



BIROn - Birkbeck Institutional Research Online

Jacobs, Amber (2009) The life of Metis: cunning maternal interventions. *Studies in the Maternal* 2 (1-2), ISSN 1759-0434.

Downloaded from: <https://eprints.bbk.ac.uk/id/eprint/6701/>

Usage Guidelines:

Please refer to usage guidelines at <https://eprints.bbk.ac.uk/policies.html>
contact lib-eprints@bbk.ac.uk.

or alternatively

The Life of Metis: Cunning Maternal Interventions

Amber Jacobs

‘It is in effect Metis who allows us to blaze a trail, a poros, a way, to find a path through obstacles, to discover an expedient (poros), to find a way out (poros) of a situation from which there is no way out, which is aporetic.’

Sarah Kofman¹

Beyond the aporia produced by Lacan’s ‘psychic essentialism’², feminist interventions after Irigaray have generated a vision of a porous and multiple symbolic field; a network of co-existent and overlapping symbolic systems that by definition resist and undermine any tendency towards a totalising and determining function and are, most crucially, responsive to change³.

I would like to chart here different and co-existent uses of the ancient Greek myth and concept of ‘Metis’ in this context of a post Irigarayan porous model of the symbolic(s). More specifically, to examine metis as a transformative practice which creates alternative logics and patterns of thought and action not grounded in any telos, identity or subject but free of ground altogether: an agency under erasure if you like, that is to say, a movement of subversive action that has no affiliation to project goal or ‘molar’ politics⁴ but nevertheless is a way of operating whose movement will perpetually undo any logic of control and leave new practices in its trail⁵.

In my earlier work on the Oresteian myth⁶, Metis the ancient goddess – raped, impregnated and swallowed by Zeus – was traced as the radically marginalised and hidden matricide that the murder of Clytemnestra masked. Metis, I also argued, was conspicuous by her absence and this absence was both sustained and subverted by a myriad of reversals, inversions, and elipses in the ancient Greek texts and receptions of these texts. I went on to argue that bringing Metis, mother of Athena, back into discussions and readings of the *Oresteia* was a significant move that could have implications for other contemporary discourses such as psychoanalysis and feminism.

Via this rereading of the *Oresteia* that sought to bring Metis out of the darkness of Zeus’s stomach I proposed a matricidal law organised around a set of parthenogenetic phantasies. Metis’s law and her associated prohibitions could, I argued, contribute to what contemporary feminists and philosophers influenced by Irigaray have described as

alternative symbolic systems existing according to different laws, structures and phantasies not reducible to the phallic Oedipal model. In this way, Metis was used as a figure to theorise a maternal law; a law-of-the-mother that could function on at least two levels/registers. Firstly, in direct relation to Irigaray's call for symbolic change that would allow for forms of representation, phantasy and modes of subjectivity and sociality that the current dominant phallic symbolic forecloses. Secondly, Metis's Law could be one way of limiting or holding in check the strikingly prevalent male parthenogenetic fantasies that permeate our culture – and thus could potentially act as a check/limit on an aspect of male psychic and physical violence towards women – and more specifically pregnant women.⁷ In this way, Metis's law is one contribution in the attempt to counter the phantasies projected onto and acted out on the maternal feminine whose ubiquity feminist theorists and clinicians have so compellingly revealed.

My first approach and use of Metis can be seen as part of a tradition of feminist practice that undertakes work with myth based on the kind of 'stealing' or 'poaching' associated with the feminist bricolage of Adriana Cavarero's early work⁸. Since Cixous' Medusa⁹, Irigaray's turn to Antigone and the Demeter/Persphone couple¹⁰, and Cavarero's reworking of Penelope and other female mythical figures (ISoP), there have been important turns to myth from within feminist thought, most notably, Butler's recent work on Antigone¹¹ and Ettinger's work on Eurydice¹². It was in dialogue with this particular tradition that Metis, in my earlier work, was decrypted and reactivated as a figure signifying laws and practices not reducible to phallic logic. These turnings to myth then – whilst all different – relocate, reactivate and re-read mythical figures as a way of positing different conditions of subjectivity, cultural intelligibility, representation and kinship organisation.

I have developed and expanded my use of Metis since my early work with the myth (OM) and am currently working with the '*concept*' metis¹³; a specific form of Greek 'cunning intelligence' as it is evoked so vividly in Detienne and Vernant's astonishing book '*Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*'¹⁴. In their words:

Metis is a type of intelligence and thought, a way of knowing; it implies a complex but very coherent body of mental attitudes and intellectual behaviour which combine flair, wisdom, forethought, subtlety of mind, deception, resourcefulness, vigilance, opportunism, various skills and experience acquired over the years. It applies to situations which are shifting,

**Amber Jacobs,
The Life of Metis: Cunning maternal interventions**

disconcerting and ambiguous, which do not lend themselves to precise measurement, exact calculation or rigorous logic (p. 3).

Detienne and Vernant's book is an act of intricate intellectual archaeology devoted to reclaiming metis as it manifests itself in Greek myth, literature and culture. They demonstrate that this form of cunning intelligence was very much alive and an important aspect of Greek culture and society – but has been systematically marginalised and overlooked by modern Greek/Classics scholars and philosophers because of the dominant legacy of the Platonic metaphysical tradition that condemned and banished metis as an unreliable corrupter of the Truth.

Modern Greek scholars who have neglected the importance of its role, its impact or even its existence, have remained faithful to a particular image Greek thought created of itself, in which metis is conspicuous by its absence (CIGC, p. 42-48).

Through their analyses, Vernant and Detienne present us with the essential features of metis, its mode of operation, its terminology and its associations. They do this by tracing the concept back to its origins in the fields of hunting and fishing. Metis, the 'many faceted' intelligence, belongs to the duplicitous world of traps and devices: the knot, the net, the weave, the rope, the mesh, the bait, the noose and the snare.

Vernant and Detienne identify the fox and the octopus as creatures most richly endowed with metis and use them as models to describe the full scope of cunning intelligence that extends far beyond the world of fishing and hunting – and can be found in allusions and associations across ten centuries that separate Homer from Oppian (CIGC, p. 44). Metis is a way of operating, an intelligence always 'ready to pounce' an action based upon a 'many faceted knowledge' using trick, deceit and vigilance. Metis is an action generated by 'weighty condensed thought informed by experience'; it *seems* impulsive but is not at all. Metis 'foresees the unforeseeable' –seizes opportunity and is forever on the alert. Metis is 'multiple, many coloured and shifting' – it belongs to 'the world of appearance and becoming' – polymorphous, pliable, fluid – it can never be pinned down or seized. Like the octopus 'it assumes every form without being imprisoned in any' (CIGC, p. 39).

Metis functions through inversion and reversal; it pertains to all that is pliable, slippery and twisted, oblique, elusive and ambiguous, and it moves in more than one

**Amber Jacobs,
The Life of Metis: Cunning maternal interventions**

direction simultaneously¹⁵. Like the cunning of Hermes (rich in metis), who confuses his pursuers by reversing the tracks of the hooves of his cattle: ‘putting the front hoof-marks at the back and back ones at the front’ (CIGC, p. 41) and himself walking backwards, creating double tracks and thus conjuring an enigmatic ‘metic¹⁶’ figure that simultaneously points in divergent directions.

Vernant and Detienne’s tracing of metis to the ruses of the sea, to the specific tactics of octopus and other fishes – known for their ingenious capacity for escape from situations of extreme danger (against all odds) – leads them to conclude that:

Relations of force are constantly upset by the intervention of metis...the defeat of the weak and frail is not a foregone conclusion (CIGC, p. 46)

One of the salient properties of metis that Vernant and Detienne are passionate to convey is its radical resistance to being fixed or being made to be/do one thing. It is a movement rather than a position, and thus it can never be claimed for any cause or projected idea. It cannot be made to represent anything nor can it be identified with –since it is never itself but always already shifting and reversing. It can neither be claimed as a stable concept and it can have no affiliations – any such move to claim metis as a shoring up of a position, argument or identity betrays the very specificity of its logic.

Yet it is striking that on several occasions in Vernant and Detienne’s book, they will explicitly declare that metis is inextricably bound up with power relations. They are consistent and persistent in placing metis as functioning on the side of the ‘weaker’, the ‘frail’ and the subordinate – operating to ‘reverse the rules accepted in a trial of strength’ with stratagem that are like ‘spells to oppose brute force’ (CIGC, p. 44):

That which makes possible a reversal of power such as which is characteristic of metis – which enables the smaller and weaker to dominate the bigger and stronger (CIGC, p. 44).

Seemingly then, the interventions of metis are always in the service of the subordinate, subjected or oppressed, and the cunning of metis will forever disrupt and undo consolidations of power (create a ‘blazing trail a way out (poros) (BA, p. 7)’ from bondage and domination). In this way it is not – at first glance – hard to imagine how metis could be utilised in the service of a politics of liberation via the subversion of power structures.

**Amber Jacobs,
The Life of Metis: Cunning maternal interventions**

But Vernant and Detienne are clear that ‘*whatever metis wins it does not keep*’ (my italics) (CIGC, p. 28). Metis may reverse power relations, reverse binaries, turn the hunter into hunted, turn rational certainty inside out – but by its nature it will never shore up, consolidate, develop or sustain. Its movement will only ever shift ground and will never take root. In this way, metis has a very particular relation to power and in turn to politics – a relation that brings paradox (which is an essential part of its nature) to any attempt to ‘use’ metis in the service of political project, revolution, strategy or goal, hence the challenge it brings to feminist praxis; our context here.

Metis, most crucially *does not want power*; what it wins it does not keep – what can it mean then to identify metis as part of a feminist praxis related to theoretical transformations of the feminine and maternal? Can we tally the *not keeping* of metis with a viable post-structuralist feminist approach? What can this paradoxical double direction of metis – undoing power relations and not keeping what it wins – contribute to feminist philosophy and theory? In addition, its strong resonances with the recent Deleuzian turn in feminist thought as well as with some trends in Queer Theory can be left at this point as an open question to which I will return.

In this way, I want to think further about this fundamental juxtaposition that is essential to the nature of metis: on the one hand, its movement that reverses or destabilises power relations in the service of the subordinate; and on the other hand, the not keeping what it wins. I suggest that such a model, despite being organised around paradox (and perhaps in part because of this) could be generative in developing further the tools and methods available to feminist philosophy and theory to get through/beyond the often ‘aporetic’ debates in feminist thought regarding notions of agency, subject position and identity – the latter of which have long been shown to be counterproductive for a viable post-structuralist feminist theory, politics and practice.

Metis, in its transformative action that undermines power relations and does not keep what it wins, cannot be used in the service of notions of possession, ownership, legitimacy and sovereignty. It is an action without origin – no single subject is its cause or reason – rather its movement emerges from the multiple and the heterogeneous. Metis transforms the constellation of power but crucially never comes from or acts from one place. In this way, metis produces an action or an intervention that does not depend upon a unitary subject or intent. Its transforming capacity is precisely in its multiplicity and simultaneous movement in divergent directions. Without this crucial characteristic of not

**Amber Jacobs,
The Life of Metis: Cunning maternal interventions**

keeping what it wins, it would inevitably become another potential form of domination and or mastery.

Metis is a form of cunning intelligence that functions from and in ‘a world of becoming, in circumstances of conflict’ (CIGC, p. 46). It has no desire or idea of stability, mastery or resolution, and defies every tendency towards winning, keeping or controlling. If it has a trajectory that can be defined, then it is a circular one. Vernant and Detienne use the circle to describe the ultimate expression of metis:

The ultimate expression of these qualities is the circle, the bond that is perfect because it completely turns back on itself, with neither beginning nor end, nor front or rear, and which rotation becomes both mobile and immobile, moving in both directions at once (CIGC, p. 42 – 48).

The continuous curve of the circle – which expresses the ultimate nature of metis – can by its very nature have absolutely no investment in teleology, genealogy or futurity. This type of cunning intelligence that, according to Detienne and Vernant, had a major impact on Greek thought possesses a ‘power that is beyond ordinary logic’ (CIGC, p. 42 - 48). This alternative epistemology functioning ‘beyond ordinary logic’ is shown by Detienne and Vernant to be a fundamental part of Greek thought that was always a co-existent and perhaps disruptive and/or competing model of thought and action to that of the eternal ‘Being’ of the Platonic tradition.

Detienne and Vernant’s evocation of metis and their claim that metis ‘seems to have had a profound effect upon one whole dimension of Greek thought’ (CIGC, p. 47) is part of a philological project or an intellectual archaeology – but their final comment that closes this massive study reveals a distinct politicised gesture toward the contemporary intellectual scene, and more specifically to post-structuralist thought (that was flourishing outside of classics in France at the time of their researching and writing this book):

The concept of Platonic Truth which has overshadowed a whole area of intelligence with its own kinds of understanding *has never really ceased* to haunt western metaphysical thought (CIGC, p. 318) (my emphasis).

The Platonic haunting that they speak of motivates the foreclosure of this kind of cunning intelligence from recognition/value or acknowledgement. Relegated to

**Amber Jacobs,
The Life of Metis: Cunning maternal interventions**

invisibility, written out of the accounts of Greek philosophy and epistemology, we can now see the relation between the myth Metis and the concept metis – both incorporated/swallowed and violently marginalised. We cannot also ignore the fact that this connection between the myth Metis and concept metis brings the maternal into the terrain of metic cunning intelligence.

Such a radical leaving out of what Vernant and Detienne show to have been a crucial and massive part of Greek culture and thought can be seen to be related to this ‘haunting’, this continuing hold of the static ontology of metaphysics from Parmenides to Plato. Vernant and Detienne’s book then is an intervention that seeks to disrupt this legacy by showing that metis is older than Being and Truth – and was always already exerting its extraordinary logic and so undermining the Platonic model.

Vernant and Detienne’s collection and analysis of the array of qualities and practices comprising metis produces a counter epistemology that resonates strongly with some of the salient thrusts of contemporary poststructuralist philosophy¹⁷. Its publication in 1974 is significant in that around this time in France was the emergence of some of the key texts of contemporary French post-structuralism that would produce radical and transformative interventions into the history of philosophy and Western thought. Vernant and Detienne’s book is part of this intellectual climate and I think there is an implicit speaking to it. Whilst they are at pains to avoid/resist using metis didactically or holding it up as some kind of open to all critical tool or methodology (since that would apparently betray its essential nature), there is a distinct sense that Vernant and Detienne’s work on metis was not only a massive contribution to Classics and our understanding of ancient Greek culture and thought, but also was almost like throwing bait to contemporary French thought – to be snapped up and used as armoury or tactic to aid the break from the traditional Logos – a break that defines the continental contemporary philosophical scene. The reclaiming of Metis and its dissemination at this particular historical moment was no coincidence.

There is a significant scattering of appearances and mentions of metis – as it is explicated by Vernant and Detienne – in contemporary French philosophy and post-structuralist thought. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the reception of metis as cunning intelligence in the canon of continental post-structuralism. For our purposes here I want to look at firstly at the most substantial political taking up of metis in contemporary thought, and secondly, at if and how Detienne and Vernant’s work on metis has been taken up in contemporary feminist thought.

**Amber Jacobs,
The Life of Metis: Cunning maternal interventions**

Vernant and Detienne's model of metis was taken up most substantially by Michel de Certeau in his work *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984).¹⁸ Here, metis was used to develop his distinction between tactics and strategy that was crucial to de Certeau's theory of resistance to the determining power of the socioeconomic order and the 'grid of discipline' (PEL, p. xvii). Metis was used to demonstrate a mode of operation in everyday life that complicated ideas of activity and passivity in relation to the production and consumption of culture – namely de Certeau's notion of the 'tactic' and of 'active consumption':

Many everyday practices (talking, reading, moving about, shopping, cooking etc.) are tactical in character. And so are more generally, many ways of operating: victories of the "weak" over the "strong" (whether the strength be that of powerful people or the violence of things or of an imposed order etc.), clever tricks, knowing how to get away with things, "hunters cunning," maneuvers, polymorphic simulations, joyful discoveries, poetic as well as warlike. The Greeks called these "ways of operating" metis. But they go much further back, to the immemorial intelligence displayed in the tricks and imitations of plants and fishes. From the depths of the ocean to the streets of modern megalopolises, there is a continuity and permanence of these tactics (PEL, p. xvii).

Metis is drawn upon to describe a mode of operating that explains how an entire society resists being reduced to the terms of the dominant order with its 'extensive grid of discipline'. De Certeau seems to be using metis to think through and expand the implications of Foucault's work¹⁹. Metis then is embraced and placed on the side of the tactic – that is to say, as the basis of a particular and ubiquitous political action of resistance whose 'active consumption' of culture transforms and reactivates it according to a logic that counters the total interpellation by the dominant order. De Certeau is clear that such a mode of operation and practice 'does not imply a return to the individual' (PEL, p. xii) and claims that:

The question at hand concerns modes of operation, schemata of action and not directly the subjects or persons who are their authors or vehicles (PEL, p. xvii).

De Certeau sees in metis a model for action and resistance that refuses the imperialist mastery of notions of agency and self. Metis for de Certeau describes and celebrates the cunning mechanisms by which the apparently passive and dominated make

**Amber Jacobs,
The Life of Metis: Cunning maternal interventions**

do and make use of what is at hand to transform, resist and create alternative ways of operating in the everyday navigation of systems of power, discourse and culture. It is precisely the essential features of metis described earlier that de Certeau is engaging with: the subversion of power in the service of the ‘weakest’, the ‘not keeping what it wins’ – and that metis undoes what de Certeau calls ‘the proper place’ (PEL, p. xvii) that is the ground from which panoptic strategies launch their domination and control.

It is clear that de Certeau embraces metis ethically and, one could say, in a utopian vein. Metis as tactic and circumvention is clearly used here in the service of a theory of resistance to power and oppression – as a way to describe ‘the subtle movements of escape and evasion’²⁰ and in turn for a theory of survival, transformation and creativity. The Metic tactic for de Certeau will reveal the limitations of systems of power and reveal their porous and pliable nature. For de Certeau, metis is a way of operating that has never ceased across centuries and species (from the depth of the ocean to the modern city) and helps him theorise and describe the permanent force of cunning that will always ‘blaze a trail’ (BA, p. 7) and twist, subvert and/or limit the sovereignty of the all powerful.

If metis is seen as improvised interventions on behalf of the otherwise powerless, it cannot be ignored as a source of creativity and intervention²¹.

Metis travels from Detienne and Vernant’s restorative account to de Certeau’s direct political and ethical usage and then we can track down further contemporary engagements with metis as cunning intelligence via de Certeau in areas spanning cultural studies, rhetoric, anthropology and, most recently, in organisational theory²².

For the most part, the references to metis in feminist theory refer to the mythical figure Metis, the goddess, raped and incorporated by Zeus. Metis appears more generally as a metaphor to describe this violent action of raping, swallowing and foreclosing that characterises the ubiquitous phallogocentric relation to the ‘feminine’.

The concept metis – as cunning intelligence – is mentioned briefly by Cavarero in her discussion of Penelope’s metic cunning in the doing and undoing of her weave (ISP, p. 30). Yet, despite its explicit connection (via the thread that links the myth Metis and concept metis) to the ‘maternal feminine’, according to Detienne and Vernant and also to a major alternative epistemology/ practice ‘beyond ordinary logic’, it has not been taken up substantially in feminist thought. It is as if the excavation of the myth and the mythical maternal goddess tallied more with the dominant strain of feminism linked to ‘molar politics’, linked to ideas of a maternal subject and to theories which claimed for the

**Amber Jacobs,
The Life of Metis: Cunning maternal interventions**

maternal something specific that would further ground ideas of female subjectivities and female imaginaries.

Metis as concept – as cunning intelligence – by its nature (as we have seen) works against any kind of intervention linked to aims for consolidating or grounding the feminine and/or maternal to any kind of identity, subject, ethics or law, whereas the myth and figure Metis is clearly far more open to be used in this way – hence the tradition of feminist bricolage discussed earlier.

Metis in its conceptual form – as cunning intelligence – is neither an identity nor is it a theory of gradual incremental change or development. Metis is not connected to the rational subject²³ at all:

In gradual, incremental change and improvement there is no metis. In metis there is the shock of the unexpected and a possibility of unpredictable modifications. Metis is the practice of the radically new – it is pure becoming.²⁴

Perhaps the time is ripe for the concept of metis as cunning intelligence to ‘blaze a trail’ in feminist philosophy. Of course I do not want, in any way, to *reduce* or *conflate* metis to concepts in Deleuzian feminist philosophy or vice versa. The connections or resonances can at this stage be suspended as a question and/or possibility.

In my early work on Metis (the myth) that focused on the raped and swallowed maternal figure, I was working in a tradition far more closely related to the molar politics related to polemic and strategy and the creation of a ground from which to theorise the ‘feminine’ outside the projections of what Irigaray called the masculine imaginary – and so counter the phallogocentric underpinnings of our culture. The blindspot or untheorised aspect of that project was the exciting possibilities regarding the connection between the swallowed pregnant Metis banished to Zeus’s stomach and the concept metis – as cunning intelligence – also banished from the legacy of philosophy.

The connection between the myth and the concept shows the double direction of M/metis²⁵ (the hoof-marks suggesting two opposite directions simultaneously). Like the ‘crab words’ that Vernant and Detienne describe as belonging to metis – ‘two headed statements’ (CIGC, p. 39), a sideways movement, a double action, an operation existing beyond static oppositions, ‘a continual oscillation between two poles (turning into its

**Amber Jacobs,
The Life of Metis: Cunning maternal interventions**

opposite neither one nor the other)' (CIGC, p. 39). In this way the actions of M/metis will not favour one model over another but will blaze a trail of cunning interventions.

Via M/metis then I link the 'molar politics' of feminist bricolage and the maternal law (described earlier) with a molecular movement of cunning intelligence linked to notions of becoming and imperceptibility²⁶. M/metis is simultaneous divergent actions that are neither in harmony or discord, nor conflated or opposed not integrated or resolved but in a perpetual coexistent binding that may open up a myriad of cunning (maternal?²⁷) interventions.

¹ Sarah Kofman, 'Beyond Aporia?' translated by David Macey, in *Post-Structuralist Classics*, ed. by Andrew Benjamin. (Routledge London; New York, 1988), (p. 7). This chapter will be referred to as (BA) in the text from herein.

² Rosi Braidotti, 'Teratologies', in *Deleuze and Feminist Theory*, ed. by Ian Buchanan and Claire Colebrook (Edinburgh University Press, 2000), (p. 161).

³ Judith Butler's comments on the question of Lacanians and symbolic transformation are relevant here: 'If it is symbolic is it changeable? I ask the Lacanians this question and they usually tell me that changes in the symbolic take a long time. I wonder how long I will have to wait. Or they show me some passages in the Rome Discourse and I wonder if these passages are the ones we are supposed to cling to for hope that things might eventually change'. Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (Routledge, 2004), p. 212.

⁴ For a description of 'molar politics' see Claire Colebrook, Introduction to *Deleuze and Feminist Theory*, ed. by Buchanan and Colebrook (Edinburgh University Press, 2000), (p.1).

⁵ The Greek term 'poros', as Sarah Kofman notes, refers to a specific type of journey, path or escape route across water: a 'sea route opened up across a chaotic expanse' a path that 'can never be traced in advance, can always be obliterated and it must always be traced anew in a unprecedented fashion'. A poros is a trajectory across water that can never be fixed or repeated, anticipated or measured. Whilst poros describes this type of elusive and innovative journeying, Poros is also a god: son of Metis. (BA, p.10).

⁶ Amber Jacobs, *On Matricide: Myth, Psychoanalysis and the Law of the Mother* (Columbia University Press: New York, 2007). This edition will be referred to as (OM) in the text from herein.

⁷ E. V. Welldon, 'Dancing with Death', *British Journal of Psychotherapy*, 25, 2 (Wiley Blackwell, May 2009).

⁸ Adriana Cavarero, *In Spite of Plato: A Feminist Rewriting of Philosophy* (Polity Press, 1995). This edition will be referred to as (ISoP) in the text from herein.

⁹ H. Cixous, 'The Laugh of the Medusa', *Signs* 1, 4 (1976), 875-893.

¹⁰ For a discussion of Irigaray's work on Antigone, see Miriam Leonard, 'Lacan, Irigaray and Beyond: Antigones and the Politics of Psychoanalysis' in *Laughing with Medusa: Classical Myth and Feminist Thought*, ed. by Zajko and Leonard (Oxford University Press, 2006).

**Amber Jacobs,
The Life of Metis: Cunning maternal interventions**

¹¹ Judith Butler, *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death* (Columbia University Press: New York, 2000).

¹² Bracha L. Ettinger, *The Matrixial Borderpspace* (University of Minnesota Press, 2006)

¹³ When referring to the concept of 'metis' I will not use a capital.

¹⁴ Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*, translated by Janet Lloyd (The Harvester Press Sussex Humanities Press: New Jersey, 1978). This edition will be referred to as (CIGC) in the text from herein.

¹⁵ The description of metis here is a brief summary of Detienne and Vernant's extensive collection of the characteristics belonging to metis.

¹⁶ I am using 'metic' as an adjective here.

¹⁷ This point is the subject of another article.

¹⁸ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, translated by Steven Rendall (California University Press, 1984). This edition will be referred to as (PEL) in the text from herein.

¹⁹ De Certeau's use of metis to intervene into Foucault's work cannot be developed here due to lack of space.

²⁰ Ian Buchanan, *The de Certeau Reader*, ed. by Graham Ward (Blackwell, 1999), p.100.

²¹ H. Letiche and M. Statler, 'Evoking Metis: Questioning the Logics of Change: Responsiveness, Meaning and Action in Organizations', *Culture and Organization*, 11, 1, (2005), 4.

²² See Jay Dolmage, 'Metis, Métis, Mestiza, medusa: Rhetorical Bodies Across Rhetorical Traditions', *Rhetoric Review*, 28, 1 (2009), 1-28; and Letiche and Statler, *Culture and Organization*, 11, 1, (2005), 1-16.

²³ This could be another reason why metis (as concept of cunning intelligence) has not been substantially utilised in feminist thought – perhaps in a wariness of embracing the 'irrational', despite the powerful deconstruction of rationality in feminist philosophy.

²⁴ Hugo Letiche and Matt Statler, *Culture and Organization*, 11, 1, (2005), 1-16.

²⁵ I use M/metis as a way of describing the double operation of myth and concept simultaneously.

²⁶ For a discussion of these concepts see Jerry Aline Flieger, 'Becoming Woman: Deleuze Schreber and Molecular Identification' in *Deleuze and Feminist Theory*, ed. by: Buchanan and Colebrook. (Edinburgh University Press, 2000), (p. 38-63).

²⁷ I leave this purposefully as a question mark here to indicate that metis is never only connected to one thing and cannot be made to be associated with a particular realm or identity yet at the same time its connection to the maternal cannot be denied/ignored.

**Amber Jacobs,
The Life of Metis: Cunning maternal interventions**