). **At** the site of Henry Parkes Motel, the reading of "the text of a motel legend (2), supplies, for Morris, a "site of analysis" (1988a, 3). "The motel as site of analysis" (3), is a site whose "minimal semiotic programme" is to "thematize relations between...mobility and placement" (2).

However, if the site of analysis is now the text in the itinerant project of postmodern reading, a subtle shift has been achieved in the traditional "gap" between the "marker" and the sight "marked". No longer, according to Morris, is it the "Theorist as totalizing Seer"--what Morris also refers to as philosophy's deconstructed "realist/empiricist/metaphysician of Presence" (15)--that marks the sight. Rather it is now

the ever-shifting object of the sight seen, in this case, the site of the Henry Parkes Motel, and the text of its Legend **in-situ**. This Legend, a legend of "nationality, origin, engendering" inscribed on the "street-front wall of the Henry Parkes Motor Inn, Tenterfield" (1), is as much a legend that Morris invents as it is one that she discovers. A legend whose text Morris reads all the while that she writes it. For, this is not the legend of how the modern nation was "founded by a speech-act" (1)--for it is claimed, according to Morris, that the Motel was founded in the proximity of the place where the statesman Henry Parkes delivered his memorial speech that built the Australian Commonwealth. Rather, it is a legend that blends together the rhetoric of place and the politics of displacement to engage us in a wholly new metaphorics for postmodern theory and the subject of reading. It is a legend that seeks to "mark out space for considering convergence and overlap, rather than divergence and distinction, between the rhetoric of mobility and the politics of placement, the mapping of the voyage and the 'metaphorics of **home**'" (44).

**The metaphorics of the voyage and the 'home'**

Morris' move in the construction of her essay is, above all, the recuperation of the 'home', the **locus classicus** of woman's "situatedness in the social" as a "practiced space" (37)--a space within which the practices of theory and reading can emerge as "complex social experience" rather than "totalizing theoretical activity" (32). For, if the theoretical "model of "(post)modern-Man-in-general" marks the "denial of situatedness in the social", it does so through the erasure of the 'home' (**domus**) as well as of the social, political and theoretical struggle that its presence entails (16). In its traditional form, the '**domus**', or 'home', stands out as the classical counter-point to 'the voyage'. It is both 'the ending' and 'the place of origin' (43). Morris locates this principle of domesticity-as-

opposition in the discourses of the "formalist (return to first principles)", the "feminist (return to place of origin)", and the "postmodernist(...intellectual mobility)" (1988a, 43). In each of these, the **domus** (home) is oppositionally constructed as the fixity of place contrasts with the mobility and displacement of the voyage.

However, if **domus** is oppositionally constructed in relation to the voyage, this polarity is itself only "an occasion for effacing the first term and expanding the second" (34). In each case, where the **domus** is given the status of a "fixed" and "exemplary" place, its potential as site for the analysis of "spatial practices" becomes erased. This erasure takes place on the level of its traditional definition--its theorization as woman's "exemplary" place-- as well as on the level of its oppositional relation to the voyage metaphor for reading and theory.

a) The 'home' as "exemplary place". As a site of opposition to the voyage, the 'home' or **domus** in Morris' reading of the "masculinist tradition", is not "reciprocally constructed as a site of work, theoretical or otherwise" (11). On the contrary, it is, in the work of the "theorists of travel" **cum** "theorists of the **domus**" (Morris facetiously slides from one appellation to the other) "a space which is blank" (12). As a consequence, the 'home', in this presentation, is "figuratively constructed not only as a womb, but as unproductive--a womb prior to labor" (12). While there is "no necessary logical connection", writes Morris, between the 'home' and the 'womb', nor between "the concepts of coherence and unity (which the tourist tries to impose on 'a chaotic and fragmented universe') and those of home and womb", Morris insists that "there is a very powerful cultural link" (12). This "link" is one which for Morris "is particularly dear to a masculinist tradition inscribing 'home' as the site both of frustrating containment (home as dull) and of truth to be rediscovered (home as real)" (12).

b) The 'home' in the metaphorics of the voyage. As the "elusive ideal that motivates the journey" (15) in the operation of the classical masculinist epistemological metaphor of the voyage, the 'home' manifests itself in the field of the theoretical paradigm in two distinct ways. Morris' text brings to visibility (sights) the 'home' as both 1) the paradigm for a tourist "society of alienated leisure" (12-13), and 2) the paradigm for the "cognitive experience" within that society as "the effort to catch up cognitively with the ever-fleeing experience of being **en route**" (1988a, 11). As such, the 'home' appears in the masculinist construction of the voyage metaphor as well as in its eventual postmodernist "deconstruction". For, in the first instance, the metaphor of the voyage and its implicit "teleological **drive**" (10) or "search for 'destination'" (11), inaugurates the birth of the tourist/theorist's "social 'home' as a society of alienated leisure". In the second instance, as a metaphor for the "fundamental dilemma said to define the speaking being" the "project of domestication" within this society is doomed to fail: "not only because of the gap between marker and sight, but because the tourist's interpretation always 'lags' behind the activity of voyaging" (11).

**Toward a metaphorics of the 'home'**

If for Morris the **domus** is emptied of its significance within the discourse of a metaphorics of travel, it is imbued with significance ir the "metaphorics of the 'home'".

a) 'Home' as "practiced space". In this respect, there are essentially two antagonistic conceptions of the'home' in Morris' text. The one is the 'home' as "exemplary place" the other as "practiced space". It must be noted, however, that in sighting the home as "practiced space" rather than "exemplary place", Morris in no way is looking to erase the idea of 'home' as the traditional female preserve. On the contrary, her objectives are, as stated above, to "frame and displace without effacing" the traditional association

of home with "woman's place". However, what the sighting of the 'home' as "practiced space" accomplishes by way of achieving these objectives, is to demolish the oppositional structure of the **domus**/voyage distinction (43). For, besides its definition as exemplary place, it is also its formulation as fixed place that marks it oppositionally within the masculinist travel metaphor. In this respect, it becomes possible to disjoin the two characteristic formulations of 'home' in the masculinist metaphorics: 1) the equivalence of 'home' with (exemplary) place; and 2) the opposition of 'home' and 'voyage'.

b) The 'end' of the metaphorics of the voyage. The dissolution of the home/voyage opposition does not by any means imply the recession of the equivalence between 'home' and 'place'. "My interest," writes Morris, "has been the disjunctions between the rhetorics of movement, displacement, and rapidity in debates about popular culture, and the feminist insistence on recognizing place in critiques of everyday life" (43). In rewriting 'home' as "practiced space" Morris has sought rather to expand the site of the home to include the rhetorics of movement, displacement and rapidity. Moreover, as that 'space' in which the interplay of oppositions rather than their divergence can be considered, the sight of the 'home' as "practiced space" marks it as a site for the project of theory and the practice of reading as much as one for the practices of everyday life.

c) The recuperation of "woman's place". Morris achieves the recuperation of woman's place through two means. The first is by sighting the motel site as a "home-away-from-home" (2); the second, by citing the changes that have taken place in the traditional site of home. As a "home-away-from-home" the motel site furnishes a unique opportunity to "fix new sites of placement for domestic, affective, and sexual labor, paid

as well as unpaid" (2). In addition, the motel offers effective "political" significance for a feminist reading of woman's 'place'. As such, it offers the opportunity to rewrite 'home' as a "transit-place" for women that has had "liberating effects" in the history of women's mobility (2). In relation to the traditional site of woman's position in the **domus**, Morris recognizes "the ways in which economic and technological changes in the 1980s have been transforming women's lives" (33). However, while she emphasizes the existence of rapidly changing experiences of the work-place, the home, and family life in the postmodern, her analysis does not reach out to include them. Instead, she merely asks: "what happens to...the voyage/**domus** opposition...if 'home', rather than the voyage, is rewritten as chaos and fragmentation, labour, transience, 'lag'--or in quite different terms..." (12).

## 2. The Site of the 'Home' in the Discourses of Feminism and Postmodernism

Of all the technological changes to affect the modern world, television is perhaps the single greatest. As a "home- based mode of consumption" that remains "without precedent as visual entertainment" (Mulvey, 1986, 80), its introduction into the American 'home' has effectively revolutionized its conditions. Amongst those to chart and metaphorically explore these changes are theorists, male and female, who have seen in "the television-dominated home" (Mulvey 1986, 82), a new site of theory.

While Meaghan Morris has achieved great strides in sighting the 'home' as the "point of departure" for feminist cultural studies, as well as of the status of "woman's place" therein, her particular displacement of the traditional association of woman and 'home' onto the analytical site of the motel has left the actual site of 'home' in current discourses unexplored--both in its special significance as a model for theoretical activity and in terms of its implications for woman's situatedness in the social. While, as I

mentioned above, Morris indicates the importance of the latter, no concrete moves are undertaken to consider the implications of this position in contemporary domains.

It is, therefore, following Morris herself that I propose, in this section, to look at the metaphorics of 'home' as it appears in two contemporary discourses--the discourses of feminism and postmodernism.[5] In both of these discourses, the 'place' of TV's within the domestic interior is critical. However, while in the discourses of postmodernism it is theoretically critical as the site of a dissolution of the bounds between the interior and the exterior (etc.), in the discourses of feminism it is critical in terms of the women's situatedness within or outside these bounds.

**'Home' in the postmodernist discourses**

In this section I propose to consider how the 'home' presents itself as the postmodern site for the dissolution of modernist oppositions (or as the key site for the postmodernist dissolution of modernist oppositional rhetoric) in the work of three contemporary male theorists of the postmodern: Jean Baudrillard, Lawrence Grossberg, and Arthur Kroker. While still only a 'latent' image of postmodernity in their works, the 'home' in each of their discourses marks a metaphorical site--a site at which the postmodern is articulated as the dissolution of opposition. For Baudrillard, this site is 'the social'; for Grossberg it is 'the subject'; and for Arthur Kroker, it is 'the body'. At each of these sites, 'home', and the 'metaphorics of home', become the rhetorical instrument of postmodernist theory.

a) <u>'Home' and 'the end of the social': Jean Baudrillard's challenge to the opposition between 'public' and 'private' in a postmodernist reading of the social</u>. If Meaghan Morris

conducts a tour of the external (public) terrain of the postmodern with a view to transforming its theoretical paradigm, it is to the province of its internal setting that Jean Baudrillard addresses himself in the essay "The ecstasy of communication" (1983a). Following the lines set up by his initial critique of television economy as form of object- or commodity- fetishism (1981, 53-57), Baudrillard here turns his critical (postmodernist) eye to this economy as a "means of communication" (cf. 1981, 54). As such, it is the "obscene delirium of communication"--a state of "negative ecstasy", "fascination and vertigo" (1983a, 132) in which are transformed the classical demarcations of space and place, of interior and exterior, and of private and public, by "an original and profound mutation of the very forms of perception and pleasure" (132)--that engages his attention..

This "mutation", achieved through the "electronic encephalization" of the environment (129) is according to Baudrillard, the result of "the passage into orbit of our private sphere itself" (128); the "elevation of the domestic universe to a spatial power" and a "spatial metaphor" (128); the "realization of a living satellite, **in vivo** in a quotidian space" (128) expressed by the "private telematics" (128) of the domestic television screen and its images.

As a testimony to the final dissolution of the classical epistemological and ontological dichotomy between public and private space in the electronic age of the postmodern, the screen image, in Baudrillard's text, stands supreme as it "explodes the scene formerly preserved by the minimal separation of public and private" (130). In perhaps no other form have the boundaries that separate, classify, limit, and delimit space and place been so radically challenged as they are here, in what Baudrillard calls "this forced extroversion of all interiority" and "forced injection of all exteriority" that according to Baudrillard "the categorical imperative of communication literally signifies"

(132)

And yet, if "this explodes the scene formerly preserved by the minimal separation of public and private" (138), it is not because it has been challenged from without. In Baudrillard's reading of the electronic age, the **locus principus** of postmodernity is the "domestic universe" (128) itself as "the entire universe comes to unfold arbitrarily on your domestic screen" and the "most intimate processes of our life become the virtual feeding ground of the media" (130).

As such, the domestic universe of the 'home' becomes, in this discourse, the key site for Jean Baudrillard's postmodernist proclamation of "the end of the social" (1983b). In the glare of postmodernity's television era, this 'universe' heralds the "extermination of interstitial and protective spaces" (131) as well the "loss of public space" (130) and "forms a sort of ecological niche where...opacity, resistance or the secrecy of a single term can lead to catastrophe" (128). Its pleasures, "aleatory and psychotropic" (132) become key terms in a discourse in which 'home' is read as metaphor for the postmodern.

b) 'Home' and 'the nomadic subjectivity': Lawrence Grossberg's challenge to the opposition between 'fixed' and 'mobile' in a postmodernist reading of the subject. Where for Baudrillard the site of the home was marked principally by the dissolution of the opposition between public and private, for Lawrence Grossberg, another theorist of the postmodern, it is by that of the opposition between the 'mobile' and the 'fixed'. Echoing strains reminiscent of Morris' essay, Grossberg takes 'home' as the **in situ** paradigm for travels in the postmodern. In his essay "The in-difference of television: mapping TV's affective economy" (1987) and in a conference paper "Mapping cultural audiences: cultural practices and nomadic subjects" (1988), Grossberg attaches the idea of 'home' to that of the postmodern subject.

Also addressing the omnipresence of the television image in the postmodern, Grossberg departs from a hermeneutics of domestic space to embark instead upon a hermeneutics of the billboard as the model for postmodernist theory. Establishing the dual aspect of the TV-image and the TV- medium (1987, 45), Grossberg proceeds to leave behind the TV medium's 'fixed' location within the field of enclosed domesticity in order to study the 'mobile' force of reading the TV image. "[T]elevision's economy", he writes, "is a domestic one, built upon structures of security and comfort." However, he adds , "TV is a domestic medium but it need not constantly domesticate every image; nor is it already domesticated, without any role in ongoing cultural struggles" (1987, 45).

In mapping out the television's "affective economy of the popular " (1987, 41), Grossberg uncovers a new principal of 'home', a principal that rests with the theory of the subject itself--in this case, a post-modernist and "post-humanist theory of the subject" (1987, 38) that rests with the notion of "nomadic subjectivity", whose subject, "the nomad" is itself "the site of struggle, an ongoing site of articulation with its own history" (1987, 39). For, "the nomad subject" is, for Grossberg, "amoeba-like, "struggling to win some space for itself in its local context" (1987, 39).

Rejecting the theory of the unified "existential subject" as well as the poststructural deconstructionist theory of the "fractured" and "fragmented" one (38-39), Grossberg proposes to locate the postmodern subjectivity in the "nomadic wandering through ever-changing positions and apparatuses" that constitutes the "complex set of practices and identities" of the TV fan. (38). In acceptance of the fact that "any individual position is actually mobilely situated in a fluid context" (38), Grossberg develops the image of a "nomadic subjectivity" (1987, 38) in the context of a hermeneutics not of the domestic television image itself, but that of the highway billboard. With the model of the "billboard" as roadmarker "to be driven past", Grossberg proposes to read the self reading

the television image.(31). By contrast to the fixed position of reading "texts to be interpreted" Grossberg's metaphorical billboards engage the mobility of the affective hermeneutical subject and his reading project.

However, if the billboards are indeed "a space in which many different discourses...appear" (31), this is merely a space within a space; for, this "nomadic relation to the media" (38) is but a secondary relation, and the "wandering nomad", a home-body. In this respect, Grossberg's metaphorics of the postmodern locate the site of what he calls the "complex social spaces of media effects" (38) within a double-articulation of the 'home'-image. First, the residential home of the television medium (or object), i.e., the 'home' as fixed location; and second, the transcendental 'home' of the subject-nomad, the place-less place that is all places and no one of them at the same time, because it is a 'place' within him self

It is significant that Grossberg's nomadic subject is not living a transcendental "homelessness" either within himself or his domestic environment. For Grossberg the nomad's 'home' resides in the space within himself, and with its own effective articulation as a "shape": "While its shape is always determined by its nomadic articulations, it [the nomad] always has a shape which is itself effective" (39). Indeed, "moving along different vectors and changing its shape, but always having a shape" (1987, 38), this, according to Grossberg, is a subjectivity that is "always at 'home'" (1988). In this instance, it may be said that the 'home' as the dominant image of postmodernity is created within a site more open and more mobile than the restricted hemispheres of the domestic world. However, it is also spatially more limited, or closed, in that it resides within the postmodern subject himself--a subject who now contains and reflects both 'home' and outside world.

c) 'Home' and 'the disappearing body': Arthur Kroker's challenge to the opposition between the 'real' and the 'hyper-real' in a postmodernist reading of the body. Within the masculinist enterprise in the postmodern, the propensity to demolish and dissolve the oppositional rhetoric of modernity has converged on 'home' as the key site for this dissolution. However, attendant to it, has been a parallel propensity to gradually diminish its ever narrowing sphere, as postmodernity invades and liquidates one traditional bastion of 'home' after another. In Arthur Kroker's recent postmodernist tract, it is the site of the Body, that becomes the demolition site. With his essay "Theses on the disappearing body in the hyper--modern condition" (1987), Kroker engages in a discourse that casts the myth of place and space, in the ever-fading light of a vanishing ideal. Operating from the site of television's cybernetic revolution, telematics, of "computers as the externalization of memory" and "**in vitro** fertilization as the alienation of wombs", Kroker rewrites the myth of the prison-house of the soul as a fantasy of the body's ruins. For it is Kroker's contention that under the "fin-de-millennium" sign of the "hyperreal", "the body no longer exists" (1987, 20). Thus he writes, "its dissolution into a semiurgy of floating body parts reveals that we are being processed through a media scene consisting of our own (exteriorized) body organs in the form of second-order simulacra" (1987, 21).

Indeed, for Kroker, this postmodern body, is the kaleidoscopic site of a grand simulacrum. As such, it becomes the site of just one more rhetoric field: what Kroker finally calls "a fantastic simulacra of body rhetorics" (1987, 22). In this way Kroker launches the final **coup-de-grace** to the **ex-nihilo** site of the 'home' in a metaphors of the dying gasp of a body-without-organs and a site without a seer.

**'Home' in the feminist discourses**

In contrast to the masculine theorists of the postmodern who seek in a

metaphorics of 'home' the dissolution of oppositions, it is precisely in the service of describing those oppositions that the full rhetoric of the feminist discourses, and their metaphorics of the 'home-site', unfolds. However, while all feminist theoreticians alike seek to mark in the site of the 'home' a site for gendered practice, it is not with a like mind that they read the effects and the meaning of this practice. Indeed, if one looks at the main strains within feminist writing in the 1980s, one finds at least three different views on gendered practice on the home-front. Laura Mulvey, Tania Modleski, and Valerie Walkerdine have each participated in a dialogue with the 'metaphorics of home' that yields very different readings of the construction of 'home' as gendered site.

a) 'Home is where the heart is': Laura Mulvey and the metaphorics of 'home' in the gendered practice of television narrative structure in the postmodern. As a counter--point to her ground-breaking theory of male "visual pleasure and narrative cinema" (1985), Laura Mulvey engages a perspective on the gendered practice of narrative structure founded upon the privileging of the female audience. The mark of this practice is the television, and its principal site, the home. In her most recent essay "Melodrama in and out of the home" (1986), Mulvey recognizes the fact that "television sprang, Minerva-like, fully grown into the American home, in the midst of the American family, the source material of the Hollywood melodrama itself" (82).

Recognizing the changes that the introduction of television into the American home has wrought, Mulvey traces these changes via its restructuring of the classic oppositions of public/private, production/consumption as well as masculine/feminine. "The home, she writes,is a "social place and mythologized space" that has "special significance for the new medium" (82). "In its "icon-like role" (82), the home, for Mulvey, is the "source material" of American life. As the "social space of the interior", it

also contains "a number of receding levels of privacy" (89). It is within each of these, that she sights the operation of the oppositi . through which the "spheres of male and female space" are mythologized" (88).

In the first place, Mulvey points out, the advent of TV in the 1950s marks the "swing to domesticity" and the "triumph of the home as point of consumption" (98): "Whereas the appeal of films was posited 'on going out', television," she writes "appeals to staying in" (80). This swing has been greatly enhanced by the "lure" that the "family melodrama" represents to female audiences (81). In Mulvey's view, the nineteenth century shift to a home-based, "family-audience" (83) is the occasion for a double--barrel change: the public/private opposition that initially marked off the "chaotic crowds of the streets" and the "urban industrialized environment" (83) as the primarily entertainment site now gives way as the family (and woman) becomes the new audience and the 'home' becomes the key site for a new paradigm of spectatorship.

However, while reminiscent of Baudrillard's postmodernist reading of the dissolution of the public/private opposition at the paradigmatic site of the 'home', Mulvey does not terminate her reading of the postmodern here. For her, the site of 'home' is not a site that closes off the play of oppositions. On the contrary, in Mulvey's vision of postmodernity, it marks a new site for their installation. Accordingly, Mulvey reads 'home' and the new "conditions of spectatorship" (80) that the advent of TV has precipitated, as a key site for the articulation of the antinomy between production and consumption. In this its new light, 'home', the now "established area of consumption" becomes the breeding-ground for the "phantasmagorias of the interior" that advertising and family television hold in store (89).

Nevertheless, while the postmodern site of the home marks a triumph in revolutionizing the conditions of spectatorship, the new "terrain of the imagination" that

this spectatorship negotiates bespeaks its opposite, as 'home', for Mulvey, is a setting that "touches directly on the raw nerve of the psychoanalytic" (95). As such, it bespeaks the presence of what she calls the "receding levels of repression" (89). Thus, according to Mulvey's reading, the popular culture "of general melodramatic appeal", located within the social spaces of the interior and its receding "levels of privacy", in addition to having a stake in the public/private and production/consumption oppositions, has also a deep tie into the male/female one as well. "[I]n the television dominated home", Mulvey writes, "problems of...sexual difference are translated into mythology through a series of spatial metaphors. interior/exterior, inside/outside, included/excluded" (88).

In these "receding levels" of interior space that mark the 'home', in Mulvey's metaphorics of spectatorship, as the key site for the narrative structure of melodrama, the private sphere of "woman's place" is not confined to "woman as female, but perhaps even more principally, includes woman as wife and mother" (89). For it is, according to Mulvey, the mother "sacred figure" in the iconography of 'home' and the American life who is the source material upon which the narrative structure of the television melodrama is based (81).

Not the neutral billboard territory of Grossberg's television nomad, Mulvey brings 'home' the full force of the patriarchal domination of woman. As the guarantor of the image of the "privacy" and "respectability of the 'home' (89), the figure of the mother operates like a "double-helix": "the mother's mythologized image as censorship and the mother's own containment and restraint" (98) become, in Mulvey's reading, the "texts of Muteness" that charge the language of the popular melodrama (94). The 'cinema of the interior', marked by a metaphorics of the 'interior' with its "receding levels of privacy" becomes the site upon which is inscribed "the emotional terrains of motherhood and family relations" (89). This terrain, "torn", according to Mulvey's metaphorics of 'home'

in the postmodern, "between facade and repression", becomes a new 'social space' within which "[h]idden away as invisible and unspeakable, at the point where the public becomes the secret, is the sphere of sexuality itself" (89). As the "physical setting" that can "hold a drama in claustrophobic intensity and represent, with its highly connotative architectural organization, the passions and antagonisms that lie behind it" (95), the 'home', for Mulvey, and the "space" of the 'home' "relate metaphorically, to the inside space of human interiority, emotions and the unconscious" (95). Contrary to Kroker's metaphorics of the postmodern that would condense 'home' into the diminishing space of the 'disappearing body', Mulvey's expand it. Its 'mythologized space' in Mulvey's metaphorics of 'home' is a space that expands beyond the narrow confines of even a domestic universe to include forces that "coalesce economics with cultural and sexual/psychoanalytic structures" (98).

b) 'A woman's place is in the home': Tania Modleski and the metaphorics 'home' in the gendered practice of mass culture in the postmodern. The antipode to Laura Mulvey's metaphorics of home that would read the popular melodrama and its insertion into mass culture phenomenon as the mark of a rhetoric of feminine repression, Tania Modleski reads 'home' as the breeding-ground for a rhetoric of feminine expression instead. Turning the traditional association of 'home' with 'feminine repression' on its head, Modleski reads the gendered practice of mass culture consumption and along with it the domestication of culture as a new site for the metaphorization of "woman's pleasure" (1982, 32; 1983, 68) in the postmodern. Arguing against Ann Douglas' denigration of the domestication and "feminization of American culture" (1986b, 163), Modleski, like others (cf.Radway, 1984), draws upon the foundations of reader-response criticism in order to recuperate 'home' as the dual site of both a metaphorics of feminine-

response and the dissolution of the high/low culture antinomy.

In both Loving With A Vengeance: Mass-Produced Fantasies for Women (1982) and "The rhythms of reception: daytime television and women's work" (1983) Modleski explores the recuperation of 'home' as a metaphorics of woman's pleasure rather than displeasure. In so doing, she has taken on the "critical double-standard" (1986a, 37) that permeates the pejorative rhetoric traditionally applied to the equivalences woman/home and woman/consumption. Alongside other equally impressive moves to dismantle and discard this rhetoric, such as those concerned with the recuperation of 'home' as site of feminine production (1986a, 42)[6], Modleski's contribution stands supreme in the archive of the Posts. For, what is particularly welcome about Modleski's siting of 'home' is that in "searching out the radical potential of the subordinate term" (1986a, 42), in this case that of consumption itself, she has achieved a monumental restoration of the image of the 'home' itself--an image that now becomes appropriate to the metaphorics of pleasure and play as much as those of work and worry.

Indeed, it can be said that Modleski's recuperation of 'home' is all the more precious if we consider that 'home' has **not** always been a place that woman could call her own, neither in work, nor out of work. As Modleski herself reminds us, historically speaking, woman has not always had command over the domestic scene. She correctly points out that there was a time when woman was no less a stranger in her own home. Thus she writes: "in the past...it was woman who was forced to live the loss of both public and private space--denied participation in the public sphere, and though confined to domesticity, forbidden real privacy (a room of her own) and even legal possession of her body" (1986a, 50).

However, there is another sense in which Modleski's metaphorics recuperate 'home' from the rhetoric of traditionalist oppositions and engages in restoring the radical

potential woman's place. In her exploration of "woman's narrative pleasures" (1982, 32) based on trenchant analyses of domestic fiction and daytime television (1982; 1983), Modleski produces another reversal of oppositional logic and rhetoric. In this case, however, it is not the oppositions production/consumption and high/mass culture themselves that are in question, nor is it the radical potential of the inferior terms themselves. Rather, it is a reversal of the rhetoric that describes the site at which these inferior terms are articulated.

Thus Modleski writes 'home', the site at which both 'consumption' and 'mass culture' are articulated, as the site of such pleasures as the "pleasures of a fragmented life" (1983, 71). In this way, she subverts the image of coherence and unity in conjunction with that of womb-like vacuity that in Morris' account describes the traditional rhetoric of 'home' (above). Bringing to bear valuable insights pertaining to "the formal properties of daytime television" and the ways in which these "accord closely with the rhythms of women's work in the home (1983, 73), Modleski writes the metaphorics of 'home' in a discourse that engages in the postmodern concepts of rupture and discontinuity rather than those of coherence and unity.

c) 'No place like home': Valerie Walkerdine and the metaphorics of 'home' in the gendered fantasy spaces of the postmodern. Valerie Walkerdine's essay on the domestic practice of family video-viewing entitled "Video replay: families, films and fantasy" (1986), takes the domestic metaphor of 'home' onto a new discursive plane. In this essay on "how aspects of filmic representation are incorporated into the domestic practices of the family" (1986, 168), this plane is the site of, what Walkerdine calls, the site of "fantasy spaces" (195). Disrupting the traditional "common-sense split" between the spaces of 'fantasy' and 'reality', Walkerdine addresses the "inscription of fantasies within

family practices" and domestic relations (192).

Fantasy, according to Walkerdine, is a space in which "the creation of fictional representation" takes place (187). "Fantasies", she writes, "have a psychical reality which has positive and material effects when its significations are inscribed in actual practices" (190). As in Modleski's recuperation of the domestic arena and the forms of popular expression to which it gives rise, Walkerdine also undertakes to defend "fantasy spaces as places for hope and for escape from oppression as well" (195). However, contrary to Modleski, Walkerdine expects to focus her critical attention on those fantasy relations that are born out of, and into, the domestic practices themselves. For, it is primarily with "the constitution of subjectivity" and subject "positions" within cultural practices that Walkerdine is concerned (192). "I approach **positions**", she writes "as fictional spaces in which fantasy is lived out" (199, n. 23). Insofar as the model for the inscription of these positions is "in the lived relations of the family" (199, n. 23), the opposition that takes singular precedence in Walkerdine's metaphorics of the 'home' as site of analysis, is neither that of public/private, nor consumption/production, but sexual difference itself. For, what Walkerdine portrays, at the point of the "dynamic interaction" between the filmic representations of Rocky II and the domestic practice of the Coles' watching this video, is "the fears and fantasies inscribed in and projected on to" that representation as they construct sexuality and thus "fix what 'woman' and 'man' are taken to be" (186).

Looking upon the manner in which fantasy is "invested in domestic relations just as much as in films" (192), Walkerdine accounts for two distinct viewing practices, both of which unfold within the same domestic space: 1) the viewing practices of the Cole family watching the movie Rocky II on video, and 2) her own ethnographic practice of "watching them watching television" (167). With 'viewing' as a "point of dynamic intersection" (191), Walkerdine proceeds to articulate, in both these instances, the

"effectivity of filmic representations within the lived relations of domestic practices" (191). In the case of the Coles' viewing practices this becomes linked with the construction of gender, whereas in her own case, it is linked with the construction of knowledge as "the law which claims to impose a reading on the interaction" (167).

Walkerdine describes the creation of these fantasy spaces within which sexual identity is constructed and the specific "regimes of representation" into which sexual identity "enters as a relation" (188) by way of a three-way deconstruction of the domestic viewing practice. First, she addresses the text of the film itself. Second, the Coles' domestic practice of watching it. And finally, the fantasy spaces that are created within her own, and that of the Coles', viewing practices.

Foregrounding the film's presentation of Rocky's body, which is filmically "presented as beaten, mutilated and punished", and appears as both "spectacle and triumph", Walkerdine builds her case for "fighting, as a key signifier in the film" (173). Upon this ground, it is to fighting as "a class-specific and gendered use of the body" (**as against the mind**)" (173 emphasis added), that she looks to in portraying the "dynamic interaction" between this representation and the fantasy of control and power that the domestic practice of video-replay affords its subject--Mr. Coles. Walkerdine notes the ways in which Mr. Coles' control of playback on the video machine, and the practices attending it, are, like the fighting on the screen, "most clearly presented as masculine and something from which women are excluded" (179).

As the story of "Rocky's struggle to become bourgeois" (169) Walkerdine reads the filmic representation of "fighting" as the "key term in a discourse of powerlessness" (184). In the interstices of her own fantasy space, the "fantasy of the fighter" is "the fantasy of a working-class male omnipotence over the forces of humiliating oppression" (173) and crosses with the "bid for mastery" that engages her in her own bourgeois--

intellectual struggle to "know" and thereby conquer and "regulate" with her mind the proletarian force of "the masses"(168; 196-7).

In the fantasy spaces that link the Coles' family practice of video-viewing and the filmic representation of Rocky's body in action, "fighting as an aspect of gendered practice" (181), Walkerdine perceives the "bid for mastery" (172) that both denies and defines Woman--the women in the Coles family and herself as the ethnographer whose object it is to survey them. In this respect, Walkerdine's self reflexive text--a text that calls attention to the "desire for forms of mastery" that underlie her own cultural analysis (168)--bespeaks a fantasy of difference that, couched as it is within its own receding levels of refracted discourse, must be exposed. This is especially so, in that the story that it tells affords its own diegesis of the construction of sexual identity, both 'in' and 'out of' the 'home'.

In keeping with her purpose of self-evaluation and analysis, as well as of portraying the "fictional spaces" in which her own fantasies are lived out, Walkerdine confesses a personal parallel between the "pain" of Rocky's struggle to become bourgeois and that of her own pain of becoming bourgeois "through work" (198, n. 4.). This being "a route opened to working-class women, perhaps for the first time" according to Walkerdine "in the post-war educational expansion" (198, n. 4) it weaves a link between woman's incursion into the work-force, her excursion from the home, and the particular "intellectualization of pleasure" (168) in which Walkerdine's own particular career choice engages her, as seeker of "knowledge/truth"--the "knowledge, certainty and mastery" (197) that is grounded in the now opprobrious bourgeois-academic "will-to-truth" (197).

However, it is Walkerdine's portrayal of the 'link' between viewing practices of "control of playback on the video machine" exercised by Mr. Coles and Rocky's fight to control the forces of oppression "which mutilate and break the body in **manual** labor"

(173) that forge the link between which the fantasy of her own exclusion (as a bourgeois intellectual) and the "bodily and sensuous pleasure of 'low' cultures" (196). Here, the domestic exclusion of woman from direct participation in the gendered practice of video-viewing ("control and playback") and her extra-domestic bourgeois exclusion from the gendered and bodily practice of participation in the "animal passions" come to merge. In so doing, they create a picture of Woman (Walkerdine), the female bourgeois-ethnographer-social-scientist for whom "the web of power/knowledge" (192) furnishes "the vicarious excitement in that which is forbidden...and in which s/he profoundly desires to engage but must only monitor, watch, describe and moralistically criticize and prevent" (197, n. 1).

Although Walkerdine here specifies the "bourgeois researcher", custodian of the rational order and regulator of "animal passions" (197), as the subject of this vicarious enterprise, it is also the construction of the (sex-specific) **female** bourgeois researcher that is in question here? For, if "fighting masculinity" is the principal fantasy of the "intellectualization of pleasures" (168) that characterize the bourgeois researcher, Walkerdine does not fail to intimate its relation to femininity. "A fighting masculinity" she writes, "might therefore relate to a terror of femininity" (180). This "terror" is even more pronounced when, in the guise of the image of masculinized "fantasies of omnipotence, heroism and salvation" (172), it is her own femininity that Walkerdine must confront as the extra-domestic task of "monitoring of pathology" (174) grazes that of the all-time, classic and mythologized image of woman's place in the home front (see Mulvey, above).

In this way, the particular metaphorics of 'home' that her essay offers up are especially illumining. In the fantasies of exclusion, otherness, and sexual difference that within the spaces of the female imaginary, 'home' conjures up, a new rhetorical space is

created--a space within which woman's place 'in' and 'out of' the postmodern is articulated. Penetrating beyond those ideological barriers that divide the 'battle'-front from the 'home'-front, this essay is a kind of excursus into the still fantasmical possibilities of living 'home' in non-dualistic terms; of perceiving it as a site at which struggles are fought, won, and even lost, but a site of struggle just the same. A site where rather than fixed relations of oppression or expression, it is heterogeneous, multifold ones that are made and unmade.

## 3. Citing the 'Home': The Hermeneutical Spaces of Feminism and Postmodernism

I should now like to return to this task by briefly recapitulating the ground that I have covered thus far, assessing Meaghan Morris in the light of my own rudimentary attempt to thematize 'home'. To return to my own starting point, in the first section of this chapter I tried to show how Meaghan Morris' insights have been useful in delineating at least two areas of contestation that are relevant to feminism and cultural studies (or simply women's struggles) today: the one pertaining to a masculinist appropriation of the theoretical paradigm by way of its metaphorical limitation to a travel rhetoric, the other to the particular condensation of "woman's place" into a very limited set of descriptive terms within this rhetoric.

While not wishing either to claim or to disclaim this particular constellation of equivalences and oppositions, Morris, I have argued, has looked to disturb it by subverting its terms. Thus 'home', the traditional epithet for woman's 'place', becomes sighted in its multiplicity of meanings: as the possibility of travel (the motel as home-away-from-home), as the practice of reading (the motel as postmodernist text), and even as woman's 'place' (the motel as new site of production). In this way, 'home', finally disarticulated from its conventional meanings presents a most suitable site for articulating

a whole range of practices, theoretical and otherwise (material, cultural, quotidian). Indeed, it has been following this particular route, opened by Morris' disjunctions, that has essentially enabled me, in the following sections of my chapter to thematize such fundamentally incompatible discourses--as, for instance, the masculinist and the feminist (cf. Probyn, 1967), amongst others.

The reason for this, I would now argue, is that 'home' is fundamentally emerging as a new rhetorical and hermeneutical space: a space within which a variety of discourses struggle and articulate themselves in contestation (or agreement) over practices and theories in the postmodern. To mention but the most salient that I have touched upon besides the major masculinist and the feminist ones (which, as I have tried to show, break down into multiple constellations of struggle), these range from masculinist contestations regarding the specific theoretical formations described by the postmodernist dissolution of oppositions, to feminist ones regarding the specific gendered practices. In the masculinist discourses they range from contestations about the theoretical formations of the social, the subject-ive and the bodily; in the feminist discourses, they range from contestations about male and female domestic practices, expressive practices and repressive ones, fantasy practices and actual practices. For each of these, it has been my contention, it is the rhetorical space of the 'home' that presents itself as the principal site at which the struggles over meaning have been articulated.

Moreover, this theoretical horizon, with its set of practices and discursive metaphors, it is now my further contention, is the parameter, the length and breadth of a critical articulation of the relation between feminism and postmodernism. If in response to the postmodernist appropriation of feminist criticism and this move to speak for (silence?) feminism, feminist writers have produced different claims to visibility, they have also resisted an easy and unproblematic coalition between feminism and

postmodernism (Modleski 1986a, 1986b; Probyn 1987, 1990). Looking to assess the political implications of postmodernism for feminism, the recent anthology Feminism/Postmodernism (1990), for example, asks whether coherent theory and politics are at all possible within a postmodern position (1990, 9), or whether postmodernism's refusal of objectivity, its replacement of the "God's eye view" (or the modernist "view from nowhere") with a "view from everywhere" does not imply a relativism and an abandonment of theory that is essentially the end of feminism (1990,7-9). Pointing to some of the dangers of postmodernism's invocation of abstract principles such as 'difference', feminism demands that postmodernism situate its defense of certain values and ideals within a specific historical and political context (Nicholson, 9 ff.).

Without going into the vexed question of whether feminism has not reversed the theoretical agenda by simply assimilating postmodernism to its own political project, we can nonetheless ground the feminism/postmodernism debates within a hermeneutical space which allows us to consider convergence and overlap, as much as divergence and difference, locating the subjects of feminism and postmodernism in what is not a sex, but a space.[7] Thus 'home' appears not only as a key theoretical space for the development of discourses on postmodernism and the subject in and of postmodernity. A site unseen by the traditions against which both feminism and postmodernism have defined their respective subjects and the subject of a new sight, the 'home', in these discourses, presents a key rhetorical/theoretical space across which to thematize the relation and boundaries between feminism and postmodernism. However, lest this last be read too closely as a disguised attempt to put feminism in the vanguard, or women in the 'place' of the "ideological leaders" (Probyn 1987, 353) in the march of the Posts, I should like to end this thesis' meditation on 'home' with some concluding remarks on the link between 'home' and "woman's place".

# Notes

[1] While I have already looked into the discourse of feminism in the last chapter, this chapter focusses uniquely upon developments, during the last five to ten years, within what has come to be known as feminist cultural studies.

[2] I owe the use of this academic pun that rhetorically elides the notions of sight/site/cite to a passage in Alice A. Jardine's Gynesis (1985, 109)

[3] I want to point out that in my selection of authors, I have had to limit myself. I have nevertheless chosen those most representative in terms of outlining the range of discursive possibilities. To be sure, there are a great many more. However, expediency (being the essence of this theoretical project whose hugely dense discursive fabric has not always been easy to contain) regrettably requires the imposition of these limits, which in a future study I would like to have the opportunity to dissolve

[4] A neologism introduced by Jacques Derrida in his critique of Western metaphysics, 'logo-centric' has been adapted to the aims of a feminist position by Morris and others (hence the prefix 'phallo-'), and is currently in circulation within certain types of critical texts As such it has proven useful in naming a convergence of theoretical biases that have become increasingly suspect in their capacity to conceal and deny the free play of possibilities, divergences, and differences

[5] It might be said that in focussing uniquely on the site of 'home' in feminism and postmodernism I have side-stepped some of the unresolved issues pertaining to 'home' in the crucial materialist critique of culture While this is not to depreciate certain most valuable Marxist/feminist analyses of the 'home' as domestic site of production and its widespread challenge to classical Marxist theory--I am here thinking principally of the analyses of Christine Delphy (1988, 1984), Michèle Barrett (1987), Annette Kuhn (1978), Ann Oakley (1974), Juliet Mitchell and others--my purpose here is to work backwards Consequently, I have chosen to confine my attention strictly to the rhetoricization and metaphorization of 'home' within discourses that take the importance of television in late capitalist society into consideration, for a more detailed discussion on the relation between postmodernism and late capitalism, see Fredric Jameson (1987).

[6] These, of course, would primarily include the materialist analyses of Christine Delphy in her ground breaking collection of essays brought together in the anthology Close to Home A Materialist Analysis of Women's Oppression (1984) and, more recently, her essay "Patriarchy, domestic mode of production, gender and class" (1988), as well as Ann Oakley's Woman's Work (1974). For a general collection of essays on women and domestic modes of production see the excellent anthology by Annette Kuhn and AnnMarie Wolpe Feminism and Materialism, Women and Modes of Production (1978) For a somewhat modified version of the marxist-feminist position on these issues see Michèle Barrett's Women's Oppression Today Problems in Marxist Feminist Analysis (1980)

[7] In her essay "Feminism The Political Conscience of Postmodernism?" Laura Kipnis convincingly argues in favor of poststructuralism's naming the political subject of feminism as a discursive "space" rather than a biological "sex" (1988, 159)

## The Space That Claws And Knaws: Concluding Remarks

...as a woman, I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world.

Virginia Woolf, Three Guineas

In this thesis, I have tried to show how from the time of the very first family shelter, the 'home' has been a symbol and a setting (Davidoff et al. 1979, 153) that has long haunted both our lives as well as our language. It has been used and abused in the history of the West, and in the discourse of that history, from the beginning of recorded time. Thus by way of retracing the history of space very roughly, one could say that in Antiquity there was a hierarchical ensemble of places which was supported by cosmological theories.[1] Here 'home', domestic space, constituted on the basis of the wall, offers a different set of relations than those of 'home' constituted on the basis of the localization of objects, people, technologies--that is, objects and physical forms. In the first instance domestic space is subject to a hierarchical ensemble of sacred places where supercelestial places were opposed to celestial, terrestrial and subterrestrial ones.

However, with the founding of the city-state, this hierarchical order of spaces is dissolved, as a new domestic reality is formed by way of a 'national space'. This in turn gives way to a relational space in which domestic space is one axis of a binary notion of space. With its opposition between open and exposed, protected and sheltered spaces, sacred and profane spaces, private space and public space, urban space and rural space, masculine space and feminine space, family space and social space, cultural space and

useful space, space of work and space of leisure, domestic space becomes constructed as part of an apparently symmetrical relation. However, within this space, 'extension' is substituted by 'localization'[2], as the site of the 'home' is defined by geometric relations of proximity between points or elements giving way to a constitutional a-symmetry (which I discussed in the fourth chapter of this thesis) as it manifests itself in various forms across the philosophical discourses of domesticity. Finally, we have in our own epoch what can be described as a "relational space" (Foucault 1986, 23 ff.): a space in which a site is defined by relations of proximity and in which domestic space is also virtual space.

Thus in our culture, the 'home' performs a particular icon-like role in which the Mother is its sacred figure (Mulvey 1986). It is characterized by the idea of 'privacy', 'comfort' and a retreat from the cold, savage, heartless world where men engage in brutal, competitive, and instrumental struggles for survival (Rybczynski 1986, vii; Davidoff et al. 1976, 140 ff; Luxton et al. 1990, 10; Cohen 1983, 4); Lasch 1975, 7). Whether from the wilds of nature, civic bonds and obligations, industrial pollution and its fumes, or just plain alienated work, this 'inner sanctuary' founds the myth of the 'sheltered place' that pervades Western capitalist, patriarchal society from pre-historic times. This hegemonic 'myth of home' (Harman 1989, 13)--also known as the 'ideal of home', 'ideology of the home', 'cult of domesticity', 'sanctification of the home'--that sets up 'home' as a distinctly separable **topos**, synonymous with warmth, nurturance, and expressivity, and outside social and economic reality, is a myth deeply rooted in private property and in intimate nuclear familial relations, which are in turn rooted in changing definitions of "woman's place" within shifting relations of domestic space.

Predicated upon the idea of a minimal separation of public and private, and upon the equation of public life with man's domain and the 'home' with woman's place, this myth is instrumental in naturalizing economic, political and economic structures of

dominance and ideological sexual arrangements. In the current renewed discussion of a woman's place, it is of paramount importance, indeed crucial, to examine how such ideas fit in with other aspects of society and culture. Thus, not only must we look at the 'home' as a repository of social meaning (in which biological as well as social reproduction take place), but we must also look upon the production and reproduction of woman's 'place' within it not as an immutable place within a fixed, homogeneous and unequivocal geographical location, but as a position in a social reality that has been constructed over time.

However, I would seriously caution against the view that takes 'home' to refer to an unproblematic geographical location; an empty space that contains physical forms, individuals and things such as technologies, men, women, and children. Whether in reference to an internal phenomenological space or an external social space, it is important to keep in mind the sense in which, to quote Biddy Martin's and Chandra Talpade Mohanty's essay "Feminist Politics: What's Home Got to Do with It?", 'home' is "the invisible and only apparently self-evident boundaries around that which we call our own" (Martin and Mohanty 1986, 192). This is evidenced by the essential ambiguity of idea of the German word '**heimlich**', the 'homelike' as I mentioned above. For, I repeat it here, Freud points out that among its different shades of meaning, '**heimlich**' exhibits one which is identical to its opposite '**unheimlich**', as 'familiar', 'friendly', 'intimate' become the 'hidden', 'secret' and 'kept out of sight' (Freud 1958, 129 ff.).

Thus, it is important to keep in mind that 'home' is a slippery and elusive term. For 'home' means more than a fixed place of residence. Yet while one might look upon 'home' as an invisible place outside all places, as the "placeless place" that exists nowhere in reality, it is nonetheless possible to indicate its physical location. Indubitably it remains the 'heterogeneous' space in which we live, which draws our inquiries, and in

which the erosion of our lives and of the lives we study occurs, in which an erosion of our time and of our history as well as of 'time' and 'history' occurs--the place that claws and knaws at us both critically and experientially.

For the 'home' cannot be assumed as an unproblematic category, a unitary locus of effects or a unitary and stable object of research. It cannot be taken as a transparent name for an immutable and homogeneous place or flattened against the confines of an enclosed space. Even less can it be entered unproblematically as theoretical site for the representation of 'change'. On the contrary, the 'home' as site and object of inquiry is itself constructed in and by the epistemological discourses (philosophical, historical, ethnographic categories) that describe it. As a site, it is organized according to the laws of those discourses in which it appears, the definitions they impose, and can at times express the ongoing struggle of representation that takes place between them. Misrecognized as the pre-discursive space in which we live, it has hitherto enjoyed the status which the 'child', the 'woman', the 'family', 'sexuality', and others before it have claimed. However, just as these have been progressively disrupted, their claims to unitary stability and fixity dissolved, dispersed, and displaced across myriad points, so too 'home' must be examined as the constructed articulation of relations--a mixed, heterogeneous, polymorphous, movement and positioning across time. The essentialism that secretly informs our assumptions about its status as a unitary, stable, homogeneous entity must be challenged, both polemically as well as historically, and its points of articulation, dislocated. This is not to say that it becomes a term voided of spatial or ideological meaning, but that this meaning is continually held in perspective, measured against the factors that produce it.

In thus raising questions about the discursive and non-discursive construction of 'home', its concealment in erudite discourses of gendered place and its representation in

conflicting practices of domestic space as the ideological effect of a 'private' technology of power, I have sought to bring into visibility how 'home' emerges as a constructed, imaginary, and fictive unity at different points or historical conjunctures via the interplay of local and practical knowledges and erudite discourses; how it manages to gain discursive unity through the articulation of 'place' and 'space' as the effect of patriarchal power.

If I have chosen to study this intercalation as it is expressed in the technologies of the sacred and secular family hearths and the domestic television set, it is because each of these acts as an anchorage point for changes in the discourse on 'home'. This allows me to trace its genealogy through historically different points of emergence, though these are not points designated by changes or major 'events', or 'successive configurations' of "effective history",[3] and thus may not correspond to the boundaries legitimated by such a "history". Rather they are isolated in respect to changes in what are (minuscule) procedures of power.

For, each of these apparatuses--domestic cultural apparatuses (object-mediums) the emergence of which represents distinct cultural periods or 'anchorage points' of the discourse on 'home'--can, in the context of their study as a topological construction of 'home', and of the discourse on 'home', serve to express the systems of relations that articulate gender with 'global forms of power' via 'heterogeneous webs' of conflictual local, spatial, practical and conceptual, discursive, philosophical operations. They also serve to express the fact that 'home' as a unitary, homogeneous, and immutable entity does not exist outside the discursive formations that produce it as the ideological effect of gendered place and its intersection with domestic space. Far from being the initial reality from which "woman's place" derives, it is rather the obverse. The 'home' is also an 'ideal point' made necessary by the 'machinery of power' that has produced a theory of separate

spheres, of man's and woman's separate places, and that has thereby erased and yoked over the distinction between domestic space and gendered place.

More importantly, it becomes possible to see that this is a theory that carries out a number of functions on behalf of the machinery of patriarchal power. It has made it possible to group together under a naturalized unity anatomical elements, biological functions and modes of behavior, and has allowed this fictional unity to function as causal principle. By presenting itself in this unitary way, as both idealized 'space' and mythologized 'place', it has linked a biological knowledge of reproduction with a particular conception, or 'positioning', of woman within cultural knowledge. This unitary notion of 'home' as the ideological effect of a patriarchal power has thereby reduced the real, multiple, heterogeneous nature of space as system of power relations and thus concealed its true relation of total confrontation with an equally single, universal conception of sexual identity in place.

The implications of this for the discursive circulation of 'home' in social scientific texts as 'woman's place' in current theoretical production, both within and outside feminism, is immense; particularly if and when the discursive and practical operations of the various technologies of private life are brought into relation with the articulation of the problematic of the 'home' as 'lived' domain and as a 'positionality' (or 'place') for women today. For while it has been the undeniable lament of practically all feminist treatises on culture to date, that woman has been left out of the history of the West, it is important to be cautious about how she is to be let in.

Denied access to the realms of culture and power that make up our understanding of social reality and confined to the private realm of 'house and home', woman, it is argued, has been excluded from her rightful place as co-subject of humanity by social theories and practices that privilege the public over the private, culture over nature, the

father over the mother, Man over woman. Whereas initially it had appeared that the answer for women (theorists as much as non-theorists) was to be an onslaught and concerted foray into the traditionally male preserve of public life, this has changed in recent years. Thus a move to give more definition to this lament has been initiated, that focusses on the absence in theoretical accounts of discussions about the 'private' and 'domestic' realms. In the absence of 'home' (the essence of domestic space and the preserve of a feminine claim to privilege) from cultural theory, feminist theorists are now beginning to perceive an oppression that exceeds the realms of the material, to touch upon an ideological dimension. In the very nature of the oppositional thinking that places woman in the 'home' and man outside of it, feminist thinkers now see the deep structures of patriarchal oppression at work. In the very equation of "woman's place" with the 'home', which in turn supposes the equation of this equation with natural and biological necessity and underlies traditional theories of culture, these thinkers now see the outline of a patriarchal oppression that privileges the superior terms and cuts as deep as the idea of 'culture' itself, equating the terms man, civil society, and culture.

In so far as the discursive circulation of the 'home' has recently seen a 'boom' in academic production (Cavell 1991; Barbey 1989; Seamon 1990; Harman 1989; Luxton et al. 1990; Rybczynski 1986), it demands attention. As the discourse of contemporary media studies suggests, the existence of a 'new community' (Czitrom 1982, 91 ff.)--a 'global village' (McLuhan 1964, 20), and a new 'home-centered way of living' (Williams 1975, 26)--lends to the 'home' a new discursive value, one that is linked to the emergence of questions of identity and community raised by today's technological society. Moreover, as the discourses of postmodernism disclose, in today's technological society the 'home' achieves meaning as a site at which the classical demarcations between private and public, the domestic and the social, the outer worlds of mobility and transience and

the inner realms of a fixed internal world, are dissolved. Thus the 'home' achieves a key place in theorizing questions of identity and community in relation to social change.

However, while we may as women be tempted to celebrate this dissolution of bounds--consider for example, the appeal of the slogan 'the personal is political'[4]--traditionalists can tend to fear the loss of real community, the loss of 'home', or of a 'sense of place' (Meyrowitz 1985) within social reality. Joshua Meyrowitz, critical analyst of the electronic age and its effects upon social behavior, writes that as 'home' becomes a less "bounded and unique environment", the walls of the family 'home' no longer present "effective barriers that wholly isolate the family from the larger community and society" (Meyrowitz 1985, vii). In an even more apocalyptic vein, there are those theorists for whom this alleged dissolution of bounds takes the ominous form of a potential "collapse" of a public world and of "community", as the new social value that is placed on the 'home' becomes the harbinger of an imminent (and immanent) disintegration of community and human identity. For these theorists of doom, community "disintegrates" into 'home', which has now become the contemporary "church, or **temple**, representing the world of sociability, publicness, and festivity" (Seamon 1987, 12)--a temple of joy as much as temple of doom in which this disintegration in turn "threatens" to extend into marriage, at which point the 'home' itself risks becoming an anachronism. When this happens, it is then feared, we are looking upon the loss of the very foundations of our humaneness (Seamon 1987, 12; Harries 1983, 20). Thus, while one the one hand feminists may rejoice at this the new discursive mobility of the 'home', on the other, feminists must, by way of the politics of their location within it, be critical as well.

In her "Notes toward a Politics of Location", Adrienne Rich describes the impact of late twentieth century feminism as one which demonstrates the fact that "[w]herever people are struggling against subjection, the specific subjection of women, through our

location...from now on has to be addressed." Within this ever-widening ground of location, or situatedness within bodies, subjectivities, and social realities, the 'home' as that space in which the position of women is both structurally and culturally inscribed becomes an equally principle ground/center for the articulation and theorization of the projects of feminist theory and feminist politics. As the principal site of a politics of location 'home' is an important locus that not only marks the historic subject of feminism, but the female subject--feminine body, gendered subjectivity, and woman's situatedness in the social--as well. For, struggling against the use of lofty and privileged abstraction, and pushing to name and locate the grounds from which we speak, as well as the criteria by which claims of knowledge are legitimized, what has emerged as a "politics of location" emphasizes 'place' as a position within social and epistemological reality.

Indeed however much we may revel, as women, to find the 'home' cited and sighted as the paradigm of social existence, subjectivity, and the physical body in postmodernist discourses, the 'home' in these theorists of the **domus** is not constructed either as a site of the reproduction of gender (i.e. as gendered space) or of woman's situatedness in the social. For, while the 'home' is not only the site of gender struggle and the reproduction of persons, a discourse which takes it as its point of departure must nonetheless take into account the fact that it remains the site of complex fantasy spaces, conflicting wishes, desires, and experiences for women, at the same time as a marker of the social and structural changes within the family (Kuhn 1978; Barrett 1980). Consequently, the erasure of this principle, in a site where the position of women and the articulation of gender has been so ideologically and historically inscribed, becomes problematic when we consider the political implications of postmodernism, for example.

Grounded within social reality at the same time as maintaining a critical distance from it, the feminist push for a politics of location thus not only offers up new

possibilities for rescuing "woman's place" from the sometimes excessive rhetoric of postmodernism, but also allows us to think through its political implications and assess the situatedness of postmodernism as a moment within a specific cultural and historic context. For as much as their work is a reflection upon changing historical and technological realities that may effect radical changes in our perceptions of ourselves and our domestic universe, as well as a reflection upon changing epistemological currents that take as their model the spatialization (versus the temporalization) of theoretical categories (Stephanson 1988, 6-7), the 'home' in these postmodernist theorists of the **domus** is, like in the readings of the theorists of travel, as Morris points out, "a space which is blank" (Morris 1988a, 12). It's rhetorical presence thus not only marks the denial of situatedness in the social and the erasure of social, political and theoretical struggle, but furthermore this presence vaporizes the potential for the articulation and analysis of spatial and political categories and practices (and imperatives).

However, as much as feminism's 'push' for a politics that takes 'home' as its political location can aid in assessing postmodernism, postmodernism in turn reminds feminism to remain vigilant about positing 'home' as a fixed and stable or homogeneous space, working against the notion of 'home' as an unproblematic geographical location. In this case, postmodernism might prompt a rethinking of the political implications of traditional notions of space and place. It not only allows us to expand the site of the home to include the rhetoric of instability, contradiction, and the dissolution of bounds, but also to understand the sense in which 'home' is, to once again repeat the words of Martin and Mohanty: "the invisible and only apparently self-evident boundaries around that which we define as our own" (192). Thus from within feminist practice, we might ask, as Morris does, what happens to the idea of 'home' as "woman's place" when 'home', rather than the voyage, is rewritten "as chaos and fragmentation, labour,

transience, 'lag'--or in quite different terms..." (Morris 1988a, 12). For recognizing that 'home' is not a stable homogeneous site but a site of intersecting and mobile social and discursive spaces, bodies, and subjectivities, also means recognizing the ways in which economic and technological change in the 1980's, what Haraway has called, following Richard Gordon "the homework economy" (Haraway 208), has been transforming family life (Nicholson 1990; Haraway 1990).

Following Biddy Martin and Chandra Talpade Mohanty who, in their insightful essay "Feminist Politics: What's Home Got to Do with It?", point to the importance of the 'problematics of home' as the search for ways to conceptualize 'home', identity, gender, and community differently without dismissing its appeal, we might envisage the possibility of "a new sense of community which gives up the desire for the kind of 'home' where the suppression of difference underwrites familial identity" (1986, 205); one in which it is the unsettling of bounds that accompanies a relational notion of identity displacing the notion of a 'fixed' center. Thus we might envisage the possibility of "a new sense of community", one which gives up the desire for 'home' as a fixed and immutable center--the kind of 'home' where it is the suppression of difference that underwrites familial identity--and which forges a relational notion of identity in the current unsettling of bounds.

In this context, it is in the disjunctions between the postmodernist rhetorics of the displacement and instability, mobility, transience and the feminist insistence on recognizing the importance of 'place' in critiques of everyday life (Morris 1988a, 43; 1988b, 194), that 'home' emerges in its full force as a ground upon which to reconceptualize political community; conceptualize, that is, the relations between 'home', identity and political change (Martin & Mohanty, 192). In its articulation with the feminist push for a politics of location, the emergence of 'home' as key rhetorical and

theoretical space in postmodernist discourse drives a wedge between the traditional search for a secure place from which to speak and "the awareness of the price at which secure places are bought", the awareness of the exclusions, omissions and the limits of such a place (Martin and Mohanty, 206).

In this wedge driven between 'home' as a stable and protected place, and 'home' as the basis for exclusion, the political stakes of the equation of 'home' with both organic community and personal identity emerge. While it does not erase the desire for unity, this is a wedge that disrupts, destabilizes, and undercuts it. Re-created through the struggles and contradictions of the everyday, 'home' as paradigm for political community becomes, in this reading, reconceptualized as unstable, contextual, relational, the object of struggle, and always the product of interpretation and history. Implicating the individual in contradiction, this realization that 'home'-- 'unity', 'stability', 'sameness', interpersonal as well as political--is fragmentary, does not however preclude agency (Martin and Mohanty, 209). On the contrary, it restores meaning to the subjects of the gendered body, the construction and negotiations of gendered subjectivity and the transformation of the social, without erasing its political significance. Equally, it is the epistemological and institutional 'home', or analytical position, that are exposed as fictions and as denials of the critics own situatedness in the social. The transparent domesticity and positionality of "vigilante attacks on humanist beliefs in 'man' and Absolute Knowledge" (Martin and Mohanty, 193-4), characteristic of any unitary feminist (cf. Rich 1986, 219) as much as of post-structuralist (Spivak 1988) discourses, can thus be traded against one's implication in actual historic or social relations.[5]

Thus, to maintain, after Morris and others,[6] the theoretical necessity of neither abandoning nor too obsessively clinging to, the conventional equivalence of woman and the 'home', (Martin and Mohanty, 191), it is necessary above all to return to its roots,

revisit its history, and rethink its meaning: pry open this equivalence at the very heart of its inception. This is perhaps one of the chief tasks awaiting academic inquiry today, as we are invited to explore a concept whose images are amongst the most pervasive and central rather than the most marginal.

For this reason, I should like to consider all of the above as a preamble and a prelude rather than a conclusion; an opening, rather than a closure, to the questions raised by the discursive circulation of the 'home' as we conceptualize its meanings through the perspectives of our own very real, imagined, and definitely plural discursive 'homes'.

## Notes

[1] Foucault discusses the space of 'emplacement' in the Middle Ages in connection with the history of space generally (Foucault 1986, 22-23). However, here Foucault is describing distinctions that localize subjects, not those that separate a subject from its exteriority, a distinction underscored by de Certeau (1984a, 123).

[2] Foucault discusses the transition from extension to localization in the seventeenth century. Today, he writes "the site has been substituted for extension which itself has replaced emplacement" (1986, 23).

[3] Foucault uses the terms "effective" history to cover the historical investigation of the operations of power in its large-scale and well-recognized aspects, such as that of states, heads of state, institutions, and the like See his "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" (1977, 153).

[4] This is not by any means a simple celebration For many feminists, the proclaimed dissolution of bounds is also looked upon as a re-articulation of women's isolation in the home (Probyn 1989; Morris 1988b) An excellent discussion of how television, the ultimate space-merging technology serves to often-times increase women's social isolation can be found in Lynn Spigel's "Installing the Television Set: Popular Discourses on Television and Domestic Space, 1948-55," (1988, 21 ff ).

[5] Adrienne Rich (1986) and Gayatri Spivak (1988) have each respectively addressed the concealed exclusions of a transparent theoretical colonialism that appears in certain feminist and post-structuralist discourses A discussion of how 'home' functions as theoretical grounds for such colonizing gestures might begin by looking at Martin and Mohanty's text

[6] Feminist criticism has a recent history of debates regarding the merits and demerits of claiming the home. The "appeal" of the rhetoric of 'home' as well as its dangers is discussed by Biddy Martin and Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1986). For a more historical account of this debate within feminist and non-feminist writing in recent years, see Zillah Eisenstein's Feminism and Sexual Equality (1984)

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