

ECONOMIES OF THE WOR(L)D:
READING DERRIDA'S *WHITE MYTHOLOGY*

ECONOMIES OF THE WOR(L)D:
READING DERRIDA'S *WHITE MYTHOLOGY*:
METAPHOR IN THE TEXT OF PHILOSOPHY

By

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ABSTRACT

Most deconstructive and Marxist cultural theories are at odds with one another because they are concerned with two very different subjects or entities: words and the world. In what follows I will try to show that these two potent theories are fundamentally at odds with each other because they reside on opposite sides of some formative binary oppositions, such as abstract/concrete, ideal/material, sensible/intelligible, physical/spiritual, and signifier/signified. Of course each of these oppositions is a metaphor; as such the relationship between Marxism and deconstruction must therefore proceed from and always refer back to this metaphorical condition. It is in my political interest to incorporate within this figurative type of atavism the concepts of economy, exchange, labour, power, property, and ideology, the very concepts in which we find not the opposition between Marxism and deconstruction but their relative sameness.

Since Jacques Derrida is often referred to as the foremost deconstructive theorist, and since so much of his work is concerned with the theory of language (and metaphor), I will attempt to deliver my co-articulation of Marxism and deconstruction to a political and (I hesitate only minimally to use the term) post-Marxist reading of his *White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy*. I am of the opinion that Derrida's works lend themselves superbly to politically motivated readings, and I also think that in undertaking such a reading I am opposing a dangerous mainstream approach to deconstruction, one which is virtually devoid of any political, cultural, or social interest or reference. My thesis is thus an attempt to read politically or economically a theory of metaphor which is far more explicitly economic and political than academic consensus allows.

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INTRODUCTION

My problem is: economy.
Jacques Derrida

One cannot determine the function of language in literature and in society without taking into account the political and economic functions and uses of language.

Michael Ryan

The title of my thesis suggests that an economic (or political) reading of Derrida's *White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy* is only parenthetically inserted into a more commonplace or strictly textual reading. But this is to presuppose the existence of two well defined entities or subjects of study called *words* and the *world* and by inference this presupposition severely confines the scopes of deconstructive and Marxist theory to the attenuated areas of language and culture or society. Such an understanding adheres without question to an already constructed system of metaphors and oppositions on which both Marxism and deconstruction are based. It is in my political interest to show that Marxism and deconstruction in fact share a common *ground* within some of the key concepts of metaphor and economy, such as exchange, value, property, impropriety, truth, power, resemblance, transformation, metaphysics and ideology. In doing so I hope that the "entities" of language and the world (and the related oppositions of signifier/signified and base/superstructure) appear less as distinct fields and more as elements of a similar *text* or general *economy*. Of course, all of this will also serve as justification for choosing what has often been called a *non-literary* topic or approach, for implicit within my work are the reasons and explanations for using economic, political, and social theory as somewhat of a theoretical ground in a reading of Derridean critical theory.

This thesis is not a classically literary-critical or philosophical explication of *White Mythology*. Rather it is a theoretical wandering through seemingly diverse critical approaches and theories which I hope to prove are themselves products of certain *economic* forces or movements. What I have tried to do is employ Derrida's text as a kind of theoretical looking glass through which to view the various economies of the wor(1)d, among them language, metaphor, political economy, exchange, labour, and power. I do not use Derrida's *White Mythology* as a "host" text to which a number of various critical approaches are applied, and this is because throughout my thesis Derrida's text figures as both an approach *and* a host. I will say provisionally that my approach is Derridean to the extent that it is very difficult to disagree with Derrida's working over of the concept of metaphor in *White Mythology*. I should also say that my political convictions and interests have lead me to assume somewhat of a post-Marxist critical stance, and the most palatable "political" critic I have yet to come across in this field is Michael Ryan, perhaps best described as a post-Marxist/deconstructive theorist. My approach to critical Marxism (one which is often limited to an interest in economic theory) can be best expressed in the following quote from Ryan's "Deconstruction and Radical Teaching": "I'd agree . . . that the notion of boundary (between unbiased scholarship and biased politics) should be replaced by a concept of reciprocal exchange between two instances that have no existence outside of that exchange" (57). I too agree that the "boundary" between literary and philosophical texts, and political and economic ones, should be brought down. In moving from a theoretical discussion of Marxism and deconstruction to a comparison of linguistic and political economies, and again from a comparative reading of the processes of metaphorization and the objectification of labour to a critique of western (metaphysical and philosophical) power structures, I have attempted to accomplish such a move in my thesis.

The first chapter proceeds from the fact that I see deconstruction and Marxism as having positive implications for one another. The title, "Marxism *or* Deconstruction," is intended to call

into question the severity of the opposition between the two theories and their constitutive philosophies. Ultimately, I hope that the stringent conjunction "or" can be replaced by a less severe structure in which both Marxism and deconstruction find themselves necessarily infused with elements and characteristics of the other. The most fundamental of these shared characteristics is *metaphor*. Marxism and deconstruction are two philosophies whose primary relationship is metaphorical in nature, and they are engaged in a relationship based primarily on metaphor. This chapter will briefly consider the metaphorical conditions of some Marxist critiques of deconstruction and some deconstructive critiques of Marxism, and it will always point to the general idea that there is something about metaphor that lends itself well to a discussion of economic and political issues.

In the second chapter--"Classical Exchanges: Economies of the Wor(1)d"--I am concerned primarily with *exchanging* some classical positions on the economies of language and the world. The term "Wor(1)d" is constitutive of this double gesture as it is intended to refer to both linguistic and politico-economic systems of exchange. There is a classical theory that inserts the opposition *proper/improper* into the system of language. Similarly, there is another theory that inserts the same opposition into the world of commodity exchange. The subjects appear to be different, but the oppositions on which the entire force of their arguments hinge are similar. Moreover, each theory appears to inevitably deconstruct itself. Using Aristotle's *The Poetics* and *The Politics*, and Marx's *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy* and *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, I try to show just how each theory of (language and commodity) exchange inevitably undermines its own position. The double gestures of profit and loss, production and consumption, creation and effacement, are introduced as formative motifs in the theory of metaphor and economy and also function as points of convergence between metaphor and economy.

At issue in the third chapter--"Beyond Profit and Loss: Hegel, Derrida, and Marx on

Figurative Detours "--is the metaphor of the "figurative detour," which insinuates itself into Hegel's theory of the process of metaphorization and--as I shall try to show--into Marx's theory of the process of the objectification and alienation of labour. In a manner of speaking, what Derrida does with Hegel's *Philosophy of Fine Arts* is what I will try to do with Marx's *Capital* and *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. In this chapter I will further try to incorporate Derridean and Marxist strategies of reading economics and language by moving into close proximity with each other the theories of objectification and idealization. As a subtext to the movement of these processes I have tried to play off the philosophies of materialism and idealism and temper them both with a non-hierarchical or deconstructive re-reading of both processes. In this chapter the function of *economy* takes the form of a system of figuration and disfiguration (a process of metaphorization) in which philosophy is itself constituted.

Of course, no Marxist (or post-Marxist) reading of a text is complete without a critique of a certain power structure. This penchant is perhaps the most respectable function of critical Marxism. The chapter "Power in the Light of Metaphor" will, among other things, extract and manipulate some of the key concepts circulating within the *White Mythology*. A general economy of language has as one of its sustaining figures the concept of power, under which we might classify the conceptual subsidiaries of truth, meaning, wealth, knowledge, profit, and property. And there is at work in the philosophy of metaphor a definite ideological or metaphysical system of power brokerage, an almost political administration governing the difference between what is proper, domestic, or literal and what is improper, foreign, or metaphorical. In *White Mythology* Derrida also considers the Aristotelian claim that the maker of metaphor is somewhat of a figurative superhuman, and he applies to it a surprisingly political reading. As such, this chapter will consider metaphor as an instrument and determinant of power. In this respect it is the mainstay of my argument.

CHAPTER ONE

MARXISM *OR* DECONSTRUCTION

Most often researchers postulate the existence of two separate entities, language and society (or culture or behavior), and then study the one through the other. One of the entities is regarded as cause, the other as effect, and the effect is studied with a view to gaining knowledge of the cause, or vice versa, according to whether the one or the other lends itself better to rigorous analysis. Most of the time, society or one of its surrogates is the object of knowledge, and language is taken as the easy-to-handle intermediary that leads to the goal.

Oswald Ducrot and Tzvetan Todorov

There is a problem in the relationship between deconstruction and Marxist critical theory. The problem is not the barrage of potent criticisms that arise when these two theories meet; on the contrary, I think the problem is that quite often Marxism and deconstruction simply fail to meet. The division between these two cultural theories¹ has formed an interstice, a dichotomy if you will, over and through which little dialogue can pass. This stalemate arises because Marxism and deconstruction are *philosophies*,² and as such they employ and are in the employ of distinctive sets of formative metaphors. In *White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy* Jacques Derrida establishes a relationship of interdependence between philosophy and metaphor: "It is not so much that metaphor is in the text of philosophy . . . rather these texts are in metaphor" (60). This is precisely the type of relationship which I hope to produce in this essay. It is a relationship in which Marxism and deconstruction find themselves *metaphorically* opposed to one another. Philosophy and metaphor are neither mutually inclusive nor mutually exclusive; rather, they are engaged in a figurative production process, a process which leads not only to the

production of philosophy's founding concepts, but also of metaphor. Derrida's argument goes something like this: philosophy produces metaphor because the concept of metaphor is itself a philosophical concept; however, metaphors also produce philosophy because philosophy is always grounded in a series of originary tropes, a series of metaphors without which philosophy could not exist. Marxism and deconstruction, then, being two philosophies related by metaphor, are engaged in a relationship based primarily *on* metaphor.

On the one hand, deconstruction generally opposes the peculiarly Marxist gesture of immediately proceeding from an analysis of a certain text to a corresponding real or material condition. Deconstruction criticizes what it regards as Marxism's blindness to textuality, a blind leap of faith over the text which often results in its assuming genuinely unreflective philosophical positions, especially naïve assumptions regarding the purpose and function of language. Marxism explicitly privileges the material over the ideal, and it must therefore be chastised not only for taking this particular position, but specifically for taking a position which omits the immanent position of language. In deconstructive theory the rule of thumb often appears to be a denial of the material world and, by inference, a privileging of the ideal. On the other hand, deconstructive readings come under heavy fire by Marxists and non-Marxists alike for what appears to be an inability or refusal to get past the text. These theorists vehemently object to any theory which denies the textual significance of cultural or economic conditions. Now, the problem that characterizes an articulation of these two apparently distinct ways of reading is that their subjects are often two radically different "entities." Indeed, they employ two sets of radically contradictory metaphors. The deconstructive agenda is quintessentially textual, it consists primarily of matters of language; the ultimate goal of Marxism, however, is a critique of--and, of course, an alteration of--the political and economic structure of the real world. Perhaps the best way to describe this problem is to liken it to a scenario in which there are two warring factions, both of which attempt

to destabilize the position of the other but consistently fail to do so simply because each camp has either made itself invulnerable to enemy attacks or (always already) aims at the wrong target. But regardless of how it is explained, the relationship between Marxism and deconstruction seems to be at best naïve and indifferent, and at worst unproductive.

In the one camp we have the numerous critics of deconstruction, and although these critics come from quite an assortment of philosophical positions, they all find in deconstruction a common enemy. Edward Said, for example, expresses his objection to deconstructive theory in *The World, the Text, and the Critic*, by suggesting that it amounts to a withdrawal into a "labyrinth of 'textuality'" (3). Texts, he suggests, "are always enmeshed in circumstance, time, place, and society--in short, they are in the world, and hence worldly" (35). Strictly speaking, Said is not a Marxist, but his metaphorical casting of a "worldly" net over both the entities of language and culture is exemplary of Marxist criticisms of deconstruction. The tactic is quite unique: in one figurative gesture Said subsumes texts and cultural and economic conditions under the general rubric "worldly." To fix one's gaze solely on a written text is to commit the grave error of creating an illusory world of figures and images and pretending that it functions independent of social or "worldly" issues. At risk is the critic's ability to utilize his or her potential to interfere with the everyday operations of cultural institutions--namely the university, without which critical theory would be virtually non-existent. In his essay "Opponents, Audiences, Constituencies, and Community," Said claims that the labyrinthine (read "textual") exploits of deconstruction lead to somewhat of an attitude problem on the part of its adherents: while safely among themselves in a conference room in a secluded corner of the university campus they say to one another "they [presumably the administrators and politicians] can run the country, we will explicate Wordsworth and Schlegel" (23). Metaphorically speaking, they are committing critical suicide. The primacy of textuality might very well be guaranteed in these "disciplinary ghettos" (25), but

for Said this primacy is established only at the expense of the immediate and more taxing concerns of human culture and society.

In his observations on the skeptical disposition characteristic of contemporary criticism, Eugene Goodheart writes from a similar philosophical position. "Deconstruction," he says, makes social criticism of whatever inspiration (literary, historical, philosophical) very difficult, if not impossible" (173). For Goodheart deconstruction, which is a purely textual pursuit, has set itself up as an obstacle to addressing the concerns of the material world. And Terry Eagleton, one of Marxism's few remaining supporters, makes a similar suggestion when he writes of the deconstructive critics that not only have they pulled "the metaphysical carpet out from under themselves" but they have simultaneously pulled the carpet out from under the Marxists (477). (Perhaps it is worthwhile briefly to draw attention to the relationship between Said's *overcast* net metaphor and Eagleton's positioning of deconstruction as an theory that de-constructs by removing the upholstery *below*. While the one is concerned with encompassing from above, the other shows how a radical critique can disrupt from below.) Although Goodheart remains skeptical, perhaps even indecisive, as to whether or not deconstruction can be applied to social or cultural criticism, he does concede that it remains a possibility after the deconstructors have done their dirty read. Eagleton, however, makes no such concession. He furiously reprimands the deconstructors for practicing a "mode of self-destruction" which leaves them "as invulnerable as an empty page" (482). If I might once again employ the war metaphor I would suggest that for Eagleton the deconstructive faction strategically and economically negates itself in order to remove itself from the Marxist line of fire. And in doing so it effectively eliminates the opposition, which means that the Marxist line has neither a target nor ammunition. "The deconstructionist never lieth because he nothing affirmeth" (483). The important thing to remember here, of course, is that Eagleton understands that the entity of language is not only the subject of deconstructive

readings but it is also inextricably involved in Marxist criticisms of the capitalist economy, for the "rug" to which he refers is precisely a metaphor for language. The cause of Eagleton's irritation, then, is nothing more than deconstruction's putative denial of the connection--a vital connection for Marxism-- between the word and the world.

Other Marxist theorists have theorized against deconstruction for variations of this same reason. John Brenkman, for example, writing in his very short essay entitled "Deconstruction and the Social Text," suggests that deconstruction has "held off" pressing historical and cultural problems by limiting the scope of its criticism to philosophical concepts and "idealist philosophy." What deconstruction leaves us with is no more than a "purely philosophical" theoretical system (188). In effect, it is the death knell of the material and a corresponding triumph of the ideal. Similarly, Frederic Jameson deploys deconstruction as a counter-material metaphor in his book *The Prison-House of Language: A Critical Account of Structuralism and Russian Formalism*. For Jameson, deconstruction figures as some sort of afterbirth to structuralism, whose conception of the sign "forbids any research into the reality beyond it" (106). But Jameson is not satisfied with casting deconstruction into the figurative role of an obstacle to materialist criticisms. Instead, what he does is cunningly bring deconstruction under his transcendental form of Marxism, a move which is similar to Said's "enmeshing" principle, but a move which is doubtlessly and ironically much more severely metaphysical in its account of deconstruction. Deconstruction is, he writes, a part of the larger "Marxist framework" (187); it must therefore be perceived in light of a well-grounded materialism which does not dwell incessantly upon purely textual concerns. The tactic here is one in which deconstruction is made to be a metaphor for the Marxist superstructure, while Marxism itself is given the primacy of being a figure for the economic base. Indeed, Jameson accomplishes this act of theoretical consumption in an almost teasing fashion, and it is precisely this aspect of his criticism which leads us to the teasing ambivalence with which

deconstructive theory often acknowledges Marxism.

Unlike the Marxists, the deconstructive theorists have no qualms with keeping themselves distant from what are commonly called social or cultural questions. Howard Felperin is one such critic who praises deconstruction for its adept critical practices while simultaneously suggesting that Marxism is a philosophy which is plagued by its outdated and naïve assumptions about language, namely the assumption that there is in truth a material reality to be found somewhere beyond, behind or beside the "text." Deconstruction is scrupulously aware of its textuality; Marxism, however, suffers from what Felperin calls "rhetorical over-confidence" and "unself-consciousness" (51). That is, Marxists err by not dwelling upon the language which they employ to impart their philosophy, and this blindness makes for an undeniably faulty philosophical position. As Felperin would have it, Marxist theorists ingenuously desire to appropriate the precise language of math or science because it, apparently unlike *real* theoretical writing, would be "a system of notation free from ambiguity, a purely denotative linguistic system in which each sign is clearly differentiated from all other signs" (64). Felperin strikes at the heart of the problem when he claims that Marxists simply assume that they can move from the text to the world without much difficulty. His criticism of Eagleton, a critic who produces the "pseudo-materiality of a highly concrete diction" (65), rests upon a thorough rejection of materialism, or a disbelief in an eventual or latent connection between text and physical world. Felperin rightly points out that materialism is the mainstay of Marxist theory and he accuses Eagleton of shamelessly employing concrete terms in order to vivify this materiality and make simple the connection between word and world. But language is language regardless of how "concrete" it is. "The play of signification that constitutes all texts . . . cannot be so easily or wilfully made material; the materialist privileging of the 'concrete' in the binary opposition 'abstract/concrete' can itself be easily and wilfully deconstructed" (66). Felperin's attack focuses primarily on the Althusserian Marxist³ desire to

saturate a text with scientific terms and thus have it correspond to a definitive material condition, but his criticisms are doubtlessly intended to destabilize the philosophical austerity of all Marxisms. For Felperin, the correspondence between text and world is easier said (or written) than done, for essentially there is no apparent way in which to use a text in order to apprehend the real world.

There is another disturbing figurative principle at work in Felperin's criticism, and it is precisely the same principle which functions in so much deconstructive criticism of Marxism. It is the oppositional metaphor "abstract/concrete," or more precisely an unwarranted faith in this opposition. Felperin's criticism is grounded in this metaphor, but his call to deconstruct this opposition and simultaneously disfigure the entire Marxist project does not neutralize the opposition. Rather, it is merely reversed. Nowhere in Felperin's text is there a call to proclaim the opposition dead. Instead, there is a steadfast and almost pompous privileging of the "abstract," the part of the opposition to which we can narrowly but economically append the concepts of the "ideal," the "spiritual," and of course the "textual." Thus, when Felperin accuses Eagleton of privileging the "concrete" he at once neutralizes the force of materialist and cultural theory and invests his philosophical position within the disinterested realm of the "abstract." This, it would seem, is very sloppy deconstruction. He opposes the Marxist project on the grounds that it artificially produces a "concrete" ground of language, yet he nonetheless maintains the Marxist opposition simply by positioning himself on the opposite side. "Marxist criticism," he writes, "is prevented by the necessary pretensions of its own discourse to the extra-historical univocality of scientific discourse from fully recognizing the metaphorical nature, the rhetoricity or fictiveness, of its own claim to having its referential resting-point in history" (69). The Marxists employ, or rather deploy, concreteness of diction simply because they are intimidated by the inherent figurality of language. Of course what Felperin is suggesting is that if the Marxists ever did accept

this seemingly "global" metaphors, they would find it very difficult, if not impossible, to say anything certain about human culture and society. And with this metaphors we come to one of the central points of my argument, for according to Felperin, Eagleton and the Marxists believe that "metaphor is the traditional enemy of science" (67), a classical position in which a material world is constructed by a simultaneous construction of a metaphysical, or immaterial one.

Before pursuing this thought let me first briefly summarize the relationship I am trying to establish between Marxism and deconstruction. What we have are two philosophies caught in a state of unproductive polarity. The one faction finds itself necessarily at home in textuality, while the other converges on the text and then immediately ricochets to the material world and proclaims *it* as the ultimate subject of their work. The problem involving the relationship between deconstruction and Marxist critical theory is a problem not because it involves the possibility of a solution, but because it poses what appears to be a simply irreconcilable difference, the difference between words and the world. And it is a problem which has as its apparent point of departure the removal of social concerns from the study of texts and a corresponding repression of questions regarding textuality arising from an impatient desire to confront the material world. Thus the problem is not only the entification of language and society, it is also that this entification leads to the elimination of the possibility of communication between the two entities. In other words, theories which valorize *either* textuality *or* materiality create a violent hierarchical system in which two domains appear to comfortably exist isolated from one another. This separation of the entities of language and society is an imprudent and uneconomical one at best; it is a dangerous hierarchization which not only limits what can and can not be discussed in critical circles but also contributes to the further segregation of academic disciplines.

Said's criticism of deconstruction and Felperin's criticism of Marxism, for example, both hinge on variations of the opposition written text/material world. On the one hand, Said suggests

that there is indeed a "labyrinth of 'textuality'" into which one can dismally withdraw, but this might equally be read as an admission of the power of the text, an admission which functions as an alarm warning academics away from the subject of their study. More importantly, however, it is an affirmation of the existence of the one half of the opposition, which amounts to the same thing as an affirmation of the entire oppositional construction. There is *text* and there is the *world*, and although the arch-subject of critical theory is indeed textuality, according to Said the critics and theoreticians must work beyond the system of language in order to locate their true vocations in the more "worldly" issues concerning human culture. And, as we have already seen, the same opposition pervades Felperin's criticism when he writes of the Marxist tendency to privilege the "concrete" over the "abstract," for implicit in his critique of the materialist inclination towards the concrete is his own apparent privileging of the abstract or ideal. The materialists cannot make the abstract text into something concrete; they are confined to the ubiquitous "play of signification that constitutes all texts." By this Felperin claims that there is no access to the concrete world, thus disqualifying "worldly" issues as something which forever lie outside the reach of critical theory.

Said's and Felperin's philosophies, then, are produced by and indeed produce the dangerously uncritical oppositions textual/worldly and abstract/concrete. Said's predilection is for the worldly or ultimately concrete; Felperin is apt to prefer the textual or abstract. And when Eagleton writes of the "metaphysical rug" that deconstruction has pulled out from under itself and Marxist criticism, the "rug" functions as a figure for language, which suggests that he conceives of language as some kind of an intermediary between critic and a corresponding material world, just as the "carpet" functions as a mediator between subject and ground in its usual sense. He has done nothing to engage the notion of the ground that lies under the carpet, the ground whose existence deconstruction has so incisively questioned. In other words, Eagleton has done nothing to defend his materialism from Felperin's type of deconstructive attack. In effect, Eagleton is guilty of what

historian Hayden White accuses many Marxist historians of: the theoretical crime of reading too seriously texts which are necessarily loaded with unstable significations and references. For White, historians, especially those of the Marxist persuasion, make the common mistake of assuming that historical texts are free from ambiguity and rhetorical sway. "The [historical] chronicle," however, "is a fiction which permits the historian to act *as if* he has *found* a world of data which his theories can then fashion into a cognitively secured body of knowledge" (103). In a similar vein, Richard Rorty, whose essay "Philosophy as a Kind of Writing" attempts to secure Derrida's works into a historical perspective, says this of deconstructive theory: "writing always leads to more writing, and more, and still more--just as history does not lead to Absolute Knowledge or the Final Struggle, but to more history, and more, and still more" (145). Words are what the historian, literary theorist and philosopher work with, but they are also (the subject of) history, literary theory and philosophy. Therefore, those who deal with texts must take account of the language through which they think they are apprehending a real political or economic world, and this is especially the case when a reading of a text leads to an often incisive and effectual political position, as is the case with Marxism.

Unlike the Marxist theorists, White and Rorty assume that words are neither secure in their reference nor that they are solidly anchored to a convenient historical or philosophical sense. "The dream of the perfect chronicle," White writes, "is as futile as the dream of the perfect philosophy of history" (105). It is precisely within this idiomatic "dream" that Marxism undergoes its blindness to textuality. And the connection between this figurative slumber and philosophy in general is made by Derrida in *White Mythology* when he calls the "*sleep* of philosophy" that which allows philosophy to ignore the series of metaphors which form the "fundamental" oppositions on which it is constructed (28 -29). This dream, of course, is like the Marxist dream, in which every text has a clear ideological sense and an ambiguous connection with the real world. In fact, it is this *sleep* or *dream* that contributes more to ideology⁴ than any

other philosophical factor. To extend the force of the metaphor perhaps we can say that the "rug" to which Eagleton refers is a kind of ideological comforter, a tool which sustains this period of "sleeping" through texts instead of accosting them. But it also functions as a figure representing the problem between Marxism and deconstruction, for it comfortably separates the ground from the occupant in the same way that a metaphorical line graphically and interstitially separates the oppositions abstract/concrete, text/world, and Marxism/deconstruction.

If we recall the earlier war metaphor we still find the two philosophical positions invulnerable to the other's attacks. Nor does either side appear to be aiming at the right target. Their strategies are separated by opposed and seemingly mutually exclusive metaphors. The relationship between Marxism and deconstruction is metaphorical in nature, and these philosophies, like all philosophies, are engaged in a relationship which is based primarily on metaphor. Now, because metaphor is a "figure of speech," and therefore a *textual* rather than a concrete or "worldly" item, it might seem that I am here favouring the "textual" over the "worldly" or, by extension, deconstruction over Marxism. This is not my intention. I am articulating a point which I hope to work over throughout the course of my argument: namely, that the concept "metaphor" takes as its ground neither the purely textual nor the purely material; rather it takes a general form of a *text*, a general economy⁵ if you will, which functions as a point of convergence between the two apparently incompatible metaphorical parts of the oppositions word/world, abstract/concrete, and even deconstruction/Marxism. In this light, what we are left with in Marxism and deconstruction are two philosophies grounded on the opposite sides of a metaphor. Between them there is a war of wor(l)ds, a metaphorical war.

For the sake of economy let me recall Felperin's assumption that the fundamental difference between Marxism and deconstruction is a product of contrary positions within a single metaphorical opposition. The one works from the "abstract," the other from the "concrete." Let me extend the force of this point by suggesting that the metaphorical contradiction is not, as Felperin

seems to suggest, a theoretical cul-de-sac. On the contrary, it is within metaphor--specifically, within the oppositional metaphor separating Marxism from deconstruction--that we find part of our solution. Now, let me illustrate the gravity of this opposition by citing one of Derrida's infamous responses to Jean-Louis Houdebine and Guy Scarpetta in "Positions":

[I]n a classical philosophical opposition we are not dealing with the peaceful coexistence of a *vis-à-vis*, but rather with a violent hierarchy. One of the two terms governs the other (axiologically, logically, etc), or has the upper hand. (41)

The philosophical opposition which interests me here, namely that one between word and world but also that one between abstract and concrete, and by inference the opposition between deconstruction and Marxism, is one of these "violent" hierarchies. In order to deconstruct these oppositional metaphors Derrida proposes a twofold gesture: an "overturning" and a "neutralization." The movement is not complete until both have been accomplished. Keeping this in mind it is clear that both the Said and Felperin camps have merely engaged in the first, and of course the more popular or radical, of these acts. Said accuses deconstruction of advocating a "text/worldly" opposition, and he remedies the situation by reversing the priority of the opposition so that it becomes "worldly/text." Felperin accuses Marxist theorists of advocating a "concrete/abstract" opposition in which the "concrete" is given precedence over the abstract, but he does no more than reverse the opposition in order to satisfy his own privileging of the "abstract." A "neutralization" of the opposition would entail, among other things, a denial of the authority governing the hierarchical structure, which neither Said nor Felperin do. It is through (and indeed *within*) metaphor that this deconstruction takes place, for it is in metaphor that one finds the textual revolutions and altering rhetorics dissolving the allegedly staid origins of philosophies and philosophical positions. It is within metaphor that Marxism and deconstruction are constituted; it is within metaphor that Marxism and deconstruction can be roused from their "*sleep* of philosophy."

Derrida leads us to a related point in *White Mythology* when he asks this pressing question: "what more urgent task for epistemology and the critical history of the sciences could

there be than distinguishing between the word, the metaphorical vehicle, the thing, and the concept?" (63). Metaphor, as Derrida suggests, leads us directly to the dichotomy separating the opposition between text and world, between abstract and concrete, or between "metaphor" and "thing." More important, however, is his drawing attention to the virtual import of metaphor in the study of philosophy and, of course, cultural theory. And when Kenneth Burke writes in *Permanence and Change: An Anatomy of Purposes* that metaphor reveals "hitherto unsuspected connectives" and that "[i]t appeals by exemplifying relationships between objects which our customary rational vocabulary has ignored" (90), he is pointing directly to the central issue of my thesis. What he is suggesting is precisely the type of connection between two different entities that characterizes a co-articulation of Marxism and deconstruction. Burke asserts that metaphor signifies the possibility of articulation; it points to a deconstruction of proper borders and identities and, by its very nature as a figure representing a "transference,"⁶ produces philosophy (95). His position acknowledges the figurative economy of exchanges that works to reduce or efface the propriety and property of philosophical "identities" (philosophies) by highlighting their metaphorical positions.

In the Marxist camp there is a group of theorists whose perceptions of deconstruction are not so very different from Derrida's and Burke's perception of metaphor. Alex Callinicos--regretably, not a wide read theorist--writes of an alternative, deconstructive-literate route for Marxist theory to pursue. In *Is There a Future for Marxism?* he addresses some of the key textual concerns which Marxist theory has recently been driven to deal with. For example, he begins by correctly pointing out that the "revolution of language" which deconstructive theory has wrought "clearly represents a radical challenge to Marxism" (48). And challenge it does, for as we have already seen deconstructive theory can often be read as an attempt to displace materialism into the obscure reaches of philosophical and political insignificance simply by eliminating the connection between word and world. For Eagleton, this amounts to a destruction of the ground on

which Marxist theory is based. But Callinicos, far from jettisoning Marxism into a position of basic supremacy or manipulating deconstruction into a Marxist framework, at least takes the new theory of language seriously. This he does for two reasons: first, he understands that there can be no knowledge without text and signification, that "thought takes place within discourse" (5); and second, for political reasons he claims that the common Marxist perception of the superstructure (of which all texts are a part) as a pure "effect" of the material and economic base is itself based on dangerous reductionism. The superstructure, he says, needs relative autonomy, it is not always already predetermined by the base or material condition. That is, the elements of the superstructure (laws, politics, aesthetics, theology) are under no obligation to present the cultural theorist with a translucent view of the economic mode of production. Nor can language simply be viewed as a polished window opening up to a definite sense or meaning, for sense (in so far as it is an actual thing) and meaning are invariably connected with what Marxists call the "base." The "revolution of language," then, means that texts and the elements within the field of the "superstructure" cannot be made to comfortably refer to something that exists outside in an empirical reality. And if the texts' and the superstructures' status as signifiers are undermined, then so too must their positions as *derivatives* of the conditions of economics, politics and consciousness. Callinicos thus places the emphasis on deconstruction's subversive tendencies (he calls it a "textual politics" [47]) and then harnesses these qualities in order to use them for his own Marxist project.

Another one of these tolerant or "open" Marxists is Michael Ryan. In his book *Marxism and Deconstruction* he writes that "[t]o affirm the abyss deconstruction opens in the domain of knowledge is politically to affirm the permanent possibility of social change" (8). Indeed, while it is typical, even fashionable, for Marxist adherents of deconstruction to endlessly harp on this theory's pugnacious aura and subversive vocabulary, Ryan brings us back to the subject at hand by meticulously acknowledging the theoretical possibilities posed by the deconstructive theory of

metaphor. According to Ryan a metaphor "implies the possibility of transformation and change, a questioning of the absoluteness of proper meaning and, consequently, of law" (4) and it represents "[t]he open possibility of displacement" (5). In this light it is easy to see how the disruptive workings of metaphor appeal to Marxist theorists, because for them metaphor itself *becomes a metaphor* for the act of undermining oppressive political regimes and institutions and advocating popular social transformations. It is in fact a figurative cohesion between word and world precisely because it does not operate according to a simplistic signifier = signified structure. Nor is there an absolute cessation to this figurative politics, for this would mean that an absolute meaning has insinuated itself into the necessarily figurative process of language. Here Ryan gives his account of the problem of absolute meaning and metalevels of linguistic comprehension:

Perhaps Derrida's most famous text on this problem is "The White Mythology," in which he argues that, because all language is metaphoric (a sign substituted for a thing), no metametaphoric description of language is possible that escapes infinite regress. He is criticizing the transcendental impulse in general, the desire to construct truths through a language supposedly so formal that it renders the truth of the thing itself in its presence without any representational mediation. (20)

For Ryan, as for Derrida, metaphor is simply ubiquitous. The closest either one comes to delimiting metaphor is by giving its habitat the general name of "text." According to Ryan, Derrida gives this name to "history and the material world," in essence to everything. What we have, then, is the beginning of a neutralization of the oppositional metaphors of word and world, abstract and concrete, and, of course, deconstruction and Marxism. The "text," here signifying both language and material world, essentially cancels the typical Marxist metaphor of base/superstructure, and by inference, the perception of the vehicular passages *between* a word and the world. So too does it negate the deconstructive claim that no passage exists between the word and the world.

Let me pursue this deconstructive Marxism and cite two provocative imprints from Derrida's *Of Grammatology* and *Dissemination* : "*There is nothing outside of the text* [there is no outside-text; *il n'y a pas de hors-texte*]" (158), a statement which both

deconstructors and Marxists might, for better or for worse, literally translate as a denial of the existence of what is commonly called the material world. And again: "There is nothing but text, there is nothing but extratext" (43), which further obscures the marks distinguishing the textual from the material. But it would be no less than foolish to think even for an instant that by "text" Jacques Derrida means the body of writing in English or French or German or any other language which constitutes the books that we as members of a community read and write. A more powerful reading of these statements and one that is more to the point would suggest that "text" is quite simply a figure referring to both the textual (in the bookish or literal sense of the word) and the worldly. Indeed, this is to suggest a complete re-thinking of text and material world. Such a reading of Derrida's infamous proposal would doubtlessly circumvent the dangerous distinction that has so often been drawn between the entities of language and text. It would also do away with the dangerous position of regarding one of the two entities as a cause and the other as an effect. More importantly, however, it would bring under scrutiny Derrida's project of undoing the entire oppositional system of metaphors on which the opposed theories of Marxism and deconstruction find themselves.

Nothing can be hermetically sealed under the names of word and world. Everything is a text and functions economically within a (con)text. In a sense, this is to assert no more than the primacy of exchange and relationality among the fields of language and material items. Taken to a more political level of understanding, this means that there is no transcendental or meta- form of property which legitimizes the existence of private property. Indeed, from the deconstruction of the literary and philosophical text proceeds the deconstruction of the material and textual basis of political and economic institutions. For Derrida this means that the political project of Marxism is just as "textual" as a deconstructive reading of literary theory. Indeed, it has been said of Derrida that he does not open himself up to directly political questions. Christopher Norris, for example, in his *On Marxist Deconstruction* says of Derrida that he has a "teasing ambivalence" towards

Marxism and is "shrewdly diagnostic" of political positions of any colour (202). But such claims offend only the most vulgar of Marxist critics, for it is precisely those critics who underwrite and sustain the textual/worldly opposition and subscribe to a dogmatic brand of Marxism which insists upon finding the answers to all questions in the three volumes of *Kapital* and a handful of other originary texts (which are themselves, ironically enough, a textual rather than a material base). Similarly, the compatriots of the vulgar Marxists in the deconstructive camp, those who are often called the "American deconstructors,"⁷ propagate this same dichotomy by claiming that what Derrida really means is that political questions lie on a terrain completely alien to purely textual questions. But Derrida is not an "American;" he is not a vulgar theoretician. On the contrary, he once said in an interview with Imre Salusinszky that deconstruction must "insinuate itself everywhere" (14), which suggests that the theory cannot be contained within the text of philosophy or literature. He also opens deconstruction to the direct political questions which concern Marxism by advocating a form of "open Marxism," one which would not pursue one dogmatic line of criticism over another but be free to question all political power structures. Indeed, I do not think that critical prowess is found on the side of a deconstruction or Marxism which advocates only the linguistic or material condition of a text. It is found where the rigour of reading a "text" is the task of reading the world in its material condition. It is found not within a violent binary opposition but in a deconstructed field in which economic theory can be employed in the reading of a literary or philosophical text. And it is found where textuality and materiality, the system of words and the system of worlds, are articulated in a single gesture; in a wor(1)d, in metaphor.

CHAPTER TWO

CLASSICAL EXCHANGES: ECONOMIES OF THE WOR(L)D

Literary critics . . . are supposed to know certain things, and not others--good style, for example, but never economic theory.

Michael Ryan

The title of this chapter is intentionally double-sided, its function similar to that of a coin in that it represents two surfaces in a single token. By "Economies of the Wor(1)d" I mean to alloy, or perhaps even suggest an alliance between a deconstructive theory of language and what is commonly called Marxist economic theory. The term "Wor(1)d" is constitutive of this double gesture as it is intended simultaneously to refer to both linguistic systems and to politico-economic systems--neither one of which will be granted primacy over the other--and I use it with the hope that it will come close to naming the point of convergence between these two systems; specifically, the point at which the metaphorical process appears to function similar to the economic activity that goes under the name of exchange. And it brings to light the concept of the "exergue" which, in Jacques Derrida's *White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy*, marks the point of intersection between linguistics and economics. "It is remarkable how insistently the metaphorical process is designated by the paradigm of coinage, of metal--gold and silver" (14) Derrida writes, drawing attention not only to the transference of items from the world of economics to the words of language, but to the metaphorical abilities the one field has over the other. Economic motifs figure prominently in *White Mythology*, and it is precisely this general function of exchange between language and political economy that is my immediate concern. On the one hand,

language--and especially the phenomenon of metaphor--might be seen in terms of an economy in which words function under the general rubric of exchange. (And perhaps this exchange is synonymous with the concept of *text*.) In this light the theory of metaphor might be explained with the figurative assistance of principles taken from field of political economy. On the other hand, the movement of goods and properties within a *real* political economy necessarily operates according to certain ideology of exchange, and as such this real or material political economy functions according to a certain way of *thinking* exchange and not at all alone by being informed purely by economic conditions. In other words, both the concept of metaphor and the material workings of political economy, in so far as they are functions of exchange, transformation, substitution, and similarity, can be *thought of* in terms of a single dominant motif, that of a "general economy."¹ As Derrida reminds us in *Living On: Border Lines*, "economy, of course, remains to be *thought*" (169). It is precisely in the *thinking of* economy as a metaphor of metaphor that we come close to naming a point of convergence between the two entities. A simultaneous articulation of a theory of metaphor and an economic theory, then, would consider as its point of departure the precise point at which these two conventionally separated entities intersect. This is the point of similarity or resemblance, the *point* of metaphor. My point, then, is that the study of the "Economies of the Wor(1)d" begins with the general notion of economy and the operation of exchange which occurs within its specific field.

Exchange is a function of economy. It is at once a concept and an activity, and it can be neither one without simultaneously being the other. Exchange is, moreover, a precondition of economy, both in the sense that it provides the necessary gestures of trade and substitution which characterize an economy, and in the sense that without the potential movement of things, that is, without the *possibility* of exchange, an economy simply has no function at all. Properties are exchanged within a network of other properties and it is precisely this differential movement which constitutes an economy. In its earlier form the term "economy" designated the "[m]anage-

ment of a house," but it eventually came to designate in political economy "the art or practical science of managing the resources of a nation so as to increase its material prosperity" (*OED* 356). Thus not only is movement of property indicative of an economy but so too is a certain measure of political administration or "management." And of course the term "exchange" simply refers to "[t]he action . . . of reciprocal giving and receiving" (*OED* 377). For our purposes we might provisionally accept a definition of exchange which highlights not only its transformational and substitutive nature, but also its reference to the potentially differential character of property in so far as it can be traded and moved around within a given political or economic structure.

In the strict sense of the word, the term "economy" signifies "household management." In a classical economic treatise, *The Politics*, Aristotle writes at great length on the art of household management, that is, on the topic of economy (*oikonomia*). For Aristotle, an economy is a functioning household, within which there are two ways exchange (*metablelike*) can be executed: the first is the proper, or natural, method of exchange; the second is the improper, or unnatural, method. Proper exchange takes the form of a natural redistribution of property, and it occurs within a system in which the sole purpose of exchange is the alleviation of need. In this economy not only is any exchange resulting in profit classified as improper, it is also most uneconomical, for according to Aristotle exchange which is generated for the purpose of profit or money-making (*chrematistike*) can not, or rather *should* not, occur within an economy. Chrematistics belongs to some extra-economic field of property exchange; there is no place for it in the household. By definition, then, the Aristotelian economy is a profitless one. Here is Aristotle's explanation of this rule of exchange within an economy:

Every piece of property has a double use; both uses are uses of the thing itself, but they are not similar uses; for one is the proper use of the article in question, the other is not. For example a shoe may be used either to put on your foot or to offer in exchange. Both are uses of the shoe; for even he that gives a shoe to someone who requires a shoe, and receives in exchange coins or food, is making use of the shoe as a shoe, but not the use proper to it, for a shoe is not expressly made for the purposes of exchange. (81-82)

When a shoe is put to a proper use, then, it is worn by its owner. The impropriety arises when the

shoe marks the process of exchange between itself and some other item. Nor can the shoe recover its lost propriety, for even if after it has entered into an exchange it is employed by its new owner *as a shoe* it doubtless remains as a figure of the exchange process, since its current status as a property of a new owner hinges upon an initial transaction. In indicating that propriety is a function of ownership Aristotle implies that property can not be transferred if it is to remain within the field of the proper economy. The impropriety of a shoe, for example, is determined only after it enters into the process of exchange and is substituted for by another item. In Aristotle's example a shoe is made for the purpose of being worn by its owner. If it is exchanged for either food or coin it moves closer in proximity to the uneconomical field characterized by profit and unnatural wealth and must, as a condition of this exchange, carry with itself the classification of being *improper*. This form of exchange leads to money-making (and, incidentally, towards the more recent designation of "economy") and is considered both as improper conduct and as a departure from the natural field of the economy, for neither can the economy admit--nor "house"--chrematistical desire nor can it lend its general name to a system of unnatural or deviant exchange.

But Aristotle's rule does not only delimit the propriety of an item to ownership it also concedes that exchange, in so far as it is executed in the name of a redistribution of natural wealth, can often be beneficial. In the proper economy exchange of property leads to the fulfillment of human need and not to the satisfaction of human desire. "Such a technique of exchange is not contrary to nature and is not a form of money-making; for it keeps to its original purpose: to re-establish nature's own equilibrium of self-sufficiency" (82). Thus we now have a proper form of exchange which does not drastically alter a given distribution of property and does not radically disrupt the "natural" status quo. On the contrary, it replaces, or rather replenishes, without causing too much discord in the household. Perhaps it might be regarded as a more or less stagnating economy, one in which property exchange is supplemental to the real economic concerns

of ownership and consumption. Exchange leading to money-making, however, is improper because its purpose is no longer the equitable redistribution of natural properties within an economy.

Although he would have liked to establish the economy as having been functionally present in society from the very origin of cultural history, in *The Politics* Aristotle takes note of the fact that proper exchange is not quite as harmless as it first appears. He concedes that from the very beginning this apparently prototypical economy is contaminated with the germ of impropriety when, with reference to the proper method of exchange, he writes: "it was out of it that money-making arose, predictably enough" (82). Indeed, it is "predictable" that from within the *oikos*-economy of proper exchange comes the seed of its own destruction in the form of improper chrematistics. Or, if we keep in mind the initial definitions of the word proposed above, the economy becomes more of a *political economy*. According to Aristotle, "men become more experienced at discovering where and how the greatest profits might be made out of the exchanges" (83), and they thereby propagate the destruction of their own self-serving system of exchange by recognizing this mere *possibility* of profit in the otherwise profitless economy. And the precise point at which natural household management is transformed into unnatural profiteering is when skill (*technikos*) makes its way into--and displaces--the entire economic system. That is, a natural economy "was probably quite a simple affair" (83), but with the advent of systematic money-making came the demise of the natural distribution of property. *Technikos* is the tool which allows the occupants of the economy to recognize and seize profit for themselves. Perhaps it might be seen as the germ of capitalism or the free enterprise system, indeed to a Marxist it might be perceived as a seed of defiance and revolution always already present within a governing establishment. It is always already present in the natural economy, but for reasons which Aristotle does not care to explain it is only activated at a certain point in the history of an economy. The possibility of money-making is inscribed on the origin and horizons of the domestic economy. The economy exists only as long as the exchange carried out within its field is executed in the name of a

natural redistribution of property, that is, specifically in the form of alleviating human need. When exchanges become more systematic, as they do when they are informed by technique, the economy ceases to exist. It becomes, in effect, an unnatural and uneconomical system. But because the harmlessness of the natural economy is in a state of always having been constituted at least in part by chrematistics it can not be as pure as Aristotle would like to think. And this is not just a question of difference between simple and complex economies, it is a question of the entire theory of origins and derivatives. Indeed, it is a question of the theory of metaphor.

In the Aristotelian schema the chrematistics and speculative trading which contaminate the natural economy come into being only under a set of certain related conditions: first, there must be definite geo-political constituencies which lend themselves to the import and export of certain items and compound the need for politically authorized measurements of value; and second, there must be some conventional unit of measurement in place which would ensure that value can be calculated and profit distinguished from loss. Theoretically, the first condition pertains to the classical opposition inside/outside, the second to the notion of money and the representation of value. "Not all the things," Aristotle reminds us, "are easily carried; and so for purposes of exchange men entered into an agreement to give to each other and accept from each other some commodity, itself useful for the business of living and also easily handled, such as iron, silver, and the like" (82-83). For Aristotle, as for us, this common commodity is currency (*nomisma*): "Once a currency was provided, development was rapid and what started as a necessary exchange became *trade*, the other mode of acquiring goods" (83). The acquisition of goods and, thereby, wealth is determined by money, for it is the unit which symbolizes wealth and its function is to confer certain values upon different items. If we consider money as Aristotle did we notice that it is the figure which is responsible for the extinction of the economy; and precisely because it is a figure representing a value which can be matched in the network of property, money disfigures the household. Money is an item the origin of which is *technikas*, and as such it is the material

representation of this most harmful and unnatural of human skills. In order for the economy to function properly, money, in so far as it is an instrument of wealth and speculation, must be banished from the household; it must, in effect, be set out of doors, somewhere beyond the frontier. Because it carries exchange beyond the extent necessary to adjust natural inequalities in the distribution of property, there is no place for money in the classical Aristotelian economy.

My immediate concern is neither the fact that in *The Politics* improper exchanges originate in the proper exchanges from which Aristotle tries to distinguish them, nor is it the figurative role money assumes in its capacity as an agent of disfiguration in this economy--more on these later. My primary concern is the proximity of Aristotle's treatise on the political, or material, economy to his perception of the linguistic economy. Keeping in mind what he writes on economy, exchange, and the propriety and impropriety of exchange within a household, let us read an excerpt from the twenty-first chapter of *The Poetics* :

Every word is either current, or strange, or metaphorical, or ornamental, or newly-coined, or lengthened, or contracted, or altered. By a current or proper word I mean one which is in general use among a people; by a strange word, one which is in use in another country. . . . Metaphor is the application of an alien name by transference either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or by analogy, that is, proportion. (78-79)

Metaphor, as Aristotle suggests, does not belong to language *proper*. It is classified in opposition to current and proper words, along with "ornamental" and "altered" words. And if metaphor is neither current nor proper, then it must be deviant and improper, from which we might conclude that in *The Poetics* Aristotle's concept of proper and improper is governed by that same desire for dialectical or oppositional purity as is his concept of the proper and improper uses of material property. In *The Poetics* he classifies as improper that item which has undergone a transformation or entered into an exchange, just as in *The Politics* he classifies as improper that item which has undergone a transformation from one owner to another after having entered the field of economic exchange. Prior to becoming a metaphor a word or phrase must first enter into the process of exchange, during which time its propriety, its literality if you will, is stripped

away from it. It is no longer current or proper because it designates itself as a foreign term in a proper, or domestic, sentence. Its impropriety is captured within its nature as a figure, just as the impropriety of a good is determined by its exchangeability.

The consistency with which metaphor is presented alongside "unusual" or "strange" words in *The Poetics* is quite remarkable, for not only are these types of words cast as foreign or alien--indeed, a "strange" word is one that "is in use in another country"--they are all set in opposition to proper words. All of which brings us back to the notion of exchange and the importation and exportation of properties we explored in *The Politics*. Improper exchange in the political economy is a product of the valuating power of currency, which in turn is a direct product of human *technikos* and can not manifest itself without the existence of established geo-political boundaries. It is here that we encounter the problems which arise when we try to distinguish the "outside" or foreign territory from the "inside" or the domestic economy. In a sense this question ultimately leads to the very questions governing the theory of metaphor in so far as it is concerned with distancing proper or literal meanings from metaphorical ones. In *Dissemination* Derrida addresses these questions in a suitably Greek context. It is what he calls the "*pharmakon*" which is responsible for constructing "the medium in which opposites are opposed." "The *pharmakon* is the movement, the laws, and the play: (the production of) difference" (127). But it is also a "remedy," or that which "links them among themselves" (127). What is curious about Derrida's hypothesis is that not so much the construction of the opposition, but rather the ceremony and service which legitimizes the opposition. "To keep the outside out," says Derrida, "[t]his is the inaugural gesture of 'logic' itself, of good 'sense' insofar as it accords with the self-identity of *that which is*: being is what is, the outside is outside and the inside inside" (128). In short, the stability of the inside is guaranteed only at the expense of the outside's inconstancy. The inside defines itself according to a simple dialectic in which it is the opposite of everything outside of its field. As regards metaphor, let me once again cite Derrida who, in

situating his theoretical drama in Aristotle's Athens, sheds new light on the opposition outside/inside as it pertains to economies.

The city's body *proper* thus reconstitutes its unity, closes around the security of its inner courts, gives back to itself the word that links it with itself with the confines of the agora, by violently excluding from its territory the representative of an external threat or aggression. (133)

The outside and inside are thus engaged in a relationship of mutual inclusivity, one in which neither can theoretically remain completely isolated from the other but nonetheless one which calls for violent confrontation between the two. In *The Poetics* that which Aristotle calls a *current* word is perhaps like the *pharmakon* in that it names both the property and stability of language and the *currency* (*nomisma*) which functions as a disfiguring principle in the entire system.

In *The Politics* we recall that chrematistics inevitably arose from the natural, or rather economical, redistribution of properties:

[A]s soon as the import of necessities and the export of surplus goods began to facilitate the satisfaction of needs beyond national frontiers, men inevitably resorted to the use of coined money. Not all the things that we naturally need are easily carried; and so for purposes of exchange men entered into an agreement to give to each other and accept from each other some commodity, itself useful for the business of living and also easily handled, such as iron, silver, and the like. (82-83)

Having presented themselves as obstacles to efficiency and expediency the foreign frontiers had to be traversed; markets in need of tapping waited on the other side of political borders and these small markets had to be incorporated into larger, homogenous trading blocs. Now, although Aristotle writes freely of "inevitable" economic expansion he nevertheless calls this transnational exchange *improper*, the uses of property having been subordinated to exchange-value and subsequent profiteering. For the moment let us recall his example of the shoe: he writes that "a shoe is not expressly made for the purpose of exchange," which, by inference, suggests that commodities produced in the domestic economy and still in the hands of their producers and eventual consumers become improper manifestations of themselves once they enter into exchange, traverse an economic frontier, and become substituted with other non-self-identical items. The shoe,

therefore, remains a proper shoe and retains its status as a proper operant in the economy only until it is exchanged with something else and then that something else stands in the shoe's place. The original owner of the shoe, who is now shoeless, possesses not the same item which he or she initially had, but instead is proprietor of something different, alien, and foreign. The shoe's propriety, then, is commissioned by the use it was put to by the initial owner.

This same formula can be applied to Aristotle's linguistic treatise. A metaphor is a word that is substituted for an original word in a signifying economy and the place of the original word is systematically usurped and occupied by the alien word for whatever reason (poetic riches, floridity, good style, etc.). The exchange in the linguistic economy takes the form of an importation of a figurative word, but still the metaphorical process hinges upon a transference of a word with properties different than the intended word. In Aristotle's example the frontiers are represented by his distinctions between genus and species and his distinction between properties of the same genus and species. A metaphor differs from a proper or current word because, as Aristotle says in *The Poetics*, it is not "from the normal idiom" (83). It is precisely this difference which constitutes what might be called the metaphor's impropriety. For instance, when Aristotle presents an example of a metaphor that proceeds from species to genus: "Verily ten thousand noble deeds hath Odysseus wrought," the impropriety is manifested in the attribution of the phrase "ten thousand" to a context (Odysseus's noble deeds) which literally calls for only a few or, at least, a smaller number. "Ten thousand" is a figure which might logically be applied to the number of people who, for example, saw Odysseus in any given year; however, this figure cannot possibly signify the number of deeds wrought by a single man. Thus the numerical exaggeration constitutes an impropriety in the sense that "ten thousand" is not really a figure corresponding to the number of his good deeds. For Aristotle, a metaphor signifies a deviation from the common or proper use of language. It involves, as R. Harris and Talbot J. Taylor write in *Landmarks in Linguistic Thought*, "a transgression or setting aside of the normal correlations which govern the everyday

use of words" (20). And this "transgression" is a passing over of demarcated boundaries which is similar in kind to the deviance characteristic of transnational and chrematistical trade which Aristotle outlines in *The Politics*. Or, as in the case of the shoe, the impropriety of the word arises only after it has entered into the field of exchange and becomes a substitution for another, proper word. The metaphor, then, is the improper word which functions in the linguistic economy much in the same way that an exchanged good functions in a political one.

That Aristotle uses the terms "current" and "proper" to classify certain features of the exchange process in the political economy and the linguistic economy is no coincidence, for both economies are characterized by the processes of exchange. His "political" treatise converges with his "poetic" one in the sense that both significantly rely upon the notions of property and propriety and its exchange and transformation within a defined economic field. And it is with this in mind that Marc Shell wrote of Aristotle in his book *The Economy of Literature* that he is a "poet-economist" (91). The metaphor-maker, Shell writes, must be a good economist in order to be able to speculate on the potential exchangeability of words from their common, or proper, contexts into alien ones. Similarly, as we have already seen, the money-maker must use his or her technical skill (*technikas*) to locate the most favourable potential material exchanges. Shell continues: "[m]inting and money made possible a revolution in art and esthetic theory of which Aristotle is an articulate spokesman and critic" (93), the suggestion of course being that the advent of material currency and the subsequent ease with which goods could be transferred from one geo-political domain into another informed Aristotle's perception of metaphor as a transference of properties undertaken for the purpose of poetic profit. The political economy presented itself as that which precomprehended the workings of the linguistic economy; for Aristotle this meant that the economy of material property, like the economy of language, was a system of exchanges and substitutions the field of which was clearly mapped out by the use of restrictive terms such as *proper* and *improper*, and *common* and *deviant*.

On the subject of metaphor and the notion of "place" Patricia Parker writes in "The Metaphorical Plot" that in the body of classical writing on metaphor (of which Aristotle is our exemplary figure) the dominant feature is its reliance upon figurative space. Characteristic of such writing is "the notion of 'place'--of territory already staked out, of the tropological as inseparable from the topological--and thus also of 'property,' or of a place where a word properly belongs" (133). Metaphor is often seen as "a foreigner or an 'alien'"; it is the breaker of natural laws and it disrupts the proper network or economy of words. According to Parker, the theoretical emphasis is on the transference or transport of a word across a border or a boundary and into a place where it substitutes for another word, thus becoming metaphorical. In the classical view of metaphor and, if I may be permitted this inference, of political economy, there is an emphasis and dependence upon the figurative role of proper space. A metaphor is a transgressive figure the preconditions of which are the oppositions proper/improper and foreign/alien; a commodity characterized by its exchange-value or *exchangeability* is a transgressive figure in so far as it constitutes a deviation from the norms of personal and political economy (use-value) and the corresponding notions of propriety/impropriety.

In Aristotle's examples, then, the shoe and the "ten thousand deeds" designate similar oversteppings of boundaries: the shoe is a figure of transgression because it is an object of trespass, and as such it marks a breach of ownership; the figure of "ten thousand" is a violation of the specificity of a certain number in favour of a generic large number. In the two examples the *proper* uses are exchanged for alien and improper ones. And, as Parker reminds us, it is precisely the distinction between proper ownership and improper exchange, or breach of ownership, on which metaphor relies for its explanation. She continues:

Classical textbook examples of metaphor . . . reveal a potential menace within the conception of metaphor as a transfer from place to place. The very idea of transportability' is a threat to decorum or 'decor,' a sense that things might not only be 'out of place' but out of control.

(137)

The movement from "place to place" seems to necessarily prefigure the concept of metaphor, for

without an initial authorization of what exactly distinguishes one place from another one, a proper place from an improper or foreign one for example, the *meta-* of metaphor, the prefix which names its properties of change and exchange, ceases to exist. In the political economy of *The Politics*, Aristotle classifies as improper the exchange (*metabletike*) which leads to money-making. But this profit manifests itself only with the figurative and valuative functions of material currency, which in turn exists only under the condition that certain geo-political *places* have already been established. In a sense, these areas need only be defined by a generic inside/outside opposition. Thus, because law and order are prerequisites of a stable economy, the impropriety of *exchange*, in the Aristotelian sense of the word, is a product of the political configurations which deem the home economy the proper one and the foreign market the improper or alien one. And if we consider the linguistic economy in this same vein we might say that what a neighbouring state--and by inference a competing one--is to a domestic economy, the metaphor is to a signifying economy.

Again, let me express my concern with issuing a simultaneous articulation of the metaphorical process and the process of political economy. Thus far I have tried to establish what might be called a classical exchange on metaphor and economy, a classical exchange of ideas regarding metaphor and material exchange. I am not suggesting that the convergence between metaphor and political economy is as simple as 'metaphor = commodity'; I am, however, endeavouring to point out the general functions of *economy* and *exchange* (in their transformative or substitutive functions) prevalent in both systems. It is in my political interest to regard the phenomenon of metaphor as an economical one and the phenomenon of commodity exchange as a semiotic one, and I do this not so much for reasons of simplification as for the sake of desegregating the fields of economic and linguistic knowledge. As such, I find it necessary to concur with Roman Jakobson who, in his landmark essay "Linguistics in Relation to Other Sciences," writes that money is "a semiotic system" and that linguistics is the best tool for analyzing the

monetary "medium of communication" (665, 666); with Talcott Parsons' *Sociological Theory and Modern Society*, in which language is perceived as the prototypical mechanism of social interaction, one which "can serve as a major point of reference when discussing the case of money" (357); and also with Jean Baudrillard, who writes the following in *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*:

The extension of the critique of political economy to the sign and to systems of signs is required in order to show how the logic, free play and circulation of signifiers is organized like the logic of the exchange value system. (129)

It is out of more than a political interest, however, that I advocate this double gesture of political and linguistic economy, for my interest also lies in a necessarily synchronic exposition of the ideological root of the metaphorical process and the material conditions of political economy. Very generally, then, I follow the Marx of *The German Ideology*, who wrote of the need to link the world of culture and ideas and language (the superstructure) with the world of material human conditions (the economic base). This "link" is at best an association; it will not be asserted as a hierarchical system. And it is from this ideological position that I find it necessary to *converge* linguistic systems with politico-economic ones, and it is with this in mind that I introduce Marx into the subject at hand.

Rather than begin by posing Marx *against* the classical Aristotelian perception of economy, perhaps it would be useful to locate a place of *resemblance*. In *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx quotes from Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*: "'Thou visible God!/ That solder'st close impossibilities,/And Mak'st them kiss'"(165). The reference is clearly to money and the context in which it appears indicates that for Marx this "visible God" is really a demon whose figurative role it is to make equal that which is not equal, thereby contributing to discrimination among the social classes. Money, he writes, is "[t]he equation of the incompatible" (163), it is the figure of greed and profiteering; and, in a passage remarkably similar to the Aristotle of *The Politics*, he claims that money "arises

naturally out of exchange" (165). *Grundrisse*, like *The Politics*, is loaded with negative remarks on exchange in the political economy. For both Aristotle and Marx exchange is a harmful figure of greed and exploitation. Where as Aristotle writes of the *im*-propriety of exchange, Marx writes of its *im*-morality:

The exchangeability of all products, activities and relations with a third, *objective* entity which can be re-exchanged [money] for everything *without distinction* --that is, the development of exchange values (and of money relations) is identical with universal venality, corruption. (163)

Exchange is a product of the figurative power of money, which in turn is a figurative product of certain established geo-political places. For Marx, items and properties exchanged within an economy are signs of corruption, just as for Aristotle chrematistical exchange is a sign of a mismanaged household. The possibility of exchanging one item for another owes its existence to the figurative power of money, which not only discharges the use-value of property in an economy but also functions as a measurement of one's wealth over another and is the sole figure of surplus-value, and hence the cause of the exploitation of one class by another.²

Yet if we look elsewhere in the body of Marx's writing we find that he contests his own desire to deride exchange and exchange-value. In *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* Marx no less than eliminates the opposition between exchange-value and use-value, the same opposition which he so clearly relies upon in other works. And this prefiguration of deconstructive thinking comes in the form of an explanation of the function of production and consumption in political economy:

Production is not only simultaneously consumption, and consumption simultaneously production; nor is production only a means of consumption and consumption the purpose of production . . . in other words, each of them is not only simultaneously the other, and not merely the cause of the other, but each of them by being carried through creates the other, it creates itself as the other. (198)

Production is consumption in the sense that it produces, or supplies, the object of consumption and also produces the specific mode of consumption. On the other hand, consumption is production to the extent that a product becomes a product only through consumption and when the consumption of an

item manifests itself in the act of self-annihilation another product must be produced to fill the vacancy left by the consumed good. For example, the production of a shoe is at once its material manufacture and also its use as a shoe because the initial production occurs only under the condition that the product will eventually be consumed. The consumption of the shoe, its employment from production to destruction, not only completes the process of production, for the consumption of the shoe fulfills its status as a product, but also facilitates the production of more shoes. The political economy, then, is characterized by a perpetual and simultaneous state of production/consumption, consumption/production.

Exchange occurs somewhere in the midst of this productive and consumptive synchrony. Marx defines exchange as "an intermediate phase between production and distribution" (204), which means that it occurs between the creation of a physical good and its subsequent destruction. One of the presuppositions of this notion of the simultaneity of production and consumption is an economy based on exchange, the existence of which determines that items or properties manufactured in it must be classified as commodities. Commodities differ from manufactured products in that they are particular characteristics of what Marx calls a capitalist economy, but what we might call a free enterprise system. "All economies produce products," writes Menghad Desai in his *Marxian Economics*, "only in capitalism do products take the form of commodities. Commodities are produced mainly, if not entirely, for exchange" (19). The difference between a commodity and a product, then, is the difference between exchange-value and use-value. A commodity is produced for the purpose of exchange; a product is produced for the purpose of use.

In *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx argues that "[t]he commodity . . . is the direct unity of use-value and exchange-value" (41), thereby dissolving the curiously Marxist distinction between a product's use-value and a commodity's exchange-value. He continues: "[t]he commodity *is* a use-value . . . but as a commodity it is simultaneously *not* a use-value" (42). It is, in other words, both itself and its other, which in this case means that it

is both a commodity and a product. In a capitalist or free-enterprise economy the commodity is a use-value for its proprietor only to the extent that it possesses exchange-value, that is to say its use *is* its exchangeability and the value accruing to its status as product is actually exchange-value.

To *become* a use-value, the commodity must encounter the particular need which it can satisfy. Thus the use-values of commodities *become* use-values by a mutual exchange of places: they pass from the hands of those for whom they were means of exchange into the hands of those for whom they serve as consumer goods. (42)

And here Marx exemplifies the simultaneity of the two values:

Bread, for instance, in passing from the baker to the consumer does not change its character as bread. It is rather that the consumer treats it as a use-value, as a particular foodstuff, whereas so long as it was in the hands of the baker it was simply representative of an economic relation, a concrete and at the same time an abstract thing. (42)

In an exchange economy a commodity possesses both use-value and exchange-value. Its use-value is in fact determined by its exchangeability in relation to the exchangeability of all other commodities; its exchange-value is simultaneously determined by its ability to function as an item worthy of being used. The deconstruction of the oppositions use/exchange, use-value/exchange-value, production/consumption, and product/commodity, then, occurs in Marx's own admission that manufactured properties can not so readily be classified as possessing characteristics of *either* use *or* exchange, but rather must possess characteristics of both at once. Yet so much of Marx's writing hinges directly upon the notion of surplus-value, which is produced both by monetary values affixed to commodities in an exchange economy and also by the theoretical distinction between use and exchange. His contention in *Grundrisse* that "the development of exchange-values (and of money relations) is identical with universal venality and corruption" (163) is deconstructed in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* in so far as the exploitation and class struggle produced by exchange-value can not be seen as a particular feature of a capitalist or free enterprise system, produced by a self-constituted value determined in and of itself. On the contrary, a commodity's exchange-value is inextricably caught up with its

status as a product possessing use-value and as such it must be re-thought not only as a function of the figurative power of money but also as a value directly commensurate with its *use-ability*. All of which means that the history of the confrontation between social classes--indeed all of history--is as much a product of an item simply being employed by a user as much as it is a product of venal commodity exchange.

Marx's specific example of the bread passing from the baker to the consumer also provides us with a sound theory with which to re-think Aristotle's classical economic treatise. We recall that the shoe in Aristotle's example manifests itself as an impropriety in the economy only after it enters into a transaction and is subsequently exchanged for another item. In this case the shoe is used improperly if it is exchanged. According to the Marx of the *Grundrisse* this shoe would also constitute such an impropriety, for its mobilization in an exchange economy is facilitated by its monetary worth, the figure of which is a coin or paper money. But in his *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* Marx severely qualifies the oppositions use/exchange and product/commodity by dissolving the difference between them. Keeping this condition in mind we might suggest that Marx would say to Aristotle that the shoe constitutes no more of an impropriety than the loaf of bread, for the shoe, in passing from one owner to the next, "does not change its character" *as a shoe*. Instead, it is considered as a use-value by the new owner, just as it had previously been treated as an exchange-value by the initial owner. Thus, Aristotle's distinction between the proper and improper uses of a good is reversed to the extent that the initial use or exchange-value is deemed improper in regards to its ultimate (post-exchange) use or use-value.

At this point permit me to again exchange the political economy for the economy of language. And let me promote this exchange by briefly citing from Allen Hoey's essay "The Name on the Coin: Metaphor, Metonymy, and Money": "[i]n the language of Marx's theory of commodities and money, the exchange-value of language is its use-value" (29). Hoey's primary concern is the function of money as a figure of human labour, and as such he first poses Marx against himself--that is,

against the all too quick distinction between use-value and exchange-value in *Grundrisse* --and then against the classical notion of metaphor. In effect he is drawing an equation between use-value and exchange-value, the very same thing which we have already done above with both Aristotle and Marx. "Monetary value," he writes, "is bound with inscription" (31). Hoey emphasizes the proximity between political economy and language, the site of which is the place reserved for the inscription on a coin, which is in turn the metaphor par excellence in the political economy. His immediate concern is showing how language is inherently metaphorical, and that its value is therefore exchange-value (metaphorical, figured as currency) and not use-value.

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My immediate concern, however, is not with Hoey's essay but with Derrida's *White Mythology*, and it is this work which I pose as a critique of classical perceptions of the metaphorical process, much in the same way that Marx (at least in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*) figured as a deconstructive critic of classical perceptions of the political economy. Almost at the beginning of *White Mythology* there is a brief but crucial reference to an episode in Anatole France's *The Garden of Epicurus*. It is cited in order to demonstrate the notion of the "certain wear and tear of metaphorical force in philosophical intercourse" (6). Derrida is interested in the apparently necessary paradox of explaining the concept of philosophical metaphor *using* other metaphors:

We can have no access to the wear and tear of a linguistic phenomenon without giving it some kind of figurative representation. What could be the wear and tear *properly so-called* of a word, a statement, a meaning, a text? (7)

There is no escaping the metaphoric world when trying to explain it; there is simply no other world to resort to. Nor is there a "*properly so-called*" word with which one can literally step out of figurative representation. This is a rule of the linguistic economy. And *The Garden of*

Epicurus functions as an example "of this metaphor of the wear and tear of metaphor," for in it the two speakers, Aristos and Polyphilos, are engaged in a dialogue on the nature of metaphysical language. They are, as Derrida reminds us, "concerned precisely with that sensible figure which is sheltered . . . in every metaphysical concept" (7). Perhaps this "sensible figure" is the material prefiguration of an immaterial word or text, the real germ from which a concept springs. Perhaps it is some sort of primordial base which precedes the cultivated world of figurative abstractions and textual superstructures. "Abstract notions always conceal a sensible figure. It seems that the history of metaphysical language is commingled with the erasing of what is effective in it, the wearing out of its effigy" (7). An abstract notion, then, is not only an abstract notion, but it is also the home to a sensible figure, a figure different from the notion which derived from it but a figure nonetheless which is that notion's very condition of possibility. In short, metaphysical language is characterized by a process of evolution in which its own image is, as it were, destroyed. As Derrida puts it, what is "effective" in metaphysical language is the real or sensible source of every concept, but at the same time this origin is equally and paradoxically worthy of destruction. Indeed, the *effect* of this sensible figure is constituted by its erasure and consequent *ineffectiveness* .

The metaphysical term annihilates itself, in so far as "itself" is constituted by an originary and sensible figure, and it conserves itself to the extent that it continues to operate in the form of metaphysical language. This antipodal movement maintains an economy of profitable loss, a system in which depreciation and accretion are engaged in a curious relationship of prudent exchange. And in so far as it is profit and loss, this movement reintroduces the Marxist concept of production as consumption and consumption as production. Polyphilos is referring to precisely this double gesture when he says of the metaphysician, "[b]y this needy knife-grinder's activity words are changed from a physical to a metaphorical acceptance. It is obvious that they lose in the process; what they gain by it is not so immediately apparent" (8). This grinding business--which is itself, as Derrida tells us, "a figure to signify the figurative"--is undertaken by the metaphysicians who,

being in demand of a *sense*-less language, must efface the sensible origin in every word they employ in order to rid it of its materiality. In effect, what they are doing is altering the nature of a certain capital investment by reinvesting it with their own brand of ideological worth. The loss, as Polyphilos concedes, is "obvious," because it is a sensible one. On the other hand, the profit "is not so immediately apparent," clearly because it is documented as an abstract concept. This frugal devaluation liberates the word from its material past and invests in it a metaphysical future. The sense is bankrupt; the metaphysical remnant is deemed solvent by an almost political act on the part of the metaphysicians.

The term which Derrida invests as somewhat of a philosophical catchword of the episode in *The Garden of Epicurus* is the French word "usure," a term which signifies the dual process of profit and loss characteristic of metaphysical language. Its import is twofold, for not only does it signify a kind of wearing or "erasure by rubbing," it also suggests a kind of "usury." And on this "usury" Derrida says it is "the additional product of a certain capital, the process of exchange which, far from losing the stake, would make that original wealth bear fruit, would increase the return from it in the form of income, of higher interest, of a kind of linguistic surplus value" (7). The two "inseparable" senses of the French word "usure" name two contradictory yet necessarily synchronic movements within the evolutionary process of metaphysical language: erasure and usury. Let me add to Derrida's figure's for "usure" and introduce another economic metaphor, that of "opportunity cost,"³ in order to extend this figuration of the figural process. In this particular linguistic economy certain properties of a word are not only the favoured properties of metaphysical investment, but that this privileging occurs only at the expense of other properties. In this metaphysical system one economizes, that is one exercises a definitive choice by decreasing the significance of the sensible while simultaneously increasing the investment climate surrounding the conceptual. Similarly, the desire to increase productivity in one sector of the political economy must necessarily correspond with a decrease in another sector's productivity.

This is a rule of political economy. In our example an opportunity is taken in which the metaphysical properties of a word are privileged, and the word's sensible origin is the cost which arises as a result of this reallocation of priorities. The immediate difference, of course, is that in a political economy the numbers of an actual material good are decreased after the numbers of another equally material good are increased. The operation here takes place as a result of the movement of two separate items. In the linguistic economy of *The Garden of Epicurus*, however, Derrida suggests that the opportunity cost is captured in the single word "usure," thus the emphasis here is on the binary nature of the *single* word. This word at once names a state of loss ("erasure by rubbing") and profit ("linguistic surplus value"), the simultaneity of which is constitutive of both an opportunity *and* a cost. In the example of *The Garden of Epicurus* the opportunity cost of increased abstraction is a certain amount of concretion. The initial investment is a sensible one; the return, however, takes the form of an immaterial, metaphysical concept.

While on the subject of *The Garden of Epicurus*, Derrida refers to the profitability which accrues when a sensible figure is dropped by a metaphysical notion as the result of a certain "process of exchange" that leads to the creation of a kind of "linguistic surplus value" (7). Of course Derrida is here following the Marxist conception of surplus value as a price which arises as a *product* of the production process and simultaneously as the value which makes production itself possible. Surplus value is both investment and return. In *Grundrisse* Marx argues that surplus value is "*presupposed*" to all prices and that it is "realized only in circulation" (321), thereby indicating that it is both the originary incentive for production and the value which derived and extracted from the production process in the form of profit. Thus, the surplus values of both Marx and Derrida designate values not only over and above the initial investment, but also values of an inherently metaphysical character. As Marx tells us, surplus value "is greater than that which was present in the original components of capital. In effect, this value has no material referent or purchasing power, it has, in other words, no immediately perceptible referent. For Marx it is

responsible for the exploitation of the labouring classes, therefore it signifies a *difference* rather than a material condition. In other words, it names an ideological or perceptive condition, not a tangible or quantitative difference. Indeed the import is philosophical; the metaphor, however, is definitely economic. And all of this brings to mind some of the issues discussed above, namely Aristotle's notion that profit is a product of a transaction in a commodity exchange system. The additional value in this metaphysical system is wrought by the loss of the sensible, and the surplus is that nonsensible or immaterial metaphor which remains as the "fruit" of the "original wealth," the metaphysical income which rises out of an initial physical investment.

Profit (*chrematistike*) in the Aristotelian economy is a product of an exchange of commodities, it manifests itself only with the advent of *technikos* and the political will to reap profits over and above those garnered by one's neighbours. It is this methodical exchange and ancillary profiteering that Aristotle condemns as harmful to humanity in his critique of political economy, and it is precisely this same process of exchange and reaping of "linguistic surplus value" which Polyphilos criticizes in *The Garden of Epicurus*. Here is Derrida on what he perceives to be Polyphilos' "implicit logic":

Polyphilos, it seems, wants to preserve the capital intact, or rather, to preserve the natural wealth which precedes the accumulation of capital, the original virtue of the sensible image which is deflowered and spoilt by the history of the concept. In this way he presupposes . . . that at its origins language could have been purely sensory, and that the *etymon* of a primitive meaning, though hidden, can always be determined. (8)

According to Derrida, Polyphilos is almost religiously bent upon privileging the hidden *sense* of a metaphysical notion at the expense of the obvious metaphorical one. He is suggesting that this Greek is an anti-metaphysic, one who characterizes the historical passage from "the physical to the metaphysical" in terms of a process of "degradation" (8). "The vocabulary of mankind was framed from sensuous images," says Polyphilos, "and this sensuousness is to be found . . . even in the technical terms concocted by metaphysicians." This sense is inscribed within the term much like an original engraving is inscribed into a concrete building and remains there after its name has

been changed. And then Derrida says this of Polyphilos' theory: "The primitive meaning, the original figure, always sensible and material . . . is not exactly a metaphor. It is a kind of transparent figure, equivalent to a proper meaning" (8-9). There is, then, a material origin from which our vocabulary springs, an origin which is, at least for Derrida, perceived as something "kind of" like a literal or proper ground. And for Polyphilos this origin is more valuable than the state of derivation, or rather deprivation, characteristic of metaphor, and partially because it is, as Derrida predictably notes, perceived as a *proper* place.

From out of the proper sense of an original word we have a fructification, the product of which is improper metaphor. Interestingly, the principle through which impropriety manifests itself in this linguistic economy also functions in the political economy, for the sense becomes the metaphor only "when put in circulation in philosophical discourse" (9). This "circulation" operates in a strikingly similar fashion to the "exchange" of Aristotle's political economy which, as we recall from above, can either take the form of a natural redistribution of property or an unnatural system of profit-maximization. The parallels exist not only between Aristotle's perceived propriety of the natural economy and Polyphilos' similar privileging of the sensual or primitive meaning of a word, and the derivative impropriety of the chrematistical economy and metaphorical meaning, but the most important similarity is the point at which each propriety is said to *become* an impropriety. For Aristotle this point is the often unclear moment in which "use" becomes "exchange"; for Polyphilos the point is marked by the labour of the metaphysicians, who work to efface the sensible image of a word, but who can do so only after it has been "used." Moreover, upon completion of their task we are told that the metaphysicians say this of the newly *coined* words: "'we have freed them from all limits of time and space; they are not worth five shillings any more; they are of an inestimable value, and their exchange value is extended indefinitely'" (7-8). The metaphysicians, like the conniving speculators of Aristotle's chrema-

tistical economy, measure their profits against the exchangeability of the items within their respective economies. Figuring forth from a state of "use," the words enter not only into a simple exchange, but into an exchange in which "their exchange value is extended indefinitely." Indeed, their value is, much like the exchange-value of items within a political economy, simply and indefinitely based upon their exchangeability: the more they can be mobilized in an exchange system the more their worth. That is, their worth or value is not inherent in them, rather it is determined solely on the basis of what they can be exchanged for. In a sense this value is a result of the dematerialization of the word. The original word, of course, has a sense-reference. When its sense is negated it is freed up and allowed to move liberally within the economy of language, investing itself with various meanings and imports.

We have already learned from Marx that the distinction between an item's use-value and exchange-value is a dangerously impetuous one. "The commodity," he writes, "is a use-value . . . but as a commodity it is simultaneously *not* a use-value" (42). Here, as elsewhere in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx emphasizes the necessarily dual role of the commodity: it can be *used* as an item, in which case its materiality is immediately destroyed; or it can be introduced into an exchange system, in which case its sensuality, or that which characterizes it as an object to be consumed, is hidden in order that its exchange-value might be realized. Because its exchange-value increases at the expense of its use-value, the opportunity cost of exchanging a commodity is in fact a measure of its use-value. Every transaction involving a commodity involves a simultaneous act of deference on the part of that commodity's usefulness. In fact the function of the commodity is similar to the "ground" word in the *Garden of Epicurus*, whose *use*-fulness is present but remains hidden in its figurative state of effacement. The word possesses both (material) use-value *and* (figurative) exchange-value, much in the same way that a commodity is comprised of both use-value and exchange-value in Marx's political economy.

"What is white mythology?" Derrida asks. He answers: "It is metaphysics which has

effaced in itself that fabulous scene which brought it into being, and which yet remains, active and stirring, inscribed in white ink, an invisible drawing covered over in the palimpsest" (11). Polyphilos refers to this same (in)visibility when he says of the metaphysicians' abstractions that their "primitive and concrete meaning . . . lurks invisible yet present under the abstract" (8). And it is in my interest to suggest that this same process is functioning in Marx's critique of political economy when he writes of the commingled state of use and exchange. In a state of exchange the commodity's use-value remains "invisible yet present" within the abstract value which moderates the entire transaction. Perhaps the "palimpsest" can even serve as an apt metaphor for the curious simultaneity of exchange and use values in the political economy, in which case the use-value of a commodity resembles the original text which is partially erased in order to accommodate different subsequent texts.

CHAPTER THREE

BEYOND PROFIT AND LOSS: HEGEL, DERRIDA, AND MARX ON *FIGURATIVE DETOURS*

Our system here is linguistic; our controlling metaphors, however, are economic. But whether in the field of language or in the region of economics, the currency of metaphor invests itself with a curious propensity for unlimited capital returns. Indeed, how can we *not* write about metaphors? Or how can we write at all without referring or having recourse to metaphors? For even as I write I produce a kind of white mythology, and all white mythologies are labourious processes of metaphorization, the wage of which is financed by some metaphysical account. Metaphorization, as Derrida calls it in *White Mythology*, "is nothing but a movement of idealization" (25), and idealization, at least in the Hegelian sense of the word, refers to a process of metaphorical labour in which a word's original or proper meaning is effaced, transferred into a metaphorical signification, and finally deposited with a proper spiritual meaning. Thus the process names the movement from material to ideal sense, the movement from the sensuous *world*, through a "figurative detour," and finally to an ideal state. This is a labour process whose output at once constitutes and is constituted by an array of primary metaphysical oppositions: namely that of material/ideal, but also the correlative oppositions sense/spirit, nature/culture, proper/improper, and profit/loss. In this chapter I will attempt further to incorporate Derridean and Marxist cultural theories by suggestively comparing Marx's theory of objectified and alienated labour to Derrida's reading of the metaphysical concept of metaphor and the metaphors at work in the concept of metaphysics. More to the point, what concerns me here is the striking similarity

both in form and content between the linguistic process of metaphorization/idealization and Marx's economic concept of the objectification of labour and the production of a fetishistic society. As I see it, both processes are circumscribed by the metaphor of labour--indeed, both are circumscribed by *figurative detours* --and in both cases the labour factor is the transformative agent which leads to a proper economy comprised of proper identities. And perhaps I should also add that since the subject of my entire project regards, in one way or another, the antagonistic metaphors of the *material* and the *ideal*, a reading of idealization in language and the objectification of labour, the articulation of Derrida alongside of Marx, represents a reciprocal neutralization¹ of these opposed figures.

In the second chapter of *White Mythology*, "More and No More Metaphor,"² Derrida's explanation as to why it is impossible to write a general taxonomy of philosophical metaphors leads directly to our problem. He claims that such a "metaphorology" would presuppose the answers to the very problems which "generate the whole of philosophy and its history" (28). The problems are not only the series of tropological oppositions and the metaphorically generated concepts which insinuate themselves into all philosophical discussions of metaphor by virtue of their constructive functions; they arise also from the fact that metaphor is a "classical philosophical element," and as such it is a "metaphysical concept" (18). Metaphor is therefore a part of the very field (philosophy) which it would be such a metaphorology's purpose to subsume. We learn from Derrida that metaphor is "the product of a network of elements of philosophy which themselves correspond to tropes and figures and are coeval with them or systematically bound to them. This stratum of 'founding' tropes, this layer of 'first' elements of philosophy . . . cannot be subsumed" (18). Nor can philosophy get an objective grip on a potential theory of metaphor, or a meta-metaphorics, for it has no power to exercise within the field of "general tropology and metaphorics." Metaphor is a producer to the extent that it is at the root of philosophy and occupies a formative space in all theories of itself; and metaphor is a product because it is generated by what

Derrida calls "elements of philosophy." Indeed, the problem for Derrida is precisely the uncanny nature with which metaphor and philosophy find themselves woven into the same theory. It is neither metaphor nor philosophy which would underlie and sustain a potential meta-metaphorics; rather, it is a questionable number of intersecting philosophical and metaphorical processes working towards the production of what Derrida calls "white mythology," or the myth of a philosophy that could be perfectly abstracted from the semantic pull of metaphor, or of a metaphorology that could be removed from the realm of philosophy.

In this same chapter Derrida cites a lengthy passage from the second volume of Hegel's *The Philosophy of Fine Arts*, and in it he finds a nexus from which to process his thesis regarding the impossibility of classifying metaphors and developing a strategy of metaphorology according to the process of metaphorization. Hegel, he claims, applies his own "dialectical logic" to the process of metaphorization which underwrites the entire process as a general movement away from the physical world and towards a spiritual or ideal world. (This of course is in keeping with his quintessentially idealistic philosophy.) For the sake of economy I will highlight only parts of Hegel's passage here:

'[E]very language includes within its own compass a host of metaphors. They arise from the fact that a word, which in the first instance merely designates something entirely sensuous (*nur etwas ganz sinnliches bedeutet*), is carried over (*übertragen wird*) into a spiritual sphere (*auf Geistiges*).

Words thus pass through a stage in which they are stripped of their material reference, what Derrida parenthetically calls a "figurative detour," and are then invested with a purely mental import, what Hegel calls a "spiritual" meaning. At this second non-sensual stage the word is a metaphor because it possesses an improper or derivative signification. Indeed, the word passes the stage in which it is implicitly connected with a physical sense and then transported to the spiritual realm, but for Hegel a word's ultimate destination is neither in a physical state nor is it in this state of metaphysical displacement. Rather, it is in the ideal state or spiritual sense. Here is Hegel on a word's movement away from an improper metaphorical designation:

'By degrees, however, the metaphorical aspect disappears in the general use (*im Gebrauche*) of such a word, which as the current coin of language (*durch die Gewohnheit*) is converted from an expression which is not strictly accurate (*uneigentliche*) to one that is so.'
(cited in Derrida, 24)

In Hegel's historical schema a word is bound to pass through and resolve itself within this dialectical process of sense/spirit, and of course this passage is facilitated by a "figurative detour," an evolutionary movement away from the ordinary sensuous signification. In effect, a word evolves from the primal state of a purely physical or material designation into a signification which is spiritual or purely mental in import *because of* metaphor. Of course the form of this movement is quintessentially idealistic, for inscribed into its entire process is a *telos* of spiritual rather than material propriety and purpose. Moreover, this process also names the entire project of metaphysics as one which necessarily resides beyond the sensuous or real world in order to avoid the problem of referentiality.³ The system which overrides idealism and metaphysics, however, is governed neither by idealism nor materialism, but by metaphor.

In *The Philosophy of Fine Arts* Hegel uses as an example of the process of metaphorization the German term "*fassen*," a verb which, as Derrida notes, translates as "to grasp," but which also means "to seize," "to catch," or "to apprehend." According to Hegel this term is "connected with the process of thought." It is not associated with the original sense-reference of literally grasping or seizing a physical object, rather its metaphorical reference is with what Hegel calls a "second spiritual" designation of mental comprehension or understanding. The word has thus been *seized* from its original sense-reference and manufactured into a metaphor designating an act of the mind rather than an act of physical grasping. "*Fassen*" is the name given to the apprehensive and possessive process of mental cognition. Of course its original sense-reference remains actively inscribed as a familiar image (that of grasping) within the horizons of its new mental (metaphorical) identity, but this origin has in Hegel's words been "abandoned and exchanged for the meaning applicable to the mind." Through time, however, the metaphorical feature "disappears," which is to say that the "image" of physically *grasping* is

negated while the abstract "import" of the action is preserved. At this stage "the image merely immediately presents the abstract significance itself instead of a concrete mode of vision." In effect Hegel uses the term "*fassen*" as an example because it is one which has undergone the binary process of first becoming a metaphor and then subsequently becoming disfigured. This evolution or movement within the oppositional system figuration/disfiguration marks not only the life and death movements of a metaphor but also, as Derrida points out, the general rule of idealism, which is the *telos* of an ultimate spiritual propriety and purpose or a privileging of the ideal within the opposition material/ideal.

What is of particular interest to Derrida is that in Hegel's idealistic thesis there is an implicit dialectical logic at work sustaining the movement of a word as it passes from a material designation to an ideal one. After a word departs from the field of material or sensuous designation, thereby becoming a metaphor, it invariably sheds all traces of its improper metaphoricity and (once again) becomes an expression that is, at least in the ideal sense, "strictly accurate." It is a temporary absence from proper or accurate signification and it is demarcated only by the metaphorical attributes given the word while it is on the detour leading away from--but ultimately towards--a proper reference. For example, when the term "*fassen*" moves from a material to an ideal signification the movement is authorized by a negation of the impropriety imbedded within the term when it is used as a metaphor. There is a curious metaphorical aspect to the process of metaphorization, then, and it comes to light precisely when the signification of a word is "carried over (*übertragen wird*)" from sensuality to ideality. Here is what Derrida thinks about the interesting position of the figure of metaphor within this process of figuration and disfiguration:

To this distinction between metaphors in action and metaphors that have been effaced corresponds the traditional contrast between living and dead metaphors. Above all, the movement of metaphorization (the origin and then the effacing of the metaphor, the passing from a proper sensible meaning to a proper spiritual meaning through a figurative detour) is nothing but a movement of idealization. And it is covered by the master category of dialectical idealism, namely *sublation* (*Aufhebung*), that is, that memory which produces signs and interiorizes them (*Erinnerung*) by raising up, suppressing and conserving sensible exteriority. (25)

The entire process hinges on a temporary metaphorical displacement, a "figurative detour" which transports the word first into and then out of an improper metaphorical reference. And this detour is not really temporary; on the contrary, it is a permanent fixture within the process of metaphorization and idealism. As such, this alternative path *around* proper signification, this indirect road leading from the sensuous to the spiritual world, is the very precondition of idealism. As in the case regarding the term "*fassen*," the original sense-reference of *grasping* is foregone in favour of the purely mental import of *grasping* as cognition and a cognitive process.

The means by which a movement is made between the physical world and the ideal or spiritual one, but more importantly the process of the transcendence itself, occurs within the domain of metaphor. Indeed, it might be said of the entire opposition that it is the product of a metaphorical "detour." What is not immediately clear, however, is what this "detour" is a deviation from or what work area it conceals. As Hegel and Derrida present it to us, this "figurative detour" marks not so much the intersection or interstice between the physical and the spiritual, but rather the evolution or maturity of the sense-reference of a word into a projected higher spiritual domain. It is not, then, a simple matter of a horizontal shift from one realm of being to another. On the contrary, it is a movement upwards, indeed it is as Derrida suggests "nothing but a movement of idealization" (25). But at the same time the term "detour" is etymologically connected with a "turning or deviation from the *direct* road" (*OED*, italics mine), and as such brings with its usage an association with an *indirect* route taken in order to avoid a hazardous site of construction or repair. The "figurative detour" is therefore contrary to the "'economizing' view of metaphor," what Derrida himself calls *the* "classical theory of metaphor" (20). For if in fact a metaphor establishes itself within the shoulders of a detour, and if it marks an indirect or round-about route away from a proper course, then it must be true that it is actually an imprudent and difficult (and hence, *un*-economical) route to take. It is characterized by a devious rather than a direct (dis)course. In effect, this means that the passage from sensuous to

spiritual signification, the archetypical movement of idealism, signifies an improper or covert process.

It is a classical feature of theories of metaphor that they are grounded out in pronounced philosophical distinctions such as proper/improper, direct/deviant, original/derivative, or natural/unnatural. Derrida addresses precisely this issue when he discusses *Les Metaphores de Platon* and Pierre Louis' attempt to classify metaphors according to the regions of their origin. Such a taxonomy, Derrida concludes, would invoke the tropological oppositions which are implicated in theories of metaphor and would thus make the entire system a product of what it is trying to subsume. As a matter of economy there are regions which are originary, and they give us "physical, animal, and biological metaphors" (19). This is the realm of the purely physical; it is concretion at its finest. Within these discourses there is no process or system simply because everything is in a state of physical being. To be sure, this first region is an extreme version of the sensuous world. Unlike this primary world, the second set of regions are preceded by natural progenitors. Here we have the derivative discourse which "produces metaphors which are technical, artificial, economic, cultural, social, and so forth" (19). Metaphors from this group originate elsewhere, their signifieds have in some way or another been tampered with, contaminated, and in the process have been made unnatural. Both the original and derivative regions, however, intersect precisely where they are themselves constituted, within the metaphorical opposition between *physis* and *tekne*, which according to Derrida "comes into play everywhere" (19).

The site of metaphor usually demarcates the quasi-historical or evolutionary passage from the literal to the figurative, after which the figure of metaphor becomes directly associated with the underprivileged components within the philosophical system: the improper, the deviant, the derivative, and the unnatural. I. A. Richards describes this metaphysics of metaphor in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* when he poses this enigmatic question: "when a man has a wooden leg,

is it a metaphoric or literal leg?" (118). In this example the border circumscribing the field of the proper context of "leg" is defined by human anatomy in such a way that the leg a man is born with is the original one, therefore it must be equivalent to a literal (original, natural, proper) meaning. At this stage the leg is neither a sign nor a version of something else. It is a perfect equation between signifier and signified. Indeed, it is purely and properly literal. On the other hand, the wooden leg is an improper one simply because it deviates from the biological constitution of human anatomy. In essence the leg is not really *real*. Rather, it is a spiritual leg in the sense that its artificiality guarantees its secondary or derivative status. That is, the function is present even in the absence of the real leg. Although its function is generally similar to that of the real leg, the wooden alternative is a representation of an ideal concept of *leg* molded after the primary form of the human leg.

And the same system of constitutive oppositions appear in Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism*, where the author suggests that literal meaning and understanding "occupies the same place in criticism that observation, the direct exposure of the mind to nature, has in the scientific method" (81). The literal and all of the privileged parts of binary oppositions associated with it--*physis*, the original, the natural, the proper--is a realm of experience which is characterized by a direct connection between signifier and signified, between a word and a physical object. As is the case with Richards' "leg," the literal is equal to itself, it is without any rhetorical obstruction. Indeed, literal signification is as pure as a perfect physical image, the same image we might say that occupies the pre-metaphorical state in Hegel's scheme of metaphorization. The theory of metaphor so explained brings into play a classical methodology whose basis is the inconspicuous working opposition of literal/figurative, but whose subsidiary oppositions include natural/unnatural, original/derivative, and *physis/tekne*. More importantly, however, it is established by the metaphorical process at work within the figurative detour.

The "figurative detour" marks the path towards idealization, and this path is neither short-

er nor longer than the "direct" path whose parallel existence is presupposed in the usage of the term "detour." Indeed, it is not so much an alternative route at all as it is a passageway bridging the Hegelian tripartite movement from pre-metaphorical figures, to metaphors, and finally to spiritual disfiguration, the existence of which presupposes a word's final movement to a proper ideal reference. Derrida correctly points out that this governing notion of active and effaced metaphors "corresponds to the traditional contrast between living and dead metaphors" (25), which of course reinscribes the entire process of metaphorization within a larger evolutionary or quasi-historical (and hence metaphorical) framework. He does not, however, address the critical pre-metaphorical state which according to Hegel is the absolute precondition of metaphor. Of course it is from the literal that the metaphor is first born and it is according to the laws of literal meaning (namely propriety) that a metaphor is effaced. That is, Hegel's process proceeds in metaphysical fashion from the sensuous world towards the ideal. Indeed, the entire "figurative detour" is grounded first and foremost in the existence of a literal understanding occupying a place of signification within the *real* world. What interests Derrida is Hegel's system of metaphorization and its consequent reliance upon strategic binary oppositions and a dialectical system of logic, for it points directly to the dangerous tropological oppositions which are the very objects of Derrida's deconstructive critique. The entire Hegelian theory is permeated with a tacit idealism which forces onto language a framework in which ultimate and proper signification is made possible only after the sensuous world has been thoroughly transcended. All of this, as it were, is inextricably involved with the process of metaphorization, because it is through this process that a word's original sense-reference is displaced by a "proper spiritual" one. Idealism, then, at least in the Hegelian sense, is administered through a process of metaphorization, which is itself an idealistic procedure.

Derrida claims that the system of idealization and the complementary process of metaphorization constitutes the somewhat troublesome system of tropological oppositions--"the

opposition between nature and spirit, nature and history, or nature and freedom, an opposition genealogically linked to that between *physis* and its opposites, and at the same time to that between the sensible and the spiritual, the sensible and the intelligible, the sensible and sense itself (*sinnlich/Sinn*)"--on which the very concept of metaphysics rests. "Nowhere is this system more explicit than in Hegel . . . and the concept of metaphor so defined belongs to him." Indeed, this entire system of metaphors "describes . . . the possibility of metaphysics" (25), for not only does it produce philosophical metaphors and thereby sustain philosophy itself, but it also names precisely the figurative detour which presents itself as an interstice between the physical and the spiritual or metaphysical world. Thus the binary logic which circumscribes the opposition material/ideal and thereby straddles the distinction between "living" and "dead" metaphors is the classical operative in Hegel's writings on metaphor, but in addition to possessing this figurative role it is also an operative which produces a surplus of metaphysical oppositions, all of which can be more or less called by-products of the Hegelian master concept of *Aufhebung*.

If the concept of *Aufhebung* is the theoretical means of production of metaphysics, then the concept of metaphor and the related system of oppositions are its outputs. In its most literal sense the term *Aufhebung* is a noun which designates simultaneously the two contradictory movements of conservation and destruction. In the "Translator's Preface" to *Of Grammatology*, Gayatri Spivak says of *Aufhebung* that it is "a relationship between two terms where the second at once annuls the first and lifts it up into a higher sphere of existence" (xi). In this sense perhaps it might be seen as an economic force which produces concepts in true dialectical fashion, namely by employing a process through which a logical concept or category evolves and preserves itself only by cancelling within itself any hint of a contradiction or illogicality. *Aufhebung* is, as Derrida writes early on in *White Mythology*, "a unity of gain and loss" (9). It signifies a profit to the extent that it conserves a trace of a word's sensuous origin, and a loss because it provides for the destruction of the sensual reference and a simultaneous privileging of the spiritual realm. And

it is strategically connected with the concept of metaphor, and even more so with the philosophical position of *idealism*, in so far as it prefigures the process of metaphORIZATION, the movement of negating and conserving the sensual or material world, which is the originary (non-)figure of every word. Without this originary concept the process of metaphORIZATION would not occur. It is a tool of idealism which allows an original sense-reference to be at once retained (as the origin of a certain general image) and cancelled (and displaced by a spiritual sense). Or according to Derrida, it is the "memory which produces signs and interiorizes them (*Erinnerung*) by raising up, suppressing and conserving sensible exteriority" (25). Perhaps I might suggest that the *Aufhebung* is a vast structure or process of rationalization in which the simplicity of dialectical structures is preserved at the expense of all those constitutive components within each opposed term which in fact constitute their negation. This structural metaphor would by extension also implicate all of those binary or philosophical oppositions which, as Derrida tells us in *White Mythology*, sustain an entire philosophical and metaphysical tradition. *Aufhebung*, then, in its capacity as a generator of the opposition between sense and spirit, *physis* and *tekne*, and material and ideal, is the very condition of possibility of metaphysics.

It is also the memory which, according to Derrida, "produces" and "interiorizes" signs, and as such it is closely connected with the empirical categorization which accompanies a metaphorology based on the senses (as Hegel's is). Hegel proposes a taxonomy of metaphors based on an understanding of their sensuous origins; but even such a noble project entails using metaphors. "We might," Derrida says, "be tempted to analyze such content according to the classical concepts of the senses" (26). Of course we would use a criteria based on sight, hearing, touch, and even smell and taste, but we would invariably run into a figurative detour. Or as Derrida puts it:

But we should find, corresponding to this empirical aesthetics of sensible contents, a corresponding transcendental and formal aesthetics of metaphors which would be the condition of possibility for the empirical aesthetics. We should be led back by it to the a priori forms of space and time. (26)

That space and time exist within the mind prior to any empirical experience, indeed that their function is that of original forms, is no less than an inconvenient figurative detour on the road to metaphorology, a science of metaphor. Yet, as Derrida points out, the significance of these two *ur*-categories is considerable, for how can we use "sense" as a determining metaphorological category without using the categories of space and time? "How could we know what is meant by the temporalizing or spatializing of a sense or meaning, an ideal object, an intelligible tenor, without elucidating the meaning of 'space' and 'time'?" (27). And none of this can be explained without metaphor. Indeed, how can we deploy the space/time opposition without first (and metaphorically) describing what both space and time are? It is doubtless that we cannot. This is because the opposition itself is the product of a "figurative detour," operating under the influence of the concept of *Aufhebung*, whose purpose it is to rationalize and dialecticize conceptual categories.

Of course, the concept of *Aufhebung* is also that which serves to impair distinctions between philosophical oppositions. To be sure, it both preserves and negates, and because it is theoretically situated at the summit of the process of metaphorization and idealization its contradictory function is responsible for obscuring the movement of a word as it passes from a proper sensuous signification to a proper spiritual one. The process moves *from* the material *to* the ideal, it is therefore a process of *idealization*. However, the governing concept of *Aufhebung*, without which the process would fail to operate, insists that the idealization of a word be defined by its retention of a sensuous signification. *Aufhebung* is negation *and* preservation; it is the agent which refracts the process of idealization, bending it over upon itself and shifting its destination towards, as it were, the sensuous. To a certain extent, then, the concept is strangely responsible for the *materialization* of the ideal process. A word can only undergo the Hegelian process of idealization successfully if it contains within itself a material or sensuous significance.

This paradox is what Derrida refers to when he claims that the Hegelian dialectical concept of metaphor is saturated with a "double twist" which allows "the term *sense* to be applied to that

which is foreign to the senses" (28). His point is that the signifier used to designate a sense (for example, the tactile sense of *grasping*) is itself *sensible* because in order to be understood it must first be capable of being perceived *by the senses* (for example, of sight or sound). Derrida's argument is that the "divergence between sense (signified) and the senses (sensible signifier) is declared through the same root (*sensus, Sinn*)" (27), which in fact means that the divergence is also a point of convergence. Both components within the opposition proper sense-reference/proper spiritual signification, then, are contaminated with the characteristics of their opposites, which is to say that the possibility of "sense" is inscribed within the horizon of the "intelligible," and that of the "intelligible" is also within the "sensuous." For Derrida it is only through a "hidden sublation" (again the concept *Aufhebung*) that the oppositions between sense and the senses, between the ideal and the sensuous, and of course between signifier and signified, can be maintained.

The process of metaphorization or idealization is the framework which sustains the movement of a word as it transfers its significance from the sensuous to the intelligible or spiritual. The network of metaphors which are implicitly involved in this movement move us laterally among various philosophical discourses, always maintaining the first metaphors which necessarily prefigure the philosophies--indeed, Derrida says of such systems of metaphorical opposition that they are "sedimented . . . by the whole history of philosophy" (27). One such lateral shift takes us in the direction of Marx's critique of private property and the process of the objectification of labour from which it arises. Naturally the Marxist metaphysic inserts itself everywhere the subject of sensuous/spiritual and its compatriot opposition of material/ideal arises. This is especially the case when the determining factor is the process of idealization, which inevitably privileges a *telos* of the ideal or spiritual at the expense of material or the sensuous.

For Marx, "private property" and "estranged labour" are engaged in a curious relationship

of interdependence. In *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* he writes of private property that it is "the product, the result, the necessary consequence, of *alienated labor*." However, he points out that "it is as a result of the *movement of private property* that we have obtained the concept of *alienated labor*" (117). Just as metaphor is perceived by Derrida to be the producer *and* the product of philosophy, for Marx private property is the result of and the producer of estranged or alienated labour. Whereas Derrida asks how philosophy can explain metaphor if it is itself a product of metaphor, Marx asks how the phenomena of private property can explain labour if it is itself a product of that labour. Within the Marxist metaphysic, then, private property is ascribed with a determining significance, one which is at once necessary and subject to scrutiny. Now the Hegelian process of idealization (and Derrida's reading of it) becomes similar in form to Marx's process of the objectification of labour value when it is understood that it is only through private property (a commodity measured as a monetary figure) that value moves from the labourer (labour's *spiritual* possession of value) to the object of his or her production. Of course, this materialization of labour's value is opposite to Hegel's process of idealization-- indeed, Marx's attempt to *materialize* philosophy is a complete reversal of Hegel's idealism--but both nonetheless occupy the same *topos* which is defined at its ends by the material and the ideal, and both similarly depend on a "figurative detour" in order to pass from one state to the other.

The primary function of the capitalist economy is the transference of value from the labourer to the owner of the means of production. This precondition can be met only if value is invested into the object of the labourer's production. In *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* Marx calls this transference of value the "objectification" of wealth and the alienation and the estrangement of labour which is its necessary precondition. Here is his brief description of this process:

The product of labor is labor which has been embodied in an object, which has become material; it is the objectification of labor. Labor's realization is its objectification. In the sphere of political economy the realization of labor appears as a loss of realization for

the workers; objectification as loss of the object and bondage to it; appropriation as estrangement, as alienation. (108)

The objectification of an object of production is paradigmatic of a materialist philosophy, that is why the general movement here is in the direction of the sensuous or material, towards a value objectified and made material within a commodity. We know that whatever is "lost" within this process is also that which pre-exists the process of objectification, that which is the first step in the process, and also the object's condition of possibility. For Marx, this amounted to a "loss of realization," a phrase he designates as "*entwirklichung*," which according to his translator is equivalent again to a loss of "accomplishment," "performance," and the "making of something real" (241n). According to Marx this loss signifies a "*devaluation* of the world of men" (107). It is not so much any one of these specific activities that name the state of labour before objectification, rather it is the *value* inherent within the labourer as the potential to produce an object while engaged in one of these activities. Value, then, an intelligible or immaterial expression of something's worth or usefulness, is a measurement and a *name for* the object of production and is thus established as the beginning of the movement of objectification. And the *de*-valuation of labour amounts to a negating of the immaterial or spiritual *possibility* of producing commodities.

In *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* Marx expresses this loss not as a loss of a physical object, but rather as a loss of labour's spiritual or inner worth. "With the *increasing value* of the world of things proceeds in direct proportion the *devaluation* of the world of men" (107). Indeed, Marx writes of the poverty of the labourer's "inner world," a type of poverty not often associated with a serious materialist philosophy (108). He even deploys a spiritual parallel in his analysis: "It is the same in religion. The more man puts into God, the less he retains in himself. The worker puts his life in the object; but now his life no longer belongs to him but to the object" (108). This reference clearly places the spiritual or abstract as the original state within the process of objectification. In the economic sense, this amounts to a dis-

displacement of spirituality by an alien and nonhuman object. The worker is thus estranged from his or her productive potential because within the capitalist economy this potential is always already first the property of the commodity produced, and second the property of the owner of the means of production. Marx claims that the objectification occurs precisely when the value inherent in the "inner world" is transferred or carried over into a physical object, as it is in the capitalist production process. It is a process of materialization (but also of metaphorization) characterized by a movement *away from* a spiritual state and *towards* a sensuous state in which the thing produced is an objectified version of the pre-existing figure of labour-value.

Just as the process of idealization is circumscribed by the system figuration/disfiguration, so too is Marx's concept of objectification a product of what Derrida calls a "figurative detour." Both movements occupy the same interstice between the oppositions material/ideal, sensuous/spiritual, and physical/intelligible, and both are theoretically straddled by the concept of metaphor: the former in the sense that within the field of language a word is *figured forth* into a spiritual significance, the latter because in the region of political economy the *figure* of value is objectified and thereby made real. To be sure, the figurative detour is a permanent fixture within processes characterized by movements between materialism and idealism. The objectification of labour value proceeds through a figurative detour precisely when the object of production is named as a commodity operating within an exchange economy. According to Marx it is named first as a fetish and then as an object of property whose value is determined by its money-price.

A fetish is an object which elicits a strange and, more importantly, an unquestionable value or power. The placing of value outside of the human labour factor is the production of a fetish simply because the labourers predicate themselves before the powerful subjects of their own creation (the object of production), the commodity economy. In *Capital* Marx refers to this strange and abstract property as the "metaphysical" character of property:

A commodity appears at first sight an entirely obvious, trivial thing. But its analysis brings out that it is a very strange thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties. So far as it is a use-value, [however,] there is nothing mysterious about it. (163)

These metaphysical and theological "subtleties" implicate themselves as characteristics of a system of commodities exactly when the object of production becomes an exchange-value. But as we saw in chapter two, a commodity's exchangeability is always already present within its state as a use-value, which means that perhaps all objects of production are inscribed within the metaphysics of fetishism. However, because commodities will invariably be reinvested or *used*, their status as fetishes is only temporary. The moment they are possessed as objects of use-value their fetishistic character, which is in fact a metaphor for the value implicit within the capitalist production process itself, is negated. The metaphor operating within the fetish, signifies a transcendental value, a monetary wealth, a specific social relation and the privileged position of the capitalist within this relationship, and of course a deviation from a product's movement from manufacture to consumption. In effect, the metaphor is a necessary disruption or disfiguration within the capitalist economy; it is both the reason for production and that force which prevents a commodity from being consumed and thus realized as a commodity.

In his book *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* W. J. T. Mitchell refers to commodities as precisely this type of figurative object. There is, he claims, much more to the "commodity" than even Marx realized. "A commodity is a figurative, allegorical entity, possessed of a mysterious life and aura, an object which, if properly interpreted, would reveal the secret of human history" (188). Commodities, like language as a vehicle of *logos*, are a part of a great code or system in which the constitutive powers of metaphor are forever deferring the reality of the physical object and presenting them as transcendental dainties signifying something immaterial, something entirely different than that which they really are. Commodities not only tell a story, they tell *the* story of "human history." Everything is involved within their figurative home. "Commodities," Mitchell writes, "are "nothing but symbols; but from within capitalism, as from within primitive

life, they are magical objects that contain within themselves the principle of their value" (192). The "principle" of value is the ever present possibility of being released from a differential signification and finally *used*. The value is thus measured according to a system of economy, a system which is thoroughly based on the notion of exchange and transference. Thus the commodity, short of being a religious relic, is a fetish (an economic icon) which signifies among other things a system of figurative detours which, in measuring the value of the commodity against an economy of other commodities, are themselves necessary disruptions within the capitalist economy.

Now, for Marx the onus of fetishisms and the commodification of social relations is on the physical product. It is the object *par excellence* and it is the product of the process of objectification. Jean Baudrillard goes against Marx and suggests that that which needs unpacking in the capitalist economy is not the product, but the concept of fetishism. (This strategy curiously marks a movement on the part of Marxist theory away from materialism [the product] and towards idealism [the concept].) "Fetishism is not the sanctification of a certain object, or value," rather it is "the sanctification of the system as such, of the commodity as system" (92). There is, then, a synecdochal relationship between the commodity and the economy of which it is a figure, and it is a relationship which simultaneously transfers responsibility for fetishism from the material product to the human system operating the economy in its entirety. It is interesting to note also that Baudrillard's contention refers us back to the idea that metaphor, through its properties of transference and propriety, contains within it the representation of the entire language system of which it is also a part. The fetishistic character of a commodity, then, like the figure of metaphor, is its capacity to reflect the system which it produces but nonetheless is a product of .

Within the capitalist economy this "figurative detour" is also named as an object of property whose value is determined by its money-price. In *Capital* Marx posits the formula " C^1-M-C^2 " as the process whereby a commodity (C^1) engages within the exchange economy and indirectly becomes another commodity (C^2) only after undergoing a monetary detour (M) (205).

This metamorphosis of commodities is accomplished through a figurative detour which not only facilitates the exchange process but in fact is the very condition of possibility of this process. In such an exchange between two commodities both are "equal to a third thing, which in itself is neither the one nor the other" (127). It is neither commodity because it is a money-price, which according to Marx constitutes the negation of the commodities and also makes the exchange possible because it equates the unequal. He comments on the indirect and deviant nature of this detour when he writes that "every commodity disappears when it becomes money" (205). The exchange process is thus determined by the temporary displacement of a commodity's value onto the figure of money. The interesting idea here is not that money represents physical things, but that in essence it represents absolutely nothing. As Baudrillard writes, the only fascinating thing about money "is its *systematic nature*, the potential enclosed in the material for total commutability of all values, thanks to their definitive abstraction. It is the abstraction, the total artificiality of the sign that one 'adores' in money" (93). It is the artifice which hides the transcendental or magical value under whose auspices it nevertheless functions, and it is the artifice which also hides the social relation (of capitalist to labourer) which produced it. Perhaps it is the "total artificiality" that one also "'adores'" in metaphor.

And this money-price also attempts to repress or hide the original spiritual figure of value included within its monetary name. "I know nothing of a man," Marx writes, "if I merely know his name is Jacob. In the same way, every trace of the money-relation [namely the social relation] disappears in the money-name pound, thaler, franc, ducat, etc" (195). The value implicit within the social relation, then, is similar to the original sense-reference of a word in Hegel's idealization because both origins are seized from their original references and processed into entirely different properties, the first into a monetary figure representing an established social relation, the second a linguistic figure designating an intelligible meaning.

This figurative detour, then, marks precisely the same thing in both the Marxist and Hegelian processes of metaphorization: the possibility of movement between proper spiritual and the proper sensuous references. But of course the directions are reversed. In Hegel the word "*fassen*" evolves from an original sense-reference into a metaphor and then finally into a proper spiritual signification. In Marx's process of objectification a commodity exists only as a spiritual or intelligible possibility before being transformed into a metaphor and then ultimately deposited with a final sensuous use-value. For example, before producing a shoe, workers in fact possess within themselves the possibility of that productive process. When this possibility is finally realized (made into a shoe) it is immediately ascribed with a money-price in order that it may serve its purpose as a commodity with exchange-value (hence the "loss of realization" or potential value on the part of the labourer). When the owner of the means of production sells the shoe it is accomplished first through a liquidation of the shoe's value and a transference of this value into a monetary figure, a transference which is already present in the money-price itself. The value is now incorporated into the money received as payment for the shoe; it exists as a metaphorical negation of the objectified inner value of the labourer. Ultimately the value is exchanged for an object which may be again exchanged or immediately consumed. However, the commodity and the entire process of objectification is realized only when it escapes the figural (monetary) process and is employed as an object of consumption or use-value, for it is only in this capacity that it is realized as a physical object and not a commodity which is always already saturated with the possibility of being exchanged for something else.

The objectification of labour's value is interrupted by this detour the very instant that the value inherent within the worker is abandoned and subsequently applied to the object of his or her production. This, of course, is a characteristic and desire of the capitalist economy, but it is also a presupposition of this economy because what this objectification names is the possibility of profit. As the labourer produces and, as Marx writes in *The Economic and Philosophic*

Manuscripts, "becomes a slave of his object" (109), he or she maintains the process of objectification and alienation, which is nothing but a movement of metaphorization proceeding from spiritual to sensuous value through a process of exchange in which objectivity is temporarily carried over (by) a figural meaning.

But just as Derrida pointed out the difficulty which arises with Hegel's use of the formative opposition sense/spirit, so too is Marx's process of materialization not as simple as it appears to be. Of course the overall movement of this process proceeds from the realm of the spiritual to the material, but there are clear indications that both proper parts of the opposition (the reversed form of Hegel's material/ideal) are contaminated by the other. For Marx, the "inner world" or spiritual realm contains the possibility of production; the material or objective world is the exchange economy which receives the objectified potential in the form of finished objects of production. Now the reversal of this process comes into play precisely where Marx restates the necessity of grounding out all economic events in empirical reality.

The worker can create nothing without *nature*, without the *sensuous external world*. It is the material on which his labor is realized, in which it is active, from which and by means of which it produces. (109)

Nature itself, however, does not stimulate that possibility of production which exists within every labourer. On the contrary, it seems to be a purely intelligible "inner" articulation of a productive capacity. The ideal realm in which the process of materialization begins is thus necessarily prefigured by *sensuous* nature and in a constant state of negating it. And this negation emerges in the same way that the difference between "sense" and "the senses" signified a convergence and a divergence within the Hegelian dialectic. According to Derrida the "divergence between sense (signified) and the senses (sensible signifier) is declared through the same root (*sensus*, *Sinn*)" (27). Both components within the opposition sense/spirit or sensible/intelligible, then, are contaminated with the characteristics of their opposites, which is to say that the possibility of being made into a non-self-identical entity is inscribed within both metaphorical parts. When

Marx writes this of a labourer's increased appropriation of the external world, "it [the sensuous world] more and more ceases to be *means of life* in the immediate sense" (109), he is drawing attention to precisely the same principle that Derrida pointed out was at work in Hegel. Here ("in the immediate *sense*") we have what Derrida calls a "double twist" which allows "the term *sense* to be applied to that which is foreign to the senses" (28). Again, his point is that the signifier used to designate a sense is itself *sensible* because in order to be understood it must first be capable of being perceived by the senses, just as the "external world" in Marx's program must first be perceived as, or *in* a certain sense.

The Marxist process of objectification, then, operates in much the same way as the Hegelian process of idealization. Both are defined at their antipodes by the sensuous and spiritual world, and both move within this metaphorical process according to a system of figuration/ disfiguration, or a "figurative detour." And when Derrida points out that the concept of *Aufhebung* is at work within Hegel's dialectic, we might say that the same thing is at work in Marx's theory of objectification. We learn from Derrida that in the process of idealization *Aufhebung* is responsible for the production of metaphysics. It is a "unity of gain and loss" to the extent that it designates a negation and a simultaneous preservation of an original word's sense-reference. In Marx the concept functions in a similar way. In his critique of the estrangement of labour he writes this of the double gesture of profit and loss:

The worker becomes all the poorer the more wealth he produces, the more his production increases in power and size. The worker becomes an ever cheaper commodity the more commodities he creates. With the *increasing value* of the world of things proceeds in direct proportion the *devaluation* of the world of men. (107)

As the worker produces he or she loses that which is made. The object of production works against the worker because it is a component within an entire economy of properties which belong to someone else. Of course, the point is that the worker *loses* him- or herself to both the object of production (which is *predicated* to the status of a metaphysical and theological fetish) and the owner of the means of production (who *profits* from the exchange of the labour's product). The

concept of *Aufhebung* is thus active within the process of objectification to the extent that profit and loss occur simultaneously and are the result of the same process of metaphorization. Indeed, Marx's theory of objectification fits well into Derrida's project in *White Mythology*, especially in the chapter "More and No More Metaphor," for it too probes beyond profit and loss in order to locate that which is the condition of their possibility. And as close as both of them come, that which is precomprehended in the distinction between profit and loss is the process of metaphorization.

Derrida's general project in "More and No More Metaphor" is to show just why a taxonomy of metaphor or a "metaphorology" would be "derivative with regard to the discourse over which it would claim ascendancy" (28). One metaphor would always escape classification, the metaphor of metaphor. Indeed this profit/loss system is the very substance of metaphor, is the point of Derrida's project to establish a "general economy" of metaphor and metaphysics. The "figurative detour" is that which works to provide metaphor with a basis on which it claims to proceed from one identity to another. It also lends its general structure to the processes of objectification and metaphorization. And the processes of idealization and materialization, being just so many powerful metaphors, are in fact processes of metaphorization, the producer and product of philosophy.

CHAPTER FOUR

POWER IN THE LIGHT OF METAPHOR

One impoverishes the question of power if one poses it solely in terms of legislation and constitution, in terms solely of the state and the state apparatus. Power is quite different from and more complicated, dense and pervasive than a set of laws or a state apparatus.

Michel Foucault

Metaphor exists only to the extent that someone is supposed to be manifesting by an utterance such-and-such a thought which remains in itself unobvious, hidden, or latent. Thought happens upon metaphor, or metaphor is the lot of thought at the moment at which a sense attempts to emerge of itself to say itself, to express itself, to bring itself into the light of language.

Jacques Derrida

To bring my present working over of the metaphysical concept of metaphor into closer proximity with a more explicitly ethico-political criterion I need only to introduce an agent which has until now remained hidden on the margins of this discussion. I am, of course, referring to the concept of power. Indeed, to suggest that power is situated on the *margins* of this discussion is at once to affirm at least part of Derrida's project--namely, the exposure of the controlling metaphorical concepts on the margins of all philosophical discourses--and to bring under further scrutiny the effects of this concept within the classically defined field of metaphor. A general economy of language has as one of its sustaining figures the concept of power, under which we might classify the conceptual subsidiaries of truth, meaning, value, wealth, knowledge, profit, and property. The concept of power, insofar as it is issued forth from the binary logic implicit in the structure of the philosophy of metaphor, is the figure-head of the present chapter. And perhaps I might even extend the force of my argument by suggesting that the concept of power is also (and

paradoxically) responsible for issuing forth the binary logic in all philosophical theories of metaphor. In other words, it is power (in the form of ideology or metaphysics) which is at work in the dichotomization or separation of the literal and metaphorical fields of meaning, and also within the structures of the "originary tropes" which function as the ground of philosophy.

Let me economize my argument by naming the two specific forms of power which interest me here. First, there is at work in the philosophy of metaphor a definite ideological or metaphysical system of power brokerage, an almost political administration governing the difference between what is proper, domestic, or literal, and what is improper, foreign, or metaphorical. It is the force which keeps words seemingly embedded within their significations, and it is also that which liberates them from these significations and lets their properties be transferred to other words. In short, it is the power which lifts and separates literal from metaphorical meanings; it is the possibility of metaphor. This ideology of power is also at work sustaining the series of oppositions mentioned in previous chapters, such as "concrete/abstract" and "world/word." It is a system of power that keeps oppositions opposed and it is, properly speaking, a characteristic of philosophy. As such it is as much evident in Aristotle as it is in Derrida. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, my interest lies with the concept of power and its relationship to what might at least provisionally be called the material or physical world. By this I mean chiefly the political world of reified labour, property ownership, ideological institutions, and the state apparatus. In *White Mythology* Derrida undertakes what might be called a curiously political reading of Aristotle's theory of metaphor, one which relates the theory not only to a hierarchy of physical meaning (the literal and the metaphorical), but also to a hierarchy of being (the philosopher as a figurative kind of superhuman). Of course, this Aristotelian *chain* is a metaphor, but it is also an ideological superstructure which is directly responsible for a system of production and distribution of power which proceeds from the philosopher through to the lesser classes of human beings and then finally down to animal and plant

life. As such it is a metaphorical apparatus which allocates metaphorical resources (the resource of metaphor) inequitably among the various classes of organic life. In this sense the concept "power" is employed in the separation of those who are capable of producing metaphors from those who are not. Perhaps I might call this function the metaphorical ability to stratify class divisions.

Let me begin by briefly establishing a working relationship between metaphor and power. We learn from Derrida that a discussion of metaphor invariably brings to light questions of philosophy and metaphysics, the purveyors of metaphor. Metaphysics is the important item here. Derrida calls it "a white mythology which assembles and reflects Western culture: the white man takes his own mythology (that is, Indo-European mythology), his *logos* -- that is, the *mythos* of his idiom, for the universal form of that which it is still his inescapable desire to call Reason" (11). This "white mythology" is ideology at its finest; it is, to use a Marxist metaphor, both base and superstructure. It pervades the world because it functions according to a definite Western will to power, an ideology of dominance, by making it a reflection of the West. Yet it also names the very base upon which an entire philosophy is based. In effect, those who have the power are able to define what universal truth will be by transferring its properties to the outside world. The necessary precondition of power, then, is remarkably similar to the form and structure of metaphor.

In his "Deconstruction and Social Theory" Michael Ryan addresses this relationship between power and metaphor in a way which is at once engaging and perceptive. Ryan calls "liberalism" that which I have been generally calling Western metaphysics or what Derrida calls "Indo-European mythology." The "structural origin" of liberal civil society, he says, is "a metaphorical process," therefore it is neither a stable ground nor a universal truth. "In liberalism, civil society substitutes for nature," Ryan claims, by which he means that the origin of our Western society is based on a displacement from nature to civil society. We take as *natural* and therefore fair that which we appear to perceive in nature. In doing so liberal bourgeois society

legitimizes itself according to the metaphor of "nature," the attributes of which are appropriated from a realm existing quite separately from civil society. Thus, according to Ryan "civil society and nature are sometimes seen as being interchangeable" (157). As a Marxist theorist, Ryan's strategy is to present liberal society as something necessarily discursive and therefore easily transformed, but his application of the metaphorical process of transference and exchange to a directly political situation illustrates the powerful capabilities of the metaphorical process. In addition to this Ryan also reaffirms the strategic place of metaphor as a precondition of the execution of power. It is precisely this ethico-political version of the relationship between power and metaphor that is at issue here.

According to Derrida, it is by virtue of his position of strength that the "white man"--the archetypal liberal bourgeois citizen in Ryan's essay--is able to deploy his *logos* and *mythos* as the universal "Reason" or natural truth and hypostatize his own desire for control. Those who have power legitimize their privileged positions by claiming to have the greatest access to the truth, whether this truth takes the form of a seemingly innocent transference of nature's characteristics to civil society as it does in Ryan's essay, or a "white mythology" which "assembles and reflects" a dominant culture. Of course, the concept "truth" is now an active component within this relationship between power and metaphor, and it is one which cannot be overlooked. For assistance with this concept let me briefly turn to Nietzsche, a thinker who makes "truth" into an instrument of authority. In *Beyond Good and Evil* he asks "what compels us to assume there exists any essential antithesis between 'true' and 'false'?" (47). Here he is trying to shed light on the arbitrary or fictive nature of the concepts of truth and falsity. These two words are fictions which classify an otherwise *graded* system of "apparentness;" they are metaphors in the service of chance. Although there may not be an apparent reason for the production of such a severe opposition, it is in the motive behind this production that we come to what Nietzsche first called the *will to power*. "The world seen from within," Nietzsche writes, "the world described and defined

according to its 'intelligible character'--it would be 'will to power' and nothing else" (49). Those who profit most in this scheme of things are the ones who succeed in transforming the world to suit their own needs. Indeed, some of these, as we shall see later, are the philosophers in Aristotle's metaphorical chain of being, for what greater power can a being have than to produce metaphors. Prior to being manifest as an instrument of philosophers, however, this will to power is first represented as an instrument of a certain culture.

When Derrida points out the specific cultural induction which takes place when the Indo-europeans assume that their own mythology is the mythology of the universe, he at once calls into question the legitimacy of that which we call Western metaphysics and disrupts the ground on which this metaphysics rests. And here "white mythology" functions according to the principle of metaphor (which brings the discussion from metaphor and power to truth and then again to metaphor), for as a metaphor which loses sight of its proper or literal sense it "has effaced in itself the fabulous scene which brought it into being." It "assembles and reflects Western culture," just as metaphor both constructs philosophy and is a product or reflection of philosophy. Now metaphysics is itself a metaphor of human *being*, just as metaphor is a metaphysical concept which includes within its field an entire metaphysical system of *being* and identity. Derrida addresses this issue in "The *Retrait* of Metaphor":

[T]he metaphysical, which corresponds in its discourse to the withdrawal of Being, tends to reassemble, in resemblance, all its metonymic divergences in a great metaphor of Being or of the thought of Being. This bringing together is *the* language of metaphysics *itself*. (21)

The emphasis is of course on the production or re-assembling of difference into a great metaphor of resemblance. "Metaphysical discourse," Derrida claims, produces and contains "the concept of metaphor," and "therefore it is a metaphor englobing the narrow-restrained-strict [literal?] concept of metaphor" (21-22). The power of metaphysics, then, a power which is the legitimizing agent in a collective will to power, is the power of metaphor precisely because it names a relationship of resemblance and operates under the condition that it harbours a universal set of

truths. In *White Mythology* Derrida calls metaphysics that which "assembles" Western culture, and in "The *Retrait* of Metaphor" he says it "reassemble[s]" a field of differences. This is precisely the same as saying that metaphysics and metaphor function according to a similar paradigm of power whose function it is to enclose a heterogenous field of different properties, identities, and cultures.

A discussion of metaphor invariably brings to light the concept of power because the philosophical positions of the proper and the improper, the domestic and the foreign, the very positions which are implicated in the hallmark distinction between literal and metaphorical meaning, are in fact the philosophical subsidiaries of the concept of truth. Again, truth is perhaps the primary component within the philosophical field defined by power and metaphor. And of course truth is in the service of the ideology of oppositions in so far as every opposition must be a truth before it can contribute to the constitution of philosophy.¹ All of the fundamental oppositions on which the theory of metaphor rely are therefore members in good standing of the entire Western metaphysic. In the third chapter of *White Mythology*, "Ellipsis/Eclipse of the Sun: The Riddle, the Incomprehensible, the Ungraspable," Derrida names this very idea. "What makes a metaphor possible," he writes, "is what makes truth possible" (37). Here he is undertaking a reading of *The Poetics* and referring specifically to Aristotle's theory of metaphor, which makes explicit the connection between truth (*aletheia*) and resemblance (*homoiosis*). There is an interesting logic governing this relationship, for it is not only that metaphor and truth share a common function--the one to name a similarity, the other to legitimize the concept of similarity-- but also that they themselves are engaged in a relationship of resemblance, hence their similarity. Perhaps we might say that for Aristotle when one thing is *like* something else, then it must be *true* that there is a resemblance between them, but in order for an initial similarity to constitute itself there must be a *truth* in place which makes the possibility plausible in the first place.

But this claim brings some pressing questions under consideration. For example, to

suggest that a metaphor is applied to some similarity always already present in nature is to endorse the concept of a precomprehended transcendental truth. It is to adhere to that inane philosophy of truth which Nietzsche vehemently derides in his essay "On Truth and Lies in A Nonmoral Sense." Human beings, he says, must be admired as a "genius of construction" who builds out of fragile metaphors complete conceptual structures of belief through which he looks at and explains the world. Here Nietzsche characterizes the process of locating the truth as a silly child's game:

When someone hides something behind a bush and looks for it again in the same place and finds it there as well, there is not much praise in such seeking and finding. Yet this is how matters stand regarding seeking and finding "truth" within the realm of reason. If I make up the definition of a mammal, and then, after inspecting a camel, declare "look, a mammal," I have indeed brought a truth to light in this way, but it is a truth of limited value. That is to say, it is a thoroughly anthropomorphic truth which contains not a single point which would be "true in itself" or really and universally valid apart from man. (85).

There is no profit in looking for "truth" because the concept of truth is little more than a human system of metaphors whose determination and content is always already a foregone conclusion. According to Nietzsche, "truths are illusions of which one has forgotten that they *are* illusions" (84), but indeed we must ask whether this act of forgetting is an illusion itself, strategically placed to cover up a certain philosophical will to power. After all, it would seem more likely that we are conscious of the "truth" to the extent that we know precisely where to find it and what its probable effect on us will be, rather than to say that we are involved in a game of hide-and-seek in which we have no clue regarding the location of the truth.

To say that one physical object is like another physical object, then, is to assume that the *truth* to which the resemblance corresponds is a transcendental or universal one which prefigures humankind. In this game of truth, metaphor is the vehicle which casts light on a set of resemblances which, as it were, are always already in the dark just waiting to be found. "The will to power," as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak writes of Nietzsche in her "Translator's Preface" to *Of Grammatology*, "is a process of 'incessant deciphering'--figuring, interpreting, sign-ifying through apparent identifications" (xxiii). Our "will to truth is a will to power" because to gain

knowledge ("to know") is in a sense historically linked to the desire to conquer and colonize.² Spivak tells us that the figure of appropriation is actually a figure of "making equal," which is a curious contention but which can nonetheless operate here as the metaphor of metaphor. To appropriate is to colonize, and both, in turn, are the equivalent to employing a metaphor. The will to power, then, which is metaphor's employer, is that force which temporarily hides the truth from itself, only later to engage in a charade of innocent discovery.

The Aristotelian claim of a transcendental truth is also a claim that metaphor--indeed all language--is derived from a pre-existing world of sense and thought, because it would mean that metaphor perpetually comes after the fact or truth of resemblance which it is destined to illuminate. As Derrida says of Aristotle's theory of metaphor, "metaphor, properly controlled, is in the service of truth" (38), a contention which presupposes first a figure *controlling* and therefore preceding metaphor, and second an authority (truth) to which metaphor is bound. In his *Models and Metaphors*, Max Black makes a similar claim. "[T]he metaphor," he writes, "creates the similarity," one cannot see it as a figure which "formulates some similarity antecedently existing" (37). To employ a metaphor, then, is to capitalize on a truth, but it is also to *construct* a truth, or at least articulate the possibility of a truth. For both Derrida and Black, the concept of power appears to come into play precisely where truth and metaphor are referred to or called upon for the purpose of producing or distributing a specific motive or vested interest. And these interests may be either philosophical or political or metaphysical in nature.

My first concern with the concept of power is how it functions in the philosophy of metaphor. There is at work in this philosophy a potent ideological and metaphysical system which is responsible for the construction of what Derrida calls "the fundamental oppositions of 'metaphorology'" (28). These oppositions--sensible/intelligible, physical/spiritual, natural/cultural--are quite simply the very conditions of the possibility of metaphor; they are metaphors in the service of metaphor. Yet these same oppositions are, or rather *must be*, the products of a

certain metaphorical process of execution and separation. The opposition physical/spiritual, for example, is certainly not the result of a random chop of an aimless philosophical blade. Rather, it is (or at least it appears to be) a calculated severance, one in which each of the component parts, the physical and the spiritual, become antitheses engaged in a struggle for domination, a deadly philosophical power game whose stake is nothing less than the absolute suppression of the losing constituent part. As Derrida tells us, it is perhaps the very constitution of philosophy--"one might even say the sole thesis of philosophy" (29)--to bind and encapsulate a heterogeneous conceptual field, to rationalize understanding in order to make it conform to the simplicity and drowsy ease of a dialectical structure. "The philosopher yearns . . . to sum up/sublate/interiorize/dialecticize/command the metaphorical divergence between the origin and itself" (72), which is to say that he is a power broker attempting to contain and constrain the metaphorical movement from the proper sense to a similar sense of properties. In essence, he is trying to control metaphor. There is no philosophy that is not directly involved with a power structure, and here this structure is a metaphysical desire (for truth or "Reason") leading to the production of an entire philosophical tradition. From "the opposition between what is proper and what is not" we have philosophy (29), or philosophy comes to us from a metaphysical power structure. And thus we have what Derrida calls the "fundamental oppositions," which are themselves "prephilosophical tropes," so constructed or opposed in order to serve and sustain philosophy; and we have metaphor itself, which is not only nourished by these philosophical oppositions but also produces them, in the sense that it lends to philosophy its structure of exchange and displacement.

This is precisely Derrida's point when he writes at the beginning of the third section that "[i]n every rhetorical definition of metaphor is implied not just a philosophical position, but a conceptual network within which philosophy as such is constituted" (30). A "position" in the derridean sense of the word probably refers to a strategic topography from which a certain philosophy administers itself, for example the Aristotelian *topos* of proper/improper, or the

Marxist *topos* of base/superstructure. And the "conceptual network" is no more than the system of oppositions which we know are implicated in the theory of metaphor. Of course, there is a system of power brokerage at work in the production of the system of prephilosophical oppositions, we need look no further than the severity of the binary structure itself to notice this relationship which Derrida elsewhere calls a "violent hierarchy." Literal and metaphorical meanings, for example, name two distinct and binodal philosophical states: the first originary, proper, and linked with a definite and originary physical sense, the second derivative, improper, and a part of the field of derivative--but, as we shall soon see, superior--intelligibility. The one is always associated with the fundamental materialism of the real world; the other with the ideal world and all of the metaphysical illusions that are associated with it. The breakage occurs in the middle ground between the two, indeed the breakage is the constitutive factor of both the middle ground and the remnant parts. The source of power is thus manifested in the initial rupture which constructs fractured philosophy.

But of course this fracture is a metaphor. Derrida calls its operation a part of "a code, a program, a rhetoric" (30), invariably a larger meta- or macrosystem to which all discourses on metaphor must answer. It emerges as a philosophical system which binds and encapsulates difference, an ideology of dialecticism, and even a metaphysics of order and authority, which is in fact the very subject of Derrida's critique of the stalwart Aristotelian tradition. As D. C. Wood puts it in "An Introduction to Derrida," "[w]e can perhaps understand metaphysics in Derrida's account as the legitimation of textual power" (19). A "text," in as much as it is saturated with a combatative dialectic between literal and figurative meanings, is similar to a philosophy, which is itself the product of "pre-philosophical oppositions." The "text" and philosophy possess power not only because they are grounded out in various sets of tropes, but also because in their "sleep" they claim to be free from metaphorical suasion. "Might we not dream," Derrida asks, "of some meta-philosophy"? Indeed, a metaphilosophy would, among other things, be indubitably immune to

the disfiguring power of metaphor. Indeed again, it would be constructed with *concepts*, traditionally the binary opposite of metaphor. This pure conceptual field would be a languageless entity, the archetype for what Wood calls "textual power." For Derrida, this "textual power" refers in part to "the great unmoving chain of Aristotelian ontology" which governs and protects the great Western tradition of Aristotelian logic, epistemology, and, of course, "the basic organization of his [Aristotle's] poetics and his rhetoric" (36). More specifically, Aristotle's is the "first systematic placing" of the concept of metaphor, a *placing* which "survived as the first, and had the most profound historical consequences" (30). This Western metaphysic is in fact the entire Aristotelian philosophical tradition.

Metaphysic is precisely that abstruse branch of philosophy whose subject is nothing less than the very nature of existence. Yet because we apprehend the world with language, because we must use metaphors to name the physical and intelligible properties of the world, the "foundation" of this "nature" or "existence" is necessarily in a constant state of being disrupted by the linguistic push and pull of metaphors. Indeed, the foundation of this home, this economy, is always already fractured by the metaphors which nonetheless contribute to its construction. Now the will to power comes into play where language, and especially metaphor, is not recognized as a productive and constitutive factor within philosophical (or metaphysical) discourse. And of course this blindness to textuality is in many ways the *raison d'être* of deconstructive critical theory. In *The Deconstructive Turn*, Christopher Norris mentions this forgetful aspect of philosophy when he establishes a commonplace parallel between Derrida and Nietzsche. Both, he says, are critically inclined to "unmasking the claims of systematic knowledge, [and] showing them up as elaborate schemes for preserving and disguising the intellectual will-to-power" (14). Both Derrida and Nietzsche regard figurative language, namely metaphor, as "a means--the only one available--of dismantling and exposing the ruses of philosophy" (14). Norris picks up this same theme in his later work, *The Contest of Faculties*, where he writes of deconstruction that it is "a rigorous

thinking-through of precisely those issues that are pushed out of sight by other, more accommodating versions of cultural critique" (218). Here Derrida's project comes to light in the form of a *bringing to light* of henceforth unseen or unacknowledged textual forces. The emphasis is on the act of exposure, the bringing to light or the deconstruction, which suggests that that which remains unrecognized or unacknowledged must necessarily be some anonymous governing agent, a metaphorical king of Western or Aristotelian philosophy executing his duties from the margins of the discussion. But the power which this monarch has over philosophy is not only the effective power of textuality, for this authority is not only metaphorical, it *is* metaphor.

In Derrida's terms this metaphorical authority is demarcated by the "*sleep* of philosophy" (29), for it is metaphor of which philosophy is often unconscious. And the "exposure," the "unmasking," the "rigorous thinking-through," are all aimed at waking up philosophy, which is itself a metaphor for exposing the interests of the philosophical tradition. This figure is directed to the margins of philosophy where philosophy takes its rest. And what, if not metaphor, occupies these margins? This, it seems, is the entire project of *White Mythology*: metaphor *is* in the text of philosophy but is displaced to a marginal position and thus occupies only an eclipsed or secondary place in relation to the concepts which constitute philosophy. The perception of metaphor as being something of a supplement to *real* language is typical of the Western tradition of critical theory. According to Derrida, this part of tradition sees metaphor as "menacing and foreign to the eyes of *intuition* (vision or context), of the *concept* (the grasping or proper presence of what is signified), of *consciousness* (the proximity of presence to itself)" (73). In this philosophical strain we have, for example, I. A. Richards, who writes in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* that metaphor is always seen as "a sort of happy extra trick with words" and that it is "a grace or ornament or *added* power of language" (90). Metaphor is not proper language, but rather something foreign (yet necessary) to it. As a result of this marginal status, the more complex or abstract our ideas and philosophies become the more "we

profess *not* to be relying on" metaphors (92), and consequently the more we displace metaphor to the margins of philosophy. Metaphor is thus cast as a figure approaching supplementarity, as a bothersome but necessary element of language. It is contrary to the profession of philosophy because it does not possess that scientific or concrete or *real* quality which would allow it to properly name an identity. Northrop Frye extends this view in the *Anatomy of Criticism* where he writes that "[l]iteral understanding occupies the same place in criticism that observation, the direct exposure of the mind to nature, has in the scientific method" (81). Here metaphor is associated with that which it clearly is not, namely "literal understanding" and scientific observation, or as Derrida would doubtlessly put it, "that gesture of power, the taking-now, the grasping and taking hold of the thing as an object" (24). And Umberto Eco repeats this philosophical sentiment in his essay "Metaphor, Dictionary, and Encyclopedia," where he deploys scientific and mathematical metaphors to define metaphor's opposite: "No algorithm exists for the metaphor, nor can a metaphor be produced by means of a computer's precise instructions, no matter what the volume of organized information to be fed in" (269). Indeed, in this tradition metaphor reverberates with the echoes of potentially turbulent rhetorical sways within the disquieting silence of literal understanding. Perhaps Christopher Norris puts it best when he writes in *The Contest of Faculties* that "[f]rom Aristotle to the present, metaphor has been theorized in accordance with the need for philosophy to subdue figural language to its own operative terms and concepts" (223). However, he writes, "[p]hilosophy is unable to subjugate figural language, on account of the manifold residual metaphors (and other figures of thought) that inhabit its own language" (224). Thus philosophy's power to construct and propagate concepts is constantly being checked by the often feeble and deficient metaphors which contribute to their formation.

This entire tradition, then, is saturated with the philosophical opposition literal/figurative, or proper/improper. More importantly, however, because this entire system is a product of a metaphorical transference of truth and control from the universal or natural world

into the human realm it is always informed by the concept of power. Under the constraints of this dialectical system literal language is given the qualities of being a transparent manifestation of the *real* world. It is, in a manner of speaking, a lucid presentation of the world of physical and intelligible properties in which each signifier corresponds perfectly with one distinct feature of the outside world. It is a pure and simple dialecticism in which differences are quickly set aside in order to preserve the prudent correlation between a word and its worldly referent. Let me again turn to Nietzsche for an elaboration on this point. In *Human, all too Human* he casts somewhat of a cynical light on this system of language as a man made tool with which we can apprehend the world.

The importance of language for the development of culture lies in the fact that, in language, man juxtaposed to the one world another world of his own, a place which he thought so sturdy that from it he could move the rest of the world from its own foundations and make himself lord over it. To the extent that he believed over long periods of time in the concepts and names of things as if they were *aeternae veritates*, man has acquired that pride by which he has raised himself above the animals: he really did believe that in language he had knowledge of the world. (18-19)

According to Nietzsche, truth is not so much in the eye of the beholder as it is in the word of the linguist or rhetorician. The world is thus established as a universal prototype which will not reveal itself to humankind through the pseudo-scientificity of language. Now the misanthropic nature of Nietzsche's contention is well founded, for without a transparent language how is humankind ever to know anything about the *real* world? It is perhaps as an answer to or a reason for this question that philosophy rationalizes its use of language by displacing the obscure and unstable nature of all language onto metaphor, for in doing so it creates for itself a hypereconomical system of language and thus re-emphasizes its control over the world.

Signs of this unscientific nature of metaphor appear in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*, texts which are among the philosophical architects of this entire tradition. In the first of these texts Aristotle claims that "metaphors imply riddles" (170), the implication being that metaphors operate as knots and complexities within the field of literal or proper language. And in

the *Poetics* he consistently associates metaphors with "strange" or "foreign" words and writes that metaphor is that which "deviates from the ordinary modes of speech" (253). But Aristotle's position falters under its own figurative weight. He claims that metaphor is improper and foreign and strange, but he also contends that it is nonetheless an absolutely necessary and indeed a constitutive element of language. In the *Poetics* he writes that the "two classes" of words, "the proper or regular and metaphorical," are employed by all people in conversation, that both are domestic to the economy of language. Indeed, to employ a metaphor is to make an exchange between "a thing" and "something else" (251), but it is also to fall into the dreaded process of exchange (*metabletike*). As such, the process of metaphor might be seen in an economic sense, in which it constitutes an impropriety, a capital offence of transnational or universal proportions against the domestic economy. However, just as exchange of commodities is necessary to the extent that it facilitates profit and national welfare, so too is metaphor a necessary figure of concept formation in language.

In *White Mythology* Derrida pulls precisely this contradiction into question. Of course he is concerned with the nonscientificity of metaphor as an element *in* the text of philosophy, but he also refers to the "ambiguous" position that philosophy has towards metaphor. This position not only claims that metaphor is nonscientific, it also suggests that it is "an accomplice of that which it threatens, being necessary to the extent to which a de-tour is a return tour guided by the function of resemblance (*mimesis* and *homoiosis*) under the law of sameness" (73). Derrida's reading of Bachelard's *La Formation de l'esprit scientifique* puts the ambiguity into perspective: "[i]mmediate metaphors," he writes, or those which are used creatively and spontaneously, create the danger of what Bachelard calls "an autonomous form of thought" (61). "[N]on-immediate or constructed metaphor," however, serves a productive purpose in the formation of integral concepts. Without dwelling too long on Bachelard's distinction, it is safe to assume that metaphors are, as Derrida says, ambiguous and contrary to the extent that they are both excluded and included within

the philosophical idiom. They are, in effect, the instruments of a certain textual will to power which needs them in order to produce and promulgate philosophical concepts, but which simultaneously rejects them as being unscientific figurative dainties which are neither to the point nor capable of positing well constructed concepts. In short, they are producers and saboteurs, they both affirm and deny language its access to positive signification. Earlier I posited the metaphor of metaphor as a king in exile. Whether this exile is self-imposed or not is unclear, but what is clear is that this king controls and subsidizes the economy while simultaneously sapping it of its properties and wealth.

The supplementarity of metaphor, then, is a result of its status as necessity and fortuity; it is a product of its marginality. The supplement is an exterior addition. It is both substitute and surplus, both lawful monarch and rebel usurper. In *Of Grammatology* Derrida writes that "[t]he supplement adds itself, it is a surplus, a plenitude enriching another plenitude," and that it also "adds only to replace. It intervenes or insinuates itself *in-the-place-of* " (144-145).

It is indeed culture or cultivation that must supplement a deficient nature, a deficiency that cannot by definition be anything but an accident and a deviation from Nature. Culture or cultivation is here called habit; it is necessary and insufficient . . . (146)

Metaphor as supplement to literal or proper or real language means that it has the same technical function that "culture" or "cultivation" has in the "natural" world. Metaphor is technique in so far as it is an artificial or unnatural linguistic construction, but at the same moment it is an ingenuous and spontaneous utterance. It is profit or, as I. A. Richard's says, an "*added* power of language." In the Marxist lexicon the supplementarity of metaphor can loosely be called a "surplus value," which Meghad Desai claims is "the explanation and measure of exploitation" (23). In the capitalist economy surplus value exists as the difference between the labour's wages and the value of its work as it is objectified in the object of production. It is a residue of the production process which functions as a figure of the employer's wealth; it is at once the value extracted from the economy and the profit which creates the demand for labour and the incentive for production. More

importantly, however, the surplus value is the value which is responsible for the stratification of society.³ The surplus is thus responsible for the division of the classes, just as metaphor is responsible (through its association with the various underwriting concepts of the Aristotelian metaphysic) for the division of humankind into those with and those without metaphorical abilities. Now the concept of metaphor as surplus is connected with the concept of power precisely where it utilizes its ability to stratify the heterogenous fields of society and philosophy. It is here that the direction of my argument passes from the concept of metaphor and its association with power to power and its relationship to the explicitly ethico-political world of labour, property, and ideology.

According to Derrida, metaphor is, at least in the Aristotelian definition, a part of the "system of interpretation in which *metaphora*, *mimesis*, *logos*, *physic*, *phoné*, *semainen*, and *onoma* are linked" (31). They are linked by a philosophic bricolage in which power is the main player. We know that Aristotle regarded *aletheia* (truth) as a precondition of metaphor, and that it is also a product of *homoiosis* (resemblance), but what is particularly interesting to us is that this philosophical triumverate--metaphor, resemblance, truth--is responsible for the concept of *mimesis* (37). Now the "sleep of philosophy" becomes a chief concern precisely where it is constructed into an ideological series of oppositional concepts on which the entire philosophy of metaphor is itself based. Ideology shows itself in Aristotle's theory of metaphor, in Derrida's *White Mythology*, and of course in my own work, as a "truth" contending within a text or theory. Ideology is the producer of textual power.

And in Aristotle's definition, one which always figures prominently as the historical nodal point in discussions of metaphor, textual power plays a crucial role. Truth goes no where, indeed it cannot make the smallest inscription upon the world, without *power*. As Michel Foucault says in "Truth and Power," "truth isn't outside power, or lacking in power" (131). On the contrary, the two are engaged in a relationship of mutual inclusivity. "Truth is a thing of this world," Foucault

writes, "it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power" (131). As such, it is produced by a set of power relations and it also generates power itself. As regards metaphor, it is through *truth*, that metaphysical agent of legitimation, that a similarity manifests itself within a metaphor and distinguishes itself from falsity, and it is through *power* that philosophy falls into and emerges from its metaphorical sleep. (It falls asleep by displacing metaphor onto the margins of its discourse; it awakens when these margins are brought to light.) As I have already said, there is a traditional philosophical position which takes the view that metaphor is at once productive and destructive, that it is an ambiguous concept which is both an obstacle and a generator for philosophical discourse. It is precisely because of this contrary nature that the theory of metaphor can be considered under Michel Foucault's heading of *power*: "What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms of knowledge, produces discourse" (119). The Aristotelian theory, then, is not really contradicting itself when it authorizes metaphor as both improper and necessary, rather it is falling into its equivocal role as an institution of power.

For Derrida, it is the concept of *mimesis* and its figurative role as an emblem of humankind's metaphorical abilities that introduces us to the theme of power and how it functions in the division of human labour. Power in this sense functions as a broker between those who have access to metaphorical abilities and those who do not. Humankind, of course, is the core group in the Aristotelian chain of being, and under it come all the other species in the organic world. According to Derrida, nonhuman animal is, among other things, "denied *logos*" (37). Animals are "incapable of *mimesis*," and as such they are *naturally* incapable of detecting resemblances between identities, of unmasking the truth. Nor are they apt to produce metaphors. Moreover, they are denied access to the executive concept of *truth*, which sets all of these things in motion. "[M]imesis," Derrida writes, "belongs to *logos*." It is in the possession of *logos*, which is in turn

a strictly human affair. And it is not a simple matter of "aping and mimicking, of animal gesture," for if it were then every animal would, theoretically at least, have access to the mimetic faculty. Rather, *mimesis* "is connected with the possibility of meaning and truth in discourse" (37). Meaning and truth, in turn, are connected with the Aristotelian or Western metaphysics in so far as they pattern the world according to a precomprehended and hierarchized (hence the *power*) configuration. (Indeed the roles of meaning and truth are here associated with the structuring principles of *concept*, without which they would be left without a logical conclusion. And the "concept of concept," as Derrida rightly points out, preserves and maintains "that gesture of power, the taking-now, the grasping and taking hold of the thing as an object" (23-24).) Mimesis, then, short of being the primary function of metaphorical humankind, is related to the entire metaphysical system which has as its goal the seizure of truth, the "grasping" of meaning and, of course, the possession of knowledge as the property of humankind. This is the metaphorical will to power.

According to the Aristotelian schema, humankind is the only species which imitates and it does so by employing speech. Thus it is related to the logocentric conception of *voice* as the coalescing of signifier and signified, the univocality of the word as it is ushered into the world within the voice of the speaker. Following Aristotle's theory, Derrida writes that "[*m*] *imesis* is the property of man. Only humankind properly speaking imitates. He alone takes pleasure in imitating, learns to imitate, and learns by imitation" (37). I have already said that the power of metaphysics is the power of metaphor, and here the convergence between the two comes to another fruition. When we employ a metaphor we acknowledge a truth of resemblances, and in this we acknowledge *the* truth of nature, which manifests itself only after we cast our illuminating eyes upon it. First we recognize a possible similarity within a field of distinct properties and then we transfer the property of one identity to the vicinity of another. This is an unveiling of a specific truth of resemblance, which is to say that the metaphorical being has successfully uncovered a

match of similar properties. It is equivalent to looking at a page in the book of nature. For example, when I say of metaphor that "the king of philosophy governs from a place in exile," I am uncovering a truth of resemblances. First, I have employed the properties of *mimesis* in order to name both "king" and "metaphor" into existence. I am assured of the verity of these named properties because I am a human being and thus a creature of *logos*. Following this I recognize a similarity between the distinct properties which I have just ushered into existence. Finally, I transfer the properties from the realm of kingship into the vicinity of language. And thus I have constituted a truth of resemblance. (If I were a philosopher this truth would be unquestionable.)

Here is Derrida on the properties of this mimetic process of metaphor construction: "The power of truth, as an unveiling of nature (*physis*) by *mimesis*, is a congenital property of man as a physical being" (37–38). In this act of unveiling the truth we are reminded of the colonization of the world by Western man, an appropriation of a universal truth caught up in an initial truth of resemblance. The "white man," the bearer of "white mythology," recognizes a similarity between his own Western, Indo-European metaphysic and that of the outside world. This similarity, of course, arises from the desire to grasp the outside world, to possess its riches, to own its properties. Through a colonialistic transfer of properties (a complete superstructure of ethics, religion, and laws) man makes his own regional metaphysic into a manifestation of universal "Reason." It is Western man who, according to Derrida's reading of Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, "sums up, assumes, and fulfills the essence of man 'illuminated by the true light'" (71). He is the philosopher *par excellence*. He signifies, as Hegel suggests, "'the end of History'" (71, cited in Derrida); he is, in other words, the one who *gets it right*.

Derrida uses a similar directive to illustrate the ordering of humankind's cognitive powers in other texts. In *Of Grammatology*, for example, he exchanges the east/west solar trajectory criteria for a thermal one based on a north/south dialogue between reason and emotional expression. In remarking on Rousseau's *Essay on the Origin of Languages*, Derrida claims

that the difference between "savagery and civility" is the difference between South and North:

The 'enlightened spirit,' the cold clarity of reason, turned toward the North and dragging the corpse of the origin, can, having recognized 'its first error' [employing a metaphor], handle metaphors as such, with reference to what it knows to be their true and literal meaning. In the south of language, the impassioned spirit was caught within metaphor: the poet relating to the world only in the style of nonliterality. (277)

Of course the image Derrida presents is one of the Northern man, who is also a member of Western society, trudging northward with his carefully crafted metaphorical origin assuming the position of a spoil of war. As Rousseau would have it the "savage" spirit is the one who attributes irrational metaphors; conversely, the picture of "civility" is the society which orders the signification process by making the metaphor into a proper literal designation. Ironically, however, this civility is achieved with a destructive and ethnocentric view of claiming "reason" as the property of the "North." In their essay "The Nazi Myth" Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy make a similar contention when they write that Aryans are mythically perceived as a race of superhumans primarily because they are "the bearers of the solar myth" (309). Because the sun is "impressive in proportion to its rarity," the myth of the invincible Aryan *is* the solar myth. Here Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy connect this myth with the power of light: "The myth of the sun is nothing less than the myth of that which causes forms to come forth as such, in their visibility, in the contour of their gestalt" (309). And of course the cold reason of the "North" is blended with the light-giving of the sun in order to construct an ethnic *mythos* which is at once logical and quite naturally perceptible. Indeed, in *Of Grammatology* the "North" is interchangeable with the "West" of *White Mythology*. Both "North" and "West," then, are used as metaphors of shrewd reason and enlightenment, two political qualities which are gained and employed only at the expense of their opposites. The opposites, of course, are the "South" and "East," or in short everything that is not European.

It is *mimesis* which gives the Western race power in *White Mythology*. But what compels the white race to imitate if not some deep-rooted desire to appropriate for their own use

that which is the property of others? The maker of metaphor, Derrida says, uses metaphor as "a means to knowledge" (38). Metaphor "puts before our eyes," it makes "a picture" and has a "lively effect" (39), and because of this it places itself into the control of humankind. Similarly, the maker of "white mythology," the metaphysician, uncovers and explores the world. When Derrida suggests of perceiving resemblances that it is to "uncover the truth of nature" (46), he is saying that those who perceive metaphorical possibilities in fact colonize nature for their own use. To *colonize* is "to establish" or "to transfer" from one property to another, hence its similarity to metaphor. To *know* is "to possess" or "to apprehend" knowledge or truth as property. Both terms name actions of appropriation and possession. In terms of metaphor, we can follow Derrida and say that "the ideal of all language, and of metaphor in particular, is to allow the thing itself to be known" (49). When knowledge of the "thing itself" is established in a metaphor, then we have gained a degree of control over it.

For Derrida knowledge and colonization are connected with the concept of power and penetration: "metaphor is included within metaphysics as that which should penetrate to the horizon or to the depths of the proper, and in the end there regain the origin of its truth" (71). And by "penetration" Derrida suggests a kind of colonial-minded rape of the fields of the properties of meaning by the empire, by the marginal king of philosophy. The resources of nature lay in the dark silently awaiting the human immigrant, that powerful anthropomorphic citizen who reveals the "truth of nature." Similarly, the non-Indo-europeans wait in silence in their dark continents for the illuminating metaphysic of the white race.

This perception of language as something reflective of and characterized by the violence of appropriation and colonization is an arresting one to say the least. Indeed, Derrida's own metaphors of the theory of metaphor--metaphor as "usury" (7), as something in need of "neutralization" (12), as the "taking hold of the thing as an object" (24), as an interruption in the "semantic plenum to which it should belong" (41), as a "dominant" ability in man (47), the "reign of

metaphor" (61)--have a distinct intensity to them. This can only be a result of language's function of sequestering meaning. The effect, however, is much more important. Violent or combative metaphors fuse the typically separate entities of language and the real or material world. They work to *overthrow* philosophical perceptions of language as being an antithesis to the (violence of the) world. Michel Foucault draws on this opposition in "Truth and Power," where he writes that historical reference should be established as the violence of war rather than the symbolic order of language. "The history which bears and determines us has the form of a war rather than that of a language: relations of power, not relations of meaning" (114).

And in "Violence and Language" Paul Ricoeur makes a similar but more elaborate suggestion: language is violence's opposite in so far as it is constituted by speech, which is the vehicle with which we pursue "meaning" and "rationality" and which frustrates specious violence. "[A] person cannot argue for violence without contradicting himself, since by so arguing he wants to be right and already enters the field of speech and of discussion, leaving his weapon at the door" (90). Violence is that which precedes *logos*. It is the name of action which results in immoral criminal behaviour. And as Ricoeur suggests, "he who calls a crime a crime is already on the road to meaning and salvation" (100). Thus the *logos* is that which rescues us from violence. It tempers speech to the extent that it becomes the subject of reason and logic. However, as we have already seen, violence is indeed involved with the concept of *logos* not only because it contributes to a separation of metaphorical capabilities, but also because it is involved with the metaphysical production of truth and seizure of knowledge. Ricoeur seems to name this very idea in his short treatise on metaphor, "The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling." In reading the theory of metaphor we must be aware of the "rapprochement" involved in their construction. It is a conciliatory process in which a similarity between two different properties seemingly comes to terms with each part of the metaphor. The violent aspect of this apparently symmetrical theory comes into play when Ricoeur suggests that we call this process "*predicative*

assimilation " (146).

In order that a metaphor obtains, one must continue to identify the previous incompatibility *through* the new compatibility. The predicative assimilation involves, in that way, a specific kind of tension which is not so much between a subject and a predicate as between semantic incongruence and congruence. The insight into likeness is the perception of the conflict between the previous incompatibility and the new compatibility. "Remoteness" is preserved within "proximity." To see *the like* is to see the same in spite of, and through, the different. (146)

Now the "violence" to which I am referring exposes itself not only in the *assimilation* of different things under a similarity of their properties, nor does it reside only in the *tension* which occurs when the deviant metaphor is applied to a new semantic field. The violence rears itself precisely when Ricoeur suggests that we must see the resemblance "in spite of, and through, the different" (146), for what kind of rapprochement calls for such myopia? Indeed, in order to construct and perceive a metaphor one must first *not see* the difference from which it arose. The violence comes in the form of what Ricoeur himself calls "the war between distance and proximity" (147), which is the battle between accepting the metaphor on its own grounds or rejecting it because its differences outweigh its similarities.

What is unwritten in both Foucault's and Ricoeur's suggestions is the fact that the quest for meaning itself is a quest to *know* and thereby control properties of the world. This is perhaps the most common of all violent acts. The function of language, and especially of metaphor, is primarily the apprehension of meaning and the subsequent production of named and *controlled* identities which establish a *controlled* system of signs. Of course none of this appropriation or seizure, either in a metaphorical or metaphysical sense, is possible without *logos*. In a sense, humankind *is logos*. According to Derrida, in Aristotle's *Poetics* "*logos, mimesis, and aletheia*" are "one and the same possibility" (38). Aristotle's metaphysical system is set up as a series of oppositions in which one term is naturally inclined to be truer than the other. Humans, not animals or plant life, best imitate nature; the human voice, not writing or physical gesture, is best suited to imitation. Of course Aristotle's system moves us into the general direction of truth,

this we can detect in the function of *logos* as a circumscribing factor in the determination of metaphorical ability. The *logos* of humankind is not only that which makes metaphysics, truth, and knowledge itself possible, it also produces the dangerous ethnocentrism characteristic of Western culture's acceptance as universal their own metaphysic.

Of Grammatology is perhaps the text in which *logos* figures most prominently as a dangerous instrument of cultural-centrism. Ethnocentrism, for example, plays a significant role in the text as a synonym for the logocentric perception of speech as the privileged part in the opposition speech/writing. The very first sentence of the text prominently displays this concept as one which "everywhere and always, had controlled the concept of writing" (3). Ethnocentrism is a violation of other cultures, as in the case of Claude Lévi-Strauss' excursion into the tribal homeland of the Nambikwara, of which Derrida says it "is a violation" (113). But ethnocentrism is also an application of what Derrida calls the "standard concepts of speech and writing" and an expected "privileging [of] the model of phonetic writing" (120-121). And it is with the *logos* and the *phonus* that truth and metaphor insinuate themselves into the Aristotelian metaphysic. Here is Derrida on the importance of the association of *logos*, truth, and, by inference, metaphor: "the history of (the only) metaphysic, which has . . . always assigned the origin of truth in general to the logos: the history of truth, of the truth of truth in general, has always been . . . the debasement of writing, and its repression outside 'full' speech" (3). Full speech is the vehicle through which *mimesis* produces metaphor. For Aristotle, spoken words are figures of inner experience. It is not that they come *close* to naming a certain mental experience or sensory perception, rather it is that they altogether avoid mediation. In essence, they are *logos*.

[T]he voice, producer of the *first symbols*, has a relationship of essential and immediate proximity with the mind. Producer of the first signifier, it is not just a simple signifier among others. It signifies 'mental experiences' which themselves reflect or mirror things by natural resemblance. (11)

The human voice is "closest to the signified"; it is joined, by a long and oppressive history of logocentrism and phonocentrism, to the "meaning of being" (12). The voice is at the heart of

knowledge, it is the signifier of knowledge, indeed it is at the very heart of nature.

The voice *is heard* (understood)--that undoubtedly is what is called conscience--closest to the self as the absolute effacement of the signifier: pure auto-affection that necessarily has the form of time and which does not borrow from outside itself, in the world or in 'reality,' any accessory signifier, any substance of expression foreign to its own spontaneity. It is the unique experience of the signified producing itself spontaneously, from within the self, and nevertheless, as signified concept, in the element of ideality or universality. (20)

As the spontaneous expression of the truth which is lodged within the heart of humankind, *voice* is the essence of *logos*. This is nothing less than what Derrida calls "the effacement of the signifier in the voice" (20), and it is perhaps the most important contention of the entire western metaphysic. It is a manifesto which explicitly calls "voice" an associate to *the* truth of nature. A speaker speaks in the *present*, therefore what he or she is saying is closer to the truth than a written transcription of the voice. Speech is revelation; voice is the audio version of the book of nature. The voice acts immediately, it is not dogged by the temporal displacement of written expression. In so far as it contains the ultimate truth of nature and produces itself as signified "spontaneously," the voice is at the very heart of the western metaphysic.

This motif of the self-effaced signifier as a presupposition of *logos* is also present in *White Mythology* --indeed, to a certain extent, this self-effacement constitutes the "whiteness" of white mythology itself. "In non-sense, language is not yet born," Derrida writes. "In truth, language should be in a state of plenitude, fulfillment, and actualization to the point of self-effacement, there being no possible play before the thing (the thought) which is there properly made manifest" (41-42). In this sense, the speaking of a word, like the concept of concept, is the grasping of an object, is the apprehension of a thought free from the intermediate "play" of signification. No interruptions, only powerful interpretations; no obstacles, only cleared paths to nature's truth: *logos* is that which liberates thought through the figure of truth and knowledge.

The *logocentrism* of Aristotle's theory of metaphor not only produces the framework of an ethnocentric and anthropomorphic taxonomy in which humankind is given the metaphorical

resource, and thereby direct access to the "truth" of nature. It also stratifies society according to a hierarchy of classes because the allocation of the resource of metaphor is not an equitable one. Aristotle introduces us to this class society in the *Rhetoric*, where he writes this about people with power: "Those in power are more ambitious and more manly in character than the wealthy, because they aspire to do the great deeds that their powers permit them to do (127)." Power, or the general will and means to do what one wants, is given a place of privilege over wealth in the Aristotelian hierarchy. But here is Aristotle in the *Poetics* giving absolute privilege to the person capable of making metaphors: "[T]he greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learnt from others; and it is also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars (255). "Power and wealth" may indeed be useful properties for the political man, but to be a "master of metaphor" is the "greatest thing." Thus, before isolating humankind from the animal and plant world, and before privileging western man over the men of the outside world, the metaphorical hierarchy of being first divides humankind according to the capacity to produce metaphors. The philosopher, the statesman, the poet: as members of the human race all will be judged and ascribed a position within the hierarchy according to the success of their metaphors.

Derrida fastens onto this very division in *White Mythology*. "The philosopher," he writes, is "*more able*" to recognize similarities and thus construct metaphors (38). And because the contradictions and ambiguity in the theory of metaphor are *naturalized* by calling on Nature itself to name the metaphorical resource (and thereby neutralize the contradictions within the resource) there is room for contradictions within the hierarchy. Derrida writes:

[M]etaphorical ability is a natural talent. In this sense everyone has it But, according to a pattern which we have frequently encountered, nature gives (herself) more to some than to others. More to men than to beasts, more to philosophers than to other men. Since the invention of metaphors is an innate, a natural, a congenital gift, it will also be a mark of genius. The notion of nature makes this contradiction acceptable. In nature, everyone has his nature. Some have more than others--more brilliance, more generosity, more seed. (45)

The interesting feature of this passage is not so much that men "have" as property the natural characteristics of "genius," "brilliance," "generosity," and "seed," rather it is the way in which Nature itself is perceived as the universal legitimation of "having" properties. Of course, once a series of beliefs (and here we are not limited to the "artistic" or "philosophic," but also to the economic, political, social, and scientific) are predicated and placed outside the human realm they become a universal truth and are thus the property of nobody. Legitimation of any ideology proceeds from the fact that it is cast as universal or global or, as in this case, *natural* in effect. Of course the traditional Marxist argument follows: classes of people are content to remain within their socio-economic stations because they are informed by a dominant ideology, in the guise of *nature*, to do so, just as all classes are informed that the ownership of property is a natural and God-given right. Although Derrida does not come right out and name a *specific* politics or ideology controlling this Aristotelian hierarchy (excluding, of course, the "white mythology"), he does seem to insinuate it at the end of the third chapter. Here Derrida says this of the capacity to make metaphors and detect resemblances:

Either you know how, or you do not: either you can, or you cannot. The ungraspable, what cannot be taken, certainly, is the genius for perceiving a hidden resemblance, but also, and consequently, for being able to substitute one term for another. The genius for *mimesis* can therefore give rise to a language, to a code of controlled substitutions, to the talent and the techniques of rhetoric, to the imitation of genius, to the mastery of the ungraspable. (46)

Now it is disputable whether or not Aristotle's stratification of metaphorical resources is legitimate or not,⁴ but there is no question that this same hierarchy contributes to a greater "class" ideology, one in which the social system is carved into opposed quadrants. Derrida concludes that what "cannot be taken" as property will thus be named in a taxonomy, the aggregate of which will constitute a *controlled* code and lead to a figurative "mastery" of that physical and intelligible world which simply cannot be mastered. The ideology at work here is one in which the possession of property is displaced from the unattainable realm of signifieds to the attainable realm of signifiers. To use Nietzsche's phrase again, it is a will to power which dictates that if the "thing"

itself cannot be possessed, then it must be *named* into a proscribed field of linguistic knowledge. Indeed, the naming of things might very well give humankind an illusion of control over the world, but when we consider that in the Aristotelian schema the power to name is limited to a certain class of people, then the implications of this power become clear.

The act of naming, then, is by no means a passive or even neutral one. On the contrary, it is a reflection of humankind's desire to control the entire environment, harness its resources, and make everything (by virtue of its name) into a piece of property. As Nietzsche writes in *Human, all too Human*, "[t]he shaper of language was not so modest as to think that he was expressing the highest knowledge of things with words; and in fact, language is the first stage of scientific effort. Here, too, it is *the belief in found truth* from which the mightiest sources of strength have flowed" (19). Of course the source of this strength is an illusion, but when it is used as an instrument of classification and division, as it is in Aristotle, it becomes a dangerous political weapon. Indeed, the power of naming can not be seen as anything less than a power of propriety.

In *The Order of Things*, Foucault calls the act of "naming" the "sovereign act of nomination." He says that it is a move "through language, towards the place where things and words are conjoined in their common essence" (117). Things are not named into existence, but rather into a system or taxonomy whose purpose it is to linguistically circumscribe the chaos of a polysemous world. Just as wealth is "*coinable*," so too is an individual "*nameable*," a representation "*signifiable*," or a natural being "*characterizeable*" (175) Indeed, the power of naming is perhaps the most important of that metaphysical will to power which works at the production of truth and the seizure of knowledge. For truth is equal to the convergence of a signifier and a signified in a single name, and knowledge is the meaning that this name produces. Derrida recognizes this in *White Mythology* when he concludes that names are the bastions of the Aristotelian metaphysical system. "The whole theory of names which governs the theory of metaphor, the whole Aristotelian doctrine of simple names . . . is constructed to guarantee the

havens of truth and of that which is proper" (45). That which is the property of "names"--namely, truth and knowledge, but also resemblance and *logos*--is thus invested with the ideological position of symbolizing the entire Aristotelian metaphysic. To be sure, the name contains within itself the utterance of a univocal meaning and it constitutes a deed in which its property is designated as a component in the complex world of significations. "To be univocal," Derrida says, "is the essence, or rather the *telos*, of language. This Aristotelian ideal has never been rejected by any philosophy as such. It is philosophy" (48). The name is that which, properly speaking, contains within itself the very life and breath of the thought or object to which it is *made* to refer. As such, the theory of metaphor, in so far as it is comprised of an initial opposition levied against the proper and improper, hinges on the theory of the proper name, which is unquestionably one of the more rigorous and authoritarian concepts of the Aristotelian tradition. This point, however, brings me to another issue, one which occupies the horizons of my present argument.

More to the point, to the extent that it stands for something other than itself, and to the extent that it transfers the properties of *logos*, *mimesis*, *aletheia*, and *homoiosis* from humankind to the natural world, all language is metaphorical. That which allows language to stand for things other than itself, that which makes the transference of properties possible, is precisely the power which resides on the margins of philosophy. A theory of metaphor cannot be articulated without a corresponding treatise on the concept of power. Indeed, every theory of metaphor must necessarily be a theory of power. Whether this power is regarded as metaphysical desire or a philosophical will to power is beside the point, for what is at issue here is not just a "concept" or "metaphor" (or a concept of metaphor) existing in some kind of rhetorical isolation from the world of economic and political structures. Nor is it the prefabricated entities of words and the world. Rather, it is the relationship between philosophical concerns regarding language and the ethico-political world, it is the association of language and society which I have posited here as the "economies of the wor(1)d." In this final chapter I have tried to show that the notion of power in all

of its political, economic, philosophical, and metaphysical manifestations plays an important role in the construction of the theory of metaphor. Perhaps this is emblematic of my entire argument, for what is at stake here is a way of thinking through metaphor and philosophy to a deconstructed field capable of hosting both materialist and idealist philosophies, Marxist and deconstructive interests, and, most importantly, both the "entities" of words and worlds.

NOTES

CHAPTER ONE. MARXISM OR DECONSTRUCTION

1. In *The Contest of Faculties*, Christopher Norris describes deconstruction and other critical theories as "versions of cultural critique" (218). Marxism and deconstruction are "cultural" to the extent that they take as their subjects intellectual development, the complete system of human organization, and the anthropomorphism involved in the concepts of "meaning," "truth," "value," and "knowledge." Thus, what is often called "Western metaphysics," or "bourgeois" or "capitalist" society might generally be seen as synonyms for Indo-European culture.

2. That Marxism and deconstruction are philosophies does not preclude them from being cultural theories. Every theory or concept is philosophical to the extent that it is constituted by what in *White Mythology* Derrida calls a series of "'founding' tropes" (18). And of course both are philosophies because they conform to the classical definition of the study of truth, knowledge, and being.

3. This term has become associated with the scientific Marxism which Louis Althusser calls a de-metaphorized brand of critical theory. In *Lenin and Philosophy* he refers to the unscientific method of employing metaphors (namely *base* and *superstructure*) to describe the organization of human society. "The greatest disadvantage of this representation of the structure of every society by the spatial metaphor of an edifice, is obviously the fact that it is metaphorical: i.e., it remains *descriptive*." The Althusserianism is activated in the contention that all "great scientific discoveries cannot help but *pass through* the phase of what I shall call *descriptive theory*" (136, 138).

4. By Marxist "dream" I mean the simple correlation between a text and a definitive material condition. In other words, this equation can be expressed as the perceived connection between a signifier and a signified, a word and the world, or the superstructure and the economic base. Because ideology is administered from the economic base the relationship between it and the superstructure takes the form of a presupposed connection rather than an intricate association.

5. Alan Bass, the translator of the version of "White Mythology" which appears in the *Margins of Philosophy* collection, explains the general economy this way: "For Derrida, the 'general economy' is the one that shows how metaphysics's eternal attempt to *profit* from its ventures is based upon an irreducible *loss*, an 'expenditure without reserve' without which there could be no idea of profit. Thus, this essay inscribes the concept of metaphor in the general economy." He goes on to say that "in this [general] economy 'profit' produces 'loss.'" (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982) 209n, 219n.

6. In "Four Master Tropes" Burke goes further and claims that the phrase "to transfer" is in fact synonymous with "to metaphor" (421-438).

7. The "American" adjective has come to designate a non-Derridean deconstruction which is not as politically inclined as its European progenitor. In his "On Marxist Deconstruction" Christopher Norris writes that although some politically inclined theoreticians see deconstruction as "a species of pseudo-radical libertarian discourse devoid of all historical grasp or effectivity," only "American deconstruction . . . would seem to bear out that charge" (205).

CHAPTER TWO. CLASSICAL EXCHANGES: ECONOMIES OF THE WOR(L)D

1. See note 5 to Chapter One above.

2. In Marxist economics "surplus value" is the difference between the price of a commodity and the initial capital investment required to produce it. In *Grundrisse* Marx goes to great lengths explaining this key concept. "[A] surplus value which, as a higher price of the product, is realized only in circulation, but, like all prices, is realized in it by already being ideally *presupposed* to it, determined before they enter into it--signifies, expressed in accord with the general concept of exchange value, that the labor time objectified in the product--or amount of labor (expressed passively, the magnitude of labor appears as an amount of space; but expressed in motion, it is measurable only in time)--is greater than that which was present in the original component of capital" (321).

3. "The cost of using resources for a certain purpose, measured by the benefit or revenues given up by not using them in their best alternative use" (Lipsey, et al. glossary).

CHAPTER THREE BEYOND PROFIT AND LOSS: HEGEL, DERRIDA, AND MARX ON FIGURATIVE DETOURS

1. In deconstructive theory the "neutralization" of an opposition proceeds from what Derrida calls an "*overturning* ." His infamous response to interviewers Houdebine and Scarpetta in *Positions* explains this process concisely: "To deconstruct the opposition, first of all, is to overturn the hierarchy at a given moment. To overlook this phase of overturning is to forget the conflictual and subordinating structure of opposition. Therefore one might proceed too quickly to a *neutralization* that *in practice* would leave the previous field untouched, leaving one no hold on the previous opposition, thereby preventing any means of *intervening* in the field effectively" (41).

2. The title of this chapter is of course indicative of Derrida's concept of "general economy." See note 5 to Chapter One above.

3. This abstract nature of metaphysics is of course the subject of many Marxist critiques of Hegelian idealism. In her book *Dialectical Economics* Lyn Marcus writes that "[t]he principle flaw in metaphysics is not that it is impractical, but that it represents the failure of man to discover how to make such knowledge practicable. As *metaphysics* it becomes the terminus of the process of reasoning, attained by a last, magnificent conceptual leap over an uncomprehended

void separating the process of aggregating knowledge from its implied completion. Metaphysics cannot guide the philosopher back to reality. He can only leap back, finding himself left with the memory of his acrobatics, but without the power to impart any tools from the universal into the empirical realm" (74).

CHAPTER FOUR POWER IN THE LIGHT OF METAPHOR

1. On the connection between philosophy and truth the following definition will suffice: philosophy is "the love, study, or pursuit of wisdom, or of knowledge of things and their causes" (*OED*, 781).

2. Of the diverse definitions of the verb "to know" here are three which illustrate its faculties of possession and propriety: "[I]n its most general sense, [it] has been defined by some as 'To hold for true or real'; 'To have cognizance of (something) through observation, inquiry, or information; to be aware or apprised of'; 'To apprehend or comprehend as fact or truth; to have a clear or distinct perception or apprehension of'" (*OED*, 746).

3. See note 2 to Chapter Two above.

4. To the question, "[i]s metaphor a basic and robust capacity, one which is likely to remain relatively intact even in the face of considerable injury to the brain?", Drs. Howard Gardner and Ellen Winner answer that "the division of labour between the two halves of the brain" is at least "partially responsible" for metaphoric capacity (134-135).

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