

'THE PLEASURES OF MERELY CIRCULATING'
-- THE INTERPETIVE ANTHROPOLOGY OF CLIFFORD GEERTZ
AND THE 'POSTMODERN' ANTHROPOLOGY OF JAMES CLIFFORD:
A DECONSTRUCTIVE READING

By

K. JOANNE RICHARDSON

B.A. (English), The University of British Columbia, 1971
M.A. (Anthropology), The University of Bristish Columbia, 1982

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(Department of Anthropology and Sociology)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

August 1989

© K. Joanne Richardson, 1989

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date AUG 8/90

ABSTRACT

In this dissertation I attempt to explicate Jacques Derrida's strategy of deconstruction and, through a deconstructive reading of Clifford Geertz's interpretive anthropology and James Clifford's 'postmodern' anthropology respectively, to show its relevance to the discipline of anthropology in general. The following is a skeletal outline of how I set about this endeavour.

In my introductory chapter, I attempt to indicate the way in which the notion of logos or presence has dominated Western philosophy from its inception in ancient Greece up to and including the present day. As Derrida utilizes it, the term 'presence' has to do with the assumption of and desire for the existence of a self-certain and self-identical basis for all extant phenomena and is manifested in such notions as truth, meaning, God, self, concept and so on. Because it is always defined as self-sufficient and self-identical, wherever it operates, presence entails the suppression of difference and otherness. In Chapter Two, I offer an explication of Derrida's strategy for exposing and delimiting presence as it manifests itself through and throughout Western conceptuality, paying particular attention to his work on undecidability. Briefly, this has to do with arguing that concepts, as such, are always already originarily doubled and hence, Aristotelian

logic notwithstanding, are both possible (as effects of undecidability) and impossible (as self-sufficient and self-identical ideas). This calls radically into question our assumptions about the nature of conceptuality and indicates the way in which these assumptions ensure the repression of difference and otherness. In Chapter Three, I look at the phenomenological (Husserl) and hermeneutic (esp. Heidegger, Gadamer, Ricoeur) background of contemporary interpretive and 'postmodern' anthropology and, in so doing, attempt to show that it is premised upon an assumption of presence. In Chapter Four, I offer a deconstructive reading of certain works by Clifford Geertz and by James Clifford respectively, and attempt to show that their unrecognized dedication to an assumed notion of presence prevents them from seeing the repressive/oppressive nature of their chosen conceptuality. And, finally, in my concluding chapter, I argue that Geertzian interpretive anthropology and Cliffordian 'postmodern' anthropology are two sides of the same old coin and that, with respect to the latter's work, the term 'postmodern' is a misnomer. I further argue that Western conceptuality is, by definition and in principle, both repressive and oppressive and that, this being the case, anthropology must either re-examine and re-evaluate its most basic assumptions or, failing that, resign itself to perpetuating the inherited legacy of a ruthless metaphysics.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....11

Acknowledgements.....iv

I. Introductory Comments: Philosophical Background
and Statement of ~~Intent~~.....1

II. An Explication of Derridean Deconstruction.....22

III. Philosophical Background of Interpretive
and 'Postmodern' Anthropology: Phenomenology
and Hermeneutics.....60

IV. Clifford Geertz and James Clifford:
A Deconstructive Reading.....106

V. Concluding Assessments.....165

Bibliography.....188

Ah the old questions, the old answers,
there's nothing like them!
(Samuel Beckett, Endgame)

. . . that things go round and again go round
Has rather a classical sound.

(Wallace Stevens,
"The Pleasures of Merely Circulating")

What connection is there
between the sartorial
splendours of the educated man
and the photograph of ruined
houses and dead bodies?

(Virginia Woolf, Three Guineas)

Daddy, daddy, you bastard, I'm through.
(Sylvia Plath, "Daddy")

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Elvi Whittaker, and my committee members, Dr. Kenelm Burridge and Dr. Marie-Francoise Guédon, for reading and commenting on this dissertation.

I would like to thank Dianne Tiefensee for her love and support and for guiding me through the treacherous world of computer technology.

I would like to thank my many friends for their affection and camaraderie.

I would like to thank my parents, Jean and Fred Richardson, for their constant love and devotion.

Chapter One

Introductory Comments: Philosophical Background and
Statement of ~~Intent~~

1) Philosophical Background

In his historical lexicon of Greek philosophical terms F.E. Peters offers the following entry concerning Logos:

lógos: speech, account, reason,
definition, rational faculty, proportion.

1. . . . [For] Heraclitus logos is an underlying organizational principle of the universe. . . . And this harmony, which is really a tension of opposites, is not to be understood in the sense of a cyclic return, but as a stable state (frs. 10, 51).¹ This logos principle,

¹ Interestingly, according to Kirk, Raven and Schofield, the common notion that Heraclitus was predominantly, if not entirely, concerned with flux and change as opposed to stability and order has to do with his having been misread by Plato and Aristotle:

As for Plato and Aristotle, there is little verbatim quotation of Heraclitus in either, nor were they really interested in the accurate objective assessment of early predecessors. Plato occasionally mentions him, mainly in a humorous or ironical way and with emphasis on a view freely attributed to him in the dialogues, that 'all things are in flux' According to Aristotle at Met. A6, 987a32, Plato was influenced in youth by the emphasis laid by Cratylus on this kind of view. But all Presocratic thinkers were struck by the dominance of change in the world of our experience. Heraclitus was obviously no exception, indeed he probably expressed the universality of change more clearly and more dramatically than his predecessors; but for him it was the complementary idea of the measure inhering in change, the stability that persists through it and controls it, that was of vital importance. Plato may have been genuinely misled, especially by fifth-century sophistic

though it is hidden and perceptible only to the intelligence (frs. 54, 114. . .), is still material, as can be seen from the identification of the Heraclitan logos with cosmic fire. . . .

2. Plato . . . used the term logos in a variety of ways, including the opposition between mythos and logos . . . , where the latter signifies a true, analytical account. This is common usage, but it leads off into an epistemological theory. In Phaedo 766 Plato marks as a characteristic of true knowledge (episteme) the ability to give an account (logos) of what one knows. In Theat. 201c-d this aspect of logos is incorporated into the definition of episteme: true opinion (doxa) accompanied by an account. Socrates discusses what logos would mean in this context (ibid. 206c-2106), and from his analysis emerges a description of logos as the statement of a distinguishing characteristic of a thing (ibid. 2086). The validity of this is denied on the ground of its being of no value in the case of sensible, individual beings (compare Aristotle, Meta. 1039b).

3. But when this conception of logos is moved higher up the Platonic scale of being it obviously does have a role to play; in Rep. 534b Plato describes the

exaggerations, in his distortion of Heraclitus' emphasis here; and Aristotle accepted the Platonic flux-interpretation and carried it still further. Other references to Heraclitus in Aristotle attack him for denying the law of contradiction in his assertion that opposites are 'the same.' Again this is a misinterpretation by Aristotle, who applied his own tight logical standards anachronistically; by the 'same' Heraclitus evidently meant not 'identical' so much as 'not essentially distinct.' [In any case, Heraclitus was] less concerned with the mechanics of development and change than with the unifying reality that underlay them.

(Kirk, Raven and Schofield, 1984: 185-186)

dialectician . . . as one who can give an account (logos) of the true being (or essence, ousia) of something, i.e. the term of the process of division (diairesis) described in the Sophist, the Aristotelian definition (. . . horos) by genera and species; indeed, Aristotle frequently uses logos as a synonym for [definition]. Another typical Aristotelian use is logos as reason, rationality, particularly in an ethical context, e.g. Pol. 1332a, Eth. Nich. V. 1134a, and frequently in the combination "right reason" (orthos logos, the Stoic recta ratio) He also understands logos as mathematical proportion, ratio (Meta, 991b), a usage probably going back to the Pythagoreans, even though it is unattested in their fragments. . . .

4. The Stoic point of departure on logos is Heraclitus' doctrine of an all-pervasive formula of organization, which the Stoics considered divine. . . . Logos is the active . . . force in the universe (D.L. VII, 134),² creative in the fashion of sperm (SVF I, 87;³ D.L. VII, 135; see logoi spermatikoi⁴). As in

² Diogenes Laertius, Lives of the Eminent Philosophers, ed. and trans. R.D. Hicks, Loeb Classical Library, London, 1925.

³ J. von Arnim, Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta, 4 vols., Leipzig, 1903-1924.

⁴ According to Peters:

The Stoic logoi spermatikoi, which are designed to explain both plurality and teleology in a monistic system, appear to be patterned after the Aristotelian eidos . . . in its role as physis [nature]. The logos considered as a unified entity contains within itself, on the analogy of animal sperm, the growth powers of exemplars of all the individuals (SVF II, 1027; D.L. VII, 135). These individual logoi are imperishable (SVF II, 717), i.e. they survive the cyclical conflagration (ekpyrosis) that consumes the kosmos and are the seedlings of the next kosmos (ibid. I, 497). Despite their paradigmatic character they are more

Heraclitus it is material and identified with fire It is also identical with nature (physis . . .) and Zeus (see Cleanthes, Hymn to Zeus; SVF I, 534). This pervasive presence in the universe develops in several directions: since it is a unity it grounds the theory of cosmic sympathy . . . and of natural law and the ethical imperative "to live according to nature". . . . Stoic linguistic theory further distinguished interior logos (=thought) and exterior logos (=speech) (SVF II, 135; Sextus Empiricus, Adv. Math. VIII, 275⁵ . . .), a distinction that clearly influenced Philo's notoriously difficult vision of logos.

5. Philo knew the distinction between interior and exterior logos and could apply it in an orthodox Stoic fashion (De Vita Mos. II, 137⁶), and it was perhaps this distinction, together with the Jewish scriptural tradition about the "Word of God," that led to his new treatment of logos. In the first instance logos is the Divine Reason that embraces the archetypal complex of eide that will serve as the models of creation. . . . Next, this logos that is God's mind is externalized in the form of the kosmos noetos . . ., the universe

Aristotelian than Platonic in that they are immanent in matter (ibid. II, 1074). They also play a major role in Plotinus: they reside in the psyche (Enn. II, 3,14; IV, 3,10) where they are the cause of its movement (ibid. IV, 3,15), the logoi contain all the details of the being (ibid. III, 2,1) and are the reasons why individuals differ (ibid. IV, 4,12); unextended themselves, they are individualized only by the matter in which they inhere (ibid. IV, 9,5).
(Peters, 1967: 110)

⁵ Sextus Empiricus, Adversus Mathematicos, 3 vols., ed. and trans. R.G. Bury, Loeb Classical Library, London. 1935-1953.

⁶ Philo, Works, ed. and trans. F.H. Colson et al., 10 vols., Loeb Classical Library, London, 1929 to date.

apprehensible only to the intelligence (ibid. 7,29). It is transcendent . . . and it is God, although not the God . . ., but rather the "elder son of God". . . . With the creation of the visible world (kosmos aisthetos) the logos begins to play an immanent role as the "seal" of creation (De fuga 2,12), the Stoic "bond of the universe" . . . and heimarmene [fate]. Philo differs from the Stoics in denying that this immanent logos is God (De migre. Abr. 32, 179-181); for the providential role of Philo's logos, see pronoia.⁷ Philo gives his logos a

⁷ According to Peters, pronoia means 'forethought' or 'providence':

1. The earlier history of the concept of providence is to be seen in the emergence, from Diogenes to Aristotle, of a notion of an intelligent purpose (telos . . .) operating in the universe. In all of these thinkers it is clearly associated with the intelligent God whose features begin to appear in the later Plato (see Laws 899 where the denial of pronoia is reckoned blasphemy) and in Aristotle. For the Stoics the immanent Logos governs all by nous and pronoia (D.L. VII, 138; SVF I, 176). It is given a new turn in the direction of anthropocentrism by Chrysippus . . . where the rest of the kosmos is subjected to the good of man. Stoic pronoia, identified as it was with physis, was essentially immanent. 2. Later Platonism, like the newly appeared Semitic tradition, was transcendent and believed in a series of intermediate deities . . ., with the result that pronoia began to be distributed through the entire range of deities (Plutarch, De facto 572f-273b; Apuleius, De Platone I, 12). As the supreme principle grows more remote, its direct involvement in pronoia becomes markedly less. So in Philo, De fuga 101, the Logos exercises providence through the immanent dynamis, just as in Plotinus (Enn. IV, 8,2) the World Soul has a general providence and the individual souls a particular providence

distinct role in creation: it is the instrumental cause (De cher. 35, 126-127); it is also an archetypal light . . ., this latter image reappearing in Plotinus, Enn. III, 2,16.⁸ But there is a difference between the two thinkers; what was in Philo both logos and nous [intelligence, intellect, mind] is divided in Plotinus who uses the logoi concept in a fashion akin to the Stoic logoi spermatikoi. . . .
(Peters, 1967: 110-112)

From the foregoing extended quotation it may be seen that throughout ancient Greek philosophy, up to and including the first intimations of Christianity, the concept of logos is always, either directly or indirectly, associated with some notion of the existence of an absolute -- of a changeless entity against which all else may be measured. However, it is the Presocratic notion of logos as 'the underlying organizational principle of the universe', a principle which, in various forms, persists through to the present day, that inspired Jacques Derrida to coin the term 'logocentrism.' Logocentrism refers to Western philosophy's assumption of

for the bodies they inhabit; the One, of course, is beyond providence. . . . Implicit in this distinction between general and particular providence, i.e., between command and execution, is the reconciliation of the necessary transcendence of God and the necessary immanence of providential activity. . . .
(Peters, 1967: p. 164)

⁸ Plotinus, Enneads, 6 vols., ed. E. Brehier, Paris, 1924-1938; trans. S. MacKenna, 2nd ed., London, 1956.

presence, that is, its assumption of an essence, an absolute, a plenitude, etc. which, in the process of grounding and accounting for all extant phenomena, subsumes difference within identity and/or the other within the self.

Thus, for example, Platonic and Aristotelian notions of eidōs (idea) presuppose a division between what is absolute and what is transient. For Plato the changing world of mortal existents is a reflection of the unchanging realm of the eide or ideas. As Peters expresses it,

The relationship between the indivisible, eternal eide and transient, sensible phenomena (aistheta) is described in a number of different ways. The eide are the cause . . . of the aistheta (Phaedo 100b-101c), and the latter are said to participate . . . in the eide. In an elaborate metaphor, pervasive in Plato, the aistheton is said to be a copy (eikon . . .) of the eternal model (paradeigma), the eidōs. This act of artistic creation (mimesis . . .) is the work of a supreme craftsman (demiourgos . . .).

. . . . [Where] is one to locate the eide? Here analogy comes into play. Just as the aistheta are contained in some sort of organic unity that is the kosmos, so the eide exist in some "intelligible place" (topos noetos, Rep. 508c, 517b . . .) located "beyond the heavens" (Phaedrus 247c).

(Peters, 1967: 48)

Thus Plato posits a transcendent realm capable of grounding and accounting for the earthly realm. As for Aristotle,

The chief difference between the Platonic and Aristotelian view of the eidos is that for the latter the eidos is not (except in the cases of the first mover and/or movers, and that of the nous [mind, intellect, intelligence] "that comes from outside" . . .) a separate subsistent . . ., but a principle of complete substances. It is the formal cause of things (Phys. II, 194b), a correlative of matter in composite beings (ibid. I, 190b), and the intelligible essence (ousia) of an existent (Meta. 1013a . . .). In knowing things we know their eidos (Meta. 1010a), i.e., the appropriate faculty (nous or aisthesis) becomes the thing it knows by reason of the eidos of the known object entering the soul (De an. III, 431b-432a). Eidos is, in brief, an actualization (energeia, entelechia . . .; De an. II, 412a).
(Peters, 1967: 49-50)

In other words, Aristotle takes the Platonic notion of eidos and views it not only as transcendent (e.g. first mover), but also as immanent (e.g. 'the intelligible essence (ousia) of an existent'). But the position of the eidos as absolute and unmoving remains constant. Given Aristotle's acceptance of eidos as absolute and complete in and of itself, it is a short step to his positing of the founding principle of the logic of identity -- the principle of non-contradiction:

For the same thing to hold good and not to hold good simultaneously of the same thing and in the same respect is impossible. . . . This, then, is the firmest of all principles. . . . For it is impossible for anyone to believe that the same thing is and is not. . . . But if it is not possible for contraries to hold good of the same thing

simultaneously . . . , and the opinion contrary to an opinion is that of the contradictory, then obviously it is impossible for the same person to believe simultaneously that the same thing is and is not; for anyone who made that error would be holding contrary opinions simultaneously. That is why all those who demonstrate go back to this opinion in the end: it is, in the nature of things, the principle of all the other axioms also.

(Aristotle, 1987: 267)
(emphasis Aristotle's and mine)

This principle of non-contradiction and its concomitant logic of identity, premised as they are on an assumption of eidōs as absolute and essential, have never ceased haunting Western philosophy and/or theology.*

The two main branches of post-Platonic and post-Aristotelian philosophy are Empiricism and Rationalism. Generally speaking, the seventeenth century and eighteenth century empiricist philosophers (e.g. Bacon, Locke, Berkeley, Hume) held that knowledge derives not from innate or a priori ideas but from the accumulation of concrete sensory

* With respect to Christian theology, whether the emphasis is on God as transcendent (and hence the need for a chain of intermediaries schooled in translating His ways to humanity (e.g. Roman Catholicism)) or on God as immanent (and hence the need only for an 'open heart and receptive mind' (e.g. Protestantism)) the important point is that God is invariably viewed as omnipotent and omnipresent (also, interestingly, as male -- metaphoric notwithstanding). In other words, whatever particular aspect of the concept of God one chooses, for whatever reasons, to stress, God, as such, is assumed to be absolute, unchanging and eternal -- that which both accounts for and contains all known (and, by extension, unknown) phenomena.

experiences. Here, of course, we see the glimmerings of an inductive 'scientific method' premised on the notion that certainty is determinable through direct observation and experience. However, like the rationalists (and Plato and Aristotle before them), what is of primary concern to the empiricists is still certainty, and, like the rationalists, they assume that certain propositions are, by definition, indubitable. Thus the empiricists rarely questioned the existence of God and, in any case, never questioned the existence of necessary truths -- they merely held that the former was not subject to concrete observation and therefore not the business of science and that the latter, being logically necessary, could not be questioned without resulting in absurdity. For example, Bacon believed in the separation of reason and revelation; Locke believed that there was nonempirical a priori knowledge of nonsensible phenomena; Berkeley believed that knowledge of God was a given; Hume, unlike the others, questioned the existence of God, but, like the others, believed that certain relations of ideas (e.g. analytic propositions and mathematics) constituted necessary truths, and so on.

The empiricist tradition, in spite of its stated opposition to the Platonic dualism of unchanging transcendent ideas/transient earthly phenomena and the general rationalist dualism of a priori/a posteriori ideas, itself remains essentially dualistic in that it assumes the validity of the

distinction between necessary and contingent truths -- an assumption which, except in so far as it locates necessary truths within the tenets of universal logic rather than in the human mind, does not differ in any fundamental respect from the aforementioned rationalist assumption of the distinction between a priori/a posteriori ideas. Hence, methodological differences aside, the empiricist tradition, every bit as much as the rationalist tradition, assumes the existence of self-certain and self-evident truths which are predicated upon an acceptance of the indubitability of the logic of identity (as evinced in the Aristotelian principle of non-contradiction) and against which all concretely observed and/or experienced phenomena must be measured. Thus, for example, both traditions assume concepts, as such, to be, by definition and in principle, self-identical and indivisible because, following the logic of non-contradiction, a concept, being that which is definitive of the essence or meaning of a category or class of phenomena, cannot be what it is not: i.e. it cannot, simultaneously, be both possible and impossible.¹⁰ This being the case, both traditions, either implicitly or explicitly, assume the priority of identity over difference and, as will become

¹⁰ It should be noted that, notions of 'good' and 'bad' theorizing about conceptuality notwithstanding, this is the standard definition of 'concept' as it functions throughout the Western philosophical tradition. (The reader may consult the Oxford English Dictionary or any reputable dictionary of philosophical terms.)

clear in the following section on Rationalism, self over other.

Of the three leading seventeenth century and eighteenth century rationalist philosophers, Descartes, Leibniz and Spinoza, it is Descartes who has had by far the most influence on later philosophy. It is generally acknowledged that modern philosophy begins with Descartes's demonstration that certitude is grounded in the thinking individual's indubitable awareness of her own thought processes -- the famous cogito ergo sum. In other words, one may doubt everything but the fact of one's own thinking/doubting self. Thus for the first time in Western philosophy knowledge is grounded in the perceiving subject rather than in an assumed transcendent form(s) or in a world that is presumed to exist outside of one's own consciousness. This is not to say that Descartes dispensed with a notion of God -- on the contrary, he undertook to prove the logical necessity of God's existence.¹¹ Moreover, Descartes believed in the existence of innate or a priori ideas, such as the principles of knowledge and science (e.g. the principle of non-contradiction) which

¹¹ Descartes argued that to know was a greater perfection than to doubt, and that therefore, he himself must be an imperfect being who, nonetheless, was capable of having an idea of perfection. This idea of perfection could only have come from a perfect being, i.e. God. Further to this, Descartes argued that existence, being a perfection, could no more be separated from the notion of a supremely perfect being than having three angles could be separated from the notion of a triangle.

are present in the human mind from birth and which, being evident to the 'natural light of reason,' are immune from doubt. However, Descartes's importance for later philosophy centres on his linking of certitude with the thinking self and the concomitant notion of the mind/body split. As he reasons in the fourth Discourse,

. . . examining attentively what I was, and seeing that I could pretend that I had no body and that there was no world or place that I was in, but that I could not, for all that, pretend that I did not exist, and that, on the contrary, from the very fact that I thought of doubting the truth of other things, it followed very evidently and very certainly that I existed; while on the other hand, if I had only ceased to think, although all the rest of what I had ever imagined had been true, I would have no reason to believe that I existed; I thereby concluded that I was a substance, of which the whole essence or nature consists in thinking, and which, in order to exist, needs no place and depends on no material thing; so that this 'I', that is to say, the mind, by which I am what I am, is entirely distinct from the body, and even that it is easier to know than the body, and moreover, that even if the body were not, it would not cease to be all that it is.

(Descartes, 1980: 54)

Descartes reasoned that the mind or self (res cogitans) was unextended and indivisible and hence totally distinct from the body or matter (res extensa) which was extended and divisible. And because certitude can only be achieved by and

through the thought processes of the thinking subject, for Descartes, knowledge of otherness (res extensa) must, by definition, be derived from and determined by the self (res cogitans).

The seventeenth century and eighteenth century empiricist tradition, with its notions of logical induction and necessary truths and its emphasis on sensory experience as the barometer of certitude, carried on through Auguste Comte up through Bertrand Russell, the early Wittgenstein and the logical positivism of Hempel, Carnap et al., and influenced much of nineteenth century and twentieth century anthropology (e.g. Tylor, Fraser, Boas, Radcliffe-Brown, Murdock, Stewart, White, Lévi-Strauss, etc.). The hallmarks of this tradition include a reliance on testability, replicability, objectivity, quantitative analysis, facts, causal or deterministic explanation, a fundamental separation between the observer and the observed, and the possibility of establishing laws based on conclusions drawn from observable data. The seventeenth century and eighteenth century rationalist tradition, with its notion of logical deduction from a priori ideas and its emphasis on the thinking/perceiving subject as the barometer of certitude, carried on through Kant, Hegel, the phenomenology of Husserl and the hermeneutics of Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, Gadamer and Ricoeur and particularly influenced twentieth century interpretive anthropology (e.g. Geertz, Sperber,

Rabinow, Boon, Hymes, etc.) and 'postmodern' anthropology (e.g. Clifford, Tyler, Marcus, Fischer, etc.). The hallmarks of this tradition include an emphasis on subjectivity, a belief in the intersubjective social construction of an always mediated 'reality' and the importance of interpreted meanings as opposed to analyzed facts.

However, both traditions, in that they whole-heartedly embrace the logic of identity (i.e. logic premised on the validity of the principle of non-contradiction) and in that they both aspire to the attainment of certitude, remain profoundly metaphysical. That is to say, they both assume and rely on a notion of presence, i.e. a guarantee of self-evident and self-identical certainty which expresses itself in such notions as essence, idea, truth, self, dialectic, consciousness, concept, and so on. This notion of presence, through phenomenological/existentialist/hermeneutical ideas concerning self and/or dialecticity and through semiological/structuralist ideas concerning binary oppositionality, dominates twentieth century thought every bit as much as it dominated Plato and Aristotle. It is this implicit or explicit notion of presence which Jacques Derrida's deconstruction seeks to expose and to delimit within the works of Western philosophy and, in so doing, to indicate the way in which, due to the very nature of our most cherished concepts, indeed, due to the very nature of concepts as such, we, albeit unknowingly, constantly repress otherness and

difference.

ii) Statement of ~~Intent~~

In this dissertation I attempt to accomplish three goals: (1) to provide an explication of Derridean thought and to demonstrate the relevance of its application to anthropology, (2) to delineate the philosophical background and presuppositions of interpretive anthropology (as evinced in the writings of Clifford Geertz) and 'postmodern' anthropology (as evinced in the writings of James Clifford) and to subject them to a deconstructive reading and (3) to show that Western conceptuality, by definition and in principle, is both repressive and oppressive and that, this being the case, anthropology must begin to engage in a fundamental re-evaluation of its most basic assumptions.

I choose to concentrate on the work of Jacques Derrida because, Nietzsche and Heidegger notwithstanding,¹² the only

¹² Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 - 1900) is of great interest to Derrida in that the former dedicated his life's work to a radical critique of the truth claims of Western philosophy. In addressing the concept of truth Nietzsche expresses himself as follows:

What, then, is truth? A mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, and anthropomorphisms -- in short, a sum of human relations, which have been enhanced, transposed, and embellished poetically and rhetorically, and which after long use seem firm, canonical, and obligatory to a people: truths are illusions about which one has forgotten that this is what they are; metaphors which are worn out and without sensuous power; coins which have lost their pictures and now matter only as metal, no longer as coins.

We still do not know where the urge for truth comes from; for as yet we have heard only of the obligation

imposed by society that it should exist: to be truthful means using the customary metaphors -- in moral terms: the obligation to lie according to a fixed convention, to lie herd-like in a style obligatory for all....

(Nietzsche in Taylor, 1986a: 219)

In other words, according to Nietzsche, Western metaphysics, from Plato on, has engaged in a prolonged process of mistaking rhetorical convention for indisputable truth. He further argues that human consciousness is an effect of the interplay of differential forces and that force is, by definition, relational - i.e. that force, as such, cannot exist as a singular unity but must always exist in relation to another force. In this way Nietzsche challenges the general philosophical assumption of self-identical, self-sufficient unity. For Nietzsche,

. . . every thing is fissured and every consciousness duplicitous. [He] believes that the search for truth is actually an exercise of "the will to power" through which one tries to master the uncertainties of the human condition by repressing the inevitability of fragmentation and disclocation. . . . Nietzsche's "gay wisdom" joyfully affirms the inescapability of incompleteness and the impossibility of knowledge.

(Taylor, 1986a: 16)

Despite Nietzsche's attempt to unsettle the self-assured assumptions of Western metaphysics, Martin Heidegger (1889 - 1976) considered him to be very much a proponent of that which he sought to discredit. (Indeed, Heidegger refers to Nietzsche as the last great metaphysician.) As far as Heidegger was concerned, Nietzsche, like all those who preceded him back to and including Plato, was mired in a concern with knowledge which precluded any serious attention to the question of the meaning of Being. According to Heidegger,

Neither Nietzsche nor any thinker before him . . . come to the commencing beginning, rather they see the beginning already and only in the light of what is already a falling off from the beginning and a quietening of that beginning: in the light of Platonic philosophy . . . Nietzsche himself already early on designates his philosophy as reversed Platonism. The reversal does not eliminate the Platonic premise, but rather solidifies it exactly through the appearance of elimination.

(Heidegger in Spivak in Derrida, 1982e: xxxiv)

In other words, because Nietzsche does not go far enough, because he does not question the meaning of Being (i.e. the possibility of presence as such), he is left with no choice but to operate by a

method of simple reversal (e.g. anti-Christ as opposed to Christ, Dionysian as opposed to Apollonian etc.) which, Heidegger argues (and Derrida would agree), leaves the philosophical field essentially untouched.

Heidegger sets out to address the possibility of presence through attempting to think difference as difference. He refers to difference as 'the same' which, for Heidegger, is that which simultaneously joins and separates. In other words, Heidegger attempts to move away from the standard Western philosophical notion of presence as, by definition, undifferentiated, and attempts to think presence as the 'luminous self-concealing' of the 'same.' However, as Mark Taylor points out,

It is clear that in struggling to think the unthought, Heidegger tries to think philosophy's other. Yet does he still think this other philosophically or even metaphysically, and, thus, not think it as other? Insofar as Heidegger continues to value unity over plurality, he remains true to the most important assumption of Western philosophy. Though intended to overcome metaphysical notions of identity, Heidegger's concept of the same approaches the notion of identity-in-difference that Hegel develops in response to what he regards as Schelling's inadequate "philosophy of identity." The Logos that articulates Heidegger's same is, like the Hegelian Logos, a "primal phenomenon," that "draws and joins together what is held apart in separation." By attempting to think difference as same, Heidegger seems to extend the philosophical search for origins. In exploring the difference left unthought by philosophy, Heidegger seeks what he explicitly labels an "essential origin." From this point of view, the problem with the traditional notion of Being, as well as its modern manifestation in phenomenology's "principle of principles" (i.e. transcendental subjectivity), is that both Being and subjectivity are insufficiently primordial, and, hence, cannot provide a proper foundation for thinking. As a more original origin, difference can answer the question of how presence becomes present.

(Taylor, 1986a: 20-21)

As will become clear in the course of this dissertation, Derrida has a great deal of sympathy with parts of the Nietzschean and Heideggerian efforts -- much of his work being concerned with maintaining and developing many of their insights while avoiding their essential acceptance of presence. For, although both Nietzsche and Heidegger attack the presuppositions of Western metaphysics, both, ultimately, remain dedicated to that metaphysics -- Nietzsche through the retention of a metaphysics which is

thinker of whom I am aware who manages, through his use of such 'psuedo-concepts' as originary doubling and undecidability,¹² to indicate the way in which Western metaphysics represses otherness and difference without, himself, succumbing to such repression. I choose to concentrate on interpretive anthropology because it is widely perceived to be a reaction to, and more rigorously comprehensive than, traditionalist positivistic approaches to anthropology (Scholte, 1974; Hymes ed., 1974; Watson-Franke and Watson, 1975; Rabinow and Sullivan eds., 1979; Ruby ed., 1982; Geertz, 1973, 1983, 1988; Boon, 1982; Whittaker, 1986; Clifford, 1988). As has been said, positivist approaches to anthropology modelled themselves on empiricist notions of fact, objectivity, the separation between observer and observed and so on. In opposition to this view, interpretive anthropology argues that 'objectivity' is an epistemological construct which entails the unwarranted and unacceptable assumption that the anthropologist can exist as an unprejudiced observer who is capable of writing up a dispassionate, 'factual' account of whatever she observes. Interpretive anthropologists introduce phenomenological/

steeped in Platonic/Cartesian dualism (e.g. truth/error, appearance/ reality etc.) and Heidegger through a nostalgia for recovering the moment of the meaning of Being.

¹² Why these are not traditional concepts is explained in Chapter Two.

hermeneutical notions of intersubjectivity, interpretation and dialecticity into their discipline and maintain that whatever the anthropologist produces, so far from being an unprejudiced, dispassionate account, is always a thoroughly mediated social construction which deals not with analyzed facts but with interpreted meanings -- hence doing away with any notion of the validity of objective, scientific privilege on the part of the anthropologist. I choose to concentrate on 'postmodern' anthropology because it sets itself up as an improvement over interpretive anthropology and as embodying what is au courant within the discipline as a whole (Marcus and Fisher eds., 1986; Clifford and Marcus eds., 1986; Rabinow, 1986; Tylor, 1987; Clifford, 1988; Sangren, 1988; Geertz, 1988; Kapferer, 1989; Whittaker, 1990). 'Postmodern' anthropology argues that interpretive anthropology, its improvement over positivist anthropology notwithstanding, merely interprets, rather than actively engaging with, other cultures. Thus, while accepting the interpretive anthropologist's emphasis on the phenomenological notion of intersubjectivity, 'postmodern' anthropology places an emphasis on the Gadamerian hermeneutics of dialogue rather than on the Diltheyan or Ricoeurian hermeneutics of interpretation. In this way, 'postmodern' anthropology seeks to ensure that whatever the anthropologist produces will be in the form of a 'negotiated reality' and, as such, unlike interpretive anthropology, will

disallow any possibility of being skewed in favour of the remnants of a privileged point of view. I choose to concentrate on Clifford Geertz as representative of interpretive anthropology and on James Clifford as representative of 'postmodern' anthropology because that is how they are characterized in the current anthropological literature (re. Geertz: Rabinow and Sullivan eds., 1979; Ruby ed., 1982; Boon, 1982; Webster, 1982, 1983; Parker, 1985; Marcus and Fischer eds., 1986; Scholte, 1986; Clifford, 1988. re: Clifford: Marcus and Cushman, 1982; Marcus and Fischer eds., 1986; Rabinow, 1986; Geertz, 1988; Sangren, 1988; Kapferer, 1989; Whittaker, 1990). I argue that both Geertzian interpretive anthropology and Cliffordian 'postmodern' anthropology are firmly embedded within an unexamined conceptuality which ensures that they continue to perpetuate the legacy of Western metaphysics through the unacknowledged and, indeed, unrecognized repression of difference and otherness.

Chapter Two

An Explication of Derridean Deconstruction

Jacques Derrida maintains that the entire history of Western metaphysics, from its inception in ancient Greece to its expression in modern day hermeneutics, grounds itself in a concept of presence; that is, in the assumption of and desire for a 'transcendental signified' -- an absolutely certain because self-identical and self-sufficient source of being and knowledge which manifests itself in such concepts as truth, essence, substance, meaning, God, and so on.¹⁴ Whether presence is expressed as a Presocratic notion of logos, as a Platonic or Aristotelian notion of eidōs, as a Christian notion of God, as a Cartesian notion of cogito, as a Kantian notion of synthetic a priori, as a Hegelian notion of Absolute Spirit, as a Rousseauian notion of nature, as a Husserlean notion of transcendental subjectivity, as a Saussurian notion of the inner system of language or as a Heideggerian notion of the meaning of Being as aletheia, it always expresses both the possibility and the necessity of an absolute and self-sufficient ground for all human experience. And because presence must be assumed to account for any and

¹⁴ The reader should be aware that, throughout this work, it is Derrida's view of Western metaphysics with which I am concerned. It should not be assumed that this is a view which is commonly shared by all philosophers.

all discrete phenomena, because nothing must be allowed to fall outside its purview (for, if this were to happen, the unquestionable would have to be questioned and chaos would threaten logos) it is perceived to be homogeneous -- to be the ultimate unity which contains and allows for all multiplicity but which is not in itself multiple.

A corollary of the foregoing view of presence is that Western conceptuality abounds with innumerable hierarchically structured oppositional pairs such as speech/writing, truth/error, certainty/uncertainty, referent/sign, signified/signifier, identity/difference, meaning/absurdity, self/other, wherein the latter term of each pair is viewed as a corruption of the former. Thus, to use the speech/writing opposition as an example, Derrida asserts that:

. . . phonocentrism merges with the historical determination of the meaning of being in general as presence, with all the subdeterminations which depend on this general form and which organize within it their system and their historical sequence (presence of the thing to sight as eidos, presence as substance/essence/existence [ousia], temporal presence as point [stigmé] of the now or of the moment [nun], the self-presence of the cogito, consciousness, subjectivity, the co-presence of the other and of the self, intersubjectivity as the intentional phenomenon of the ego, and so forth). Logocentrism [supports] the determination of the being of the entity as presence [and the] epoch of the logos thus debases writing considered as mediation of mediation and as a fall into

the exteriority of meaning.¹⁵
 (Derrida, 1982e: 12-13)

In other words, speech is exalted because it is considered to be close to an originary presence, truth or meaning, while writing is scorned because it is a 'mediation of mediation' and consequently twice removed from that which it attempts to approximate. Derrida contends that, so far from being a secondary or derivative form of speech, writing is actually a precondition of language and that speech has always already been written. Clearly, Derrida is not referring to writing in the standard sense of symbols representing words:

As Derrida deploys it, the term [writing] is closely related to that element of signifying difference which Saussure thought essential to the workings of language. Writing, for Derrida, is the 'free play' or element of 'undecidability' within every system of communication. Its operations are precisely those which escape the self-consciousness of speech and its deluded sense of the mastery of concept over language. Writing is the endless displacement of meaning which both governs language and places it forever beyond the reach of a stable, self-

¹⁵ At this point it should be noted that, throughout this study, I have consulted English translations of Derrida's works. I have not read Derrida in French and I do not claim to account for the French versions of Derrida. My sole concern is with the English translations.

authenticating knowledge.¹⁶
 (Norris, 1986: 28-29)

Derrida's basic endeavour is to demonstrate that the key notions of Western metaphysics are rooted in, and determined by, the concept of presence, a concept which cannot help but contain its own absence -- its own originary difference from itself as such -- and that it is the denial or, more appropriately, the repression of this difference which has ensured that our predominant modes of thought have so far remained unsatisfactory. Derrida's strategy for calling into question the concept of presence involves a close and rigorous examination of specific texts with the intention of deconstructing their fundamental premises through exposing the point beyond which, following and because of their own logic, they inevitably lapse into aporia -- into an insoluble problem for which Western metaphysics, due to its own basic assumptions, simply cannot account.

Derrida's assessment of Saussure's Course in General Linguistics may serve as an illustration of how he (Derrida) goes about deconstructing unexamined notions of presence within Western thought. With respect to this particular text, Derrida approvingly notes how Saussure maintains that

¹⁶ As Derrida utilizes it, 'writing' is associated with an open-ended chain of terms which he refers to as 'undecidables.' These will be discussed in a later portion of this chapter.

language is a system of signs and that signs are arbitrary -
 - that they are not defined in relation to an unchangeable
 essence or presence but by the differences which distinguish
 them from other signs. Derrida sees this as a radical
 formulation which, had it been followed through, would have
 resulted in the recognition of a notion of writing wherein:

The play of difference supposes, in effect, syntheses and referrals which forbid at any moment, or in any sense, that a simple element be present in and of itself, referring only to itself. Whether in the order of spoken or written discourse, no element can function as a sign without referring to another element which itself is not simply present. This interweaving results in each 'element' -
 - phoneme or grapheme -- being constituted on the basis of the trace within it of the other elements of the chain or system. This interweaving, this textile, is the text produced only in the transformation of another text. Nothing, neither among the elements nor within the system, is anywhere ever simply present or absent. There are only, everywhere, differences and traces of traces.

(Derrida, 1981g: 26)

However, Saussure remains dedicated to a notion of phonetic writing and thus views "[language] and writing [as] two distinct systems of signs [with] the second [existing] for the sole purpose of representing the first" (Saussure in Derrida, 1982e: 30). Through this limitation he reinforces the traditional speech/writing dichotomy and further contends

that: "The linguistic object is not defined by the combination of the written and the spoken word: the spoken word alone constitutes the object" (Saussure in Derrida, 1982e: 31). In Saussurian linguistics writing is "unrelated to the inner system of language" (Saussure in Derrida, 1982e: 33) and is doomed to wander the misty flats of exteriority. According to Derrida,

The basic functional principle of phonetic writing is precisely to respect and protect the integrity of the 'internal system' of the language, even if in fact it does not succeed in doing so. The Saussurian limitation does not respond, by a mere happy convenience, to the scientific exigency of the 'internal system.' That exigency is itself constituted, as the epistemological exigency in general, by the very possibility of phonetic writing and by the exteriority of the 'notation' to internal logic.

(Derrida, 1982e: 33-34)

In other words, the epistemological concept of presence necessitates the concept of its own absence in order to underscore its always assumed but never realized existence. The inside can only be inferred from the outside. So writing (the outside), whose sole purpose is to represent language (the inside), represents presence by presenting its absence. There is here a danger to the entire edifice of the metaphysics of presence which Derrida maintains it is crucial to develop. Saussure himself is not unaware of this danger:

"Writing, though unrelated to its inner system, is used continually to represent language. We cannot simply disregard it. We must be acquainted with its usefulness, shortcomings, and dangers" (Saussure in Derrida, 1982e: 34).

To develop this further, consider some of Saussure's comments concerning writing:

Writing veils the appearance of language; it is not a guise for language but a disguise.

(Saussure in Derrida, 1982e: 35)

The graphic form [image] manages to force itself upon [people] at the expense of sound . . . and the natural sequence is reversed.

(Saussure in Derrida, 1982e: 35)

. . . the graphic form [image] of words strikes us as being something permanent and stable, better suited than sound to constitute the unity of language throughout time. Though it creates a purely fictitious unity, the superficial bond of writing is much easier to grasp than the natural bond, the only true bond, the bond of sound But the spoken word is so intimately bound to its written image that the latter manages to usurp the main role.

(Saussure in Derrida, 1982e: 35-36)

(emphasis Derrida's)

Derrida points out that Saussure's castigation of writing is fundamentally moralistic in tone. Writing forces itself on speech, it usurps the privileged position of speech, it reverses a natural sequence -- it is, in its essence, a

perversion. And writing is a dangerous perversion precisely because it threatens the natural priority accorded to speech by virtue of its intimate association with an assumed, intuited presence:

The affirmation of the essential and 'natural' bond between the phonè and the sense, the privilege accorded to an order of signifier (which then becomes the major signified of all other signifiers) depends expressly, and in contradiction to the other levels of the Saussurian discourse, upon a psychology of consciousness and of intuitive consciousness. What Saussure does not question here is the essential possibility of nonintuition.

(Derrida, 1982e: 40)
(emphasis mine)

That is, what Saussure does not question is the existence of a determining presence. The very possibility of the phenomenon of writing, because it is defined as both exterior to, yet representative of, language, carries within it the threat of the absence of presence -- of presence as absence. If Saussure did not deride writing, if he took its ramifications seriously, he would soon be dangerously close to Derrida's vision of there being "only, everywhere, differences and traces of traces."

Interestingly, Derrida points out that:

. . . it is when he is not expressly dealing with writing, when he feels he has closed the parentheses on that

subject, that Saussure opens the field of a general grammatology.¹⁷ Which would no longer be excluded from general linguistics, but would dominate it and contain it within itself. Then one realizes that what was chased off limits, the wandering outcast of linguistics, has indeed never ceased to haunt language as its most intimate possibility. Then something which was never spoken and which is nothing other than writing itself as the origin of language writes itself within Saussure's discourse.

(Derrida, 1982e: 43-44)

Saussure states that:

It is impossible for sound alone, a natural element, to belong to language. It is only a secondary thing, substance to be put to use. All our conventional values have the characteristic of not being confused with the tangible element which supports them. . . . The linguistic signifier . . . is not [in essence] phonic but incorporeal -- constituted not by the material substance but by the differences that separate the sound-image from all others. . . . The idea or phonic substance that the sign contains is of less importance than the other signs that surround it.

(Saussure in Derrida, 1982e: 53)

Thus, ironically, when Saussure is not dealing with speech in relation to writing, he opens up the very possibility of writing which, earlier, he is at such pains to repress. He has gone from "the spoken word alone constitutes the

¹⁷ In Derrida's usage 'grammatology' (which comes from Littré: "A treatise upon Letters, upon the alphabet, syllabation, reading, and writing" (Derrida, 1982e: 323)) is used interchangeably with 'writing' in the undecidable sense.

linguistic object" (Saussure in Derrida, 1982e: 31) to "the linguistic signifier . . . is not . . . phonic but incorporeal" (Saussure in Derrida, 1982e: 53). And, to emphasize the contradiction within Saussure's work, Derrida points out that:

By definition, difference is never in itself a sensible plenitude. Therefore, its necessity contradicts the allegation of a naturally phonic essence of language. It contests by the same token the professed natural dependence of the graphic signifier.

(Derrida, 1982e: 53)

Derrida contends that it is Saussure's dedication to a metaphysics of presence that necessitates the self-contradictory nature of the Course in General Linguistics:

. . . the intention that institutes general linguistics as a science remains . . . within a contradiction. Its declared purpose indeed confirms, saying what goes without saying, the subordination of grammatology, the historico-metaphysical reduction of writing to the rank of an instrument enslaved to a full and originally spoken language. But another gesture (not another statement of purpose, for here what does not go without saying is done without being said, written without being uttered) liberates the future of a general grammatology of which linguistics-phonology would be only a dependent and circumscribed area.

(Derrida, 1982e: 29-30)

In maintaining that "nothing . . . is anywhere ever simply present or absent" Derrida is proposing that concepts such as presence, essence, meaning etc., are always already doubled -- that is, that they are always already inscribed with the possibility of their own otherness -- that they are heterogeneous as opposed to homogeneous from their very inception. In discussing Derrida's 'psuedo-concept' of iterability,¹⁰ Rodolphe Gasché puts it this way:

. . . what is in question here is not iteration or repetition but only their possibility, or iterability, which can occur as a possibility to any unit and is, consequently, a necessary possibility that must be inscribed in the essence of that unit itself. A priori, then, the possibility of iteration divides the identity of all units; iterability is the impurity of an absence that, from the start, prohibits the full and rigorous attainment of the plenitude of a unit, and that in principle subverts its self-identity.

(Gasché, 1986: 213)

As Derrida says,

. . . the being-present (on) in its truth, in the presence of its identity and in the identity of its presence, is doubled as soon as it appears, as soon as it presents itself. It appears, in its essence, as the possibility of its own most proper non-truth, of its psuedo-truth reflected in the icon, the phantasm, or the simulacrum. What is is not what it is, identical and identical to itself, unique, unless it adds to

¹⁰ 'Iterability' is another Derridean 'undecidable.'

itself the possibility of being repeated as such. And its identity is hollowed out by that addition, withdraws itself in the supplement that presents it.

(Derrida, 1981a: 168)

Thus, for example, to refer back to the explication of Saussure's text, the supposed originary presence of the spoken word is, because of its essential iterability, always already written with the possibility of its own absence, its own non-presence, and, as such, with its own impossibility as a self-identical concept.

It is important to realize that Derrida is concerned neither with a simple reversal of oppositional concepts (e.g. writing/speech instead of speech/writing) nor with their neutralization: "[A general strategy of deconstruction] is to avoid both simply neutralizing the binary oppositions of metaphysics and simply residing within the closed field of these oppositions, thereby confirming it" (Derrida, 1981g: 41). A reversal of these oppositions would merely lead to a Yeatsian vision of revolution wherein "[t]he beggars have changed places, but the lash goes on" (Yeats, 1973: 358) whereas a neutralization of these oppositions would preclude any possibility of difference and hence result in a speechless homogeneity. Derrida does not attempt to do away with philosophical opposition -- he attempts to address the possibility of oppositionality as such, and, in so doing, to call into question the existence of presence as an

originarily self-sufficient entity capable of grounding and hence of accounting for a seemingly endless chain of hierarchically structured conceptual pairs. In other words, the purpose of deconstruction is not simply to isolate instances of contradiction within any given text or oeuvre and to say that these contradictions are the logical result of Western philosophy's subscribing to the validity of paired hierarchical oppositions which are both premised on and resolved by a concept of presence, but to show the contingent nature of this entire view and to try to unsettle or displace it by indicating other possibilities. As Gasché points out:

Deconstruction is . . . the attempt to account for the heterogeneity constitutive of the philosophical discourse, not by trying to overcome its inner differences but by maintaining them. . . .

. . . deconstruction starts with a systematic elucidation of contradiction, paradoxes, inconsistencies, and aporias constitutive of conceptuality, argumentation, and the discursiveness of philosophy. Yet these discrepancies are not logical contradictions, the only discrepancies for which the philosophical discourse can account. Eluded by the logic of identity, they are consequently not contradictions properly speaking. Nor are these necessary inconsistencies the result of inequality between form and content. Their exclusion from the canon of philosophical themes is precisely what makes it possible to distinguish between form and content, a distinction that takes place solely against the horizon of the possibility of their homogeneous reunification.

(Gasché, 1986: 135)

If one questions the possibility of the 'homogeneous reunification' of oppositional pairs then one has to re-think the nature of philosophical contradiction. Rather than viewing contradiction as something which is actually resolvable, because, according to Western thought, both terms of oppositional pairs such as signified/signifier are premised upon and contained within a notion of originary presence, the only division between them being that the former is closer to the organizing source than the latter, one must view presence itself as originally differentiated, i.e. as itself always already divided by contradiction. Thus contradiction becomes something that not only cannot be resolved in an originary and transcendent unity, but must be viewed as that which allows the thought of unity to be possible at all. Hence, the concept of a unifying presence is only possible due to its impossibility as a self-identical entity, and contradiction, which is, of course, an expression of differentiation or heterogeneity, so far from being a philosophical dead end -- something which must be either overcome (i.e. transcended) or abandoned -- is actually that which allows for the possibility of philosophy in the first place (pace Aristotle). Again, to refer to Gasché,

. . . deconstruction . . . presupposes a concretely developed demonstration of the fact that concepts and discursive totalities are already cracked and fissured by necessary contradictions and heterogeneities that the discourse of

philosophy fails to take into account, either because they are not, rigorously speaking, logical contradictions, or because a regulated (conceptual) economy must avoid them in order to safeguard the ethico-theoretical decisions that orient its discourse. These fissures become apparent when we follow to its logical end that which in the process of conceptualization or argumentation is only in a certain manner said. Deconstruction thus begins by taking up broached but discontinued implications - - discontinued because they would have contradicted the intentions of philosophy.

(Gasché, 1986: 136)

We have already seen how this works in Saussure -- how Saussure, in spite of asserting that "the linguistic signifier . . . is not . . . phonic but incorporeal -- constituted not by the material substance but by the differences that separate the sound image from all others" (Saussure in Derrida, 1982e: 53), yet maintains, in direct contradiction to this point, that ". . . the spoken word alone constitutes the [linguistic] object" (Saussure in Derrida, 1982e: 31). And that he maintains this, not because it is supported by what he is 'almosting' in his work, but because of an ethico-theoretical dedication to a notion of presence: "What Saussure does not question here is the essential possibility of nonintuition" (Derrida, 1982e: 40).

Derrida's work on Rousseau provides another of numerous examples of how the refusal to let go of the Western metaphysical concept of presence prevents a writer from

seeing the implications of his own work. Like Saussure, Rousseau privileges speech over writing:

Languages are made to be spoken, writing serves only as a supplement to speech. . . . Speech represents thought by conventional signs, and writing represents the same with regard to speech. Thus the art of writing is nothing but a mediated representation of thought.

(Rousseau in Derrida, 1982e: 144)

What is interesting here is Rousseau's use of the term 'supplement,'¹⁹ for, as Derrida points out, it "harbours within itself two significations whose cohabitation is as strange as it is necessary" (Derrida, 1982e: 144). On the one hand, a supplement is added to something which is supposedly complete in itself -- it is, in this sense, an addition, an inessential extra; on the other hand, the very existence of a supplement implies an incompleteness in that which it not only supplements but effectively replaces. According to Rousseau a supplement is dangerous precisely because it leads to a preference for a representation of the phenomenon rather than for the phenomenon itself. And although he scorns writing as a supplement of speech, "as destruction of presence and as disease of speech" (Derrida, 1982e: 142), he finds himself attempting to supplement,

¹⁹ 'Supplement' also belongs to the open-ended company of Derridean 'undecidables.'

through the absence of writing, a presence that is absent from speech:

I would love society as others do if I were not sure of showing myself not just at a disadvantage but as completely different from what I am. The decision I have taken to write and to hide myself away is precisely the one that suits me. If I were present people would never have known what I was worth.

(Rousseau in Derrida, 1982e: 142)

What does this point to but the intimation that speech is always already riddled with absence -- that it, too, is a supplement and that like all supplements it, too, may be supplemented? The phenomenon, as such, as the self-identical and self-sufficient entity with which Rousseau so concerns himself, does not and has never existed:

. . . the indefinite process of supplementarity has always already infiltrated presence, always already inscribed there the space of repetition and the splitting of the self. Representation in the abyss [en abyme]²⁰ of presence is not an accident of presence; the desire of presence is, on the contrary, born from the abyss (the indefinite multiplication) of representation, from the representation

²⁰ According to Barbara Johnson, translator of Derrida's Dissemination: "The expression en abyme, popularized by Gide, was originally used in heraldry to designate the status of the figure of a small shield used to decorate a shield. Now used whenever some part of a whole can be seen as a representation of that whole . . . ad infinitum, as in the Quaker Oats box on which a man holds up a Quaker Oats box on which a man...etc." (Johnson in Derrida, 1981a: 265)

of representation, etc.

(Derrida, 1982e: 163)

In other words, presence, so far from being the primordial raison d'être of the supplement, is itself merely an effect of supplementarity.

Throughout Rousseau's work, Derrida underscores instances of supplementarity: culture is a supplement of nature, masturbation is a supplement of so-called 'normal sexuality,' Thérèse is a supplement of a 'real mother,' writing is a supplement of speech, speech is a supplement of thought and everything is a supplement of presence -- which is itself always and everywhere only approximated through its absence. It is Rousseau's commitment to a concept of presence that leads him into the tortuous by-ways of a complex supplementarity which, according to him, is by definition never good enough but which is always all there is. What Derrida attempts to show in deconstructing Rousseau's use of the supplement is that:

. . . in what one calls the real life of these existences of "flesh and bone," beyond and behind what one believes can be circumscribed as Rousseau's text, there has never been anything but writing; there have never been anything but supplements, substitutive significations which could only come forth in a chain of differential references, the "real" supervening and being added only while taking on meaning from a trace and from an invocation of the supplement, etc. And thus to

infinity, for we have read, in the text, that the absolute present, Nature, that which words like "real mother" name, have always already escaped, have never existed; that what opens meaning and language is writing as the disappearance of natural presence.

(Derrida, 1982e: 158-159)

Although written explicitly about Rousseau, the following may be applied to any writer operating within Western metaphysics:

Rousseau's text must constantly be considered as a complex and many-leveled structure; in it, certain propositions may be read as interpretations of other propositions that we are, up to a certain point and with certain precautions, free to read otherwise. Rousseau says A, then for reasons that we must determine, he interprets A into B. A, which was already an interpretation, is reinterpreted into B. After taking cognizance of it, we may, without leaving Rousseau's text, isolate A from its interpretation into B, and discover possibilities and resources there that indeed belong to Rousseau's text, but were not exploited by him, which, for equally legible motives, he preferred to cut short.

(Derrida 1982e: 307)

What traditional metaphysics consistently prefers to cut short (and, as Derrida points out, it is difficult not to surmise that, whether conscious or not, this is an ethico-theoretical decision) is any exploration that threatens to lead to a radical questioning of presence. Thus, for

example, in the case of Rousseau, he does not explore the possibilities of supplementarity that lie untouched within his text. Being committed to presence as a self-identical, self-sufficient entity,

. . . Rousseau could not think this writing [supplementarity] that takes place before and within speech. To the extent that he belonged to the metaphysics of presence, he dreamed of the simple exteriority of death to life, evil to good, representation to presence, signifier to signified, representer to represented, mask to face, writing to speech. But all such oppositions are irreducibly rooted in that metaphysics. Using them, one can only operate by reversals, that is to say by confirmations. The supplement is none of these terms. It is especially not more a signifier than a signified, a representer than a presence, a writing than a speech. None of the terms of this series can, being comprehended within it, dominate the economy of différance²¹ or supplementarity. Rousseau's dream consisted of making the supplement enter metaphysics by force.

(Derrida, 1982e: 315)

(emphasis Derrida's and mine)

A look at Derrida's 'undecidables' is indispensable to further clarifying deconstruction's displacement of presence. In attempting to account for an always already occurring process of differentiation which allows, simultaneously, for both the possibility of presence (as an effect) and the

²¹ 'Différance' is an 'undecidable.'

impossibility of presence (as a self-identical entity), Derrida posits a series of terms such as trace, iterability, différance, supplement, pharmakon, mark etc., which cannot be reduced to any single, self-identical meaning. Thus, for example, trace combines the senses of both the mark and the effacement of the mark, iterability combines the senses of both that which is repeated and that which is other (iter coming from the Sanskrit itara: other), différance combines the senses of both to differ and to defer, supplement combines the senses of both that which is added to and that which takes the place of, pharmakon combines the senses of both poison and remedy, mark combines the senses of both the trace and the effacement of the trace, and so on. These 'undecidables,' as Derrida refers to them, "can no longer be included within philosophical (binary) opposition but, rather, they inhabit philosophical opposition, resisting and disorganizing it, without ever constituting a third term, without ever leaving room for a solution in the form of speculative dialectics" (Derrida, 1981g: 43). Vincent Leitch suggests a similarity between Gell-Mann's and Zweig's quark²² and Derrida's undecidables:

Like the quark in physics, the [undecidable] is a theoretical unit . . . that, though imperceptible -- more nothing than something

²² Derridean thought and quantum physics are explored in Floyd Merrell's Deconstruction Reframed, West Lafayette (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1985).

-- operates amidst the innermost reaches of [textuality], permeating and energizing its entire activity, affecting omnipresence, yet remaining out of hand. Just as the quark, posited by Gell-Mann and Zweig during the early 1960's, accounted for the strange activities of particles within sub-atomic spheres, so Derrida's [undecidable] explains the peculiar effects of textuality detected at microlevels of the sign. Neither a free quark nor a pure [undecidable] can be dislodged or isolated because they are functions of relations -- mirage 'effects' of primordial differentiation in process.

(Leitch, 1983: 28)

And, precisely because they cannot be dislodged or isolated, undecidables cannot be perceived as concepts per se -- that is, they cannot be reabsorbed into a dialectical system of hierarchical oppositions as clear cut 'third terms' or, indeed, as self-identical terms at all. As Derrida says with respect to différance, "every concept is inscribed in a chain or in a system within which it refers to the others, to other concepts, by means of the systematic play of differences. Such a play, différance, is thus no longer simply a concept, but rather the possibility of conceptuality, of a conceptual process and system in general" (Derrida, 1982a: 11). As Gasché points out:

Because the [undecidables] are not atoms, because they have no identity in themselves, . . . they cannot be gathered once and for all upon themselves in some ideal purity. Let us not forget that the undecidables are the conditions of possibility (and impossibility) of the conceptual differences as well as of

discursive inequalities; thus, they are what makes the project of systematization possible, without, however, being systematizable themselves. Yet this is not to say that a certain systematization cannot apply to them; it simply means that their system cannot be closed upon itself by means of some dominating center. . . . The system of the [undecidables] cannot be formalized, idealized, or systematized because it is precisely its play that makes those projects possible.

(Gasché, 1986 184-185)

Derrida takes care to point out that, because undecidables "block every relationship to theology," every relationship to a 'transcendental signified' or referent of whatever form, none of them may be elevated to the position of "a master-word or a master-concept" (Derrida, 1981g: 40) and, consequently, their number is open -- their creation depending not on any possibility of absolute closure (as is the case with philosophemes such as truth, meaning, dialectic etc. which are grounded in and contained by a notion of presence) but on the nuances and play of whatever piece of textuality may be under one's consideration. As I will now attempt to show, it is important to understand how Derrida views language and textuality.

In Of Grammatology Derrida states: "There is nothing outside of the text [there is no outside-text; il n'y a pas de hors texte]" (Derrida, 1982e: 158). This statement, almost invariably taken out of context, has led to enormous

confusion and to the belief, expressed by critics as divergent from one another as Edward Said and E.D. Hirsch, that deconstruction maintains that nothing exists outside of language. In a 1984 interview with Richard Kearney Derrida expresses his irritation with such misreadings:

I never cease to be surprised by critics who see my work as a declaration that there is nothing beyond language, that we are imprisoned in language; it is, in fact, saying the exact opposite. The critique of logocentrism is above all else the search for the 'other' and the 'other' of language. Every week I receive critical commentaries and studies on deconstruction which operate on the assumption that what they call 'post-structuralism' amounts to saying that there is nothing beyond language, that we are submerged in words -- and other stupidities of that sort. Certainly, deconstruction tries to show that the question of reference is much more complex and problematic than traditional theories supposed. It even asks whether our term 'reference' is entirely adequate for designating the 'other'. The other, which is beyond language and which summons language, is perhaps not a 'referent' in the normal sense which linguists have attached to this term. But to distance oneself thus from the habitual structure of reference, to challenge or complicate our common assumptions about it, does not amount to saying that there is nothing beyond language.

(Derrida in Kearney ed., 1984: 123-124)

When Derrida says that "[t]here is nothing outside of the text," that there is no 'outside-text,' no 'extra-text,'

he is saying that there is no 'transcendental signified' or self-identical presence capable of grounding and accounting for any given piece of writing or, indeed, for any isolated or 'framed' situation whatsoever. For Derrida, language, as such, is an effect of the text taken in its generalized or 'undecidable' sense, for, as Gasché indicates,

. . . according to Derrida the generalized concept of text is precisely that which exceeds the traditional determination of text as a totality. In whatever terms -- empirical, idealist, or dialectical -- text is defined, it always implies a closure upon itself with a clear inside and outside, whether it is the empirical closure of the unity of a corpus, the intelligible unity of a work, or the dialectical totality of its formal or thematic meanings. Yet if the general text delimits the traditional totalizing concepts of what has been called text, it also implies that the entirely different text, because it is no longer a totality, has no inside or outside. The generalized text is not something that is closed upon itself in such a manner that its limits would demarcate an inside from an outside. . . . The general text is rather that border itself, from which the assignment of insides and outsides takes place, as well as where this distinction ultimately collapses. . . . "There is no extra-text" means just this: nothing outside the text can, like a last reason, assume a fulfilling function . . . of the textual referrals. It certainly does not permit the conclusion that there is nothing else but texts, or for that matter, that all is language.

(Gasché, 1986 279-181)

It may, of course, be argued, and, indeed, often is, that Derrida is maddeningly abstruse, that he uses ordinary words in an extraordinary fashion and then complains because people take exception or get confused or both. Such comments as: "There is nothing outside the text" (Derrida, 1982e: 158); "I don't believe that there is any perception" (Derrida in Macksey and Donato eds., 1982: 272); "Immediacy is derived" (Derrida, 1982e: 157); "Speech . . . is already in itself a writing" (Derrida, 1982e: 46); "Wherever it operates, 'thought' means nothing" (Derrida, 1981g: 49), and so on, tend to be picked up (again, almost invariably out of context) and bandied about as though they are merely off the cuff comments and that they, in and of themselves, preclude any necessity for one's taking their author seriously. No less an established and respected critic than René Wellek has incurred a contemptuous response from Derrida for engaging in precisely this sort of dismissive and embarrassingly unprofessional behaviour:

It does not suffice, in order to know how to read, simply to own a library and to know how to talk. In saying this I am referring to what can be inferred about non-reading from an assertion by Wellek, according to which I supposedly advanced "the preposterous theory that writing precedes speaking, a claim refuted by every child and by the thousand spoken languages that have no written records." I quote this "child" argument . . . because it demonstrates that the condemned texts have not even been opened.

(Derrida, 1986d: 42)

The point is, of course, that Derrida's comments are most emphatically not off the cuff and to portray them as such is to do a disservice not only to him but to scholarship in general.

One of the strategies which Derrida employs in attempting to delimit Western metaphysics, which, it must always be remembered, is dependent upon the notion of presence as a self-identical and self-sufficient entity, is to demonstrate the unstable and volatile nature of concepts such as text, writing, meaning, sign, and so on, which we commonly tend to view as definitively closed signifieds. By indicating the slippage within these concepts, by displacing the self-authenticating notion of presence, Derrida is attempting to open Western metaphysics to the possibility of its 'other,' to the possibility of an originarily and always, everywhere, already occurring process of differentiation. With respect to Derrida's use of notions and concepts which appear to be traditional to Western metaphysics one is reminded of Wallace Stevens's The Man with the Blue Guitar:

They said, "You have a blue guitar,
You do not play things as they are."

The man replied, "Things as they are
Are changed upon the blue guitar."

And they said then, "But play, you must,
A tune beyond us, yet ourselves,

A tune upon the blue guitar
Of things exactly as they are."
(Stevens, 1982c: 165)

In other words, although Derrida uses traditional concepts they are not to be read as 'traditional concepts' pure and simple -- they are always already 'under erasure'²² -- always already changed upon the blue guitar of deconstruction. As Derrida says:

Since these concepts are indispensable for unsettling the heritage to which they belong, we should [not] renounce them. Within the closure, by an oblique and always perilous movement, constantly risking falling back within what is being deconstructed, it is necessary to surround the critical concepts with a careful and thorough discourse -- to mark the condition, the medium, and the limits of their effectiveness and to designate rigorously the intimate relationship to the machine whose deconstruction they permit; and, in the same process, designate the crevice through which the yet unnameable glimmer beyond the closure can be glimpsed.

(Derrida, 1982e: 14)

This 'unnameable glimmer' is teased out of the texts of Western metaphysics in the formless shape of 'undecidables' which, in turn, are teased out by the 'split writing' or 'double gesture' of deconstruction. Vincent Leitch offers a concise and useful summary of this process:

The place where a reader notices a displacement or reversal in a textual

²² Concepts, which, having been deconstructed, are revealed as being non-self-identical yet indispensable, are sometimes written: ~~truth~~.

chain or system often constitutes the site of philosophical or thematic opposition. Disclosing such a crevice, the deconstructor systematically and tenaciously inverts the oppositions to reveal the actual hierarchical relation of the dichotomous terms. At this point she steadfastly disallows any reconstitution, sublimation, or synthesis (any Hegelian Aufhebung) of opposing terms. This strategic inversion and stubborn exposé produce an unexpected gap, forcing the emergence of a new ['concept'], which nameless mark neither neutralizes nor reforms the old opposition. Rather, it functions as a disorganizing structural force that invisibly inhabits and transgresses the opposition. . . . The purpose of the deconstructor is to produce such undecidables and to track their insistent operation throughout the text. . . .

The split writing of deconstruction . . . consists of deliberately inverting traditional oppositions and marking the mysterious and disorienting play of hitherto invisible ['concepts' i.e. undecidables] that reside, unnamed, in the gap between opposing terms. (Between "nature" and "culture," for example, dwells the supplement.) In this double gesture, deconstruction avoids simply defusing oppositions or reforming them; in other words, deconstruction actively resists the inclusion of the new ['concept'] into the old dichotomy.

(Leitch, 1983: 180)

Just as deconstruction, with its insistence on originary doubling, does away with the notion of a pure origin, beginning or arche, so it also does away with the correlative notion of a pure finality, ending or telos. This being the case, the Western notion of linearity, and of history as a linear sequence, is called radically into question, for, as

Derrida points out, "history has no doubt always been associated with a linear scheme of the unfolding of presence, where the line relates the final presence to the originary presence according to the straight line or the circle" (Derrida, 1982e: 85). Although, as Mark Taylor indicates, we often tend to draw a sharp distinction between Eastern and Western, or, indeed, 'primitive' and 'civilized' notions of time wherein the former is considered to be cyclical and static, with the end coinciding with the beginning, and the latter is considered to be linear and progressive, with the end surpassing the beginning, it is important to realize that, "[b]oth circle and line are forms of closure and figures of plenitude that serve as totalizing metaphors" (Taylor, 1987c: 70). In other words, both the line and the circle are dominated and determined by the notion of presence. According to J. Hillis Miller,

The model of the line is a powerful part of the traditional language of Occidental metaphysics. . . . The end of the story is the retrospective revelation of the law of the whole. That law is an underlying 'truth' which ties all together in an inevitable sequence revealing a hitherto hidden figure in the carpet. The image of the line tends always to imply the norm of a single continuous unified structure determined by one external organizing principle. This principle holds the line together, gives it its law, controls its progressive extension, curving or straight, with some arche, telos, or ground. Origin, goal, or base: all three

come together in the gathering movement
of [presence].

(Miller in Taylor, 1987c: 70)

Along with this, of course, goes a severe critique of the notion of the book and its implicit or explicit assumption of the linearity of beginning, middle and end. Again it must be emphasized that, obviously, Derrida does not dispute the existence of books as tangible objects -- what he does dispute is the existence of books as comprehensive wholes dependent on a notion of pre-established self-contained harmony or order, i.e. presence. And this critique holds whether the book in question happens to be a novel, a history, an ethnography, or whatever. According to Derrida,

The idea of the book is the idea of a totality, finite or infinite, of the signifier; this totality of the signifier cannot be a totality, unless a totality constituted by the signified preexists it, supervises its inscriptions and its signs, and is independent of it in its ideality. The idea of the book, which always refers to a . . . totality, is profoundly alien to the sense of writing. It is the encyclopedic protection of theology and of logocentrism against the disruption of writing, against its aphoristic energy, and . . . against difference in general. If I distinguish the text from the book, I shall say that the destruction of the book, as it is now underway in all domains, denudes the surface of the text.

(Derrida, 1982e: 18)

Not surprisingly, Derrida's notion of originary doubling, of iterability, also provides a radical critique of our concept of self, and, by extension, of our concept of the author as such. The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'self' as: "Person's . . . own individuality or essence." As Derrida has shown, the idea of essence is only made possible by that which renders it impossible as an independent and self-identical concept. And so with the notion of self: in order to appear as what it portends to be -- a unique and independent essence -- it must, to reiterate, "[add] to itself the possibility of being repeated as such. And its identity is hollowed out by that addition, withdraws itself in the supplement that presents it" (Derrida, 1981a: 168). Thus, as Taylor points out, "[the] search for self-presence in self-consciousness leads to the discovery of the absence of the self" (Taylor, 1987c: 50). And this because, by definition, consciousness of self is dependent on the possibility of the separation of self from self -- on an originary doubling which precludes the possibility of self as a unique, impenetrable essence. As Derrida says, "the self of the living present is primordially a trace" (Derrida, 1973b: 85).

The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'author' as: "Originator . . . ; writer of book, treatise, etc." We think of an author as a person (a self) who produces a book which contains what she means to say and which stands as a

completed manifestation of her expressed intentions. Bearing in mind the Derridean critique of origin, book and self, consider the following:

. . . iterability . . . excludes the hypothesis of idealization, that is, the adequation of a meaning to itself, of a saying to itself, of understanding to a sentence, whether written or oral, or to a mark in general. Once again, iterability makes possible idealization -- and thus, a certain identity in repetition that is independent of the multiplicity of factual events -- while at the same time limiting the idealization it makes possible: broaching and breaching it at once [elle l'entame]. To put it more simply and more concretely: at the very moment (assuming that this moment itself might be full and self-identical, identifiable -- for the problem of idealization and iterability is already posed here, in the structure of temporalization²⁴), at the very moment when someone would like to say or write, "On the twentieth . . . etc.," the very factor that will permit the mark (be it psychic, oral, graphic) to function beyond this moment -- namely the possibility of its being repeated another time -- breaches, divides, expropriates the "ideal" plenitude or self-presence of

²⁴ Of course, for Derrida, the 'moment' can never be 'full and self-identical' because the structure of temporality, being premised on the essentially Aristotelian notion of the non-temporal now, of presence as non-temporal because immediate and self-identical, is always already fissured by its own impossibility -- by its 'other.' To put it another way, because time is defined as a linear (or circular) number of past-nows and future-nows ("It is the now that measures time, considered as before and after" (Aristotle, 1987: 125)) and because the now as such cannot be realized in its supposed self-presence (always being already past or already future) the possibility of a full and self-identical moment is precluded by the very temporality for which it seeks to account.

intention, of meaning (to say) and, a fortiori, of all adequation between meaning and saying. Iterability alters, contaminating parasitically what it identifies and enables to repeat "itself"; it leaves us no choice but to mean (to say) something that is (already, always, also) other than what we say and would have wanted to say, to understand something other than . . . etc. In classical terms, the accident is never an accident.

(Derrida, 1977b: 199-200)

In other words, neither the 'author' nor the 'book' is possible in so far as either presumes to present closed and/or definitive accounts of anything whatsoever. And there can be no closed definitive accounts not, as with the hermeneutic notion of polysemy, because the number of possible meanings exceeds the possibility of adequate representation, but because meaning is always already fissured -- is always already marked with its own essential non-essence. As Derrida says, "It is this hermeneutic concept of polysemy that must be replaced by dissemination" (Derrida, 1981a: 262).

In Positions, Derrida offers one of his clearest statements on the problem of polysemy and dissemination:

If dissemination, seminal différance, cannot be summarized into an exact conceptual tenor, it is because the force and form of its disruption explode the semantic horizon. The attention brought to bear on polysemia or polythematism doubtless represents progress in relationship to the linearity of the

monothematic writing or reading that is always anxious to anchor itself to the tutelary meaning, the principal signified of a text, that is, its major referent. Nevertheless, polysemia, as such, is organized within the implicit horizon of a unitary resumption of meaning, that is, within the horizon of a dialectics . . . a teleological and totalizing dialectics that at a given moment, however far off, must permit the reassemblage of the totality of a text into the truth of its meaning, constituting the text as expression, as illustration, and annulling the open and productive displacement of the textual chain. Dissemination, on the contrary, although producing a nonfinite number of semantic effects, can be led back neither to a present of simple origin . . . nor to an eschatological presence. It marks an irreducible and generative multiplicity. The supplement and the turbulence of a certain lack fracture the limit of the text, forbidding an exhaustive and closed formalization of it, or at least a saturating taxonomy of its themes, its signified, its meaning.

(Derrida, 1981g: 45)

Dissemination, like other Derridean 'undecidables,' indicates the originary doubling, the originary slippage and displacement, that accounts for both the possibility and impossibility of a conceptuality premised upon the notion of presence and its concomitant logic of identity (i.e. the principle of non-contradiction). Polysemy, its improvement over monosemic accountings notwithstanding, still remains dependent upon a concept of frayed but ultimately to be fused unity. As Gasché puts it:

Dissemination is the name by which the in-advance always already divided unity is affirmed. This in-advance divided unity of the undecidables is not the polysemic dispersion of a once unitary meaning but . . . an always open ensemble of structures, presupposed by the project of unity and totality and affirmed by reflection and speculation, without their knowledge, as the limit of their possibility. The general theory of duplication or reduplication [iterability] outlines . . . the limits of the philosophical presuppositions of the philosophy of reflexivity -- presuppositions of an original spontaneity, of productive imagination, of intellectual intuition, and so on. . . . No virgin substance or homogeneous and organic unity precedes or superintends the originary duplication and the 'system' of the [undecidables]. The myth of a unity is only an effect made possible and irrevocably undercut by reflection itself, insofar as it must rely, in order to take place in the first place, on what it cannot hope to reflect. What lies beyond the mirror, on the other side of the speculum, in the beyond of the presuppositions of the philosophy of reflection -- that is to say, the 'system' of the [undecidables] -- cannot be understood in terms of unity, synthesis, totality, and the like.
(Gasché, 1986: 237)

Dissemination, the constantly repressed 'other' of Western metaphysics, is the limitless play of originary difference which allows for the possibility of presence not as a self-sufficient grounding totality but as an effect -- as a by-product of the disseminating play of undecidability, i.e. writing, trace, différance, supplement etc. And, as by now will come as no surprise, for Derrida,

Play is the disruption of presence. The presence of an element is always a signifying and substitutive reference inscribed in a system of differences and the movement of a chain. Play is always play of absence and presence, but if it is to be thought radically, play must be conceived of before the alternative of presence and absence. Being must be conceived as presence or absence on the basis of the possibility of play and not the other way around.

(Derrida, 19781: 292)

In other words, what is of interest is not specific concepts, themes or philosophemes per se, but the play of the cracks and fissures within them which prohibit them from ever being self-identical and which ensure, from the outset, that they will always already be involved with slippage and displacement. As Derrida says,

From the very beginnings of Greek philosophy the self-identity of the Logos is already fissured and divided. I think one can discern signs of such fissures of 'différance' in every great philosopher: the 'Good beyond Being' (epekeina tes ousias) of Plato's Republic, for example, or the confrontation with the 'Stranger' in The Sophist are already traces of an alterity which refuses to be totally domesticated. Moreover, the rapport of self-identity is itself always a rapport of violence with the other; so that the notions of property, appropriation and self-presence, so central to logocentric metaphysics, are essentially dependent on an oppositional relation with otherness. In this sense, identity presupposes alterity.

(Derrida in Kearney, ed., 1984: 117)

Rather than emphasizing presence and its concomitant notions of homogeneity, the logic of identity, non-contradiction, the linear teleology of beginning, middle and ending, polysemy and so on, Derrida stresses originary doubling, heterogeneity, displacement, and the disseminating play of undecidability. The following chapters concern themselves with what the Derridean exploration of the repressed 'other' of Western metaphysics has to say to an interpretive and/or 'postmodern' anthropology rooted in phenomenological/hermeneutical notions of intersubjectivity, intentionality, meaning etc., and, by extension, what it portends for the possible future of the discipline of anthropology in general.

Chapter Three

Philosophical Background of Interpretive and 'Postmodern'Anthropology: Phenomenology and Hermeneutics

In order to adequately comprehend the status of contemporary interpretive and/or 'postmodern' anthropology it is necessary to be acquainted with their rootedness in certain modes of Continental thought. Consequently, in this chapter I will attempt to demonstrate that the phenomenology of Husserl and the hermeneutics of Heidegger, Gadamer and Ricoeur respectively, are all based on such manifestations of the concept of presence as consciousness, unity, totality, plenitude, dialectic, and so on and that, as such, they (and, by extension, their anthropological inheritors) are open to a radical deconstruction. Obviously, I make no claim to coming close to addressing all the complexities inherent within the works of any of the aforementioned authors -- constantly expanding library shelves attest to the impossibility of such an endeavour. With respect to Husserl, Heidegger et al., my concern is simply to show that specific threads of their reasoning, which have woven and continue to weave their way into the fabric of interpretive and/or 'postmodern' anthropology, are prime fodder for a deconstructive reading. In this chapter I will not offer any full scale deconstructive readings but, rather, will delineate

certain features of Continental thought that will reappear in my chapter on Geertz and Clifford and will there be dealt with in detail.

I PHENOMENOLOGY

(1) Husserl

In his last work, The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology, Husserl makes an impassioned statement concerning the then current status (1930's) of the natural and human sciences:

The exclusiveness with which the total world-view of modern [humanity], in the second half of the nineteenth century, let itself be determined by the positive sciences and be blinded by the 'prosperity' they produced, meant an indifferent turning-away from the questions which are decisive for a genuine humanity. Merely fact-minded sciences make merely fact-minded people. . . . In our vital need -- so we are told -- this science has nothing to say to us. It excludes in principle precisely the questions which [humanity], given over in our unhappy times to the most portentous upheavals, finds the most burning: questions of the meaning or meaninglessness of the whole of this human existence. Do not these questions, universal and necessary for all [humanity], demand universal reflections and answers based on rational insight? . . . What does science have to say about reason and unreason or about us [human beings] as subjects of this freedom? The mere science of bodies clearly has nothing to say; it abstracts from everything subjective. As for the humanistic sciences, on the other hand, all the special and general disciplines

of which treat of [humanity's] spiritual existence, that is, within the horizon of [its] historicity; their rigorous scientific character requires, we are told, that the scholar carefully exclude all valuative positions, all questions of reason or unreason of their human subject matter and its cultural configurations. Scientific objective truth is exclusively a matter of establishing what the world, the physical as well as the spiritual world, is in fact. But can the world, and human existence in it, truthfully have a meaning if the sciences recognize as true only what is objectively established in this fashion, and if history has nothing more to teach us than that all the shapes of the spiritual world, all the conditions of life, ideals, norms upon which [humanity] relies, form and dissolve themselves like fleeting waves, that it always was and ever will be so, that again and again reason must turn into nonsense, and well being into misery? Can we console ourselves with that? Can we live in this world, where historical occurrence is nothing but an unending concatenation of illusory progress and bitter disappointment?

(Husserl, 1970: 6-7)

Husserl believes that the sciences have become so carried away with their methodologies and their fascination with 'facts' that they have forgotten their subjective origins. This forgetting has in turn led to the creation of an ever widening gap between technical sophistication and actual human needs. As a solution to this 'crisis' Husserl offers transcendental phenomenology.

Husserl's phenomenology is meant to provide an absolutely sound, because absolutely indubitable, ontological

foundation for epistemology. Husserl believes that what he terms the 'natural attitude,' the unexamined every-day world of taken for granted assumptions wherein objects appear to exist prior to and to impinge upon the perceiving consciousness from without, must be subjected to a phenomenological epoché or reduction. In other words, the natural attitude must be 'bracketed' or suspended and the phenomenologist must describe only what appears to her consciousness as, and only in so far as, it appears to her consciousness. The possibility of attaining to this 'pure' form of description, a description which is supposedly unadulterated by any interpretation, is premised on the conviction that consciousness is intentional -- that is, that all consciousness intends some object, that all consciousness is, by definition, consciousness of something. As Husserl says, "the basic character of being as consciousness, as consciousness of something, is intentionality" (Husserl in Taylor, 1986a: 123). Another way of putting this is to say that consciousness is constitutive, i.e., that, so far from being a passive receptacle (or, à la Locke, a tabula rasa) waiting to receive exterior objective sensations, consciousness actually produces objective sensations. In other words, objectivity, as such, is a subjective construct. This being the case, the phenomenologically reduced consciousness is immediately and unmediatedly present to its

intentional phenomena, thus allowing for pristine description.

Interestingly, for all his radicalizing of Cartesian doubt (e.g. his emphasis on the intentional or constitutive nature of consciousness with the attendant collapsing of the res cogitans/res extensa distinction), Husserl never attempts to doubt or bracket the phenomenologically reduced consciousness or what he alternately refers to as the 'transcendental subject' and/or 'primordial intuition'²⁵:

No theory we can conceive can mislead us in regard to the principle of all principles: that every primordial dator Intuition is a source of authority (Rechtsquelle) for knowledge, that whatever presents itself in 'intuition' [consciousness] in primordial form (as it were in its bodily reality), is simply to be accepted as it gives itself out to be, though only within the limits in which it then presents itself.

(Husserl in Derrida, 1973b: 62)

Taking the transcendental subject as the only indubitable given, Husserl proceeds to show how it is responsible for constituting 'reality' as we know and accept it in the common sense world of the natural attitude. It is important to

²⁵ In order to avoid confusion, for the duration of this section on Husserl, I will use the term 'transcendental subject' rather than 'primordial intuition' or 'phenomenologically reduced consciousness.' However, the reader should bear in mind that these terms are interchangeable.

understand that Husserl believes that the constitutive nature of the transcendental subject results in the emergence of 'invariant essential forms' which allow for the possibility of knowledge and which it is the purpose of phenomenological reduction to reveal:

. . . the phenomenology of perception of bodies will not be (simply) a report on the factually occurring perceptions or those to be expected; rather it will be the presentation of invariant structural systems without which perception of a body and a synthetically concordant multiplicity of perceptions of one and the same body as such would be unthinkable. If the phenomenological reduction contrived a means of access to the phenomenon of real and also potential inner experience, the method founded in it of "eidetic reduction" provides the means of access to the invariant essential structures of the total sphere of pure mental process.

(Husserl in Taylor, 1986a: 126-127)

In other words, through bracketing out the taken for granted world and by reducing supposedly concretely existing sensations and/or objects to intentional phenomena -- to that which is a product of the intentional activity of a transcendental subject, Husserl is able to posit the a priori existence of invariant essential forms or structures which, as such, constitute an ideal objectivity and which allow for the possibility of the everyday life of the natural attitude. However, one must never forget that this seeming objectivity

is first and foremost a subjectivity as it can, by definition, have no existence apart from the constituting activity of the transcendental subject.

Husserl is not unaware that he often appears to run the risk of becoming mired in solipsism. If everything is the consequence of the constituting work of transcendental subjectivity, if in order to know anything one must reduce the world to the workings of one's own consciousness, how can one ever be certain of the actual existence of anything outside of one's own mind?²⁶ Husserl attempts to deal with this problem through the notion of intersubjectivity:

The reductive method is transferred from self-experience to the experience of other insofar as there can be applied to the envisaged . . . mental life of the Other the corresponding bracketing and description according to the subjective "How" of its appearance and what is appearing. . . . As a further consequence, the community that is experienced in community experience is reduced not only to the mentally particularized intentional fields but also to the unity of the community life that connects them all together, the community life in its phenomenological purity (intersubjective reduction). . . .

²⁶ At this point it does not hurt to recall that, for Husserl, pure expression -- pure meaning as such, can only occur within 'solitary mental life' (Husserl in Mueller-Vollmer ed., 1988: 173). According to Husserl, outside of the inner workings of consciousness, 'expression' is always interwoven with 'indication' and hence 'meaning' can only be intimated -- it cannot be experienced in its pure form. (In Speech and Phenomena Derrida provides an extended deconstructive reading of Husserl's use of 'expression' and 'indication'.')

To every mind there belongs not only the unity of its multiple intentional life-process . . . with all its inseparable unities of sense directed towards the "object." There is also, inseparable from this life-process, the experiencing I-subject as the identical I-pole giving a center for all specific intentionalities, and as the carrier of all habitualities growing out of this life-process. Likewise, then, the reduced intersubjectivity, in pure form and concretely grasped, is a community of pure "persons" acting in the intersubjective realm of the pure life of consciousness.

(Husserl in Taylor, 1986a: 125-126)

Yet all of the above must, by Husserl's own 'principle of principles,' still be premised upon, and hence merely a projection of, the individual transcendental subject or consciousness. For Husserl, the other must remain an extension and reflection of the self. As a philosophy of transcendental subjectivity, Husserlean phenomenology can no more bequeath objective existence to other subjectivities than it can bequeath objective existence to any feature of the taken for granted world.

A brief look at Derrida's deconstruction of Husserl's notion of inner time consciousness provides considerable insight into phenomenology's inability to remain true to its own guiding principles. According to Husserl, "the actual now is necessarily something punctual (ein Punktuellles) and remains so, a form that persists through continuous change of matter" (Husserl in Derrida, 1973b: 62). In order to account

for the seeming continuity of events as perceived by consciousness Husserl posits the idea of retention and protention -- that is, past nows and future nows. However, Husserl is at pains to underscore the necessary and essential priority of the 'actual' or present now: "[The actual] now-apprehension is, as it were, the nucleus of a comet's tail of retentions [and] a punctual phase is actually present as now at any given moment, while the others are connected as a retentional train" (Husserl in Derrida, 1973b: 62) (emphasis mine). Remembering that the entire structure of phenomenology rests on a notion of the originary and indubitable self-presence of the constitutive consciousness which, by definition, can only exist in an immediate and unmediated present, one can see that Husserl's concept of retentional and protentional components of the now shakes his whole edifice of thought. As Derrida says,

. . . we cannot avoid noticing that a . . . concept of the "now," of the present as punctuality of the instant, . . . decisively sanctions [Husserl's] whole system. . . . If the punctuality of the instant is a myth, a spatial or mechanical metaphor, an inherited metaphysical concept, or all that at once, and if the present of self-presence is not simple, if it is constituted in a primordial and irreducible synthesis, then the whole of Husserl's argumentation is threatened in its very principle.
(Derrida, 1973b: 61)

If the present now must be supplemented by a past now in order to be known as such, then the present now is not and cannot be absolute -- its possibility is constituted by its impossibility as a pure self-identical concept. Identity, as such, is always already contaminated by difference. As Derrida puts it,

. . . difference, which constitutes the self-presence of the living present, introduces into self-presence from the beginning all the impurity putatively excluded from it. The living present springs forth out of its nonidentity with itself and from the possibility of a retentional trace. It is always already a trace. This trace cannot be thought out on the basis of a simple present whose life would be within itself; the self of the living present is primordially a trace.

(Derrida, 1973b: 85)

In the form of a belief in primordial intuition/transcendental subjectivity/constitutive consciousness Husserl's transcendental phenomenology expresses itself as a philosophy of presence. As Derrida says,

. . . what is signified by phenomenology's "principle of principles"? What does the value of primordial presence to intuition as source of sense and evidence, as the a priori of a prioris, signify? First of all it signifies the certainty, itself ideal and absolute, that the universal form of all experience (Erlibnis), and therefore of all life, has always been and will always be the present. The

present alone is and ever will be. Being is presence or the modification of presence.

(Derrida, 1973b: 53)

As with all philosophies of presence, phenomenology cannot be extricated from notions of the absolute, of a return to a pristine origin, of essence, of teleology and so on. As Husserl says,

In phenomenology all rational problems have their place. . . . For out of the absolute sources of transcendental experience . . . they first [are able to] obtain their genuine formulation and feasible means for their solution. . . . [Phenomenology] recognizes the absolute norms which are to be picked out intuitively . . . and also its primordial teleological-tendential structure in a directedness towards disclosure of these norms and their conscious practical operations. . . . The tracing back of all being to the transcendental subjectivity and its constitutive intentional functions leaves open . . . no other way of contemplating the world than the teleological.

(Husserl in Taylor, 1986a: 138-140)

(emphasis Husserl's and mine)

And, again, as with all philosophies of presence, phenomenology necessitates and reinforces a whole series of hierarchically structured oppositional pairs such as subject/object, self/other, essence/contingence, identity/difference, etc. wherein the latter term of each pair is viewed as a corruption of the former, thus ensuring the suppression of

difference and/or otherness. As Taylor says,

The absolute knowledge made possible by the phenomenological reduction of difference to identity in subjectivity's full knowledge of itself realizes Western philosophy's dream of enjoying a total presence that is undisturbed by absence or lack.

(Taylor, 1986b: 3)

II HERMENEUTICS

(i) Background

The term 'hermeneutics' comes from the Greek words 'hermeneuein,' usually translated as 'to interpret,' and 'hermeneia,' usually translated as 'interpretation.' As Richard Palmer points out, 'hermeneuein' and 'hermeneia' taken together with 'hermeios' (the priest at the Delphic oracle) refers back to,

. . . the wing-footed messenger-god Hermes, from whose name the words are apparently derived (or vice versa?). Significantly, Hermes is associated with the function of transmitting what is beyond human understanding into a form that human intelligence can grasp. The various forms of this word suggest the process of bringing a thing or situation from unintelligibility to understanding.
(Palmer, 1969: 13)

Hermeneutics, as such, is usually traced to the seventeenth century, at which time it was perceived to be a form of biblical exegesis. In the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century hermeneutics was focussed upon the philological researches of Wolf and Ast and in the nineteenth century Schleiermacher attempted to elevate hermeneutics to the status of a science of understanding through providing a method by which the reader could comprehend the meaning of a given text through an empathetic understanding of its author's intentions. However, it was Wilhelm Dilthey who first attempted to ground the human sciences on a notion of hermeneutical understanding.

Dilthey believed that, whereas the natural sciences may ground themselves on an explanation of fact, the human sciences must ground themselves on an understanding of meaning. Like Schleiermacher, Dilthey believed that it was possible to reconstruct and hence to re-experience another person's inner consciousness. As Palmer says, "It was Dilthey's aim to develop methods of gaining 'objectively valid' interpretations of 'expressions of inner life'" (Palmer, 1969: 98). For Dilthey, 'understanding' is an epistemological notion which has to do with the knowability of the products of one human mind through "a mysterious process of mental transfer" (Palmer, 1969: 104) to another human mind. This mental transfer takes place through the possibility of an intuitive understanding of human

productions, be they texts or visual arts or whatever. Thus Palmer quotes Dilthey as follows: "above all . . . the grasping of the structure of the inner life is based on the interpretation of works, works in which the texture of inner life comes fully to expression" (Dilthey in Palmer, 1969: 114). And, according to Dilthey, such an interpretation would be 'objectively valid' because these 'works' are as objectively existing as is anything else -- therefore it is just as possible for a hermeneutic interpretation of a written text to 'get it right' as it is for a scientific explanation of a geological formation. The difference lies in the objects under study rather than in the objective validity of the results of the inquiry.

Like Wolf, Ast and Schleiermacher before him, Dilthey makes use of the 'hermeneutic circle' wherein the parts are understood in relation to the whole and the whole is understood in relation to its parts. It is a tacking back and forth between whole and parts that allows understanding to determine the specific meaning of any given work:

. . . the sentence furnishes a clear example of the interaction of the whole and parts and the need for both: out of the meaning of individual parts is yielded an understanding of the sense of the whole, which in turn changes the indeterminateness of the words into a fixed and meaningful pattern. Dilthey cites this example and then asserts that the same relationship exists between the parts and the whole of one's life. The meaning of the whole is a 'sense'

derived from the meaning of individual parts. An event or experience can so alter our lives that what was formerly meaningful becomes meaningless and an apparently unimportant past experience may take on meaning in retrospect. The sense of the whole determines the function and the meaning of the parts. And meaning is something historical; it is a relationship of whole to parts seen by us from a given standpoint, at a given time, for a given combination of parts. It is not something above or outside history but a part of a hermeneutic circle always historically defined.

(Palmer, 1969: 118)

Dilthey's hermeneutics is premised on a philosophy of consciousness -- on the idea that the 'inner life' of the human mind exists as a knowable entity and is understandable as such. His notion of 'objectively valid' knowledge is a direct result of his belief that human works can be contextualized into concretely definable parts and wholes whose reciprocal interaction accounts for the attainability of historically specific meanings. His concern is fundamentally epistemological, i.e. to provide a method whereby the sciences may aspire to the achievement of objectively valid knowledge. It is Martin Heidegger who first attempts to provide an ontological grounding for the hermeneutic project.

(ii) Heidegger

Heidegger had been a student of Edmund Husserl and, indeed, at one time the latter entertained the hope that the

former would carry on his work. However, as is often the case, the student proved to be a major disappointment to the teacher. Heidegger could accept neither Husserl's notion of transcendental subjectivity with its roots in human consciousness nor his hope for the development of phenomenology as a 'rigorous science.' According to Heidegger, Western metaphysics took a wrong turn when it ceased to take the Presocratic questioning of 'Being' seriously.

This question has today been forgotten -
- although our time considers itself
progressive in again affirming
'metaphysics.' And what then was
wrested from phenomena by the highest
exertion of thinking, albeit in fragments
and first-beginnings, has long since been
trivialized.

Not only that. On the foundation of
the Greek point of departure for the
interpretation of Being a dogmatic
attitude has taken shape which not only
declares the question of the meaning of
Being to be superfluous but sanctions its
neglect. It is said that "Being" is the
most universal and the emptiest concept.
As such it resists every attempt at
definition. Nor does this most universal
and thus indefinable concept need any
definition. Everybody uses it constantly
and also already understands what he
means by it. Thus what made ancient
philosophizing uneasy and kept it so by
virtue of its obscurity has become
obvious, clear as day; and this to the
point that whoever pursues it is accused
of an error of method.

(Heidegger, 1962: 2)

Heidegger maintains that Western metaphysics has an essentially epistemological programme and that, consequently, it 'forgets' to ask the fundamentally ontological question of the meaning of Being, of the difference between being and Being.²⁷ He disagrees with Husserl's presupposition of the existence of primordial intuition and maintains that, so far from being a constitutive subjectivity, Dasein (literally 'there-being,' often loosely translated as 'human being') is 'thrown' into a world that is always already there. Knowledge, as such, is a secondary phenomenon -- what is primary is Dasein's intrinsic involvement with 'being in the world,' an involvement which Heidegger characterizes as 'concern' and/or 'care.' It is this primordial involvement with the world (world being defined as the whole in which Dasein is always already involved and always already preunderstands) that metaphysics, in its concern with 'Knowledge,' forgets.

In Being and Time Heidegger attempts to get to the question of the meaning of Being through an analysis of Dasein -- that being whose special ontological status is constituted by its awareness of Being. This mindfulness of the problem of Being is a feature of Dasein's temporal nature, i.e. its awareness of past, present and future as

²⁷ Very roughly, 'being' refers to the concretely existing individual whereas 'Being' refers to the mystery of the 'isness' of existence. (Steiner, 1980: 26)

coincidental with its awareness of its own finitude. Heidegger emphasizes the hermeneutic nature of his examination of Dasein:

In explaining the tasks of ontology we found it necessary that there should be a fundamental ontology taking as its theme that entity which is ontologico-ontically distinctive, Dasein, in order to confront the cardinal problem -- the question of the meaning of Being in general. Our investigation itself will show that the meaning of phenomenological description as a method lies in interpretation. The logos of the phenomenology of Dasein has the character of hermeneuein, through which the authentic meaning of Being, and also those basic structures of Being which Dasein itself possesses, are made known to Dasein's understanding of Being. The phenomenology of Dasein is a hermeneutic in the primordial signification of the word, where it designates this business of interpreting.

(Heidegger, 1962: 61-62)

Before looking at Heidegger's version of the hermeneutic circle it is necessary to grasp what he has to say about understanding and interpretation. For Heidegger, understanding is an equiprimordial feature of Dasein's being-in-the-world and, further, "understanding has in itself the existential structure which we call 'projection' (Heidegger, 1962: 184-185). In other words, Dasein, by definition, always has a pre-understanding of any given situation and, as projection refers to potential, "Dasein always has understood

itself and always will understand itself in terms of possibilities" (Heidegger, 1962: 185). Interpretation is the development and articulation of the possibilities projected by understanding. As Heidegger says,

The projecting of the understanding we call "interpretation." In it the understanding appropriates understandingly that which is understood by it. In interpretation, understanding does not become something different. It becomes itself. Such interpretation is grounded existentially in understanding; the latter does not arise from the former. Nor is interpretation the acquiring of information about what is understood; it is rather the working-out of possibilities projected in understanding.

(Heidegger, 1962: 188-189)

For Heidegger, an interpretation is not a framework which we superimpose upon an objectively existing world but a disclosure or retrieval of Dasein's pre-understanding of its always already occurring involvement with the world. As Heidegger puts it,

In interpreting, we do not, so to speak, throw a 'signification' over some naked thing which is present-at-hand, we do not stick a value on it; but when something within-the-world is encountered as such, the thing in question already has an involvement which is disclosed in our understanding of the world, and this involvement is one which gets laid out by the interpretation.

(Heidegger, 1962: 190-191)

Interpretation enables us to view the 'ready-to-hand' world of the understanding as constituted by various objects such as tables, chairs etc. Heidegger refers to this as the 'as structure' of interpretation which, as will presently become clear, is intimately involved with the fore-structures of understanding.

Heidegger posits three forestructures which belong to the realm of understanding and which allow for its development in interpretation -- fore-having, fore-sight and fore-conception. As these are crucial concepts with respect to Heidegger's notion of interpretation I will quote him at length.

The ready-to-hand is always understood in terms of a totality of involvements. This totality need not be grasped explicitly by a thematic interpretation. Even if it has undergone such an interpretation, it recedes into an understanding which does not stand out from the background. And this is the very mode in which it is the essential foundation for everyday circumspective interpretation. In every case this interpretation is grounded in something we have in advance -- in a fore-having. As the appropriation of understanding, the interpretation operates in Being towards a totality of involvements which is already understood -- a Being which understands. When something is understood but still veiled, it becomes unveiled by an act of appropriation, and this is always done under the guidance of a point of view, which fixes that with regard to which what is understood is interpreted. In every case interpretation is grounded in something

we see in advance -- in a fore-sight. This fore-sight 'takes the first cut' out of what has been taken into our fore-having, and it does so with a view to a definite way in which this can be interpreted. Anything understood which is held in our fore-having and towards which we set our sights 'foresightedly,' becomes conceptualizable through the interpretation. In such an interpretation, the way in which the entity we are interpreting is to be conceived can be drawn from the entity itself, or the interpretation can force the entity into concepts to which it is opposed in its manner of Being. In either case, the interpretation has already decided for a definite way of conceiving it, either with finality or with reservation; it is grounded in something we grasp in advance -- in a fore-conception.

(Heidegger, 1962: 191)

Thus the 'as-structure' of interpretation is the working out of the projected 'fore-structures' of understanding which, in turn, allow for Heidegger's notion of meaning as "the 'upon which' of a projection in terms of which something becomes intelligible as something; it gets its structure from a fore-having, and a fore-conception. In so far as understanding and interpretation make up the existential state of Being of the 'there,' 'meaning' must be conceived as the formal-existential framework of the disclosedness which belongs to understanding" (Heidegger, 1962: 193). In other words, 'meaning' is not something which exists in some form outside of Dasein -- it is, by definition, constituted by and

restricted to the historical horizon of Dasein's projected understanding in the form of interpretation.

By now it should be clear that the Being of Dasein, along with being fundamentally temporal, is essentially circular. As Heidegger says,

The 'circle' in understanding belongs to the structure of meaning, and the latter phenomenon is rooted in the existential constitution of Dasein -- that is, in the understanding which interprets. An entity for which, as Being-in-the-world, its Being is itself an issue, has, ontologically, a circular structure.

(Heidegger, 1962: 195)

Thus the always already existing pre-understanding of Dasein projects itself toward futural possibilities which can only be authentically²⁸ realized by disclosing the always already having been of primordial understanding. Like T.S. Eliot, we go forward in order to come back properly:

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
(Eliot, 1963: 222)

John Caputo provides a succinct synopsis of the circularity of Dasein:

²⁸ In Heidegger 'authenticity' has to do with Dasein's recognition of, and being in harmony with, Being whereas 'inauthenticity' has to do with Dasein's forgetting of Being.

As an 'existing' being (in the Kierkegaardian sense), the meaning of Dasein is to move forward, to press ahead toward its authentic future. But this forward movement is taken by Heidegger to be at one and the same time a movement back to the being that Dasein all along has been. The movement forward is thus also a movement of recovery or retrieval. . . . Heidegger . . . gives a special play to the 'circular' movement of Dasein's Being in Being and Time linking in an ontological loop Dasein's forward and backward movement, its futural projection and its already having been. Wiederholung in Being and Time means a repetition/retrieval, a pressing forward which recovers something hitherto latent, in potentia, harboured in the possibility-to-be (Seinskönnen), of Dasein. Dasein's own Being 'circulates' between its 'futurity' (Zukünftigkeit) and its 'having been' (Gewesenheit). The Being of Dasein is constantly projected ahead, never in a free-floating and absolute way, but always toward possibilities into which it has all along been inserted. Whence Heidegger speaks of "the circular Being of Dasein."

(Caputo, 1987b: 60)

Heidegger's shifting of the hermeneutic circle from epistemological to ontological ground portrays his deep concern with origins ("In the [hermeneutic] circle is hidden a positive possibility of the most primordial kind of knowing" (Heidegger, 1962: 195)), unity and totality -- in a word, with holism. As Robert Solomon comments, "Being and Time is almost unique in Western philosophy in its unrestricted emphasis on holism, its vision of our being-in-

the-world as a seamless whole even more than in Hegel (who sees the whole as a result rather than a starting point") (Solomon, 1988: 156). In his later writing Heidegger moves away from attempting to determine the meaning of Being through an analysis of Dasein and concentrates on elucidating/obfuscating the meaning of Being as aletheia -- as "luminous self-concealing" (Heidegger, 1984: 108). However, his nostalgia for origins and his eschato-teleological desire for the unifying horizon of the circle never abates. Hence, in commenting on the "Anaximander Fragment," Heidegger expresses himself as follows:

But what if that which is early outdistanced everything late; if the very earliest far surpassed the very latest? What once occurred in the dawn of our destiny would then come, as what once occurred, at the last . . . , that is, at the departure of the long-hidden destiny of Being. The Being of beings is gathered . . . in the ultimacy of its destiny. The essence of Being hitherto disappears, its truth still veiled. The history of Being is gathered in this departure. The gathering in this departure, as the gathering . . . at the outermost point . . . of its essence hitherto, is the eschatology of Being. As something fateful, Being itself is inherently eschatological. . . . We think of the eschatology of Being in a way corresponding to the way the phenomenology of spirit is to be thought, i.e. from within the history of Being. The phenomenology of spirit itself constitutes a phase in the eschatology of Being, when Being gathers itself in the ultimacy of its essence. . . .

If we think the eschatology of Being, then we must someday anticipate

the former dawn in the day to come; today
we must learn to ponder this former dawn
through what is imminent.

(Heidegger, 1984: 18)

(iii) Gadamer

Gadamer does not follow his teacher, Heidegger, into the mysticism surrounding the latter's concern with the meaning of Being as aletheia but, instead, takes his mentor's ontological notion of understanding and attempts to develop it into a full blown 'philosophical hermeneutics,' the purpose of which is to show "not what we do or what we ought to do, but what happens to us over and above our wanting and doing" (Gadamer in Baynes et al., 1988: 339). For Gadamer, this means working out a system which accounts for understanding as the fundamental universal ontological process of being human:

"How is understanding (Verstehen) possible?" This question is prior to any activity of understanding on the part of subjectivity, including the methodical activity of the verstehenden sciences, their norms and rules. In my view, Heidegger's temporal analysis of human Dasein has convincingly shown that understanding is not one of many modes of action on the part of the subject but rather Dasein's very mode of being. It is in this sense that [I employ] the concept of hermeneutics. . . . It designates the fundamental movement of Dasein, which constitutes its finitude and historicity and thus encompasses the whole of its experience of the world. To say that the movement of understanding is comprehensive and universal is neither arbitrary nor a constructive exaggeration of a single aspect; it lies rather in the

very nature of things.
(Gadamer in Baynes et al., 1988: 341)

Because Gadamer believes that understanding is essential to the temporal beingness of Dasein he opposes Schleiermacher's and Dilthey's notion of the possibility of slipping out of one's immediate historical context in order to comprehend the authorial intention within a text written in another era. According to Gadamer, this results in an impossible separation and hence reification of both the past and the present whereas what is required is a recognition that, on the Heideggerian model, past, present and future are inseparable (i.e. Dasein is 'thrown' into a present which is constituted by a pre-understanding of the past and is projected into the possibility of the future).

In working out his 'philosophical hermeneutics' Gadamer 'rehabilitates' three notions that he maintains fell into unwarranted disrepute during the Enlightenment -- prejudice, tradition and authority. With respect to prejudice, Gadamer argues that it is actually neither more nor less than the Heideggerian concept of pre-understanding, which effectively shows that one is, by definition, never without always already existing presuppositions. To deny these presuppositions is to be unaware of one's own involvement with beingness and hence to ensure that one will be incapable of ever grasping the authentic nature of understanding. As

for tradition,

[In] our continually manifested attitude to the past, the main feature is not . . . a distancing and freeing of ourselves from what has been transmitted. Rather, we stand always within tradition, and this is no objectifying process, i.e. we do not conceive of what tradition says as something other, a model or exemplar, a recognition of ourselves which our later historical judgement would hardly see as a kind of knowledge, but as the simplest preservation of tradition.

(Gadamer, 1975: 250)

In other words, as Palmer succinctly expresses it, "tradition does not stand over against our thinking as an object of thought but is the fabric of relations, the horizon, within which we do our thinking" (Palmer, 1969: 182). The recognition of tradition as an integral part of Dasein's being-in-the-world leads directly to the acknowledgement of its authority. As Gadamer says,

That which has been sanctioned by tradition . . . has an authority that is nameless, and our finite historical being is marked by the fact that always the authority of what has been transmitted - - and not only what is clearly grounded - - has power over our attitudes and behaviour.

(Gadamer, 1975: 249)

Basically, Gadamer takes exception to what he perceives to be the Enlightenment's superficial view that prejudice,

tradition and authority are the enemies of creative thought -
- its notion that somehow it is possible to transcend the
muck of the world and to have recourse to a pristine realm of
pure reason. Such an attitude precludes the possibility of
recognizing the ontological nature of understanding and
determines a world view premised upon unacknowledged second
order constructs. As far as Gadamer is concerned, prejudice
and the authority of tradition are simply part of the
nature of things and, whether or not this fact is consciously
acknowledged, it nonetheless exerts its effect on all human
thought -- Enlightenment or no Enlightenment: "there is one
prejudice of the enlightenment that is essential to it: the
fundamental prejudice of the enlightenment is the prejudice
against prejudice itself, which deprives tradition of its
power" (Gadamer, 1975: 239-240)

Again emphasizing Heidegger's notion of the essential
historicity of Dasein, Gadamer posits what he terms the
'principle of effective history.' By this he means that
Dasein must be aware that its existence as a historical being
is definitive, i.e. it cannot be and be without
presuppositions. Thus,

If we are trying to understand a
historical phenomenon from the historical
distance that is characteristic of our
hermeneutical situation, we are always
subject to the effects of effective-
history. It determines in advance both
what seems to us worth enquiring about
and what will appear as an object of

investigation, and we more or less forget half of what is really there -- in fact, we miss the whole truth of the phenomenon when we take its immediate appearance as the whole truth.

(Gadamer, 1975: 267-268)

Taking the historicity of Dasein as a given, Gadamer further argues that in looking at any particular text or text analogue one must initially engage in 'the anticipation of completion.' In other words, one must assume that the text presents a 'unity of meaning.' In attesting to his agreement with Heidegger concerning the structure of the understanding Gadamer goes on to discuss the importance of the notion of completion:

The significance of [the hermeneutic] circle, which is fundamental to all understanding, has a further hermeneutic consequence which I may call the 'fore-conception of completion.' But this, too, is obviously a formal condition of all understanding. It states that only what really constitutes a unity of meaning is intelligible. So when we read a text we always follow this complete presupposition of completion, and only when it proves inadequate, i.e. the text is not intelligible, do we start to doubt the transmitted text and seek to discover in what way it can be remedied.

. . . .
The anticipation of completion that guides all our understanding is, then, always specific in content. Not only is an immanent unity of meaning guiding the reader assumed, but his understanding is likewise guided by the constant transcendent expectations of meaning which proceed from the relation to the truth of what is being said. . . . The anticipation of completion, then, contains not only this formal element that a text should fully express its meaning, but also that what it says

should be the whole truth. . . .
 [U]nderstanding means, primarily, to understand the content of what is said, and only secondarily to isolate and understand another's meaning as such. Hence the first of all hermeneutic requirements remains one's own fore-understanding, which proceeds from being concerned with the same subject [matter as expressed in the text]. It is this that determines what unified meaning can be realised and hence the application of the anticipation of completion.

(Gadamer, 1975: 261-262)
 (emphasis mine)

The last paragraph of the preceding quotation makes it clear that what Gadamer concerns himself with are the ontological conditions of understanding itself rather than the epistemological structure of what is presumed to be understood. For Gadamer, the primary area of hermeneutical interest lies in the misty flats between the given historical position of a particular text and the given historical position of a particular reader. It is the seeming polarity between the strangeness of what is distant and the familiarity of what is near that hermeneutics attempts to mediate: "The place between strangeness and familiarity that a transmitted text has for us is that intermediate place between being an historically intended separate object and being part of a tradition. The true home of hermeneutics is in this intermediate area" (Gadamer, 1975: 262-262).

In attempting to mediate between text and reader Gadamer relies on a dialectic that is part Platonic and part Hegelian

and which results in what he terms a 'fusion of horizons.'²⁹ Gadamer's Platonic influence is evident in his belief that a dialogic structure of understanding is essential to mediating between the assumed unified meaning of any given text ('anticipation of completion') and its application to one's immediate historical situatedness. For Gadamer, Plato provides the ideal model of dialogic questioning:

The art of questioning is that of being able to go on asking questions, i.e. the art of thinking. It is called 'dialectic,' for it is the art of conducting a real conversation. . . . To conduct a conversation means to allow oneself to be conducted by the object to which the partners in the conversation are directed. It requires that one does not try to out-argue the other person, but that one really considers the weight of the other's opinion. Hence it is an art of testing. But the art of testing is the art of questioning. For . . . to question means to lay open, to place in the open. As against the solidity of opinion, questioning makes the object and all its possibilities fluid. . . . Dialectic consists not in trying to discover the weakness of what is said, but in bringing out its real strength.

The unique and continuing relevance of the Platonic dialogues is due to this art of strengthening, for in this process what is said is continually transformed into the uttermost possibilities of its rightness and truth and overcomes all opposing argument which seeks to limit its validity. . . . What emerges in its truth [in the Platonic dialogues] is the logos, which is neither mine nor yours

²⁹ Gadamer defines horizon as "the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point" (Gadamer, 1975: 269).

and hence so far transcends the subjective opinions of the partners to the dialogue that even the person leading the conversation is always ignorant. Dialectic as the art of conducting a conversation is also the art of seeing things in the unity of an aspect (sunoran eis hen eidos) i.e. it is the art of the formation of concepts as the working out of the common meaning.

(Gadamer, 1975: 330-331)

(emphasis mine)

Gadamer follows this panegyric to the Platonic dialogue by stating that "it is more than a metaphor, it is a memory of what originally was the case, to describe the work of hermeneutics as a conversation with the text" (Gadamer, 1975: 331) (emphasis mine). This conversation with the text is concerned not with any possible authorial intention but with the subject matter of the text, which transcends any individual intentionality and which emerges as the fusion of the horizon of the text with the horizon of the reader. As Gadamer says,

. . . it is part of any genuine conversation that one submits to the other, allows his viewpoint really to count and gets inside the other far enough to understand not him, to be sure, as this individuality but rather what he says. That which has to be grasped is the substantive validity of his opinion so that we can be united with one another on the subject-matter.

(Gadamer in Warnke, 1987: 100)

Gadamer's notion of the fusion of horizons bears a striking resemblance to Hegel's notion of Aufhebung -- of the synthesis of thesis and antithesis which transcends both while yet maintaining both. Gadamer's contention that he differs markedly from Hegel in so far as he has no notion of Absolute Spirit or Knowledge in which the dialectical process finds ultimate completion cannot belie the fact that his version of the fusion of horizons reads very much like a secularization of Hegel. Thus,

. . . the horizon of the present is being continually formed, in that we have continually to test all our prejudices. An important part of this testing is the encounter with the past and the understanding of the tradition from which we come. Hence the horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past. There is no more an isolated horizon of the present than there are historical horizons. Understanding, rather, is always the fusion of these horizons which we imagine to exist by themselves. . . . In . . . tradition this process of fusion is continually going on, for there old and new continually grow together to make something of living value, without either being explicitly distinguished from the other.

(Gadamer, 1975: 273)

John Caputo nicely captures Gadamer's reliance on Plato and Hegel:

In the end . . . Gadamer remains attached to . . . tradition as the bearer of eternal truths, which in a way does

nothing more than modify Plato and Hegel from a Heideggerian standpoint. Gadamer's hermeneutics is traditionalism and the philosophy of eternal truth pushed to its historical limits. He offers us the most liberal form of traditionalism possible. He introduces as much change as possible into the philosophy of unchanging truth, as much movement as possible into immobile verity.

Plato said that truth is eternal and that we require a dialogue among ourselves in order to make the ascent to the forms. Hegel put the forms into time and required that they pass through dialectical development, that they prove their eternal worth in time, in the hard work and negativity of historical becoming. Gadamer delimits the Hegelian project of setting the truth into time, not by denying eternal truth but by protesting that there is no one final formulation of it. He insists that there is always a plurality of articulation of the same truth, that the selfsame is capable of an indefinite number of historical expressions. But that is another way of reassuring us that no matter how great the transformation of . . . tradition may be, its deep unity is always safe. Gadamer's whole argument turns on an implicit acceptance of the metaphysical distinction between a more or less stable and objective meaning and its ceaselessly changing expression.

For Gadamer, the only real question is how meaning and truth get passed along and handed down (trans-dare). That is why the Platonic conception of dialogue and the Hegelian doctrine of dialectical mediation are so important to him. These are the principle means of the transmission of meaning and truth.

(Caputo, 1987b: 111)

Thus Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, its critique of the epistemological bases of previous forms of

hermeneutics notwithstanding, remains embedded in traditional Western metaphysical notions of unity, completion, truth and so on. In light of this it is not surprising that he prefaces his magnum opus, Truth and Method, with the following laudatory address to the suppression of otherness:

Catch only what you've thrown yourself, all is
 mere skill and little gain;
 but when you're suddenly the catcher of a ball
 thrown by an eternal partner
 with accurate and measured swing
 towards you, to your centre, in an arch
 from the great bridgebuilding of God:
 Why catching then becomes a power --
 not yours, a world's.

(Rilke in Gadamer, 1975: n.p.)

(iv) Ricoeur

Like Heidegger and Gadamer, Ricoeur believes that hermeneutics must grasp the ontological significance of understanding as predicated upon an awareness of human finitude and historicity. However, unlike Heidegger and Gadamer, Ricoeur concerns himself with attempting a reconciliation between ontology and epistemology through a study of the relationship between understanding and explanation. According to Ricoeur: "Understanding precedes, accompanies, closes, and thus envelops explanation. In return, explanation develops understanding analytically" (Ricoeur in Baynes et al., 1988: 354). As Ricoeur says,

If there is a feature which distinguishes me not only from the hermeneutic philosophy of Schleiermacher and Dilthey, but also from that of Heidegger and even Gadamer (despite my great proximity to the work of the latter), it is indeed my concern to avoid the pitfall of an opposition between an 'understanding' which would be reserved for the 'human sciences' and an 'explanation' which would be common to the latter and to the nomological sciences, primarily the physical sciences. [I am concerned with the] search for a flexible articulation and a continual to and fro between the investigator's personal engagement with the matter of the text, and the disengagement which the objective explanation by causes, laws, functions or structures demands. . . .

(Ricoeur, 1982i: 36)

In attempting to mediate between explanation (erklären) and understanding (verstehen) Ricoeur relies upon the model of the written text.

According to Ricoeur, the text is "characterized by (1) the fixation of meaning, (2) its dissociation from the mental intention of the author, (3) the display of non-ostensive references, (4) the universal range of its addressees" (Ricoeur, 1982e: 210). The combination of the preceding four traits constitutes the text as an object susceptible to explanation -- explanation being, as Ricoeur is at pains to point out, not an import from the natural sciences (pace Dilthey) but a possibility which is inherent within the

linguisticity of any given text as such²⁰: "There is no transfer from one region of reality to another -- let us say, from the sphere of facts to the sphere of signs. It is within the same sphere of signs that the process of objectification takes place and gives rise to explanatory procedures" (Ricoeur, 1982e: 210).

Ricoeur begins his discussion of the nature of text interpretation by positing a movement from understanding to explanation. Borrowing from E.D. Hirsch, Ricoeur maintains that text interpretation has to do with the dialectic between guessing and validating, the former corresponding to understanding and the latter corresponding to explanation. The dialectic of guess and validation is necessitated by the holistic nature of the text. As Ricoeur says,

Why do we need an art of guessing? Why do we have to 'construe' the meaning? . . . a text has to be construed because it is not a mere sequence of sentences, all on an equal footing and separately understandable. A text is a whole, a totality. . . . Correctly, the whole appears as a hierarchy of topics, or primary and subordinate topics. The reconstruction of the text as a whole is implied in the recognition of the parts. And reciprocally, it is in construing the details that we construe the whole. There is no necessity and no evidence concerning what is important and what is

²⁰ Ricoeur distinguishes between language-systems or linguistic codes and language-event or linguistic usage. The former is synchronic and unchanging (e.g. Saussure's langue) and hence amenable to explanation whereas the latter is diachronic and dynamic (e.g. Saussure's parole).

unimportant, what is essential and what is unessential. The judgement of importance is a guess.

(Ricoeur, 1982e: 211)

Thus, according to Ricoeur, our initial response to the plurivocal totality of any given text is to guess at its meaning. Bearing in mind that "the text is a limited field of possible constructions" (Ricoeur, 1982e: 213), after making one's 'guess' one then subjects it to a process of validation. This process of validation, which manifests itself as a logic of probability, weighs the validity claims of any particular guess against what is presumed to be known about the text and eventuates in the determination of the most probable meaning: "Such is the balance between the genius of guessing and the scientific character of validation which constitutes the modern complement of the dialectic between verstehen and erklären" (Ricoeur, 1982e: 212).

At this point in his analysis of text interpretation Ricoeur reverses the order of the movement from understanding to explanation. Working now from explanation to understanding, he stresses the importance of the "referential function of the text."

This referential function . . . exceeds the mere ostensive designation of the situation common to both speaker and hearer in the dialogical situation. This abstraction from the surrounding world gives rise to two opposite attitudes. As readers, we may either remain in a kind

of state of suspense as regards any kind of referred-to world, or we may actualize the potential non-ostensive references of the text in a new situation, that of the reader. In the first case, we treat the text as a worldless entity; in the second, we create a new ostensive reference through the kind of 'execution' which the art of reading implies. These two possibilities are equally entailed by the act of reading, conceived as their dialectical interplay.

(Ricoeur, 1982e: 215-216)

Looking at the text as a self-enclosed, self-referential system of signs entails the use of explanation as structural explication. Contrasting this mode of explanation to Dilthey's attitude toward explanation, Ricoeur says,

. . . a new kind of explanatory attitude may be extended to the [text], which, contrary to the expectation of Dilthey, is no longer borrowed from the natural sciences, i.e. from an area of knowledge alien to language itself. The opposition between Natur and Geist is no longer operative here. If some model is borrowed, it comes from . . . the semiological field. . . . We have learned from the Geneva school, the Prague school, and the Danish school that it is always possible to abstract systems from processes and to relate these systems -- whether phonological, lexical, or syntactical -- to units which are merely defined by their opposition to other units of the same system. This interplay of merely distinctive entities within finite sets of such units defines the notion of structure in linguistics.

(Ricoeur, 1982e: 216)

Ricoeur uses Lévi-Strauss's analysis of myth as an example of the appropriate application of explanation. In this case the numerous sentences which constitute the narrative of the myth are reduced to 'mythemes' or 'bundles of relations' the interaction of which makes up the structure of the myth as such. Structural analysis allows us to "say that we have explained a myth, but not that we have interpreted it. We can, by means of structural analysis, bring out the logic of it, the operations which relate the 'bundles of relations' among themselves. This logic constitutes the structural law of the myth under consideration" (Ricoeur, 1982e: 216-217). To this structural explanation of a myth or text must be added an understanding of what the text talks about, i.e. its meaning. Ricoeur argues that this understanding does not do violence to the integrity of structural analysis but, rather, develops it, for: "Structural analysis does not exclude, but presupposes . . . the . . . hypothesis [that] the myth . . . has a meaning as a narrative of origins. Structural analysis merely represses this function. But it cannot suppress it" (Ricoeur, 1982e: 217).

Ricoeur maintains that the purpose of structural analysis is to go from surface semantics (the myth or text as narrative) to depth semantics (the mediation of fundamental oppositions), the latter constituting "the ultimate

'referent' of the myth" (Ricoeur, 1982e: 217). Thus Ricoeur suggests that,

If . . . we consider structural analysis as a stage -- and a necessary one -- between a naive interpretation and a critical interpretation, between a surface interpretation and a depth interpretation, then it would be possible to locate explanation and understanding at two different stages of a unique hermeneutical arc. It is this depth semantics which constitutes the genuine object of understanding and which requires a specific affinity between the reader and the kind of things the text is about.

(Ricoeur, 1982e: 218)

Thus, as opposed to being concerned with authorial intention or what the text ostensibly says, one must be concerned with what the text is about, i.e. with its 'non-ostensive references.' It is these non-ostensive references which allow the reader to blend explanation with understanding, and, consequently, to exercise her 'productive imagination' in the realization of possible worlds. As Ricoeur says,

The non-ostensive reference of the text is the kind of world opened up by the depth semantics of the text. Therefore what we want to understand is not something hidden behind the text, but something disclosed in front of it. What has to be understood is not the initial situation of discourse, but what points to a possible world. Understanding . . . wants to grasp the proposed worlds opened up by the references of the text. To understand a text is to follow its

movement from sense to reference, from what it says to what it talks about. In this process the mediating role played by structural analysis constitutes both the justification of this objective approach and the rectification of the subjective approach.

(Ricoeur, 1982e: 218)

Thus, whether the movement is from understanding to explanation vis a vis guessing and validating or from explanation to understanding vis a vis ostensive and non-ostensive references, according to Ricoeur: "Understanding is entirely mediated by the whole of explanatory procedures which precede it and accompany it" (Ricoeur, 1982e: 220). And, not surprisingly, this entire dialectical process always takes place within the hermeneutic circle: "Ultimately, the correlation between explanation and understanding, between understanding and explanation, is the 'hermeneutical circle'" (Ricoeur, 1982e: 221).

With respect to his work on narrative, Ricoeur maintains that "it is the same debate between understanding and explanation which is pursued here; for the capacity to follow a story expresses the irreducible component of understanding in the act of narrating, whereas the investigation of laws in history, and of narrative structures in folk tales, plays, novels and fictional literature in general, corresponds to the explanatory phase of the nomological sciences" (Ricoeur, 1982h: 38). Very briefly, Ricoeur contends that fictional

and historical narratives have a common narrative structure and that this structure is an indispensable feature of the historicity of the human situation. I do not wish to get involved in a major discussion of Ricoeur's theory of narrative as much of it would merely repeat what has already been said concerning text analysis (e.g. the necessity of a structural phase of analysis, the importance of non-ostensive referentiality and so on). Suffice it to say that Ricoeur maintains that:

. . . any narrative combines, in varying proportions, two dimensions: a chronological dimension and a non-chronological dimension. The first may be called the 'episodic dimension' of the narrative. Within the art of following a story, this dimension is expressed in the expectation of contingencies which affect the story's development; hence it gives rise to questions such as: and so? and then? what happened next? what was the outcome? etc. But the activity of narrating does not consist simply in addressing episodes to one another; it also constructs meaningful totalities out of scattered events. This aspect of the art of narrating is reflected, on the side of following a story, in the attempt to 'grasp together' successive events. The art of narrating, as well as the corresponding art of following a story, therefore require that we are able to extract a configuration from a succession. This 'configurational' operation . . . constitutes the second dimension of the narrative activity.

(Ricoeur, 1982f: 278)

In other words, all narrative is both teleological (chronological episodic sequence tending to final resolution) and eschatological (non-chronological meaningful totality -- the all encompassing structure of final resolution) the proper interpretation of which requires a dialectic between understanding and explanation. Thus, although Ricoeur, like Gadamer, maintains that the text or narrative discloses no absolute meaning, that the polysemic/plurivocal nature of linguisticity precludes this possibility, he nonetheless persists in viewing the text/narrative as a unified, meaningful totality -- that is, multiplicity/difference is always contained within, and dominated by, unity/identity. As Caputo says, in contrasting Ricoeur and Gadamer to Derrida:

Dissemination effects a disruption of semantics, even when semantics tries to protect itself, when it tries to make concessions, with a theory of polysemy, such as those of Ricoeur and contemporary hermeneutical theorists. The reading of literature has been dominated by the rule of the semantic. It has assumed, for fundamentally metaphysical reasons, that there is a ruling "thematic" unity to a text, a single, unifying meaning by which the entire chain of signifiers is organized and to which it is subordinated. In the older version, this semantic unity was attributed to the unifying intention of the author. In its more modern form, in the "new criticism" and in the hermeneutics of Gadamer and Ricoeur, it is attributed to a system of meaning which operates in the text itself, which therefore exceeds and outlasts the original author and his original audience. For Derrida, this

amounts to a retrenchment of semanticism which has the effect of allowing it to dig in even deeper. In either version, the task of semantic criticism is to finger this golden thread, to find the animating, unifying centre.

(Caputo, 1987b: 149)

To summarize, in various ways all of the preceding modes of thought manifest their reliance on a concept of presence - - on the existence of an absolute and unquestionable ground capable of accounting for all human experience. Thus, for example, Husserl insists upon the existence of 'invariant essential structures' as the product of a constitutive transcendental subjectivity, Heidegger insists upon the ontological priority of the meaning of Being and on the circular nature of Dasein, Gadamer insists upon the validity of understanding as a dialogical process resulting in a fusion of horizons which maintains yet elevates discrete viewpoints through a dialectical process of transcendence and Ricoeur insists upon interpretation as the product of the dialectical interplay of explanation and understanding within the unity of meaning which is the text.

In the following chapter I will attempt to show that a number of concepts common to interpretive and/or 'postmodern' anthropology (e.g. interpretation, dialogic, meaning and so on) are drawn directly from the aforementioned phenomeno-

logical/ hermeneutical traditions and that, this being the case, a deconstructive reading of these concepts (and, indeed, of conceptuality as such) is essential to anthropology's recognition of itself as an inheritor and perpetuator of the values of Western metaphysics.

Chapter Four

Clifford Geertz and James Clifford: A Deconstructive Reading

In this chapter, I will look at certain works by Clifford Geertz and by James Clifford respectively, with the purpose of isolating a number of their key concepts (particularly, in Geertz's case, 'meaning,' 'concept,' 'interpretation,' 'context,' 'translation' and 'text' and, in Clifford's case, 'metaphor/allegory,' 'subjectivity,' 'dialogism,' 'discursivity,' 'representation' and 'speech') and subjecting them to a deconstructive reading. In order, as much as possible, to allow Geertz and Clifford to speak for themselves, I will provide an extended series of quotations at the beginning of each of their respective sections. Although this format necessarily entails a certain amount of overlap, it effectively illustrates the significance of specific recurring concepts.

I GEERTZ

(1) Culture

Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. It is explication I

am after, construing social expressions on their surface enigmatical.

(Geertz, 19731: 5)
(emphasis mine)

[Assuming that] the aim of anthropology is the enlargement of the universe of human discourse. . . . It is an aim to which a semiotic concept of culture is peculiarly well adapted. As interworked systems of construable signs (what, ignoring provincial usages I would call symbols), culture is not a power, something to which social events, behaviours, institutions, or processes can be causally attributed; it is a context, something within which they can be intelligibly -- that is, thickly -- described.

(Geertz, 19731: 14)
(emphasis mine)

To generalize within cases is usually called, at least in medicine and depth psychology, clinical inference. Rather than beginning with a set of observations and attempting to subsume them under a governing law, such inference begins with a set of (presumptive) signifiers and attempts to place them within an intelligible frame. Measures are matched to theoretical predictions, but symptoms . . . are scanned for theoretical peculiarities -- that is, they are diagnosed. In the study of culture the signifiers are not symptoms or clusters of symptoms, but symbolic acts, and the aim is not therapy but the analysis of social discourse. But the way in which theory is used -- to ferret out the unapparent import of things -- is the same.

(Geertz, 19731: 26)
(emphasis mine)

. . . culture is best seen not as complexes of concrete behaviour patterns -- customs, usages, traditions, habit clusters -- as has, by and large, been the case up to now, but as a set of control mechanisms -- plans, recipes, rules, instructions (what computer engineers call "programs") -- for the governing of behaviour.

(Geertz, 1973f: 44)
(emphasis mine)

. . . the culture concept to which I adhere has neither multiple referents nor, so far as I can see, any unusual ambiguities: it denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life.

(Geertz, 1973g: 89)
(emphasis mine)

[To view a symbolic system as a "metasocial commentary"] is to engage in a bit of metaphorical refocussing of one's own, for it shifts the analysis of cultural forms from an endeavour in general parallel to dissecting an organism, diagnosing a symptom, deciphering a code, or ordering a system -- the dominant analogies in contemporary anthropology -- to one in general parallel with penetrating a literary text. If one takes the [Balinese] cockfight, or any other collectively sustained symbolic structure, as a means of "saying something of something" (to invoke a famous Aristotelian tag), then one is faced with a problem not in social mechanics but social semantics. For the anthropologist, whose concern is with formulating sociological principles . . . the question is, what does one learn about such principles from examining

culture as an assemblage of texts?

(Geertz, 1973c: 448)

(emphasis mine)

(ii) Interpretation

. . . there are three characteristics of ethnographic description: it is interpretive; what it is interpretive of is the flow of social discourse; and the interpreting involved consists in trying to rescue the "said" of such discourse from its perishing occasions and fix it in perusable terms.

(Geertz, 19731: 20)

(emphasis mine)

If anthropological interpretation is constructing a reading of what happens, then to divorce it from what happens -- from what, in this time or that place, specific people say, what they do, what is done to them, from the whole vast business of the world -- is to divorce it from its application and render it vacant. A good interpretation of anything -- a poem, a person, a history, a ritual, an institution, a society -- takes us into the heart of that of which it is an interpretation.

(Geertz, 19731: 18)

(emphasis mine)

. . . from whatever level at which one operates, and however intricately, the guiding principle is the same: societies, like lives, contain their own interpretations. One has only to learn how to gain access to them.

(Geertz, 1973c: 453)

(emphasis mine)

Are we, in describing symbol uses, describing perceptions, sentiments, outlooks, experiences? And in what sense? What do we claim when we claim that we understand the semiotic means by which . . . persons are defined to one another? That we know words or that we know minds?

In answering this question, it is necessary, I think, first to notice the characteristic intellectual movement, the inward conceptual rhythm . . . in all . . . analyses . . . namely, a continuous dialectical tacking between the most local of local detail and the most global of global structure in such a way as to bring them into simultaneous view. . . . Hopping back and forth between the whole conceived through the parts that actualize it and the parts conceived through the whole that motivates them, we seek to turn them, by a sort of intellectual perpetual motion, into explications of one another.

All this is . . . but the now familiar trajectory of what Dilthey called the hermeneutic circle, and my argument here is merely that it is as central to ethnographic interpretation, and thus to the penetration of other peoples' modes of thought, as it is to literary, historical, philological, psychoanalytic, or biblical interpretations. . . .

(Geertz, 1983b: 69)
(emphasis mine)

(iii) Anthropology

. . . anthropological writings are themselves interpretations, and second and third order ones to boot. (By definition, only a "native" makes first order ones: its his culture.) They are, thus, fictions; fictions in the sense that they are "something made," "something fashioned" -- the original meaning of fictio -- not that they are

false, unfactual, or merely "as if" thought experiments.

(Geertz, 19731: 15)

(emphasis Geertz's and mine)

The ethnographer "inscribes" social discourse: he writes it down. In so doing, he turns it from a passing event, which exists only in its own moment of occurrence, into an account, which exists in its inscriptions and can be reconsulted. . . . "What," Paul Ricoeur, from whom this whole idea of inscription of action is borrowed . . . asks, "what does writing fix? Not the event of speaking, but the "said" of speaking, where we understand by the "said" of speaking that intentional exteriorization constitutive of the aim of discourse thanks to which the sagen -- the saying -- wants to become Aus-sage -- the enunciation, the enunciated. In short, what we write is the noema ["thought," "content," "gist"] of the speaking. It is the meaning of the speech event, not the event as event." . . . Cultural analysis is (or should be) guessing at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses. . . .

(Geertz, 19731: 19-20)

(emphasis Geertz's and mine)

We must, in short, descend into detail, past the misleading tags, past the metaphysical types, past the empty similarities to grasp firmly the essential character of not only the various cultures but the various sorts of individuals within culture, if we wish to encounter humanity face to face.

(Geertz, 1973g: 53)

(emphasis mine)

[The] issues are multiple, involving questions of definitions, verifications,

causality, representativeness, objectivity, measurement, communication. But at base they all boil down to one question: how to frame an analysis of meaning -- the conceptual structures individuals use to construe experience - - which will be at once circumstantial enough to carry conviction and abstract enough to forward theory. These are equal necessities. . . . But they also . . . pull in opposite directions, for the more one invokes details the more he is bound to the peculiarities of the immediate case, the more one omits them the more he loses touch with the ground on which his arguments rest. Discovering how to escape this paradox -- or more exactly, for one never really escapes it, how to keep it at bay -- is what, methodologically, thematic analysis is all about.

(Geertz, 1973i: 313)
(emphasis mine)

What is needed is some systematic, rather than merely literary or impressionistic, way to discover what is given, what the conceptual structure embodied in the symbolic forms through which persons are perceived actually is. What we want . . . is a developed method of describing and analyzing the meaningful structure of experience . . . as it is apprehended by representative members of a particular society at a particular point in time -- in a word, a scientific phenomenology of culture.

(Geertz, 1973h: 364)
(emphasis mine)

. . . it is from the . . . difficult achievement of seeing ourselves amongst others, as a local example of the forms human life has locally taken, a case among cases, a world among worlds, that the largeness of mind, without which objectivity is self-congratulation and tolerance a sham, comes. If interpretive

anthropology has any general office in the world it is to keep reteaching this figurative truth.

(Geertz, 1983f: 16)
(emphasis mine)

The question of signature, the establishment of an authorial presence within a text, has haunted ethnography from very early on, though for the most part it has done so in a disguised form. Disguised, because it has been generally cast not as a narratological issue, a matter of how best to get an honest story honestly told, but as an epistemological one, a matter of how to prevent subjective views from coloring objective facts.

(Geertz, 1988b: 9)
(emphasis mine)

From the preceding quotations, which, I believe, constitute a fairly representative sampling of Geertzian anthropology, it may be seen that, 'a bit of metaphorical refocussing' notwithstanding, throughout his career Geertz's views have remained quite consistent. Geertz often refers to himself as a 'meanings-and-symbols' anthropologist whose purpose is to assess ever more precise descriptions of varying cultural contexts in order to arrive at ever more accurate interpretations of "what the devil [the people under scrutiny] think they are up to" (Geertz, 1983d: 58). According to Geertz, meaning can be transferred from one cultural context to another through the interpretation of symbolic structures, thus enabling 'the enlargement of the

universe of human discourse.' In a particularly romantic moment Geertz opines that for the seeker of anthropological knowledge "the road lies, like any genuine Quest, through a terrifying complexity" (Geertz, 1973f: 54). Throughout his work, Geertz maintains that an application of phenomenological ('some systematic . . . way to discover what is given') and hermeneutical ('a continuous dialectical . . . [h]opping back and forth between the whole conceived through the parts that actualize it and the parts conceived through the whole that motivates them') principles to whatever cultural context may be at hand is the method most appropriate to those who would embark upon the anthropological 'Quest.' Time and again Geertz makes use of such phrases as 'figurative truth,' 'the heart of the matter,' 'essential character,' 'genuine Quest,' 'the fixation of meaning' and so on. He insists that,

The meanings that symbols, the material vehicles of thought, embody are often elusive, vague, fluctuating, and convoluted, but they are, in principle, as capable of being discovered through systematic empirical investigation -- especially if the people who perceive them will cooperate a little -- as the atomic weight of hydrogen or the function of the adrenal glands.

(Geertz, 1973h: 362-363)

For Geertz, cultures, like the literary texts examined by critics such as Leo Spitzer and Lionel Trilling, are, in

principle, susceptible to thematic analysis, i.e. their meaning is discoverable if only they are properly approached.

Interestingly, in spite of Geertz's constant contention that meaning is, in principle, both discoverable and transferable, and in spite of the fact that "a recurring cycle of terms -- symbol, meaning, conception, form, text . . . culture -- [are] designed to suggest there is system in persistence, that all [my] so variously aimed inquiries are driven by a subtle view of how one should go about constructing an account of the imaginative make-up of a society" (Geertz, 1983f: 5), his work is haunted by a naggingly persistent uneasiness. Thus, for example,

The stuttering quality of . . . my own efforts . . . is a result. . . of not knowing, in so uncertain an undertaking, quite where to begin, or, having anyhow begun, which way to move. Argument grows oblique, and language with it, because the more orderly and straightforward a particular course looks the more it seems ill advised.

(Geertz, 1983f: 6)

Finding our feet, an unnerving business which never more than distantly succeeds, is what ethnographic research consists of as a personal experience; trying to formulate the basis on which one imagines, always excessively, one has found them is what anthropological writing consists of as a scientific endeavour.

(Geertz, 1973l: 13)

[I have never] gotten anywhere near to the bottom of anything I have ever written about. . . . Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete. And, worse than that, the more deeply it goes the less complete it is. It is a strange science whose most telling assertions are its most tremulously based, in which to get somewhere with the matter at hand is to intensify the suspicion, both your own and that of others, that you are not quite getting it right.

(Geertz, 19731: 29)

Meaning, that elusive and ill-defined pseudo-entity we were once more than content to leave philosophers and literary critics to fumble with, has now come back into the heart of our discipline.

(Geertz, 19731: 29)

This effort, half-quixotic, half-Sisyphean . . . to render anomalous things in not too anomalous words. . . .

(Geertz, 1983e: 225)

It is not that we no longer have conventions of interpretation; we have more than ever, built -- often enough jerry-built -- to accommodate a situation at once fluid, plural, uncentered, and ineradicably untidy.

(Geertz, 1983a: 21)

These examples could be multiplied, but what I have quoted should be sufficient to indicate that behind Geertz's more self-assured pronouncements there lurks an uneasiness for which the tenets of his chosen conceptuality do not allow him

adequately to account. It is with this in mind that I would now like to show what a deconstructive reading tells us about Geertz's use of, and reliance upon, such notions as 'meaning,' 'concept,' 'interpretation,' 'context,' 'translation' and 'text.'

As will be recalled, Derrida maintains that concepts are always already doubled, that the essential possibility of their iterability precludes them from ever being homogeneous and self-identical. This being the case, Geertz's assumption (which is the assumption of Western metaphysics in general) that a 'fixation of meaning' is both possible and desirable is called radically into question. As Geertz refers to himself as a 'meanings-and-symbols' anthropologist it is useful to look at how he defines these two terms:

. . . significant symbols [include] words for the most part but also gestures, drawings, musical sounds, mechanical devices like clocks, or natural objects like jewels -- anything, in fact, that is disengaged from its mere actuality and used to impose meaning on experience.

(Geertz, 1973g: 45)

(emphasis mine)

[A symbol] is . . . any object, act, event, quality, or relation which serves as a vehicle for a conception -- the conception is the symbol's "meaning."

(Geertz, 1973j: 91)

(emphasis mine)

So for Geertz, symbols are 'construable signs' and what they are significative of is meanings or concepts. Now, according to Derrida, notions such as 'symbol,' 'sign,' 'meaning' and 'concept' are premised upon a dedication to presence -- to a belief in the existence of a "'transcendental signified' which in and of itself, in its essence, would refer to no signifier, would exceed the chain of signs, and would no longer itself function as a signifier" (Derrida, 1981g: 19-20). In other words, presence is the ultimate unity which both exceeds and contains multiplicity, the ultimate self-identity which both exceeds and contains difference -- it is the theological moment par excellence ("the name of God . . . is the name of indifference itself" (Derrida, 1982e: 71)), for, being perfect in and of itself, it functions as an absolute referent which, by definition, does not itself refer. This dedication to presence, whether it be in the form of a belief in God, a belief in meaning or a belief in conceptuality as such, precludes the possibility of acknowledging difference as difference or the other as other for difference must always be viewed as a corruption of and/or inferior to identity and the other must always be viewed as a corruption of and/or inferior to the self. Hence Western metaphysics abounds with philosophies which subsume difference within identity (e.g. the Hegelian Aufhebung and dialectics in general) and the other within the self (e.g. the Cartesian cogito and its development in Husserlean

thought and phenomenology in general). Thus the uneasiness which is apparent in Geertz's work may be seen to be due to the fact that his metaphysical assumptions imprison him within a theoretical and methodological framework which functions to repress the difference/otherness/diversity that he is able to intimate but for which he is unable to account.

Even though Geertz acknowledges that 'cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete' that meaning is an 'elusive and ill-defined pseudo-entity' he never arrives at the point where he questions the notion of concept or conceptuality as such. And, as Derrida says,

Every concept that lays claim to any rigour whatsoever implies the alternative of "all or nothing." Even if in "reality" or in "experience" everyone believes he knows that there is never "all or nothing," a concept determines itself only according to "all or nothing." Even the concept of "difference of degree," the concept of relativity is, qua concept, determined according to the logic of all or nothing, of yes or no: differences of degree or nondifferences of degree. It is impossible . . . to form a philosophical concept outside of this logic of all or nothing.

(Derrida, 1988a: 116-117)

Thus, given that concepts are defined as self-identical (either there is meaning or there is not, either there is essence or there is not etc.) and given that Geertz does not question the appropriateness and/or adequacy of conceptuality

as such, it is not surprising that he constantly finds himself 'unnerved' by what he perceives to be the 'ineradicable untidiness' of cultural phenomena. Cultural phenomena are not either (tidy) or (untidy) -- they are both (tidy/untidy) and (involved with irreducible undecidability). And this because no cultural phenomenon, be it a ritual, a book or a philosophical concept, exists in and of itself, referring only to itself -- it is always already doubled, always already part of a signifying chain, and thus always already riddled with otherness. It is this undecidability, this play of iterability, différance, trace etc., which is not reducible to either/or logic, the logic of identity, and yet which allows for both the possibility (as effect) and the impossibility (as self-sufficient cause) of that logic, that must be taken into account.

Geertz's notion of interpretation provides another example of the way in which his theoretical/philosophical assumptions prevent him from recognizing and developing certain possibilities which are nonetheless inscribed within his work. For Geertz, as for Western metaphysics in general, interpretation consists in the determination of meaning. It is important to realize that, however it is expressed, whether as a Diltheyan tacking back and forth between part and whole, as a Heideggerian projection and retrieval, as a Gadamerian fusion of horizons, as a Ricoeurian working out of understanding and explanation, or as a Geertzian combination

of Dilthey and Ricoeur, the dialectical movement of the hermeneutic circle (or spiral, or arc) always presupposes an over-riding unity upon which the possibility of interpretation as the construing of meaning is based. A dialectical structure, whether it be in the garb of Platonic dialogue, Hegelian speculation, Gadamerian hermeneutics, or Geertzian interpretive anthropology, is, by definition and in principle, dedicated to the teleological resolution of oppositionality. As Wallace Stevens says, "a law of inherent opposites,/ Of essential unity, is as pleasant as port" (Stevens, 1982b: 215). And whether the dialectical process is deemed capable of completion (e.g. Hegel's Absolute Spirit) or whether it is deemed endless (e.g. Ricoeur's polysemy) it is nonetheless always carried out within a notion of unity. Thus even though Geertz, in likening the anthropological task of interpretation to that of the literary critic, views culture as an 'assemblage of texts' which are by nature polysemous and polythematic, he still cannot escape the inevitably homogeneous strictures of his theoretical paradigm, for, as Derrida says,

Polysemy always puts out its multiplicities and variations within the horizon, at least, of some integral reading which contains no absolute rift, no senseless deviation -- the horizon of the final parousia of a meaning at last deciphered, revealed, made present in the rich collection of its determinations. Whatever interest one might find in them, whatever dignity one might grant them,

plurivocity, the interpretation it calls for, and the history that is precipitated out around it remain lived as the enriching, temporary detours of some passion, some signifying martyrdom that testifies to a truth past or a truth to come, to a meaning whose presence is announced by enigma. All the moments of polysemy are, as the word implies, moments of meaning.

(Derrida, 1981a: 350)

Thus, even though Geertz attempts to defend diversity by proclaiming an 'anti-anti-relativist' stance against the unifying notions of 'Human Nature' (e.g. various forms of biological determinism) on the one hand and of 'Human Mind' (e.g. various forms of psychologico-linguistic determinism) on the other, both of which display "the same tendency to see diversity as surface and universality as depth" (Geertz, 1984: 272), he nonetheless, ironically and in spite of his own most strenuous efforts, cannot help but end up as himself a promoter of unity. And this because he does not question the repressive, homogeneous implications of his own conceptuality.

Geertz's notion of interpretation, besides entailing a dialectical working out of meaning, also entails a notion of the essential possibility of the transmissibility of meaning from one cultural context or frame to another. As Geertz says, he is concerned with what he perceives to be a problem of "translation, [of] how meaning gets moved, or does not, reasonably intact from one sort of discourse to the next"

(Geertz, 1983g: 154). And 'translation,' according to Geertz, "is not a simple recasting of others' ways of putting things in terms of our own ways of putting them . . . but [of] displaying the logic of their ways of putting them in the locutions of ours. . . . [it is a] catching of 'their' views in 'our' vocabularies" (Geertz, 1983f: 10). In other words, Geertz is concerned with the transmission of meaning (i.e. translation) between cultures via a thematic or interpretive reading of symbols which allows him

. . . to penetrate somewhat [the] tangle of hermeneutical involvements, to locate with some precision the instabilities of thought and sentiment it generates and set them in a social frame. Such an effort hardly dissolves the tangle or removes the instabilities. Indeed . . . it rather brings them more disturbingly to notice. But it does at least (or can) place them in an intelligible context, and until some cliometrician, sociobiologist, or deep linguisticist really does contrive to solve the Riddle of the Sphinx, that will have to do.

(Geertz, 1983c: 45)

(emphasis mine)

From the preceding quotation it is evident that, again, Geertz is troubled by the amorphous nature of his 'data' and that, again, he attempts to account for it through the use of an unexamined conceptuality. In order to begin deconstructing this let us first look at the notion of 'context.'

The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'context' as, "parts that precede or follow a passage or word and fix its meaning (out of -, without these and hence misleading); ambient conditions." In terms of anthropological interpretation Geertz perceives a context to be those conditions which surround and determine a particular phenomenon (i.e. symbol or symbolic cluster) hence rendering it capable of being recognized as a vehicle of essentially translatable meaning. In other words, symbols or symbolic clusters are perceived to be at the centre of any given context (at 'the heart of the matter,' as Geertz would say) and thus, by usage and by definition, the notion of context as such, as it functions in Geertz's work, is, in principle, a unific concept constituted dialectically by the 'meaning' which it surrounds and in surrounding both defines and is defined by and in defining it both saturates and is saturated by. What Geertz ends up with is a notion of cultural context which, for purposes of comparison and/or contrast, is isolable and hence transmissible and/or translatable as a definable entity. With respect to this notion of context Derrida comments,

But are the conditions . . . of a context ever absolutely determinable. . . . Is there a rigorous and scientific concept of context? Or does the notion of context conceal, behind a certain confusion, philosophical presuppositions of a very determinate nature? . . . [I] try to demonstrate why a context is never absolutely determinable, or rather, why

its determination can never be entirely certain or saturated. This structural non-saturation would have a double effect: 1) it would mark the theoretical inadequacy of the current concept of context (linguistic or non-linguistic), as it is accepted by numerous domains of research, including all the concepts with which it is systematically associated; 2) it would necessitate a certain generalization and a certain displacement of the concept of writing. This concept would no longer be comprehensible in terms of communication, at least in the limited sense of a transmission of meaning. Inversely, it is within the general domain of writing, defined in this way, that the effects of semantic communication can be determined as effects that are particular, secondary, inscribed, and supplementary.

(Derrida, 1988a: 2-3)

As will be recalled, writing, in the sense by which Derrida refers to it above, is an 'undecidable' -- it is, to reiterate Norris, "the endless displacement of meaning which both governs language and places it forever beyond the reach of a stable, self-authenticating knowledge" (Norris, 1986: 29). As I argued in Chapter Two, it is the play of undecidability which, premised as it is upon a notion of originary doubling, allows for both the possibility of philosophical concepts (as effects) and their impossibility (as self-identical entities). With respect to Geertz's notion of context, it is precisely this primordial play of undecidability which he fails to take into account. For Geertz, context functions as an isolable framework which

surrounds and determines an equally isolable meaning. However, as Derrida says, "Context is always, and always has been, at work within the place, and not only around it" (Derrida, 1988a: 60). In other words, contextuality as such, as that which frames or fixes a meaning, is always already itself contextualized, that is, it is always already itself an effect of the play of undecidability -- it nowhere exists as an absolute, isolable entity. And, as Derrida points out, "This does not imply that [a gesture, a word, an action etc.] is valid outside of a context, but on the contrary that there are only contexts without any centre or absolute anchorage" (Derrida, 1988a: 12). And whether Geertz acknowledges the artificial, imposed nature of his contextual frames or not (and, quite obviously, he does), unless and until he acknowledges the undecidability that is always already at work (or play) within his chosen conceptuality he will continue, contrary to his repeatedly professed intentions, to subordinate diversity to unity, difference to identity, the other to the self.

Before discussing Geertz's notion of translation or the transmissibility of meaning, it is important to be clear that, for him, meaning is intentional, that is, meaning, being that which is contained within 'symbols or symbolic clusters,' is that which people 'think [it is] they are up to' -- i.e. it is that which they intend. It must be remembered that intentionality, as such, is predicated upon

a phenomenological notion of intentional consciousness which, in turn, is predicated upon a notion of primordial intuition, "where 'consciousness' means nothing other than the possibility of the self-presence of the present in the living present" (Derrida, 1973b: 9). In other words, intentionality is an integral feature of a philosophy of consciousness which posits the essential possibility of intuition -- of an immediately self-present and unmediated "source of authority . . . for knowledge" (Husserl in Derrida, 1973b: 62). Intentionality, as defined in the tradition of Husserlean phenomenology and as manifested in Geertzian interpretive anthropology, is fundamentally and irremediably teleological -- that is, it entails, in principle, fulfilment in the self-present realization of that which it intends. And, whether or not Geertz recognizes it (and, apparently, he does not),

This telos of "fulfillment" is constitutive of intentionality; it is part of its concept. Intentional movement tends toward this fulfillment. This is the origin or the fatality of that "longing for metaphysical plenitude" which, however, can also be presupposed, described, or lived without the romantic, even mystical pathos sometimes associated with those words. . . . Nevertheless, if one wishes to speak rigorously of an intentional structure one should take into account, with or without "longing," the telos of plenitude that constitutes it. . . . This plenitude (this "fulfillment"), for reasons I have already stated (iterability, structure of the trace and of the mark in general [i.e. the play of undecidability]), is already inaccessible in perception or in

intuition in general as the experience of
a present content.

(Derrida, 1988a: 121)

Now again, as with the notion of context, it is important to realize that Derrida is not arguing that there is no intentionality -- he is arguing that intentionality as such, as a philosophical concept premised on a teleological notion of ultimate plenitude, does not and has never existed. As Derrida says, "What is limited by iterability [undecidability] is not intentionality in general, but its character of being conscious or present to itself (actualized, fulfilled, and adequate), the simplicity of its features, its undividedness. . . . The iteration structuring it a priori introduces into it a dehiscence and a cleft . . . which are essential" (Derrida, 1988a: 105). In other words, the concept of intentionality, like all undeconstructed conceptual categories, functions as a unifying structure which represses its own essential undecidability. And this undecidability is essential because intentionality, as such, is predicated upon the impossible 'possibility of the self-presence of the present in the living present' -- impossible because, as stated in Chapter Two but worth repeating here,

. . . the being-present (on) in its truth, in the presence of its identity and in the identity of its presence, is doubled as soon as it appears, as soon as

it presents itself. It appears, in its essence, as the possibility of its own most proper non-truth, of its pseudo-truth reflected in the icon, the phantasm, or the simulacrum. What is is not what it is, identical and identical to itself, unless it adds to itself the possibility of being repeated as such. And its identity is hollowed out by that addition, withdraws itself in the supplement that presents it.

(Derrida, 1981a: 168)

Thus intentionality, as a concept predicated upon its realization or fulfilment in the plenitude of an intended and self-present meaning, is, due to ordinary doubling and the essential play of undecidability, itself always already fissured with its own impossibility. And again, as Geertz does not examine the implications of his conceptual framework, he is left with no alternative but to follow the dictates of that framework, thus ensuring that heterogeneity is inevitably subsumed within homogeneity.

With respect to Geertz's notion of translation, of the transmissibility of meaning from one cultural context to another, it should by now be clear that it is premised upon a whole strain of philosophical thought which, among other things, presumes a teleological notion of dialectical process and of intentionality as well as the self-identical nature of conceptuality. Thus it should not be surprising that Geertz posits the possibility of "meaning get[ting] moved, or . . . not, reasonably intact from one sort of discourse to the

next." It will be remembered that Geertz contends that meaning is contained within symbols or symbolic clusters and that he defines symbols as signs. And, of course, according to Geertz's conceptuality, signs must be signs of something, and what they are signs of is meaning. However, as Derrida says, "But what is a sign as such? There is no sign as such. Either the sign is considered a thing, and it is not a sign. Or it is a reference, and thus not itself" (Derrida, 1982e: 204). Further,

Is it not evident that no signifier, whatever its substance and form, has a "unique and singular reality?" A signifier is from the very beginning the possibility of its own repetition, of its own image or resemblance. It is the condition of its ideality, what identifies it as signifier, and makes it function as such, relating it to a signified which, for the same reasons, could never be a "unique and singular reality." From the moment that the sign appears, that is to say from the very beginning, there is no chance of encountering anywhere the purity of "reality," "unicity," "singularity."
(Derrida, 1982e: 91)

Nonetheless, the concept of 'sign,' as it functions within Western metaphysics in general and within Geertzian anthropology in particular, indicates the existence of a meaning which is by definition self-identical and which is in principle isolable and hence transportable (i.e. translatable) from one cultural context to another. As Derrida says,

. . . the model of the sign . . . marks the "semiological" project itself and the organic totality of its concepts, in particular that of communication, which in effect implies a transmission charged with making pass, from one subject to another, the identity of a signified object, of a meaning or of a concept rightfully separable from the process of passage and from the signifying operation. Communication presupposes subjects (whose identity and presence are constituted before the signifying operation) and objects (signified concepts, a thought meaning that the passage of communication will have neither to constitute, nor, by all rights, to transform). A communicates B to C.

(Derrida, 1981g: 23)

Thus Geertz's notion of translation may be seen to be the inevitable outcome of his embeddedness within an undeconstructed system of conceptuality. And whether or not one argues that Geertz is, after all, by and large using 'everyday language' and that to make so much out of his usage is to put far too fine a point on things, it cannot be denied that,

. . . "everyday language" is not innocent or neutral. It is the language of Western metaphysics, and it carries with it not only a considerable number of presuppositions of all types, but also presuppositions inseparable from metaphysics, which, although little attended to, are knotted into a system.

(Derrida, 1981g: 19)

Thus, for example, the concept 'sign,' which carries with it the notion of an essential distinction between signifier and signified, between the sign and what it signs,

. . . inherently leaves open the possibility of thinking a concept signified in and of itself, a concept simply present for thought, independent . . . of a relationship to a system of signifiers [i.e. a 'transcendental signified']. . . . [However] from the moment that one questions the possibility of . . . a transcendental signified, and that one recognizes that every signified is also in the position of a signifier, the distinction between signified and signifier becomes problematical at its root. . . . In effect, the theme of a transcendental signified took shape within the horizon of an absolutely pure, transparent, and unequivocal translatability. In the limits to which it is possible, or at least appears possible, translation practices the difference between signified and signifier. But if this difference is never pure, no more so is translation, and for the notion of translation we would have to substitute a notion of transformation; a regulated transformation of one language by another, of one text by another.

(Derrida, 1981g:19-20)

In other words, the point is neither to neutralize the distinction between signifier and signified nor simply to reverse their levels of importance, but to show that their distinction is not and never has been absolute -- that it is an effect of an essential undecidability which both allows for and delimits the notion of conceptuality in general. It

is this essential undecidability which ensures that any notion of translation as the simple transmission of meaning from one context to another is fundamentally inadequate, and it is this essential undecidability that Geertz does not take into account.

Before going on to the work of James Clifford, I would like to look at Geertz's favourite analogue for culture, that of the text:

The key to the transition from text to text analogue, from writing as discourse to action as discourse, is, as Paul Ricoeur has pointed out, the concept of "inscription": the fixation of meaning. When we speak, our utterances fly by as events like any other behaviour; unless what we say is inscribed in writing (or some other established recording process), it is as evanescent as what we do. If it is so inscribed, it of course passes, like Dorian Gray's youth, anyway; but at least its meaning, the said, not the saying -- to a degree and for a while remains. This too is not different for action in general: its meaning can persist in a way its actuality cannot.

The great virtue of the extension of the notion of text beyond things written on paper or carved into stone is that it trains attention on precisely this phenomenon: on how the inscription of action is brought about, what its vehicles are and how they work, and on what the fixation of meaning from the flow of events -- history from what happened, thought from thinking, culture from behaviour -- implies for sociological interpretation.

(Geertz, 1983a: 31)

Geertz, like Ricoeur, views the text as a plurivocal totality which, as such and in principle, enables the interpreter to isolate and to account for specific meanings -- the process of interpretation consisting of a dialectic between guessing at and validating said meanings. Whereas the meanings of written discourse are embodied within given linguistic or verbal structures, the meanings of social discourse are embodied within actions or clusters of actions perceived as symbolic structures -- but the principle upon which interpretation is based remains the same, i.e. the essential possibility of the fixation of meaning or meanings which is a necessary feature of the self-contained totalizing structure of the text or text analogue. It is precisely this assumed totalizing structure, which is a feature of conceptuality in general, which must be questioned, for, until it is, anthropological interpretation, along with interpretation in general, will remain dedicated to a notion of plenitude which disallows not only a rigorous accounting of, but, indeed, any recognition of, the radical heterogeneity of things.

Geertz's penchant for viewing anthropology as a kind of textual commentary leads him to posit, in his most recent work, that the anthropologist may be most constructively viewed as being concerned with "a narratological issue, a matter of how best to get an honest story honestly told" (Geertz, 1988b: 9). Now both narration and story entail, by

definition, the recounting of a linear sequence of events or episodes which are contained within an overarching plot structure, i.e. they are both teleological and eschatological. (See Ricoeur on narrative, Chapter Three.) As such, they function to contain heterogeneity (i.e. the perceived 'ineradicable untidiness' of things) within homogeneity (i.e. the plenitude of a self-contained and all encompassing paradigm). The story or narrative as such, as defined within the conceptual limits of Western metaphysics, do not and have never existed for they are always already fissured by an essential undecidability which prevents them from ever being, at any given moment, pure or self-contained. This being the case, the unexamined use of narrative or story as an analogue or model for the anthropological enterprise ensures that the latter will remain premised upon and dedicated to a notion of plenitude. As one of Virginia Woolf's characters comments,

I have made up thousands of stories; I have filled innumerable notebooks with phrases to be used when I have found the true story, the one story to which all these phrases refer. But I have never yet found that story. And I begin to ask, Are there stories?

(Woolf, 1968: 160)

Geertz could do worse than to begin to ask as well.

II CLIFFORD

(1) Discourse

Discourse . . . is a mode of communication in which the presence of the speaking subject and of the immediate situation of communication are intrinsic. . . . Discourse does not transcend the specific occasion in which a subject appropriates the resources of language in order to communicate dialogically. Ricoeur argues that discourse cannot be interpreted in the open-ended potentially public way in which a text is "read." To understand discourse "you had to have been there," in the presence of the discoursing subject. For discourse to become a text it must become "autonomous," in Ricoeur's terms, separated from a specific utterance and authorial intention. Interpretation is not interlocution. It does not depend on being in the presence of a speaker.

(Clifford, 1988f: 39)

(emphasis mine)

An interest in the discursive aspects of cultural representation draws attention not to the interpretation of cultural "texts" but to their relations of production. Divergent styles of writing are, with varying degrees of success, grappling with these new orders of complexity -- different rules and possibilities within the horizon of a historical moment. . . . [There is a] general trend toward a specification of discourses in ethnography: who speaks? who writes? when and where? with or to whom? under what institutional and historical restraints?

(Clifford, 1986a: 13)

(emphasis Clifford's and mine)

A discursive model of ethnographic practice brings into prominence the intersubjectivity of speech, along with its immediate performative context.

(Clifford, 1988f: 41)

(emphasis mine)

Once cultures are no longer prefigured visually -- as objects, theaters, texts -- it becomes possible to think of a cultural poetics that is an interplay of voices, of positioned utterances. In a discursive rather than a visual paradigm, the dominant metaphors for ethnography shift away from the observing eye and toward expressive speech. . . . And the crucial poetic problem for a discursive ethnography becomes how "to achieve by written means what speech creates."

(Clifford, 1986a: 12)

(emphasis mine)

11) Dialogue

. . . dialogical processes proliferate in any complexly represented discursive space. . . . Many voices clamor for expression. Polyvocality was restrained and orchestrated in traditional ethnographies by giving to one voice a pervasive authorial function and to others the role of sources, "informants," to be quoted or paraphrased. Once dialogism and polyphony are recognized as modes of textual production, monophonic authority is questioned, revealed to be characteristic of a science that has claimed to represent cultures.

(Clifford, 1986a: 15)

(emphasis Clifford's and mine)

To the extent that the ethnographic process is seen as inscription (rather than, for example, as transcription, or dialogue) the representation will

continue to enact a potent, and questionable, allegorical structure.

(Clifford, 1986b: 113)

(emphasis mine)

The model of dialogue brings to prominence precisely those discursive -- circumstantial and intersubjective -- elements that Ricoeur had to exclude from his model of the text. . . . If it is difficult for dialogical portrayals to escape typifying procedures, they can, to a significant degree, resist the pull toward authoritative representation of the other. This depends on their ability fictionally to maintain the strangeness of the other voice and to hold in view the specific contingencies of the exchange.

(Clifford, 1988f: 43-44)

(emphasis mine)

The fictional dialogue is in fact a condensation, a simplified representation of complex multivocal processes. An alternative way of representing this discursive complexity is to understand the overall course of the research as an ongoing negotiation.

(Clifford, 1988f: 44)

(emphasis mine)

. . . ethnography [should be] a dialogical enterprise in which both researchers and natives are active creators or, to stretch a term, authors of cultural representations. . . . Dialogical, constructivist paradigms tend to disperse or share out ethnographic authority.

(Clifford, 1988l: 84)

(emphasis mine)

[Fieldwork] must . . . be seen as a historically contingent, unruly dialogical encounter involving to some degree both conflict and collaboration in the production of texts.

(Clifford, 19881: 90)

(emphasis mine)

(iii) Anthropology/Ethnography

. . . I treat ethnography itself as a performance emplotted by powerful stories. Embodied in written reports, these stories simultaneously describe real cultural events and make additional, moral, ideological, and even cosmological statements. Ethnographic writing is allegorical at the level both of its content (what it says about cultures and their histories) and of its form (what is implied by its mode of textualization).

(Clifford, 1986b: 98)

(emphasis mine)

. . . transcendental meanings are not abstractions or interpretations "added" to the original "simple" account. Rather, they are the conditions of its meaningfulness. Ethnographic texts are inescapably allegorical, and a serious acceptance of this fact changes the ways they can be written and read. . . . I [applaud] a recent tendency to distinguish allegorical levels as specific "voices" within the text. I argue . . . that the very activity of ethnographic writing -- seen as inscription or textualization -- enacts a redemptive Western allegory. This pervasive structure needs to be perceived and weighed against other possible emplotments for the performance of ethnography.

(Clifford, 1986b: 99)

(emphasis Clifford's and mine)

A recognition of allegory complicates the writing and reading of ethnographies in potentially fruitful ways. A tendency emerges to specify and separate different allegorical registers within the text. The marking off of extended indigenous discourses shows the ethnography to be a hierarchical structure of powerful stories that translate, encounter, and recontextualize other powerful stories. It is a palimpsest. . . . Moreover, an awareness of allegory heightens awareness of the narrative, and other temporal setups, implicitly or explicitly at work. Is the redemptive structure of salvage-textualization being replaced? By what new allegories? Of conflict? Of emergence? Of syncretism?

(Clifford, 1986b: 120-121)

(emphasis mine)

Interpretive anthropology, by viewing cultures as assemblages of texts, loosely and sometimes contradictorally [sic] united, and by highlighting the inventive poesis at work in all collective representations, has contributed significantly to the defamiliarization of ethnographic authority. In its mainstream realist strands, however, it does not escape the general strictures of those critics of "colonial" representation who, since 1950, have rejected discourses that portray the cultural reality of other peoples without placing their own reality in jeopardy. . . . Henceforth neither the experience nor the interpretive activity of the scientific researcher can be considered innocent. It becomes necessary to conceive of ethnography not as the experience and interpretation of a circumscribed "other" reality, but rather as a constructive negotiation involving at least two, and usually more, conscious, politically significant subjects. Paradigms of experience and interpretation are yielding to discursive paradigms of dialogue and polyphony.

(Clifford, 1988f: 41)

(emphasis mine)

Although Clifford constantly reiterates that his desire is "to displace any transcendent regime of authenticity" (Clifford, 1988c: 10), to question and critique all modes of totalization ("there is no whole picture that can be 'filled in'" (Clifford, 1986a: 18) "There is no longer any place of overview . . . no Archimedean point from which to represent the world" (Clifford, 1986a: 22)), it is evident that his failure to seriously question the components of his own preferred 'paradigm' precludes any possibility of the fulfilment of this desire. Unfortunately, Clifford's approach to theoretical problems tends to be rather superficial. As Kapferer comments (in a review with which, the following observation aside, I am far from being in agreement),

[In reading Clifford's work] I could not escape a sense of superficiality. Clifford alights, like some gorgeous butterfly, in the great garden of human possibility which is the field of anthropology. But he passes from flower to flower, seldom staying for long to examine thoroughly their possibility. This I found frustrating.

(Kapferer, 1989: 101)

Similarly, Sangren calls attention to "Clifford's (1986a: 3) invocation of academic luminaries to no apparent purpose other than to authorize and locate his text within their aura" (Sangren, 1988: 409). What is most annoying about Clifford is not simply that he does not do what he says he is going to do, i.e. displace transcendent, totalizing regimes

of authenticity, but that he in fact further reinforces those regimes by consistently overlooking the totalizing nature of his own conceptual framework. For example, he does not question metaphor/allegory, subjectivity, dialogism, discursivity, representation or speech as such. Accordingly, I will begin my deconstructive reading of Clifford by looking at his use of metaphor and allegory.

In an essay entitled "On Ethnographic Allegory" Clifford adopts the Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary definitions of 'allegory': "1. a story in which people, things and happenings have another meaning, as in a fable or parable: allegories are used for teaching or explaining. 2. the presentation of ideas by means of such stories" (Clifford 1986b: 98). He argues that ethnographies are irremediably allegorical and that this fact should be accepted as the basis upon which ethnographic literature is approached. According to Clifford,

A scientific ethnography normally establishes a privileged allegorical register it identifies as "theory," "interpretation," or "explanation." But once all meaningful levels in a text, including theories and interpretations, are recognized as allegorical, it becomes difficult to view one of them as privileged, accounting for the rest. Once this anchor is dislodged, the staging and valuing of multiple allegorical registers, or "voices," becomes an important area of concern for ethnographic writers. Recently this has sometimes meant giving indigenous discourse a semi-independent status in the textual whole, interrupting the privileged monotone of "scientific" representation. Much of ethnography,

taking its distance from totalizing anthropology, seeks to evoke multiple (but not limitless) allegories.

(Clifford, 1986b: 103)

In other words, Clifford seems to think that if ethnographies are viewed as collections of multiple allegories, this fact, in and of itself, prevents them from being totalizing constructs contributing to a 'totalizing anthropology.' This, however, is far from the case, for the concept of allegory, in and of itself, is a totalizing concept par excellence. And this, Clifford seems not to notice.

Clifford agrees with Quintilian that allegory is, essentially, a form of metaphor, that "any continuous or extended metaphor develops into allegory" (Clifford, 1986b: 98). Aristotle provides the classic definition of metaphor:

Metaphor (metaphora) consists in giving (epiphora) the thing a name (onomatos) that belongs to something else (allogriore), the transference being either from genus to species . . . , or from species to genus . . . , or from species to species . . . , or on the grounds of analogy.

(Aristotle in Derrida, 1982m: 231)

In discussing the preceding definition Derrida emphasizes the relationship between metaphor and that which is nominalizable:

It is under [the] heading of [the nominal, the noun] that [Aristotle] treats metaphor (epiphora onomatos). Onoma certainly has two values in this context. Sometimes it is opposed to the verb (rhema), which implies the idea of time. Sometimes it covers the field of verbs, since metaphor, the displacement of nouns, also, in the examples given in the Poetics, plays upon verbs. This confusion is possible by virtue of the profound identity of the noun and the verb: what they have in common is that they are intelligible in and of themselves, have an immediate relation to an object or rather to a unity of meaning. They constitute the order of the phonè semantike from which are excluded . . . articles, conjunctions, prepositions, and in general all the elements of language which, according to Aristotle, have no meaning in themselves; in other words, which do not of themselves designate something. The adjective is capable of becoming substantive and nominal. To this extent it may belong to the semantic order. Therefore it seems that the field of onoma -- and consequently that of metaphor, as the transport of names -- is less that of the noun in the strict sense, (which it acquired very late in rhetoric), than that of the nominalizable. Every word which resists this nominalization would remain foreign to metaphor. Now, only that which claims, or henceforth claims -- to have a complete and independent signification, that which is intelligible by itself, outside any syntactic relation, can be nominalized. To take up a traditional opposition that still will be in use in Husserl, metaphor would be a transport of categorematic and not syncategorematic words as such.

(Derrida, 1982m: 233)

In other words, metaphor, and all concepts which are traceable to it (e.g. allegory, analogy, simile etc.), is rooted in a notion of self-identical essence or presence. Métaphor, and, by extension, allegory, has to do not with the displacement of meaning as such but with the replacement of one meaning by another, and , hence, with the reaffirmation of meaning as an all-inclusive, self-identical concept. As Gasché points out,

Derrida has never left the slightest doubt that metaphor is by nature a metaphysical concept. In spite, or rather because of its negativity, it belongs to the very order and movement of meaning: the provisory loss of meaning that metaphor implies is subordinated to the teleology of meaning as one moment in the process of the self-manifestation of meaning in all its propriety. The philosophical concept of metaphor (and there is no other) makes metaphor depend on the absolute parousia of meaning.

(Gasché, 1986: 293)

Indeed, Derrida is very clear in indicating the philosophical nature of metaphor and the metaphoric nature of philosophy:

. . . metaphor remains, in all its essential characteristics, a classical philosopheme, a metaphysical concept. . . Metaphor has been issued from a network of philosophemes which themselves correspond to tropes or to figures, and these philosophemes are contemporaneous to or in systematic solidarity with these tropes or figures. This stratum of "tutelary" tropes, the layer of "primary"

philosophemes (assuming that the quotation marks will serve as a sufficient precaution here), cannot be dominated. It cannot dominate itself, cannot be dominated by what it itself has engendered, has made to grow on its own soil, supported on its own base. Therefore, it gets "carried away" each time that one of its products -- here, the concept of metaphor -- attempts in vain to include under its own law the totality of the field to which the product belongs. If one wished to conceive and to class all the metaphorical possibilities of philosophy, one metaphor, at least, always would remain excluded, outside the system: the metaphor, at the very least, without which the concept of metaphor could not be constructed, . . . the metaphor of metaphor. This extra metaphor, remaining outside the field that it allows to be circumscribed, extracts or abstracts itself from this field, thus subtracting itself as a metaphor less. By virtue of [a] tropic supplementarity, since the extra turn of speech becomes the missing term of speech, the taxonomy or history of philosophical metaphors [can] never [be] saturated.

(Derrida, 1982m: 219-220)

In other words, what is radical is not the discovery or realization that philosophical works (which, of course, includes anthropology) are replete with metaphors or allegories -- they are so by definition (as Rabinow remarks, "the insight that anthropologists write employing literary conventions, although interesting, is not inherently crisis provoking" (Rabinow in Clifford and Marcus eds., 1986c: 243)) but the recognition that metaphor, as such, is in a symbiotic relationship with philosophy and that they must both be

deconstructed. What has to be recognized is not the existence of metaphor as such but the possibility of metaphoricity in general -- which is hardly the same thing. And this comes back to the notion of originary doubling. If philosophy is always already involved with metaphor as a means by which to represent or refer to itself, and if metaphor is always already predicated upon and referring to philosophy, then we are left with both a more and a less for which neither philosophy nor metaphor, as such, can account. The ideal of totalization is fissured from the outset by the impossibility of the existence of an unmediated presence, an impossibility which, from the outset, involves a 'tropic supplementarity' whereby the extra metaphor (i.e. the possibility of metaphoricity -- the metaphor of metaphor) becomes the missing metaphor (i.e. that which escapes the totalizing field of philosophy). It is metaphoricity as the play of undecidability, as supplementarity, iterability, différance, trace and so on that may harbour radical implications for philosophy and, by extension, for anthropology, not metaphor or allegory as such.

Clifford never questions the notions of allegory or metaphor as philosophical concepts. The recognition and, in Clifford's case, the celebration of ethnographic works as containing multiple allegorical registers does not free them from a totalizing metaphysics -- on the contrary, it binds them ever more tightly to notions of essence, presence and so

on. Take, for example, Clifford's effusive praise of one of the allegorical strands of Marjorie Shostak's Nisa: The Life and Words of a !Kung Woman:

The story [of Nisa's giving birth] has great immediacy. Nisa's voice is unmistakable, the experience sharply evoked: "She lay there, moving her arms about, trying to suck her fingers." But as readers we do more than register a unique event. The story's unfolding requires us, first, to imagine a different cultural norm (!Kung birth, alone in the bush) and then to recognize a common human experience (the quiet heroism of childbirth, feelings of postpartum wonder and doubt). The story of an occurrence somewhere in the Kalahari desert cannot remain just that. It implies both local cultural meanings and a general story of birth. A difference is posited and transcended. Moreover, Nisa's story tells us (how could it not?) something basic about woman's experience. Shostak's life of a !Kung individual inevitably becomes an allegory of (female) humanity.

(Clifford, 1986b: 99)

Not only does this passage sing the praises of a totalizing, dialectical homogeneity ('a difference is posited and transcended' 'an allegory of (female) humanity' etc.), but it does so in a particularly offensive manner. Who is James Clifford to define childbirth as revealing 'something basic about woman's experience'? What about the millions of women, myself numbered among them, to whom the experience of childbirth is about as basic as is flapping our arms and

flying to the moon? What about the millions of women to whom childbirth is a sorrow and a burden, evoking not 'wonder and doubt' but depression and despair? Aside from the fact that there are few things quite so off-putting as some man gushing over 'the quiet heroism of childbirth' it seems to me that Clifford here presents a classic example of the way in which the repressive/oppressive nature of totalization excludes and debases difference by subsuming it within a transcendent homogeneity.

Because he never questions the nature of metaphorical and/or allegorical representation, Clifford never grasps the point that, no matter how many allegorical levels he may delineate or produce in any given ethnography, so far from engaging in the construction of a non-totalizing work, he is merely juggling various strata of meaning without ever questioning meaning as such. Clifford leaves the philosophical field utterly intact -- allegory/metaphor and philosophy endlessly reflecting and referring to each other within a closed circularity. Thus, for example, in referring to a passage of Shostak's work wherein she depicts her banter with a twelve year old !Kung girl whom she finds admiring herself in a mirror, Clifford comments (approvingly) as follows:

A great deal of the book is here: an old voice, a young voice, a mirror . . . talk of self-possession. Narcissism, a term of deviance applied to women of the West, is transfigured. We notice, too, that it

is the ethnographer, assuming a voice of age, who has brought a mirror, just as Nisa provides an allegorical mirror when Shostak takes the role of youth. Ethnography gains subjective "depth" through the sorts of roles, reflections, and reversals dramatized here. The writer, and her readers, can be both young (learning) and old (knowing). They can simultaneously listen, and "give voice to," the other. Nisa's readers follow -- and prolong -- the play of a desire. They imagine, in the mirror of the other, a guileless self-possession, an uncomplicated feeling of "attractiveness."

(Clifford, 1986b: 108-109)

For Clifford, the other is a mirror which reflects the self and vice versa -- this circularity is self-perpetuating and constitutes a homogeneity wherein the other as other has no place. In order to think a radical alterity one must first perceive the cracks within the reflexive circularity of Western conceptuality. As Derrida says,

The breakthrough toward radical otherness (with respect to the philosophical concept -- of the concept) always takes, within philosophy, the form of an aposteriority or an empiricism. But this is an effect of the specular nature of philosophical reflection, philosophy being incapable of inscribing (comprehending) what is outside it otherwise than through the appropriating negative image of it, and dissemination is written on the back -- the tain -- of that mirror. Not on its inverted spectre. Nor in the triadic symbolic order of its sublimation.

(Derrida, 1981a: 33)

Clifford states that, "In the human sciences the relation of fact to allegory is a domain of struggle and institutional discipline" (Clifford, 1986b: 119). And this may, indeed, be true. However, what he consistently fails to comprehend is that fact and allegory are both predicated upon and dedicated to a notion of presence, of self-identical and unquestionable essence. To emphasize allegory rather than fact is not, as Clifford seems to think, to discover "a troubled, inventive moment in the history of cross-cultural representation" (Clifford, 1986b: 109), but merely, as the old saying goes, to rob Peter to pay Paul. As Derrida says concerning metaphor (and, it will be remembered, this also applies to allegory),

Metaphor . . . is determined by philosophy as a provisional loss of meaning, an economy of the proper without irreparable damage, a certainly inevitable detour, but also a history with its sights set on, and within the horizon of, the circular reappropriation of literal, proper meaning. This is why the philosophical evaluation of metaphor always has been ambiguous: metaphor is dangerous and foreign as concerns intuition (vision or contact), concept (the grasping or proper presence of the signified), and consciousness (proximity or self presence); but it is in complicity with what it endangers, is necessary to it in the extent to which the de-tour is a re-turn guided by the function of resemblance (mimesis or homioiosis), under the law of the same. The opposition of intuition, the concept, and consciousness at this point no longer has any pertinence. These three values

belong to the order and to the movement of meaning. Like metaphor.

Henceforth the entire teleology of meaning, which constructs the philosophical concept of metaphor, coordinates metaphor with the manifestation of truth, with the production of truth as presence without veil, of the reappropriation of a full language without syntax, with the vocation of a pure nomination: without differential syntax, or in any case without a properly unnamable articulation that is irreducible . . . to dialectical interiorization. [What is needed is a deconstruction of metaphor which] is no longer a [matter] of extending and confirming a philosopheme, but rather, of unfolding it without limit, and wresting its borders of propriety from it. And consequently [exploding] the reassuring opposition of the metaphoric and the proper, the opposition in which the one and the other have never done anything but reflect and refer to each other in their radiance.

(Derrida, 1982m: 270-271)

I would like now to look at Clifford's use of discourse, dialogue, speech and voice. Clifford constantly urges that anthropologists/ethnographers utilize discursive/dialogical rather than textual/interpretive models or paradigms in their accountings of other cultures. Clifford believes that focussing on attempting to capture the immediacy of the discursive/dialogical context of speech events allows for the evocation of multiple voices and hence for the disruption and dispersion of monophonic authority within anthropological/ethnographic writings. Aside from the obvious problem of who finally determines what ends up in any given written account

and what its format will be, and, indeed, who (or what) decides upon what is worth writing up in the first place (a problem which, to be sure, Clifford does appear to recognize), there remains a major problem which Clifford does not appear to recognize, and that is that the concepts of discourse, speech, voice, dialogue and so on are all premised upon and dedicated to an unexamined notion of presence -- a notion whose authoritative sway is constantly reinforced in his work by its status as taken for granted assumption.

As I argue throughout this dissertation, the assumption of presence is, by definition and in principle, repressive/oppressive and, by extension, so are the working concepts of Western thought which remain firmly within its aura. As has been stated, Clifford asserts that, "a discursive model of ethnographic practice brings into prominence the intersubjectivity of speech along with its immediate performative context." And he concurs with Stephen Tyler that the "problem for a discursive ethnography is how 'to achieve by written means what speech creates.'" Clearly, Clifford's primary focus is on the presumed immediacy of speech and how best to depict that immediacy in ethnographic form. At this point it is helpful to quote Derrida at length:

Within [the] logos, the original and essential link to the phonè has never been broken. . . . [The] essence of the phonè [is perceived to be] immediately proximate to that which within "thought"

as logos relates to "meaning," produces it, receives it, speaks it, "composes" it. If, for Aristotle, for example, "spoken words (ta en te phonè) are the symbols of mental experience (pathemata tes psyches) and written words are the symbols of spoken words" (De interpretatione, 1, 16a, 3) it is because the voice, producer of the first symbols, has a relationship of essential and immediate proximity with the mind. . . .

The feelings of the mind, expressing things naturally, constitutes a sort of universal language which can then efface itself. . . . In every case, the voice is closest to the signified, whether it is determined strictly as sense (thought or lived) or more loosely as thing. All signifiers . . . are derivative with regard to what would wed the voice indissolubly to the mind or to the thought of the signified sense, indeed to the thing itself, (whether it is done in the Aristotelian manner we have just indicated or in the manner of medieval theology, determining the res as a thing created from its eidos, from its sense thought in the logos or in the infinite understanding of God). The written signifier is always technical and representative. It has no constitutive meaning. This derivation is the very origin of the notion of the "signifier." The notion of the sign always implies within itself the distinction between signifier and signified, even if, as Saussure argues, they are distinguished simply as the two faces of one and the same leaf. This notion remains therefore within the heritage of that logocentrism which is also a phonocentrism: absolute proximity of voice and being, of voice and the meaning of being, of voice and the ideality of meaning. . . . What is said of sound in general is a fortiori valid for the phonè by which, by virtue of hearing (understanding)-oneself-speak -- an indissociable system -- the subject effects itself and is related to itself in the element of ideality.

(Derrida, 1982e: 11-12)

And, as stated at the beginning of Chapter Two and worth re-emphasizing here,

. . . phonocentrism merges with the historical determination of the meaning of being in general as presence, with all the sub-determinations which depend on this general form and which organize within it their system and their historical sequence (presence of the thing to sight as eidos, presence as substance/essence/existence (ousia), temporal presence as point (stigmè) of the now or of the moment (nun), the self-presence of the cogito, consciousness, subjectivity, the co-presence of the other and of the self, intersubjectivity as the intentional phenomenon of the ego, and so forth).

(Derrida, 1982e: 12)

Clifford's emphasis on discursivity, the immediacy and intersubjectivity of speech, places him squarely within a phenomenological philosophy of consciousness and/or subjectivity. Like Husserl before him, Clifford assumes the existence of an intentional or constitutive consciousness and the problem is not this supposed consciousness as such but, rather, how best to depict the intersubjective relations between such consciousnesses. Thus, in extolling a dialogical approach to anthropology, Clifford states,

. . . fictions of dialogue have the effect of transforming the "cultural" text (a ritual, an institution, a life history, or any unit of typical behavior to be described or interpreted) into a speaking subject, who sees as well as is seen, who evades, argues, probes back. In this view of ethnography the proper

referent of any account is not a represented "world"; now it is specific instances of discourse. But the principle of dialogical textual production goes well beyond the more or less artful presentation of "actual" encounters. It locates cultural interpretation in many sorts of reciprocal contexts, and it obliges writers to find diverse ways of rendering negotiated realities as multisubjective, power-laden, and incongruent. In this view, "culture" is always relational, an inscription of communicative processes that exist, historically, between subjects in relations of power.

(Clifford, 1986a: 14-15)
(emphasis Clifford's and mine)

Clifford then goes on to argue that, in order to disperse monovocal authority, ethnographies must be viewed and constructed as polyvocal. But 'voice' or 'speech' as such are never questioned. It is this resolute non-questioning of speech which allows Clifford (in agreement with Bakhtin) to arrive at the bizarre conclusion that the works of Charles Dickens, no less, "tend to resist totality" precisely because they are plurivocal (Clifford, 1988f: 46-47). Now it does not take much more than a nodding acquaintance with Dickens's work to realize that there are very few novelists who are more concerned with ensuring that there are no loose ends, that everything fits together in a seamless whole, which, although it may indeed stretch coincidence to alarming if not laughable extremes, nonetheless provides an adamantine structure containing and accounting for any and all events.

And so with ethnography -- it is not the number of voices which will lead to a non-totalizing product, but a re-working of the very notion of speech or voice as such.

As Derrida has shown, throughout Western metaphysics speech is presumed to be in immediate proximity with being or consciousness and thus is perceived to be the privileged vehicle of meaning. However, speech, as such, as pure and self-identical, does not and cannot exist for it is always already fissured by the essential possibility of its own iterability -- its own otherness. In other words, speech's integrity as a self-sufficient concept is compromised from the outset by its own other because it cannot be what it is unless it adds to itself the possibility of its own repetition -- and this necessary addition absolutely disallows its existence as a unique, self-identical entity. What we have, from the outset, is the trace, *différance*, the supplement, i.e. undecidability and the concomitant essential possibility of dissemination. What we do not have is a self-identical concept and the concomitant inevitability of interpretation and/or dialogical totalizing as such.

Because Clifford does not radically question his basic concepts, i.e. speech, immediacy, discourse, dialogue, intersubjectivity and so on, even though he claims to be concerned with espousing a non-totalizing anthropology he in effect does just the opposite. So far from inventing non-totalizing constructs, Clifford merely adds his name to the

long list of thinkers who predicate their work upon a primary notion of subjectivity -- a notion which, in turn, is tied to a privileging of speech, discourse, dialogue etc. Just as Clifford seems content to posit that polyvocality ensures the non-privileging of the singular voice, so he seems content to posit that intersubjectivity ensures the non-privileging of the singular subject or self. But this is a very superficial view. Numerous voices still come back to privileging voice or speech as such just as numerous subjectivities still come back to privileging subjectivity or consciousness as such. The motivating concepts remain untouched.

Clifford maintains that "identity, considered ethnographically, must always be mixed, relational, and inventive [i.e. intersubjective]" (Clifford, 1988c: 10) and that,

ethnographic texts are orchestrations of multivocal exchanges occurring in politically charged situations. The subjectivities produced in these often unequal exchanges -- whether of "natives" or of visiting participant observers, are constructed domains of truth, serious fictions. Once this is recognized, diverse inventive possibilities for postcolonial ethnographic representations emerge.

(Clifford, 1988c: 10)

But how does this 'recognition' differ in any significant way from Husserl's observation that subjectivity is constitutive? Referring to subjectivity or subjectivities as 'constructed

domains of truth, serious fictions' in no way addresses the problem of subjectivity as such, i.e. as, essentially, the product of a constitutive consciousness. Clifford merely points out that any given self or subjectivity is 'fashioned' from numerous fragments -- of language, of culture, of interpersonal relations and so on, but even Tennyson (a conservative, totalizing poet if ever there was one) could acknowledge as much: "I am a part of all that I have met" (Tennyson, 1958: 66). It is the old Husserlean trick of transforming subjectivity into intersubjectivity in a desperate bid to avoid solipsism, and it works for Clifford about as well as it worked for Husserl. As Derrida says,

according to Husserl . . . the subject [is] designated in terms of the classical metaphysical schema which distinguishes substance (present being) from its attributes. Another schema that keeps the . . . analysis within the closure of the metaphysics of presence is the subject-object opposition. This being whose "absolute properties" are indescribable is present as absolute subjectivity, is an absolutely present and absolutely self-present being, only in opposition to the object. The object is relative; what is absolute is the subject. . . . This determination of "absolute subjectivity" would . . . have to be crossed out as soon as we conceive the present on the basis of difference, and not the reverse. The concept of subjectivity belongs a priori and in general to the order of the constituted. This holds a fortiori for the analogical appresentation that constitutes intersubjectivity.

(Derrida, 1973b: 84-85)

In other words, intersubjectivity is as much a product of the notion of constitutive or intentional consciousness as is subjectivity per se. But if, as we have seen, consciousness is not and cannot be an absolutely self-present and self-identical entity, then not only the notion of consciousness, but the notions of intentionality, the self, subjectivity, intersubjectivity and so on must be rethought as well. This Clifford does not recognize.

Just as Clifford's notion of subjectivity may be seen to have its roots in Husserl, so his notion of dialogue may be seen to have its roots in Gadamer. As was shown in Chapter Three, Gadamer relies on a Platonic notion of dialogue in order to achieve his hermeneutic 'fusion of horizons' and the concomitant attainment of 'the common meaning.' In the same way, Clifford's notion of 'negotiated realities' relies on an essentially Platonic cum Gadamerian notion of dialogue wherein the 'truth' (partial or otherwise) of any given situation is determined by the 'fusion' of the views of the negotiating parties. Again, the fact that Clifford insists upon the non-absolute (i.e. the 'partial' nature of 'truth') in no way discounts the fact that his entire conceptual system remains predicated upon and dedicated to an unexamined notion of presence which, by definition, implies the existence of the very absolutes he is at pains to deny. In other words, it is no use denying the possibility of attaining absolute truth if one's entire conceptual frame

assumes that possibility -- one must first look to one's taken for granted notions for, to paraphrase Aristotle, the unexamined concept is not worth having. So with speech and dialogue, for, as Derrida points out,

[The system of speech] requires that it be heard and understood immediately by whoever emits it. It produces a signifier which seems not to fall into the world, outside the ideality of the signified, but to remain sheltered -- even at the moment that it attains the audiophonic system of the other -- within the pure interiority of auto-affection. It does not fall into the exteriority of space, into what one calls the world, which is nothing but the outside of speech. Within so-called "living" speech, the spatial exteriority of the signifier seems absolutely reduced. . . . Conversation [dialogue] is, then, a communication between two absolute origins that, if one may venture the formula, auto-affect reciprocally, repeating as immediate echo the auto-affection produced by the other. Immediacy is here the myth of consciousness. Speech and consciousness of speech -- that is to say consciousness simply as self-presence -- are the phenomenon of an auto-affection lived as suppression of différance. That phenomenon, the presumed suppression of différance, that lived reduction of the opacity of the signifier, are the origins of what is called presence.

(Derrida, 1982e: 166)

And, indeed, Clifford very much subscribes to this system of speech and dialogue as indicative of immediate and unmediated instances of presence -- "the proper referent of any account

is not a represented 'world,' . . . it is specific instances of discourse" (Clifford, 1986a: 14). These 'instances of discourse' are composed of dialogical situations, the intersubjective nature of which it is the task of the ethnographer to negotiate. But this entire procedure takes place within the unquestioned domain of speech as presence, of speech as immediate and self-identical and, as we have seen, speech, being subject to iterability, is always already riddled with its own impossibility as such -- with its own impossibility as an unmediated, self-identical concept. Again, the ramifications of this must be considered.

Finally, although Clifford criticizes an anthropology that, monophonically, 'has claimed to represent cultures' (emphasis Clifford's) he has no difficulty in perceiving anthropology as 'a dialogical enterprise in which both researchers and natives are . . . authors of cultural representations' (emphasis mine). In other words, he never questions the nature of representation as such. The Oxford English Dictionary defines the verb 'to represent' as follows: "place likeness of before mind or senses, serve or be meant as likeness of . . . symbolize, act as embodiment of, stand for, correspond to." Thus, representation may be seen to be part of the order of the sign in general (n.b. the OED defines 'sign' as "thing used as representative of something") -- that is to say, it assumes the possibility of re-presenting an idea or phenomenon which pre-exists said

representation as a self-contained plenitude. As Derrida points out,

Between the overture and the philosophical accomplishment of phonologism (or logocentrism), the motif of presence was decisively articulated. It underwent an internal modification whose most conspicuous index was the moment of certitude in the Cartesian cogito. Before that, the identity of presence offered to the mastery of repetition was constituted under the "objective" form of the ideality of the eidōs or the substantiality of ousia. Thereafter, this objectivity takes the form of representation, of the idea as the modification of a self-present substance, conscious and certain of itself at the moment of its relationship to itself. Within its most general form, the mastery of presence acquires a sort of infinite assurance. The power of repetition that the eidōs and ousia made available seems to acquire an absolute independence. Ideality and substantiality relate to themselves, in the element of the res cogitans, by a movement of pure auto-affection. Consciousness is the experience of pure auto-affection.

(Derrida, 1982e: 97-98)

In other words, in post-Cartesian philosophy the concept of representation is indissociable from the concept of consciousness as pure auto-affection -- as pure self-presence. We have already seen how the Cartesian notion of consciousness is developed and extended by Husserl and how Husserlean phenomenology is assumed by both 'interpretive' anthropology vis à vis Geertz and 'postmodern' anthropology

vis à vis Clifford. The notion of representation as such assumes a philosophy of subjectivity which takes as its moment of indubitability the moment of consciousness as pure self-presence. To repeat, representation is what re-presents an assumed originary self-presence. However, if the concept of presence, in all its varied manifestations (e.g. speech, consciousness, metaphor etc.), is called into question, so, too, is the concept of representation. If presence is always already divided, always already riddled with its own absence, then representation as such is no longer a viable concept for it can no longer re-present a unique, self-contained phenomenon -- which is to say that it cannot re-present, as such, at all.

Clifford, like Geertz, and, indeed, like anthropologists in general, must become more aware of the implications of Western conceptuality. Unless and until this happens Clifford, and anthropologists in general, will continue, wittingly or unwittingly, to reinforce and to perpetuate the repression/oppression which comes with an unexamined acceptance of totalization and homogeneity.

Chapter Five

Concluding Assessments

In this final chapter I will begin by assessing what I have already said about Geertz and Clifford respectively, and, in so doing, will attempt to show that interpretive and 'postmodern' anthropology are two sides of the same old coin. Having done that, I will then go on to suggest why a serious consideration of Derridean deconstruction is of crucial importance to the discipline of anthropology.

Both Geertz and Clifford have their roots in phenomenology and hermeneutics and both profess to be concerned with rescuing cultural diversity from an overarching unity or totality. Their main difference seems to be methodological, in that Geertz prefers the Ricoeurian model of the text whereas Clifford prefers the Gadamerian model of the dialogue.²¹ Thus Geertz lauds the possibility of a 'fixation of meaning' through establishing a "consultable record of what man has said" (Geertz, 1973: 30) while Clifford lauds the possibility of a 'specification of discourses' through emphasizing "the intersubjectivity of

²¹ Interestingly, Rabinow comments that in Clifford's article, "On Ethnographic Authority" (Representations 1, no. 2, 1983: 118-146), he praises Gadamer for aspiring to 'radical dialogism.' However, in the 1988 reprint of this article in Clifford's The Predicament of Culture, all reference to Gadamer has been deleted. One wonders why.

speech, along with its immediate performative context" (Clifford, 1988f: 41). In other words, Geertz abstracts from the dialogical situation(s) through a process of guess and validation whereby he arrives at the 'partial truth' of an interpretation whereas Clifford attempts to represent the dialogical situation(s) as such whereby he arrives at the 'partial truth' of a negotiated 'reality.' But both authors perceive the doing of anthropology to be involved with a hermeneutic idea of process (Geertz through his notion of dialectic and Clifford through his notion of dialogue) and both authors privilege a phenomenological idea of the constitutive or intentional nature of consciousness (Geertz through his notion of meaning and Clifford through his notion of speech). Further to this, both authors emphasize the importance of narrative and/or stories with respect to ethnography (e.g. Geertz: "[Ethnography should be] cast . . . as a narratological issue, a matter of how best to get an honest story honestly told" (Geertz, 1988b: 9) and Clifford: "[A recognition of allegory] shows the ethnography to be a hierarchical structure of powerful stories [and] heightens awareness of the narrative . . . implicitly or explicitly at work" (Clifford, 1986b: 120-121)). (It will, of course, be remembered that narrativity as such is, by definition, a teleological/totalizing concept.) Thus Geertz and Clifford, their respective emphases on text and interpretation on the one hand and speech and dialogue on the

other notwithstanding, may be seen to be both inheritors and, more importantly, perpetrators of a philosophical conceptuality which mitigates against their professed desire to emphasize diversity/heterogeneity over unity/homogeneity.

At this point it is necessary to take a brief look at the term 'postmodern' and attempt both to situate it and to assess its appropriateness as a descriptive tag for the work of James Clifford.²² Mark Taylor provides the clearest account of postmodernism and its relationship to modernism that I have yet encountered and so I will quote him at some length:

The search for irreducible difference and radical otherness obsesses many of our most imaginative and creative artists, writers, philosophers, psychologists, and theologians. Although it recurs throughout the century, concern with difference and otherness is a distinguishing trait of thinkers who can be described as "postmodern." "Postmodernism" is a notoriously vague term. The obscurity of postmodernism reflects, in part, the continuing confusion surrounding the notion of the modern. . . . While it is impossible to define and delimit modernity with any degree of precision, there seems to be a consensus that modern philosophy begins with Descartes's inward turn to the subject. Plagued by uncertainty and doubt, Descartes seeks certainty through doubt. He doubts everything until he reaches what he regards as indubitable - his own doubting self. Descartes

²² For an interesting account of the various strands of postmodernist thought, the reader may wish to consult E. Ann Kaplan, ed. Postmodernism and its Discontents: Theories, Practices (London: Verso, 1989).

labels this self-certain subject res cogitans, which he distinguishes from all else, described as res extensa. Having radically differentiated res cogitans from res extensa, Descartes faces the problem of establishing the relationship between subjectivity and objectivity. In a move that becomes decisive for many later thinkers, Descartes insists that the subject's relation to otherness is mediated by and reducible to its relationship to itself.

In the wake of Descartes's meditations, modern philosophy becomes a philosophy of the subject. As the locus of certainty and truth, subjectivity is the first principle from which everything arises and to which all must be returned. With the movement from Descartes, through the Enlightenment to idealism and romanticism, attributes traditionally predicated of the divine subject are gradually displaced onto the human subject. Through a dialectical reversal, the creator God dies and is resurrected in the creative subject. As God created the world through the Logos, so man creates a "world" through conscious and unconscious projection. In different terms, the modern subject defines itself by its constructive activity. Like God, the sovereign subject relates only to what it constructs and therefore is unaffected by anything other than itself. What appears to be a relationship to otherness -- be that other God, nature, objects, subject, culture or history -- always turns out to be an aspect of mediate self-relation that is necessary for complete self-realization in transparent self-consciousness. Absolute knowledge actualized in the full self-consciousness of the subject seems to realize Western philosophy's dream of enjoying a total presence that is neither disturbed by irreducible difference nor interrupted by the return of an absolute other.

(Taylor, 1987a: xxi-xxii)

Thus modernism has to do with notions of self-identical/self-certain knowledge and totality (i.e. presence), whereas postmodernism has to do with irreducible difference and radical alterity (i.e. undecidability). In these terms, Clifford falls as much into the modernist camp as does Geertz for, as has been seen, both he and Geertz rely on a conceptuality that is phenomenological/hermeneutical -- i.e. a conceptuality that is rooted in assumptions of subjectivity (and hence totality) on the one hand and assumptions of dialecticity (and hence totality) on the other. This being the case, the term 'postmodernism' is a misnomer as applied to Clifford and it is exceedingly unfortunate that this application has gained currency in recent anthropological literature for it can do nothing but spawn confusion. (In one recent article (Kapferer, 1989) even Geertz is referred to as postmodernist!) It does not suffice merely to state that one is non-totalizing in order actually to be so -- if one's conceptuality does not follow suit one ends up being merely contradictory. And if this contradiction is not recognized and its ramifications pursued (as it is not and they are not in Clifford's work) then one submits to totality by default, for one's intentions will always remain prey to the assumptions implicit within one's conceptual frame. As Vincent Descombes remarks, "We must be wary of mistaking the wish to reach the promised land for having already arrived there" (Descombes, 1985: 77).

In any case, given that what holds for Geertz and Clifford also holds for anthropology in general, i.e. that its conceptual frames are embedded in an assumed notion of presence which always subsumes difference within identity, diversity within unity, the problem becomes how to avoid doing this while still remaining coherent. And it is crucial to avoid this assumption of presence because such an assumption, requiring, as it does, a series of hierarchical oppositional pairs wherein one term is always seen as subservient to and/or as a falling away from the favoured term (which is always closer to an assumed presence than is its partner), cannot help but be both repressive and oppressive. Indeed, the assumption of presence is the very essence of repressivity and oppressivity for it requires, by definition and in principle, that there be an absolute, a 'transcendental signified,' which exists as an ultimate, utterly dominant, self-certain plenitude. It follows that difference and otherness are given credence only in so far as they have the status of mere variations on a theme (the theme, of course, being absolute presence) -- they are not viewed as in any way threatening to the fundamental assumption of over-arching plenitude. This being the case, the essential possibility of undecidability, of radical otherness, of radical difference -- an otherness and a difference that actually disrupts and displaces a self-certain, self-identical presence -- is never seriously

considered because such a possibility is presumed, from the outset, to be utterly impossible.

Now it is not difficult to see how the presupposition of presence works itself out in practice -- it is the very charter for sexism, racism and God-is-on-our-side politics of every description. And, indeed, how could it not be? For if everything is presumed, in the 'final analysis,' to refer to an ultimate, self-certain and self-contained presence, then there cannot help but be corresponding notions as to which existing phenomena most closely approximate to that presence. Thus those phenomena which are perceived to be nearer to presence (in the guise of God, the Good, Truth, the Proper or whatever) are favoured while those which are perceived to be further from presence are derided. To take an obvious example, Western European culture was (and, make no mistake, still is) presumed to be superior to non-Western European cultures because the former was considered to be closer to God, the rightness and inevitability of 'progress and civilization' and so on. Thus the 'white man's burden' was perceived to consist of bringing out the human essence of subject peoples by transforming them into minor versions of Western Europeans. What is this but the repression/oppression of difference in the name of essential identity? And, of course, it is no secret as to who gets to define what is essential and what should be developed, what discouraged. All this is, of course, well documented and

need not be dwelt upon here. What concerns me is that this same dedication to presence remains fully operative today and continues to foment repression and oppression. The point is, I believe, with Derrida, that so long as our conceptuality remains premised upon and dedicated to an unexamined notion of presence, so long will repression/ oppression be, by definition and in principle, institutionalized and inevitable. I do not pretend to know exactly how to deal with this situation, but I do not think that it is possible to over-emphasize the importance of, at the very least, recognizing and acknowledging it. And along with recognition and acknowledgement comes the obligation not to shy away from the effort involved in trying to get out of the mire of 'the old questions, the old answers' (as T.S. Eliot says, in a rather different context, "After such knowledge, what forgiveness?" (Eliot, 1963b: 40)) but, rather, to take the advice of the late Janis Joplin: "You know what you better do baby -- you better try harder" (Joplin, 1975).

So, in this effort of trying, this trying effort, it is time to take a closer look at undecidability. As will be remembered from Chapter Two, the disseminative play of undecidability is an always already occurring process which prevents any given concept from ever being closed and self-identical (its impossibility) while simultaneously allowing for the existence of the concept as an effect (its

possibility).³³ Once concepts are seen as effects of a primordial disseminative undecidability, they are precluded from occupying any position of absolute dominance because they are recognized as being always already fissured by a play which determines both their possibility and their impossibility -- a play which prevents them from ever absolutely accounting for any given situation whatsoever. Again, I must emphasize that this is not to say that concepts will cease to function -- only that they will cease to function as all-determining entities or essences, i.e. as concepts as such. As Henry Staten puts it,

Derrida . . . denies what we could call the impermeability of the as-such, the transcendental or logical superhardness of the barrier that marks off the conceptual purity of X from everything that is not-X. It is not that identity is drowned in otherness, but that it is necessarily open to it, contaminated by it. Yet the necessity or essential character of this contamination cannot be named unless we first grasp the concept or essence or form as purity, as pure positive self-identity. Otherwise either there is nothing to contaminate, or the force of the contamination is not felt. Furthermore, the claims of positive self-identity are undeniable.

³³ It should be noted that this holds for the concept of difference every bit as much as it holds for the concept of identity. The reader must take care not to confuse 'difference,' a philosophical concept which presupposes ultimate resolution within a unific, self-identical presence, with différance, the always already occurring process of undecidability, which is neither difference nor identity but which allows for the possibility of both as an effect of its disseminative play.

The Now cannot be reduced to the not-now. Its essential linkage with the not-now compromises the purity of its positive identity without destroying it.

The point of departure of deconstruction from philosophy is thus quite subtle. The value and necessity of pure concepts and categories are not denied, but they are no longer the last word. We no longer simply note and then set aside the factual or empirical contamination of our unities, but see that they are impure always and in principle, and pursue the implications of this essential law of impurity.

(Staten, 1984: 18-19)

Now if concepts, as such, can no longer be seen to totally dominate any given field, can no longer be seen to have 'the last word,' then it becomes necessary to re-think conceptuality as such and to take account of its essential openness to radical alterity. And this radical alterity, this otherness which cannot be homogenized within the self-same of classical conceptuality, is the disseminative play of undecidability.

It is important to realize that the deconstructive concern with undecidability is neither negative nor nihilistic. As Derrida says,

Deconstruction always presupposes affirmation, as I have frequently attempted to point out. . . . I do not mean that the deconstructing subject or self affirms. I mean that deconstruction is, in itself, a positive response to an alterity which necessarily calls, summons or motivates it. . . . The other, as the other than self, the other that opposes

self-identity, is not something that can be detected and disclosed within a philosophical space and with the aid of a philosophical lamp. The other precedes philosophy and necessarily invokes and provokes the subject before any genuine questioning can begin. It is in this rapport with the other that affirmation expresses itself.

(Derrida in Kearney, ed., 1984: 118)

In other words, deconstruction, unlike interpretation or explanation as such (which, being predicated upon notions of presence, presuppose the essential possibility of closure, e.g. an ultimate referent in the guise of an interpreted theme(s) on the one hand or an explained self-sufficient result on the other) concentrates on the play of a non-finite dissemination (which, being predicated on originary doubling and undecidability, presupposes the essential possibility of openness). This disseminative play constantly affirms an undecidability which, in allowing for both the possibility and impossibility of interpretation/explanation as such, insists on a recognition of radical openness which calls into question the classical notion of the concept along with the entire tradition of Western thought which presupposes its authority. To put it another way, Derrida's concern with undecidability does not negate Western philosophy -- it situates it. That is to say, rather than being seen as self-contained and inevitable, Western thought is seen as merely one possible offshoot of an originary undecidability, and, as

such, it is always already riddled with the possibility of what it defines itself as most properly not being, i.e. its other. And this essential possibility of radical alterity prohibits Western thought from ever attaining a closure and a dominance which it nonetheless presumes.

Similarly, with respect to undecidability entailing nihilism or absolute indeterminacy, Derrida comments as follows:

Différance is not indeterminacy. It renders determinacy both possible and necessary. Someone might say: but if it renders determinacy possible, it is because it itself is "indeterminacy." Precisely not, since first of all it "is" in itself nothing outside of different determinations; second, and consequently, it never comes to a full stop anywhere, absolutely [elle ne s'arrête nulle part], and is neither negativity nor nothingness (as indeterminacy would be).

(Derrida, 1988a: 149)

In other words, the play of undecidability, because it accounts for both determined effects and the impossibility of the absolute nature of those effects, cannot be perceived as a simple indeterminacy, a simple negativity, or, indeed, a simple (in the sense of consisting of one pure and self-contained element or essence) anything. It is for this reason that deconstruction and its insistence upon the crucial importance of undecidability cannot be viewed as constituting a form of relativism. Relativism presumes a

notion of context or contexts as self-contained and self-validating. If, however, contexts as such are seen to be always already inscribed with what they are not, i.e. with the possibility of their own otherness,²⁴ then the concept of relativism, like all philosophical concepts, must be deconstructed -- it must give way to the disseminative play of undecidability.

As will be recalled,

Dissemination . . . although producing a nonfinite number of semantic effects, can be led back neither to a present of simple origin . . . nor to an eschatological presence. It marks an irreducible and generative multiplicity. The supplement and the turbulence of a certain lack fracture the limit of the text, forbidding an exhaustive and closed formalization of it, or at least a saturating taxonomy of its themes, its signified, its meaning.

(Derrida, 1981g: 45)

The point is, if we can no longer think in terms of concepts which are in principle absolute and self-contained, if we must acknowledge an originary doubling, an essential undecidability which precludes any possibility of ultimate unity or closure, then we must follow up on Geertz's intimation that "Something is happening to the way we think about the way we think" (Geertz, 1983a: 20). And what is

²⁴ See my discussion of the concept of context in Chapter Four.

happening is that we can no longer 'think' as such -- that is to say, we can no longer assume the existence of a singular, self-identical consciousness or mind which intends singular and self-identical thoughts. (The Oxford English Dictionary defines the verb 'to think' as: "intend, expect. . . . form conception of. . . . independent mind.") Rather, we must be attentive to an essential openness, a primordial and generative heterogeneity, a disseminative play of undecidability. And what might this look like for anthropology in general?

Well, to begin with, it looks like what I have attempted to do throughout this dissertation. That is, it involves an extremely close examination and deconstruction of what anthropology has done up to this point -- author by author and concept by concept. An attentiveness to undecidability involves a recognition that none of our concepts, none of our assumptions, are absolute and homogeneous and that we must constantly be on guard against letting notions of plenitude, totality and other such manifestations of presence in by the back door. And this guarding against consciously or unconsciously relying on various concepts which are rooted in assumptions of presence is of fundamental importance to anthropology because such concepts are, by definition and in principle, both repressive and oppressive. They are repressive because they absolutely deny the possibility of an alterity or otherness that is not subsumed within notions of

unity and self-identity -- and this abstract repression translates into a very concrete oppression. Thus throughout Western 'history' women have been (and are) viewed as inferior to and hence properly subservient to men, 'primitive' cultures have been (and are) viewed as inferior to and hence properly subservient to 'civilized' cultures, people of colour have been (and are) viewed as inferior to and hence properly subservient to white people (and here traditional Western notions of white symbolizing good and purity and black symbolizing evil and impurity surely cannot be considered coincidental), non-human life-forms have been (and are) viewed as inferior to and hence properly subservient to human life-forms and so on. In other words, the hierarchical oppositionality which is a product of various manifestations of the concept of presence is structured in such a way that the half of an oppositional pair which is considered closest to an originary and all-encompassing presence is privileged over the other half. The non-privileged half of a hierarchically structured oppositional pair is considered to be a corrupt version of the privileged half and, therefore, to have no standing in and of itself. That is to say, because the essential possibility of radical alterity, of undecidability, is not taken into consideration, the non-privileged half is deemed to be only an impure form of its partner and hence serves merely to underscore the essential unity of a dominating

presence -- a dominating presence which is always skewed in favour of that which is perceived to be closest to it. Thus, for example, in Christian theology, Satan, the embodiment of evil, is considered to be a fallen angel; women are considered to be further from God than are men ("Hee for God only, shee for God in him" (Milton, 1975: 285)); 'primitive' peoples are considered to partake of the essence of humanity but it is 'civilized' peoples who most properly express and define that essence; non-human life-forms are considered to be further from God than are human life-forms ("26. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 27. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis, Ch.I, v. 26-27)); and so on. The point is, the non-privileged term in such oppositional pairs is always seen as being an inferior form of the privileged term and, as such, is subject to abuse and scorn.

If the kinds of concrete oppression that I have mentioned can be seen to be logical and inevitable extensions of a conceptuality that is itself dedicated to repression, then the importance of deconstructing and resituating that conceptuality should be considered paramount not only by anthropologists, but by all those who have been brought up

within the domain of Western thought. Again, I must emphasize that this is not to say that Western concepts must be destroyed absolutely -- only that they must be destroyed in their absolute form. And this deconstruction, this displacement and resituating of conceptuality as such, entailing, as it does, the acknowledgement of a situation in which it is no longer possible for a notion of presence to contain and account for all phenomena, a situation in which it is no longer legitimate for one term of an oppositional pair to be contained within and dominated by its partner, leads to a recognition of primordial or radical alterity and all that such a recognition implies.

As I hope has been sufficiently clear, radical alterity is another name for undecidability, i.e. it is that which cannot be contained and accounted for by the logic of binary opposition or trinitarian unity (which is the logic of a Western philosophy rooted in the presumption of presence) but which nonetheless allows for the possibility of a certain conceptuality. I say a 'certain' conceptuality because a conceptuality which is seen to be the product of an originary play of undecidability, unlike a conceptuality which is seen to be the product of an assumption of presence, is, by definition and in principle, incapable of absolute domination. In other words, what we are dealing with is the difference between a fundamental heterogeneity and a fundamental homogeneity -- the latter leading to a

conceptuality which is by definition closed and self-contained and the former leading to a conceptuality which is by definition open and always already other than what it is. What a recognition of radical alterity or undecidability implies for anthropology (and, indeed, for Western thought in general) is nothing less than the fact that repression/oppression can never again be justified on either purely logical or purely moral grounds. In other words, if conceptuality is seen to be the product of an essential undecidability, then logic and morality as such must be seen to be 'impure' by definition -- to be always already contaminated by their other and hence to be incapable of grounding and validating a series of hierarchically structured oppositional pairs which presuppose ultimate resolution within a unific, all-encompassing presence. What this means is that a repression/oppression which has heretofore been the inevitable logical and moral outcome of a conceptuality predicated upon a notion of presence and its concomitant skewed binarism is, quite simply, no longer acceptable. Obviously, I am not saying that a realization of the fundamentally repressive/oppressive nature of Western conceptuality will result in an end to repression and oppression. But I am saying that such a realization could, or, at least, should result in an end to the unconscious and presumptuous manufacture and perpetuation of

repression/oppression through the mindless assumption of an unexamined conceptuality.

I believe that it is incumbent upon anthropologists (and, of course, not only upon anthropologists) to be hyper-aware of the dangers of assuming such an unexamined conceptuality (and, as I hope my examination of Geertz and Clifford has shown, it is no easy task to avoid falling back on old assumptions) and to work constantly to tease out and to develop the possibilities inherent within its cracks and fissures. What this teasing out and developing might look like in concrete field situations it is not possible for me to say, for, as Derrida points out,

Deconstruction, in the singular, is not "inherently" anything at all that might be determinable on the basis of [logocentrism] and of its criteria. It is "inherently" nothing at all; the logic of essence (by opposition to accident), of the proper (by opposition to the improper), hence of the "inherent" by opposition to the extrinsic, is precisely what all deconstruction has from the start called into question. . . . Deconstruction does not exist somewhere, pure, proper, self-identical, outside of its inscriptions in conflictual and differentiated contexts; it "is" only what it does and what is done with it, there where it takes place. It is [not possible] to give a univocal definition or an adequate description of this "taking place."

(Derrida, 1988a: 141)

In other words, the application of deconstruction, what it will look like, what traces it will follow, depends upon the particular context to which it is applied, and this not because of a built-in obscurantism, but because of a fundamental and intense respectfulness for the radically heterogeneous nature of any given situation. Thus while it is possible for me to apply a deconstructive reading to the texts of Clifford Geertz and James Clifford respectively, and to delineate the presuppositions and implications of their chosen conceptuality, I cannot say what they might have found in any given field situation had they utilized a deconstructive strategy because that would depend entirely on the particular field situation in question. And I cannot take their word for what they found because, as I have tried to show, it is already entirely imbued with the presuppositions of Western conceptuality. Although the inability to project the results of a potential deconstructive reading of as yet undeconstructed situations may indeed be irritating, I believe that it is very much a strength rather than a weakness of the deconstructive approach. And this because it mitigates against the all too appealing temptation to rest on assumption. If each and every situation is always already riddled with multiple possibilities due to an essential undecidability, an essential heterogeneity, then each and every situation must be approached with an openness which precludes the

possibility, or, perhaps I should say, the validity of abstract projection. Again, this is neither evasion nor obscurantism -- it is the necessary and inevitable corollary of emphasizing an essential and radical heterogeneity rather than an essential and radical homogeneity.

What deconstruction, the recognition of radical alterity, essential undecidability, calls for is nothing less than a re-reading and resituating of the entire anthropological canon along with, of course, an approach to fieldwork which takes this resituating into account.²⁵ We

²⁵ With respect to fieldwork, it is crucial to look at the way in which fieldworkers are now trained. At the undergraduate level the Anthropology student takes a series of courses which emphasize the history of the discipline, two or three culture areas (which are constituted by the writings of 'big name' anthropologists), methods and theories. At the graduate level the student engages in more of the same and then sets to conduct her fieldwork -- after which she returns, writes up her experiences (categorizing them within the framework of any one of a number of methods and/or theories) and is accepted by the 'scholarly community' (in the form of a dissertation committee) on the basis of how well she carries out this enterprise. Now, all of this training, and the final judgement of the student's work, accepts, without question, the fundamental correctness of the Western metaphysical notion of presence and all that flows therefrom. So, whether variations on the theme of presence come in the form of Tylorian evolutionism, Radcliffe-Brownian structure-functionalism, Malinowskinian bio-psychological functionalism, Lévi-Straussian structuralism, Geertzian interpretism or Cliffordian 'postmodernism,' throughout her career, the anthropologist, so far from being encouraged to examine the consequences of her presupposition of presence, never even becomes aware that she has it. As a result of this studied lack of awareness, the discipline of Anthropology projects the repression inherent in Western conceptuality onto other peoples and other cultures through its agent, the anthropologist. And so it goes, Anthropology and the anthropologist constantly replicating and reinforcing each other through the thoughtless acceptance of a conceptuality which functions to repress the 'other.'

In order to begin to redress this situation, deconstructive strategies must be offered as part of the core curricula of all departments of Anthropology. If this were to be accomplished,

must become aware of the sometimes ever so subtle (e.g. Geertz and Clifford) sometimes ever so blatant (e.g. Frazer and Tylor) ways in which anthropology foists an assumed conceptuality, with all of its repressive/ oppressive implications and consequences, onto non-Western cultures. This alone makes deconstruction indispensable to an anthropology that entertains any notions of itself as potentially non-oppressive, liberating, genuinely concerned with the other and so on. What does the essential possibility of undecidability tell us about all we have written concerning the so-called 'primitive' and her/his lack of logic and consequent inability to perceive logical contradiction? What if she/he simply put the emphasis on heterogeneity as opposed to homogeneity? Is it possible that Lévy-Bruhl stumbled onto the trace of something which, in our desire to view other peoples as, for whatever reasons, underdeveloped versions of ourselves, we too easily and too smugly dismissed? If our anthropological fore-mothers and fore-fathers had presumed an essential heterogeneity/ undecidability rather than an essential homogeneity/presence, what might they have found? What might we still find? And so on and so on. Is anthropology, after all these years of creating and defining itself as a discipline which is

perhaps the anthropologist's professional training could be a help rather than a hindrance with respect to enabling her to approach the fieldwork situation with a sensitivity to otherness which has, hitherto, been discernible only as a lack.

supposedly dedicated to describing and comprehending the other, left in the position of an aged, half-mad, once-but-no-longer and never-again-to-be king who can only wander aimlessly amid a wretchedness of his own creating and pathetically intone, "O, I have ta'en too little care of this" (Shakespeare, 1963: 112)? The answer, all too clearly, is yes. The question remains as to whether or not we, as anthropologists, will recognize this position and, if so, what we will do about it. If we do recognize it, then a hard look at Derridean deconstruction may offer us the potential to begin re-working and resituating what we have done and provide a way to begin appreciating the otherness of others rather than constantly reducing them to simple reflections and replications of ourselves. If we do not recognize it, then we will simply go on creating and perpetuating the same old horrors -- this time, apparently, under the banner of 'postmodernism.'

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, Richard. 1977. "The Problem of Unity and Disunity in Anthropology." American Anthropologist 79: 263-264.
- Adams, Robert. 1977. "World Picture, Anthropological Frame." American Anthropologist 79: 265-279.
- Ahmed, Abdel. 1975. "Some Remarks from the Third World on Anthropology and Colonialism: The Sudan." In Asad, 1975a, 259-270.
- Almy, Susan. 1977. "Anthropologists and Development Agencies." American Anthropologist 79: 280-292.
- Anderson Jr., E.N. 1974. "The Life and Culture of Ecotopia." In Hymes, 1974a, 264-283.
- Arac, Jonathan, ed. 1986. Postmodernism and Politics. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Aristotle. 1966. Metaphysics. New York: Dutton.
- Aristotle. 1987. A New Aristotle Reader. Ed. J. L. Ackrill, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Asad, Talal, ed. 1975a. Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter. London: Ithaca Press.
- Asad, Talal. 1975b. "Two European Images of Non-European Rule." In Asad, 1975a. 103-118.
- Asad, Talal. 1979. "Anthropology and the Analysis of Ideology." Man 14: 607-627.
- Asad, Talal. 1983. "Anthropological Conceptions of Religion: Reflections on Geertz." Man 18: 237-259.

- Asad, Talal. 1986. "The Concept of Cultural Translation in British Anthropology." In Clifford and Marcus, 1986c, 141-164.
- Auerbach, Erich. 1953. Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Bailey, F.G. 1983. "The Ordered World of the University Administrator." In Marcus, 1983, 93-112.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. 1981. "Discourse in the Novel." In Holquist, 1981, 259-442.
- Barthes, Roland. 1972. Critical Essays. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Barthes, Roland. 1977. "Blind and Dumb Criticism." In Mythologies, 34-35. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Baynes, Kenneth, James Bohman and Thomas McCarthy, eds. 1988. After Philosophy: End or Transformation? Cambridge, Mass: M.I.T. Press.
- Becker, Carl. 1932. The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth Century Philosophers. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Bendix, Reinhard. 1962. Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait. New York: Doubleday.
- Benedict, Ruth. 1934. Patterns of Culture. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Benjamin, Walter. 1969. Illuminations. New York: Schocken Books.
- Berezdivin, Ruben. 1987. "In Stalling Metaphysics: At the Threshold." In Sallis, 1987, 47-59.

- Berman, Art. 1988. From the New Criticism to Deconstruction: The Reception of Structuralism and Post-Structuralism. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Bernasconi, Robert. 1987. "Deconstruction and the Possibility of Ethics." In Sallis, 1987, 122-139.
- Berreman, Gerald. 1962. Behind Many Masks. Society for Applied Anthropology Monograph No. 4. New York: Ithaca.
- Berreman, Gerald. 1974. "'Bringing It All Back Home': Malaise in Anthropology." In Hymes, 1974a, 83-98.
- Blanchot, Maurice. 1981. The Gaze of Orpheus. Barrytown, New York: Station Hill Press.
- Blankenship, Vaughn. 1973. "The Scientist as 'Apolitical' Man." British Journal of Sociology 24: 269-287.
- Boon, James. 1982. Other Tribes, Other Scribes: Symbolic Anthropology in the Comparative Study of Cultures, Histories, Religions, and Texts. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bove, Paul. 1986. "The Ineluctability of Difference: Scientific Pluralism and the Critical Intelligence." In Arac, 1986, 3-25.
- Boyer, Pascal. 1986. "The 'Empty' Concepts of Traditional Thinking: A Semantic and Pragmatic Description." Man 21: 50-64.
- Brodbeck, May and H. Feigl, eds. 1953. Readings in the Philosophy of Science. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.
- Bullock, Alan and Olivia Stallybrass, eds. 1977. The Harper Dictionary of Modern Thought. New York: Harper and Row.
- Burke, Kenneth. 1969a. A Grammar of Motives. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Burke, Kenneth. 1969b. A Rhetoric of Motives. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Caputo, John. 1985. "From the Primordially of Absence to the Absence of Primordially: Heidegger's Critique of Derrida." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 191-200.
- Caputo, John. 1987a. "The Economy of Signs in Husserl and Derrida: From Uselessness to Full Employment." In Sallis, 1987, 60-70.
- Caputo, John. 1987b. Radical Hermeneutics: Repetitions, Deconstructions, and the Hermeneutic Project. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Carr, David. 1985. "Life and the Narrator's Art." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 108-121.
- Cassirer, Ernst. 1951. The Philosophy of the Enlightenment. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Caulfield, Mina. 1974. "Culture and Imperialism: Proposing a New Dialectic." In Hymes, 1974a, 182-212.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1977. Language and Responsibility. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1979a. Towards a New Cold War: Essays on the Current Crisis and How We Got There. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Chomsky, Noam and Herman Edward. 1979b. The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism. Boston: South End Press.
- Clemmer, Richard. 1974. "Truth, Duty, and the Revitalization of Anthropologists: A New Perspective on Cultural Change and Resistance." In Hymes, 1974a, 213-247.

- Clifford, James. 1982. Person and Myth: Maurice Leenhardt in the Melanesian World. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Clifford, James. 1986a. "Introduction: Partial Truths." In Clifford and Marcus, 1986c, 1-26.
- Clifford, James. 1986b. "On Ethnographic Allegory." In Clifford and Marcus, 1986c, 98-121.
- Clifford, James and George Marcus, eds. 1986c. Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Clifford, James. 1988a. "Histories of the Tribal and the Modern." In Clifford, 1988m, 189-214.
- Clifford, James. 1988b. "Identity in Mashpee." In Clifford, 1988m, 277-346.
- Clifford, James. 1988c. "Introduction: The Pure Products Go Crazy." In Clifford, 1988m, 1-17.
- Clifford, James. 1988d. "The Jardin des Plantes: Postcards." In Clifford, 1988m, 182-185.
- Clifford, James. 1988e. "On Collecting Art and Culture." In Clifford, 1988m, 215-251.
- Clifford, James. 1988f. "On Ethnographic Authority." In Clifford, 1988m, 21-54.
- Clifford, James. 1988g. "On Ethnographic Self-Fashioning: Conrad and Malinowski." In Clifford, 1988m, 92-113.
- Clifford, James. 1988h. "On Ethnographic Surrealism." In Clifford, 1988m, 117-151.
- Clifford, James. 1988i. "On Orientalism." In Clifford, 1988m, 255-276.

- Clifford, James. 1988j. "A Poetics of Displacement: Victor Segalen." In Clifford, 1988m, 152-163.
- Clifford, James. 1988k. "A Politics of Neologisms: Aimé Césaire." In Clifford, 1988m, 175-181.
- Clifford, James. 1988l. "Power and Dialogue in Ethnography: Marcel Griaule's Initiation." In Clifford, 1988m, 55-91.
- Clifford, James. 1988m. The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Clifford, James. 1988n. "Tell About Your Trip: Michel Leiris." In Clifford, 1988, 165-174.
- Cohen, Yehudi. 1977. "The Anthropological Enterprise." American Anthropologist 79: 388-396.
- Crapanzano, Vincent. 1977. "On the Writing of Ethnography." Dialectical Anthropology 2: 69-73.
- Crapanzano, Vincent. 1986. "Hermes' Dilemma: The Masking of Subversion in Ethnographic Description." In Clifford and Marcus, 1986c, 51-76.
- Culler, Jonathan. 1982. On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Denich, Bette. 1977. "On the Bureaucratization of Scholarship in American Anthropology." Dialectical Anthropology 2: 153-157.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1973a. "Form and Meaning: A Note on the Phenomenology of Language." In Derrida, 1973b, 107-128.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1973b. Speech and Phenomena: And Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

- Derrida, Jacques. 1977a. "The Law of Genre." Glyph 7: 162-264.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1977b. "Limited Inc." Glyph 2: 162-264.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978a "Cogito and the History of Madness."
In Derrida, 1978n, 31-63.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978b. Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry: An Introduction. Stony Brook: Nicolas Hays.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978c. "Edmond Jabes and the Question of the Book." In Derrida, 1978n, 64-98.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978d. "Ellipsis." In Derrida, 1978n, 294-300.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978e. "Force and Signification." In Derrida, 1978n, 3-30.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978f. "Freud and the Scene of Writing." In Derrida, 1978n, 196-231.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978g. "From Restricted to General Economy: A Hegelianism Without Reserve." In Derrida, 1978n, 251-277.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978h. "'Genesis and Structure' and Phenomenology." In Derrida, 1978n, 154-168.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978i. "La Parole Soufflee." In Derrida, 1978n, 169-195.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978j. "The Retrait of Metaphor." Enclitic 2.2: 3-38.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978k. "The Theatre of Cruelty and the Closure of Representation." In Derrida, 1978n, 232-250.

- Derrida, Jacques. 1978l. "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences." In Derrida, 1978n, 278-293.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978m. "Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas." In Derrida, 1978n, 79-153.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1978n. Writing and Difference. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1979a. "Living On: Border Lines." In Deconstruction and Criticism. Ed. Harold Bloom et al. 79-176. New York: Seabury Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1979b. Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1980. The Archeology of the Frivolous. Pittsburgh: Duquesne..
- Derrida, Jacques. 1981a. Dissemination. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1981b. "Dissemination." In Derrida, 1981a, 287-366.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1981c. "The Double Session." In Derrida, 1981a, 172-286.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1981d. "Economimesis." Diacritics 11.2: 3-25.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1981e. "Outwork." In Derrida, 1981a, 1-59.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1981f. "Plato's Pharmacy." In Derrida, 1981a, 61-171.

- Derrida, Jacques. 1981g. Positions. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1982a. "Différance." In Derrida, 1982d, 129-160.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1982b. "The Ends of Man." In Derrida, 1982d, 109-136.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1982c. "The Linguistic Circle of Geneva." In Derrida, 1982d, 137-153.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1982d. Margins of Philosophy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1982e. Of Grammatology. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1982f. "Ousia and Gramme: Note on a Note from Being and Time." Derrida, 1982d, 29-67.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1982g. "The Pit and the Pyramid: Introduction to Hegel's Semiology." In Derrida, 1982d, 69-108.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1982h. "Sending: On Representation." Social Research 49: 294-326.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1982i. "Signature Event Context." In Derrida, 1982d, 307-330.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1982j. "The Supplement of Copula: Philosophy before Linguistics." In Derrida, 1982d, 175-205.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1982k. "The Time of a Thesis: Punctuations." In Montefiore, 1982, 34-50.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1982l. "Tympan." In Derrida, 1982d, ix-xxix.

- Derrida, Jacques. 1982m. "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy." In Derrida, 1982d, 258-271.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1984. Signsponge. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1985a. "Des Tours de Babel." In Difference in Translation. Ed. J. Graham, 165-207. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1985b. The Ear of the Other: Otobiography, Transference, Translation. New York: Schocken Books.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1986a. "But, beyond . . . (Open Letter to Anne McClintock and Rob Nixon)." In Gates Jr., 1986, 354-369.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1986c. Glas. Lincoln: Nebraska Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1986d. Memoires: for Paul de Man. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1986e. "Racism's Last Word." In Gates Jr., 1986, 329-338.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1987a. "Geschlecht II: Heidegger's Hand." In Sallis, 1987, 161-196.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1987b. The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1988a. "Afterward: Toward an Ethic of Discussion." In Derrida, 1988, 111-154.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1988b. "The Death of Roland Barthes." In Silverman, 1988a, 259-296.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1988c. "Letter to a Japanese Friend." In Wood and Bernasconi, 1988, 1-5.

- Derrida, Jacques. 1988d. Limited Inc. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Descartes, Rene. 1968. Discourse on Method and the Meditations. Middlesex: Penguin Books.
- Diamond, Stanley. 1974a. "Anthropology in Question." In Hymes, 1974a, 401-429.
- Diamond, Stanley. 1974b. In Search of the Primitive. New Brunswick: Transaction Books.
- Diamond, Stanley. 1980a. "Anthropological Traditions: The Participants Observed." In Diamond, 1980b, 1-16.
- Diamond, Stanley, ed. 1980b. Anthropology: Ancestors and Heirs. The Hague: Mouton Publishers.
- Donato, Eugenio. 1970. "The Two Languages of Criticism." In Macksey and Donato, 1970, 89-97.
- Douglas, Mary. 1966. Purity and Danger. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Dwyer, Kevin. 1977. "On the Dialogic of Field Work." Dialectical Anthropology 2: 143-152.
- Eliot, T.S. 1963a. Collected Poems 1909-1962. London: Faber and Faber.
- Eliot, T.S. 1963b. "Gerontion." In Eliot, 1963a, 39-41.
- Eliot, T.S. 1963c. "Little Gidding." In Eliot, 1963a, 214-223.
- Evans-Pritchard, Evan. 1972. Social Anthropology. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

- Fernandez, James. 1985. "Exploded Worlds -- Text as Metaphor for Ethnography (and Vice Versa)." Dialectical Anthropology 10: 15-26.
- Feuchtang, Stephan. 1973. "The Colonial Formation of British Social Anthropology." In Asad, 1975a, 71-100.
- Flew, Antony. 1983. A Dictionary of Philosophy. London: Macmillan Press.
- Foucault, Michel. 1977. Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. 1975. Truth and Method. New York: Seabury Press.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. 1977a. "On the Problem of Self-Understanding." In Gadamer, 1977e, 44-58.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. 1977b. "On the Scope and Function of Hermeneutical Reflections." In Gadamer, 1977e, 18-43.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. 1977c. "The Phenomenological Movement." In Gadamer, 1977e, 130-181.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. 1977d. "The Philosophical Foundations of the Twentieth Century." In Gadamer, 1977e, 107-129.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. 1977e. Philosophical Hermeneutics. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. 1977f. "Socrates and Hermeneutics." In Gadamer, 1977e, 82-94.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. 1977g. "The Universality of the Hermeneutical Problem." In Gadamer, 1977e, 3-17.

- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. 1988. "Foreword to the Second German Edition of Truth and Method." In Baynes, et al., 1988, 339-356.
- Gasché, Rodolphe. 1985. "Quasi-Metaphoricity and the Question of Being." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 166-190.
- Gasché, Rodolphe. 1986. The Tain of the Mirror. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Gates Jr., Henry, ed. 1986. "Race" Writing and Difference. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973a. "After the Revolution: The Fate of Nationalism in the New States." In Geertz, 1973g, 234-254.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973b. "The Cerebral Savage: On the Work of Claude Lévi-Strauss." In Geertz, 1973g, 345-359.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973c. "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight." In Geertz, 1973g, 412-453.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973d. "The Growth of Culture and the Evolution of Mind." In Geertz, 1973g, 55-83.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973e. "Ideology as a Cultural System." In Geertz, 1973g, 193-233.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973f. "The Impact of the Concept of Culture on the Concept of Man." In Geertz, 1973g, 33-54.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973g. The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973h. "Person, Time, and Conduct in Bali." In Geertz, 1973g, 360-411.

- Geertz, Clifford. 1973i. "The Politics of Meaning." In Geertz, 1973g, 311-326.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973j. "Religion as a Cultural System." In Geertz, 1973g, 87-125.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973k. "Politics Past, Politics Present: Some Notes on the Uses of Anthropology in Understanding the New States." In Geertz, 1973g, 327-341.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973l. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." In Geertz, 1973g, 3-30.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1983a. "Blurred Genres: The Refiguration of Social Thought." In Geertz, 1983f, 19-35.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1983b. "Common Sense as a Cultural System." In Geertz, 1983f, 73-93.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1983c. "Found in Translation: On the Social History of the Moral Imagination." In Geertz, 1983f, 36-54.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1983d. "'From the Native's Point of View': On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding." In Geertz, 1983f, 55-70.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1983e. "Local Knowledge: Fact and Law in Comparative Perspective." In Geertz, 1983f, 167-234.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1983f. Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology. New York: Basic Books.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1983g. "The Way We Think Now: Toward an Ethnography of Modern Thought." In Geertz, 1983f, 147-163.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1984. "Anti Anti-Relativism." American Anthropologist 86.2: 263-278.

- Geertz, Clifford. 1988a. "Being Here: Whose Life is it Anyway?" In Geertz, 1988f, 129-149.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1988b. "Being There: Anthropology and the Scene of Writing." In Geertz, 1988f, 1-24.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1988c. "I-Witnessing: Malinowski's Children." In Geertz, 1988, 73-101.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1988d. "Slide Show: Evans-Pritchard's African Transparencies." In Geertz, 1988f, 49-72.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1988e. "Us/ Not-Us: Benedict's Travels." In Geertz, 1988f, 102-128.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1988f. Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1988g. "The World in a Text: How to Read Tristes Tropiques." In Geertz, 1988f, 25-48.
- Girard, Rene. 1970. "Tiresias and the Critic." In Macksey and Donato, 1970, 15-21.
- Gjessing, Gutorm. 1968. "The Social Responsibility of the Social Scientist." Current Anthropology 9: 397-402.
- Goldstein, Leon. 1963. "The Phenomenological and Naturalistic Approaches to the Social." In Natanson, 1963a, 268-301.
- Golte, Jurgen. 1980. "Latin America: The Anthropology of Conquest." In Diamond, 1980b, 377-391.
- Gordon, Colin. 1980. Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977 by Michel Foucault. New York: Parthenon Books.
- Gough, Kathleen. 1968. "Anthropology and Imperialism." Monthly Review 19: 12-27.

- Gouldner, Alvin. 1970. The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology. New York: Basic Books.
- Greisman, H. and Sharon Mayes. 1977. "The Social Construction of Unreality: The Real American Dilemma." Dialectical Anthropology 2: 57-68.
- Handler, Richard. 1985. "On Dialogue and Destructive Analysis: Problems in Narrating Nationalism and Ethnicity." Journal of Anthropological Research 41: 171-182.
- Harari, Josue. 1984. Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Harvey, Irene. 1986. Derrida and the Economy of Differance. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Harvey, Irene. 1987. "Doubling the Space of Existence: Exemplarity in Derrida -- The Case of Rousseau." In Sallis, 1987, 60-70.
- Hassan, Ihab. 1987a. "Culture, Indeterminacy, and Immanence: Margins of the (Postmodern) Age." In Hassan, 1987h, 46-83.
- Hassan, Ihab. 1987b. "The Literature of Silence." In Hassan, 1987h, 3-22.
- Hassan, Ihab. 1987c. "Making Sense: The Trials of Postmodern Discourse." In Hassan, 1987h, 191-213.
- Hassan, Ihab. 1987d. "Parabiography: The Varieties of Critical Experience." In Hassan, 1987h, 147-166.
- Hassan, Ihab. 1987e. "Pluralism in Postmodern Perspective." In Hassan, 1987h, 167-187.
- Hassan, Ihab. 1987f. "Prelude to Postmodernism." In Hassan, 198h, 3-22.

- Hassan, Ihab. 1987g. "Postmodernism: A Practical Bibliography." In Hassan, 1987h, 25-45.
- Hassan, Ihab. 1987h. The Postmodern Turn: Essays in Postmodern Theory and Culture. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.
- Hassan, Ihab. 1987i. "Toward a Concept of Postmodernism." In Hassan, 1987h, 84-96.
- Heelan, Patrick. 1985. "Perception as a Hermeneutical Act." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 43-54.
- Hegel, G.W.F. 1986. "Phenomenology of Spirit." In Taylor, 1986a, 67-97.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1962. Being and Time. New York: Harper and Row.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1966. Discourse on Thinking. New York: Harper and Row.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1977a. "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking." In Heidegger, 1977c, 369-392.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1977b. "Letter on Humanism." In Heidegger, 1977c, 190-242.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1977c. Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings. New York: Harper and Row.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1977d. "Modern Science, Metaphysics, and Mathematics." In Heidegger, 1977c, 243-383.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1977e. "On the Essence of Truth." In Heidegger, 1977c, 114-141.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1977f. "What Calls for Thinking?" In Heidegger, 1977c, 341-367.

- Heidegger, Martin. 1977g. "What is Metaphysics?" In Heidegger, 1977c, 92-112.
- Heidegger, Martin. 1984. Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy. San Francisco: Harper and Row.
- Heisenberg, Werner. 1958. Physics and Philosophy: The Revolution in Modern Science. New York: Harper and Row.
- Held, David. 1980. Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Adorno. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hempel, Carl. 1963. "Typological Methods in the Social Sciences." In Natanson, 1963a, 210-230.
- Hirschman, Albert. 1979. "The Search for Paradigms as a Hindrance to Understanding." In Rabinow and Sullivan, 1979a, 163-179.
- Holland, Nancy. 1985. "Heidegger and Derrida Redux: A Close Reading." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 219-226.
- Holquist, Michael. 1981. The Dialogic Imagination. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Husserl Edmund. 1970. The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Husserl Edmund. 1986. "Phenomenology." In Taylor, 1986a, 121-140.
- Hymes, Del. 1974a. Reinventing Anthropology. New York: Vintage Books.
- Hymes, Del. 1974b. "The Use of Anthropology: Critical, Political, Personal." In Hymes, 1974a, 3-79.

- James, Wendy. 1975. "The Anthropologist as Reluctant Imperialist." In Asad, 1975a, 41-69.
- Joplin, Janis. "Rap on 'Try.'" Janis. Universal Records; C.B.S. Canada, 1975.
- Kant, Immanuel. 1986. "Critique of Judgement." In Taylor, 1986a, 34-66.
- Kapferer, Bruce. 1989. "The Anthropologist as Hero: Three Exponents of Post-Modernist Anthropology." Critique of Anthropology 8.2: 77-104.
- Kaplan, Abraham. 1874. "Philosophy of Science in Anthropology." Annual Review of Anthropology 13: 25-39.
- Kaplan, David and Robert Manners. 1971. "Anthropology: Some Old Themes and New Directions." Southwestern Journal of Anthropology 27: 19-40.
- Keesing, Roger. 1985. "Conventional Metaphors and Anthropological Metaphysics: The Problematic of Cultural Translation." Journal of Anthropological Research 41: 201-217.
- Kirk, G.S., J.E. Raven and M. Schofield. 1984. The Presocratic Philosophers. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kojève, Alexandre. 1986. "Introduction to the Reading of Hegel." In Taylor, 1986a, 98-120.
- Krader, Lawrence. 1980. "Anthropological Traditions: Their Relationship as a Dialectic." In Diamond, 1980b, 19-34.
- Krell, David. 1987. "The Perfect Future: A Note on Heidegger and Derrida." In Sallis, 1987, 114-121.
- Krupnick, Mark, ed. 1983. Displacement: Derrida and After. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

- Kuhn, Thomas. 1962. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Lavine, Thelma. 1963. "Note to Naturalists on the Human Spirit." In Natanson, 1963a, 250-261.
- Lawson, Hilary. 1985. Reflexivity: The Postmodern Condition. La Salle: Open Court.
- Leach Edmund. 1984. "Glimpses of the Unmentionable in the History of British Social Anthropology." Annual Review of Anthropology 13: 1-23.
- Leavey, John. 1987. "Destinerrance: The Apotropocalyptics of Translation." In Sallis, 1987, 33-34.
- Lee, Dorothy. 1959. Freedom and Culture. New York: Prentice-Hall.
- Leitch, Vincent. 1983. Deconstructive Criticism: An Advanced Introduction. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1963. Totemism. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1975. Tristes Tropiques. New York: Atheneum Press.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1976a. "Scientific Criteria in the Social and Human Disciplines." In Lévi-Strauss, 1976c, 288-311.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1976b. "The Scope of Anthropology." In Lévi-Strauss, 1976c, 3-32.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1976c. Structural Anthropology Vol. II. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Lévy-Bruhl, Lucien. 1985. How Natives Think. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Llewelyn, John. 1987. "A Point of Almost Absolute Proximity to Hegel." In Sallis, 1987, 87-95.
- Llewelyn, John. 1988. "The Origin and End of Philosophy." In Silverman, 1988a, 191-210.
- Lovejoy, Arthur. 1960. Essays in the History of Ideas. New York: Capricorn Books.
- Lovejoy, Arthur. 1963. The Great Chain of Being. London: Harvard University Press.
- Lundberg, George. 1963. "The Postulates of Science and Their Implications for Sociology." In Natanson, 1963a, 33-72.
- Lyotard, Jean-François. 1984. The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Machlup, Fritz. 1963. "Are the Social Sciences Really Inferior?" In Natanson, 1963a, 158-180.
- Macksey, Richard and Eugenio Donato. 1970. The Structuralist Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.
- Magnus, Bernd. 1985. "The End of 'The End of Philosophy.'" In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 2-10.
- Marcus, George. 1980. "Rhetoric and the Ethnographic Genre in Anthropological Research." Current Anthropology 21: 507-510.
- Marcus, George. 1982. "Ethnographies as Texts." Annual Review of Anthropology 11: 25-69.
- Marcus, George. 1983. Elites: Ethnographic Issues. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

- Marcus, George and James Clifford. 1985. "The Making of Ethnographic Texts: A Preliminary Report." Current Anthropology 26: 267-271.
- Marcus, George. 1986a. "Afterword: Ethnographic Writing and Anthropological Careers." In Clifford and Marcus, 1986c, 262-266.
- Marcus, George. 1986b. "Contemporary Problems of Ethnography in the Modern World System." In Clifford and Marcus, 1986c, 165-193.
- Marcus, George and Michael Fischer. 1986c. Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Margolis, Joseph. 1985. "Deconstruction: or, The Mystery of the Mystery of the Text." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 138-151.
- Marx, Werner. 1985. "Hermeneutics and the History of Being." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 68-81.
- McClintock, Anne and Rob Nixon. 1986. "No Names Apart: The Separation of Word and History in Derrida's 'Le Dernier Mot du Racisme.'" In Gates Jr., 1986, 339-353.
- McKenna, Andrew. 1988. "Postmodernism: It's Future Perfect." In Silverman and Welton, 1988, 228-242.
- Megill, Allan. 1987. Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Melville, Stephen. 1986. Philosophy Beside Itself: On Deconstruction and Modernism. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Milton, John. 1957. "Paradise Lost." Complete Poems and Major Prose. Ed. Merritt Y. Hughes. 207-469. Indianapolis: Odyssey Press.

- Montefiore, Alan. 1982. Philosophy in France Today. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Murray, Michael. 1985. "Hermeneutics of the World." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 91-105.
- Nader, Laura. 1974. "Up the Anthropologists -- Perspectives Gained from Studying Up." In Hymes, 1974a, 284-311.
- Nagel, Ernest. 1963a. "On the Method of Verstehen as the Sole Method of Philosophy." In Natanson, 1963a, 262-270.
- Nagel, Ernest. 1963b. "Problems of Concept and Theory Formation in the Social Sciences." In Natanson, 1963a, 189-209.
- Nash, Dennison and Ronald Wintrob. 1972. "The Emergence of Self-Consciousness in Ethnography." Current Anthropology 13: 527-542.
- Natanson, Maurice, ed. 1963a. Philosophy of the Social Sciences. New York: Random House.
- Natanson, Maurice. 1963b. "A Study in Philosophy and the Social Sciences." In Natanson, 1963a, 271-285.
- Natanson, Maurice. 1968. Literature, Philosophy, and the Social Sciences. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Newcombes, Vincent. 1985. Modern French Philosophy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1966. Beyond Good and Evil. New York: Vintage Books.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1968a. Twilight of the Idols. Middlesex: Penguin Books.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1968b. The Will to Power. New York: Random House.

- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1969. Thus Spoke Zarathustra. Middlesex: Penguin Books.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1974. The Gay Science. New York: Vintage Books.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1986. "On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense." In Taylor, 1986a, 216-219.
- Norris, Christopher. 1983a. "Deconstruction and 'Ordinary Language': Speech versus Writing in the Text of Philosophy." In Norris, 1983c, 13-33.
- Norris, Christopher. 1983b. "Deconstruction, Naming and Necessity: Some Logical Options." In Norris, 1983c, 144-162.
- Norris, Christopher. 1983c. The Deconstructive Turn: Essays in the Rhetoric of Philosophy. London: Methuen.
- Norris, Christopher. 1983d. "Methodological Postscript: Deconstruction versus Interpretation?" In Norris, 1983c, 163-173.
- Norris, Christopher. 1986. Deconstruction: Theory and Practice. London: Methuen.
- Norris, Christopher. 1987. Derrida. London: Fontana Press.
- Onians, Richard. 1973. The Origins of European Thought. New York: Arno Press.
- Ormiston, Gayle. 1985. "Binding Withdrawal." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 247-261.
- Otto, Rudolph. 1923. The Idea of the Holy. London: Oxford University Press.

- Page, Helen. 1988. "Dialogic Principles of Interactive Learning in the Ethnographic Relationship." Journal of Anthropological Research 44.2: 163-181.
- Palmer, Richard. 1969. Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Parker, Richard. 1985. "From Symbolism to Interpretation: Reflections on the Work of Clifford Geertz." Anthropology and Humanism Quarterly 10: 62-67.
- Peters, F.E. 1967. Greek Philosophical Terms: A Historical Lexicon. London: University of London Press.
- Pirsig, Robert. 1982. Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance. New York: Bantam Books.
- Plato. 1971. Timaeus and Critias. Middlesex: Penguin Classics.
- Plato. 1977. The Collected Dialogues. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Polletta, Gregory. 1973. Issues in Contemporary Literary Criticism. Boston: Little, Brown and Co.
- Pouillon, Jean. 1980. "Anthropological Traditions: Their Uses and Misuses." In Diamond, 1980b, 35-51.
- Poulet, Georges. 1970. "Criticism and the Experience of Interiority." In Macksey and Donato, 1970, 36-88.
- Pratt, Mary Louise. 1986. "Fieldwork in Common Places." In Clifford and Marcus, 1986c, 27-50.
- Rabinow, Paul and William Sullivan, eds. 1979a. Interpretive Social Science. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Rabinow, Paul and William Sullivan. 1979b. "The Interpretive Turn: Emergence of an Approach." In Rabinow and Sullivan, 1979a, 1-21.
- Rabinow, Paul. 1983. "'Facts are a Word of God': An Essay Review of James Clifford's Person and Myth: Maurice Leenhardt in the Melanesian World." In Stocking, 1983b, 196-207.
- Rabinow, Paul. 1985. "Discourse and Power: On the Limits of Ethnographic Texts." Dialectical Anthropology 10: 1-13.
- Rabinow, Paul. 1986. "Representations are Social Facts: Modernity and Post-Modernity in Anthropology." In Clifford and Marcus, 1986c, 234-261.
- Radnitsky, Gerard. 1973. Contemporary Schools of Metascience. Chicago: Henry Regnery.
- Reid, Herbert. 1972. "Critical Phenomenology and the Dialectical Foundations of Social Change." Dialectical Anthropology 2: 107-130.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1982a. "Appropriation." In Ricoeur, 1982c, 182-193.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1982b. "The Hermeneutical Function of Distanciation." In Ricoeur, 1982c, 131-144.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1982c. Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1982d. "Metaphor and the Central Problem of Hermeneutics." In Ricoeur, 1982c, 165-181.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1982e. "The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text." In Ricoeur, 1982c, 197-221.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1982f. "The Narrative Function." In Ricoeur, 1982c, 274-296.

- Ricoeur, Paul. 1982g. "Phenomenology and Hermeneutics." In Ricoeur, 1982c, 101-128.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1982h. "A Response by Paul Ricoeur." In Ricoeur, 1982c, 32-40.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1982i. "The Task of Hermeneutics." In Ricoeur, 1982c, 43-62.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1982j. "What is a Text? Explanation and Understanding." In Ricoeur, 1982c, 145-164.
- Ricoeur, Paul. 1988. "On Interpretation." In Baynes et al, 1988, 357-380.
- Rodi, Frithjof. 1985. "Hermeneutics and the Meaning of Life: A Critique of Gadamer's Interpretation of Dilthey." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 82-90.
- Rosaldo, Renato. 1986. "From the Door of His Tent: The Fieldworker and the Inquisitor." In Clifford and Marcus, 1986c, 77-97.
- Ruby, Jay. 1982. A Crack in the Mirror: Reflexive Perspectives in Anthropology. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Ryan, Michael. 1982. Marxism and Deconstruction: A Critical Articulation. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Said, Edward. 1979. Orientalism. New York: Vintage Books.
- Said, Edward. 1981. Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Said, Edward. 1983. The World The Text and The Critic. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

- Said, Edward. 1987. "Interpreting Palestine." Harper's.
March, 19-22.
- Sallis, John, ed. 1987. Deconstruction and Philosophy: The
Texts of Jacques Derrida. Chicago: Chicago University
Press.
- Sallis, John. 1988. "Echoes: Philosophy and Non-Philosophy
After Heidegger." In Silverman, 1988a, 84-105.
- Sandor, Andras. 1986. "Metaphor and Belief." Journal of
Anthropological Research 42: 101-122.
- Sangren, Steven. 1988. "Rhetoric and the Authority of
Ethnography: 'Postmodernists' and the Social Reproduction
of Texts." Current Anthropology 29.3: 405-435.
- Shakespeare, William. 1963. King Lear. New York: Signet
Classics.
- Scholte, Bob. 1974. "Toward a Reflexive and Critical
Anthropology." In Hymes, 1974a, 430-449.
- Scholte, Bob. 1976. "Dwelling on the Everyday World:
Phenomenological Analysis and Social Reality." American
Anthropologist 68: 585-589.
- Scholte, Bob. 1978. "On the Ethnocentricity of Scientific
Logic." Dialectical Anthropology 3: 177-189.
- Scholte, Bob. 1980. "Anthropological Traditions: Their
Definitions." In Diamond, 1980b, 53-73.
- Schrag, Calvin. 1985. "Subjectivity and Praxis at the End of
Philosophy." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 11-23.
- Schutz, Alfred. 1973. Collected Papers Vol. I: The Problem
of Social Reality. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

- Seebohm, Thomas. 1985. "The End of Philosophy: Three Historical Aphorisms." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 11-23.
- Shankman, Paul. 1984. "The Thick and the Thin: On the Interpretive Theoretical Program of Clifford Geertz." Current Anthropology 25: 261-280.
- Sheehan, Thomas. 1985. "Derrida and Heidegger." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 201-218.
- Silverman, Hugh and Don Ihde. 1985. Hermeneutics and Deconstruction. New York: State University Press.
- Silverman, Hugh. 1987. "Philosophy has its Reasons." In Sallis, 1987, 21-32.
- Silverman, Hugh, ed. 1988a. Philosophy and Non-Philosophy Since Merleau-Ponty. New York: Routledge Press.
- Silverman, Hugh and Donn Welton. 1988b. Postmodernism and Continental Philosophy. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Silverman, Hugh, ed. 1989. Derrida and Deconstruction. New York: Routledge Press.
- Solomon, Robert. 1988. Continental Philosophy Since 1750: The Rise and Fall of the Self. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sontag, Susan. 1979a. Against Interpretation. New York: Dell Publishing.
- Sontag, Susan. 1979b. "The Anthropologist as Hero." In Sontag, 1979a, 69-81.
- Sontag, Susan. 1979c. "Michel Leiris' Manhood." In Sontag, 1979a, 61-68.

- Sontag, Susan. 1979d. "On style." In Sontag, 1979a, 15-36.
- Sontag, Susan. 1981a. "The Aesthetics of Silence." In Sontag, 1981c, 3-34.
- Sontag, Susan. 1981b. "Remembering Barthes." In Sontag, 1981c, 169-177.
- Sontag, Susan. 1981c. Styles of Radical Will. New York: Dell Publishing.
- Sontag, Susan. 1981d. "Trip to Hanoi." In Sontag, 1981c, 205-247.
- Sontag, Susan. 1981e. Under the Sign of Saturn. New York: Vintage Books.
- Soper, Kate. 1986. Humanism and Anti-Humanism. La Salle: Open Court Press.
- Sperber, Dan. 1985a. "Anthropology and Psychology: Towards an Epidemiology of Representations." Man 20: 73-89.
- Sperber, Dan. 1985b. On Anthropological Knowledge. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Steiner, George. 1971. In Bluebeard's Castle: Some Notes Towards the Redefinition of Culture. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Steiner, George. 1975. After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation. London: Oxford University Press.
- Steiner, George. 1980. Martin Heidegger. Middlesex: Penguin Books.
- Stevens, Wallace. 1982a. The Collected Poems. New York: Vintage Books.

- Stevens, Wallace. 1982b. "Connoisseur of Chaos." In Stevens, 1982a, 215-216.
- Stevens, Wallace. 1982c. "The Man with the Blue Guitar." In Stevens, 1982a, 165-184.
- Stevens, Wallace. 1982d. "The Pleasures of Merely Circulating." In Stevens, 1982a, 149-150.
- Stocking, George. 1983a. "The Ethnographer's Magic: Fieldwork in British Anthropology from Tylor to Malinowski." In Stocking, 1983b, 70-120.
- Stocking, George. 1983b. Observers Observed: Essays on Ethnographic Fieldwork. Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Strauss, Leo. 1963. "Natural Right and the Distinction Between Facts and Values." In Natanson, 1963a, 419-457.
- Taylor, Mark. 1986a. Deconstruction in Context: Literature and Philosophy. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Taylor, Mark. 1986b. "Introduction: System...Structure... Difference ...Other." In Taylor, 1986a, 1-34.
- Taylor, Mark. 1987a. Altarity. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Taylor, Mark. 1987b. "Descartes, Nietzsche and the Search for the Unsayable." The New York Times Book Review. February 1987b, 3 and 34.
- Taylor, Mark. 1987c. Erring: A Postmodern A/theology. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Tedlock, Dennis. 1987a. "On the Representation of Discourse in Discourse." Journal of Anthropological Research 43.4: 343-344.

- Tedlock, Dennis. 1987b. "Questions Concerning Dialogical Anthropology." Journal of Anthropological Research 43.4: 325-337.
- Tennyson, Alfred Lord. 1958. "Ulysses." Poems of Tennyson. ed. Jerome Hamilton Buckley, 66-67. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Thornton, Robert. 1983. "Narrative Ethnography in Africa, 1850-1920: The Creation and Capture of an Appropriate Domain for Anthropology." Man 18: 502-520.
- Tyler, Stephen. 1987a. "On 'Writing-Up/Off' as 'Speaking-For.'" Journal of Anthropological Research 43.4: 338-342.
- Tyler, Stephen. 1987b. The Unspeakable: Discourse, Dialogue, and Rhetoric in the Postmodern World. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Ulmer, Gregory. 1985. Applied Grammatology: Post(e)-Pedagogy from Jacques Derrida to Joseph Beuys. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Ulmer, Gregory. 1983. "Op Writing: Derrida's Solicitation of Theoria." Displacement: Derrida and After. In Krupnick, 1983, 29-58.
- Varly, Craig. 1988. "Logic and Patriarchy." In Silverman and Welton, 1988b, 153-164.
- Warnke, Georgia. 1987. Gadamer: Hermeneutics, Tradition and Reason. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Watson, Stephen. 1985. "Abysses." In Silverman and Ihde, 1985, 228-246.
- Watson, Stephen. 1987. "Regulations: Kant and Derrida at the End of Metaphysics." In Sallis, 1987, 71-86.

- Watson-Franke, Maria-Barbara and Lawrence Watson. 1975. "Understanding in Anthropology: A Philosophical Reminder." Current Anthropology 16: 247-262.
- Weber, Max. 1963. "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy." In Natanson, 1963a, 355-418.
- Webster, Steven. 1982. "Dialogue and Fiction in Ethnography." Dialectical Anthropology 7: 91-114.
- Webster, Steven. 1983. "Ethnography as Storytelling." Dialectical Anthropology 7: 185-205.
- Webster, Steven. 1988. "Realism and Reification in the Ethnographic Genre." Critique of Anthropology 6.1: 39-62.
- White, Hayden. 1985. Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Whittaker, Elvi. 1986. The Mainland Haole: The White Experience in Hawaii. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Whittaker, Elvi. 1990. "The Promised Land of Epistemology: Critical Theory in the Post-Modern Age." Nexus 7: 49-60.
- Williams, Raymond. 1976. Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society. Glasgow: Fontana Press.
- Willis Jr., William. 1974. "Skeletons in the Anthropological Closet." In Hymes, 1974a, 121-152.
- Winch, Peter. 1963. "Philosophical Bearings." In Natanson, 1963a, 101-118.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. 1981. Philosophical Investigations. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

- Wolff, Kurt. 1974. "This is the Time for Radical Anthropology." In Hymes, 1974a, 99-118.
- Wood, David and Robert Bernasconi. 1988. Derrida and Différance. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Wood, David. 1987. "Following Derrida." In Sallis, 1987, 143-160.
- Woolf, Virginia. 1968. The Waves. Middlesex: Penguin Books.
- Worsley, Peter. 1986. "Proposals for Anthropology in the Nuclear Age." Current Anthropology 27: 283-284.
- Wurzer, Wilhelm. 1988. "Postmodernism's Short Letters, Philosophy's Long Farewell..." In Silverman and Welton, 1988b, 243-250.