

## The formal ideologue

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The term 'ideologue', if it is familiar to readers, owes much of its popularity to use by Frederic Jameson in *The Political Unconscious* (1981). Using the ideologue to unearth social and political contexts in Balzac, Gissing, and Conrad, Jameson enriched our understanding of these authors. Such new and 'historical' readings seemed to destine the ideologue for wider use.

But serious questions have arrested the adoption of the ideologue as a critical tool. First, what exactly is an ideologue? Second, recent language theories, especially deconstruction, argue that no such discrete sign of meaning as an ideologue could exist without reference to an infinite chain of other signs. Third, what is the domain of the ideologue? Does it apply to narrative but not lyric poetry? Does it apply to characters, to plot, or only to figures of speech? Is it intrinsically Marxist?

This essay suggests answers to these questions by tracing the history of the ideologue, proposing a model based on the 'deep structure' of metaphor and on rhetoric, and by limiting its applicability. It closes with an admittedly schematic test-run on two ideologues in the work of detective novelist Raymond Chandler, whose metaphors and their ideological underpinnings originally perplexed me. In sum, it hopes to show that a more formal version of the ideologue can surmount objections and produce richer readings.

### History

The basic notion of the ideologue is not without precedent, for classic and medieval writers envisioned the *topos*, or topic, as a storehouse of argument. Aristotle, in response to the Sophists, developed Plato's practice of 'dialectics' into a handbook (*Topics*), in which he worked out the general forms arguments could take. For him 'dialectics' came to mean reasoning based on premises generally acknowledged by everyone —

what this article refers to later as a 'commonplace'. By the time Cicero wrote his *Topica*, apparently to explain Aristotle to his lawyer friend Trebatius, the notion of 'topics' was reduced to 'finding arguments' for speeches, cases at law, etc., and the dialectics of disputation were scanted.

In Boethius' *De topicis differentiis* (ca. 523), however, the tradition of commentary on Aristotle's *Topics* was reinvigorated by a forceful integration of 'topics', their original mnemonics (*topos* had referred to an empty place one could envision filling up, as a memorization aid), dialectics, logic, and rhetoric. What emerged was a grammar of propositional relationships, too complex to summarize here, that schematized the arguments by opposition, by contrary, by proportion, by kind, etc., according to the nature and relation of their 'maximal propositions'. As Eleonore Stump's translation and exegesis (1978) make clear, this was a dauntingly adaptable apparatus that subsequently influenced not only Abelard's *De Dialectica*, but the entire medieval practice of rhetoric and argument.<sup>1</sup>

Such a historic conjunction is auspicious because the discussions of the origin of the ideologue in this paper focus on the late middle ages, when modern narrative forms began to emerge. The *Chanson de Roland* is thus a key document, but the semiotically oriented accounts in the ideologue by Julia Kristeva and Jameson become problematic in the face of a tradition of rhetoric that, as Eugene Vance (1987) argues, included the *topos* as part of the classic *trivium* of study. Thus a prototype of the ideologue was available to Chrétien de Troyes, who may have 'found and perfected the models for a new poetics of vernacular fiction and of the text' by exploding and reconstituting the traditional *topos* a long time ago.<sup>2</sup>

But if Chrétien de Troyes stands near the first formulation, contemporary interest in the ideologue nonetheless depends heavily on the term's appearance in 1928 in *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* by P. N. Medvedev, a volume now suspected to be the work of M. M. Bakhtin to which Medvedev applied editorial polish. Despite the neutral title, both men were in revolt against the autonomy that Russian Formalism granted texts. For Bakhtin the ideologue, though never precisely defined, was among the chief means by which the social context was refracted in a text. 'Literature', he wrote, 'so often anticipates developments in philosophy and ethics (ideologemes), admittedly in an undeveloped, unsupported, intuitive form' (1978: 17). He used the phrases 'ethical-philosophical' and 'psychological' repeatedly to approximate what he intended by ideologue, yet he insisted that ideology borne into the text was almost impossible to separate from thematic and artistic wholeness. His chief example was the character Bazarov of Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*, whom he identified as a *raznochinets*, or member of

the rising economic 'new class'. He gave no examples of ideologemes not embodied in characters, and seemed to insist on a typological homology: 'an ideologue deprived of its direct meaning, of its ideological bite, cannot enter the artistic structure, for it does not provide precisely what is necessary and constituent to the poetic structure — full ideological acuity' (1978: 22).

The case for Bakhtin's modern authorship of the ideologue is buttressed by his 1935 essay on 'Discourse in the novel', reprinted in *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981). Out of the polyglossia that was medieval Europe, he argues, arose novelists we deem great because their characters represent coherent, individualized ideologies. 'The speaking person in the novel is always, to one degree or another, an ideologue, and his words are always ideologemes', Bakhtin writes. 'It is precisely as ideologemes that discourse becomes the object of representation in the novel' (1981: 333–335). Thus the ideologue entered 'dialogism', though in this essay Bakhtin uses a critical vocabulary that includes rhetorical terms and such tools of formalism as tone and irony.

The glossary of *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981) already signals a second understanding of the ideologue: 'semiotic in the sense that it involves the concrete exchange of signs in society and in history' (1981: 429). But the first semiotically-oriented definition of the ideologue is in Julia Kristeva's *Le Texte du Roman*. Drawing on C. S. Peirce's distinction among icon, index, and symbol, Kristeva postulates that the original locus of ideological content was the 'symbol' (not to be confused with Romanticism's 'symbol'). But during the Renaissance there was 'a passage from the symbol to the sign' as the dominant way of thinking, and, Kristeva writes, 'the novel [became] a narrative structure revealing the ideologue of the sign' (1986: 63).

This shift of focus from dialogue to the novel, with a concentration on the Renaissance roots, will characterize the ideologue as employed by Frederic Jameson. The importance of the shift from 'symbol' to 'sign', according to Kristeva, was that 'symbols' had been metaphysical, synchronic, temporary meanings, while 'signs' were concretized, reified, diachronic signifiers that 'refer[ed] back to entities of lesser dimensions'. This chain of signifiers also advanced into the future as 'a progressive creation of metaphors'. Her casual use of 'metaphor' suggests the *Tel Quel* group's interest in Jakobson, but Kristeva never pursued the linguistic or semantic implications of the ideologue. She left it in the context of an 'infinite discourse' (1986: 71).

While Bakhtin's work led away from textual features, toward such concepts as the 'carnavalesque', theorists such as Propp and Greimas were attempting to show in structural terms how ideological meaning

functioned in narrative. Propp's morphology of fairy tales is well known. A more complex theory arose in Greimas's *Structural Semantics* (1984), one feature of which — the semiotic square or 'Greimas' grid' — was widely adopted and undergirds Jameson's ideologue.

Only an outline of the semiotic square can be given here. Basically, once we conceive of a unit of meaning (S1), we also conceive of the absence of that meaning, the 'not S' or (S<sup>-1</sup>). We also conceive of an opposing system of meaning S2, which in turn implies its own absence (S<sup>-2</sup>). Ronald Schliefer has explained the three types of opposition in the terms of formal logic:

(1) the contrary or *equipollent* relationship between S1 and S2, and S<sup>-2</sup> and S<sup>-1</sup>, an opposition between things equal and opposite ('masculinity' vs. 'femininity').

(2) the contradictory or *privative* relationship between S1 and S<sup>-1</sup>, S2 and S<sup>-2</sup>, an opposition formed by the presence or absence of some quality ('full' vs. 'empty').

(3) the *gradual* relationship between S1 and S<sup>-2</sup>, and S2 and S<sup>-1</sup>, an opposition formed by cultural categories ('blond' vs. 'brunette'). Elements of this last opposition often appear on a continuum (Greimas 1984: xxxiii).

The utility of the Greimas grid is that it alerts us to the submerged presence of third and fourth terms, the *nondit* of discourse. We are usually seeking the presence of the complex negative term S<sup>-2</sup> in the discourse, which in Greimas' view *asserts* a dialogic relation to the original term S1; as a transformation, this operation is 'the intrusion of history into permanence' (1984: xxxiv).<sup>3</sup>

The critique deconstruction made of this scheme was that binary operations always covertly privilege one term. But this deficiency was

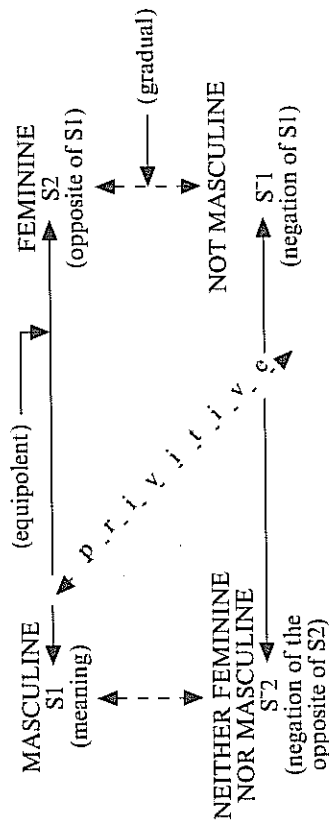


Figure 1.

defended by Umberto Eco (1976) as the very heart of 'ideological' meaning; no *identity* between representation and 'reality' is asserted, but rather an 'ideological *inventio*', which is 'the choice of a given circumstantial selection that attributes a certain property to a sememe, while concealing or ignoring other contradictory properties that are equally predictable' (1976: 292–293).

While Eco conceded that 'the multiplicity of codes, contexts and circumstances shows us that the same message can be decoded from different points of view and by reference to diverse systems of conventions', he maintained that we can identify ideological properties, which he termed 'an extra-semiotic residue ... acting as a catalyst in many abductive processes' (1976: 292). This residue lies, in his own version of the Greimas grid, in the operations of the S<sup>-1</sup> and S<sup>-2</sup> negations (1976: 142).

This is certainly not a complete answer to the deconstructionist critique, but its shelter allowed Eco to begin to explore the ways in which auditors/readers select among codes, contexts, and circumstances.

Even in the idiosyncratic personal activity of memorizing previous semiotic experience, there is a continuous activity of extra-coding. There are a lot of phrases and indeed entire discourses that one no longer has to interpret or decode because one had already experienced them in analogous circumstances or contexts. There are a lot of circumstances in which the hearer already knows what the speaker is going to say. ... As a matter of fact one is continuously anticipating expressions, filling up the empty spaces in a text with the missing units, forecasting a lot of words that the interlocutor may have said, could have said, will certainly say, or has never said. (1976: 136)

In other words, a good deal of discourse is precoded by 'commonplaces', or what the ancients called *topics*. A comparable view had earlier been introduced to sociological discussions of ideology, as we shall see, by Talcott Parsons.

Roland Barthes, in his consideration of the 'Rhetoric of the image' (1985), also drew on Greimas: 'Semes are organized in associative fields, in paradigmatic articulations, even perhaps in oppositions, according to certain defined paths or, as A.-J. Greimas puts it, according to certain semantic axes' (1985: 203). More skeptical than Eco, Barthes thought a 'massive inventory' of systems of connotation would be required before the 'reconstitution of such axes' would be possible, yet he could not resist his insight that 'it is metonymy which furnishes the image with the greatest number of its connotators' (1985: 203).<sup>4</sup> His wish to link rhetoric and history becomes more Marxian later in this essay: 'The common domain of the signifieds of connotation is that of ideology, which cannot

but be single for a given society and history, no matter what signifiers of connotation it may use' (1985: 203).

The customary impasse Marxism itself meets in 'ideology' is well represented in *Language and Materialism* (1977), by Rosalind Coward and John Ellis:

The individual, even prior to his or her birth, is always, already subject-ed to the structure into which he or she is born. ... Being always subject-ed, the subject can never be the transcendental, punctual source of a symbolic system. (1977: 3-4)

What is produced in ideology is the very basis of the subject's activity, the conditions of its positions as subject, and the coherency of the subject in the face of contradictions which make up society. (1977: 68)

How a subject totally constituted by ideology can be aware of and act on perceptions of ideology's inherent 'contradictions', a necessity to the praxis of Marxism, is never fully explained. The solution the authors offer is a micro-dialectics operating in all things, including words. All things exhibit a 'contradictoriness within the thing', which in historic situations is overdetermined by other contradictions outside in a complex process, so development does not proceed smoothly but comes about through breaks and ruptures, through revolution' (1977: 63). Here the individual presumably enters, contributing to the over-determination of events, pushing contradictions to rupture. 'This idea of structural causality means that the results of history are never really decided in advance', Coward and Ellis write (1977: 70).

Jameson escaped this impasse by drawing on the older, conservative, Bakhtinian sense of ideology. His ideologue is, variously, the emblem of a 'pseudo-idea', which is a 'conceptual or belief system, an abstract value, an opinion or prejudice', that takes its place in proto-narrative, 'a kind of ultimate class fantasy about the 'collective characters' which are the classes in opposition'. In perhaps his clearest statement, Jameson calls ideologues 'the smallest intelligible unit of the essentially antagonistic collective discourses of social classes' (1981: 76, 87-88, 115-119).

The analysis of narrative into which Jameson fits ideologues imposes further restrictions on a structural definition. He proceeds within three concentric frameworks: (1) that of historic events, dates, people, etc.; (2) that of the tension and struggle between social classes; and (3) that of the succession of social forms and modes of production. Ideologues function at the second level. They build on the specific data of historic events and people, but the salients Jameson chooses to discern among them are always those 'of the tension and struggle between social classes'. Jameson's way of unpacking ideologues to historicize them borrows

from Lévi-Strauss's description of myth as the imagined resolution of an actual social contradiction. He thus requires the complete articulation of this contradiction as his measure of the completeness of ideological analysis; then he historicizes the imagined resolution the narrative offers as a rewriting or restructuring of prior texts. 'In terms of what meta- or Ur-narrative is the resolution achieved?' he asks.

Among the ideologues Jameson suggests we can historicize are disaccumulation, *ressentiment*, and *déclassement*. While his own historicizing conforms to a Marxist model, he seems to envision alternatives, for he mentions the analyses of totalitarianism by Weber and Foucault on the one hand, and those of post-industrial society by Baudrillard and Bell on the other (1981: 86).

Jameson then develops a diachronic quality of Kristeva's ideologue that he calls *sedimentation*, which helps him defend the primacy of 'class conflict' against the critique of 'codes, contexts and circumstances'. He writes that, especially in strong genres, ideologues elicit their own reading directions. They have such a long history of ideological investment that the reader has 'always, already read' them, even if the context is different, because the figure's interpretation is 'sedimented' in the reading experience. Thus conceived, the domain of Jameson's ideologue is essentially Bakhtinian, inapplicable to, say, lyric poetry. But Jameson instead argues that the ideologue is essentially narrative because of a 'semic evaporation' that occurred in romance literature during the Middle Ages. The Kristevan change from 'symbol' to 'sign' is the root of Jameson's *sedimentation*; it is how ideologues became dissociated from their origins and *sedimented* in genres and 'reading expectations', a notion drawn from Hans Robert Jauss. Taking a cue from the *chanson de geste* mentioned by Kristeva, Jameson postulates that the late Carolingian population, terrified by barbarian incursions, defined good and evil as 'us' and 'those not us'. Thus the *Song of Roland* celebrates the exploits of the 'Franks de France' against the evil Saracens. When, in the age of chivalry, nobility began to perceive its common interests, regardless of 'otherness', the romance transformed this binary morality:

The hostile knight, in armor, his identity unknown, exudes that insolence which marks a fundamental refusal of recognition and stamps him as the bearer of the category of evil, up to the moment when, defeated and unmasked, he asks for mercy by *telling his name* ... at which point, reinserted into the unity of the social class, he becomes one more knight among others and loses all his sinister unfamiliarity. (Jameson 1981: 118-119)

The same of evil evaporates, to float freely in the world, to be assigned to abstractions, to transient causes; yet the binary morality from which

the question of *identity* emerged remains *sedimented* in the situation. Such a narrative contextualization for the ideologue seems an advance on Bakhtin's circumscription of it to discourse and character, yet we may question whether the chief feature of sedimentation is this new, free-floating sense or the reproduction of semantic directions.

More recently, Jameson introduced a special issue of *Texte* (1986-87) in which a number of the articles dealt with the ideologue or *idéosème*. While he expressed 'mixed feelings' about the efforts 'to return to basics and to make a new beginning', Jameson praised some alternative models. One, an article of over 100 pages by Michel van Schendel, reviews the meaning of ideology in Bakhtin and the Russian formalists, in Kristeva, Gramsci, and Marx.<sup>5</sup> Beginning with C. S. Peirce, van Schendel details the lineaments of the ideologue and the weaknesses and contradictions of various versions. His argument is, finally, that 'L'idéologue est un quasi-argument'.

Un idéologue est une unité discursive à valeur propositionnelle dont les termes formant la proposition sont donnés pour identiques ou équivalents. Il est composable sous la forme d'un précepte ou d'un jugement apodictique à caractère dogmatique. Il forme un quasi-argument. L'ensemble des idéologues d'un texte est le réseau historisé qui oriente la constitution de ce texte. (Van Schendel 1987: 27)

An ideologue is a discursive unity of propositional value in which the terms forming the proposition are given as identical or equivalent. It can be composed under the form of a precept or an incontestable judgement of religious character. It makes a semi-argument. The ensemble of ideologues of a text is the historicized network that orients the constitution of that text.

The key operation in van Schendel's version is *conjunction*; rhetorical or semantic elements are made parallel or joined — their identity or equivalence asserted. As he notes in his critique of the deconstructivist questions 'What does it matter who speaks? What does it matter what he says?', there is already an ideology at work in the parallelism of such rhetorical questions (an observation that would have pleased Boethius, who stressed the importance of copulatives).

In the same issue Edmond Cros employs socio-criticism to work from an Althusserian definition of ideology to a structure of ideological 'mediation'. The problem of 'codes, contexts and circumstances' is parried in terms borrowed from dialogic analysis, especially narratology. The *je*, *tu*, and *il* points-of-view are narrative *focalizations* that index a commitment to polity when plotted concurrently against the histories of such forms as autobiography, confession, and epistle, and the social hierarchy of antagonistic class discourses.

The period Cros analyzes is Spanish literature from 1550 to 1815, and

he demonstrates nicely the deforming pressure of the Inquisition. His diachronic progression (for *Lazarillo de Tormes*) shows how the *pratique discursive* of autobiography was *perverted* by one social practice (the Inquisition), then *subverted* by recourse to an older *pratique épistolaire*. Each transformation opens a space for 'speculative' ideological investment, which may come from a re-coding of *destinateur* and *destinataire*, from the displacement of the narrative's 'I' to 'you' or 'we' or by drawing upon a new discourse in the 'carnavalesque' language environment.<sup>6</sup>

Cros suggests a socio-critical grid on which the speculative ideological possibilities of *perversion*, *reproduction*, and *subversion* intersect social practice and discursive practice. In showing the six possible combinations of these elements, Cros uses the logical operators + and — and identifies the semantic intersections as *idéosèmes*.

Précisons que ces idéosèmes ne définissent que des rapports, générateurs de structures. Vides de tout contenu sémantique, ils n'en sont pas moins les vecteurs potentiels de tout déplacement sémantique ultérieur. ... Ils sont donc susceptibles de produire une quantité infinie de phénomènes textuels. ...

A travers les idéosèmes ce sont des pratiques idéologiques qui sémantisent le tissu textuel. Cette sémantisation court le long du texte et s'y développe autour d'éléments spécifiques qui relaient l'idéosème générateur et deviennent donc, à leur tour, des idéosèmes. Tel est le cas, dans le *Guzmán de Alfarache*, de tout élément qui relève du discours de prédication (sentences, autorités divines, interpellations, lieux communs de la pratique du sermon, *exempla*, etc. (1987: 147)

Let us specify that these *idéosèmes* are only *relations*, generators of structures. Empty of all semantic content, they are only potential vectors of all ulterior semantic displacement. ... They are thus susceptible to producing an infinite quantity of textual phenomena. ...

Across the *idéosèmes* are the ideological practices that semanticize the textual tissue. This semanticization runs the length of the text and there develops around specific elements that relate to the generating *idéosème* and thus become, in their turns, *idéosèmes*. This is the case, in *Guzmán de Alfarache*, of all the elements that reveal the discourse of sermonizing (verdicts, divine authority, sharp questions, common locations of sermons, *exempla*, etc.

#### A formal model

The models of Jameson, van Schendel, and Cros imply that the relation of ideological features of texts to history depends on a narrower, more formal definition of 'ideology' than is currently popular. If the impetus here seems political, it comes from both left and right, for as the Aronian neo-conservative Raymond Boudon writes (1986):

Comme on sait, ce mot a été créé par Destutt de Tracy à la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Il désignait chez cet auteur la science de la genèse des idées qu'il se proposait de fonder. En forgeant le concept d'idéologie, Destutt de Tracy entendait donc désigner une discipline qui aurait pour objet les idées, comme la minéralogie pour objet les minéraux ou la géologie la terre....

Car Marx entend bien montrer, lui aussi, que les idées sont le produit de sensations produites par les conditions matérielles de l'existence. (Boudon 1986: 40)

Le mot idéologie s'impose au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle parce qu'il décrit une *réalité* sociale nouvelle, à savoir la tentation de plus en plus communément répandue de fonder l'ordre social et l'action politique sur des analyses de type scientifique. (1986: 45)

As we know, this word was created by Destutt de Tracy at the end of the eighteenth century. It designated for this author the science of the origin of ideas that he proposed to found. In creating the concept of ideology, Destutt de Tracy understood himself to be designing a discipline that would have ideas as its object, just as mineralogy has as its object minerals, or geology the earth. ...

For Marx understood clearly that he himself was showing that ideas are the products of sensations produced by the material conditions of existence.

The word ideology imposed itself in the nineteenth century because it described a new social *reality*, namely the more and more widespread, common desire to found social order and political action on analyses of a scientific type.

Boudon associated this *définition traditionnelle* of ideology with the '[Karl] Marx-[Raymond] Aron-[Talcott] Parsons' axis of sociology, in which 'ideology' has a discernible political face and claims a foundation in scientific findings. Against this he poses the *définition moderne* of ideology by the '[Edward] Shils-[Clifford] Geertz-[Louis] Althusser' axis as 'any symbolic action ... including mathematical theorems as well as *pro forma* parliamentary insults, children's stories and philosophical theory' (1986: 47).

The Parsonian strain in Boudon's thought is also implicit in the socio-criticism of Cros and becomes explicit in the language theory of Mar Black discussed below. To simplify, Parsonian sociology derives from classic liberalism; while acknowledging Marx, it is pragmatic, non-dialectic, and concerned with *instrumentality* in class relations. 'Parsons acknowledges his indebtedness to Marx wherever appropriate', writes Andrew Hacker (1976), but 'the root of the matter, as he sees it, lies in the tension between the emphasis on individual attainment and the imperatives of bureaucratic organization' (1976: 296). The individual's attainment is 'determined on grounds essentially peculiar to himself ... he is

not identified with any solidarity group'. Hacker finds in Parsons six governing relations in place of Marx's 'single determinist idea'.<sup>7</sup>

- (1) In a competitive occupational system there will be losers as well as winners.
  - (2) Organization entails discipline and authority, and there will be resistance to the exercise of power.
  - (3) Individuals favored by strategic location can exploit those less fortunately placed.
  - (4) Varied and conflicting ideologies emerge in a differentiated social structure.
  - (5) Patterns of family life and attitude-formation in the young will vary as between social classes.
  - (6) The promise of equal opportunity for all will be thwarted. (Hacker 1976: 297)
- Key terms in Parsons's sociology, and hence determinant of 'ideology' for him, include 'equilibrium', 'strain', and 'function'; his conception of the latter overlaps the narratological use of the word. Ideology is 'purportedly normative' and 'purportedly scientific'. The concurrence of this model with that of Cros at several points is clear; Cros' *ideoseme* is the Parsonian 'strain' that results when aspects (1), (2), and (5) above are in disequilibrium.

A compatible view of language was developed by Parsons's colleague Max Black, a philosopher, in response to argument about the use of metaphor in philosophy. Black drew on such Parsonian concepts as 'function' to relate figures of speech to the semantic realm that Cros identified as the 'reproduction' of 'social practice' (1987: 279). In *Models and Metaphors* (1962), Black threw over the I. A. Richards model of metaphor as 'tenor and vehicle'. He proposed that the 'focus', or unknown term of a metaphor, was invested by the 'associated system of commonplaces' of the 'frame', the rest of the sentence.<sup>8</sup> Black described metaphor in terms that made its value investment dependent on social context; as for the 'associated system of commonplaces', Black said that laymen as well as experts knew the commonplaces about any subject, because everyone knew 'what the man on the street thinks about the matter'. When we say 'man is a wolf', we do not mean that he is like the animal; rather, we wish to invoke a system of commonplaces, or 'maximal propositions', that we share about 'wolf', such as rapacity. In this sense, Black's response to the critique of 'codes, conditions and circumstances' seems to be that the meaning of systems of commonplaces is clear enough when we stay in the realm Cros calls the reproduction of social practice. Perversion and subversion, especially as discursive practice, may require additional contexts.

If such 'systems of associated commonplaces' are 'ideological' in this sense, what systematizes them? What is 'normative' and 'scientific' in their pretenses? The insight that 'commonplaces' could be established in their reproductive *pratique sociale* by archival research if by no other

manner, offered the possibility that 'systems of commonplaces' could appear as formal features of a text. But how could one unpack tropes to examine the ideologies they invoked? And to what extent is, say, a metaphor like an ideologue?

Thinking about language in America at this time meant the generative grammar of Chomsky. In an important, but not widely known, series of essays on 'Metaphorical Ambiguities', linguist Dorothy Mack in 1973 mapped out the 'deep structure' in the comparisons at metaphor's core. She provides, in metaphor's case, a response to the critique of 'codes, conditions and circumstances'. The structure underlying metaphor generates semantic functions, says Mack — a thesis the more valuable because she takes ambiguous metaphors as her point of entry, showing that in such examples as 'the chair laughed', there are actually two types of 'predicate' (Black's 'frame'). One type of predicate refers to a presupposition and appropriates its meaning for the metaphor's subject. The other type of predicate, lacking a presupposition, makes itself part of the subject.<sup>9</sup>

Despite the change in nomenclature, Mack's 'presuppositions' correspond roughly to what Black had called commonplaces: they are what everyone agrees is self-evident about the topic (Boethius' maximal propositions). But Mack did not develop the features of the 'presupposition', which could have related commonplace knowledge to metaphor more precisely than Black's description had. Instead she focused on metaphor's transformative power. Renaming her two predicates, Mack replaced the terms of common rhetoric with 'agent promotion' (personification) and 'predicate incorporation' (objectification). In Mack's example 'the chair laughed', agent promotion assumes that laughing is a human quality: the chair becomes animate when endowed with the predicate's presupposition that only humans laugh. In the case of predicate incorporation, 'laugh' would not call on any presupposition, but would become an objective, physical quality of the chair (see Fig. 2).

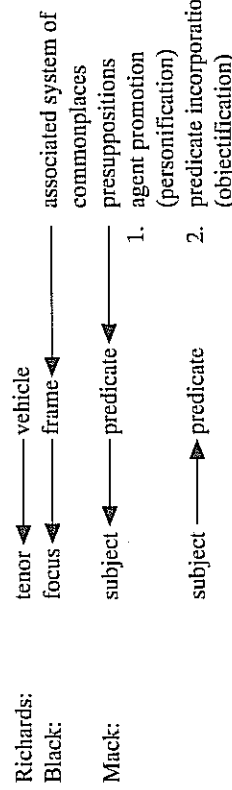


Figure 2.

Before examining the implications of Mack's model for the ideologue, we need to see what it reveals about investment of 'ordinary' metaphors. Since they have presuppositions, metaphors of agent promotion can draw on systems of commonplaces, which tap the reservoirs of popular ideology in potentially perverse or subversive ways. But when we think about most commonplaces even briefly, we realize that they are vague, or reified, having lost the diachronic quality that Kristeva said invested them. They have become *reproductive*, thus examples of predicate incorporation.

'Three removes are as bad as a fire' is such a commonplace; it no longer invokes the presuppositions that it had for readers of *Poor Richard's Almanac*;<sup>10</sup> on the other hand, 'remember that time is money' is still resonant in the U.S. There are at least four reasons for the differing legitimacy: (1) the first is a comparison of equal terms, (2) the second is in the imperative mood, and is (3) a metaphor of agent promotion, with (4) *reproductive* presuppositions for its predicate broadly available. Everyone has an experience of and a reaction to money; the *normative* and *scientific* pretensions of the predicate's presuppositions invite the auditor to identify part of his experience with the presupposition of the predicate.

Such invitations to identify with the presupposition may be broad and polyvalent, as in the case of 'money', or narrowly specific. Their efficacy seems to depend on their summoning salient features, structural characteristics, or a metonymic feature from the presupposed realm. Such a *salient* is usually absent from the dead or the lost commonplace. If we knew that 'three removes are as bad as a fire' pertained to farmers displaced by foreclosure, weather, or failed crops, we might salvage an image of the all-consuming house 'fire' from the predicate. But 'house fire' is not the instrumental *salient* of 'a fire'. On the other hand, the instrumental salient in 'time is money' is the getting of money, rather than the spending or enjoying of it or 'dirty money' or 'easy money', although by a perverting or subverting discursive practice we might make it any of these.

Comparing the two commonplaces, we notice different internal dynamics: besides the contrast of declarative and imperative moods, 'three removes equals a fire', while the 'getting' of 'money' is functionally opposed to 'time', which can only be spent. Getting and spending define one another in a system of binary opposition, which is more self-sufficient than definition by equality. They have greater instrumentality; they adjudicate the relations of conflicting claims and arrange a hierarchy of importance, but they are not the only kinds of arbiters available at this site.

Neither commonplaces nor metaphors are ideologemes *per se*, but their

process using cultural associations and formulas occurring in a particular genre and mode'. It is not her goal to describe how such contextual pre-coding might work, but Edmund Cros provides a good model. The impression of common ground is furthered when Mack notes that metaphorizing is 'one kind of hypothesizing, closely related to the modal speech of can, would and if' and that 'even metaphors which appear to be direct statements function very much like weak commands, suggestions to see or feel in a certain way' (1973: 78, 84, 84-85).

Mack's description of the deep structure of metaphor supplies what is implied but never systematized in Jameson's ideologue. Jameson's *sedimentation* could occur in the relationship between steps (2) and (5) of Mack's process. The assertion that the unknown knight is 'one of us' presupposes that we know his name. It requires comparison. 'Telling his name' is the salient the presupposition uses to draw the power of the commonplace that 'nobility have a common cause' into the newly conjoined subject (the unknown knight and us).

At this point we might re-examine that mysterious change in thinking that Kristeva attributes to the Renaissance, and that Jameson characterizes as a semic evaporation. Isn't the key to Jameson's example the reversal of logical sign from 'knight ≠ us' to 'knight = us'? The yoking of two disparate subjects creates a great deal of anxiety in the reader/auditor, according to Mack, which s/he resolves by ransacking the store of contextualizations common to the ideologue and her/his experience of life. In the process of deleting difference at step (5)b, the reader/auditor re-invokes step (2) momentarily. Why? What all descriptions of the ideologue seem to have missed is what the ancients saw — that the presuppositions necessary to the *new* meaning are governed not by a 'semic evaporation', but by a set of primary logical operators: *and, or, nor*, etc. As in Boolean algebra, fundamental logical relations, rather than simple binary oppositions, make up the truth table of the semantic relationships within ideologemes.<sup>10</sup>

The benediction of centuries of historic investment, although helpful, does not seem an absolutely essential attribute of the ideologue; in fact, 'sedimentation' happens at step (5)b when the logical operator requires and dictates the terms of re-comparison to step (2). Then, if we know a suitable diachronic presupposition, we have historic 'sedimentation'. On short reflection, however, most of us can identify ideologemes that function without 'historic' investment; the abutment of other contexts by logical operators serves equally well. 'Watergate' + [genre] or 'Watergate' + [rhetorical mode] work as well as 'Watergate' + Teapot Dome [history], and can often be historicized without Ur-narratives of class conflict. There are *other histories*, as Jameson acknowledges ('the

semantic operations overlap the latter in the realm of *elision*. For meaning all three depend on abutting two or more elements; the nature of the elision between them is important because, as Eco saw, the simple mention of 'Watergate' is not an ideologue. On the other hand, 'Watergate' + tragedy = an ideologue, while 'Watergate' + farce = its (possible) opposite. Such a shift to *genre* as the predicate suggests the breadth of presuppositional realms available. 'Watergate' + Teapot Dome is another powerfully diachronic ideologue, the sort of 'sedimented' ideologue that Jameson wants to historicize, but structural linguistics suggests that simply discovering the historic content of two terms abutted in a trope is not by itself sufficient to unravel an ideologue. The value investment of a metaphor, in Dorothy Mack's model, has six steps:

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Mack               | Reader   |
| (1) Asserting      | — 'the chair laughed'  |
| (2) Presupposing   | — human beings laugh   |
| (3) Conjoining     | — the chair + laughter ← human quality   |
| (4) Comparing      | — how can the speaker <i>mean</i> that the chair laughed?  |
|                    | a. he means 'chairman'   |
|                    | b. he invokes a genre, such as the fairy tale  |
|                    | c. he uses a trope, such as metaphor.  |
|                    | d. etc.  |
| (5) Deleting       | — a. is there a logical operation indicated?   |
|                    | b. are choices limited by the field of the presuppositions (2) above?                                  |
|                    | c. are there contexts for (4)a or (4)b?  |
|                    | d. Is the speaker using a metaphor?  |
| (6) Reinterpreting | — the speaker uses an agent promotion metaphor, or personification, to indicate whimsy or the surreal. |

This model shows not only the complexity of the comparing process and the number of places at which authorial volition can operate, but also the *pas de deux* the reader's anxiety dances with certainty of meaning. On the logical and lexical levels, this dance is destined to preclude everything outside the subject and its predicate, which can finally *mean* only in relation to each other. But semantically the ideologue arranges hierarchies of value by foreclosing presuppositional realms in the context on the basis of likelihood.

Mack allows that her model may 'be part of a pre-coded language



senses have a history' — 1981: 229). If I may transform Jameson's ideogeme into the model proposed above, the limit on salient features perceived by, or attributed to some 'I', 'you', 'he', or 'she', the sites of to those evincing 'tension and struggle between social classes' ought (authorial power are legion. At his stylistic best Chandler, having created be expanded to a Parsonian amplitude. Historicizing could concern not a norm, delighted in hoisting presumptive rebellion on its own normative only such subjects, but their salients, even the prevalence or historipetard, collapsing everything to 'science' again. But such ideological work succession of logical operators.

The heart of this formal model is the logical operator. Presuppositionists that moved 'like a stone through a cloud of dust' (Farewell, 1976b: once summoned, are tried against it for fit. The least ideologically; Sleep, 1976a: 177). demanding operator seems to be = (equals), because it allows the broad This 'physics' is one of several contexts established in the first few est range of presuppositions and contexts: it is thus typical of metaphors of *The Big Sleep*, where the trope to be scrutinized is found; also used in poetry, evocative but not stipulative. The strong logical operator prominent are knighthood and the fall of the great family. By the time are *and*, *or*, *not*; weaker are their cousins *not-or* (nor), *not-and* (nand) Marlowe, visiting the ailing Gen. Sternwood, is summoned to see his and *either-or* (xor). More exotic relations, for three-termed relations and daughter Vivian, Chandler has fully established all three. Then there is structures of implication, can be found in the truth tables of an algebra that emphasizes the conflict of class interests and impels readers and there may be a parallel with rhetorical figuration by metaphor to locate themselves ideologically, but it turns on a word — a metaphor — metonymy, synecdoche, and irony in historiography, as described by whose original ideological sharpness may elude a modern audience. It Hayden White (1973).<sup>11</sup> provides an instructive example of how the structure of the ideogeme persists in focusing meaning even when presuppositions fade. In this scene Vivian gives Marlowe a third-degree questioning. He responds: 'I didn't ask to see you. You sent for me. I don't mind your *ritzing* me or drinking your lunch out of a Scotch bottle' (1976a: 16).

#### A test-run on Chandler

Appropriately enough, Frederic Jameson treated Raymond Chandler in a 1970 essay, though his analysis focused on the difference between public street and private space 'in the darkness of a local world without the benefit of metaphorical and ideological investment. It functions as a of the federal Constitution' (1983: 130). Some of the ideological figure metaphor, a case of Mack's type three agent promotion: 'your' is endowed of Chandler's novels are indeed large (the decline of the Sternwood with the qualities of 'ritzing' in relation to 'me'). That turns out to be seems an instance of *disaccumulation*), but ideological work also occurs helpful in parsing it accurately. The semantic structure of ideologization in smaller figures, such as Chandler's metaphors.

By canvassing Chandler's early novels one may discover that an extraordinary number of his tropes presuppose a mechanistic, post-Einsteinian world of time, space, mass, motion, and inertia — a layman's physics. This context provides the *salient* feature of his tropes so often that Chandler's metaphors seem invested by a set of 'scientific' rules; in the sphere of his narratives, the victory is always to mass, speed, gravity, and hardness. Embodied in characters, this 'science' is transformed into 'tough guys' and 'tough talk'. Among the qualities that distinguish Chandler from a journeyman of the genre are the ways he discovered to pervert and subvert discursively the social practice he was reproducing Detective Phillip Marlowe, for example, often expresses sentimental or romantic ideas that undercut his own or another's pretended toughness. On the semantic level, this trope is a good example of how figures of But such subversion is typically modified by irony, trope, or arcane deletion impel readers to seek to invest ideologically by the global contexts knowledge from the 'layman's physics'. Since all of this is spoken by, previously established. If the following schematization is reductive, I hope it is also clear:

I don't mind (your ← ritzing) + me

OR (your ← drinking) + your lunch out of a bottle.

By casting 'ritz' in the gerund form, Chandler transforms it into an act a motion, and aligns it with 'drinking'. The motion implicit in the gerund form is one way of invoking the global context of physics. Chandler makes 'me' parallel to 'bottle', an object whose salient could be emptiness, hollowness, drunkenness, or even constraint. This parallelism, its implications delayed until the last word, will change the interpretive register of the trope, negating the initial 'I don't mind'. Marlowe does mind; the register is irony. At the same time Chandler summarizes Marlowe's interrogation from the detective's point of view, providing the reader a name for the process: ritzing.

Now that Chandler has positioned Marlowe (and the reader) by retrospectively prefacing the entire trope with the logical operator 'not', 'ritz-ing' cannot be invested by just any presupposition it touches off in the reader, but is directed to global contexts: physics, knighthood, and the decline of the great family.

NEITHER [(your ← ritzing) + me]

NOR (your ← drinking) + your lunch out of a bottle]]

We now recognize what in the Greimas grid are the logical operators of the negative complex term (S<sup>-</sup>2), the implied or *nonidit* thematization. In Chandler's case, that which points to itself by refusing definition in Vivian's terms is the source of Marlowe's self-empowerment, his unspoken romantic credo. If the reader possesses the background, s/he may also be led to the appropriate salients of 'ritz-ing': the song → the grand hotel → exaggerated treatment of guests → pompous formal relations of class and money → the attempt to reproduce them. The formal and contextual systems work together to tell us that Marlowe perceives wealth calling on a presumed, almost physical class boundary, the distinction of master and servant.

However, the playful rejoinder that Chandler provides Vivian — 'I ought to throw a Buick at you' — subverts this class confrontation by amplifying the double entendre of physics, for it repeats, this time ironically, her presumption that she can call on greater physical forces than Marlowe can. Of course, only Chandler can throw Buicks around, and by his creation of dialogue that shows the disparity between the pretension to and the possession of power, he implodes all that appears by virtue of his style to have escaped from his norm.

The case of 'ritz-ing' concerns one of the more common pre-coded

language processes, called metaphorical instrumentalization. In Marlowe's view, Vivian uses the Ritz Hotels on him: treats him as a valet, a bellboy. By deleting the ground of a pretended (American) egalitarianism and invoking the 'impartial laws of science', Chandler nudges the reader into position with respect to the 'great family' and their hired man, Phillip Marlowe.

Chandler created his most dramatic metaphors in *Farewell, My Lovely*, but many of these are now ideologically stranded, understood only as rhetorical remnants. One such example occurs when Phillip Marlowe remarks to Lindsay Marriott, as they drive to an assignation with blackmailers, that 'We may be watched all the way. *This car sticks out like spats at an Iowa picnic*. Could be the boys don't like your being twins' (1976b: 50). Readers chuckle at this today as they no doubt did in 1943. Yet if we look closely at the otherwise straightforward passage of description in which this trope occurs, we may be puzzled by the absent party that 'watches' them and 'dislikes' twinning, and also by the manner in which the italicized phrase brackets possible interpretations. Do we really know what an 'Iowa picnic' is? And what is the implied term, the thing in which the car sticks out?

But this is asking much, and most readers simply elide 'Iowa picnic' to 'picnic', a dramatic case of predicate incorporation, which works pretty well. Yet, alerted to Chandler's ideological habits, we see that he seems to mean more, for he has already described the auto:

a huge black battleship of a car with chromium trimmings, a coyote tail tied to the Winged Victory on the radiator cap and engraved initials where the emblem should be. The car had a right-hand drive and looked as if it had cost more than the house. (1976b: 50)

It is clearly a Rolls Royce — how much more can it 'stick out'? What salient quality relates 'spats' to the car? Some point is being made, but without a predicate that invokes strong presuppositions, readers can't supply salients, and without salient features they can't compare and delete in step with the author's original ideological intention. The 'Iowa picnic' becomes a picnic in Iowa; we imagine farm-men in overalls, women in cotton dresses. But an examination that treats the metaphor as potentially a formal ideologue can help to recover a lost, local level of ideologization. To begin with, the metaphor intends not predicate incorporation, but rather agent promotion, for its form is 'A is to B as C is to D'. But term B is implied, term C is of dubious currency, and term D is lost. The ideological operators are *and* and *equals*: (car and B)

*equals* (spats and Iowa picnic). This is a narrow set of truth conditions We begin by examining the commonplace systems of the text.

Among them are what Chandler seems to have intended as a geographic contextualization. Call it 'Iowa' for short: that state supplies a number of the novel's characters and California with the greatest number of immigrants. Iowa seemed to many Californians indicative of the future and the change that urbanization entailed. As an earlier immigrant (1912), Chandler adhered to a pastoral ideal that California historian Kevin Starr identified as the 'Mission' or Mediterranean image.<sup>12</sup> The threat that waves of Midwestern migration posed to this ideal received figuration in the local ideologue of 'Iowa picnic'.

'Iowa picnic' and even 'Iowa' by itself turn out to be Los Angeles commonplaces of the 1930s. An 'Iowa picnic' meant the annual gathering of the Iowa Society on Iowa Day, January 18th. Held at Bixby Park in Long Beach, these 'picnics' attracted up to 150,000 former Iowans, as well as politicians who courted their votes. Middle-class, afraid of Eastern political corruption, they formed the backbone of local reform sentiment called the Good Government Movement. They were fiscal conservatives with a plain-spoken, practical, aggressive style. More than a little xenophobic, they opposed all domestic and foreign immigration to their paradise. Only an ill-advised politician, come to court votes, or an outsider unfamiliar with the Iowans' immediate adoption of California's lightweight clothing, would wear spats to an 'Iowa picnic'. This is term D. 'Iowa picnic' signifies this progressive but egalitarian, middle-class, white Elystium.

What about the currency of spats? During their vogue, spats typified

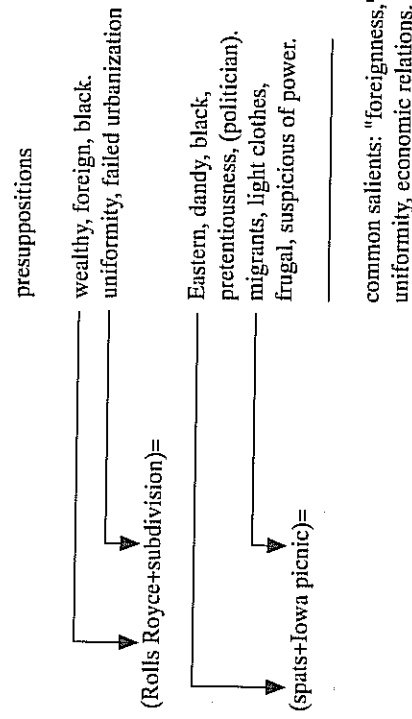


Figure 3.

the dress of dandies, a set long vilified in popular culture. In the dime novel 'spats' evoked the meta-narrative of the city slicker and the country bumpkin. Here 'spats' means corrupt politician, a type feared by these new Los Angelans, a boss who betrayed the people he 'served'. To wear 'spats to an Iowa picnic' is more than not fitting in; it is to face potential ambush by those one thinks to gull.

Now, what does that Rolls-Royce 'stick out' in? At the moment of the metaphor, Marlowe and Marriott are driving through an abandoned subdivision, the type of tract development created for and dependent on migrant Iowans. Sympathetic Los Angeles readers might have understood that an 'Iowa picnic' was Chandler's attempt to forge an ideological opposition between Eastern corruption and local economic conservatism. If they did, they would be less surprised when Lindsay Marriott (to whom Marlowe utters the metaphor) is ambushed by his co-conspirator, Helen Grayle, the figure of socio-economic mobility in the novel. The Rolls-Royce sticks out, then, in a world of necessary economic homogeneity, 'like spats at an Iowa picnic'. It and its owner must disappear.

### Summary

Although this essay focused on the ideologue in narrative, the formal qualities identified and range of contexts they can invoke do not seem to limit it to this genre. One can envision applications in drama, film, and some kinds of poetry (John Milton seems more tractable than John Ashberry). To produce useful readings, however, it will be necessary to work within a circumscribed definition of ideology and to define the functional relationships of semantic categories, whether according to formal logic, socio-criticism, dialogics, or discourse analysis. Marxism is not specially privileged in this regard, though it has provided the richest readings to date.

### Notes

1. Eleonore Stump's essays in her translation of *Boethius' De topicis differentiis* give a particularly clear picture of the classic background; for the function of dialectic, see 1978: 159-205.
2. In *From Topic to Tale: Logic and Narrativity in the Middle Ages*, Eugene Vance shows the degree to which the *topics* and various 'transgression[s]' of and restoration of probably dialectical relationship[s]' among them underlie the work of Chrétien de Troyes.

3. In his valuable introduction in Greimas' *Structural Semantics*, Schliefer explains that Greimas escapes homology by "isomorphism" [which] is ... a "formal identity" as distinguished from the isotopic "iterativity" of discourse assuring discursive utterances their homogeneity; it exists on the paradigmatic as opposed to the syntagmatic axis. Isotopies are the elements of Greimas's semiotic square; isomorphism guarantees their possible homology' (Schliefer, in Greimas 1984: xxx).
4. In a footnote, Barthes explains his 'metonymy' as non-Jakobsonian — e.g., corresponding to the Greimasian 'isomorphy' above.
5. An extraordinarily comprehensive bibliography of the ideologue may be found in the notes of van Schendel; the principal authors to consider the concept but who are not covered in this paper are F. Rastier (1972); F. Rossi-Landi (1974); E. Veron (1973, 1983), A. Wilden (1980); and M. Angenot (1985).
6. Among the possibilities suggested by Cros's analysis is that of plotting the prevalence of reproduction, perversion, and subversion as a given discourse ages. Cros's selected texts form a generic progression concurrent with the dying out of subversive ideological relations as they are dominated by 'social practice'. This seems suggestive of the ideological fatigue experienced by aging genres in general.
7. For a review of the theories of Talcott Parsons, see Black (1976). The chapters by Black ('Some questions about Parsons' theories', pp. 268–288) and Hacker ('Sociology and ideology', pp. 289–311) are particularly pertinent.
8. See Black (1962: 211). Aspects of Black's model of meaning are open to the same critiques that Austin and Searle have made of similar systems, but space does not permit an examination of this issue.
9. 'Three removes are as bad as a fire' is still recognized in its reproductive form by some residents of farm states, such as Iowa and Nebraska.
10. The similarity between the values created on the semiotic square of A.-J. Greimas and those at the basis of Boolean algebra is striking; however, while Greimas's grid is limited by its geometry to four positions, Boolean logic has extended its range with new operators to account for constructions of implication and suggestion.
11. See White (1973: 5–42).
12. Kevin Starr (1985) provides invaluable background on the arts and crafts movement of the Pasadena 'Arroyo Culture', which formed Chandler's cultural life from 1912 to 1933.

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