Thinking in Metaphors: Figurative Language and Ideas on the Mind

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In the field of human experience and meaning-making, metaphor occupies a very well-trodden cabbage patch, whose distinguishing feature is perhaps its wide, interdisciplinary relevance, as well as the prolific produce from this section of the garden. As an element of language, cognition, and literature, metaphor has been examined and theorized by linguists, literary scholars, philosophers, cognitive psychologists, and anthropologists, as well as writers who combine these disciplines into emerging distinct fields, such as cognitive linguistics. There are now several multi-disciplinary projects on metaphor running in the United States of America and the United Kingdom, with at least one devoted to the compilation of a master list of metaphors for the mind.[1] But despite the energetic study of metaphor, few areas of consensus have been reached, perhaps due to the broad range of expressions that can be called metaphoric and the different theoretical perspectives from which the topic is approached. When we interpret an expression like "the past is a foreign country" or "religion is the opium of the people", we are doing something quite complex and difficult to explain, even apart from recognizing these sentences as well-known quotations within defined ideological contexts (this intertextual dimension adds a further level of complexity which social scientists often do not address). Similarly, some theorists would refer to common or idiomatic expressions such as "she raised the stakes" or "he sold me a lemon" as metaphoric, even though few users would recognise them as such; others might call these "dead metaphors".

Once you start looking for them, metaphors seem to appear everywhere, even in the most pedestrian places, and the line between metaphoric and non-metaphoric language becomes increasingly difficult to draw. Indeed, many theorists deny this distinction altogether, despite the rather prevalent view that metaphor is some kind of tricksy use of language most appropriate to literary contexts, especially poetry. But recent research has raised the

possibility that we use metaphors not only to express ourselves in language, but also to formulate ideas: we think in metaphors. Some scholars continue to interpret metaphor primarily as a feature of language, while others now pursue it as a feature of thought. The relevance of theories of knowledge, the interpretation of discourse, and the importance of context have produced a now very complicated and variable set of considerations for this subject, which continues to attract a lot of interest and debate.

Within the often heated and conflicting discussion of the nature of metaphor – how it is to be understood theoretically and how it is processed practically – Jacques Derrida cut the Gordian knot by deciding it was impossible to produce a metaphorology as one cannot do so without recourse to metaphoric language and therefore the exercise becomes fruitlessly circular.[2] This deconstructionist view creates a false boundary around this very fuzzy category, as well as drawing upon the logical fallacy that one needs to be outside something in order to explain it, as if metaphor could be pinned down by somehow extricating discourse from its entanglements. After all, we cannot talk about language without language, and cannot get outside humanness in order to examine it, but this does not seem to impede investigation. This theory, as well as many others in the ether, ignores some important characteristics of linguistic development, as well as the role of communicative conventions in discourse processing. For example, is it really possible to draw a firm line between figurative and literal language? How important is the context when it comes to understanding metaphor?

Metaphor is usually defined as "a figurative expression in which a word or phrase is shifted from its normal uses to a context where it evokes new meanings".[3] These are meanings not predetermined by language, logic, or experience, but are somehow unexpected or incongruous with literal meanings. Metaphor is different from allegory, fable, irony, where the entire context, rather than some of the language, is figurative. Metaphor is said to be different from other figures in quality as well as degree, as it entails a "conceptual incongruity characterized by speaking of one thing in terms of another".[4] It is fundamentally different from the two figures with which it is most often associated, both of which also rely on verbal substitution: metonymy and synecdoche. In metonymy, the substitution has a basis in some actual or

perceived relationship, especially a symbolic one (e.g., "crown" for "king"). In synecdoche, the substitution is that of part of something signify the whole (e.g., "live by the sword"; "hired hands"). In both metonymy and synecdoche, there is a change in quantity and a conceptual connection which is missing from the metaphor.

Many theorists see metaphor as "an equivalence between terms taken from separate semantic domains";[5] a "transaction between contexts"; a "planned category mistake"; "an assimilation to each other of two networks of signification by means of an unusual attribution".[6] Metaphor occurs when we "take words out of their usual context and transfer their meaning to a new context"; but the relationship between contexts is a fraught issue.[7] We have cognitive scientists trying to describe what happens mentally during the processing of a metaphor; linguists describing how metaphoric meaning is captured within words or wordings; and philosophers describing how we create our mental world by means of metaphors. Some scholars believe that the metaphor cannot be paraphrased, that it creates a meaning which could not otherwise be expressed, and therefore "makes up for the imperfection of language, augments language".[8] This rather wide-spread belief is at odds with many current theories of language as constitutive of our reality rather than a tool whereby we may express already constituted thoughts. It is probably more fruitful to see that metaphor can create new conceptions as well as new expressions by producing an unexpected similarity: metaphor is a feature both of language and of thought. Samuel Johnson famously remarked that with metaphor you get "two ideas for one",[9] though whether that happens by means of the substitution, comparison, or interaction of ideas is still being debated.

The "two ideas for one" notion derives from the fundamental duality of the metaphor: the primary and secondary subject, called by various different names, which interact to produce the metaphoric idea. In a metaphoric expression, I.A. Richards calls the key (conventional) idea the "tenor" and the metaphoric part the "vehicle"; Max Black uses the distinction of "focus" (metaphoric word) and "frame" (rest of sentence).[10] Other theorists use slightly different terms, but most retain the two-part structure, which might be summarised graphically as:

All the world's	**a stage**	*people act in both places*
You are	**the apple of my eye**	*both are highly prized*
primary	secondary	*grounds* (similarity)[11]
tenor/topic	vehicle	
base	target	
frame	focus	
sentence	*figurative expression*	

Despite the slightly different terminology used, most theorists do believe that metaphor is a ubiquitous and important element of human language and thought, and, like all other aspects of natural language, is constantly being updated: new metaphors are coined and old ones die, losing their edge. The expression "dead metaphor" (some prefer "conventionalized metaphor") refers to the expression which has become so familiar as to signify straightforwardly, rather than by creating a linguistic tension out of recontextualisation. These metaphors may be interpreted directly not analogically. For example, to give someone a "leg up" the corporate ladder is so commonplace as to have become lexically frozen, and similarly "I am a rock", or "to beat about the bush" are now rarely used literally, the metaphoric meaning having become the dominant one. Much of our idiomatic language is derived from this source, and perhaps one of the greatest joys of historical linguistics is to discover contexts in which now dead metaphors were once alive and kicking, and to find the apparent conceptual origins of some of our expressions and compound words. Nietzsche memorably describes a dead metaphor as like "a coin of which the head is rubbed off of one side through use".[12] Looking at older forms of the language allows one to rediscover both sides of the coin and perhaps ascertain how long one of the sides has been rubbed smooth. Even though metaphors might have become lexicalized or normalized along the way, they still encode culturally specific constructions of concepts and regularized expressions, which can be transmitted across generations and cultures.

Paul Ricoeur's *The Rule of Metaphor* synthesises many of the ideas concerning metaphor up to the 1970s, suggesting that a discursive, semantic, rather than a semiotic process lies at the heart of the metaphor (i.e., taking the sentence, rather than the word, as the basic unit of reference

in the creation of meaning). He argues against the rhetorical theory which relies on the idea of the substitution of one word for another, positing instead an "interaction" theory of metaphor as a figurative mechanism for redescribing reality through a "split reference" (literal and second-degree references), where the metaphoric spark derives from the tension created by the co-existence of the two references. Once the tension becomes minimal, the metaphor loses its power, eventually becoming "dead" or conventional. For Ricoeur, the metaphor is untranslatable and carries new information (p. 87), through a kind of redistribution of meaning over the entire sentence (p. 122). "It redescribes reality" (22). He treats Black's exemplary metaphor, "man is a wolf," to explain how metaphor carries a new insight, not provided by either part separately, though he rejects Black's own interpretive metaphor of the filter or screen through which reality is reorganised by the metaphor.

Samuel Levin reverses Black's cause and effect of metaphor: rather than needing to adjudicate incompatible meanings, he thinks that when we interpret a metaphor, especially one in a literary context (he uses lyric poetry as his example), we reconceptualize the world, recategorizing existing schemas in order to fit in the metaphor. He says that, for a time at least, the reader's model of the world is changed to accommodate a literal interpretation of metaphor.[13] He claims that the reader has a stake in validating deviant sequences and of conceiving of the state of affairs literally: metaphor is achieved conceptually not linguistically. Many critics disagree, though it is widely understood that interpreting a metaphor involves a creative decoding process, including knowledge of the semantic system, as well as contextual and socio-cultural information. Although scholars disagree on the precise nature of the relationship, there is strong agreement that there is some "interdependency between culture and cognition".[14]

One useful way of looking at metaphor is as a means of developing new meanings for words: metaphor is an important way in which the semantic field of a word changes (so in one of the examples in my first paragraph, "he sold me a lemon", the word *lemon* can connote "car"). This is possible on account of the vagueness of language, and words' ability to acquire new additional meanings without displacing existing ones. Ricoeur develops

Roman Jakobson's idea of a word's "sensitivity to context" in the reduction of its polysemy in specific contexts,[15] by which he means that the clues provided by the surrounding words narrow the meaning potential of a single word to the most likely one. But over time, patterns of semantic usage develop, conventionalized patterns which are often overlooked or not sought by metaphor theorists and which freeze metaphorical and other expressions in combinations carried over fully-formed. Eve Sweetser, though, has argued that "the historical order in which senses are added to polysemous words tells us about the directional relationships between senses".[16] Most metaphor theorists do not take on board historical linguistics and so miss the opportunity of examining the process by which living metaphors die and new ones are born, which ones live on in suspended animation, and thereby how traditional or inherited metaphors influence the way we conceptualise the world and ourselves. This omission weakens the chance of resolving a major crux in the field, and one that is heavily discipline-based: whether metaphor is an element of language or thought. Ricoeur says that the metaphor "adds to the ways in which we perceive", creating a clash at the literal level, leading the reader to seek a meaning beyond that literal level (unless the metaphor is dead, in which case "cultural usage decides on the figurative sense of certain expressions").[17] Similarly, Black refers to this clash as the "interaction" of the two elements of the metaphor to create, rather than merely express, a new similarity; he argues that "some metaphors permit us to see aspects of reality that the metaphor's production helps to constitute".[18]

Susan Sontag makes the case even more plainly when she says "of course, we cannot think without metaphors".[19] She suggests that metaphors relating to illnesses (specifically for cancer and AIDS) are unhelpful, even disempowering, in that they disallow healthy thought processes. She is particularly scornful of the "military" metaphors used in talking about disease. She echoes some of the ideas of Enlightenment philosophers such as Hobbes and Locke, who expressed a loathing for metaphoric language and initiated a "plain style" movement, but Sontag's objection is pragmatic rather than aesthetic. It relies on the idea argued by other theorists that metaphors allow us to "structure our thinking, hiding some features of a phenomenon ... and highlighting others".[20] Metaphor may not transform

beliefs but the way we apprehend ideas and perceive situations. Thus, talking about "fighting a battle against cancer" may emphasize the conflict and the bodily destruction over other features which may aid recovery or promote acceptance. Like other recent theorists, Sontag assumes that metaphor is cognitive: an element of thought whereby our experience in the world is organized, and through which it is mediated.

Within the cognitive school of thought which sees metaphor as a figure of thought rather than a figure of speech (i.e., that the metaphor is already formed in the mind and merely expressed in language rather than being a verbally-produced comparison), the most influential theory is that put forward by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, first in *Metaphors We Live By*, and later in other publications, including most recently in *Philosophy in the Flesh*.[21] They argue that metaphors express deep-seated mental ways of organising thought. In this schema, the most important idea is that of the categorisation of thoughts into groups expressed through conventional metaphors. For example, there are many metaphors on the themes of "argument is war" ("he attacked my position", "I demolished his argument"); "life is a gambling game" ("I'll take my chances", "she had all the aces", "he is bluffing", "up the ante") and "the mind is a container" ("his memory was a sieve", "hold that thought"). Lakoff and Johnson show convincingly that such metaphors are pervasive in everyday speech and that these metaphors organize personal and social experience, that they condition our thought processes and systematically influence behaviour. That is, people actually think in terms of attack and so on, and this influences cultural norms, such as how business negotiations are handled.

The pragmatic approach of Lakoff and Johnson to language use and conceptual metaphors is helpful for understanding metaphor in use as a type of analogy, influential in shaping our mental lives. But there are two limitations to their method which are especially pertinent to the literary scholar: they do not address literary, idiosyncratic, or innovative metaphor use; and they do not look at the development of these metaphors or categories over time, or even ask where they might have come from. These omissions are problematic, as there is some evidence to suggest that some metaphoric categories in use today have significant biographies or past lives. Lakoff and Johnson fail to

consider the structure of knowledge at a cultural level, nor do they take into account cultural transmission. Also, the literary context provides some complicating features which disallow their findings from being generalized to this domain. When readers know they are reading literary texts, they mobilise special reading strategies and knowledge about literary discourses, which guide their perception processes and their interpretations of metaphor.[22] So, keeping in mind the idea that understanding metaphor in literature is a mental process which is part of literary reception, and that written texts provide a physical record of metaphoric expression that can be transmitted to later generations, we might interrogate the traditional element in metaphor by turning to some examples of metaphor use in a particular category domain: the mind. The remainder of the discussion will focus on the ways in which the mind is perceived and expressed metaphorically in literary and other contexts as a way of showing how cultural ideas are transmitted through metaphor. How we think is shaped by inherited expressions.

Recent research into mind-schemas suggests that the way the mind and its attributes and functions are understood is culturally specific to a high degree and varies across time and among societies.[23] Understanding metaphoric reference to the mind, therefore, is doubly fraught, and contingent upon highly variable processing strategies. The following discussion will situate an exploration of metaphors for the mind and its activities within some of the main intersections of these theories, in order to examine how popular notions of the mind and thought are reliant upon conventionalized and hugely traditional metaphors.

In metaphoric expressions about the mind and its activities, the inner life is understood and enunciated by recourse to basic, concrete, and widely recognisable metaphors, in terms of perception, motions, object manipulation, and eating. We say "I see" to indicate "I understand", and we talk of "wandering from the subject" and "grasping an idea" or "digesting information". The appeal of these metaphors in modern day English is their wide recognisability and their apparent appropriateness. Lakoff and Johnson claim that systematically related metaphors, such as those in the group "the mind is a container", structure our conceptual systems, perpetuating the apparent logicality of the central idea and determining how we think and

reason about phenomena such as thought.[24] For example, the metaphor of the mind as a container needing spring cleaning with compartments is found in a recent *Cathy* cartoon:
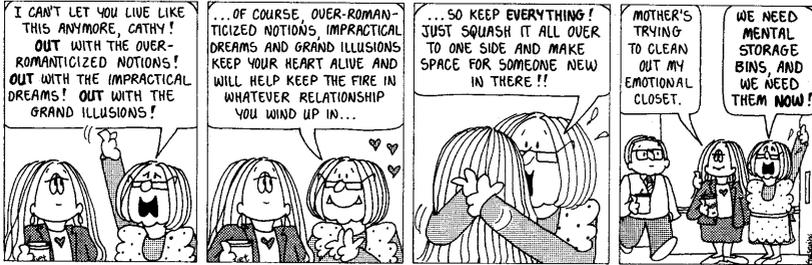
Cathy Guisewite, *I Am Woman, Hear Me Snore* (1998). CATHY © 1996 Cathy Guisewite. Reprinted with permission of UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE. All rights reserved.

In another familiar formulation, Horace Walpole recommends mental vigilance using a gardening metaphor: "When people will not weed their own minds, they are apt to be overrun with nettles."[25] We read and hear these sorts of container metaphors all the time, in all kinds of discourse contexts, not just literary or poetic ones, and they are so easy to construe that they usually pass without our notice or comment.

But these metaphors appear to be so logically appropriate precisely because they have become traditional, familiar, and widely used in English discourses since the Middle Ages. These constructions have helped to shape our popular conceptions of the mind or "folk psychology", and have been inherited, along with traditional expressions. The wide applicability and durability of these mind metaphors is demonstrated by the way that our most commonly used metaphors extend beyond regional or cultural boundaries and are not confined to the modern world. The familiar and the widespread metaphors of mind encode a conventional logic of inner experience, a repertoire of mental referents which can be deployed either rhetorically or pragmatically, and which are passed on through time in a variety of modes.

One prevalent metaphor in the Western tradition from the early Middle Ages to the present is the mind as a house or storage space, as we saw in the *Cathy* example. Like many of the mind metaphors, this one has scriptural, patristic, and scholastic resonances and has developed a range of expressive forms. This schema has generated a subset of metaphors expressing analogies concerning both storage and architecture, with nuances of preservation, cultivation, and organization, and is widely used in all kinds of discourse contexts. For example, when the character called Charles Xavier says in the second XMEN film, *X2*, "The mind is not a box that can be unlocked and opened, it is a beehive" (2003), he is invoking a heavily conventional metaphor of the mind as a compartmentalized container, in some instances a sort of multi-chambered nest, an idea with a long history. Similarly, the lyrics of Suzanne Vega's song "Soap and Water" (*Songs in Red and Gray*, 2001) refer to confusion as "a headful of bees".

There are many examples of mind metaphors like this one in texts from the fourteenth century onwards.[26] In Middle English literature, thoughts at times "fly", like doves to a bird-house, or cella.[27] John Gower uses the metaphor in his description of the site of wit and reason:

> The wit and reson which he can
> Is in the selles of the brayn. (*Confessio Amantis*, V.1462-63)[28]

Standard English dictionaries list the segments of the brain as a now obsolete denotation of cell,[29] though the idea of the segmented mind is still much in use, adapted to reflect a perceived analogy with the filing cabinet and the metaphorical filing system used in computer software.

Another variant on the "mind as container" metaphor is the idea of a site of growth (as in the Walpole example), in such expressions as "a fertile imagination", and "ferment a plan", even an "agonised womb of consciousness".[30] The gestation metaphor, like many others in modern usage, has a medieval precedent: "In the formest celle and wombe is ymaginacioun conformed an I-maad ... in the hindemest recordacioun and mynde" (Trevisa, *Bartholomaeus*, 39a/b). The reference to the mind or part of the mind as a womb is a rare but powerful metaphor found in the Wicliffite Bible and

other texts, and allied to the more general one of the mind requiring cultivation or nourishment. A fifteenth-century manual exhorts: "He etith this scripture – that is, beliveth, kepith and holdeth in mynde"; a sixteenth-century dedicatory verse uses the same metaphor: "Noble men that do endyte and rede / in bokes olde theyr worthy myndes to fede".[31] Both examples are based on the mental consumption metaphor from which our expressions such as "digest that information" and "chew on that idea" must derive.

Metaphors of the mind with variations on the traditional types occur in contemporary poetry as well as other contexts. For example, Bruce Dawe invokes the metaphor of the mind as a (limited) container of moving thoughts when he says in his poem "Flotsam":

> Memories! Flotsam sailing
> the clamped spaces of the skull.[32]

Here, the skull is employed synecdochically to stand in for the mind, and the metaphysical/physical distinction blurred. But the idea of thoughts as flotsam is a very old one. King James I of Scotland employs the same metaphor of random thoughts moving amidst the chaos of the mind as if on the high seas:

> Among thir thoughis rolling to and fro,
> Fell me to mynd of my fortune and ure.
>
> (*Kingis Quair,* 3.23, lines 64-65)

The notion of thoughts as moving within the space of the mind is also a common one. In his description of Troilus's recollection, Chaucer uses a related spiral metaphor to express the movement of thoughts in the mind, in combination with another common metaphor, that describing the mind as the wax tablet:

> And in his thought gan up and down to wynde
> Hire wordes alle, and every countenance,
> And fermely impressen in his mynde
> The leeste point that to him was plesaunce. (*Troilus,* III.1541-44)

Our expressions such as on "impressions on the mind", and "record in the memory" have precedent here.

As well as a wax tablet on which thoughts might be recorded, the mind has long been described as a treasure house of precious ideas. Chaucer uses this idea in one of his dream visions:

> O thought, that wrot al that I mette   *(made all that I dreamed)*
> And in the tresorye hyt shette   *(it shut)*
> Of my brayn ...
>
> <div align="right">(House of Fame, lines 523-25)</div>

The mind is routinely described in terms of a house, or dwelling-place of ideas. Gower says an idea "for evere it duelleth in here mynde" (*Confessio Amantis,* V.6028). One of the most interesting aspects of the storage or house metaphor is the corollary notion that the mind has both an inside and an outside, and thoughts can move in and out, that the mind is somehow inside the body but separate from it, and may require some form of control or vigilance by some other entity, perhaps the self. In this schema, the mind is believed to have some sort of depth or recessed place which is perhaps secret or hidden, a longstanding commonplace. Wordsworth envisages the mind as a secret place of awe-inspiring introspection where the poetic imagination wanders:

> Not Chaos, not
> The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,
> Nor aught of blinder vacancy – scooped out
> By help of dreams, can breed such fear and awe
> As fall upon us often when we look
> Into our minds, into the Mind of Man –
> My haunt, and the main region of my Song.[33]

Ideas like these have a long pedigree. In the fourteenth century, thoughts can be "depe in his mynde" (*Cleanness,* 852); delight can come in (*Pearl,* 1130); thoughts can run into the mind (Chaucer, *Knight's Tale,* A [I] 1402); and even *fall* into it ("Hit falleth most into my woful mynde" [Chaucer, *Lady,* 4]). In this model of external agency or even serendipity, there appears

to be a lack of design or strategy, a randomness to cognitive processes and ideas' storage and even some degree of independent animation or movement on the part of the ideas. The sin of luxury is said to arise when "somtyme of vileyns thoghtes that been enclosed in mannes mynde whan he gooth to slepe" (Chaucer, *Parson's Tale,* X [I] 913). Thoughts are imagined to possess their own kinetic energy or their own absolute sovereignty and perhaps are able to react against enclosure or confinement.

Within the Middle English literary enterprise, there are records of a variety of models of mental organisation and subordination captured in metaphoric expressions, and a degree of independent control imagined for the mind which we might not so fully endorse in present day formulations, but which is captured in some of our metaphoric language of the mind and its activities.[34] Sometimes, the individual is in control of what occurs in the mind. In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,* mental spring-cleaning is envisaged as even more under the control of the individual, who can throw ideas out of the mind ("kest hem [cast them out] of your mynde" [1484]), along the same lines as Walpole's suggestion. In a similar construction, the mind can both retain some items and allow others to pass through, like a censoring net: "lat al passe out of mynde" (Chaucer, *Merchant's Tale,* IV [E] 2390). Thoughts passing into and out of the mind can be consciously allowed to leave (Chaucer, *Troilus*, IV.1301: "lat it passe out of mynde").

Thoughts can be consciously fastened for retention in a metaphor, bringing hardware associations to mind (Chaucer, *Troilus*, V.373: "As if a wight [*man*] hath faste a thyng in mynde"). Exhortation to remember something is often fashioned as a plea to hold something in the mind as if it were a physical object and the mind a grasping hand: "Hold it in thy mynde" (Gower, *Confessio Amantis,* VII.2782). More recently, Helen Garner expresses apprehension similarly: "[What] if the part of her mind that used to grasp structure and form has suddenly lost its grip?"[35] The incarceration metaphor makes thoughts the captives of the mind and grants some executive control to that faculty, which can act aggressively, hurling thoughts out of its memory: "I se that clene out of youre mynde/ Ye han [*have*] me cast" (Chaucer, *Troilus,* V.1695-6).

Another expression, "out of his mind", is still commonly used in Modern English to connote the absence of reason or usual consciousness, but was also used in earlier forms of English. In a particularly vivid metaphor, the stealthy lover, Amans, expresses coming to his senses after a reverie as an unconscious act of falling into his right mind: "ate laste whanne I finde/ That I am falle into my mynde" (Gower, *Confessio Amantis,* V.6685-6). Here, the self or the core of being is distinct from the mind or consciousness, as in our expression "to come to your senses".

Within the metacategory of the mind as a container, individual metaphoric reflexes are culturally specific, reflecting contemporary ideas and technology. For example, Virginia Woolf uses the old metaphor of the mind as record of experience, first as engraved metal, though then with the modern twist of thoughts as atoms:

> The mind receives a myriad impressions – trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steeel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms ... Let us record the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall ... .[36]

Woolf likes to describe life itself as a metaphoric container or frame for consciousness, with a culturally specific, now outmoded, metaphor based on a "gig-lamp", or carriage light: "Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end" (p. 189).

Because we all use metaphors to express the otherwise inexpressible or ineffable, to frame and organise thought and experience, they are not confined to literature (or to poetry, as many commentators assume). They are particularly useful for signifying a range of associations from another category domain, such as referring to politics in terms of sport. One need only pick up any newspaper to see the current vibrancy of metaphoric expression in present-day Australian English, not only in literary contexts, but in advertising, the press, and everyday discourses.[37]

Metaphor, then, can be seen as a "generative incongruity", both linguistic and conceptual, but also a traditional, inherited phenomenon. The provenance of individual metaphors as well as categories of metaphor is more important than social scientists would have us believe. Metaphor is not just a category of language or of thought but a convenient label for a range of analogies, not a semantically deviant departure from some arbitrarily established norm. Metaphor encourages a reconceptualisation, often based on the recipient's understanding of systems of relationships and stereotypical features.[38] We inherit traditional forms of conceptualisations of the mind and other phenomena through metaphoric expressions which change over time, along with the rest of language and communication, though with persistent remnants or traces which continue to exert an influence on the way we express ourselves and therefore the way we conceptualise the world and ourselves. Metaphor provides the conceptual frames for understanding and expressing ideas, and many of these ideas are transferable across time and cultures. Older versions of English confirm the huge extent of our metaphoric inheritance despite extensive semantic developments. Lakoff and Johnson are right in suggesting that the metaphoric conceptualisation of the mind is essential, though their and others' arguments need to be modified to include recognition of the role of earlier forms of English in the generation and transmission of these metaphors.

NOTES

1   One of the most ambitious is that run by George Lakoff in cognitive science at the University of California Berkeley (http://cogsci.berkeley.edu). His planned exhaustive master list may be a fundamentally unsound concept, as it does not recognize the degree to which language is in a constant state of flux, nor does it recognize the creative and subjective component in identifying and decoding metaphors. Another on-line metaphor project is headed by John Barnden through the University of Leeds (http://www.psyc.leeds.ac.uk/research/metaphor).

2   Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology", trans. F. Moore, *New Literary History* 6 (1974), 5-74.

3   Wallace Martin, "Metaphor", in *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, ed. A. Preminger and T. Brogan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 760.

4   E. Steinhart and E.F. Kittay, "Metaphor", in *The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics,* ed. R.E. Asher, 10 vols. (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1994), v.2454.

5   J.D. Sapir, "The Anatomy of Metaphor", in *The Social Uses of Metaphor: Essays on the Anthropology of Rhetoric*, ed. J. Sapir and J. Crocker (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977), p. 4.

6   Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-Disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language*, trans. Robert Czerny (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), pp. 191, 197, 198.

7   Douwe Draaisma, *Metaphors of Memory: A History of Ideas about the Mind*, trans. Paul Vincent (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 10.

8   S.R. Levin, *The Semantics of Metaphor* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), p. 142.

9   Cited in V. Sage, "Metaphor in Literature", in *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, ed. Asher, v.2458.

10   I.A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1936); Max Black, *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962).

11   Developed from Andrew Goatley, *The Language of Metaphors* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), p. 9.

12   Cited in Draaisma, *Metaphors of Memory*, p. 13.

13   Samuel Levin, *Metaphoric Worlds: Conceptions of a Romantic Nature* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), p. 18.

14   Eve Sweetser, *From Etymology to Pragmatics: Metaphorical and Cultural Aspects of Semantic Structure* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 7.

15   *The Rule of Metaphor*, p. 130.

16   Sweetser, *From Etymology to Pragmatics*, p. 9.

17   *The Rule of Metaphor*, p. 190.

18   "More About Metaphor," in *Metaphor and Thought*, ed. A. Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 39.

19   *Illness and Metaphor* and *Aids and its Metaphors* (1977, 1988; repr. New York: Picador, 2001), p. 93.

20   Goatley, *The Language of Metaphors,* p. 2.

21   (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988) and (New York: Basic Books, 1999) respectively. See also George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1989).

22   As argued by G. Steen, *Understanding Metaphor in Literature: An Empirical Approach* (London and New York: Harlow, 1994), p. 47.

23   See, for example, R. D'Andrade, "A Folk Model of the Mind", in *Cultural Models in Language and Thought*, ed. D. Holland and N. Quinn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 112-48.

24   *Metaphors We Live By*, p. 6.

25   Letter to Caroline, Countess of Ailesbury, 10 July 1779, cited in *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, rev. edn, ed. A. Partington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 719.22.

26   Many mind metaphors extend back even further to the Old English period (i.e., prior to 1066), though, given the more straightforward and unbroken literary and linguistic transmission from the Middle English period, this discussion will be concerned with later medieval examples.

27   M. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 35, cites the Monk's use of the word *cell* (CT VI 1972) to refer to his memory rather than to his residence, by analogy with the convention of using the Latin word *cella*, bird-house, to refer metaphorically to the mind.

28   All Middle English citations are taken from the standard editions used and cited in the *Middle English Dictionary*, available as part on the on-line *Middle English Compendium* (http://ets.umdl.umich.edu/m/mec), which contains bibliography, searchable dictionary and citation lists, and related resources.

29   OED2, s.v. *cell* 11. c. "*Cells of the brain*: The imaginary cavities or compartment of that organ, formerly supposed to be the seats of particular mental faculties, or to serve as "pigeon-holes" for the reception of knowledge... Obs. Cf. *MED*: s.v. *celle* 6: "One of the (varying number of) compartments into which the brain was believed to be divided, each compartment being the seat of a particular faculty."

30   Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886; repr. New York: Dover, 1991), p. 43.

31   Extract from *The Holi Prophete David Seth* (Text 2.5), lines 165-66, and Henry Pepwell, Dedicatory Verses (Text 3.24), lines 6-7, in *The Idea of the Vernacular: An Anthology of Middle English Literary Theory 1280-1520*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne et al. (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), pp. 154, 306.

32   *Sometimes Gladness: Collected Poems, 1954-1978* (Hawthorn, Vic.: Longman, 1978), p. 48, lines 1-2.

33   *The Excursion* (1814; repr. Oxford and New York: Woodstock, 1991), pp. xi-xii, Preface, lines 35-41. Cf. the earlier construction of the mind as feminine and autonomous: "Of the individual mind that keeps her own/Inviolate retirement" (lines 19-20).

34   Much of the matter of Middle English poetry and drama relies on the availability of this divided viewpoint, where mind and self are distinct and the inner life compartmentalised as well as subject to external influences. Malcolm Godden has observed the same distinction between the psyche and the self in Old English poetry and prose ("Anglo-Saxons on the Mind", in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985], pp. 271-98).

35   "Woman in a Green Mantle", *The Feel of Steel* (Sydney: Picador, 2001), p. 35.

36   Virginia Woolf, "Modern Fiction", *The Common Reader* (London: Hogarth Press, 1925), pp. 189-90.

37   At the time of Peter Hollingworth's resignation as Governor-General of Australia, for example, *The Sydney Morning Herald* ran the following headlines on its front page: "One phone call and a political football was kicked into touch"; "PM will have to act quickly as vultures circle wounded institution" (27 May 2003).

38   P. Nogales, *Metaphorically Speaking* (Stanford: CSLI Publications, 1999), p. 5.

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