

AMBIVALENT LONGINGS:
HEIM AND ITS PREFIX—
ANXIETY AND THE DISCOURSE OF HOME.

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Abstract

Ambivalent Longings: Heim and its prefix—Anxiety and the Discourse of Home.

Most succinctly, this paper is a critical collage of the politics of home depicted as a naturalized yet sacrosanct originary space that calls back. Indicating some of the implications of the way home is narrated, I reflect on the how the naturalization and romanticization of this imaginary grants home both immunity and force as an image and desire. I begin with an elaboration of the ambiguous and precarious distance between the home and unhomely. Through a collage of proximities and paradoxes, I argue that the relation between the home and unhomely challenges the notion of home understood singularly as pure positive refuge. Moving to a consideration of the politics of the imaging of home as origin; I explore the way home is feminized. Particularly, I focus on the image of womb, constituted as the most natural, originary home and yet also tied to the unhomely through its sublation to the feminine. In this section, I elucidate some of the ambivalences that shape home by venturing into the erasures and confused placements that mark womb as an image. In the final section, I look at the idea of nostalgia—at how home is narrated as prescribing return. I explore the location of these images of home, particularly as they reside in economies of presence and as they are tied to a politics of individuated subjectivity that already posits separate entities.