# Metaphor in Focus

# Metaphor in Focus:
# Philosophical Perspectives on Metaphor Use

Edited by

Elisabetta Gola and Francesca Ervas

CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS
PUBLISHING

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This book first published 2013

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library



ISBN (10): 1-4438-4468-3, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-4468-0

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# A PHILOSOPHICAL GUIDE TO METAPHOR USE

ELISABETTA GOLA AND FRANCESCA ERVAS

> There is no more reason why the features belonging to a picture should be distorted for the purpose of such imaginative suggestion than that the poet's metaphors should spoil his words for the ordinary uses of man.
> (William H. Hunt)

This volume is a philosophical guide on metaphor use. Foregoing research concerning metaphors has focused on either the theoretical-linguistic problems or the uses in specific research fields. Although these domains share some common interests, there has been little cross-communication. On the one hand, theoretical studies on metaphor have often been "empty" as they failed to present actual examples of metaphor use and its features in different domains. On the other hand, research on the use of metaphor in specific fields has often been "blind", as no in-depth theoretical analysis of metaphor use was presented. The aim of this volume is to bridge the gap between the theoretical and the empirical side of the research on metaphor use. Therefore, while adopting a theoretical-philosophical point of view, the volume also presents the interdisciplinary connections between philosophy and other scientific areas such as linguistics, cognitive science, discourse analysis, communication studies, didactics, economics, arts and political science. Thus, the volume presents a broad focus on metaphor and is composed of ten chapters. The first chapter deals with a historical reconstruction of the use of metaphor in different socio-political and religious contexts. The leading contemporary theories of metaphor are discussed from both a pragmatic and a cognitive perspective in the second and third chapters. The following seven chapters aim to show how metaphor is used in various domains with particular regard to its use in novels, advertising, financial reviews, education, web documents, discourse analysis, and sign systems.

In the first chapter *Metaphor in the Collective Imaginary*, Fabio Tarzia argues that metaphor has been primarily used to build a "collective imaginary." For example, metaphors assist in creating a boundless

communication system that represents the cultural identity of a community. Tarzia focuses his attention on the notion of "space," conveying the double meaning of "internal" and "external" space. Each community modulates this notion through the dynamics of the social structure. According to Weber (1904), for instance, the notion of space is represented in different ways depending on the historical developments of religion, one of the most important human structures of knowledge. Tarzia proposes an in-depth analysis of Weber's idea, explaining how three different collective imaginaries, the Calvinistic-Puritanical, the Jewish and the Catholic, have made reference to metaphors of space in order to express their religious identity. From the Calvinistic-Puritanical point of view, the outer darkness metaphor represents the initial discovery of an already predestined future of either salvation or damnation. In this way, the island that Robinson Crusoe lands on is a metaphor of a new identity. In other words, the island is a space proving that he is predestined to salvation. From the Jewish point of view, the metaphor of being between light and darkness represents the passage from slavery to freedom. At the same time, this metaphor entails both the risk of being ghettoized and the need to be accepted by other "nations." As for the Catholic point of view, the metaphor of the inner darkness represents the absence of God in one's soul. Due to this absence, a Christian may be driven to look for Christ in the outer world. The space is further modulated to signify the difficulty people have in recognizing God inside themselves and in the outer world.

In the second chapter, *The Pragmatics of Metaphor Use*, Francesca Ervas and Elisabetta Gola discuss two main theoretical frameworks for metaphor analysis: Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual theory of metaphor (1980) and Sperber and Wilson's relevance approach to metaphor understanding (1986). Both theories are important landmarks in theorizing the mechanism of metaphor use. According to the conceptual theory, metaphor is considered not only as a linguistic phenomenon, but also a universal, cognitive one. From the conceptual view, our personal thoughts follow a metaphorical structure and are therefore metaphorical in nature. Lakoff and Johnson have been criticized for their conceptual reduction, which brought the need for a re-assessment of the linguistic component of metaphor use. On the one hand, corpus-based linguistics has provided an empirical answer to this criticism by showing the linguistic-cultural bias on metaphor understanding. On the other hand, the relevant-theoretic approach has embraced this challenge and indicated that metaphor use is not a "special" linguistic phenomenon, but rather the result of a pragmatic process of meaning modulation. Nowadays Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory is studied for the socio-cultural oriented approaches,

which considered alternative routes to metaphor understanding (Carston 2002, 2010), such as the reference to images.

In the third chapter, *Modelling Metaphor Use*, Lucia Morra focuses on Carston's recent thesis on metaphor understanding (Carston 2002). For Morra, the linguistically encoded concept of metaphor comprehension is adjusted, thereby producing an "ad hoc" concept. In other words, by either narrowing or loosening the concepts, we can access the "explicature," which is an enriched structure of the non-literal expression according to contextual expectancies of relevance. In a recent paper, Carston (2010) slightly modified her model of language understanding for it to be responsive to certain psycholinguistic findings. Morra argues that the neural bilateral model of language understanding proposed by Jung-Beeman (2005) could be of interest for linguistic approaches having a contextualistic view, such as Carston's approach. According to Morra, Jung-Beeman's model could be joined with Carston's account of metaphor use together with Giora's hypothesis of graded salience (Giora 2003). From one point of view, when lexicalized metaphors are processed, their salient (figurative) meaning might be recognized as the most relevant. Following Jung-Beeman's model, in the processing of lexicalized metaphor, the left hemisphere (LH) could occupy the main role and the necessary adjustment would be minimal. From another point of view, when metaphors are not lexicalized, the adjustment required would be greater and would involve more contribution from the right hemisphere (RH). The RH could indeed add detail to the images having literal meanings. As the incoming linguistic stimuli are being decoded, the LH produces further derivation from the global "literal" representation and the LH further selects the pragmatic inferences.

The fourth chapter, *Metaphor Use in the 19th Century Novel,* is a work on social functions of literature with particular attention given to the genre of novels. Emiliano Ilardi and Alessio Ceccherelli examine the role of metaphors in the context of Marshall McLuhan's sociological approach (McLuhan 1994). According to McLuhan, art – and especially literature – is a medium and thus a symbolic form. That is to say it is a metaphor that directly or indirectly translates one form of human experience into another. To this basic cognitive function McLuhan adds the specificity of artistic media as being "prophetic." In this added function, metaphor appears to have a peculiar role. Through the simulating power of literary metaphors, readers gain a certain kind of familiarity with the transformations even before they are fully accomplished. An example is given by late nineteenth-century poetry ranging from those composed by the symbolists to those by the historical avant-garde. Such poetry

undermined the linear, logical structure of the literary text, anticipating cognitive-perceptual structures of the new electronic media. To achieve this effect the authors argue that a sort of ethical imagination must be created to mediate between an escape through fantasy and a necessary discipline of the ability to fantasize, as opposed to the Fordist rationalization. In doing so, the novel finally seems able to unify these ideas so as to create a new paradigm of production that will fully emerge only at the end of the twentieth century.

The fifth chapter, *Metaphor Use in Advertising*, written Paula Pérez Sobrino, is a survey on the relation between metaphor and metonymy through the study of *greenwashing* campaigns in advertising discourse. The analysis is focused on the way meaning is constructed in a multimodal context. Metaphor and metonymy, indeed, are found to play a significant role in the construction and development of advertising discourse. In the considered example, Pérez Sobrino shows that *greenwashing* campaigns make use of green marketing in order to promote a misleading perception that company policies or products are environmentally friendly. This powerful chain of inference is mostly due to metonymy, which only in recent years has perked researchers' interest and caused focus to be more frequently placed on metaphor. Another original aspect of Sobrino's study of conceptual metaphor is related to the fact that research about metaphors in advertising has been extremely focused on verbal manifestations of this trope, while other modes such as visual and audio-visual, which merge in multimodal contexts, still remain largely unexplored. Hence, in this chapter, the link between cognition and persuasion is discussed by exploring the connections between metaphor and metonymy in a multimodal context (Forceville 1996).

In the sixth chapter, *Metaphor Use in Financial Reviews*, Luisanna Fodde and Olga Denti aims to analyse how business discourse may be affected by emerging crisis phenomena. The proposed research refers mainly to the 2004-2010 world financial crisis and is based on a corpus comprising of a series of EU financial stability reviews published between these dates. The chapter aims to answer the following question: how is the 2004-2010 world financial crisis reflected in or deviated by language metaphors and metaphorical patterns? The two types of analysis, quantitative and qualitative, highlight the metaphorical density that is typical of business discourse as it undergoes systematic and dramatic changes in the presence of financial turmoil. It also highlights the textual/linguistic, discursive and genre-specific elements present in the examined corpus. The issue of metaphors and metaphoric language in business and financial discourse has been investigated thoroughly over the

last years (Gotti 2003; Kövecses 2005). Metaphors have been shown to belong to this type of discourse, in which the dramatic force of the events discussed is particularly salient and may trigger further interest and satisfaction on the part of the audiences involved. The same also happens when the authors try to give a multimodal perspective of the analysis, showing how the visual elements presented in the texts enhance comprehension and cohesion. The study emphasizes that lexical choices follow the same trend and patterns as financial events.

In the seventh chapter, *Metaphor Use in Politics*, Stefano Di Pietro conducts a case study devoted to the domain of politics. He analyses the impact that multimedia and technological development have had in the political use of metaphors. Due to modern mass media, politicians are regarded in a different scope, representing every aspect of their political actions and personal life. Di Pietro describes how the enhanced panorama of political communication is viewed from an electorate's eyes. This is done, for example, by showing a gesture in a photograph, a spot on the television or any other image that may have an important role in the deep semiotic processes of the viewer. Instruments and theories giving light to a number of phenomena concerning political communication have been analysed through several case studies taken from recent events in Italian and American politics. In particular, Luigi Bersani's and Barack Obama's communication strategies are both compared using conceptual metaphors as a tool to compare the differences and similarities in their communicative choices. The use of metaphor is also considered from an emotional viewpoint and their influence on the decision-making process is illustrated. Together with insights from Cognitive and Mind Sciences, they enhance our understanding of the phenomena at stake.

In the eighth chapter, *Metaphor Use in Education*, John Wade analyses the language of education in a similar way as conceptual metaphor has been. The theoretic framework is indeed Lakoff's conceptual metaphor approach (Lakoff and Johnson 1980), with particular attention to the idea that metaphor pervasively affects our subconscious thinking. Among the conceptual metaphors, Wade conducts an analysis around the schema EDUCATION IS A JOURNEY, which hypothetically could be interpreted as a rough path that leads to a pre-established, institutionalised destination. A corpus-based analysis is then presented to evaluate this hypothesis. In the second stage of the procedure, a number of keywords are associated with the concept of JOURNEY. With the help of a dictionary of synonyms, a thesaurus and a KWIC concordance, the frequency of non-metaphorical meanings and metaphorical meanings related to JOURNEY are estimated. The research showed different patterns describing EDUCATION as a

JOURNEY. A few examples include "being on the wrong track," "going down well-worn tracks," or the idioms with "way" and "course." The initial results and the corpus-based method, along with the cognitive semantics approach, are noteworthy for both its linguistic and pedagogical implications.

In the ninth chapter, *Metaphor Use in the Web*, Maurizio Galluzzo explores perhaps the most pervasive and successful metaphor of our computational machines: the metaphor of the window. This metaphor has indeed been the basis of the user interfaces on our computers for over 30 years. However, "the window" represents a projected plan of perspective lines or a defined and fenced place to which we can turn our attention. When computers' graphical user interface was introduced, we returned to the oldest definition of space: the window, inside which anything can happen, but can be endlessly replicated. Moreover, even though windows are seemingly and endlessly replicated on the outside, it is always contained inside other windows. Galluzzo explains that the fascinating historical origins of the metaphor are found in famous painters, such as Piero della Francesca, Pietro Perugino and Leon Battista Alberti, who strongly influenced the Western visual culture. Yet he also points out how this visual structure in its turn influences the use of visual metaphors on the web, by explaining how the "new sheet of paper to write on" – i.e. the man-computer interface – is conceived. In doing so, Galluzzo shows that not only have metaphors been used to build a virtual space on the web, but also that the web in itself can be considered a metaphor of our contemporary vision of the world.

The tenth chapter, *Metaphor Use in Discourse Analysis*, written by Giorgio Cozzolino, is a research proposal for analysing errors in metaphor use. According to Cozzolino, recurring mistakes in metaphor use can be exploited as a test to identify some semantic features of these conventional uses. In analysing the discourse of everyday life, several examples are given, ranging from both personal communication and communication via media (radio, TV, web, etc.). Cozzolino proposes an analysis of two kinds of mistakes in metaphor use: hybrid metaphors and reframed metaphors. The former combines a *primary meaning* (stemming from a non-literal expression) with a *secondary incoherent* one (originating from another non-literal expression) leading to a potentially ambiguous interpretation. The latter involves the partial local modulation of a non-literal expression, displaying a different image of the non-literal expression used. Unsurprisingly, preliminary results show that correct conventional metaphors are more easily recognized than mistaken metaphors. The analysis of the collected data also shows that conventional metaphors lose their effect over time

according to the different mistaken uses and/or contexts of use. As a less predictable outcome, participants' answers also show a weak familiarity with common ways of speaking, even in the case of correct and conventional metaphors. Another notable result is that even native speakers do not always share the meaning of widespread conventional metaphors.

In the eleventh chapter, *Metaphor Use in Sign Systems*, Valentina Cuccio and Sabina Fontana attempt to integrate the cognitive linguistic theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) and the relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986) in order to provide a comprehensive explanation of metaphor use. Cuccio and Fontana do not consider these two theories of metaphor use as being in opposition. In particular, they focus their analysis on sign systems, considering and comparing both metaphors and metonymies, in order to show that these two theoretical frameworks could interrelate in providing an explanation of non-literal language use. Therefore, Cuccio and Fontana present a two-step model in which the conceptual, cognitive-linguistic theory supplies an explanation of the neural and embodied levels, while the relevance theory gives an explanation of socio-cognitive abilities, such as Theory of mind. In typical development, these two steps of metaphor understanding, despite the fact that they develop consecutively, often work together. By comparing home sign systems and conventional sign systems, Cuccio and Fontana demonstrate that in home sign systems there is only the first embodied level of metaphor. These are metaphors of orientation, i.e. metaphors fabricating a whole system of concepts in correlation with the action of our body in the world. Moreover, orientational metaphors seem not only to be embodied but also cross-linguistically similar, exactly because they are based on human physical interaction with the world. The same kind of metaphors could indeed be found in the hearing community's gestures and in the deaf community's sign language. However, no inferential metaphors were discovered because they require a wide social community, a common cultural background and a shared language. In other words, a full production and comprehension of inferential metaphors would require a second level, which would be a more pragmatic oriented process of interpretation and could be responsible for the integration of the communicative intention with more socio-cultural specific cues of the context.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the authors of the chapters of this volume, for their willingness to improve their work. We thank the members of the Italian Association for Metaphor Studies (Carla Bazzanella, Claudia Casadio, Marco Casonato, Lia Formigari, Elena Gagliasso, Pietro Storari, Daniela Veronesi). We are also grateful to the Department of Pedagogy, Psychology and Philosophy and the Faculty of Human Sciences, as well as the School of Communication Science of the University of Cagliari for the collaborative environment and support. Special thanks to Dominic Thompson for having carefully revised the overall manuscript.

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# CHAPTER ONE

# METAPHOR IN THE COLLECTIVE IMAGINARY

## THE INTERPRETATION AND REPRESENTATION OF SPACE IN THE CALVINIST, JEWISH AND CATHOLIC WORLDS

FABIO TARZIA

## Introduction

The imaginary may be described as a great communications system, circular in nature, which brings out (and then brings out again) the radical archetypes underlying a given cultural identity. To be able to be communicated and hence be used for their main purpose (that is, to construct and adapt itself to the historical processes of a given "community"), they must first of all be "formalized", and hence expressed within a media environment.

Let me give one example. The basic human drive of the relationship between finiteness and immortality has, from the earliest times, been dealt with and partially solved with the idea of God. But in order to be known, this idea needs a metaphor which expresses it (the "sun", the "father of the gods", the "old man with a beard" etc.). Metaphors are therefore the essential link between the archetypical levels and the media which communicates them.

"Space" occupies a particular position within this scheme of things. Particularly the relationship between internal and external space, as Juri Lotman has shown, as one of the fundamental structures through which Man acquires an identity (Lotman 1975). Drawing on this idea of cultural semiotics, for example, Carlo Ginzburg drew a basic borderline between a hunting culture and an agricultural culture (Ginzburg 1986).

Looking at this from the sociological point of view, Manuel Castells (who elaborated a fully-fledged social theory of space) described space as "the expression of society (but not its) reflection: It is not a photocopy of society. It *is* society… The spatial forms and processes are made up of the

dynamics of the global social structure including the contradictory trends brought about by conflicts" (Castells 2002, p. 471).

From the point of view of media studies, lastly, for Marshall McLuhan space is the extension of the body. It is by treating this space that individuals communicate and defend themselves, according to an approach which might be called the mediology of space (McLuhan, 1964). If the media are essentially "environments", then "spatial forms and processes" which derive from the dynamics of the social structure, are also, and perhaps mainly, media expressions. The questions to be asked, then, are: does there exist a standard treatment of space that is capable of defining particular cultures in respect of others? And the counter-question: does there exist a metaphorical system connected to individual cultures that is able to bring out this archetypical self-definition? But how does one set out along such a complex pathway?

Is it not perhaps the case that the founding fathers of Sociology, and primarily Weber, attempted to perform the operation of the historical definition of cultures via religion, as the most typically human cultural structure, the most all-embracing, the most powerful of all? The reasoning I am setting out here is a brief explanation of how three different imaginaries, the American, the Jewish and the Catholic, express themselves and their identity by reference to a fundamental spatial archetypical structure: the relationship between internal space and external space, which Lotman had defined as In/Es. The reasoning takes up a number of fundamental and essential metaphors through which this archetypical level is formalised, and is based on the assumption that the essence of each of the imaginaries is religious: Calvinistic-Puritanical, Jewish, and Catholic-Christian (Tarzia 2009).

I am not trying to argue that the American and the Catholic worlds are only this. But it is obvious that such complex and ancient histories and cultures cannot be "confined" in a discourse covering only a few pages, which is inevitably somewhat schematic. I would refer the reader to more wide-ranging works that are in the press for a complete treatment of the subject. But here I would like to begin by setting out a few essential features.

## 1. The first metaphor: the outer darkness

In 1719 Daniel Defoe published his masterpiece, Robinson Crusoe. Even though the question has been quite thorough debated already, it is hard not to read into the text a puritanical ideological base (Watt 1937). Indeed, his stay on the island might be construed as a kind of re-education

in Puritanism. For Robinson was shipwrecked after having sailed away in search of fortune against the better judgment of his father, a wealthy landowner living off his assets. Two equally mistaken ideals: being an adventure on the one hand, and living off landed property, on the other: the island offers the possibility of a third way, that of a new identity.

Building up the relationship between the individual and space is dealt with brilliantly in the book. Robinson is terrorized by the outside space even when he discovers that it is not infinite but circumscribed. He devotes a great deal of time to building an impregnable fortress for himself, resting against a cliff side, in which he excavated a cave as a store room. At this point he appears to have everything he needs: he could farm the land around him and live quite well. But he cannot. He then begins to timidly explore the island. He moves around during daylight, returning to base every day, and over the course of months and years, he sets up places where he can stay over and which he can easily reach: a pavilion in the centre of the island, a fence, the cave with the treasure etc. His true satisfaction, even after being away for some time, is always the possibility of returning home. In the earliest construction of Calvinistic Puritan space we can recognize a simple mapping: a home, a path through the external space, with safe and secure stages, and a return to the starting point.

What does this movement refer to in metaphorical terms? To the Puritan mind the individual is predestined to salvation or damnation. A person who is "saved" does not need to establish contact with others and the world outside – indeed this should be avoided. But they cannot avoid moving out and moving around the world. According to Weber (Weber, 1094-1905) we must "discover" that we have been predestined by God, and the only real way to do this is by being successful. Robinson Crusoe transformed his island into an extremely rich possession; in other words, he demonstrated that he was the "chosen one". But this movement (the expression of the Alliance, of which we can still see the consequences today, between capital and the religious system) cannot be an end in itself: it is solely to clarify the relationship between that individual and God. In other words, it is pure production without consumption (according to the earliest Puritanical pattern which lasted for about a century, and then only in America). This is why Robinson Crusoe returns home: because inside his fortress, after having moved around outside, he can talk directly to God (opening the Bible at random, or through evident manifestations of God's goodness, such as the corn seeds thrown on the ground which miraculously bear fruit).

This "Robinsonian" organization of space becomes creative: enclosed and protected spaces, with a sharp separation against the outside world and

its inhabitants, predestination, a direct relationship with God, going out, travelling following a set route, and then returning home.

Let us now imagine that we are entering the Bronx, today. At the Yankee Stadium the home team, the Yankees, are playing the Detroit Tigers. It would seem to be a perfect ritual representation of the movement I have just described: the only sport which makes provision for a return to base/home (and not simply violating the goal or the basket or the opposite team's area). The batter alone, threatened by the pitcher, hits the ball and runs through dangerous territory (in which he can be touched and eliminated by the defenders lined up by the opposing team) until he arrives safely back at base. After the second batter has started running, he will leave the second base and then head for the third base. The strategic aim is to return home (and hence score points) from whence he had departed. If what Roger Callois and Victor Turner say is true (Callois 1967; Turner 1982), it is as if we were witnessing (week after week) confirmation of a profound identity through a collective ritual in that stadium.

But this confirmation not only comes about in the "ordinary" ritual time, namely by being repeated "daily", but perhaps above all in exceptional times and states. Let us just take two examples: America's wars and space ventures or – as is logical – the way they have been mythologized and narrated.

In most of America's war stories, from the first 17th-century Indian wars to the Second World War, and today's wars (including their smallest variants, such as commando operations to free a hostage or kill an enemy), the very essence is getting out, eliminating the external threat, and returning home. "Bring our boys home" is one of the standard phrases in United States movies. The great adventure of Apollo 11 was prophesied by Kennedy as an operation that would put a man on the moon, touch the soil of our satellite, and "return home safe and sound": Kennedy's new frontier did not take the form of a wide-ranging movement to conquer space, but a "commando" action, of re-consecration, envisaged within the atmosphere of a "space race" typical of the "Cold War" in which Korea and Vietnam functioned as great movements of "re-consecration". It was about leaving the world and casting out into space to demonstrate that America was fighting a just war, to confirm that it was the "chosen" nation, but then to return "home", to the place where God speaks to his people.

The examples could continue *ad infinitum*. There are two points to be noted. The first is that it is not, of course, purely and simply a modern rehashing of the Puritanical essence of its origins, but an underlying settled structure that is constantly reused and adapted. From the earliest Puritanism, these "processes" retained their essential "ideological"

structure: predestination, distinction, "manifestation". And it is precisely baseball which suggests the second adjustment: these processes are not immutable; in other words, their functions are adjusted. The Vietnam war used the return structure without being able to explicate it any more: the Marines could no longer "purify" the realm of the "dark force" and so they did not return home (from the ideal point of view), as if the sign of "distinction" they had gone out to seek was no longer being given to them. Hollywood operated here for the first time to offer a critical viewpoint: works like Michael Cimino's *The Deer Hunter* (1978) and Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979) worked precisely around the idea that any such return had now become impossible. Here we are not talking simply about an imaginary which "reflects" an event (the defeat in Vietnam) but on the contrary an artistic reworking, based on the event of the war without a return home, reasoning around the fact that the ancient identity structure, of which we have spoken, has tragically revealed its total impotence in the face of a historical reality that has now changed.

I anticipate, and wish to respond to, other objections. This story is primordial: for example, it is clearly expressed in Propp's analysis of the Russian fable about magic (the damaged hero, leaving on an adventure, going into the ogre's lair, kills it, frees a hostage and returns home). Of course the narrative structure is archetypical, but in the world of fable studied by Propp there is the whole ideal driving force of sedentary agricultural civilization which, through the story, performed an exorcism guaranteeing the security of the stability that had just recently been achieved. The story is archaic, but its use can be adapted, and in the Anglo-American case, it takes on a completely different "religious" value as we have already seen.

The second objection is linked to the fact that we are also accustomed to another aspect of the American world contrary to what I have just described: the out-reaching attitude, conquering new frontiers and the world, without fear and attack syndromes, in which space offers an opportunity and is not seen as a threat (Ilardi 2009). Yet the thesis underlying our argument is precisely that the load-bearing structure of the American imaginary is built upon an intertwining of these two identities: the Puritanical and the frontier, closed and open, syndrome and the conquest of space. One seems to need the other within a simple, essential system which apparently seems to have been decisive (as history shows) in the pursuit of world hegemony. At all events, markets (for consumption) are not only conquered with weapons but also by using the imaginary. When the US troops entered Rome after the fall of Mussolini on 4 June, 1944 they were greeted by crowds, who were delirious not only because

they were celebrating the end of the war, but also because the seal was being set on that tragedy by "old friends", the good super-heroes and the cowboy avengers that the Italians had learned so well to recognize through the cinema and cartoons which not even Fascist censorship had succeeded in keeping out.

## 2. The second metaphor: between light and darkness

Jerusalem, 7 June, 1967, 9:45 am. Israeli Sherman tanks firing at ground level at the Lions Gate. Captain Zammush and Commander Motta Gur and his paratroopers race breathlessly along the Via Dolorosa, being shot at by the Jordanian-Arab riflemen. They reach the front of the Temple Mount and do not know how to reach the Wailing Wall below. They ask an old Arab to help them, and he directs them: they break down an old wrought iron gate, run down some steps and find themselves in the narrow area between the Wall and the hovels in the Maghreb quarter.

There is an extraordinary photograph showing the phases immediately following the moment in which these first Israeli squads reached that point. As Robert Darnton has shown, (Darnton 1984) it is by looking at something past, an episode, a detail which appears incomprehensible, that one finds the key to "other" mentalities. Looking closely at this photograph, it is interesting to see the faces, the joyful expressions of course, but also the bewilderment of the Israeli soldiers. I am sure that it was specifically about this episode that Abraham Yehoshua was thinking when he wrote one of the episodes in his masterpiece, Mr Mani (Yehoshua 1990). The characters in the novel, which is set in 1899, Ephraim and Linke Shapiro with Doctor Mani, travel to Jerusalem, and Ephraim in particular, on reaching the Wailing Wall is overcome, just like the soldiers in 1967 when faced with what he calls the "last station of history", which struck for its simplicity and originality, which

> make any false promises or foster any illusions. It is a last stop of history, no less than that board in the train station - a blank wall with no open-sesames or hidden crypts. What more can I tell you, Father? What else? It is perhaps the ultimate dam… (Yehoshua 1992, p. 265)

…for Jews, but this is also where a reverse resurrection takes place: not from the diaspora to Jerusalem, but from Jerusalem to the diaspora, from the wall of Zion to the remote village in Poland in which he was born and where he was told about this story:

> the Christians would rise from their graves where they were, but we Jews would crawl through underground caverns and come out in the Land of Israel... which is just what I've been doing these past few days, but in the opposite direction – from there to here – cavern-crawling and turning over in many graves – as though travelling not upon the globe but deep beneath its surface – with the coaches groaning and the locomotive wailing and smoke and soot and great showers of sparks by night – from tunnel to tunnel and from one remote station to another - each time the same flicker of gas lamps, and the same onrush of blackness, and then the same total nothing – and where you looked in the foggy distance, our flour mills standing like titans - talk of resurrection! I am happy, Father; why, we nearly came to grief... (Yehoshua 1992, p. 209)

And it is precisely this return to the diaspora which provokes the tragedy. Doctor Mani, who has begged Ephraim to leave him at least his sister Linka, a fervent Zionist, commits suicide. The diaspora is Yehoshua's real problem. He views it as a neurosis, a constant wavering between dispersion and the centre, a mechanism which deliberately prevents him from deciding between religion and the nation: are Jews defined by reference to their land (like every other people) or their religion (regardless of the place)? For Yehoshua, the solution is simple: to become a normal state, in which citizenship is established by the passport and not by the religion (Yehoshua 2004).

What could have left the Israeli soldiers open-mouthed if not the unconscious, almost primordial conception, of the end of that wavering?

Let us look at it from another point of view. According to Stefano Levi Della Torre (Levi Della Torre 1995) polemically at odds with Yehosha, the diaspora, the constellation of identities dispersed throughout the world, is the true Jewish identity. It is its extraordinary mechanism which enabled the oldest people in the world to survive for 2000 years. The linchpin of the diaspora is the community "gathered together" in the ghetto: at night time the "enclosure" makes it possible to achieve the ideal link with the centre, with Jerusalem; while opening the gates in the morning, makes the opposite possible: economic and cultural integration with the various "host" nations (Zanini 1997).

Wavering between open and closed is therefore the essence of how to interpret space in the Jewish culture, its deep-seated archetypical structure. One should therefore ask whether there is justification for the concern shown by the Israeli soldiers before the Wall or before Yehoshua's character who hastily escapes back towards Poland.

And here is a first potential objection. Whether the mechanism is deep-seated or not, today the State of Israel exists; practically and symbolically, then, the diaspora should be finished. Are we sure of that? Yehoshua is

sceptical. For example, he interprets the settlements and the outposts in the West Bank that have increased in number in recent decades as a new kind of diaspora. The point is that one cannot easily wipe out a mental and cultural structure which has taken 2000 years to become rooted and entrenched.

For today, people talk very loosely about diaspora: Tunisians, Algerians, the whole of North Africa, Pakistanis and half the Middle East, are all viewed as travellers scattered throughout the world (Appadurai 1996). Sociologists of various extractions fill their mouths with this term. Perhaps we should agree on the language. Between the Jewish type and "today's" diasporas there are at least three essential differences. For nearly 2000 years (that is, for an incredibly long and hence "founding" time) the diaspora was total. No large Jewish communities existed any longer in Palestine, there was no longer any territory-based political and state authority (in Pakistan, for example, a state continues to exist, even though many of its citizens have been scattered throughout the world). That identity mechanism was therefore incorporated and deeply introjected: such as when a non-swimmer is thrown into deep water and is forced to learn how to float. And if that person remains in the water, not for a century but for two millennia, that person will move in the direction of full-fledged mutation. When the British took over the oceans in the 16th century, Carl Schmitt (Schmitt 1954) said that they "became fishes", and moved in the water as well as, and better than, on land. Lastly a third question. It has only been in the past few decades that the Jewish diaspora has used the mass media to link the various communities scattered throughout the world, and then only with difficulty. Amos Oz beautifully describes the traditional telephone call which his family made every three or four months from a pharmacy in Jerusalem to another pharmacy in Tel Aviv, where the relations all gathered and lived, after agreeing on the day and the time by letter: this was 1947, and that contact was still a great event (Oz 2002). For 1900 years the Jewish diaspora had neither a physical centre nor a possibility of linking the parties. In this sense the "mythologisation" and "imagination" of the central identity reached its highest level of expression. If there is not the slightest relationship, fantasising runs wild, as does virtualisation. The Pakistani or North African diasporas took place in practice when it became possible to maintain direct communication with the Homeland: in this way, integration with the "host" communities could be reduced to the minimum, while the Jews were "forced" to relate radically with those communities.

In other words, and I am not the only one who thinks so, perhaps Israel is simply one, even the most important one, of the stars in the immense constellation of the Jewish Diaspora: the wavering continues.

## 3. Third metaphor: the darkness within Mother Teresa

April 1961. Mother Teresa of Calcutta wrote her umpteenth letter to her spiritual director, the Jesuit Father Joseph Neuner. In it, she spoke of her terrible interior emptiness which had accompanied her for decades:

> Now Father -Since 49 or 50 this terrible sense of loss, this untold darkness, this loneliness, this continual longing for God, which gives me pain deep down in my heart. Darkness is such that I really do not see neither with my mind nor with my reason, the place of God in my soul is blank. There is no God in me, when the pain of longing is so great, I just long and long for God and then it is that I feel. He does not want me. He is not there. (Kolodiejchuk 2007, p. 217).

According to interpretations of Catholic mysticism dating back to St John of the Cross, the absence of God is the greatest gift which the Lord can give to his chosen ones. It enables them to share suffering, and hence love, to the full. Like the stigmata, the emptiness of God refers to the decisive moment of the resurrection, to the greatest doubt of the dying Jesus: "My God, my God why have you forsaken me?"

I would like to propose another interpretation here. The absence of God in the soul is exactly what drove Mother Teresa into the stinking alleyways of Calcutta and to look for the dying in the sewers. Christ is outside, in the world, and not inside the soul of those who believe in him: He is in the deeds of those who are seeking him (Kolodiejchuk 2007, p. 218). This explains those extraordinary words that have been reported so many times in recent years, but which only have any meaning if held up against what we have just read: "If I ever become a Saint – I will surely be one of "darkness." I will continually be absent from Heaven to lit the light of those in darkness on earth" (Kolodiejchuk 2007, p. 7).

Paradise resplendent, or the city of God described in the Apocalypse, all lit up and with the doors open, was not the ideal place for that little nun. She liked to go around the world, seeking "in the slums, or in dark holes, because that is where our Lord is always truly present". It is a kind of ecstasy of the space to be conquered. Unlike the syndrome for what is off the beaten track laid down by the inscrutable and pre-determining will of God which drove the Puritans, obscurity was essential to Mother Teresa, an opportunity to find God in the world and shed light on Him. The ecstasy of space is not an end in itself, but takes on meaning because it is a reconquest of the world in the more general pathway leading to God. The Catholic does not go home, or at least not to his little earthly home. The whole of a Catholic's life is a journey towards their true home, the house

of God, but this journey cannot be taken alone: one cannot even embark on it unless one imagines it performed in the company of all those whom one meets on the road and who join the company, as suggested by the great 16th century Jesuit missionary, Francis Xavier (proclaimed Saint in 1622) who decided to leave for India after having dreams of "carrying" an indigenous man on his shoulders.

And on the subject of travellers, let me take a dizzying leap backwards, by almost 2000 years. Luke's Gospel, chapter 24, *Emmaus*. This is the open, Pauline Gospel, in contrast to the apocalyptic and Essenese Gospel of Mark, and Matthew's Gospel of mediation. Two disciples are leaving Jerusalem, thinking that everything is over, that the crucified Christ has not risen. And on the way they meet a stranger who seems to know nothing, and they take him with them and invite him for supper. Here he breaks the bread and blesses the wine, and reveals himself for who he really is. And then he suddenly vanishes. This Scriptural text is normally interpreted as showing the difficulty that people have in recognizing God. But I would like to offer another interpretation. First of all, a beautiful disturbingly Catholic sensation which is the exact opposite to what Freud would theorize almost 2000 years later. It is not the acquaintance who becomes a stranger, but the stranger who makes himself known. If, therefore, Christ is everywhere, above all in places where he is not recognized, it is unthinkable to be able to keep him locked up overnight in a house awaiting the dawn: in other words, one cannot hope to expect eternal life, waiting for the Reaper to do his final task of separating the wheat from the tares, while remaining safe, pretending that outside there is nothing. Christ disappeared just as he disappeared in the soul of Mother Teresa. Like Mother Teresa, the disheartened and despairing disciples left the protective walls behind them to return to Jerusalem, and then to spread out through all the pathways of the world in search of other unknown people who "concealed" Christ within them.

In this case too, I can imagine one possible objection. This "open" Christianity of ecstasy and of world conquest belongs only to a small part of the history of the Church. In the first five centuries, when the homogeneity of the Roman Empire made it possible for the faith to spread, or in the "Jesuitical" period of the Counter-Reformation, with the attempt to spread the word in every part of the reachable world, or, later, ideally, in the age of Vatican II. For the rest of Western history, the whole of the Middle Ages until the 16th century, and then until the end of the 17th century until practically today, the Church and the Catholic community seemed closed in and encircled, sometimes with apocalyptic features. Has Mark prevailed over Luke? The Essenes over Paul? What is most

genuinely Catholic? In my opinion, if Catholic Christianity is built up and builds itself up as a universalistic religion there can be no doubts. It can become tactically inward-looking to survive, but if it permanently cuts itself off strategically, it will die.

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# CHAPTER TWO

# THE PRAGMATICS OF METAPHOR USE

## FROM THE CONCEPTUAL VIEW TO THE RELEVANCE-THEORETIC PERSPECTIVE

FRANCESCA ERVAS AND ELISABETTA GOLA

## Introduction

This chapter aims at presenting two main theoretical frameworks for metaphor use analysis: the conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) and the relevance approach to metaphor understanding (Sperber and Wilson 1986). The former has considered metaphor not only as a linguistic phenomenon, but also as a cognitive mechanism. On the one hand, corpus linguistics, as well as artificial intelligence, provides an empirical answer to the criticism for conceptual reduction in relation to the conceptual metaphor theory. On the other hand, the relevant-theoretic approach showed that metaphor is not "special," but rather the result of a pragmatic process of "narrowing" or "broadening" of the literal meaning. Interestingly, an alternative route to metaphor understanding has been proposed in the relevance-theoretic framework (Carston 2002, 2010), referencing images evoked in metaphor use.

## 1. The conceptual metaphor theory

The strongest theoretical framework for metaphor analysis of the last thirty years is perhaps cognitive semantics, developed by the Berkeley group, spearheaded by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. They outline the conceptual theory of metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) in which the main idea involves metaphors also being a cognitive phenomenon and not only a linguistic and rhetorical device.

This is not a novel idea to the history of western thinking, beginning with Aristotle (*Poetics*, *Rethorics*), through to the ancient rhetoric of Quintiliano (*Institutio oratoria*), and up to the more recent epistemological approach (Black, 1962). Nevertheless, the claim of the centrality of metaphors in language and thought is usually attributed to George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. Their work "Metaphors We Live By" (1980) together with previous thinking create a very large consensus around this perspective, generating numerous studies and consolidating the idea that metaphors should be viewed as a conceptual phenomenon. In "Metaphors We Live By," the theoretical manifesto of the conceptual metaphor theory is charted:

> Metaphor is for most people device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish – a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language. Moreover, metaphor is typically viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action. For this reason, most people think they can get along perfectly well without metaphor. We have found, on the contrary, that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, p. 3).

In establishing a strong relationship between our conceptual system and metaphor structures based on the idea that our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, Lakoff and Johnson oriented the research of the next two decades towards the semantic aspect of metaphors. Metaphor has been examined from different points of view, primarily through a semantic perspective including the themes of metaphors and representations, metaphor and truth, metaphor and understanding, etc.

Some pragmatic and communicative aspects are certainly included in the overall view. For instance, the everyday reality to which Lakoff and Johnson refer is constituted of human interactions: "The concepts that govern our thought are not just matters of the intellect" (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 3). Language, discarded as a secondary step in meaning construction, seems to in fact play a central role: "Since communication is based on the same conceptual system that we use in thinking and acting, language is an important source of evidence for what that system is like" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, p. 3).

Metaphors and metaphor understanding are not secondary, peripheral mechanisms in meaning definition processes. On the contrary, they represent the core of knowledge construction. Even if there is an extensive range of non-metaphorical concepts, most of the assumptions about literal meaning have been proven false from the idea that everyday language is

literal, through the definition in lexicon entries of dictionaries (considered literal) and to the correspondence theory of truth in the philosophy of language.

The conceptual metaphor theory disrupts these assumptions. Metaphor and metonymy represent rather the main mechanism involved in knowledge growth that traverses a combination of potentially isomorphic domains. A metaphor is indeed a cross-domain mapping in which a set of features of the source domain is mapped to a target domain. For example, the metaphor "AN ARGUMENT IS A CONTAINER" highlights some aspects of an argument revealed by the metaphorical expressions that are used to speak about arguments. Therefore, the linguistic side of this conceptual device is composed of the metaphorical expressions that refer to the conceptual metaphor. The following expressions are such examples (cfr. Lakoff and Johnson 1980, p. 92):

Your argument doesn't have much *content*
That argument *has holes in it*
Your argument is *vacuous*
I'm tired of your *empty* arguments
That conclusion *falls out of* my argument

Returning to literal meaning, dictionary entries do not include such explanations, but the direct experiences that emerge in interacting with our environment do. The container concept, for example, emerges directly as we "experience ourselves as entities, separate from the rest of the world – as containers, with an inside and an outside" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, p. 58).

Metaphors are necessary in grasping concepts, to which they impose a structure. Inferences in a certain domain can be applied and inherited only via metaphor. It could not be said: "His theory has a strong foundation" if we could not also navigate the following chain:

THEORY IS A CONTAINER – BUILDING IS A CONTAINER -> THEORY IS A BUILDING

No other alternative meaning – presumed literal – exists that can induce the same set of inferences. Well-fitted primary metaphors, in which the source domain is directly linked to the "real" world, are selected depending on parameters that can be condensed in the key concepts of experience and embodiment.

Considering a path that leads from direct experience to cultural metaphor, cognitive semantics identifies types of conceptual metaphors with varying distances to a literal standpoint. Those closest to the literal are *orientational metaphors*. They represent the first level of abstraction on the experience of spatial orientation, which organizes an entire conceptual system in terms of opposition, such as: up/down, front/back, in/out, deep/shallow, central/peripheral. Such metaphorical schemas are not arbitrary, but they strongly depend on the way in which our bodies are structured. Nevertheless, there is leeway for some cultural variation: "Not all cultures give the priority we do to up-down orientation. There are cultures where balance or centrality plays a much more important role than it does in ours" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, p. 24).

Going a step beyond orientation, our experience of physical objects and substances represents the basis by which we select parts of our orientation. Our experiences are then referred to by categorizing these parts, grouping them, quantifying them, in a word reasoning about them. By combining orientation with objects or substance we obtain other concepts, such as the container as an object and container as a substance:

> Bounded objects, whether, human beings, rocks, or land areas, have sizes. This allows us to be quantified in terms of the amount of substance they contain. Kansas, for example, is a bound area –a container- which is why we can say, "There's a lot of land in Kansas". Substances can themselves be viewed as containers. Take a tub of water, for example. When you get into the tub, you get into the water. (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, pp. 29-30)

Another case of ontological metaphor is personification, in which certain properties of humans are mapped into nonhuman entities, as in the expressions:

> This fact argues against the standard theories.
> Life has cheated me.
> Inflation is eating up our profits.
> His religion tells him that he cannot drink fine French wines.
> (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, p. 33)

In everyday language these kinds of expressions are pervasive, unconsciously used and spread throughout our arguments and conversations. This constitutes the background of an implicit set of schemas and beliefs from which new knowledge stems.