

FROM RICOEUR'S THEORY OF METAPHORIC REFERENCE TOWARDS A
PHENOMENOLOGICAL ONTOLOGY OF METAPHOR

Dissertation submitted to the
Institute for Graduate Studies in the Social Sciences
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Philosophy

by

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2008

ABSTRACT

The thesis aims to outline a phenomenological ontology of metaphor, taking as its starting point Ricoeur's theory of metaphor in *La Métaphore Vive*. It defends Ricoeur's contention that the metaphorical statement has reference rather than simply meaning, but puts forward some significant modifications to Ricoeur's account. I then put forward my own theory of metaphoric reference through a strategic use of Husserlian phenomenology carried out in two stages: firstly, a phenomenological account of the process of metaphorisation in terms of intentionality/*noesis*, involving an analysis of the intentional/*noetic* act of perceiving *x qua y*, and secondly, the advancement of a phenomenological ontology of the metaphoric referent, as Husserlian intentional act/*noema*. This referent I call the *interrealm*: the 'imaginary world', created by the area of intersection of the worlds evoked by the two terms, or, in Husserlian terminology, the *foundational moments*, of the metaphorical statement, which I call the metaphoriser and the metaphorised. I then give a phenomenological description of the interrealm, which I see as potentially containing multiple layers of reference within itself, as possessing shifting boundaries, as having a *chiasmatic* structure based on a relationship of reversibility between the metaphoriser and the metaphorised, and as having an infinite nature. These characteristics are illustrated with examples of poetic metaphor, chosen because of their ability to bring to light the characteristics of the interrealm, and presented as *a fortiori* examples of the metaphoric process: as hypermetaphor. Finally, the thesis takes up the question of the general ontology implied by this theory of metaphor, and returning to Ricoeur, suggests how his account of subjectivity could be enriched by seeing the self in terms of metaphoricity.

ÖZET

Tez, kendine Ricoeur'un *La Métaphore Vive* adlı yapıtındaki metafor teorisini çıkış noktası yaparak, bir metafor fenomenolojik ontolojisi ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Ricoeur'un metaforik önermenin sadece bir anlamdan daha çok bir göndermesi olduğu iddiasını savunmayı üstüne alırken aynı zamanda da Ricoeur'un görüşüne bazı önemli değişiklikler getirmektedir. Tezimde böylece, Husserl fenomenolojisinin bazı kavramlarını stratejik bir biçimde kullanarak iki aşamada kendi metafor teorimi geliştiriyorum: ilk olarak metafor, intentionalite'nin *noesis* kutpu yönünde *y*'yi *x* olarak algılamam biçiminde; ikinci olarak ise *noema* kutpu açısından metaforik göndermenin fenomenolojik bir ontolojisinin geliştirilmesi doğrultusunda ele alınıyor. *Noema* bir göndermedir, metaforun göndermesine ara-ülke diyorum: "metaforlaştıran" ile "metaforlaşan" diye adlandırdığım iki terimin düşündüğü dünyaların kesişmesinden doğan "hayali dünya". Böylece metaforik önerme bir temellendirici öğelerin buluşma yeri oluyor. Ara-ülkenin fenomenolojik tasviri onun kendi içinde çeşitli gönderme katmanlarını taşıdığını, sınırlarının kaygan olduğunu, terimlerinin birbirine geri-dönüşlülüğünden ötürü kiasmatic bir yapıda Ricoeur'un "sonsuz kredi" kuramına benzerlik gösterdiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu belirlenimler poetik metafor örnekleriyle somutlaştırılmıştır, çünkü bu örnekler tam da ara-ülkeyi canlandırmakta ve *a fortiori* hipermetafor olarak metaforlaştırma sürecinin örnekleri olmaktadır. Son olarak tez, bu metafor teorisinin genel ontolojiye katkısının ne olabileceğini sormakta ve Ricoeur'un "öznellik" kavramının bu yoldan nasıl zengileştirebileceğine işaret etmektedir.

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À la mémoire de Paul Ricoeur

À moi-même comme un autre

And for Önay, with friendship and admiration

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deep gratitude to my supervisors, Prof. Dr. Önay Sözer and Prof. Dr. Stephen Voss, to the other members of my jury, Assoc. Prof. Murat Baç, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ferda Keskin and Assist. Prof. Dr. Suna Ertuğrul, and also to all the other past and present members of the Boğaziçi Philosophy Department who have instructed and inspired me over the years. Special thanks to Assist. Prof. Dr. Sun Demirli for helping me to think about vagueness from an analytical perspective. I would also like to thank Assoc. Prof. Dr. Osman Gazi Özgüdenli of Marmara University for helping me with research in Berlin, and my supportive friends and colleagues at Yeditepe University, especially Prof. Dr. Süheyla Artemel for her constant words of encouragement, Dr. Adriana Raducanu and Dr. Cathy Macmillan for solidarity in many matters, and, last but not least, Kim Laykin, master of metaphor.

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The sphere of verse [...] the interrealm of wisdom and poetry [...] was at once participation and loneliness, was intermingling and the fear of intermingling

Hermann Broch, *The Death of Virgil* ¹

The subject and the simile should be as much as possible lost in each other.

William Wordsworth²

[...] when a term not relevant to the subject matter, but signifying some extraneous object of reference is introduced into a sentence so as to unite in its significance both the subject at issue and the extraneous object of reference in a composite concept; this is also called Metaphor by the grammarians [...]

Hermogenes of Tarsus, c. 170 AD³

¹ Broch, 50.

² Wordsworth, Letters, 159.

³ Cited by Stanford, 14.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Interrealm Thesis

The thesis puts forward a theory of metaphoric reference developed from the starting-point of a critical examination of Paul Ricoeur's treatment of this question in his 1975 work *La Métaphore Vive (The Rule of Metaphor, 1977)*.⁴ It defends Ricoeur's claim that the metaphoric statement has a reference, created by the suspension of literal, or first-order, reference, against the main philosophical objections which may be raised against it, according to which metaphorical statements either have no reference, or even meaning at all, except what they would have if the statement in question were to be taken literally.

However, it also critiques some aspects of Ricoeur's argumentation, and makes certain modifications to his theory. My main critiques of Ricoeur are that he never completely succeeds in disentangling the issues of metaphoric reference and of metaphoric truth, that he remains too closely tied to the Fregean conception of reference to give a convincing account of reference to the imaginary and ideal, that he unnecessarily limits the scope of metaphoric reference in saying that it cannot take place at the level of the word, and that overall he does not give us a complete ontology of metaphorisation or of metaphoric reference.

⁴ I use the French title in the text, as the English title does not capture the essential point that metaphor is 'live'. The issue of metaphor is also discussed elsewhere by Ricoeur, notably in his 1978 essay 'The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination and Feeling', which I discuss briefly in Chapter Seven.

I attempt to go beyond what Ricoeur has given us in *La Métaphore Vive*, in providing a phenomenological description of the metaphoric statement. This description will involve giving a phenomenology of the process of metaphorisation and then a phenomenological ontology of the metaphoric referent itself.

This metaphoric referent I call the interrealm, which I will provisionally define as an imaginary world created by the area of intersection of the semantic content of the two terms of a given metaphor. These two terms I call the metaphoriser and the metaphorised; in a simple metaphorical statement such as ‘Achilles is a lion’, ‘lion’ is the *metaphoriser* and ‘Achilles’ is the *metaphorised*. Metaphor does not always take the form of such a simple linguistic statement: sometimes the metaphoriser alone is given and the metaphorised is implied. Also my use of the word ‘terms’ should not be taken to imply that words are necessary for the process of metaphorisation; it is potentially possible for a non-verbal person to metaphorise by perceiving one thing *as* another which it literally is not. However, metaphoriser and metaphorised are both necessary if metaphor is to exist: in Husserlian terminology they are co-foundational moments of the metaphorical statement.

Existing within this foundational structure, and functioning as sub-foundational moments, are individual bringings-together⁵ of individual aspects, that is, of dependent or of non-dependent parts (in Husserlian terminology, ‘moments’) of the two terms in question: for example, the fierceness of the lion and the fierceness of Achilles, or the hair of Achilles and the mane of the lion, these moments and parts themselves subject

⁵ I coin this term, although it is an ugly plural in English, to avoid speaking only of ‘points of comparison’ since it is my belief that metaphorisation involves a great deal more than a simple

to a potentially infinite subdivision. Between each of these sub-divisions, as well as between the metaphorised and the metaphoriser themselves, there is a relationship of reversibility, that is, semantic content flows in both directions, though the chiasm is an asymmetrical one: Achilles is seen more in terms of the lion than the lion of Achilles. Some of these bringings together of individual parts or moments will be considered more important or salient than others in any given individual act of metaphorisation or in common usage in any given society (for example, in the Achilles-lion metaphor, *fierceness* is more salient than *hair*, and *hair* is probably more salient than *eyelashes*), and my theory will include an account of the way in which salience functions within the interrealm. In a mixture of the language of analytic philosophy and phenomenology, the interrealm referent of the metaphorical statement ‘Achilles is a lion’ can be said to be *the state of affairs such that there are lion-moments of Achilles*: the lion-moments included are not, however, always the same, hence the vagueness of the referent considered as a singularity. The main aim of my thesis is to give an account of this referent which theorises the nature of this vagueness through the development of a phenomenological ontology.

This development of a phenomenological ontology will be carried out in terms of certain key concepts of Husserl’s thought, and will involve a strategic grafting of key ideas from various stages of Husserl’s work onto the major preoccupation of *La Métaphore Vive*. I shall draw on the accounts of intentionality and act-species, the relationship of part and whole and the concept of fulfilment given in the *Logical Investigations*, the concept of *noema* put forward in *Ideas*, and finally on the

comparison.

preoccupations of the later Husserl with intersubjectivity and the *Lebenswelt* (life-world).

What will emerge is a three-fold perspective on the *referent of the metaphoric statement*, or *interrealm*. Firstly, this referent will be seen as an entity which is ungraspable in its entirety by the reach of the human mind, in the sense that it comprises the full potentiality of all possible bringings-together, past, present and future, of the various aspects ('parts' of 'moments') of the metaphoriser and the metaphorised. So, for example, even the fact that Achilles and the lion, unknown to Homer, both possess a great deal of common DNA, is included within the interrealm on this level. Secondly, it will be seen as the contents of the mental act of the person metaphorising *qua* ideal essence (this is not to be confused with exactly what is passing through a person's mind at the time of using a metaphor). Thirdly, it will be seen as having a place in the life-world (the Husserlian *Lebenswelt*), in which it is necessarily to be found in a given situation, for example, in cultural, linguistic and textual contexts, each of which functions as a *Gestalt* and thus privileges certain interpretations and rules out, or at least discourages, others.

Crucially, these contexts do not operate on the level of pragmatics as opposed to semantics, nor even of sense (Frege's *Sinn*) as opposed to reference (Frege's *Bedeutung*); they modify the nature of the referent itself. The interrealm cannot thus be stated to be either a singular fixed referent, still less a group of three distinct referents:

it has rather, to borrow a phrase from Jean-Luc Nancy, the quality of being singular-plural.⁶

I see the interrealm of the metaphoric statement as something which, despite its non-physical nature, is grasped as a thing, in something close to the sense of Heidegger's *das Ding*: a *gathering together* and a *bringing near* of semantic content, as something which conjoins itself out of the world. Like Heidegger's jug, the metaphoric referent, as container of semantic content, is indisputably a human creation, and yet, paradoxically, it does not depend for its existence *qua* thing on the fact that it is a human creation.⁷ Nor should it be thought of as something which can only be conceived poetically, or as something which cannot be identified in the language of analytic philosophy. This referent, the interrealm, is *metaphorically* a realm, *ideally* an object/thing, and *literally*, something which refers to a state of affairs in the world, and refers to objects as sub-referents within it.

Considered as a thing, it is a thing which can undergo internal modifications, whose boundaries can never be fixed, and whose complete nature transcends us. In this, it does not differ from physical objects, which are also in flux, and which also possess infinite aspects whose grasp transcends us, as Heraclitus, Cratylus and Leibniz, among others, have pointed out. Its instability does not, however, preclude a rigorous

⁶ Cf. Jean-Luc Nancy, *Being Singular Plural*. 'The unity of a world is not one: it is made of a diversity, and even disparity and opposition. It is in fact, which is to say that it does not add or subtract anything. The unity of a world is nothing other than its diversity, and this, in turn, is a diversity of worlds. A world is a multiplicity of worlds, and its unity is the mutual sharing and exposition of all its worlds – within this world.' (185)

⁷ Cf. the description of a jug *qua* thing in the essay 'The Thing': 'What in the thing is thingly? [...] The jug is a thing as a vessel – it can hold something. To be sure this container had to be made. But its being made by the potter in no way constitutes what is peculiar and proper to the jug insofar as it exists *qua* jug. The jug is not a vessel because it was made, rather the jug is a thing because it is this holding

phenomenological description of its main characteristics, which I shall attempt in what follows.

The first aspect of the interrealm, as defined above, is not subject to change; the only reason why its boundaries cannot be fixed is because of its infinite nature. However, there is a dialectical back-and-forth relationship between the second and third aspects of the interrealm, in that the second aspect, that is the noetic act of an individual creator, or of an interpreter (reader or hearer) of a metaphor, will be influenced, or indeed, even determined, by the third aspect, that is, by the usual way of understanding a metaphor according to its pre-existing contexts, and yet the reverse process comes into play as a traditional metaphor may be, and indeed frequently is, re-interpreted in an original manner, which may then be shared with others, and, in its turn, become part of the *Lebenswelt* and, thus, a part of the context for future interpretations. The second (noetic) and third (*Lebenswelt*) aspects of the interrealm also, necessarily, draw on the first aspect as an infinite reservoir of ‘moments’, or qualities, belonging to the two terms of a metaphorical statement from which they select salient aspects.

This multi-aspect theory of the interrealm thus also allows the formulation of an account of the heuristic or innovative quality of metaphor. The discovery of truth through metaphor may take the form of selecting, from the infinite reserve or reservoir of possible metaphorisers and metaphoriseds, a metaphorised and a metaphoriser which have never previously been brought together as such, and combining them in order to form a direct or implied metaphoric statement: under the first aspect of the interrealm

vessel. (Heidegger, Poetry, 167-168).

this will necessarily reveal some truth, since everything has sufficient resemblance to everything else for some true correspondence between moments to be found; but seen under the perspective of the second and third aspects of the interrealm, metaphor may also bring to light possibilities for hitherto undiscovered untruths (commonly known as mistakes or lies!).

My theory allows for the fact that although all metaphors contain truth in a sense, a metaphor in the context of the *Lebenswelt* may nevertheless be used to lie or to deceive, and it also allows for the possibility of our assigning degrees of truth (in the sense in which this term is used in fuzzy logic) to a given metaphoric statement according to the degree of congruence of the salient features, or ‘moments’ of metaphor and metaphorised, just as a vague literal statement such as ‘She is lovely’ might be assigned a degree of truth.

The heuristics of metaphor involves, however, not only the creation of completely new metaphoric statements, but also the above-mentioned giving of a new interpretation to a metaphor which is already in usage: I claim that this will involve a change (with)in⁸ the metaphoric referent of the statement in question, not merely in its sense. I theorise this process as follows: an individual metaphoric referent already existing in the *Lebenswelt* as an example of the interrealm under its third aspect, perhaps used as a *cliché*, undergoes a transfer of semantic content from the interrealm seen under the first perspective of pure potentiality *via* the creative interpretation of a

⁸ Both *in* and *within* since a modified referent can, of course, always be considered as a new referent, and a modified metaphor as a new metaphor. But it is also the same referent in the sense in which in the ordinary human context, we do step in the same river twice. *My love is a rose* and *My love is a red rose* and *My love is like a red, red, rose* are thus both the same metaphor and different metaphors.

user of metaphor which takes place under the second aspect of interrealm *qua noema*. It then has the potential to be returned in this transformed state to the intersubjective *Lebenswelt*.

To give an illustration of this process: let us imagine it to be the case in some possible world that the metaphoric statement 'Love is a rose' exists in the *Lebenswelt*, and thus in the third aspect of the interrealm, solely as an expression of the sweetness and beauty of love, which are believed by everyone to be reminiscent of the sweetness and beauty of a rose, and no-one in this world has ever thought of using the expression to mean anything else, though there are many individualised instantiations of this metaphor *qua* noetic acts, accompanied by varying degrees of emotion and of personal recollections, hopes and wishes, and also by varying qualities of visualisation, mental presentation of non-visual sensual content such as the scent of a rose and the sound of the rustling of rose-leaves.

These details are sometimes spelled out in poetry and prose, sometimes merely brought to mind by the bare statement 'Love is a rose'. There is a lively debate within the culture as to what constitutes the most salient features in rose-love comparison: is it the colour, or the shape or the perfume of the rose which is the most important, it is asked, and is it the physical or the spiritual aspects of love which are most important? The resulting interrealm is in a sense infinite, since no-one can quantify the individual moments which the sweetness and beauty of love and the sweetness and beauty of a rose have in common. Its boundaries are also unclear, since love and beauty are both vague concepts, epistemologically, and perhaps also ontically, and botanists and laymen are not in accord as to whether a dog-rose or a tuberose or a Rose of Sharon is,

in fact, a rose. Yet there are also clear cases of possible comparison which are absolutely excluded from the *Lebenswelt*, or third aspect interrealm of this possible world: no-one has ever thought about bringing the greenfly on a rose into comparison with love, or venereal diseases into comparison with a rose.

Yet, all the time that this imagined community persists in this way of thinking, these unpleasant similarities and other aspects of the interrealm under its first aspect which they have completely failed to grasp, continue to exist as states of affairs. For all the innocence of this imagined community, it is nevertheless true that, in this possible world as in other worlds, love is often very painful, and that roses have thorns which can also cause pain. The similarity between these ‘moments’ of the rose and of love has never been noticed by anyone, but it, nevertheless, exists, and is already part of the interrealm, under its first aspect as ideal act-species.

Then one day, a poet notices this similarity and it becomes part of an act of *noesis* and also of a noemic referent of the metaphoric statement ‘Love is a rose’, of the rose-love interrealm under its second aspect. The poet then writes a poem about rose thorns and love which achieves iconic status within the culture in question and is regularly quoted by absolutely everyone in our imagined community. The phrase ‘Love is a rose’ can now normally no longer be understood in its original innocent sense by a member of this community, and this even gives rise to attempts, which can never be completely successful, to return to this original meaning through phrases which negate the negative aspects of the metaphor, such as ‘*My* love is a thornless rose’, or, more subtly, ‘The rose-thorn does not wound’ or ‘The wounds of the rose-

thorn are sweeter than rose-scent' etc. The third *Lebenswelt* aspect of the interrealm referent of 'love is a rose' has been irretrievably altered.

This dialectic relationship between the three aspects of the interrealm, which could be described as the universal, the personal and the communal, constitutes its basic phenomenology. I will also attempt a more detailed explication of, firstly, the phenomenology of the process of metaphorisation, and secondly the phenomenological ontology of the resulting metaphoric referent. Chapter Six, in which case studies of metaphor in poetry are given, corresponds to a case study both of instances of its noetic aspect *and* of metaphor functioning in the *Lebenswelt*.

The tension between the first and second aspects of the interrealm will be seen to correspond to the tension between two Husserlian theories of meaning, the concept of intentionality developed in terms of act-species in the *Logical Investigations*, where meanings have a quasi-Platonic ideality, and the concept of the *noema* put forward in *Ideas*. My account of the phenomenology of metaphorisation will be chiefly in terms of various insights from the *Logical Investigations*, though these will be seen to be compatible with the concept of *noema*. The phenomenological ontology will first present the second *noema* aspect of the interrealm in terms of Husserl's neutrality modification, and then focus on four salient characteristics of the interrealm referent, each of which can be applied to the interrealm under each of its three aspects. These are the multiplicity or multiple layering of referents within the interrealm, the unclear nature of its boundaries, the chiasmatic relationship between the two terms of and individual moments within the metaphoric statement, and finally the interrealm as a repository of 'infinite credit'.

The understanding of metaphoric reference which emerges from this account is one of an impure or vague reference, which distinguishes it from other accounts which have recently been offered, in particular from Hausman's conception of a metaphoric referent as a distinct object, and from the excessively complicated model put forward by Mooij (Study) which divides metaphors into many subspecies. Yet vagueness should not be confused with absence of, or absolute instability of meaning, with regard to a contextualised metaphoric utterance. My multiple-aspect theory also saves us from the 'anything goes' approach of what Stein Olsen has wittily called 'Humpty Dumpty' or 'imposition' theories of metaphor, according to which a metaphorical utterance can mean basically anything that one may wish. (Olsen, 37)

All these characteristics are described metaphorically, using spatial and financial metaphors, but I hope to show that this is not an obstacle to the formulation of an account which reveals literal truth about the nature and essence of metaphor.

An Outline of the Argument

The structure of my argument is as follows. My second chapter gives a critical analysis of Ricoeur's text, pointing out certain areas in which I feel his account to be incomplete or otherwise open to objections, and the modifications that I wish to make to his theory. In particular, in opposition to Ricoeur's uncritical acceptance of the Fregean sense-reference distinction, I wish to defend the view that reference is both distinct from, and co-present with meaning, and that this is just as true at word-level as at sentence-level, and that reference does not imply the real existence of the object referred to. What I

hope will emerge from my critiques of Ricoeur, is that his account confuses the questions of reference and truth in a way which is inevitable so long as he remains tied to the sentence-statement as the locus of metaphorisation, and that many of the difficulties entailed by his account could be solved by the adoption of a phenomenology of metaphor in the Husserlian sense.

I shall then go on, in the third chapter, to focus on the main objection which can be raised against Ricoeur's key concept of *référence dédoublée*⁹: the denial of the very possibility of metaphoric reference. This chiefly involves a critique of Donald Davidson's view that metaphor has no intrinsic meaning, but merely functions to arouse associations in the human mind, and the rejection of the existence of metaphoric reference that this view entails. This will also involve a defence of the 'live' quality of metaphor.

As there are some similarities between the position of Davidson on metaphor and that of Derrida, I close this chapter with some very brief remarks on the famous debate between Ricoeur and Jacques Derrida arising out of Ricoeur's comments on Derrida's 'La Mythologie Blanche' ('White Mythology') in *La Métaphore Vive*, and Derrida's reply to them in *Le Retrait de la Métaphore* ('The Retreat of Metaphor'), with the sole aim of considering whether there is anything in Derrida's position on metaphor which can actually be seen to constitute a threat to the split reference theory of Ricoeur, and whether a belief in 'the ruin of reference' is indeed a viable alternative for the philosopher of language. It will be seen that, strangely enough, Derrida and

⁹ This is translated as 'split reference' in the standard English translation of Czerny, though I prefer the more literal translation of 'double reference'.

Davidson are actually quite close to each other on the question of metaphor, but that neither has actually put forward a convincing refutation of the existence of metaphoric reference. Neither the Davidsonian insistence on the limitlessness of what metaphor calls to our attention (Davidson, 262) nor the Derridean play of perpetual deferral should lead us to the denial of reference *tout court*, but rather to an awareness of the complex and imprecise nature of the metaphoric referent.

The fourth and fifth chapters, making use of the Husserlian concepts of intentionality, of founding and founded ideas, and of *noesis/noema*, put forward my own account of metaphoric reference. This is done, in the fourth chapter, in terms of a *phenomenology of metaphorisation* and, in the fifth chapter, in terms of a *phenomenological ontology of the metaphoric referent*.

The account of the phenomenology of metaphorisation makes use of a number of insights from Husserl's *Logical Investigations*: metaphorisation is presented as an intentional act in the Husserian sense, and Husserl's account of the distinction between meaning and reference in the First Investigation, though not adopted in its entirety, is brought forward as a step in the direction of the account of metaphorical reference which I wish to defend. The mereology of the Third Investigation is used in order to present the process of metaphorisation in terms of parts, moments and wholes and of the concepts of foundation, and the concept of degrees of fulfilment outlined in the Sixth Investigation is adopted in order to theorise different degrees of vividness of realisation in metaphor.

In the subsequently presented phenomenological ontology, the interrealm referent of metaphor resulting from this process of metaphorisation is presented and its

major characteristics defined. The interrealm of metaphor is initially presented as an instantiation of the interrealm of art, which is initially presented, through a philosophical fable, as an in-between, rather than as a copy of reality as presented in the classical, and particularly the Platonic, conception of *mimesis*. The salient characteristics of the interrealm of metaphor are then elaborated: the potential existence of multiple referents within any given interrealm, its shifting boundaries which result from the changing ways in which a given metaphor can be interpreted according to context, and the shifting perspectives (in Husserlian terminology, its *Abschattung*) from which an interpreter may see it; the chiasmatic nature of the relationship between the two terms of the metaphoric statement which I call *chiasmaphora*, and the limitless possibilities of interpretation, which I call *infinite credit*.

I also here defend the universality of the interrealm theory as opposed to binary theories of metaphor which would divide metaphors into live and dead, or literary and non-literary. As already claimed in Chapter Three, it is a consequence of my theory that no metaphor is completely conventional or 'dead': this is, firstly, because all so-called dead metaphors are renewed within the context of the *Lebenswelt* as they are rediscovered afresh in individual noetic acts by individuals previously unaware of them, for example, a child learning the metaphor for the first time, or by individuals who may be suddenly struck by the force of such a metaphor afresh; and, secondly, metaphors which may be considered dead or conventional by the majority of language users within a community may be brought back to life by an original noetic act which is then shared with others in the way described in the fable of the rose metaphor given above.

All binary theories of metaphor also come up against the difficulties of making a clear boundary between the two types of metaphor in question, and if we admit of indeterminate cases, then we only run into intractable problems associated with higher order vagueness:¹⁰ having granted the existence of an intermediate group because of the difficulties of assigning certain borderline cases to one group or another, we now have to agonise about what to do when it becomes impossible to draw a clear boundary between determinate cases and indeterminate ones.

However, I also use the term *hypermetaphor* to describe certain cases of metaphor which function as *a fortiori* illustrations of the interrealm theory. There is also no clear dividing line between metaphor and what I call hypermetaphor, though here I think it is possible to adopt a supervaluationist theory of vagueness, allowing for clear cases of a certain quality although there may be many indeterminate ones, as, for example, there are many clear cases of ‘a tall man’, but also many borderline cases. Thus although the boundaries between metaphor and hypermetaphor are fuzzy, there are clear cases of hypermetaphor, while there is never a clear case of a dead metaphor.

My sixth chapter illustrates the salient characteristics of my interrealm theory using examples of hypermetaphor, or self-conscious metaphor. Metaphors typical of particular literary periods are seen as epitomising particular characteristics: thus metaphors typical of epic poetry are seen as best illustrating the multi-layered referents within the interrealm referent, ‘Metaphysical conceits’ typical of seventeenth-century English poetry are used to illustrate the shifting boundaries of the interrealm *qua noema*, examples from Romantic poetry best illustrate the chiasmatic nature of

¹⁰ Cf. Keefe, *Vagueness*, 31-36.

metaphor, and more recent poetry best illustrates the incomplete nature of this chiasm and the infinite credit of metaphor.

The seventh chapter then goes on to take up the suggestion made at the end of Ricoeur's Eighth Study in *La Métaphore Vive*, where he asks what the implications of his theory of metaphor for a general ontology are. This is done in the context of the ontological preoccupations of Ricoeur's later work, in particular his account of subjectivity, which I argue could be enriched by a shift in emphasis away from seeing subjectivity in terms of a 'narrative self' towards seeing the self in terms of metaphor.

In the rest of this introduction I shall make some brief comments concerning my point of departure with regard to the basic disciplines of phenomenology and hermeneutics, and the place of this study in the context of the general reception of *La Métaphore Vive*, and I shall also outline some basic assumptions that I shall make concerning the nature of reference and the scope of metaphor, make some preliminary comments on my way of dealing with Ricoeur's text, and define some key concepts related to metaphor theory which will be drawn upon in the course of the thesis.

The Intellectual Context and Significance of the Issues Debated

My starting point, then, is the belief advanced by Ricoeur that metaphor has a *reference*, and, more specifically, the theory of split-reference (*référence dédoublée*) which he puts forward. In this theory, the literal reference of any given metaphoric

statement is supplanted, but yet not completely erased, by the truly metaphoric reference.¹¹ In a key passage, Ricoeur asserts that:

Just as the metaphorical statement captures its sense as metaphorical amidst the ruins of the literal sense, it also achieves its reference on the ruins of what might be called (in symmetrical fashion) its literal reference [...] second-level reference, which is properly the metaphorical reference, is set free by means of the suspension of the first-level reference.¹²

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 261)

This view was, and remains, extremely controversial, as Ricoeur himself points out.

Though my third epigraph suggests that Hermogenes of Tarsus may not have been so far from the concept of fields of reference merging in metaphor, early theories of rhetoric from classical times to the eighteenth century have tended to view metaphor as purely ornamental, as the mere substitution of one term for another, and therefore

¹¹ Czerny usually translates both *référence* and *dénotation* as ‘reference’. Ricoeur uses them more or less interchangeably, though I feel there is perhaps a slightly greater emphasis on human instrumentality in ‘*dénotation*’. The sense/reference dichotomy is, of course, taken from Frege’s terms *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*, ‘reference’ translating *Bedeutung*, which was long the standard translation, though the more literally accurate rendering of ‘meaning’ has been adopted recently by analytic philosophers. Any unclarity thus generated is, I think, largely the responsibility of Frege. On this point I concur with Husserl, who in *Logical Investigations* Investigation 1, Chapter 1, Paragraph 15 basically criticised Frege for using the word *Bedeutung*, which means meaning, to refer to reference and deplored the equivocations thence arising. (Husserl, *Investigations*, Vol. 1, 201) Yet the words *Bedeutung* and *bedeuten* do continue to pose difficulties for the translator into English: J.N. Findlay in his translator’s note to Husserl’s *Logical Investigations* draws attention to the fact that although he translates the noun *Bedeutung* as ‘meaning’, he also sometimes translates the verb *bedeuten* as ‘refer’ or ‘reference’, though his more usual translation is ‘act of meaning’ or ‘to mean’. (Husserl, *Investigations*, Vol. 1, lxxxvii) *Bedeutung* is given as ‘*dénotation*’ in the French translation of Frege with which Ricoeur was acquainted. (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 274, footnote not completely translated by Czerny.)

¹² *De même que l'énoncé métaphorique est celui qui conquiert son sens comme métaphorique sur les ruines du sens littéral, il est aussi celui qui acquiert sa référence sur les ruines de ce qu'on peut appeler, par symétrie, sa référence littérale [...] à la faveur de la suspension de la dénotation de premier rang, est libérée une dénotation de second rang, qui est proprement la dénotation métaphorique.* (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 279)

without a reference of its own,¹³ and the deconstructive literary theory which has attained something approaching hegemonic status in recent decades has been far more interested in celebrating the perpetual play of signifiers than in concerning itself with the identification of signifieds.

As Ricoeur himself stated in Study Seven of *La Métaphore Vive*:

The dominant current of literary criticism, European as well as American, does not have split reference in mind, but more radically the destruction of reference – a theme which indeed appears better attuned to the principal trait of poetry [...]¹⁴

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 265)

Of course, as is well known, this tendency to deny reference both to metaphor and to the fictional, and most radically, to all language itself, was to become even more widespread with the development of post-structuralist and deconstructionist thought in the period following the publication of *The Rule of Metaphor*.

Moreover, Ricoeur's theory of metaphoric reference is also at odds with the main currents in analytic philosophy of language, where metaphor is either seen, with Gottlob Frege, as, along with fictional language, having no reference whatsoever, or else is seen, with Donald Davidson, as meaning 'what the words in their most literal

¹³ Early theorists of rhetoric tended not to focus on the question of metaphoric reference itself, but Ricoeur in the first two chapters of *La Métaphore Vive* shows how the classical view of metaphor stemming from Aristotle entails the absence of reference.

¹⁴ 'C'est n'est pas la référence dédoublée que considère le courant dominant de la critique littéraire, tant américaine que européenne, mais plus radicalement la ruine de la référence: ce thème, en effet, peut accorder mieux avec le trait principal de la poésie [...]' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 282)

interpretation mean, and nothing more' (Davidson, 245). Davidson's followers on this issue include David E. Cooper, who goes one step further in his book *Metaphor*, and argues that metaphor has no meaning whatsoever, and is best understood in terms of its social function of establishing intimacy.¹⁵

In addition, the theory of metaphoric reference developed in *La Métaphore Vive* has largely been side-lined by the later Ricoeur himself and also by his critics. It thus takes on the status of a passing phase in Ricoeur's philosophical development; as something which he had outgrown. This is despite the fact that the work was not only never repudiated by Ricoeur, but that it continued to be presented by him as the first half of the project which he brought to completion with the three volumes of *Time and Narrative*. It is typical of this neglect that one of Ricoeur's most sympathetic commentators, David Kaplan, gives a very perfunctory account of *La Métaphore Vive* in *Ricoeur's Critical Theory* (48-49), which concludes with the comment:

Ricoeur, however, quickly grew dissatisfied with his theory of metaphorical reference. It lacked any account of the reader [...] He also abandoned the Fregean conception of the linguistic reference because it appeared to be too direct and unmediated, suggesting a kind of unmediated realism. [...] *The Rule of Metaphor* is therefore best seen as a transitional work between the hermeneutics of texts of the 1970s and the hermeneutics of action of the 1980s.

(Kaplan, 49)

¹⁵ The possibility that certain metaphors, especially the more colloquial ones, might have this effect is convincing, though one might also point out that this intimacy, like the intimacy created in some groups by the use of swearwords, may be created partly by dint of using insulting metaphors for someone outside it. This begs the question of how the intimacy is created if not *via* meaning.

I believe that Kaplan is correct in his implication that the Fregean conception of reference creates serious difficulties for Ricoeur: these will be discussed in more detail below. (He is, though, mistaken in the belief that the role of the reader is ignored entirely, since Ricoeur actually sees the heuristic function of metaphor occurring through this role.) However, the main point at issue is that these critiques do not constitute a refutation of the existence of metaphoric reference *per se*. Indeed, I would contend that, despite the dominance of this paradigm of the denial of, or even the dismissal of, any consideration of metaphoric reference, no-one has actually convincingly refuted Ricoeur's position, nor closed the debate on the question of metaphoric reference which he opened in *La Métaphore Vive*.

This is all the more striking given the sudden explosion of literature on the subject of metaphor, and indeed the proliferation of theories of metaphor in recent years.¹⁶ Therefore, I feel that the time is ripe to re-examine the arguments of *La Métaphore Vive* with the aim of generating a new and more accurate account of the metaphoric process.

I believe this is worth doing because of the importance of the question of metaphor. As Ricoeur argues, speaking of metaphor is not only a matter of giving an account of a rhetorical trope, which could be considered as a mere frill, or embellishment of language. As Nietzsche argued, man is a metaphorising animal¹⁷ – perhaps to an even greater degree than he is a rational animal. The development of

¹⁶ Cf. Wayne Booth's remark that articles on metaphor are proliferating at such a rate that judging by the jump in interest between 1940 and the present (1978) if we extrapolate to the year 2039 there will be more students of metaphor than there are people. (Johnson, ix).

¹⁷ In the *Philosophenbuch* and *passim*. Cf. Kofman, 25.

Ricoeur's thought on this issue is therefore not merely an issue for the philosophy of language, but the refinement of an analysis of a vital aspect of the human method of making sense of the universe, analogous to Kantian categories such as causation.

The question of *reference*, of the relationship between the name and the thing named, is obviously equally fundamental, and, unlike the question of metaphor, which was until recently frequently dismissed by the majority of philosophers as unworthy of serious investigation, it needs no apology as a topic of philosophical enquiry. The point of intersection of these two vital aspects of human thought, metaphor and reference, is therefore deserving of serious analysis.

My view of reference, which I shall develop in my response to Davidson in the third chapter of the thesis, is that it is an ostensive or quasi-ostensive quality of language, sign or gesture: its essence is that it indicates, or points out. The concept of quasi-ostensivity is introduced to emphasise two facts: firstly, that reference can be to a vague area, such as that which is represented by a noun preceded by an indefinite pronoun, to an area whose boundaries are shifting or debatable, or to an object or set of whose identity the person making reference is uncertain; secondly, that in the case of ideal entities and certain states of affairs, reference is a pointing to that which cannot and could never be pointed out physically. The interrealm of metaphor belongs to both of these categories.

My position on reference is thus opposed to positions which privilege certain clear and distinct referents, indeed claiming them to be the only true referents, as expressed in Searle's view that 'the utterance of a referring expression characteristically serves to pick out or identify a particular object apart from other

‘objects’, and, indeed, that there is even ‘a case for refusing to call singular indefinite referring expression examples of referring at all’. (Searle, 28; 27, n. 1)

My theory of metaphoric reference also involves the defence of two other facts about reference. Firstly, that reference, in my definition, is both necessarily co-present with semantic content, and strictly to be distinguished from it. Secondly, a referent is not necessarily something which exists as an object or a state of affairs, or indeed otherwise than as something imagined by the person who refers to it, and above all, it should not be thought of as being confined to things which exist as physical, or even real, objects. The referent is thus not allowed to collapse into meaning on the one hand, nor into a fact about the physical, or real, universe on the other.

As stated above, both issues will be approached through the phenomenological tradition. Ricoeur himself makes very little reference to this tradition in *La Métaphore Vive*. This may initially seem surprising, given his well-known grounding in phenomenology, his translations of Husserl, and in particular his authorship of the texts collected by Ballard and Embree in the 1967 *Husserl: An Analysis of his Phenomenology*. This neglect, however, needs to be seen in relation to the fact that in the period leading up to the composition of *La Métaphore Vive*, Ricoeur had declared his aim of ‘grafting’ hermeneutics onto the phenomenological tradition, an aim advanced most explicitly in the essay ‘Existence and Hermeneutics’ in *The Conflict of Interpretations*. As my project goes in the reverse direction of grafting phenomenology back into hermeneutics, a brief recapitulation of Ricoeur’s argument here is in order. Ricoeur in this essay puts forward his definition of hermeneutics, which he sees as following that of Aristotle in the *Peri Hermēneias*, as being not merely the specialised

and technical art of textual exegesis (*interpretation*), but also the art which deals with the more general problems of meaning and language (*comprehension*). (Ricoeur, Conflict, 4)

To restate this distinction from a historical perspective: hermeneutics is not merely the tradition originated by Saint Augustine in *De doctrina christiana*, but a tradition which has undergone a second development, with Schleiermacher and Dilthey's development of classical philology into a critique of historical knowledge and foundation for the study of *Geisteswissenschaften*. This is evidently a discipline which predates Husserlian phenomenology: hence the metaphor of grafting and even of a 'late grafting'. (Ricoeur, Conflict, 3) Ricoeur puts forward the claim that grounding hermeneutics in phenomenology can be done in two ways: by a short route or a long.

The short route is that which Heidegger takes in his creation of an ontology of understanding, which in a sudden reversal, transforms the question of hermeneutics into an analytic of the kind of being (*Dasein*) which is capable of understanding. The long route, which Ricoeur himself proposes to undertake, is that of an epistemology of interpretation, starting from semantic and linguistic considerations (6) and passing by the level of reflection to the existential level.

The long route suggested here brings to mind the long and circuitous route which Ricoeur also proposes to follow in *La Métaphore Vive* before arriving at the problematic of reality and truth. However, in the text of *La Métaphore Vive*, it seems to me as if, to change the metaphor, the phenomenological tradition has been swamped under the weight of hermeneutics and linguistics, however much Ricoeur's phenomenological thought may have functioned as a background influence, and that

the result is a failure to provide an ontological conclusion in the sense of stating the true nature of metaphoric reference. This is despite the fact that ontology is presented as the ultimate goal of the bringing together of hermeneutics and phenomenology.

Admittedly, this ontological goal is presented in terms of a quasi-eschatological metaphor, which seemingly places it beyond the reach of the philosopher: ‘Existence and Hermeneutics’ closes with the assertion that ‘ontology is indeed the promised land for a philosophy that begins with language and with reflection; but like Moses, the speaking and reflecting subject can only glimpse this land before dying.’ (Ricoeur, Conflict, 23) Metaphorically speaking, my aim is to come down off this mountain and explore the terrain.

In more literal terms, it is to bring the phenomenological approach back into the foreground, in order to put forward an ontology of metaphor which is not solely or necessarily confined to the linguistic, and which does not tie the metaphoric referent to the sentence. This is not, I believe, a project which runs counter to the spirit of Ricoeur’s work, but which rather recoups certain aspects of his thought which deserve to be brought to bear directly on the question of metaphor.

A Note on the Definition of Metaphor

In line with this project of creating a phenomenology rather than simply a hermeneutics of metaphor, the definition of metaphor is given a wide scope in this thesis. I believe that an over-arching theory of metaphor should cover not only the most obvious form of metaphoric statement: sentences taking the form *x is a y* (‘Achilles is a lion’ etc), but

also the various methods of presenting something in terms of something else which it literally is not. Metaphor, in this wide sense, covers the whole continuum from the spelled-out comparison-metaphor of simile, through classic metaphor statements with the structure ‘*x* is a *y*’, to the use of imagery, symbolism¹⁸ and allegory in which only the *y* of such a statement is given and the *x* is left to be inferred. To these we may also add cases of symbolism where we are given the two terms of a metaphorical statement through the performative act or parenthetical gloss rather than through the linking of two terms by a copula. An example of the former would be the following statement by W.B. Yeats from ‘Blood and the Moon’:

I declare this tower is my symbol; I declare
This winding, gyring, spiring treadmill of a stair is my ancestral stair,
That Goldsmith and the Dean, Berkeley and Burke have travelled there.¹⁹

(Yeats, 268)

and of the latter, S.T. Coleridge in ‘The Eolian Harp’, speaking of

¹⁸ The exact borderline between metaphor in the narrower sense and symbolism is debatable. An attractive provisional definition is given by John Unterecker: ‘A metaphor always has at least two assigned meanings (its own sign value and the sign value of the object or idea it stands for). But symbol stands on one leg only; the other kicks at the stars.’ (Unterecker, 34)

¹⁹ David Leppard says of the first line of this quotation that ‘there is no metaphor here, we have a literal speech act instead. The conferral of this power or potential is achieved with such force of declarative convention that the symbol becomes, so to speak, literalised.’ (Leppard, 212). I would rather claim that such a performative act is simultaneously literal and metaphorical, since it not only literally describes the creation of a symbol, but also involves the actual creation of this symbol, the word ‘tower’ thus exists *qua* symbol within these lines, which have given birth to a metaphor with the potential for future use – a potential which is, of course, actualised in Yeats’s subsequent poetry. The assertion that Goldsmith, Swift *et al* have travelled the stair makes the co-presence of literal performative act and metaphor clearer, since we assume that these writers have only travelled up the stair in a metaphorical sense.

Our cot o'ergrown
With white-flower'd Jasmin, and the broad-leaved Myrtle,
(Meet emblems they of Innocence and Love!)

(Coleridge, 100)

My use of the term metaphor should, then, generally be understood to be in this wide definition of 'metaphor', including on the one hand, imagery, symbol or allegory,²⁰ in which the metaphoriser alone is given, and the metaphorised term is suppressed, and on the other, certain examples of the simile, in which the comparison of the two terms is explicitly spelt out. Simile has traditionally been defined in opposition to metaphor, but as the case of extended poetic similes, which I discuss at length in my sixth chapter, shows, it cannot be dismissed as a simple comparison of a fundamentally different nature to metaphor.²¹

My position here is not original, and, as David Cooper, in his book *Metaphor*, pointed out as long ago as 1986, recent trends in literary theory have moved towards an

²⁰ Symbol and allegory can both be understood as at least potential examples of what Searle calls 'open-ended' metaphorical utterance, in which the sentence-meaning has an 'indefinite range of meanings' (Searle, 284). As stated above, the basic difference is that in allegory the various layers of meaning tend to be clear-cut, whilst in symbolism there is a greater tendency towards vagueness. The question of 'utterance' is, however, especially problematic with regard to metaphor as the question 'Whose utterance?' arises, particularly with regard to metaphors which have taken on an idiomatic quality (so-called 'dead metaphors').

²¹ In my view there is no need to exclude similes from metaphor theory, indeed extended and original similes can in fact be seen as more intensely metaphoric than commonplace metaphors using the form of the identity statement. Moreover, what I shall call the 'extreme simile' – using the phrase 'just like' or the archaic 'even as' could be seen as having the logical form of a metaphor in line with the Leibnizian concept of the identity of indiscernibles (Loemker, 308): to assert that something *exactly resembles* something else is tantamount to saying that it actually *is* that something else and no other. One should not, however, take every *as* or *like* comparison as a metaphoric simile, which would be tantamount to reducing metaphor to comparison. In my view, to say, 'The Mersey tunnel is like the Channel tunnel' is *not* metaphoric but metonymic, as the comparison made is within the same domain and there is no obvious sense in which one tunnel is unlike the other. However, to say, 'She's got a mouth like the Mersey tunnel.' *is* metaphorical. Extended poetic similes, often known as epic or 'long-tailed' similes, are discussed in the first section of Chapter Six.

‘unmarked’ rather than a ‘marked’ usage of the term ‘metaphor’, so that it has, in fact, come to mean ‘Metaphor etc’, rather than metaphor in its strictest sense as distinguished from simile, imagery and other related tropes. (Cooper, 12-21)

This process *of perceiving or conceiving of something in terms of something else*: a *seeing as*, to use a visual metaphor (though the metaphorisation does not necessarily include the experience of visualisation) is not even confined to language; although the examples which I shall give to illustrate my arguments will focus on linguistic, and more narrowly yet, on poetic expressions, it is an important aspect of my theory that it may also be applied to the many non-linguistic media capable of expressing one thing in terms of another, including not only the Hegelian arts of architecture, sculpture, painting and music, but also modern visual arts such as photography and film, dance, and more complex wholes such as religious or other ceremonies, and the dramatic arts, in the sense in which an individual piece of theatre, cinema, opera or musical can be taken in its entirety as a metaphor. Even the preparation, presentation and consumption of food and drink, the use of incense and perfume, or the presentation of a gift, or a simple physical gesture can be seen as metaphors.²²

²² It should not, however, be inferred from the fact that metaphor is not confined to language, that language is merely a sort of transparent medium which enables us to express the ability of a physical or otherwise ‘real’ object to stand for something else. This naïve view would give us no explanation of why it is a different insult to call someone a ‘pig’ and a ‘swine’ (the latter having only connotations of nasty, selfish behaviour, not of gluttony, filth or sloppiness), of why to call someone *lapin* in French has connotations of pluckiness that the English *rabbit* does not usually have (and *bunny rabbit* has still less), or of why the English word *wolf* does not have the positive associations which might attach themselves to the equivalent Turkish word *kurt* or the equivalent French word *loup*. (One might want to have a *kurt* or a *jeune loup* in the workplace, but not a *wolf*.)

The limits of metaphor, even given this wide scope, are debatable. We may for example discuss the exact point at which metaphor fades into metonymy. Problematic cases might include certain examples of the kenning, a two-word descriptive phrase characteristic of Old English poetry, in which a noun is substituted by a two-noun phrase describing one of its salient aspects, for example *swan's way* or *seal's path* as alternative ways of referring to the sea. These examples seem to be literal though poetic, since the sea is in reality travelled by swans and seals: we are not given the simultaneous *is* and *is not* of the classic metaphoric statement. Yet it might conceivably be argued that in these examples *swan* and *seal* are being metaphorically presented as human beings by the fact that they are seen as following a way or path. Other examples seem closer to metaphor: for example, the description of blood as the *sword's water* is more problematic: is blood literally water of the sword? This depends, firstly, on the scope given to the term 'water', i.e., whether it should be thought of as unadulterated H₂O, or whether it should be seen as a generic term for liquid, and secondly, on what usage of the possessive might be considered literal: could this only be applied to liquefied sword or to a liquid that the sword caused to gush forth? There is an ambiguity here and such cases are perhaps best seen as metonymies with a concealed metaphoric aspect.

Also existing on the borderline of metaphor are what Jerry L. Morgan has called 'troublesome cases', that is, examples of parallelism and implicature, about which we can debate as to whether they should be included within the general category of metaphor. Morgan's classic example of a 'troublesome case' is:

Q: How do you like the soufflé?
A: On the whole, I'd rather be in Philadelphia.

(Morgan, 132)

Here we are supposed to use our presumed knowledge of the fact that the reply is quoting *verbatim* the famous epitaph on W.C. Fields's gravestone, in order to infer that the opinion expressed is that eating the soufflé in question is as bad as death, or pretty near. I would consider this sentence as a pointer towards a concealed metaphor rather than a metaphor in itself, but only someone capable of engaging in the process of metaphorisation would be able to extract any meaning from the sentence.

Lastly, we have the case of an imaginary world represented in fiction, such as J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle Earth or Edmund Spenser's Faerieland, which are interrealms in the sense that they both *are*, and *are not*, our own world, but which are not created as a straightforward allegory²³ with point to point correspondences between every conceivable event, person or thing represented in the text and a corresponding fact in the real world.

Perhaps the most fascinating limit case would be the filmic representation of Oxford in *The Golden Compass*:²⁴ an Oxford of another world where representations of

²³ This is despite the fact that Spenser explicitly calls his work 'a continued Allegory, or darke conceit' in 'A Letter of the Authors Expounding his Whole Intention in the Course of this Worke' (Spenser, 15) whilst Tolkien in his foreword to *The Lord of the Rings* vehemently rejected the label: 'I cordially dislike allegory in all its manifestations, and always have done so since I grew old and wary enough to detect its presence. [...] I think that many confuse "applicability" with "allegory", but the one resides in the freedom of the reader, and the other in the purposed domination of the author.' (Tolkien, 11)

²⁴ I discuss the film rather than the book on which it is based as the visual juxtaposition of the 'real' and 'unreal' in the views of Oxford (and London) is all the more striking. However, Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy and the follow-up *Lyra's Oxford* could equally well be considered candidates for

real colleges are shown in changed positions, and where many things are exactly the same as in the Oxford of this world, and others are wildly different. This is certainly an interrealm, but whether we should call it the referent of a film-length extended metaphorical statement is ambiguous.

The case for it being a metaphor is that the film presents a metaphoriser (the imaginary Oxford₂) from which we could create an implied metaphorical statement along the lines of ‘Oxford₁ is (and is not) Oxford₂’. (As Oxford₂ is explicitly presented as a possible world version of Oxford₁, we could also put forward the Aristotelian argument that to give an account of possibilities is to say more of the essence of the thing in question than to enumerate its actualities.) A possible case against seeing an extended metaphor here might be that the film’s *raison d’être* is sheer delight in world creation plus the consideration of general issues applicable to our world, rather than offering a particular critique of the real Oxford, and also that, to pursue the above argument to a *reductio*, we could construct a similar *is and is not* statement for every fictional representation of a city (or indeed anything else), since it must of necessity fall short of a perfect representation of the original, but that to call every such fictional representation metaphorical, is counter-intuitive with regard to ‘realist’ fiction: it seems strange to call the London of, let us say, Arnold Bennett, metaphorical because it contains a building that does not really exist and therefore both *is* and *is not* the London of the real world.

This vagueness concerning the exact boundaries of metaphor or the possibility of statements which are partially metaphorical does not compromise the attempt to give

limit-case extended metaphor.

an account of the referent of metaphor: on the contrary it fits in with the account that I shall give insofar that this account itself makes allowance for multiple-layers of meaning and of reference and of vague or veiled referents.

Finally, it should be noted that although I coin the terms *metaphoriser* and *metaphorised* for the two terms of a metaphorical statement such as ‘Achilles is a lion’, where the *lion* is the metaphoriser and *Achilles* the metaphorised, I sometimes follow ordinary language usage, in which the term ‘metaphor’ may refer to the metaphoriser rather than the metaphorical statement as a whole, as in the phrase ‘*Lion* is a metaphor for Achilles’.

Some Methodological Preliminaries

Before proceeding with the analysis and critique of Ricoeur’s theory, a few preliminary remarks on my approach to the primary text and also on certain basic concepts involved in the question of metaphoric reference are necessary.

Dealing with Ricoeur’s Text

Ricoeur’s method of engaging with the question of metaphor in the eight studies of *La Métaphore Vive* is through an account of various theories of and approaches to metaphor, in which he takes something from each, eschewing what he calls ‘blistering

refutations' (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 7)²⁵ of any position, showing the limitations of the theories he explores as he progresses from rhetorical to semantic to hermeneutic accounts of metaphor, yet also showing that none of these approaches need be abandoned utterly. In this way, he simultaneously does history of philosophy and hews out his own position. He does not himself use the word 'theory' to describe his views on metaphor, though I will refer to 'Ricoeur's theory', since his views on metaphor, despite being arrived at by indirect historical routes, rather than the direct proofs of propositional logic, do constitute a coherent position.

Ricoeur does not proceed according to the classic technique of the explicit formulation of questions and the provision of answers favoured by philosophers in the analytic tradition, and, perhaps for this reason, he has sometimes been accused of being guilty of a lack of clarity.

This was certainly the impression of early reviewers of the text: Peter Lamarque complains that the book suffers a 'deep-rooted vagueness, generality and unclarity' (Lamarque, 189) and is ultimately 'difficult and not greatly rewarding' since it 'creates more problems than it solves' (Lamarque, 190).

A much more sympathetic reviewer, J.J. A. Mooij, laments that the book is 'difficult and somewhat inscrutable [...] its terminology is not as clear as it might be' (Mooij, *Rule*, 496) and accuses the author of being 'positively careless' (497) in failing to precisely define the postulates of reference in the seventh study.

I would agree that Ricoeur's ordering of information is certainly not designed to be 'user-friendly', and that the reader is taken along long detours and by oblique paths.

²⁵ '*réfutation fracassante*' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 12).

Therefore, in my second chapter, I shall begin with the necessary preliminary of recasting Ricoeur's presentation of the issues in such a way as to emphasise the questions relevant to his theory of reference and the answers that he provides to them, as well as pointing out the lacunae which remain in the argument.

While Ricoeur's text can perhaps be best described as an account of the adventures undergone by our conception of metaphor through the ages, my explication and critique will focus on the specific question of reference itself. In its simplest form this means: 'Does metaphor have a reference or not?' I shall argue that metaphor does have a reference, and that therefore we also need to ask 'To *what* does metaphor refer?' and to consider the question of whether the reference that takes place within a metaphoric statement is to a single entity or is multi-levelled.

Yet this question cannot be entirely disentangled from others raised within the text. Ricoeur's defence of the position that metaphor *does* have a reference is hinted at in the early chapters and finally outlined in the Seventh Study of the book, in which he declares: 'My whole aim is to do away with this restriction of reference to scientific statements'. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 261)²⁶

However, the arguments advanced in this Study depend on positions which have been worked out in the preceding studies, and involve other questions concerning the nature of metaphor, which can be partly subsumed under the question 'Does metaphor have a reference?'

²⁶ 'Toute mon entreprise vise à lever cette limitation de la dénotation aux énoncés scientifiques.' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 278)

These chapters make it apparent that the ‘question of reference’ in its wider sense is not simply a matter of the truth-value of a single proposition (i.e. ‘Metaphor has a reference’), but rather requires us to give a fuller account of metaphor dealing with a number of subsidiary questions: in other words, a basic theory of metaphor.

Therefore it will be necessary to examine certain other aspects of Ricoeur’s account of metaphor which have bearing on the question of metaphoric reference, and in some cases to spell out the link between these questions and that of reference itself more closely than Ricoeur himself does.

The most important of these subsidiary questions are as follows: firstly, Ricoeur’s defence of an interactional and tensional theory of metaphor; secondly, his heuristics of metaphor: that is, the sense, if any, in which metaphor functions as a tool of discovery, and whether it can be said actually to generate meaning or to create truth rather than merely drawing attention to pre-existing meaning and truth, and lastly, the ontological question dealt with in the final chapter of *La Métaphor Vive*: that of the sense in which it is possible to speak of metaphorical truth.

These questions, of course, also inter-related: interactional theories of metaphor tend to subscribe to the view that metaphor actually brings truth to light rather than being a shorthand for the expression of already acknowledged similarities; the question of heuristics involves that of truth (truth being one of the things which may be discovered), and Ricoeur’s account of metaphorical truth is part of his tensional theory of metaphor, in so far that he sees a tension, which I would call an ‘ontological tension’, within the copula itself in a metaphorical statement: the metaphorical ‘is’ simultaneously means ‘is’ and ‘is not’.

This cluster of questions will again be addressed in my own account of the metaphorical referent in Chapters Four and Five, where the nature of metaphorical tension/interaction, and the questions of heuristics and of truth will be thought through in terms of my own theory of the interrealm and its three aspects. This will involve the extension of the theory of tension to involve tension between the aspects of the interrealm, and the heuristics of metaphor will be seen, at least partly, in terms of the passage of new semantic content from the first universal aspect of the interrealm to those of the interrealm *qua noema* and as existing within the *Lebenswelt*. The vexed question of the truth-value of a metaphorical statement will also be explored with relation to the interaction of the three aspects of the interrealm.

The questions of heuristics and of truth are, to an extent, self-explanatory, but a brief explication of what is involved in an interactional or tensional theory of metaphor should be given at the outset.

Interactional and Tensional Theories of Metaphor

Philosophical accounts of metaphor have tended to be polarised between substitutional and interactional accounts. Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* laid the foundation for all subsequent substitutional theories when he asserted that ‘Metaphor consists in giving the thing a name which belongs to something else; the transference being either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on grounds of analogy’ (*Poetics* 145 b 6-9, trans. Bywater, *Works*) and that metaphor consisted in ‘giving the thing a name which belongs to something else’.

Metaphor, according to the substitution theory, is therefore primarily a matter of words and not of content. Roy Harris, admittedly going beyond Aristotle's position, believes that the essence of this theory is 'the idea that words are essentially surrogates or substitutes for other things. Languages are thus surrogational systems, which provide [...] a set of verbal tokens which stand for, or take the place of, non-verbal items of various kinds' (Harris, 33). Even if we defend the idea that a substitutional theory can be about the substitution of words for other words, not words for things, it is still the case a theory which sees metaphor merely as substitute for an absent term is reducing words to interchangeable tokens.

As Leppard has pointed out, this view is a simple and commonsense one, which has much in common with Davidson's view of metaphor, sharing with him the idea that

there is no requirement for a formal theory of metaphor because to argue that metaphors present a special and difficult position is to fail to distinguish between the operations of language itself and the foisting of our interpretative faculties upon it.

(Leppard, 38)

A number of *interactional* theories of metaphor, arising out of a sense of the inadequacy of the Aristotelian or substitutional account, predate Ricoeur's theory. Philosophers tend to attribute the first formulation of an interactional theory of metaphor to Max Black, though the credit should be more properly given to I. A. Richards, and, as Leppard has pointed out, Richards's theory has its roots in the

practice and theory of Romantic writers such as Wordsworth and Coleridge. (Leppard, 5 and *passim*)

Perhaps the pithiest description of what constitutes an interaction theory is also given by Leppard:

The essential principle of interaction theory is that in the imposition of one frame of reference upon another a new meaning is created out of a fusion of two sets of vocabulary. Metaphor dissolves category boundaries and re-organises our linguistic universe.

(Leppard, 40)

Ricoeur identifies a multitude of tensions and interactions at work within the metaphorical statement, but his own summary of his version of the interaction theory is that metaphorical attribution is essentially the construction of the network of interactions that causes a certain context to be one that is real and unique:

Accordingly, metaphor is a semantic event that takes place at the point where several semantic fields intersect. It is because of this construction that all the words, taken together, make sense. Then, and only then, the metaphorical *twist* is at once an event *and* a meaning, an event that means or signifies, an emerging event created by language.²⁷

(Ricoeur. Metaphor, 114)

²⁷ *‘La métaphore est alors un événement sémantique qui se produit au point d’intersection entre plusieurs champs sémantiques. Cette construction est le moyen par lequel tous les mots pris ensemble reçoivent sens. Alors, et alors seulement, la torsion métaphorique est à la fois un événement sémantique*

An interactional account of meaning does not, however, imply a theory of metaphoric reference. Indeed, Ogden and Richards in *The Meaning of Meaning* explicitly deny the existence of any such thing.

True reference is reference to a set of referents as they hang together. False reference is reference to them as being in some other arrangement than that in which they actually hang together.

(Ogden and Richards, *Meaning*, 82)

From this it is implied that metaphor, considered as something which makes false claims about the way in which things hang together, is not actually a case of true reference. My thesis will argue otherwise, claiming that the existence of metaphoric reference and the truth-value of the metaphoric statement are distinct issues.

An analysis of interaction theories also involves the explication of various tensions existing within the metaphorical sentence. On the most basic level we need to ask, ‘What is the relationship between the *two terms in a metaphor*, e.g. What is the relationship between ‘Achilles’ and ‘lion’ in the metaphorical phrase or statement ‘Achilles is a lion’? Then we must also ask whether we also need to speak, as substitution theories do, of metaphor in terms of a ‘missing term’, that is, a term which the metaphorical term replaces: thus, ‘brave and fierce fighter’ might be considered to be the absent term replaced by ‘lion’ in the above example.

et une signification, un événement signifiant, une signification émergente créée par le langage.’
(Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 127)

Ricoeur's version of interaction theory initially defines three kinds of metaphorical tension. The first is that within the statement itself, between tenor and vehicle (in I.A. Richards's terminology), between focus (*foyer*) and frame (*cadre*) (in Max Black's terminology), or between the principal subject and the secondary subject (in Monroe Bearsley's terminology). All these are different ways of saying that in the sentence 'Achilles is a lion', there is a tension between 'Achilles' and 'a lion'. Metaphorically speaking, these two non-corresponding terms are pulling in different directions. and we can say that the copula *is* is the rope.²⁸ Secondly, there is a tension between the two interpretations of a statement, the literal and the metaphorical. Thirdly, there is tension in the relational function of the copula *to be* between identity and difference in the play of resemblance, as is explored at greater length in Study Six '*Le travail de la ressemblance*' ('The Work of Resemblance').

To all these, Ricoeur then adds what he considers to be '[t]he most extreme consequence of the theory of tension' (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 302)²⁹, which is the notion of metaphorical truth. This is the introduction of tension into metaphorically affirmed being: that is, the introduction of tension into the logical force of the copula *to be* itself. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 292; *Métaphore*, 312).

Given the importance of the relationship between the question of reference and the defence of an interaction theory, my critique of Ricoeur's theory of metaphorical reference will necessarily involve discussion of his accounts of the various kinds of

²⁸ The rope metaphor is mine, not Ricoeur's.

²⁹ '*la conséquence la plus extrême de la théorie de la tension*' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 321).

interaction within the metaphorical statement, as well as those involved in the heuristic aspect of metaphor and of the question of metaphoric truth.

My own account can also be considered an interaction theory, but I also intend to go beyond previous tension and interactional theories in giving an account of metaphor which describes the tension and interaction of the metaphorical statement in phenomenological terms. Thus the interaction between the three aspects of the interrealm outlined above can be seen as an aspect of a tension theory. I shall suggest other tensions existing within the third aspect of the interrealm as it exists in the *Lebenswelt*: notably, that caused by the overlap of what I call ‘imaginary worlds’: in my account, a metaphor may be in a state of tension with the imaginary world of the text in which it occurs, with other similar metaphors in previous literary tradition, and also in the case of extended metaphor and simile there is frequently a tension between two or more imaginary worlds within the metaphor itself.

CHAPTER TWO

A CRITICAL ACCOUNT OF RICOEUR'S THEORY OF METAPHORIC REFERENCE

What does the metaphorical statement say about reality?

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 255)³⁰

[...] a book whose sense lies hidden; one is inevitably inclined to search for this sense elsewhere. At every turn one gets the impression that the essential is not being said ...

Ricoeur of *Ideas I*, (Ricoeur, *Husserl*, 14)³¹

Introductory Remarks

In this chapter I bring forward for analysis the salient points of Ricoeur's account of metaphoric reference, that is, his account of the relationship between the metaphorical statement and reality in *La Métaphore Vive*. An initial summary of these points is, I believe, called for, not merely because the question of reference is very far from being the sole theme of the work and needs to be extracted from a number of side-issues, and from the detailed analyses of individual theorists, but also because Ricoeur's

³⁰ *Que dit l'énoncé métaphorique sur la réalité?* (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 273).

³¹ The context of the remark, which I would apply to *La Métaphore Vive* itself, is not disrespectful, despite the implication that Husserl never succeeded in clarifying his thought. Ricoeur indeed claims that the key to Husserl's thought is still lacking twenty years later in *The Cartesian Meditations*, and that the most explicit text available to us raises 'the most embarrassing questions'. Yet he also refers reverentially to the actual producer of this text, Eugen Fink, as having access to 'the living thought of the

method is, as indeed he himself confesses from the outset, an extremely indirect one.

In his preface, he remarks that the study is relatively long because it

takes pains to examine the methodologies proper to each point of view, to set out the detailed analyses belonging to each, and always to relate the limits of a theory to that of the corresponding point of view.³²

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 6)

However, I see the main difficulty with Ricoeur's text as being not the indirect method *per se*, but the fact that the final conclusion in the Eighth Study does not seem to be the appropriate culmination of all the intellectual effort invested in the project, and the diverse sources invoked. Without intending any disrespect, my personal impression of the text is that mountains have laboured, and if the result is something more than the ridiculous mouse of the Horatian metaphor, it is nevertheless something considerably less than we might reasonably feel that we have been promised.

Again and again, Ricoeur seems to bring us to the very edge of the promised 'properly ontological interpretation'³³ of metaphorical truth (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 294), only to leave us with a few faint hints rather than a full interpretation. He also shies away from considering the questions raised by the issue of conveying untruth in metaphor, or by the fact that some metaphors are more accurate or congruent (i.e. what is usually called 'truer') than others. The result is that the questions of truth and reference are confused, or rather, collapse into one another, a state of affairs which

master'. (Ricoeur, *Husserl*, 14)

³² *'prend la peine d'examiner les méthodologies propres à chaque point de vue, de déployer les analyses ressortissant à chacun, et de rapporter chaque fois les limites d'une théorie à celles du point*

might have been more acceptable if Ricoeur had limited his conception of reference to the scientifically verifiable facts of the external world, which is something that he explicitly refuses to do. Moreover, the existence of the metaphoric referent itself is only assumed by virtue of the analogy made between the split between literal and metaphoric sense and that between literal and metaphorical reference.

Therefore, a necessary preliminary stage is the excavation from Ricoeur's text of what he actually has to say about metaphorical reference itself and the delineation of the lacunae which need to be filled by a more complete theory of metaphoric reference. Once this process has been completed, I shall move away from close textual analysis of Ricoeur with the aim of getting back to the things themselves, the Husserlian *Sachen selbst*: the things in question being the metaphoric statement and its referent.

A Summary of Ricoeur's Project in *La Métaphore Vive*

La Métaphore Vive progresses through a consideration of metaphor at three stages: that of the word (the semiotic), that of the sentence (the semantic) and that of discourse (hermeneutics). Ricoeur begins his account of metaphor with an exploration and critique of the classical views of metaphor stemming from Aristotle, and persisting up to the present day, according to which metaphor is a mere substitution of one term for another, and thus functions only as a displacement or extension of the meaning of words. In the first and second chapters of *La Métaphore Vive*, he establishes that

de vue correspondant.' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 12)

traditional rhetorical or ‘tropological’ theories of metaphor from Aristotle to Fontanier, based as they are on the premise that metaphor is what Aristotle called an *epiphora*, or a ‘transposition of the name’ (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 74)³⁴, are insufficient. This is, according to Ricoeur, because such theories are, in the terminology of Leibniz, nominal rather than real: they merely enable us to *identify* the phenomenon of metaphor without actually explaining what brings it about. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 74-75; *Métaphore*, 87)

They are more taxonomy than true theory.

The first study deals with Aristotle’s theory itself, and the second with the tropology of Fontanier which represents, in Ricoeur’s view, the last phase of the old rhetoric stemming from Aristotle. These chapters together show the way in which the initial assumption that metaphor takes place only at the level of the word, being the substitution of a ‘improper’ term for a ‘proper’ one, leads inexorably to the conclusion that metaphor is merely ornamental, and that it has no place in the creation of meaning or of truth.

However, Ricoeur also finds certain aspects of Aristotle’s theory which anticipate his own. Thus, in Aristotle’s theory of poetry, with its tension between plot (*muthos*) and representation/imitation (*mimesis*), he sees the basis for the referential function of metaphor in poetry’ (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 45)³⁵, and he finds it significant that the Aristotelian concept of nature (*phusis*), which is, of course, that which is represented in *mimesis*, is not a static given, but rather something in the process of

³³ ‘*interprétation proprement ontologique*’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 313).

³⁴ ‘*transposition du nom*’, Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 87.

development – it follows that *mimesis* itself, and, by extension, the role of metaphor in the process of *mimesis*, may, therefore, even in the Aristotelian view, be not a mere reflection of a pre-existing reality, but possess a heuristic function. (Ricoeur, Metaphor, 48; *Métaphore*, 61) In other words, it does not merely reflect, but discovers, and even *creates* truth.

Ricoeur then shows how the word-centred tradition of Aristotle survives and indeed flourishes up to the time of the composition of *La Métaphore Vive* through the lexical semantics³⁶ of Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale* and the Saussurean school. This is because in Saussurean linguistics, the vital binary oppositions of form/substance, signifier/ signified and synchronic/diachronic are all centred on the word: 'indeed, the Saussurean sign is *par excellence* a word' (Ricoeur, Metaphor, 120).³⁷

Ricoeur emphasises that, for Saussure, the word is the vital middle point between the phoneme on the one hand and syntagma on the other. In the simplest terms, this means that, on the one hand, the most important criterion by which we judge a basic articulated sound, a phoneme such as *fat*, *pat* or *lat*, is that of whether it constitutes a word or not, and on the other hand, the highest linguistic level of the sentence is presupposed to be constructed using units of words as its building blocks.

³⁵ '*La fonction référentielle de la métaphore en poésie*' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 57).

³⁶Saussure's semantics is lexical in the sense of being a semantics of the word: 'the *Cours* tends to identify ultimately general semantics with lexical semantics.' (Ricoeur, Metaphor, 120) ('*Le Cours tend finalement à identifier sémantique générale et sémantique lexicale.*' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 132-133) It should be noted that Ricoeur does not use the word semantics consistently: as Mooij points out, he switches from speaking of semantics in the sense of Benveniste to speaking of semantics in the sense of Saussure according to the writer he is discussing.

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 120-121; *Métaphore* 133) The two extremes of phoneme and sentence-level discourse are thus both in a sense constituted with reference to the word.

Since Ricoeur has already concluded that word-centred theories of metaphor are insufficient, it follows that Saussurean linguistics cannot lead to a satisfactory theory of metaphor, since just like the classical rhetorical theories which preceded it, it remains imprisoned in immanence, and thus cannot direct us towards an extra-linguistic referent of metaphor. The same critique is extended to the school of French structuralism, which is also confined to the word-metaphor, although he concedes that it hints from its limits at a theory of statement-metaphor. They are all inadequate in the sense that they do not produce an account of metaphorical reference.

Nevertheless, Ricoeur characteristically dismisses nothing out of hand, and having elaborated his theory of the statement metaphor in Study Three, he then, in the Fourth and Fifth studies of the book, will go on to integrate the word-based semantics of Saussure and the French structuralists into his own theory as a way of showing how metaphor, though *produced* on the level of the statement, actually *focuses* on the word, and how the word, within the context of the sentence-statement, can refer.

First, however, Ricoeur takes what he himself sees as the crucial preparatory step in the development of his own theory, through his utilisation of the work of Émile Benveniste, which will enable him to place metaphor in the framework of the sentence. This is a vital stage from the point of view of the question of reference in particular, since it opens up the possibility of metaphors pointing to something which exists

³⁷ 'le signe saussurienne, en effet, est par excellence un mot' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 131).

beyond language itself. It is only in the terms set out in this study that Ricoeur thinks it possible to speak of a “cognitive content of metaphor” in contrast to the non-informative nature of metaphor according to the substitution theory’ (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 102).³⁸

Benveniste’s semantics takes the sentence, rather than the word, as the basic unit of meaning; moreover, for Benveniste reference only exists at the level of the sentence (the semantic level), and there is no reference at the level of the semiotic: i.e., the individual word does not refer to the external world, but has meaning due to its place in the language system. Making use of this vital distinction between the semiotic and the semantic, in the Third Study, ‘Metaphor and the Semantics of Discourse’, Ricoeur examines the role of the metaphorical statement *qua* sentence, and concludes that like an ordinary sentence, the metaphorical statement, must be seen as referring to an extra-linguistic reality. The general arguments here advanced in favour of the self-transcendence of language lay the groundwork for the theory of metaphoric reference which will emerge later in Study Seven.

First, however, he takes the initial steps in the direction of elucidating a theory of metaphor which will go beyond the nominal, and which will tell us how metaphors actually come about: he aims to give an investigation of the inter-relationships of meaning which give rise to this transposition of the name:

investigation of the interrelationships of meaning that give rise to this transposition of the name also relentlessly forces open the frame of

³⁸ ‘<<contenu cognitif de la métaphore>> en contraste avec l’information nulle que la théorie de la substitution lui assigne’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 114).

reference determined by the word, and *a fortiori* that determined by the name or noun, and imposes the *statement* as the sole contextual milieu within which the transposition of meaning takes place.

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 74)³⁹

Although he claims that an examination of the ‘generative causes’ (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 75)⁴⁰ of metaphor necessarily entails a consideration of discourse (*discours*), or more particularly, the sentence (*la phrase*), rather than the word alone, as the frame of reference for metaphor, he nevertheless he makes it clear at the outset that he does not agree with the several authors who believe an *interaction theory* of metaphor, closely tied to a conception of metaphor as belonging to discourse, to be incompatible with a *substitution theory* based on a deviation of naming. Rather, the substitution theory is valid at the semiotic level only, and an interaction theory at the semantic level (in Benveniste’s sense of ‘semantic’).

Ricoeur then builds on Benveniste’s theory in order to give an account of metaphor at this level of the metaphorical statement. In doing so, he utilises three tensional, or interactional, theories of metaphor: that of I.A. Richards in his *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 88-96; *Métaphore*, 100-109), that of Max Black, as put forward in his article ‘Metaphor’ in *Models and Metaphor* (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 96-104; *Métaphore*, 109-116), and, finally, that of Monroe Beardsley in his *Aesthetics* (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 104-116; *Métaphore*, 116-128). Richards’s work is

³⁹ ‘*l’investigation appliquée aux travail de sens qui engendre la transposition du nom a sans cesse fait éclater le cadre du mot, et a fortiori celui du nom, et imposé de tenir l’énoncé pour le milieu contextuel dans lequel seulement la transposition du sens a lieu.*’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 87)

⁴⁰ ‘*des causes génératrices*’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 87).

seen as having ‘made the breakthrough’ in terms of creating an interactional theory of metaphor: ‘after him, Max Black and the others organise and occupy the terrain’ (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 97).⁴¹ The provisional conclusion is that metaphor is best described as a case not simply of *deviant denomination* (*dénomination déviante*), but of *impertinent predication* (*énoncé impertinent*).

The fourth and fifth studies of *La Métaphore Vive*, which I shall not analyse in detail, as not being of vital importance to my main concerns, return to a focus on the semantics of the word. As Ricoeur himself points out, these studies appear to constitute a backward step in so far as they are concerned with the question of the word rather than the sentence, though they will be integrated into the main course of the argument. The main point with regard to the theme of reference is that in these studies, Ricoeur concludes that the individual word can, after all, actually refer, but that it only does so by virtue of its position in the framework of a sentence.

Study Six moves to a third level beyond the semiotic and semantic: that of hermeneutics, which operates at the level, not of the word or sentence, but of discourse. Here Ricoeur takes up an issue which he believes the interaction theorists have failed to solve: the question of *semantic innovation*, that is, of the creation of meaning evidenced by newly invented metaphors. This problem can be solved through the notion of resemblance, which is defined as a tension between identity and difference. He refutes the view that a resemblance theory of metaphor needs to be linked to a substitutional one, and shows that it is also required by an interactional theory, and

⁴¹ ‘*C’est cet ouvrage qui a fait la percée; après lui, c’est Max Black et d’autres occupent et organisent le terrain.*’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 109)

argues that the seeing of similarities in dissimilars requires us to revise traditional theories of imagination *qua* visualisation in favour of a *seeing as* in the Wittgensteinian, rather than the quasi-sensorial, sense.

Study Seven then continues to examine metaphor from the hermeneutic, discourse level perspective, with regard to the power of the metaphorical statement to re-describe reality, and in so doing puts forward the theory of split reference. In his view, the belief that all discourse has both sense and reference collides with the apparently essentially non-referential character of poetic language. To this belief in the non-referentiality of fiction Ricoeur opposes the idea that just as, in the metaphorical statement, we have the suspension of the literal sense of that statement which allows for the creation of a second, metaphorical sense, so analogously, the suspension of literal reference is ‘the condition for the release of a power of second-degree reference, which is properly poetic reference.’ (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 5)⁴²

The theory of metaphoric reference is supported by a theory of denotation close to that of Nelson Goodman, and the concept of fictional redescription is justified by a comparison of the functioning of metaphor in the arts with Max Black’s theory of the functioning of models in the sciences. We then reach the culmination of the work in the linking of fiction and redescription which presents metaphor as the rhetorical process by means of which fictional discourse unleashes the power to redescribe reality. This linking of fiction and redescription leads to the conclusion that

⁴² ‘la condition pour que soit libéré un pouvoir de référence de second degré, qui est proprement la référence poétique’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 11).

the ‘place’ of metaphor, its most intimate and ultimate abode, is not in the word, nor the sentence nor even discourse, but the copula of the verb *to be*. The metaphorical ‘is’ at once signifies both ‘is not’ and ‘is like’. If this is really so we are allowed to speak of metaphorical truth, but in an equally ‘tensive’ sense of the word ‘truth’.

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 6)⁴³

Finally, Study Eight analyses the relationship between metaphor and philosophical discourse: these are seen as separate discourses, and it is claimed that philosophy does not proceed, directly nor even indirectly, from poetry. Making this distinction involves what Ricoeur calls an ontological clarification of the postulate of reference, which will simultaneously ‘ground’ the notion of metaphorical truth and ‘limit’ poetic discourse. Poetic discourse and, by implication, metaphor itself, is thus, in his view, at one stroke both justified and circumscribed.

I shall not analyse all eight studies in equal detail below, but shall focus on some key issues with regard to reference raised in Studies One, Three, Seven and Eight.

⁴³ *le <<lieu>> de la métaphore, son lieu le plus intime et le plus ultime, n'est ni le nom, ni la phrase, ni même le discours, mais la copule du verbe d'être. Le <<est>> métaphorique signifie à la fois <<n'est pas>> et <<est comme>>. S'il en est bien ainsi, nous sommes fondé à parler de vérité métaphorique, mais en un sens également tensionnel du mot <<vérité>>. (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 11)*

Key Points regarding Reference

The Starting Point: Aristotle and the Question of Reference

Ricoeur's first study, after an opening discussion of the way in which metaphor theory has come down to us through the discipline of rhetoric, summarises the main points of Aristotle's theory of metaphor, as advanced in the *Rhetoric* and the *Poetics*. Four main points are extracted, none of which bear directly upon the question of reference, but which function as a necessary point of departure in the development of the work as a whole, since they form the basis of the substitution theory whose sufficiency will be subsequently critiqued.

Firstly, Aristotle's theory is that metaphor is something *that happens to the noun*, and therefore contains *in nuce* the theory of tropes, or of figures of speech which focus on the word. Secondly, metaphor is defined in terms of movement, or *epiphora*: a borrowed word that does not really belong to the thing which it describes, is moved in to take the place of the proper term, or in the case of *catechresis*, to fill up the void in language created by there being no ordinary word to describe a certain action: for example, there was in ancient Greek no single specific verb to describe the emanation of rays of light from the sun, so the verb used for the scattering of seed is appropriated. Thirdly, the metaphorical term introduced is seen by Aristotle as being *allogrios* ('alien'): this implies a 'deviation' from the *kurion* ('current') name, and also a borrowing, a giving of a thing a name which belongs to something else. Lastly, the

typology of metaphor or the classification of the types of possible transposition is made: from genus to species, from species to genus, from species to species, or by analogy or proportion, and the question is raised of what it means to metaphorise well, a provisional definition being that it is to see resemblances.

Ricoeur proposes three interpretative hypotheses stemming from these points and carrying Aristotle's thought a little further: firstly, that a focus on the name should be replaced by a focus on the pair of terms or relationships (from genus to species etc) which are involved. This shows the way in which a metaphor displaces a whole network of meaning. Secondly, he proposes that metaphor should be seen as a kind of logical transgression or category mistake, which exists as a de-constructive intermediary phase between description and redescription, and, thirdly, and most radically, he puts forward the suggestion, never fully developed, that, perhaps, order is born in the same way that it is destroyed, and that the initial order of logical thought and classification which is disrupted by the heuristics of metaphor also has something metaphorical at its root.

In these hypotheses, it is as if Ricoeur is straining at the boundaries of Aristotelian thought in order to derive from it something which is not confined to grammar and rhetoric, but which pertains to the relation between language and the world, the question of reference in its widest sense. This is despite the fact that Aristotle's theory of metaphor as the transposition of the name cannot, for Ricoeur, give us an account of metaphoric reference *per se*, since it remains at the level of the word, and as we shall see, Ricoeur, following Benveniste, sees reference only existing

at the level of the sentence. Nevertheless, in his view, Aristotle's account already points us in this direction:

What remains to be puzzled out is the relationship between the two sides of the phenomenon, between logical deviation and the production of meaning that Aristotle calls *epiphora*. This problem will be solved in a satisfactory manner only when the statement-character of metaphor is fully recognised. The name-related aspects can then become fully attached to a discursive structure.

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 23)⁴⁴

As I hope to demonstrate below, there is a tension, indeed a contradiction, between Ricoeur's insistence on the statement-character of metaphor which binds the act of metaphorisation to a sentence, and the belief, expressed in other passages in the text, that the act of metaphorisation is something which need not be confined to semantics. I shall attempt to solve this impasse by putting forward a theory of metaphor which at once gives an account of the two terms required by the act of metaphorisation, and is not confined to the sentence.

The question of reference emerges again in the First Study through a discussion of Aristotelian *mimesis*. The full title of this study 'Between Rhetoric and Poetics: Aristotle' refers not only to the fact that Aristotle defines and discusses metaphor at length in both his *Rhetoric* and in his *Poetics*, but also to the fact that metaphor itself

⁴⁴ *Ce qui reste à penser, c'est le rapport entre l'envers et l'endroit du phénomène: entre l'écart logique et la production du sens désignée par Aristote comme épiphore. Ce problème ne recevra de solution satisfaisante qu'une fois pleinement reconnu le caractère d'énoncé de la métaphore. Les aspects nominaux pourront alors être pleinement rattachés à la structure discursive.* (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 31)

belongs both to poetry and to rhetoric, that is, to what Ricoeur calls ‘the mimetic arts’⁴⁵ and ‘the arts of persuasive proof’⁴⁶ (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 13).

Metaphor thus has a single structure, but two separate functions. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 12; *Métaphore*, 18) Ricoeur’s ultimate aim in *La Métaphore Vive*, in so far as the work can be said to be possessed of a single aim, is to plead for the autonomy of these two discourses of poetry and philosophy. The sense in which philosophy’s autonomy from poetry must be asserted is by claiming, *contra* Nietzsche and his followers, and *contra* Derrida, or at least Ricoeur’s reading of Derrida, that philosophy can channel and utilise the heuristic power of metaphor without being at its mercy. Therefore, he strikes an important key note when he says that:

The triad of *poiêsis-mimêsis-catharsis*, which cannot possibly be confused with the triad rhetoric-proof-persuasion, characterizes the world of poetry in an exclusive manner.

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 13)⁴⁷

This distinction, looked at from a contemporary perspective, seems somewhat naïve, since it is difficult to claim that the presentation of a world view in the *mimesis* of poetry is completely devoid of an attempt to persuade the audience to adopt certain values. Indeed it would not be an exaggeration to say that literary criticism in recent years has been dominated by explorations and critiques of the ideology of

⁴⁵ ‘[les] arts mimétiques’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 18).

⁴⁶ ‘[les] arts de la preuve persuasive’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 18).

representation, as seen for example in gender-studies or postcolonial criticism focusing on ‘images of the other’.⁴⁸

However, choosing to ignore here the question of how metaphor functions in the world of proof and persuasion, Ricoeur closes his discussion of Aristotle with an insistence on the point that Aristotle gives metaphor a reference by tying it, through *mimesis*, to the world of nature, that is, of *phusis*.

Relocated on the foundations provided by *mimêsis*, metaphor ceases to be arbitrary and trivial. If considered simply as a fact or element of language, it could be taken for a mere deviation in relation to ordinary usage, alongside the rare word, the newly coined, the lengthened, abbreviated and altered. But the subordination of *lexis* to *muthos*, already puts metaphor in the service of ‘saying’, of ‘poeticizing’ which takes place no longer at the level of the word, but of the poem as a whole. Then the subordination of *muthos* to *mimêsis* gives the stylistic process a global aim, comparable to rhetoric’s intention to persuade. Considered formally, metaphor as a deviation represents nothing but

⁴⁷ ‘La triade poiêsis-mimêsis-catharsis dépeint de manière exclusive le monde de la poésie, sans confusion possible avec la triade rhétorique – preuve – persuasion.’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 18)

⁴⁸ To give one of many possible instances, the political furore surrounding the retelling of the Thermopylae story in the film ‘300’, as fine a modern example of the Aristotelian triad of *poiêsis*, *mimêsis* and *catharsis* as one might wish to find, but nevertheless perceived by some as a piece of Western propaganda against Iran, illustrates the fact that, nowadays, the presentation of men in action is seldom seen as ideologically or politically neutral. Indeed, Aristotle himself, though rejecting Plato’s political critique of the mimetic arts in *The Republic*, did not go so far as to depoliticise either *mimesis* or *catharsis*. This point is not a vital one in the development of my argumentation, but it is perhaps the case that Ricoeur’s oversimplification on this point has some connection with his tendency to overstate the clarity of binary oppositions in other areas. The desire to separate poetics and persuasion persists in the conclusion of *La Métaphore Vive*, which ends with an assertion of the clear-cut distinction between poetry and philosophy, which are seen, in Heideggerian phrase, as connected by their common service to language, and yet as dwelling on the most widely separated mountains (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 370; *Métaphore*, 398). Ricoeur is, I believe, speaking a little too generally here and thus ignoring some of the implications of his own project of the defence of metaphoric reference, which could equally well have culminated in a defence of a certain use of metaphorical language in philosophy. My own view is that the connection between poetry and philosophy is more intimate than the separated mountain metaphor might suggest, not in the sense that the philosophical project will be seen to be irredeemably compromised by its inability to free itself of metaphorical thinking, but rather in the sense that the poetry in miniature of metaphor *may* function as a moment, even perhaps a necessary moment or foundation, in the expression of truth and the identification of falsehood which is (at least part of) the purpose of philosophy. My development of Ricoeur’s account of the metaphorical referent does not demonstrate the necessity of poetry to the philosophical project, but it clears the way for the possibility of metaphor functioning in this foundational way by giving the metaphorical statement the status of something which actually refers to a state of affairs, even though this state of affairs may be vague.

a difference in meaning. Related to the imitation of our actions at their best, it takes part in the double tension which characterizes this imitation: submission to reality and fabulous invention, unaltered representation and ennobling elevation. This double tension constitutes the referential function of poetry.

Abstracted from this referential function, metaphor plays itself out in substitution and dissipates itself in language games.

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 45)⁴⁹

According to Ricoeur, if nature is not fixed, and if the essence of things is to be found in their potentiality, then the protean nature of metaphor is the discipline which may represent nature most faithfully. This is a point which deserves to be developed further, and it is disappointing that Ricoeur does not fully follow through its implications at a later stage in this work.

However, what is lacking here is a sense that we may wish to question the limits of *mimesis*, that is the sense in which poetry in general, and metaphor in particular, can be allowed to misrepresent or depart from reality and yet still to 'refer'. A case can indeed be made out for any possible metaphor, poem or story, however fantastic, referring to the world in some way, but then we need to ask how it is possible for so-called empty language games to exist.

⁴⁹ 'Replacée sur le fond de la mimésis, la métaphore perd tout caractère gratuit. Considérée comme simple fait du langage, elle pourrait être tenue pour un simple écart par rapport au langage ordinaire, à côté du mot rare, insolite, allongé, abrégé, forgé. La subordination de la lexis au muthos place déjà la métaphore au service du <<dire>>, du <<poématiser>>, qui s'exerce non plus au niveau du mot, mais du poème entier; à son tour la subordination du muthos à la mimésis donne au procédé de style une visée globale, comparable à celle de la persuasion en rhétorique. Considérée formellement, en tant qu'écart, la métaphore n'est qu'une différence dans le sens; rapportée à l'imitation des actions les meilleures, elle participe à la double tension qui caractérise ici celle-ci: soumission à la réalité et invention fabuleuse; restitution et surrévélation. Cette double tension constitue la fonction référentielle de la métaphore en poésie. Considérée abstraitement — c'est à dire hors de cette fonction de référence —, la métaphores'épuise dans sa capacité de substitution et se dissipe dans l'ornement; livrée à l'errance, elle se perd dans les jeux du langage.' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 57)

The allusion to the ennobling function of metaphor is at best irrelevant: as Aristotle himself recognised in his remarks on comedy, literature has the ability to present men as worse than they are as well as better, and there are any number of possible gradations between presenting the world as nobler and better, or worse and more ignoble than it is – even supposing the concepts of ‘good’, ‘noble’ and ‘the world as it is’ to be unproblematic. This applies to metaphor as much as to literature in general.

This key passage, then, raises more problems than it solves. There is an underlying naiveté which compromises the much more complex theoretical discussion which is to follow. One is led to ask exactly what the relationship is between the truth-value of the metaphoric statement and the existence of the metaphoric referent. Ricoeur has set up a binary opposition between reference and empty language games which has the effect of assimilating the notion of metaphoric reference to that of truth about the world. We are then given the let-out clause of seeing truth in a higher sense, as that revealed by an ennobling *mimesis*. This solves nothing, and indeed raises new difficulties: a theory of metaphor should be able to cover all possible metaphors, or at least all those which have been created so far, not only the ennobling or neutral. It should also be able to cover vicious, ill-intentioned, misleading, obscene and scurrilous metaphors, of which there is no shortage in the world of discourse.

Criticising Ricoeur’s view of Aristotelian *mimesis* on these points, may appear to be fixing on a minor aspect of Ricoeur’s argument at this stage, yet it touches upon a vital omission of Ricoeur’s: his failure to account for varying degrees of truth whilst

still defending a universal theory of metaphoric reference. Further difficulties with the relationship between reference and truth will emerge in the vital turning point of the work, Study Three, and in the focus on reference in Study Seven.

The decisive step in Ricoeur's theory of reference: the distinction between semiotics
and semantics in the work of Émile Benveniste

In the first and second studies of *La Métaphore Vive*, Ricoeur established that traditional rhetorical, or tropological, theories of metaphor from Aristotle to Fontanier, based as they are on the premise that metaphor is simply the substitution of one word for another, that is, upon what Aristotle called an *epiphora* or a 'transposition of the name' (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 74)⁵⁰ are insufficient. This is because such theories are, in the terminology of Leibniz, nominal rather than real: they merely enable us to identify the phenomenon of metaphor without explaining what really brings it about. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 75; *Métaphore*, 87)

In the Third Study of *La Métaphore Vive*, Ricoeur takes the first steps in the direction of putting forward an account of metaphor which will go beyond these nominal accounts and tell us how metaphors actually come about. An examination of these 'generative causes' (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 75)⁵¹ of metaphor necessarily entails a consideration of discourse (*discours*), or more particularly, the sentence (*la phrase*), rather than the word alone, as the frame of reference for metaphor. Therefore, his starting point, in Study Three of *La Métaphore Vive*, 'Metaphor and the Semantics of

⁵⁰ 'transposition du nom' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 87).

⁵¹ 'causes génératives' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 87).

Discourse’, is an examination of the role of the *metaphorical statement*. (*l’énoncé métaphorique*). Indeed, he claims that the investigations of meaning in the first two

studies have led him inexorably to the point where the statement metaphor needs to be given primacy:

the investigation of the interrelationships of meaning which give rise to this transposition of the name also relentlessly forces open the frame of reference determined by the word, and *a fortiori* that determined by the name or noun, and imposes the statement as the sole contextual milieu within which the transposition of meaning takes place.

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 74)⁵²

The foundation on which this account of the metaphorical statement is laid, is Émile Benveniste’s distinction between semiotics and semantics, as elaborated in his essay ‘La forme et le sens dans le langage’ (‘Form and meaning in language’).⁵³

⁵² *l’investigation appliquée au travail de sens qui engendre la transposition du nom a sans cesse fait éclater le cadre du mot, et a fortiori celui du nom, et imposé de tenir l’énoncé pour le milieu contextuel dans lequel seulement la transposition de sens a lieu.* (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 87)

⁵³ This essay was originally given at a congress at which Ricoeur himself was present, and his contribution to the discussion is recorded (*Le langage II (Société de Philosophie de langue française, Actes du XIII^e Congrès, Genève, 1966)*, La Bacconière, Neuchâtel 1967, 29-40). The essay reveals Benveniste as very consciously speaking as a linguist amongst philosophers (Benveniste, *Forme*, 215), taking as his starting point the distinction between form (*la forme*) and meaning (*le sens*) in language, and the problems for a linguist in venturing to deal with the question of meaning at all. Benveniste’s text also reveals, more closely than Ricoeur’s use of it, its place in the context of the intellectual climate of his time. It was not, then, so long since the general acceptance of the accusations of psychologism (‘*mentalisme*’) levelled by the American linguist Bloomfield against those who had attempted to study ‘meaning’ had caused linguists to confine themselves to increasingly precise and concrete analyses of the technical aspects of language. Benveniste points out that although linguists had now ceased to see meaning as a forbidden subject, a distrust of the subject matter of semantics persisted, and is, to an extent, justified, by the vague and nebulous character of traditional works purporting to deal with semantics. (216) He confesses that, ‘*De fait, les manifestations du sens semblent aussi libres, fuyante, imprévisibles, que sont concrets, définits, descriptibles, les aspects de la forme.*’ (216) In fact, the way in

The essential point for Ricoeur is that Benveniste sees language as operating on two levels, that of signs and that of the sentence. The notion of level is integral to this analysis: a linguistic unit is only to be accepted as such if it can be identified within a higher-level unit: the phoneme in the word; the word in the sentence. The sentence unit should not be thought of as if it is a longer and more complex kind of word. It is, rather, a whole which cannot be reduced to the sum of its parts; the sum of its meaning is distributed over the *ensemble* of its constituents. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 77; *Métaphore*, 89-90)

According to this paradigm, the word *per se* only functions as a sign *within* the closed and idealised system of language as presented by Saussurean linguistics, where it can be understood only in terms of inter-relations with other words, while the sentence has the power to *refer* to extra-linguistic reality. Applied to metaphor, this means that metaphor will become a question of predication: of *impertinent predication* (the deliberate misapplication of a predicate) rather than merely *deviant denomination* (the deliberate misapplication of a name).

Ricoeur values the distinction between semiotics and semantics because it supports and leads to a number of other distinctions relevant to metaphor, some advanced by Benveniste himself, and others by the linguistic analysis of English language writers which can be synthesised with Benveniste's account.

which meaning manifests itself appears to be as free, fleeting and as impossible to predict as the aspects of form are concrete, definite and susceptible to description. ('Form and Meaning', my translation). Nevertheless, he considers *form* and *meaning* as twin concepts ('*notions jumelles*', 216) and attempts to make an analysis of them without depending on any philosophical presuppositions, taking as a point of departure what he calls a rough and indeed banal definition of the meaning/sense opposition: that meaning is the total result of a process of communication as understood in the same way ('*identiquement*') by all of a group of hearers, whilst form consists of the formal arrangement of

The first section of the Third Study is thus structured around a number of binary oppositions⁵⁴. It is this rigidly dualistic schema which I feel needs to be opened up to a deconstructive critique in the course of giving a fuller account of the metaphorical referent. I attempt to give such an account in the fifth chapter of the thesis, but will here make some preliminary remarks regarding the difficulties which I see as arising out of the acceptance of these binaries. My critique will focus on two fundamental, and closely related, aspects of Ricoeur's thought. The first is his insistence on the distinction between linguistic immanence at the level of semiotics, and linguistic transcendence at the level of semantics, and the resulting rigid opposition created between the non-referring word, and referring discourse, according to which an individual word *per se* belongs to the realm of semiotics, and possesses only sense. The second is his uncritical acceptance of, and use of, the Fregean sense/reference (*Sinn/Bedeutung*) distinction, which is actually damaging to one of the ultimate aims of his work, an account of the power of fictions to redescribe reality, since it denies the possibility of fictive or ideal referents.

Ricoeur puts forward six pairs of oppositions which harmonise with Benveniste's semiotics/semantics opposition. The fourth and fifth of these pairs bear directly upon the question of reference: these are, respectively, the Fregean sense/reference distinction itself, and a sub-division of reference into reference to reality and reference to the speaker.⁵⁵ The latter distinction is only briefly touched

linguistic elements considered as deprived of their meaning.

⁵⁴ This fascination with binaries possibly owes something to the almost hegemonic status of structuralist thought at the time of the publication of *La Métaphore Vive*, although the oppositions themselves are not necessarily structuralist in origin.

⁵⁵ The others pairs are the distinction between *discourse as event* and *discourse as meaning*; the

upon and its relevance to metaphor is not stated. However, Ricoeur's assertion in this passage that reference is itself a dialectical phenomenon – in that to the extent that discourse refers to a situation, to an experience, to reality, to the world, in sum to the extra-linguistic, it also refers to its own speaker through the use of pronouns, tenses and indexicals (Ricoeur, *Metaphor* 86; *Métaphore*, 98) – suggests the possibility of further investigating the relationship between metaphoric reference and subjectivity, a relationship which I shall consider in my final chapter. The main point at issue here is, however, the sense-reference distinction itself.

Frege's distinction between sense and reference is connected to Benveniste's theory of semantics, because, in Ricoeur's view, it is only the sentence that makes such a distinction possible. Ricoeur has already made it clear in the introduction to *La Métaphore Vive*, that the adoption of Benveniste's semantics is both a vital stage in his theory, and that it coincides with the passage from sense to reference:

The passage to the hermeneutic point of view corresponds to the change of level that moves from the sentence to discourse properly speaking (poem, narrative, essay etc.). A new problematic emerges in connection with this point of view: the issue is no longer the form of metaphor as a word-focused figure of speech, nor even just the sense of metaphor as a founding of a new semantic pertinence, but the reference of the metaphorical statement as the power to 're-describe' reality.

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 5)⁵⁶

distinction between *identifying function* and *predicative function*, that between *location aspect* and *illocution aspect*, and lastly, the distinction between the *paradigmatic* and the *syntagmatic*.

⁵⁶ *Une nouvelle problématique émerge en liaison avec ce nouveau point de vue: elle ne concerne pas plus la forme de la métaphore en tant que figure du discours focalisée sur le mot; ni même seulement le sens de la métaphore en tant qu'instauration de nouvelle pertinence sémantique; mais la référence de l'énoncé métaphorique en tant que pouvoir de <<redécrire>> la réalité.* (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 10)

This sense-reference polarity is thus vital to the account of metaphor: there is a ‘necessity of the sense-reference polarity’ (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 115).⁵⁷ Ricoeur spells out the link between sense/reference and semiotic/semantic dichotomies in his summary of Frege’s position:

It too, as we will see, finds a place in the concept of semantics according to Benveniste. Only at the level of the sentence, taken as a whole, can what is said be distinguished from that of which one speaks. This difference is implied already in the simple equational definition, $A=B$, where A and B have different meanings. But if one says that one equals the other, one says at the same time that they refer to the same thing. One can expose the difference between sense and reference by looking at cases in which there are obviously two senses for one reference (Alexander’s instructor and Plato’s pupil), or cases in which no referent can be assigned empirically (the farthest thing from earth).

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 85)⁵⁸

There are two aspects of this theory which I wish to critique. Firstly, in my view, Ricoeur goes too far in this attempt to link referential function inextricably to the sentence. The following thought-experiment is offered as a counter-example to this

⁵⁷ ‘la métaphore requière la polarité entre sens et référence’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 128).

⁵⁸ *On verra qu’il trouve, lui aussi, un ancrage dans le concept de sémantique selon Benveniste. Seule, en effet, la phrase permet cette distinction. C’est seulement au niveau de la phrase, prise comme un tout, qu’on peut distinguer ce qui est dit et ce sur quoi on parle. Cette différence est déjà impliquée par la simple définition équationnelle: $A = B$, où A et B ont des sens différents. Même s’il on dit que l’une égale l’autre, on dit du même coup qu’ils se réfèrent à la même chose. On peut faire apparaître le différence entre le sens et le référence en considérant les cas où il y a manifestement deux sens et une référence (le maître d’Alexandre et l’élève de Platon), ou ceux où il n’y a pas de référent assignable empiriquement (le corps le plus éloigné de la Terre).* (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 97)

claim of inextricability.

We might imagine a primitive society in which people had not learned how to construct sentences with predicates, in whose grammar the copula did not exist and verbs were only used in command forms, but which nevertheless had a very complex and synonym-rich vocabulary of nouns, and frequently applied different names or noun-phrases to the same object, some of them in a metaphorical fashion.

For instance, sometimes the king was called *lion*, sometimes he was called *eagle*; in fact, he was given a different metaphorical sobriquet for every day of the year, which his people had to memorise under pain of death. In this society, people would have a keen awareness of the distinction between Fregean reference and sense, despite the fact that they were unable to construct a sentence along the lines of ‘The king is a lion’, and ‘The king is an eagle’, and they were very far from the sophistication of expressing *lion = eagle*.

Moreover, we do not have to look to imaginary societies in order to find cases in which the individual word can and does refer; examples can be found in daily uses of language which appear to flout this rule: the most obvious being the ‘broken language’ of the most basic kind such as that used by young children, people with language learning difficulties, people trying to communicate in foreign languages which they have not yet entirely mastered, and so on. Such speakers make reference to objects outside language, even when it consists of individual-word utterances, or of longer utterances which do not conform to grammatical rules.

It could, of course, be objected that such utterances constitute rudimentary

sentences, and obey a grammar of their own, and that a predicative structure is always implied. We are close here to what Ricoeur asserts in his Second Study, when he says that the isolated metaphorical noun already has a ‘quasi-predicative character’ (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 66).⁵⁹ In my view, however, the difference between implied or quasi-predication and actual predication is significant, as it allows for the possibility that the act of metaphorisation does not depend on the production of sentences with predicates, any more than the perception of causality depends on the existence of clauses using the word *because*.

However, we also have even clearer examples of one-word reference which it would be difficult to present as a truncated sentence. Let us take the case of a person looking up an individual noun in a dictionary, or finding it written on a piece of paper, and finding themselves summoning up mental images of the object designated by a word, and having a strong feeling of its connection with the extra-linguistic world, rather than merely considering its place in a language system. This could be accompanied with varying types of imagination or visualisation, perhaps they are discovering the word for the first time and understand its reference from an illustration to the dictionary entry. However true it might be that the *meaning* of this word, and the exact scope of its reference, can only be truly understood in relation to things which are not referents and that this is usually done through the medium of other words (we need to understand that *lion* is not the same as *tiger or panther* in order to realise that it does not designate *big cat*) this does not mean that the word exists only within a sign system.

In the dictionary entry *qua* referent we have an extreme case of the kind of

⁵⁹ ‘*caractère quasi prédicatif*’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 79).

indefinite descriptions which Russell believed to *denote ambiguously*: we do not even have the specificity of ‘*I saw a lion*’, but simply the isolated term ‘lion’. I think that there *is* denotation (*reference*) here, but *not* real ambiguity (real ambiguity would exist if the sign in question could designate either *lion* or *tiger*, but not both simultaneously, and we were unsure in which sense it was currently being used). The dictionary-entry case is rather as if someone could designate, with an extremely broad sweep of the hand, all the lions of the world, and of all possible worlds where lions exist, past, present and to come, real, painted, sculpted, photographed, otherwise depicted, and imaginary, and then say: *any or all of these*⁶⁰. Rather than calling this ambiguous denotation, I prefer to say that such words *refer*, but that they refer *vaguely*.

If it is once admitted that the dictionary entry can refer, the only way to save Ricoeur’s belief that only sentences refer, would be to see the entry as a sentence in disguise. We can indeed make a sentence of it in the sense that we can transcribe this dictionary-reader’s experience into a statement along the lines of ‘It is the case that there is a word *lion* which refers to any or all of the lions in the universe.’ Yet the comparative complexity of this sentence, compared to the immediacy of the experience, foregrounds the fact that the act of referring precedes, rather than proceeds from, such sentence construction.⁶¹ Moreover, to insist upon seeing the dictionary

⁶⁰It is not necessary to accept that such a sign refers to *all or any* of the instantiations of the class of objects which it covers in order to defend the fact that it refers. It could also be seen as having reference to the class of objects, or to a single object not yet clearly defined, to which it has the potential to refer *more specifically*. Both of these possibilities differ sharply from seeing the word as an idealised sign which has merely the potential to refer *per se* when included in a sentence.

⁶¹ Ricoeur himself at the conclusion of Study Six seems close to accepting this fact that the act of metaphorisation does not depend upon language, when he says that ‘Metaphorical meaning [...] is not the enigma itself [...] but the solution of the enigma’. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 254) (‘*Le sens métaphorique [...] n’est pas l’énigme elle-même [...] mais la solution de l’énigme*’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 271)) and when he

entry as a sentence would be tantamount to saying that there is no such thing as a word which is not a sentence, since every existing word can be considered as a dictionary entry even if it has not actually been used as one. It would be more convincing to give the dictionary-entry *qua* word referring status.

The second aspect of my critique of Ricoeur's sense/reference division, which will be further developed in the fourth chapter, is a consequence of my following certain hints of Husserl in arguing that what Frege called *Sinn* is actually always already a kind of reference in itself, although to an ideal rather than to a physical or real entity.⁶²

To return to one of Frege's most famous examples: speaking of (in common parlance, *referring to*) Venus as 'the Morning Star' or 'the Evening Star' is not merely a question of choosing between two labels within the closed system of language – it also refers outside language to the entity of Venus seen under a certain aspect, from a certain perspective (*Abschattung* in Husserlian terminology) – perhaps we might say that it refers to the sum total of her morning or evening instantiations. I would go one step further, and assert that term 'the Morning Star', used by someone who believes it to be the same celestial object as that designated by the term 'the Evening Star', has neither the same reference as does the term 'Venus' considered as a single entity, nor

suggests that a phenomenology of the imagination, such as that of Gaston Bachelard in *The Poetics of Space*, could take over at the point where semantics meets its limits and where 'the verbal is vassal to the non-verbal'. (254) ('*Le non-verbal l'emporte sur le verbal*' (272)).

⁶² To say that the entity is ideal is not to bracket the question of its physical existence entirely. The position which I would defend on this matter is not the pure Husserlian one, but is rather that put forward in Merleau-Ponty's attempt, in his essay '*Le philosophe et son ombre*', to think the unthought of Husserl. Merleau-Ponty assumes that the *epoche* can never be complete because our intentional experience of any entity is also modified according to whether its actual existence is believed in. I would add that we may, of course, suspend (dis)belief with regard to, or be indifferent to the question of, actual existence, but

the same reference as ‘the Morning Star’ used by someone who believes it to be a distinct object from the Evening Star.⁶³

It follows from this view that there are numerous cases of what Ricoeur describes as ‘split reference’ (*référence dédoublée*) in non-metaphorical language, and that this necessarily results in a more complex model, in which literal language already possessing split reference may then gain new referents when used metaphorically, resulting in metaphorical statements in which reference is not simply bifurcated as in Ricoeur’s account, but multiply-split, or as I would prefer to call it, multiply-layered.⁶⁴ This is just one example of the many ways in which splitting, or layering, of reference may occur in any given metaphorical statement: others will be explored in more detail in my account of a phenomenological description of metaphor in the fourth and fifth chapters of my thesis.

This, of course, leads to a multiplication of phenomenological entities – the so-called ‘rich’ ontology which a powerful tradition from Occam to Quine has warned us to avoid. The ontology of metaphor, seen in terms of this metaphor, is doubtless a turtle soup and cream with rum and chocolate icing. Yet it cannot be helped; it does

that such a neutrality is, in itself, an attitude towards the question of existence. Cf. Merleau-Ponty, *Éloge*, 246-270.

⁶³ A stanza of Tennyson from *In Memoriam*, on the double nature of Venus *qua* morning star and evening star, used as symbol-metaphor for his changed relationship to his dead friend, and within the wider context of the poem, also as a metaphor for death and resurrection, can be used to illustrate this point: ‘Sweet Hesper-Phosphor double name/For what is one, the first, the last/Thou, like my present and my past./Thy place is changed; thou art the same.’ (*In Memoriam*, CXXI, Tennyson, Poems, 262). Although the first two lines might seem to be a poetic rendering of the Fregean position, the poem would, in fact, be meaningless if we did not initially perceive the evening star, Hesper and the morning-star, Phosphor as distinct entities (referents) independent of language.

⁶⁴ The preference comes from the more positive associations of the word layering: to think of metaphoric reference as a kind of *mille feuilles* is more accurate as well as more pleasant than to think of it as something which is broken, or something which forces us to make a single choice rather than relish the simultaneously given meanings.

not multiply entities beyond necessity. The alternative would be to give a falsely simplistic referent for metaphor, or to abandon metaphor to the sphere of meaning and/or pragmatics. As will already be apparent, there are several other points at which my account rejects the possibility of drawing clear and distinct lines in favour of producing a theory which gives us a fuller version of the truth. Another aspect of this ‘necessary untidiness’, is that the metaphoric referent itself can only be understood in terms of the concept of vague or impure reference⁶⁵, since it is not something with clearly designated boundaries, considered either synchronically or diachronically. However, given the undeniable existence of vagueness at an epistemological, if not also an ontological level, this impurity or vagueness of the interrealm referent does not constitute an obstacle to its acceptance as a phenomenological entity.

In order to conclude my initial remarks on reference, it is necessary to jump ahead to the consideration of the question of truth, which Ricoeur does not focus on until the Eighth Study. Another difficulty with Ricoeur’s account of metaphor is that he believes that it is possible to speak of ‘metaphorical truth’, though in a ‘tensive’ sense (Metaphor, 6; *Métaphore*, 11), but leaves it ambiguous as to whether truth-value should be seen as the referent or one of the referents of the metaphorical statement, or whether in our analysis of the metaphoric statement we are instead dealing with a triad of split (or double) meaning, split (or double) reference and split (or double) truth.

⁶⁵ Mooij (Study, 52-53) in his discussion of metaphoric reference uses Linsky’s phrase ‘impure reference’ to refer to cases in which the reference of a sentence is ambiguous between the object a word normally refers to and the word itself: this view is developed in opposition to Quine’s position that a statement is not referential *and therefore irreferential* when the main reference of a sentence is not to the object but to the word itself. My definition of impure reference is not, however, confined to cases in which meaning is ambiguous between word and referent, but to any form of reference where the boundaries are ill-defined.

If, following the quasi-Platonism of Frege, we accept a statement's truth-value as its referent, then a metaphorical statement such as 'Achilles is a lion' will simultaneously have the two truth-values T and F – unless we can make out a case for some kind of synthesis of the two, which seems to bring us dangerously close to the position ridiculed in Russell's famous gibe against the Hegelians in 'On Denotation': that if the statement 'The present king of France is bald' is neither true nor untrue, they may conclude that he wears a wig. The real difficulty here, is not the acceptance of two truth-values for the literal and metaphorical meanings, since these meanings are distinct, but the deeper question as to whether the truth-value of a sentence can be considered its referent. I am sceptical as to whether truth-values can indeed be reified in this way, although a full discussion of this topic is beyond the scope of this thesis.

At any rate, it seems to me that even if truth-value *is* a referent, it is not the *only* referent, but that in the case of a normal statement the referent would be, as in the Husserlian account, reference to a given state of affairs, that is, to *the fact that such and such is the case* – in fact, the belief that Ricoeur mistakenly attributes to Frege.

If one adheres to Ricoeur's split reference theory, this is easy to apply to a metaphorical statement in the following way: the metaphorical statement refers to *the fact that such and such is and is not the case* – i.e., it is literally false, and metaphorically true, to say that Achilles is a lion. However, this account is insufficient as it does not take account of the possibility that a metaphorical statement might be both literally false *and* false in what it asserts metaphorically.

One aspect which is missing from Ricoeur's account of the tensive truth of metaphor is the simple fact that metaphor can be used to tell a lie, for example when

someone implies that Achilles is brave by the statement, ‘Achilles is a lion’ , when, in fact, the Achilles in question is a weak and miserable coward. (Let us assume that there is no conceivable way in which the speaker can wriggle out of his lie, such as by pleading irony, or perhaps by saying, ‘Well, I meant that dead lion half eaten by maggots that I saw in the forest last week.’) This sentence is obviously literally false: shall we also say that it is *metaphorically false*, or a *false metaphor*?⁶⁶

In order to deal with this possibility, we should first return to the case of the literal sentence. That such a sentence refers to a state of affairs is easy to accept in the case of a true sentence, but seems more problematic in the case of false sentences which convey information about non-existent states of affairs. Although this issue of the referent of false statements is not actually raised by Ricoeur himself, his own account of metaphor brings us to the point where it cannot be ignored.

The account that I shall offer makes use of the Husserlian bracketing or *epoche* in order to show how reference is not simply the prerogative of true sentences, and a false sentence, just as it is the possessor of meaning despite being false, also has reference to a state of affairs. Thus ‘New York is the capital of Canada’ refers to a state of affairs such that New York is the capital of Canada, just as much as the sentence ‘New York is not the capital of Canada’, or ‘Ottawa is the capital of Canada’ refer respectively to states of affairs such that New York is not the capital of Canada and Ottawa is the capital of Canada.

⁶⁶ The same problematic extends to the discussion of fictive entities: given that Hamlet is a fictive personage, can we apply different truth-values to the sentences ‘Hamlet is the Prince of Denmark’ and

In terms of Husserlian intentionality, we can describe this as a *reference* to a *potentiality* (or potentially existent state of affairs), which might nevertheless turn out to be an *actuality* (an actual state of affairs). This is a potentiality in a very weak sense, which accompanies any assertion of a state of affairs regardless of the statistical probabilities of its truth or falsehood, and which corresponds to the suspension of opinion regarding truth-value or the bracketing of the question of truth. Indeed, it applies just as much to a sentence such as ‘The circle is a square’, which we dismiss as being analytically false and eternally impossible, as it does to sentences about *a posteriori* truths which could perhaps change over time (maybe, we could reason, one day New York *will* be the capital of Canada).

When this is applied to the metaphorical statement, we can find a way out of having to assert that certain metaphorical statements regarding impossible states of affairs are either both true and false simultaneously, or that they are metaphorically false. Avoiding the latter alternative is desirable given the problems involved both in establishing absolute metaphorical falsity and in grasping it as a concept. (We may of course attempt a definition along the lines of ‘A claimed similarity which does not in fact exist’ or an attempt to make someone see something in terms of another which is invalid or misleading.)

Viewed in terms of Husserlian intentionality, we can say provisionally of the metaphorical referent, that it also refers to a potentiality, which may, or may not, correspond to an actuality, or which may have only a limited degree of correspondence, as in cases where some points of the intended comparison hold true and others do not.

‘Hamlet is the Prince of Sweden’?

(‘Achilles is today as brave as ever, but weak from illness, so he is a lion in some senses but not in others.’) This is, however, only a provisional account, and further characteristics of the referent need to be described.

To return to Ricoeur’s argument in Study Three, following on from his account of Benveniste, Ricoeur’s account of metaphor in this chapter makes use of a number of already existing *interaction theories* of metaphor, these being defined as theories based on the assumption that metaphor functions at the level of discourse. However, he makes it clear at the outset that he does not agree with authors who believe in the incompatibility of an *interaction theory* with a *substitution theory* which accounts for metaphor as a deviation or transposition of naming. His analysis of the metaphorical statement draws on three interaction theories in particular: the accounts of metaphor developed by I. A. Richards in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 88-96; *Métaphore*, 100-109), by Max Black in his article ‘Metaphor’ from *Models and Metaphor* (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 96-104; *Métaphore*, 109-116) and by Monroe Beardsley in his *Aesthetics* (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 104-116; *Métaphore*, 116-128).

The important step, in terms of Ricoeur’s concerns, taken by Richards in the text discussed, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, is his attack on ‘the Proper Meaning Superstition’ (Richards, *Philosophy*, 11) according to which every word has its own proper meaning: this is nothing more than a residue from the beliefs of sorcery with its ‘magical theory of names’ (Richards, *Philosophy*, 71). Richards defends, *contra* Aristotle, the opposing view that there is no such thing as a proper meaning of a word, but that meanings depend on context. Metaphor is a special case of transaction between contexts in which we describe one thing through the features of another: the

underlying idea is called the *tenor* and the idea under whose sign the first is apprehended is called the *vehicle*. Both are modified in this process. Ricoeur admires Richards's theory, but criticises it for not dealing with the ontological bearing of metaphorical language: that is, the relationship between metaphor and reality. Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 95; *Métaphore*, 108).

Black's work is seen by Ricoeur as an advance on that of Richards in that it succeeds in clarifying the field in a number of ways, the most important of which is a further elucidation of the functioning of interaction. For Black, in a metaphor such as 'Man is a wolf', the word *wolf* evokes a system of associated commonplaces which *organises* our view of man. In so doing, it acts as a *focus* or as a *filter*: it emphasises some details and suppresses others. The major difficulty with this account is that it is limited to commonplace or trivial metaphors for which such a system of commonplaces is readily available, and as such it cannot provide an account of the generation of meaning, of the heuristics of metaphor. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 102; *Métaphore*, 114)

The theory put forward by Monroe Beardsley in *Aesthetics* partially resolves some of these difficulties by placing a greater emphasis on the logical absurdity of metaphor, and the constructed character of metaphorical meaning, which emphasises the innovative quality of metaphor. He redefines figurative meaning, as being not the deviant meaning of a word, as in substitution theories, but the meaning of a statement as a whole arising from the connotative values of the term (the secondary subject) used to modify the principal subject. (Thus the principal subject *Achilles* would be modified by the connotations of *lion*.) However, although superficially more attuned to the process of innovation, Ricoeur points out that this theory is actually susceptible to the

same objections as that of Black: the notion of *potential range of connotations* is not really so different from *system of associated commonplaces*. A striking new metaphor could add to the former as well as the latter. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 114; *Métaphore*, 126-127) What Ricoeur does not actually spell out is that what is lacking in all these accounts is a way of theorising the shifting boundaries of perceived resemblances between any given two terms.

For Ricoeur, the only way out of this impasse is to adopt the point of view of the hearer or reader as of paramount importance, and to find here the novelty of emerging meaning. Otherwise we do not really get rid of a theory of substitution, but merely, instead of substituting a literal meaning restored by paraphrase, as a classical substitution theory does, substitute, with Black and Beardsley respectively, systems of commonplaces and connotations.

His own position is that ‘metaphorical attribution is essentially the construction of the network of interactions which causes one context to be real and unique’ (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 114)⁶⁷, and metaphor is ‘a semantic event that takes place at the point where several semantic fields intersect’. (114)⁶⁸ For Ricoeur, only authentic metaphors are at once both meaning and event. Later a metaphor passes into common usage in a linguistic community and thus becomes a dead metaphor.

In my view, this proposed solution begs too many questions. Metaphor *qua* event is an aspect of metaphor which should not be ignored, but it is going too far to

⁶⁷ ‘l’essential de l’attribution métaphorique consiste dans la construction du réseau d’interactions qui fait de tel contexte un contexte actuel et unique’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 127).

⁶⁸ ‘un événement sémantique qui se produit au point d’intersection au plusieurs champs sémantiques.’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 127)

privilege it over the other aspects of metaphor. In terms of the theory that I shall put forward, Ricoeur is only taking account of the second aspect of the interrealm *qua noema* and ignoring the others: the infinite reservoir of the first aspect and the individual metaphor's place within the intersubjective *Lebenswelt*.

Study Seven: The Postulates of Reference

In Study Seven, Ricoeur returns to the direct question of what the metaphoric statement has to say about reality. By way of an answer, he puts forward two 'postulates of reference', one functioning at the semantic, and one at the hermeneutic level. In so doing, he attempts to confront, not in my view with complete success, the clash between the Fregean theory of sense and reference with its denial of reference to fictive entities, and his own wish to include the concept of reference within the framework of the hermeneutics of the literary text.

As a postulate of semantics, the requirement of reference takes as given the distinction between semiotics and semantics introduced by Benveniste, and the sense-reference distinction of Frege. Ricoeur begins with the working hypothesis that the Fregean distinction holds in principle for all discourse, and emphasises its complementarity with the theory of Benveniste. Although, for Frege, reference is communicated from the proper name to the proposition, while, for Benveniste, the reverse process occurs,⁶⁹ this is seen in terms of each theory conveying one aspect of

⁶⁹ Strangely, he claims that for Frege, the referent of the sentence, functioning as proper name, is the *state of affairs* (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 257-258; *Métaphore*, 275-276) when Frege actually asserts that the

the essential polarity of reference, as being both to objects and to states of affairs. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 256-257; *Métaphore*, 274-275) He then contrasts the positions of Wittgenstein and Strawson with regard to reference as a way of emphasising this polarity, though he does not actually come down on the side of either philosopher.

As is well known, Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* defines the world as the totality of facts (*Tatsachen*), not things (*Dinge*), and defines fact as the existence of *states of affairs* (*das Bestehen von Sachverhalten*), but nevertheless presupposes that a state of affairs is a combination of things. P.F. Strawson in *Individuals* returns to the strict Fregean position, in which reference is linked to the function of singular identification, and is carried by the logically proper name. For Strawson, the predicate does not identify but characterise; it does not refer to anything that exists, and to accord existential value to predicates would be to repeat the mistake of the realists in the argument over universals. Thus, in this account, the identifying function and the predicative function are totally asymmetrical and cannot be confused. Crucially, the identifying function poses the question of existence, and the predicative function does not. The proposition thus only refers globally to something by virtue of the function of the singular identification of one of its terms. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 258; *Métaphore*, 276)

Ricoeur then cites the thesis put forward by John Searle in *Speech Acts*, that something must *be* in order for it to be *identified*, and presents this ‘postulate of

statement functions as a proper name and that its referent is its *truth value*.

existence as the foundation of identification' (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 258)⁷⁰ as being what Frege had in mind when he said that we are not satisfied with a sense, but presuppose a reference.

Ricoeur is now confronted with the difficulty of how to reconcile the philosophical position above stated with a hermeneutic approach: 'for certain texts, called literary, seem to constitute an exception to the reference requirement expressed by the preceding postulate.' (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 259)⁷¹

Ricoeur responds to this through finding a way in which the Fregean distinction can function within the domain of the fictive. First, he posits the claim that a literary work, such as a poem or a novel, is a totality irreducible to the sum total of its words or sentences, and that the code of genres which make a poem or a novel a single individual thing, thus gives a literary discourse the status of a *work (oeuvre)*, and that each work creates its own internal *world (monde)*. The Fregean sense-reference distinction is then transposed to the literary text in the following way: instead of saying that we are not satisfied with sense and presuppose reference, we now say that we are not satisfied with the structure of the work merely, but presuppose the world of the work. The structure of the work corresponds to sense, and the world of the work corresponds to reference. Making this transition involves the suspension of the first level of reference or denotation, which is replaced by a second level of reference or denotation. This postulate can now be applied to the problem of metaphor:

⁷⁰ '*postulation d'existence comme fondement d'identification*' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 276).

⁷¹ '*certain textes dits littéraires, semblant faire exception à la demande de référence exprimé par le*

It may be, indeed, that the the metaphorical sentence is precisely the one that points out most clearly this relationship between suspended reference and displayed reference. Just as the metaphorical statement captures its sense as metaphorical midst the ruins of the literal sense, it also achieves its reference upon the ruins of what might be called (in symmetrical fashion) its literal reference.

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 261)⁷²

The question of whether in this process our concepts of the world, reality, and truth vacillate is postponed until the final study. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 261; *Métaphore*, 279)

The question which is not, in my view, sufficiently engaged with, either here or later, is that of how fictions and metaphors can continue to refer to *the world outside themselves* once this destruction of first-level reference has taken place, not only allegorically, or otherwise metaphorically, but literally, as when a novel or poem speaks of ‘a tree’ or ‘the city of London’. Ricoeur’s application of a strategy of *epochē* here seems to sever the links between the real and the fictional worlds too absolutely.

Admittedly, the following sections of the study, in which Ricoeur appropriates concepts from Nelson Goodman and Max Black, go some way towards considering the relationship between the second-order reference of fiction and metaphor and the question of truth.

Nelson Goodman, in *The Languages of Art*, discusses the question of exemplification, according to which a sad and grey picture *exemplifies* both sadness

précédent postulat’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 276)

⁷² *Il se peut en effet que l’énoncé métaphorique soit précisément celui qui montre en clair ce rapport entre référence suspendue et référence déployée. De même que l’énoncé métaphorique est celui qui conquiert son sens comme métaphorique sur les ruines du sens littéral, il est aussi celui qui acquiert sa référence sur les ruines de celui qu’on peut appeler, par symétrie, sa référence littérale.* (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 279)

and greyness. Ricoeur sees cases of exemplification as ‘cases of making reference with only a difference of direction’, and it follows that a quality which the picture exemplifies or possesses in a metaphorical sense is, nevertheless, referred to or denoted. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 270-283; *Métaphore*, 288-301)

Max Black puts forward the hypothesis that the role of metaphor should be seen as analogous to that of the theoretical model in science: it has a heuristic function which aids the process of discovering the truth, in the same way that the scientific model gives us a possibility of discovering the truth. Citing Northrop Frye, Ricoeur emphasises that the creation of a mood can function as a kind of hypothesis. He admits that this heuristic function of mood is difficult for us to recognise because of the tendency to associate knowledge with representation, but that it should be understood as potentially giving us knowledge that mere representation cannot supply because it gives us participation in things. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 233-291; *Métaphore*, 302-310)

This account of fiction *qua* redescription gives fiction a potential link with truth. Indeed, Ricoeur will go so far as to assert that ‘We can presume to speak of metaphorical truth in order to designate the “realistic” intention that belongs to the redescriptive power of poetic language’ (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 292)⁷³

This, in my view, is to presume too much: the label ‘truth’ should not be used to designate the quest for truth, the intention to discover the truth, or tools which come in useful in the process. The section on ‘Model and Metaphor’ itself ends more inconclusively:

⁷³ ‘On peut se risquer à parler de vérité métaphorique pour désigner l’intention <<réaliste>> qui s’attache au pouvoir de redescription du langage poétique.’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 311)

The comparison of model and metaphor at least shows us the direction: as the conjunction of fiction and redescription suggests, poetic feeling itself also develops an experience of reality in which invention and discovery cease being opposed and where creation and revelation coincide. But what then does reality mean?

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 291)⁷⁴

The final section of Study Seven ‘Towards the concept of “Metaphorical Truth”’ is intended to bring us closer to an answer to this question, but what we are ultimately given, is rather an account of the different tensions existing within the metaphorical statement which, though valuable, begs the question of its ultimate relation to reality.

Here, Ricoeur recapitulates the three applications which are given to the idea of tension within the metaphorical statement: a) tension within the statement between tenor and vehicle, between focus and frame, between secondary subject and principal subject; b) tension between two interpretations, that is between the literal interpretation and a metaphorical interpretation; and finally, c) tension in the relational function of the copula, between identity and difference in an interplay of resemblance. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 292; *Métaphore*, 311) All of these three tensions, for Ricoeur, remain at the level of meaning immanent to the statement, and cannot be said to pass beyond it into reference and transcendence. He now wishes to make a new application of the tension theory which will go beyond this:

⁷⁴ ‘La comparaison entre modèle et métaphore nous a du moins indiqué la direction: comme le suggère la jonction entre fiction et redescription, le sentiment poétique lui aussi développe une expérience de réalité dans laquelle inventer et découvrir cessent de s’opposer et où créer et révéler coïncident. Mais que signifie alors réalité?’ (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 310)

In the most radical terms possible, tension must be introduced into metaphorically affirmed being. When the poet says that ‘nature is a temple where living columns...’ the verb *to be* does not just connect the predicate *temple* to the subject *nature* along the lines of the threefold tension outlined above. The copula is not only relational. It implies beside, by means of the predicative relationship, that *what is* is redescribed, it says *that* things really are this way.

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 292)⁷⁵

Again, reference and truth are equated. But let us presume that the above statement by Baudelaire actually does give us a real truth about nature, and that therefore, according to Ricoeur’s account, that there really is a referent for the sentence. What then of the statement, which a poet, or indeed the poet, could just have easily have made, ‘*Nature is no temple where living columns...*’ Would Ricoeur deny this statement metaphoric reference? Would he say it is literally true, but metaphorically false? Or that it has no poetic truth, because its truth is trivial, since we all know very well that nature is not, in fact, a temple? We could perhaps have found a way out of this difficulty by asserting that we are presented with a referent ‘Nature-as-a-temple-with-living-columns’ which may or not have real existence/correspond to a state of affairs in the world, and that we can then place this referent in either positive or negative sentences. However, this is an option which is not open to Ricoeur as long as he remains committed to the theory that metaphorical meaning and reference are tied to the predicative sentence.

⁷⁵ *Pour l’exprimer le plus radicalement possible, il faut introduire la tension dans l’être métaphoriquement affirmé. Quand le poète dit: <<la nature est un temple où de vivant pilliers...>>, le verbe être ne se borne pas à relier le prédicat <<temple⁷⁵>> au sujet <<nature >> selon la triple tension qu’on vient de dire; la copule n’est pas seulement relationnelle; elle implique en outre que, par la*

However, Ricoeur makes no further attempt to engage with such issues on the level of individual sentences and their relation to the world. Instead, in order to demonstrate his tensional concept of metaphorical truth, he proceeds in what he calls a dialectical fashion. This means that his method is to explicate two extreme positions with regard to the truth content of metaphor, and point out the shortcomings of each. Firstly, he points out the inadequacy of what he calls naïve *ontological vehemence*⁷⁶ as found in work on metaphor which focuses upon the ecstatic moment of language. The authors referred to here are S.T. Coleridge and Philip Wheelwright, who give us vitalist accounts of metaphor in which, in Ricoeur's view, philosophy is mixed with what he considers Romantic intuitivist non-philosophy. These writers are so carried away with the power of metaphor to reveal truth that they have fallen into the trap of ignoring the implicit 'is not' of the metaphorical statement, preferring to focus on the 'is'. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 294-297; *Métaphore*, 313-316)

Secondly, Ricoeur goes on to demonstrate the inadequacy of the inverse interpretation, the debunking account of Colin Murray Turbayne in *The Myth of Metaphor*, which attacks the abuses of metaphor and the dangers of somehow taking metaphors literally, but in so doing leaves no room for the 'is' of metaphor. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 294; *Métaphore*, 313).

Ricoeur does not actually go so far as to say that his critique of these two opposing positions proves his theory, but claims that it helps us to recognise the

relation prédicative est redécrit ce qui est; elle dit qu'il en est bien ainsi. (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 311)

⁷⁶ This naïve ontological vehemence should be distinguished from the ontological vehemence which Ricoeur himself espouses and which he continues to defend in his later works.

assumptions and commitments of a person using the verb *to be* metaphorically, and that it underlines the paradoxical nature of a metaphorical concept of truth which must allow for the critical incision of the literal *is not* into what he calls the ontological vehemence of the metaphorical *is*. This is best conveyed by the *Once upon a time* formula used by Catalan story-tellers, '*Aixo era y no era*': 'There was and there was not'.⁷⁷ (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 302; *Métaphore*, 321)

This double reference is indeed as applicable to metaphor as to fiction. However, what is still lacking is an account of what constitutes the *is*. Showing the necessity of adopting an intermediate position between Wheelwright and Turbayne does not deliver on Ricoeur's promise to provide an ontology of the metaphorical referent, since the account of the differing attitudes to metaphor would be equally valid on the level of semiotics or pragmatics.

The Account of Metaphor and Truth in the Eighth Study

Finally, we come to the Eighth Study, where the ultimate question of metaphor and truth has been promised to be addressed. However, from my perspective, that is, the perspective of an interest in the nature of the metaphorical referent *per se*, the most serious weakness of *La Métaphore Vive* is that, precisely in this final chapter, it actually swerves aside from the main question of the nature of metaphor to discuss the question of the relationship between philosophy/speculative discourse and metaphor/poetic discourse, and to make a case for the autonomy of the former from the

⁷⁷ Interestingly, approximately the same formula exists in Turkish: *bir varmış bir yokmuş*.

latter. This is, of course, a legitimate subject for discussion, and Ricoeur's conclusion that poetic discourse and metaphor form a kind of pool, from which speculative discourse can draw its concepts, but which does not necessarily determine the course which this speculation takes, is convincing.⁷⁸

However, in addition to the failure to resolve the question of the relationship between reference and truth discussed above, three problems ensue from this focus in the final chapter, all of which indicate the necessity for a more universally applicable account of metaphor than that which Ricoeur has given us here.

The first difficulty is the blurring of the distinction between metaphor and poetic discourse in general – Ricoeur does not go so far as to actually state that these are identical, but his manner of proceeding at this stage makes it seem as if he has by sleight of hand collapsed the two categories together. This is disturbing, since poetry and metaphor quite obviously cannot be equated with one another, there being many examples of non-metaphoric poetry, and also of metaphor which is outside the confines of what is normally considered poetic discourse. Therefore, even though binary theories which attempt to make an absolute distinction between poetic and non-poetic metaphors are ill-advised, we are reminded of the necessity for a theory of metaphor to consider its applicability to all types of metaphor.

The second problem is that, despite the relatively discrete nature of the eight studies in the text, the final study is presented as the culmination of an argument which will finally give us an ontological interpretation of metaphor, and yet this

⁷⁸ However, the view of metaphor as something approaching a model or hypothesis seems to suggest that metaphor should be given at least an *indirect* role in the philosophical project, which is something

phenomenological ontology of metaphor is in the final analysis only briefly and obliquely touched upon.

The third difficulty is that, in this final privileging of the relation between metaphor and speculative discourse, Ricoeur reduces metaphors to their Platonic function as mediators between the realms of the visible and the invisible. (This over-emphasis on the invisible/visible dichotomy is perhaps also connected to an aspect of his thought critiqued above: the tendency to accept rigid binary oppositions as initial assumptions.) A metaphorising of invisible content through a visible metaphoriser is indeed a very common role played by metaphor. This is indeed one role which metaphor plays, but it is far from being the only one. This over-simplification of metaphor is indeed a *déformation professionnelle* of philosophers, within the Western tradition at least.

Ironically enough, both Heidegger and Derrida, in the midst of their famous critiques of Western metaphysics, fall into same trap of embracing this ‘Platonic’ view of metaphor. Heidegger expressed the view

that the idea of ‘transfer’ and of metaphor rests on the distinction, if not the complete separation, of the sensible (*sinnlich*) from the non-sensible as two self-sufficient realms.

(Heidegger, *Satz*, 88, quoted by Cooper, *Metaphor*, 25)

Ricoeur explicitly denies; this question is however outside the scope of this thesis.

A comprehensive theory of metaphor should also have room for the cases in which metaphor or simile link two aspects of the sensual world, as colloquial metaphors in particular often do: 'He's a beanpole', or 'An egg without salt is like a man without a moustache' (or indeed, 'Achilles is a lion'). My discussion of examples of poetic metaphor in the Romantic and post-Romantic traditions, and, in particular, of the poetry of Ted Hughes, in Chapter Six attempts to illustrate, among other things, how poetic metaphor can function in this way, and indeed sometimes self-consciously reject its role as a mediator with invisible realms in favour of an exploration of the interrelations between physical objects in this world. Ignoring or downplaying the importance of such cases again leads to an oversimplified paradigm of the metaphoric.

A Summary of my Main Objections to Ricoeur's Position

In the above account, I have identified some lacunae in Ricoeur's account, which make clarification and development of his position necessary. The problem, in a nutshell, is that, having asserted that metaphorical reference exists, he has very little to say about *what it actually is*. This is all the more striking since the path by which he comes to the point of defending the existence of this reference is a long and circuitous one, at the culmination of which one might expect him to say something more about either the process of referring or the referent itself. However, he does not give us such a description; neither does he seek to help us grasp these concepts by the analysis of concrete examples of metaphor, which are strikingly few in the work as a whole.

Therefore, I feel, he never quite provides the phenomenology of metaphor necessary for an identification of its referent.

In response to this, in what follows, I shall attempt to refine and adapt Ricoeur's account of metaphor with the aim of offering a more precise phenomenological definition⁷⁹, that is, a definition in terms of ideal units, of the referent of metaphor and of the process of metaphoric reference. As stated above, I believe that a solution to many of the difficulties raised with regard to metaphoric reference can be found by a return to the theory of meaning and the general ontology taken from the Husserl of the *Logical Investigations* and of *Ideas*⁸⁰. This is despite the fact that Husserl does not himself engage with the question of metaphor in these works, although he does give us an account of the layers of reference which the perception of an artwork entails, which I shall adapt to my own account of metaphoric reference.

To summarise: the difficulties arising from Ricoeur's account of metaphoric reference, as I see them, are, firstly, a confusion of the issues of reference and truth, which begins in Study One and culminates in the incomplete account of tensive metaphorical truth ventured in Study Eight, secondly, an unnecessary limiting of the scope of metaphoric reference to sentence and discourse, which ties the act of metaphorisation too closely to language, and thirdly, the failure to make a break with the Fregean sense/reference distinction, although his defence of metaphoric reference ultimately requires this; fourthly, a confinement of the question of heuristics to the

⁷⁹ As such my account will not deal with the psychological, political and social questions raised by the cognitive linguists who have recently dominated much of the debate concerning metaphor. Questions regarding the dominant metaphors of certain societies or discourses are beyond the scope of the thesis and should, I feel, be bracketed in the initial attempt to create a phenomenology of metaphor.

⁸⁰ The difficulties arising from the fact that the theory of meaning advanced in these works is slightly

creation of new metaphors rather than also attempting to theorise the re-interpretation of pre-existing ones, and lastly, the incomplete nature of the ontology put forward in Study Seven.

My aim is to put forward an account in terms of Husserlian phenomenology, which liberates the metaphorical referent from the sentence, disentangles the issues of reference and truth, puts forward an account of heuristics in terms of the shifting of the interrealm referent, and in general offers a more complete account of the nature of this metaphoric referent.

However, first it is necessary to engage with a position which, if true, would render this project completely vain: the view that Ricoeur's major premise, the existence of split reference, is mistaken, since metaphorical sentences have only literal meaning, and either only literal reference, or no reference at all.

different will be discussed in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER THREE

A CRITIQUE OF DAVIDSON'S DENIAL OF METAPHORIC MEANING AND REFERENCE

But meanwhile, while we eat, let us turn over these scenes as children turn over the pages of a picture-book and the nurse says, pointing: "That's a cow. That's a boat." Let us turn over the pages, and I will add, for your amusement, a comment in the margin.

Virginia Woolf, *The Waves*⁸¹

Now and then I break off a lump, Shakespeare it may be, it may be an old woman called Peck; and say to myself, smoking a cigarette in bed, "That's Shakespeare. That's Peck – with a certainty of recognition and a shock of knowledge which is endlessly delightful, though not to be imparted. So we shared our Pecks, our Shakespeares; compared each others versions; allowed each other's insight to set our own Peck or Shakespeare in a better light.

Virginia Woolf, *The Waves*⁸²

[...] the absence of an adequate study of imagination in our theories of meaning and rationality is symptomatic of a deep problem in our current views of cognition. The difficulty is not a mere matter of oversight. The problem is far more distressing, for it concerns our entire orientation towards these issues, based as it is upon a widely shared set of presuppositions that deny imagination a central role in the constitution of reality.

Quine, 'Two dogmas of empiricism'⁸³

⁸¹ Woolf, *Waves*, 184.

⁸² Woolf, *Waves*, 161.

⁸³ Quine, *View*, 41, cited by Fiumara, *Process*, 2.

Non-limited scope Reference as Ostension

Before making a critique of Davidson's view of metaphor, I would like to make clear the view of reference which underlies this critique, which can be summarised as the view of reference as ostension, which is not limited to the physically present or even to the real or existent. The first stage in this argument is a defence of the distinction between reference and meaning, seen in terms of the ostensive quality of reference; the second stage is a defence of this act as being applied to abstract or ideal entities, states of affairs and the fictive. I shall then turn to Davidson's objections to the existence of cognitive content in the metaphorical statement. The essay in question, 'What Metaphors Mean', does not actually mention reference at all, but nevertheless any defence of metaphoric reference is obliged to engage with it, since, if its position is valid, the possibility of constructing a split reference on the basis of the split meaning of the metaphorical statement, as in Ricoeur's account, is destroyed.

Reference *qua* Ostension

Reference is sometimes described in such a way that its aspect *qua act* of reference is on the verge of disappearing. For example, Simon Blackburn's *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* begins its entry on reference with the words: 'The basic case of reference is the relation between a name and the person or object which it names' (Blackburn, 323); a definition in which not only is the referent presumed to be a singularity, but where the person referring has vanished. At least we remain at the level of what

Husserl called empty meaning-intention, when the object named is not intuitively before one. Although referent and referring term may indeed survive the demise of the person referring, reference cannot be completely understood unless it is understood in terms of an initial conscious act.

The first two epigraphs to this chapter are chosen for the way in which they draw attention to the basic difference between the *act of reference* ('That's a cow'/'That's Shakespeare') and the *acts of meaning*, interpretation and commentary which can be associated with it, but which should be distinguished from it. Of course, these passages can only be used to give us a rough, not a technical distinction. A sentence such as 'That's a cow' (or 'that's an x') foregrounds the referential function of language, and can be thought of as being implicit in any naming of an *x*, whilst a sentence of the form 'an X is...', such as 'A cow is a ruminant quadruped' would foreground its meaning, but both sentences actually possess both meaning and reference (*ruminant quadruped* having just as much of a reference as *cow*.) However, this rough foregrounding of the distinction is, I believe, worth making, since with respect to imaginary objects, the meaning-reference distinction can become submerged, as we shall see it does in Davidson's account.

Woolf's phrase *breaking off a lump* conveys, through a concrete metaphor, the sense of isolating one particular aspect of reality from the sum-total of existing reality: in short, the act of reference. This is a mental act which, with regard to that which is not physically present, requires to be expressed through metaphor, if it is not to go unnoticed. This is because it is obviously only in the case of the physically present that the linguistic act of reference can be backed up with the physical ostensive gesture.

When we speak or write of something that we cannot point out with our hand, or with an object held in the hand, or else with head, foot or glance, we do not usually consider that what we are doing is fundamentally the same thing, though now we are using the medium of language rather than the medium of flesh. However, this is my claim: that the action of reference-ostension is still present when we refer to that which cannot be pointed out physically: that which is not physically present, or even that which is non-existent; and that this action is not to be reduced to the action of naming or describing, or to the expression of meaning itself, any more than a physical act of pointing is reducible to the flesh and bones of the pointing hand.⁸⁴

All reference then is a pointing out. Such a pointing out has a double aspect in that firstly, it is usually, but not necessarily, a pointing out for someone else to look at. We may also point out for *ourselves* to look at, though perhaps in this case there is a sense in which the self can, in Ricoeur's phrase, be considered as another. However, on another level, the private experience of reference is, in Woolf's phrase, a 'shock of knowledge' which cannot be imparted. We should be careful not to confuse this issue with the meaning/reference distinction. If we focus on this, we might find ourselves embracing the belief that reference is equiprimordially a solipsistic act, and that that which *can* be imparted to another is rather the act of supplying meaning or interpretation, what Woolf calls comparing our Pecks and our Shakespeares: giving

⁸⁴ Meaning thus becomes the supplement, but never the supplanter of reference, though perhaps it can be seen as a dangerous supplement, in that every expressed meaning can be seen as creating a new referent. This seems strange if we persist in the view that meaning is only a kind of commentary attached to an object, though even then excessive deviations in the comments and interpretations of two different commentators will generally lead us to the point where we feel that we actually have two referents to deal with. To give an example, we may debate as to whether when uttering the word 'Shakespeare' I am indeed referring to the same Shakespeare-referent as an orthodox Shakespeare scholar if I happen to

them a ‘comment in the margin’; or conversely, we might seek to place reference in the shared public realm and make meanings private, when actually both reference and meaning have public and private aspects.⁸⁵

Utterances of the *that’s an x* type are not confined to simple statements about the present-to-hand such as ‘That’s a cow’⁸⁶ or even ‘That’s Shakespeare’: they also often deal with the metaphoric and the imaginary, presented – as when, to take the most basic (and least elevated) kind of example, we say ‘That’s a bitch’ when it is a female human, not a canine, that has strolled past.

However, the everyday co-existence of metaphor and the making of reference is insufficient to make the existence of metaphoric reference itself universally accepted given the powerful influence of a tradition of philosophy which defines reference as reference to real physical objects only, or to singularities, or else to these plus truth values of statements. According to this tradition, we point to the woman only, not to the bitch, or else we gesture beyond both to some Fregean and quasi-Platonic realm of truth.

believe that the plays attributed to that name are the work of Francis Bacon or the Earl of Oxford.

⁸⁵ That is, I would claim that, although Woolf is right in saying that the exact mental content that we possess when we feel the shock of reference is not to be communicated, (and this is also the case in our experience of physical objects that we point to with a finger) reference, even to ideal content, is *not* an entirely solipsistic act. To say ‘that’s an *x*’ is to make an act of reference, and potentially to cause a hearer or listener to re-enact this act of reference. Any two or more people performing a referential act concerning any given *x* may have very different perceptions about the nature of the *x* and its meaning, just as different people looking at (and referring to) the same table will necessarily see it from different perspectives. Polysemy, and the multiplicity of possible interpretations, and even the fact that any given *x* can be broken down into sub-referents (the different perspectives on the table all being potential referents as well as the table) do not invalidate what I would call the primordial referential act.

⁸⁶ The nurse of Woolf’s text would have been more correct in saying ‘That is a picture of a cow’, but this is a point which is rarely insisted upon in normal discourse. I discuss this point further in the first section of Chapter Five.

A Wide-scope Theory of Reference

The second stage of my account of reference consists of some remarks on why I consider the denial of reference to the fictive and imaginary favoured by the founders of the analytic tradition in philosophy to be mistaken. This view seems to be the expression of the underlying belief that the major concern of philosophy is to determine what actually physically exists, and that to allow us to speak of reference to the non-existent, which, of course, includes the fictive, mythical and imaginary, only serves to muddy the waters. This is encapsulated in Quine's famous opinion, expressed in 'On What There Is', that 'Pegasus' is not something that can be referred to.

Of course, I accept Quine's belief that the use of proper nouns in negative sentences does not entail a belief in the existence of the objects referred to by these nouns, and certainly have no wish to resurrect any version of Anselm's ontological argument for the existence of God (or, indeed, McX's argument for the existence of Pegasus). Moreover, a philosopher has the privilege of defining the word 'reference' in this technical way, giving it the limited scope of 'reference to physical objects' or 'reference to physical objects and events or phenomena involving physical objects' or in any other way which to his mind covers all legitimate objects of reference and excludes the possibility of referring to the imaginary, ghosts in the machine, epiphenomena and spooks of all varieties. However, we would then need another word to cover the instances of what I call reference which are not covered by Quinean reference.

This lacuna in language would be indicated by a question which we might pose to the adherents of Quine's limited scope theory of reference: what it is that allows us to distinguish between the terms, 'Pegasus' and 'Gasusep': what is it that the term 'Pegasus' does, that the term 'Gasusep' does not?

Probably any answer given would fall back on the idea of meaning as being something distinct from reference. Instead of saying that 'Pegasus' is a referring term, and that 'Gasusep' is not, we can simply say that 'Pegasus' means something, and that 'Gasusep' does not; or that 'Pegasus' has semantic content and that 'Gasusep' does not. Someone putting forward this belief would probably also claim that the scope of reference in the sense in which I use the term covers *cases of reference* plus *cases where there is meaning alone*.

However, meaning as it is generally understood will not stand in for the concept of reference in the sense in which I wish to use the term; in my account reference and meaning although co-present need to be distinguished. The vital distinction between meaning and reference is that reference is a *pointing out*, rather than a bearer of semantic content, or a definition or an indication of the potential use of a word.

This can be made a little clearer by formulating questions concerning reference and meaning involving fictive and non-fictive terms: 'What does "Paris" refer to?' is *not* the same question as 'What does "Paris" mean?' and 'What does "Narnia" refer to?' is *not* the same as 'What does "Narnia" mean?' This is even the case when we put aside the fact that the question using the verb 'mean' could be given an etymological answer along the lines of: 'The name derives from the Gallic Parisii tribe, whose name may come from the Celtic Gallic word *parios* meaning cauldron, but this is not certain'

etc⁸⁷, or on the other hand, could draw a subjective response along the lines of ‘Ah, to me, “Paris” means champagne and Toulouse Lautrec!’

Even limiting ourselves to the most objective approach to the object itself, meaning and reference are different. Admittedly, we might answer a question about meaning *almost* as we would one about reference, but the difference in the way we answer is telling. ‘Meaning’ and ‘reference’ simply cannot be substituted for one another *salva veritate*. When asked what Paris *refers to* we might say, ‘The capital city of France’, or ‘A city in France’, ‘A city’ or even ‘a place’ – all of these would be correct answers, though with an increasing degree of vagueness of reference. For Narnia, we might answer ‘An imaginary kingdom in the novels of C.S. Lewis’, or ‘an imaginary place’ etc. In both cases, a noun-phrase is a sufficient answer. However, when we are asked ‘What does ‘Paris’ *mean*?’ we would be more likely to reply with a phrase of the sort: ‘*It is the name of* the capital of France/a city in France/a city’ or even ‘*It is* the capital of France/a city in France/a city’: we would not normally use a noun-phrase alone and say ‘Paris *means* the capital of France’ or ‘Paris *means* a city in France’. Such a phrase might conceivably be uttered, perhaps in a conversation between an over-tired parent and an over-curious child who kept insisting on asking what ‘Paris’ meant, but to most speakers of English this would seem clumsy and incorrect.

This minor excursion into ordinary language philosophy is meant to illustrate the fact that reference *is that which points out*, not that which defines. The most succinct answer to a reference question concerning an object is a ‘that’ accompanied by

⁸⁷ Quoted from Wikipedia.

a pointed finger; whereas the most succinct answer to a meaning question is likely to be along the lines of ‘It is a thing which ...’⁸⁸ Therefore, we cannot substitute meaning for reference in dealing with any kind of entity which we wish to indicate rather than merely define, whether it is a physical object such as a shoe, an event such as the Second World War, or a mythical, or semi-mythical, object or event, such as a unicorn or an adventure of the court of King Arthur.

My use of the word ‘semi-mythical’ can be used to introduce a new aspect of the difficulties which arise from confining reference to physical objects whose identity cannot be doubted: what would thereby be excluded would be not only the fictive, but the indeterminate. Phrases such as ‘the number of leaves on that tree’, or ‘the first King to rule in Britain’, or ‘the object in the solar system furthest from the Sun’ are needed to formulate questions by means of which we can either increase our knowledge, or, at least, arrive at an awareness of its limitations. All of these designate an object about which further information is required. This manner of referring to inexact knowledge is a way of overcoming Meno’s paradox (*Meno*, 80d-e): the belief that inquiry is unnecessary if we know what we are looking for, and impossible if we do not.

One way of explaining why this paradox does not prove the impossibility of increasing knowledge is to say that it equivocates between knowing the question and

⁸⁸ This is not to claim that the ostensive gesture or referential phrase of the type ‘That’s *x*’ is devoid of meaning. The very fact that in many cultures it is considered rude to point with the finger, and even more so to point with the foot indicates that the referential is often loaded with other implications: contempt, mockery, accusation or the treating of a person like an inanimate object are all possible meanings of the referential gesture or phrase itself. This combination of reference with meaning is not, it seems, limited to the human species, as we learn from recent reports of vervet monkeys in Kenya who mocked women farmers who had tried to scare them off their crops with certain referential gestures. The women had dressed themselves as men in trousers and hats in order to command more authority, but the monkeys saw through this disguise easily, and by *pointing* at the women’s breasts and then at their own

knowing the answer: and that it is perfectly possible to know a question without knowing the answer to it. However, the knowing of a question also entails a kind of knowledge of the referring term which can answer it: we know that the answer to ‘How many leaves are there on the tree in the quad?’ will not be ‘Red’ or ‘in the year of our Lord 1066’. We are in fact asking, ‘What is the number of the leaves on the tree?’ The phrase, ‘the number of leaves on the tree’, although vague in the sense of corresponding to a precise but unknown number, has both reference and meaning, and this despite the fact that the answer might be ‘There are no leaves on the tree’ or ‘Zero’.

I would say that a phrase such as ‘the number of leaves on the tree’ refers to the number, let us say, 3,000, of these leaves, *whether or not we know that this is the number*. The referent is the same whether we have counted the leaves correctly, whether we confess that we have no idea as to their number, or indeed, whether we have carelessly miscounted them as 2,999 or 3,001. It is as if, in the first case, we are pointing to something seen clearly, in the second we are gesturing to something which is concealed in the mist, and in the third we are pointing to what we imagine is a clear shape, but which has been distorted as if by refraction. In the case of there being no leaves, unless our conception of number included zero, the process of reference is equivalent to gesturing towards a void.

However, if we wish to create a phenomenology of the act of referring, there is clearly a difference in the act of referring to the number of leaves on a tree when we think we know what it is, and when we do not think we know what it is, and if we wish

breasts and sexual organs the monkeys conveyed their knowledge of, and complete contempt for, the attempted ruse. (Reported by the BBC News August 2007.)

to make this a phenomenological ontology it also matters whether we are correct in what we think we know.

It is interesting that those who would deny reference to imaginary objects do not usually carry their metaphysics of presence to the point of saying that we can only refer to things which exist in the present, and not to those which exist in the past or the future. Since a fairly high proportion of discourse is actually about the past or future, this would result in making a great deal of our language non-referential, and in making the existence of all referents time-dependent.⁸⁹

The above examples all show the undesirable consequences of a narrow scope of reference theory. I shall now look in more detail at an account of metaphor which ultimately springs from this type of world-view.

Davidson on Metaphor, Meaning and Reference

In his 1978 essay, 'What Metaphors Mean', Davidson, whilst asserting himself to be an admirer of the many wonders worked by metaphor, which he calls the dreamwork of language, nevertheless puts forward the thesis that a metaphorical sentence has no cognitive content as such, that is, no meaning whatsoever beyond its literal meaning,

⁸⁹ This means that the way in which the truth-value of many statements is time-dependent would be transferred to the status of terms within them as referents. Let us suppose that X is a political leader who is assassinated. At the moment of this murder, sentences such as 'X is alive', or 'X is the leader of a political party' cease to be true. However, it is counter-intuitive to say that at that very moment 'X' ceases to be a referring term. It might be objected that a more precise referent such as 'X-as-a -living-person-within-the-world-at-this-moment' would lose its referential status, and have meaning only. Yet even this points in the direction of something, even though there is nothing in the sense of what Husserl

and that metaphorical meaning cannot be paraphrased since there is just simply nothing whatsoever to paraphrase.

Our sense of metaphor, according to Davidson, lies solely in its attendant mental interpretations and associations, the seeing of which may be *caused* by a metaphor, in much the same way that a hard knock on the head might cause us to see something before our eyes, but which are not actually contained within the metaphor itself, any more than the stars in the knock on the head. Metaphor, therefore, belongs absolutely and exclusively in the domain of use.

This essay, unpublished at the time when Ricoeur composed *La Métaphore Vive*, can be seen, among other things, as the culmination of the rhetorical tradition of seeing metaphor *qua* ornament which Ricoeur had traced in substitution theories from Aristotle to Fontanier.

This is, as stated above, despite the fact that Davidson's essay is not explicitly presented as an attack on metaphoric reference: it is the concept of a specifically metaphoric *cognitive content* (which we are told we may or may not call *meaning* though it is difficult to see what other kind of cognitive content he could have in mind) which is denied. Though the essay mentions Richards and other interaction theorists as examples of the proponents of erroneous views, it does not mention Ricoeur's work on metaphor, with which it is very possible that Davidson was not familiar at the time of its publication, especially given that the English version of Ricoeur's text had only appeared a year previously. However, the absence of reference, as well as of meaning, is implied by Davidson's argument.

calls meaning-fulfilment.

Indeed, Davidson's other writings on the philosophy of language show him to be hostile to the notion of reference as a concept in philosophy of language, not because he believes that there is no such thing, but because he believes that a theory of meaning can and should be constructed without recourse to it.⁹⁰

Let us now turn to Davidson's arguments in 'What Metaphors Mean' in more detail. He begins, in his opening paragraph, by presenting metaphor as, above all, a collaboration between its creator and its interpreter:

Metaphor is the dreamwork of language and, like all dreamwork, its interpretation reflects as much on the interpreter as on the originator. The interpretation of dreams requires collaboration between a dreamer and a waker, even if they be the same person; and the act of interpretation is in itself a work of the imagination. So too understanding a metaphor is as much a creative endeavour as making a metaphor, and as little guided by rules.

⁹⁰ For Davidson, as for Frege, truth is in the domain of reference. As he states in the opening words of his essay 'Moods and Performances': 'Frege held that an adequate account of language requires us to attend to three features of sentences: reference, sense and force. Elsewhere I have argued that a theory of truth patterned after a Tarski-type truth definition tells us all we need to know about sense. Counting truth in the domain of reference, as Frege did, the study of sense thus comes down to the study of reference.' (Davidson, 109) However, reference by a *sentence* to a *state of affairs* does not have a place in this theory of meaning, which, following Tarski, depends on T-sentences, as he calls them, of the type "There is an x" is true if and only if there is an x.' In his essay 'In Defence of Convention T', Davidson discusses Tarski-style T-sentences, and though conceding the existence of reference to something more than physical objects, singularities, and the truth, he does not see a sentence referring directly to a state of affairs: 'Let someone say, "There are a million stars out tonight" and another reply, "That's true", then nothing could be plainer than that what the first is said is true if and only if what the other has said is true. This familiar effect is due to the reciprocity of two devices, one a way of referring to expressions (work done by the demonstrative 'that'), the other the concept of truth. The first device takes us from talk of the world to talk of language; the second brings us back again.' (Davidson, 65)

I would contest the assertion that the use of the demonstrative 'that' takes us from the world to the expression. I would say rather that there is here a *double reference*, both to the expression and to a state of affairs in the world. So that, 'That's true' could be paraphrased by 'That is a true sentence that you have uttered', or by 'The fact to which you have referred is indeed the case.' Indeed, Davidson himself admits the ambiguity of the *that* phrase in his essay in the same volume, 'On Saying That', where he plays with the possibility that someone who says that there is a hippopotamus in the fridge might actually do so under the delusion that the term 'hippopotomus' refers to an orange, and discusses whether it would be correct in such a case for us to say of such a speaker: 'He said that there was a hippopotomus in the fridge.' (Davidson, 100-101) It seems to me that an acceptance of what Ricoeur called *référence dédoublée* might get Davidson out of a great deal of his difficulties here.

These remarks do not, except in matters of degree, distinguish metaphor from more routine linguistic transactions: all communications by speech assumes the interplay of inventive construction and inventive construal. What metaphor adds to the ordinary is an achievement that uses no semantic resources beyond the resources on which the ordinary depends.

(Davidson, 245)

Much of this is uncontroversial: I do not wish to contest the scope for creativity and polysemy possessed by metaphor, nor the intersubjective aspect of its existence. What is missing, however, in this initial insistence on creative freedom and interpretation is the sense of a fundamental ontology or phenomenology of metaphor in terms of *the perceiving something as something else*. This *does* has the status of a basic rule, since, as we might discover through a mind experiment conducted along the lines of the Husserlian eidetic variation, if this aspect were to vanish, then the statement in question is simply no longer a metaphor. (Statements can, of course, be ambiguous or equivocal between the literal and the metaphorical, or they may be misunderstood as literal when they were actually meant as metaphorical and *vice versa*, but this does not alter the basic condition of what the metaphorical is.) This lack of an awareness of the metaphoric *process* as something which has an ideal essence beyond its manifestation in language is an underlying defect in what follows: in the denial of meaning, truth-value and, by implication, reference to the metaphorical.

This essay, as it unfolds, shows a striking and seemingly wilful blindness. Davidson finds it difficult to deny the fact that a *simile* has a propositional truth-value and a meaning: after all, it asserts that something is like something else, and this assertion obviously must have a truth-value. Therefore, he needs to find a way of

refuting the theory that a metaphor is an elliptical simile and, therefore, also possesses meaning and truth. His attempts to do so are ultimately unconvincing.

Taking as his examples Dante's metaphorical description of the earth as a *floor* and 'a famous critic's' description of Tolstoy as 'a great moralising infant', Davidson argues that the elliptic simile theory would make the hidden meaning of the metaphors all too obvious and accessible. I quote:

In each case the hidden meaning is to be found simply by looking at a painfully trivial simile. This is like that – Tolstoy is like an infant, the earth is like a floor. It is trivial because everything is like everything, and in endless ways. But with this theory, interpretation and paraphrase typically are to the hand of the most callow.

(Davidson, 254)

This paragraph makes a number of seriously questionable assumptions. We need to ask whether the word 'trivial' here is merely an expression of disgust at an unimportant topic, or whether it is also being used in its rigorous philosophical sense, or whether, as seems to me to be the case, Davidson equivocates between these two usages.

'Painfully trivial' understood in the subjective sense, is – just that: an expression of subjective, personal opinion about the value of the process of metaphorisation, which seems to be in contradiction with his previously stated admiration for the dreamwork of language.

Obviously one cannot enter into disputes concerning the author's personal literary tastes, but it does seem strange that the shift from the form of the classic 'x is a y' metaphor, to the form of a simile (perhaps accomplished by the simple assertion of

the word *like* into a sentence) should cause the transition from the status of acclaimed dreamwork to the contempt incurred by the ‘painfully trivial’. It is as if here Davidson apparently sees metaphor and simile as having fundamentally different underlying structures, which is odd, since he does not credit metaphor with an underlying structure in the first place. (As stated in the introduction, my own position here is that simple comparison and metaphoricisation are *not* the same thing, but that the simile is actually a subspecies of metaphor.)

If the word ‘trivial’ is meant in the more philosophically rigorous sense, this is simply untrue. It is not the case that any given simile or metaphor, however hackneyed, is trivial in the sense that ‘Everything is identical to itself’ or ‘A square has four equal sides’ is trivial. Phrases such as ‘Achilles is a lion’, or ‘hungry as a hunter’, give us information about the world which cannot be deduced *a priori*. Perhaps, though this is not spelled out, Davidson was making the assumption that each given simile is to be seen as an instantiation of the trivial statement ‘Everything is like everything’, and is therefore trivial. This assumption also seems very questionable: it is rather like saying that ‘Each of the four sides of this square measures 4m’ is trivial because it is an instantiation of ‘A square has four equal sides’.

The truth of ‘Everything is like everything’ might be disputed. Negative theologians would certainly exclude God, and sceptics ask how we can possibly know that there is not something, perhaps totally unknown and unknowable to us, which is unlike everything else in the universe. Then again, if we were to discover two indiscernible objects, such as Max Black’s famous spheres, we might think it was

inappropriate to describe them in terms of ‘like’ comparisons. However, let us provisionally accept Davidson’s assertion here.

One problem with this view is that Davidson does not give us any reason why there should be a different number of possible correspondences between the terms *Tolstoy* and *infant* in the case of metaphor and simile.

It seems to me that some qualities of the infant are obviously applied to Tolstoy whether the comparison is made through metaphor or simile: i.e., intellectual immaturity, and the inability to hold any other than extremely simplistic notions of right and wrong. Other qualities are debatable: the unpleasant noises and smells which may emanate from an infant *might* also be applied to Tolstoy to compound the insult, but this was not necessarily in the mind of the critic or of all his readers. It is less likely that the simile was intended to suggest that Tolstoy was in any way cute or cuddly, and at least one quality of the infant is certainly not intended to apply: the potential to grow up.

The skilful reader of metaphor and simile is sensitive to context and creates a world of metaphor according to their knowledge of the existing world. Even given that the points of comparison between any two objects are infinite, one has to accept that some infinities are larger than others, since some comparisons will almost always be excluded by context.

The next aspect of Davidson’s argument is that metaphor is impossible to paraphrase (by simile or otherwise), and that this is proof of the absence of cognitive content. Both of these points are unconvincing. There are many things that we cannot express accurately in words, but which nevertheless exist (for example the exact

variations of light and shade that we see on a wall in front of us). As for the lack of paraphrasability argument itself, let us examine the example which Davidson gives for his belief:

Virginia Woolf said that a highbrow is ‘a man or woman of thoroughbred intelligence who rides at a gallop across country in pursuit of an idea.’ What simile corresponds? Something like this, perhaps: ‘A highbrow is a man or woman whose intelligence is like a thoroughbred horse and who persists in thinking about an idea like a rider galloping across country in pursuit of ... well, something.’

(Davidson, 253)

This *well, something* is intended to be the clinching stage of the argument. Behind it, we can sense adherence to the Searlian belief that reference is that which picks out – and *ergo* if ‘something’ cannot be sufficiently clearly distinguished (whatever sufficiency might be), well, then it has no reference.

The chosen example is extremely infelicitous, since to anyone familiar with the cultural context within which Woolf was writing would not find the object of the literal hunt referred to as a basis for the metaphorical one to be mysterious at all. Surely Davidson, who had lived in England for a number of years, was only pretending to be so completely ignorant of the English cultural context as not to know that the aforesaid thoroughbred horse and rider of Woolf’s metaphor were in pursuit of not a *well, something*, but a *fox*? And, I would contend, not just any fox, for example a desert fox, or an arctic fox, but a red fox with some black on the tip of its tail.

This point needs to be made since metaphorical statements, just like literal statements in this respect, refer through oblique gestures towards common cultural knowledge, values and norms, and the philosopher of language who ignores this cannot give a valid account of either everyday or literary language.

But let us suppose that someone with a slightly pedantic cast of mind were to decide to call into question my statement about the red fox. He or she asserts that the case is not so clear cut, for as a matter of fact, stags were also hunted in the West Country in Britain during the period in question, and moreover, that Virginia Woolf was known to have taken holidays in the West Country, and that, therefore, surely, I must accept the fact that the animal in question could be either a stag or a fox?

Or just let us go one step further and suppose that Davidson were to have created a similar metaphor with a slightly less culturally-loaded context, so that we might imagine a horse and rider in pursuit of ‘any kind of small furry mammal’, or ‘any animal whatsoever’ or indeed ‘the object of the hunt or quest’ – which could be anything from a mythical beast of Arthurian legend to a remote-controlled robot with flashing lights. Nevertheless, something is presented to the mind; it is, in Husserlian terms, the object of an intentional act; even if it is as vague as the Davidsonian *well, something* itself.

Whichever of these suppositions we accept, Davidson would still not have succeeded in refuting the existence of cognitive content, or reference, of metaphor with his example, since what we have here is only an increasing amount of vagueness with regard to the object mentioned, not an absence of content or of reference itself. There is a necessary vagueness in almost all linguistic reference, and to insist on the absence

of vagueness as a prerequisite for reference would be tantamount to saying that ordinary language does not refer. To spell out the *reductio*: one might say with Heraclitus that one does not hunt the same fox twice, or with Cratylus that one does not hunt the same fox once.

Davidson's position on metaphor draws attention in particular to the necessity of engaging with metaphor both as an individual noetic act and in the context of the life-world, as what in the account put forward in the subsequent chapter, I shall call the third aspect of the interrealm.

If Davidson in his reading of Woolf's metaphor leaves the interpretations of a metaphor embedded in a context too open, some of his critics make the mistake of overstating the case in the opposite direction, and thus neglecting the infinite potentiality of metaphor which also needs to be included in any account of its reference. Nelson Goodman in 'Metaphor as Moonlighting' sees the metaphorical statement as doing two jobs at once: the literal meaning is the day job, as it were, and the metaphorical meaning the night job. Therefore, for everything to be in order, each of these jobs needs to have its own truth-value. Unfortunately, this insistence on assigning metaphorical meanings a truth-value raises more problems than it solves. It may initially seem to have some validity for the clichéd metaphor, as opposed to polysemic examples of literary metaphor, but even then, we find ourselves in difficulties.

The example which Goodman gives in order to illustrate his theory is that to say, 'The lake is a sapphire' is literally false and metaphorically true, but that to say 'Muddy Pond is a sapphire' would be both literally and metaphorically false, or else

ironic. Let us presume Muddy Pond to live up to its name, and to be the expected shade of dirty brown. Let us forget that particular moment of a particularly brilliant sunset when the quality of light is such that the dirty brown mud takes on the colour and sheen of a dark blue gemstone. Let us even put aside objections to the effect that all sapphires are not blue, and that there may even be some brown sapphires in the world. So far so good. But if a poet were to assert of the favourite glorious mud-hole of his childhood:

*Seas are sapphire in the eye;
But Muddy Pond's a sapphire in my soul*

then, well, who are we to contradict him? Every metaphor can be interpreted in such a way as to extract some truth from it. To ignore this infinite potential of the act of metaphorisation is to ignore one of its essential aspects.

This is not, of course, the same as saying that metaphors in a given context cannot be used to deceive. If someone giving a reference to an employer were to describe an indisputably bad candidate for employment (presuming there is such a thing) with the words, 'She is a star' and 'She's a pearl', and later protest that there was no intention to mislead, but that the meaning was that all human beings without exception are stars in the eyes of God, and that the person in question is a pearl because if you strip off the layers of shiny covering you will find a bit of irritating dirt at the bottom, this would be considered a poor defence against the charge of deliberately misleading someone. The best term for this kind of use and abuse of metaphor is

equivocation, in the sense that Shakespeare uses the term in *Macbeth*⁹¹ : it can be defined as the practice of deliberately making a statement which one knows will be understood by the listener in a certain way, and believed to be true in that interpretation, when as the speaker well knows, in that interpretation it is actually false, although when interpreted differently it is a true statement.⁹²

These examples are meant to imply that it is more difficult to capture the meaning of metaphor than may be supposed by those who assign it too wide or too narrow a scope. In both cases metaphor seems to be too slippery, and in Ricoeur's master-metaphor, too much *alive*, to be confined within the theory. In the next chapter I shall put forward a three aspect account of metaphor which theorises this very slipperiness, while retaining the concept of reference.

This leads to a final criticism of Davidson's essay: another reason given there for denying the existence of a second-order meaning in metaphor is because of the nature of dead metaphors. If metaphors really did have a second meaning, as ambiguity does, the figurative meaning would be immortalised when the metaphor dies⁹³. (Davidson, 253) However, this is not the case:

⁹¹ *Macbeth* Act II Sc III, 782-783; Act V, Sc V ll. 42-5.

⁹² However, metaphor does not differ from ordinary language in this respect: we can lie in ordinary non-metaphorical language, and also, in many cases, 'tell the truth with ill intent', that is, twist the ordinary meaning of our statement in order to claim that we were actually telling the truth. For example, 'I have been thinking about you a lot lately,' suggests affection, but the speaker might perhaps have indeed been thinking about his auditor a lot as he laid plans to kill her after defrauding her of her fortune through the pretence of romantic love. These slippery characteristics of non-metaphorical language do not, however, constitute arguments in favour of our denying it reference.

⁹³ The description of dead metaphor here is very similar to Hegel's definition of dead metaphors as

Once upon a time, I suppose, rivers and bottles did not, as they do now, literally have mouths. Thinking of present usage, it doesn't matter whether we take the word 'mouth' to be ambiguous because it applies to entrances to rivers and openings of bottles as well as animal apertures, or we think there is a single wide field of application that embraces both. What does matter, is that when 'mouth' applied literally only to bottles, the application made the hearer notice a likeness between animal and bottle openings. (Consider Homer's reference to wounds as mouths.) Once one has the present use of a word, with literal application to bottles, there is nothing left to notice. There is no similarity to seek because it consists in simply being referred to by the same word.

(Davidson, 252)

In a sense this passage is self-subversive, because Davidson himself proves that the metaphors of river and bottle mouths are *not* entirely dead by his own apparent ability to re-imagine how they would have been understood when first thought of. This in itself suggests that no metaphor can, metaphorically speaking, be consigned to a death without resurrection. Of course, it is indisputable that there are many metaphors that are so frequently used in a given language, that in terms of the study of the grammar and idiom of that particular language, the term 'dead metaphor' is perfectly appropriate: they have become fixed in idiom or proverb, or now seem to function as an extended non-metaphorical use. However, the point is that these still have what I would call a latent natality, firstly, since every metaphor still has the power to give the shock of the new to the child or foreign language learner who discovers them for the

metaphors which have lost the power *to call up ideas* which is critiqued by Derrida in 'White Mythology' as being itself suspiciously metaphorical.

first time,⁹⁴ and, secondly, because the interrealm created between the metaphoriser and the metaphorised is still subject to dynamic change.

By this I mean that the interrealm of metaphoriser and metaphorised has the potential to produce new insights into the relation between, for example, the mouth of an animal and the entry to a river, or the mouth of a person and the opening of a bottle. This is not only in terms of the latent natality which can be realised by the first-time discoverer of an expression. We may also at any point go through a process of defamiliarisation which allows us to meditate or focus afresh on the relation between metaphoriser and metaphorised, either by seeing new links between them, or by (re)gaining a sense of wonder at the existence of the relationship.

Sometimes, of course, this takes place through the reworking of an old metaphor in new words. We may then, of course, argue as to whether it is actually the same metaphor at all. Is the phrase '*Achilles roaring in the fray is a lion going forth to the hunt*' the same metaphor as '*Achilles is a lion*'? Can we speak of the same meaning and of the same referent? In one sense, both meaning and referent are different. (The same point can be made with regard to literal sentences. 'The man over there' and

⁹⁴ To draw on examples from the experience of learning foreign languages, one speaks of 'a pair of shoes' in English, and in my first exposure to this expression I have no recollection of associating it with a pair of lovers. This attitude would be close to the Quinean approach to metaphor: the belief that to speak of a hard question is no more metaphorical than speaking of a hard stone. The word *pair* could be thought of as a term to be applied to any object or thing that goes in twos, and there would be no reason to consider the animate as equi-primordial: pairs of turtledoves and pairs of scissors are both merely instantiations of the concept pair. However, when in a Turkish shoe-shop I was first asked if I would also like to try the *eş* (a word which I had understood until then as meaning only partner, husband, wife) of the shoe I had put on, the phrase struck me as a metaphor: how cute, I thought, a married pair of shoes, and what a shame, one might add, that one of them is kept away from the other in a box, and they are thus prevented from making baby shoes! This experience was, however, nothing to my bewilderment when Turkish workers re-installing an air-conditioning unit asked me where its feet (*ayak*) and hair (*saç*) were.

‘The man over there in the blue tie’, presuming them to be the same person, are doubtless the same referent according to Frege’s theory, but there is another sense in which what is referred to is different.)

But there is another sense, less language dependent than the first, in which we can speak of the first statement here as being an instantiation of the second, of which it brings certain salient aspects to light. The relationship between the two terms can be represented as follows in terms of my tri-partite theory of the interrealm of metaphor; we can say that *Achilles is a lion* represents the first aspect of the interrealm *qua* act-species, and that the more detailed presentation belongs to the second aspect. (Of course the detailed can also be seen in itself under the first aspect.)

This might happen either by thinking unprompted about an idiomatic phrase in a new or more intense way, or by having the relationship between the two familiar terms defamiliarised through linguistic devices and/or a new context. In particular, poetry and other forms of literature may bring ‘dead metaphors’ to life by reworking the metaphor whilst retaining its two main terms: thus we might revivify the ‘dead metaphors’ of river mouths or of bottle mouths by saying that ‘The river mouth gnashed its teeth in fury as the storm rose’ or ‘I stared at the mouth of the wine-bottle till it stuck its tongue out at me in scorn’.

To give a more extended example of this process I would like to quote a poem by Cem Uzungüneş, which completely transforms and revivifies the ‘dead metaphor’ which refers to part of a shoe as a tongue by giving the shoe a screaming mouth, which is presented against the *Gestalt* of the suffering of those involved in the manufacture of the leather from which shoes are made, of the tanners who taste death on their teeth:

Ayakkabıcı Dükkanı

tabak işçileri için

*körelme denmez ki kör doğmuştur
kent in bazı noktaları, kamaşmaz*

*çığlık gibi duymazlar o kokuyu
kokunun girdabıdır suskuları, kamaşmaz*

*bunamış bunları anca dokunuş
öperken ince kadınlarının hassas*

*noktaları kamaşmaz. hey tabakçılar
(kendi derileri yüzülür düşlerinde)
dişlerinde ölüm tadı, kamaşmaz*

*vitrinlerde A çılmış A ğızları ve dilleriyle
pabuçlarda bir ç ı ğ l ı k !*

parfümleri dükkânları kamaşmaz!

Cem Uzungüneş

The Shoemaker's Shop

For tannery workers

We don't say 'blinded' of those born blind
certain points of the city don't dazzle their senses

they don't hear that stench like a scream
the stench's whirlpool silences don't dazzle

touch their dull noses by the instant
kissing the sensitive points of delicate

women doesn't dazzle. tanners!
(their own skin flayed in their dreams)
the taste of death on their teeth
doesn't set them on edge
it doesn't dazzle

in the shop windows in the open mouths

and tongues of shoes – a scream!
perfume shops don't dazzle!

(my translation⁹⁵)

This poem is an example of what I call hypermetaphorisation: the use of metaphor in a way which foregrounds the way in which it operates, of which I shall give further examples in the sixth chapter.

A Note on Perpetual Deferral: is Derridean *différance* the Ruin of Reference?

Derrida might not at first sight seem to have a great deal in common with Davidson. Yet, despite the vast difference in their philosophical styles, there are certain similarities in their position with regard to metaphor. As Cooper points out of Derrida: 'Despite the sharp continental tang of his prose, he is giving expression to an outlook that is more international, and one which in fact forms a main chapter in Twentieth Century philosophies of meaning and mind.' (Cooper, 23)

My aim here is not to explore the full implications of the exchange between Ricoeur and Derrida, which has already been subjected to a great deal of scrutiny, perhaps most lucidly by Stellardi (2000) in discussion of 'The Ricoeur-Derrida Debate' (70-194). The main issue at stake in this exchange is the question of philosophy's possible autonomy from the power of metaphor; however, placing this vital question

⁹⁵ This translation together with the original of the poem was published in *The Dirty Goat* (Szoka and Bratcher, 162-163.)

firmly in parentheses, I shall merely comment briefly on the issue of whether Derrida's position actually entails that metaphor possesses no reference.

A concise summary of the usual view of the Derridean position is given by

Leppard:

The post-structuralist critique of language deconstructs the referential potentialities of all language by locating meaning in a process of difference and deferral and therefore seems particularly pertinent to the case of metaphor, where cognitive meaning is often obscured by the detour from literality. In attacking the essential presuppositions behind the classical account of metaphor, Derrida denies that metaphorical expressions can be eliminated and replaced with literal expressions which can preserve their truth claims. He denies, that is, that the concepts of literality and truth possess any credibility.

(Leppard, 25)

The awareness of the instability of meaning, that every decoding is a further encoding, and of the impossibility of ever arriving at a final all-encompassing meaning, does not constitute the denial of reference *per se*, though it may entail the belief that the referent in question can never be free of vagueness. Reference and *différance* are not so incompatible as they might seem at first sight, once we accept that reference, seemingly inescapably implicated in the metaphysics of presence, can have its own deferrals, and that a completely defined referent is impossible. Something may be blurred at the edges, but that does not mean that we cannot point a finger, rather than being reduced with Cratylus to merely wagging it. (Aristotle, *Metaphysics Γ*, iv. 1010)

Though even the finger-wagging of Cratylus can be seen as the trace of a frustrated ostensive gesture, and perhaps the most appropriate bodily manifestation of

vague reference would be the *wagging* gesture of a finger that points and wags simultaneously.

CHAPTER FOUR

A PHENOMENOLOGY OF METAPHORISATION

Metaphorisation as Quintessential Intentional Act

The attacks on the concept of metaphoric meaning, and the concomitant neglect of the very question of metaphoric reference discussed in the previous chapter, are characterised by the failure to take into account, firstly, the *act* of metaphorisation which underlies the metaphoric statement, and, secondly, and more specifically, the failure to take into account this act *qua indicating or singling out*⁹⁶ a particular entity.

In other words, this critique is based upon a seemingly deliberate forgetting or ignoring of what Husserl called *intentionality*, of the basic fact that in *metaphorising* (understood either as the act of the creation, original or otherwise, of a metaphor or as the act of perceiving one) we are conscious of a *something* metaphorised, just as in perception we are conscious of a something perceived, in hatred of a something hated and so on and so forth.

I shall argue here that Husserl furnishes us with a conceptual framework which, although never applied to metaphor in his own writings, can be taken up in order to provide us with a valid theoretical account of metaphorisation as a mental act, and indeed lead us towards an account of the metaphorical referent as an ideal essence. I shall first consider certain basic concepts taken from the Husserl of the *Logical Investigations* in this respect, and then turn to the later Husserl's development of the

⁹⁶ The term singling out does not mean to imply that only singularities can be referred to: what is 'singled out' in this sense can actually be multiple or of very vague demarcation.

theory of noematic meaning, and then show how both of these theories can be combined in a theory of the metaphoric referent.

Seeing metaphor in terms of the basic structure of Husserlian intentionality will not, of course, give a full account of all the complexities arising from the nature of the metaphorical statement, as a linguistic entity subject to different interpretations and perceptions by different minds, but such an account constitutes a necessary first step in the presentation of metaphor *qua* possessing reference. My subsequent attempt to place the metaphoric referent in the context of intersubjectivity is also Husserlian in that it corresponds to the preoccupations of the final period of his life.

In redressing the neglect of intentionality by Davidson and his followers, this chapter also seeks to redress Ricoeur's comparative neglect of Husserl in *La Métaphore Vive*⁹⁷ and Husserl's neglect of the question of metaphor in the *Logical Investigations*.

There is, of course, no reason why Husserl should have focused on metaphor in the *Investigations*, but there is equally no reason why he should not have done so. As is well known, this work attempts a fundamental epistemological enquiry into the very structure of acts of thinking and acts of knowing, and into the objects of thought and knowledge in their essential meanings. Although the text as it stands deals mainly with logic, mereology and questions concerning universals (Species), Husserl himself came around to the position that logic was not in itself a necessary starting point, and that the

⁹⁷ Ricoeur does make passing references to Husserl in *La Métaphore Vive*, and briefly invokes the Husserlian *Lebenswelt* and *epoché* in his 1978 essay 'The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination and Feeling'. However, at no point does he fully utilise Husserlian phenomenology in his account of metaphor.

phenomenological method which he first begins to expound in the *Logical Investigations* could have been initiated through work in a different subject area.

Indeed, he went so far as to claim, in a letter to E. Spranger of 1918, that the *Logical Investigations* had ‘as little to do with logic as with ethics, aesthetics and other parallel disciplines’ (*Husserliana*, XXIII, xiii). Another way of stating this would be to say that the *Investigations* has potentially *as much* to do with aesthetics, and, indeed, with metaphor, as it does with logic: the attempt to provide a new science dealing with ideal essences and contents of consciousness could be applied as much to one as to the other.

My basic claim concerning metaphoric reference is rooted in the Husserlian concept of intentionality, according to which every conscious act is a consciousness of *something*: therefore, *to metaphorise is to be conscious of a thing metaphorised*, which in my account is the metaphoric referent itself. Considered *qua* referent, it is completely irrelevant whether the two terms of a metaphor (the metaphoriser and the metaphorised) are real or fictive, or whether the metaphorical statement as a whole expresses a truth about the world, an outright lie, or can be resolved to a number of individual propositional statements, some of which are true and some of which are false, thus raising the possibility of assigning the overall metaphorical statement a percentile truth value in terms of some system of fuzzy logic. The fact that a referent is fictive does not mean that it can be reduced to a so-called signifier without a signified.

Indeed, there is no such thing as a signifier without a signified, unless we confuse ‘the signified’ with the existence of an object or state of affairs.⁹⁸

This claim is consistent with Husserl’s account of intentionality, in which the intentional act is not dependent on the real existence of objects, as is made clear in the *locus classicus* concerning the presentation of the god Jupiter. Husserl does not speak directly of reference, but what he is providing us with is an account of how an object can be referred to, or aimed at, in presentative, judging, or other fashion:

If I have an idea of the god Jupiter, this god is my presented object, he is immanently present in my act, he has ‘mental inexistence’ in the latter, or whatever expression we may use to disguise our true meaning. I have an idea of the god Jupiter: this means that I have a certain presentative experience, the presentation-of-the-god-Jupiter is realised in my consciousness. This intentional experience may be dismembered as one chooses in descriptive analysis, but the god Jupiter naturally will not be found in it. The ‘immanent’, ‘mental object’ is therefore not part of the descriptive or real make-up (*deskriptiven reellen Bestand*) of the experience, it is in truth not really immanent or mental. But it also does not exist extramentally, it does not exist at all. This does not prevent our idea-of-the-god-Jupiter from being actual, a particular sort of experience or particular mode of mindedness (*Zumutesein*), such that he who experiences it may rightly say that the mythical king of the gods is present to him, concerning whom there are such and such stories. If, however, the intended object exists, nothing becomes phenomenologically different. It makes no essential difference to an object presented and given to consciousness whether it exists, or is fictitious, or is perhaps completely absurd. I think of Jupiter as I think of Bismarck, of the tower of Babel as I think of Cologne Cathedral, or a regular thousand-sided polygon as of a regular thousand-sided solid.

(*Logical Investigations*, Vol. 2, 99)⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Of course the word ‘signified’ may be used as a term to describe an existing object or state of affairs in the world, but then it must be distinguished from the other sense of ‘signified’ *qua* signified meaning independent of the existence of the object.

⁹⁹ *Stelle ich den Gott Jupiter vor, so ist dieser Gott vorgestellter Gegenstand, er ist in meinem Akte „immanent gegenwärtig“ hat in ihm „mental Inexistenz“ und wie die in eigentlicher Interpretation verkehrten Redeweisen sonst lauten mögen. Ich stelle den Gott Jupiter vor, das heißt, ich habe ein*

Although as previously stated, I do not entirely concur with Husserl in that our thinking of what we know to be fictive is the same as that which we believe to be true, I think that this position is valid for the basic act of reference. It is also an important point that, for Husserl, this irrelevance of the real existence of the object holds true not only for the simple presentation (*Vorstellung*) of an object, but also for other intentional experiences which are built upon them:

To represent an object, e.g. the *Schloss* in Berlin, is to be minded in this or that descriptively determinate fashion. To *judge* about the *Schloss*, or to delight in its architectural beauty, to cherish the wish that one could do so, etc. etc. are new experiences, characterized in novel phenomenological terms. All have this in common, that they are modes of objective intention, which cannot be otherwise expressed than by saying that the *Schloss* is perceived, imagined, pictorially represented, judged about, delighted in, wished for etc. etc.

(*Logical Investigations*, Vol. 2, 99)¹⁰⁰

*gewisses Vorstellungserlebnis, in meinem Bewußtsein vollzieht sich das den-Gott-Jupiter-Vorstellen. Man mag dieses intentionale Erlebnis in deskriptiver Analyse zergliedern, wie man will, so etwas wie der Gott Jupiter kann man darin natürlich nicht finden; der „immanente“, „mentale“ Gegenstand gehört also nicht zum deskriptiven (reellen) Bestande des Erlebnisses, er ist also in Wahrheit gar nicht immanent oder mental. Er ist freilich auch nicht extra mentem, er ist überhaupt nicht. Aber das hindert nicht, daß jenes den-Gott-Jupiter-Vorstellen wirklich ist, ein so geartetes Erlebnis, eine so bestimmte Weise des Zumuteseins, daß, wer es in sich erfährt, mit Recht sagen kann, er stelle sich jenen mythischen Götterkönigen vor, von dem dies und jenes gefabelt werde. Existiert andererseits der intendierte Gegenstand, so braucht im phänomenologischen Hinsicht nichts geändert zu sein. Für das Bewußtsein ist das Gegebene ein wesentlich Gleiches, ob der vorgestellte Gegenstand existiert, oder ob er fingiert und vielleicht gar widersinnig ist. Jupiter stelle ich nicht anders vor als Bismarck, den Babylonischen Turm nicht anders als den Kölner Dom, ein regelmäßiges Tausendeck nicht anders als einen regelmäßigen Tausendflächner. (Husserl, *Untersuchungen*, 373)*

¹⁰⁰ *Sich ein Objekt, z.B. das Berliner Schloß, vorstellen, das ist, sagten wir, eine deskriptiv so und so bestimmte Art des Zumuteseins. Über dieses Schloß urteilen, sich an seiner architektonischen Schönheit freuen, oder den Wunsch hegen, dies tun zu können, u. dgl., das sind neue Erlebnisse, phänomenologisch in neuer Weise charakterisiert. Alle haben sie das Gemeinsame, daß sie Weisen der gegenständlichen Intention sind, die wir in normaler Rede nicht anders ausdrücken können, als daß wir sagen, es sei das Schloß wahrgenommen, phantasiert, im Bilde vorgestellt, beurteilt, es sei Gegenstand jener Freude, jenes Wunsches usw. (Husserl, *Untersuchungen*, 374).*

To this list of ways of perceiving, we can, of course, add the act of *metaphorising* the *Schloss*, of calling it the thickly sculpted icing on the plumcake of the Teutonic state, or whatever apt metaphoric statement may spring to mind. Husserl did not give this as one of his examples of intentionality, but, it is, ironically, a less controversial example of intentionality than some of the mental states which he *does* cite.

For instance, according to Husserl, when we love we must be conscious of a thing loved, and when we hate of a thing hated. However, it is possible to imagine a non-specific love, or a non-specific hate (sometimes described respectively as ‘the oceanic feeling’ or as ‘having got out of bed the wrong side that morning’!), as well as the so-called ‘non-specific anxiety’ which later psychologists were to raise as a counter-example to Brentano. These non-specific emotions can be explained in terms of a biological cause – perhaps the excess of a certain hormone which sometimes produces the effect of fear, desire etc. in the absence of a fearful or desirable object, perhaps a disease which causes palpitations of the heart or contractions of the intestines and, by mimicking the effects of acute anxiety, actually creates the effect of anxiety in the subject.

Such non-specific emotional states can also be explained as having *everything* or *anything* as their objects, in which case the intentionality thesis would be saved, but even then we can conceive of a moment in the experience of hatred or desire when the emotion is experienced as ready-to-fix-on-something rather than fixed on something. In contrast to these, though a neurological explanation of the mechanism of metaphorisation, and a pathology of a tendency to excessive metaphorisation is

possible, an example of non-specific metaphorisation without a thing metaphorised is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to imagine.¹⁰¹

The nearest we can come to non-specific metaphorisation is the poet in the mental state of being *about to create* a metaphor, but here we cannot really say that metaphorisation is as yet fully experienced.

There are, admittedly, accidental creations of metaphors, for example, when a person imagines they are merely speaking literally when actually they are also uttering a metaphorical truth, even perhaps one apposite to the situation. To give an illustration, let us imagine that a man is driving a car at dusk through a forest, and is not quite sure of his whereabouts: he comes to a crossroads and says to his girlfriend, 'I think we are at a crossroads here'. Little does he know that this is metaphorically truer than he thinks, since his girlfriend is about to confess that she is in love with someone else and they are going to have a discussion about whether to end their relationship. There may be stranger cases yet: the proverbial monkey at the typewriter might produce a metaphorical statement, or a bird walk casually across a keyboard and make a brilliant metaphor pop up on the computer screen. None of these can, however, be considered as *acts of metaphorisation* as such: their result is subjected to an act of metaphorisation only when *someone perceives it to be a metaphor*.

Metaphorisation is, then, the quintessentially intentional act which Husserl, despite his various discussions of the experience of perceiving the imaginary or the

¹⁰¹ Possibly the nearest we could come to this is the kind of mystical experience of which the subject asserts that they saw the meaning of the universe, but are not able to convey what this meaning is. However, if we translate this as meaning that everything in the universe becomes a metaphor for God or some cosmic force, then the metaphorisation is no longer absolutely non-specific. If we do not name God or another term as the metaphorised, then it is debatable whether what we are dealing with is really

artwork, omits to describe. I wish to demonstrate here how, nevertheless, this forgotten act of metaphorisation can be described through a return to certain basic principles of Husserlian phenomenology, and how this description will give us a phenomenology of metaphorisation, which will fill the lacunae left in Ricoeur's theory of metaphoric reference.

This is not a refutation of Ricoeur's position, for as stated above, although Husserlian phenomenology has, in a sense, been sidelined by Ricoeur in his shift from pure phenomenology towards hermeneutics, it is not at all incompatible with his general philosophical approach. Indeed, it can be seen in terms of his project to carry out a grafting of phenomenology onto hermeneutics.

Beyond the basic concept of intentionality, the three aspects of the *Logical Investigations* which I wish to adopt for my account of metaphor, are firstly, Husserl's view of reference, and of the meaning/reference distinction, secondly, his theory of the part-whole relationship, and the more detailed account of intentionality as given in Investigation V, with its account of the concept of foundation, and finally the more detailed account of the concept of fulfilment in Investigation VI. I will then discuss the way in which the changes in Husserl's theory of meaning in the transition to the thought of *Ideas I*, bears upon the question of metaphor.

metaphorical rather than merely pre-metaphorical.

Insights from the *Logical Investigations*

Husserl on the Distinction between Meaning and Reference

The arguments put forward by Husserl in the *Logical Investigations* concerning the distinction between meaning and reference,¹⁰² are significant steps in the direction of providing an account of the referent of the metaphoric statement, even though Husserl himself never arrives at a completely clear statement of his views on reference, and though I do not share his views in their entirety.

As stated above, my own position is that there cannot be meaning without reference; and Husserl's position here falls short of such a claim. I also differ from Husserl in that I would attribute both meaning and reference to processes which can occur 'in isolated mental life' (*im einsamen Seelenleben*) (Husserl, *Investigations*, Vol. 1, 183; *Untersuchungen*, 24), whereas Husserl believes that only meaning, not reference can occur in this way.

Husserl's thoughts on the nature of reference, however, provide a vital point of departure for a theory of reference not confined to scientific statements as desired by Ricoeur. This is through the challenge that they pose to the rigidity of the Fregean sense-reference distinction, and therefore to its use in confining the metaphorical to the

¹⁰² The translation of these terms into English is problematic. To realise the extent of possible confusion one has only to look at J.N. Findlay's translator's preface to *Logical Investigations*, where he states: '*Bedeutung* in the sense of significant content I have translated as meaning, less commonly by 'sense': Husserl does not follow Frege in keeping the two words distinct, and neither ever means the object of a reference. The word *bedeuten* I have translated by 'act of meaning' or simply by the verb 'mean',

domain of sense. Although the extent to which Husserl himself differs from Frege's theory is controversial, his analysis prompts us to question it.

Husserl himself tends to emphasise the inconclusiveness of his thought on this issue. In Investigation I, he makes a characteristically consciously preliminary discussion of the 'connection between meaning and objective reference', which concludes with the words:

These indications may suffice for the moment. They must guard in advance against the error of seriously thinking that sense-giving acts have two distinct sides, one which gives them their meaning, while the other gives them their determinate direction to objects.

(Husserl, Investigations, Vol. 1, 199)¹⁰³

In other words, it is a mistake to distinguish rigidly between sense and reference in the manner of Frege. However, this position has not been arrived at easily, since Husserl in the *Logical Investigations* actually accepts the validity of the Fregean distinction at a basic level, but believes that a more profound phenomenological clarification will show that talk of two distinguishable sides (i.e. meaning and reference) to each expression should not be taken seriously. (Husserl, Investigations, Vol. 1, 198; *Untersuchungen*, 49)

though I have sometimes used 'refer', 'reference' as an equivalent.' (*Logical Investigations*, lxxxvii)

¹⁰³ *Diese Andeutungen mögen vorläufig genügen; sie sollen nur von vornherein dem Irrtum vorbeugen, als wären am sinngebenden Akte ernstliche zwei Seiten unterscheidbar, deren eine dem Ausdruck die*

The paragraphs preceding the above citation from Investigation I have illustrated this basic level distinction with the now famous examples of the kind of cases which lead us to make this sense-reference distinction. Husserl argues that although proper names such as ‘Socrates’ can obviously only have a different reference by also having a different meaning and *vice versa*, this is not the case with other manners of naming. We can thus have two naming phrases which differ in meaning, but name the same object, as in the case of two ways of referring to Napoleon,¹⁰⁴ as ‘the victor at Jena’ and ‘the vanquished at Waterloo’, where we have two meanings, but only one *object* is actually referred to (Husserl stops just short of saying that there are two meanings and one reference).

On the other hand, there are also cases of two expressions which have the same meaning, but a different objective reference, as with all general names, for example, the expression ‘a horse’ which has different objective referents in the expression ‘Bucephalus is a horse’, and ‘That cart-horse is a horse’. Cases of a sentence with subject and predicate having two meanings and one reference can also be found if we consider the referent of the sentence as the state of affairs that it describes: thus *a is smaller than b* has the same referent, but a different meaning from *b is greater than a*.

Bedeutung, deren andere ihm die Bestimmtheit der gegenständlichen Richtung gebe. (Husserl, *Untersuchungen*, 50)

¹⁰⁴ The case is not, I think, quite so clear cut as Husserl implies. He does not consider whether it is the case that there could be difference in meaning between the application of two proper names to a given individual. Given that names are not neutral labels, there is a sense in which this may be the case. To look no further for an example, there is a difference between ‘Napoleon’ and ‘Napoleon Bonaparte’, or the British and the French would not have disputed as to which should be inscribed upon his tombstone. One could also cite examples of whether one refers to a person using a title, or in the case of a person with two names, each characteristic of a different national or religious group, which one is chosen to

On the other hand, nouns expressing generalities such as *redness* have one meaning and many instantiations.

However, Husserl in his subsequent discussion of the ‘connection between meaning and objective reference’ (*‘Zusammenhang zwischen Bedeutung und gegenständlicher Beziehung’*) (Investigations, Vol. 1, 198-199; Paragraph 13; *Untersuchungen*, 49) asserts that all these examples merely entitle us to regard as well-established the distinction between an expression’s meaning and its power to direct itself as a name to this or that objective correlate – and, of course, the distinction between meaning and the object itself. It is clear, for the rest, that the sides to be distinguished in each expression are closely connected. An expression only refers *because* it means something. Moreover, it can be rightly said to refer *through* its meaning.

He then states that further research on this issue is required, before a more profound phenomenological conclusion can be reached. However, the provisional conclusion that Husserl draws from this is that ‘the essence of an expression lies solely in its meaning’ (Husserl, Investigations, Vol. 1, 199).¹⁰⁵ Reference is thus sidelined. However, I think that Husserl’s arguments can also be mobilised in the opposite direction: in favour of a defence of the unavoidability of reference.

The subsequent discussion of the *fulfilment* of different intuitions is susceptible to this kind of treatment: Husserl points out expressions and their meaning intentions are not the result of ‘mere intuition’ (that is, of phenomena of external or internal sense

make a reference to the person in question will be loaded with meaning.

¹⁰⁵ *‘vielmehr das Wesen des Ausdrucks ausschließlic in der Bedeutung liegt.’* (Husserl,

impressions). They also take their measure from the intellectual forms through which objects are determined. Different meanings may thus pertain to the same intuitions (and thus the same object) regarded in a different manner.

However, where a whole range of objects corresponds to a single meaning, the meaning's own essence must be indeterminate: that is, it must permit a sphere of possible fulfilment. (Husserl, *Investigations*, Vol. I, 199; *Logische Untersuchungen*, 50) In the Husserlian concept of fulfilment, we have (metaphorically speaking) the arrow of reference pointed in the opposite direction, but reference is here understood in a limited, narrow-scope, Fregean, Quinean sense. I shall discuss the application of the concept of fulfilment in greater detail at the end of this chapter. For now, suffice it to say that, in Husserlian terms, the meaning-intention of *the table* is fulfilled only when there is a real table there.

We can carry Husserl's thought one stage further here, and say that what we have in the case of indeterminate meaning, is best described not as indeterminate meaning and a whole range of possible distinct referents, but as both *indeterminate meaning* and *indeterminate reference*. To give a concrete example: let us say that we have a group of men and we want to divide them up into a group of tall ones and those who are not tall. The problem is that we do not know where to draw the line because the word *tall* is vague and permits of indeterminate cases. Here the indeterminacy of the meaning *tall* will lead to the group of tall men being an indeterminate referent. Analogously, when the *semantic content* of a metaphor is vague, the result will be a vague metaphoric *referent*.

Untersuchungen, 49)

Husserl temporarily abandons the issue of reference at this point, but the meaning/reference problematic is taken up again in the opening paragraph of Investigation 1, *Ausdruck und Bedeutung* ('Expression and Meaning'), where, in yet another consciously preliminary consideration of the main issues at stake with regard to the question of meaning, Husserl points out that there is an ambiguity (*Doppelsinn*) in the nature of the sign (*Zeichen*), stemming from its indicative function (*der Funktion des Anzeigen*) and its significant functions (*Bedeutungsfunktion*). I quote this rather lengthy passage in its entirety, given its vital bearing on the meaning/reference distinction:

The terms 'expression' and 'sign' are often treated as synonyms, but it will not be amiss to point out that they do not always coincide with expression in common usage. Every sign is a sign for something, but not every sign has 'meaning', a 'sense' that the sign expresses. In many cases it is not even true that a sign 'stands for' that of which we may say it is a sign. And even when this can be said, one has to observe that 'standing for' will not count as the 'meaning' which characterizes the expression. For signs in the sense of indications (notes, marks, etc) do not express anything, unless they will happen to fulfil a significant as well as an indicative function. If, as one unwillingly does, one limits oneself to expressions employed in living discourse, the notion of an indication seems to apply more widely than that of an expression, but this does not mean that its content is the genus of which an expression is the species. To mean is *not a particular way of being a sign in the sense of indicating something*. It has a narrower application only because meaning – in communicative speech – is always bound up with an indicative relation, and this in turn leads to a wider concept, since meaning is also capable of occurring without such a connection. Expressions function meaningfully even in isolated mental life, where they no longer serve to indicate anything. The two notions of sign do not really stand in the relation of more extensive genus to narrower species.

The whole matter requires more thorough discussion.

(Husserl, Investigations, 183)¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ *Die Termini Ausdruck und Zeichen werden nicht selten wie gleichbedeutende behandelt. Es ist aber*

Here the Husserlian ‘indication’ (*Anzeige*) obviously covers the concept of reference, though, as he makes clear in the subsequent paragraph, *Das Wesen des Anzeige* (‘The essence of indication’) *Anzeige* actually has a wider scope than that of marks (*Merkmale*). This is potentially confusing, as the word ‘mark’ *may*, but does not *necessarily*, convey a referential function in English: the Husserlian *Merkmale* could possibly be better translated as ‘signs which actually refer to something’.¹⁰⁷

If we understand *Merkmale* as referring signs, what is discussed here is the tension between *the sign as bearer of reference* and *the sign as bearer of meaning*, a tension which Husserl is here describing with regard to the literal statement, but which can also be transferred to the metaphoric statement.

Husserl does not, I believe, go far enough in the direction of insisting on the co-existence of meaning and reference. Husserl’s belief that an indicating or referring sign can, under certain given circumstances, be completely devoid of meaning is debatable:

nicht unnütz zu beachten, daß sie sich in allgemein überlich Rede keineswegs überall decken. Jedes Zeichen ist Zeichen für etwas, aber nicht jedes hat eine „Bedeutung“, einen „Sinn“ der mit dem Zeichen, ausgedrückt ist. In vielen Fällen kann man nicht einmal sagen, das Zeichen „bezeichne“ das, wofür es ein Zeichen genannt wird. Und selbst wo diese Sprechweise statthaft ist, ist zu beobachten, daß das Bezeichnen nicht immer als jenes „Bedeuten“ gelten will, welche die Ausdrücke charakterisiert. Nämlich Zeichen im Sinne von Anzeichen (Kennzeichen), Merkzeichen u. dgl.) drücken nichts aus, es sei denn, daß sie neben der Funktion des Anzeigens noch eine Bedeutungsfunktion erfüllen. Beschränken wir uns zunächst, wie wir es bei der Rede von Ausdrücken unwillkürlich zu tun pflegen, auf Ausdrücke, die im lebendigen Wechselgespräch fungieren, so erscheint hierbei der Begriff des Anzeichens im Vergleich mit dem Begriff des Ausdrucks als der dem Umfang nach weitere Begriff. Keineswegs ist er darum in Beziehung auf den Inhalt die Gattung. Das Bedeuten ist nicht eine Arte des Zeichenseins im Sinne der Anzeige. Nur dadurch ist sein Umfang ein engere, daß das Bedeuten – in mitteilender Rede – allzeit mit einem Verhältnis jenes Anzeichenseins verflochten ist, und dieses wiederum begründet dadurch einen weiteren Begriff, das es eben auch ohne solche Verfelchtung auftreten kann. Die Ausdrücke entfallen ihre Bedeutungsfunktion aber auch im einsamen Seelenleben, wo sie nicht mehr als Anzeichen fungieren. Im Wahrheit stehen also die beiden Zeichenbegriffe gar nicht im Verhältnis des weiteren und engeren Begriffes.

Doch es bedarf hier näherer Erörterungen.

(Husserl, *Untersuchungen*, 23-24)

¹⁰⁷ As examples of things which are not marks, but merely indications, Husserl gives us the examples of the belief that the Martian canals are signs of intelligent life on Mars, or that the fossil record is a sign of

in my view, the barest of signs, such as an arrow, or a red dot used to point out or mark an object, also carry within themselves a meaning: the meaning of reference or indication itself. The arrow does not *only* point, but also simultaneously and unavoidably conveys a message about itself, as if it were to say: ‘I am a thing which points out the way!’ Of course, in everyday life we may seldom focus on this meaning: we may need to visit a foreign country where an arrow is drawn in a slightly different way, or perhaps replaced by a pointing hand, or some entirely different sign before we register the sign as such, rather than merely following it.

I find the assertion that reference cannot occur in isolated mental life equally questionable: this is to confuse reference with intimation or communication with others. Even if these were identical acts, it would still be possible to make a case for soliloquising as intimation for one’s own benefit or communication with oneself. Yet I would argue that they are rather two distinct acts, which necessarily take place together¹⁰⁸, and that it is possible to refer to something just for, or to, ourselves, whether we articulate the word of reference or not.¹⁰⁹ However, the main point at issue

the existence of prediluvian animals, and also the example of signs which are used to aid memory, such as a knot tied in a handkerchief which is used in order to remind oneself to carry out some task.

¹⁰⁸ An analogous case would be that of looking and seeing.

¹⁰⁹ A good example of this (cited by Kittay (124) in the context of defining ‘expressive capacity’) is given in the François Truffaut film *L’Enfant Sauvage* where a doctor tries to teach a ‘wild child’ the use of language. He is able to get him to pronounce the sound *lait* and attempts to get him to use the word to request a glass of milk by refusing to give it to him when he merely gestures for it. This does not work and the poor boy is baffled and frustrated. Finally the doctor gives up in despair and hands over the glass of milk. The boy drains it, and then with deep satisfaction utters the word *lait*. Sadly, the doctor does not see this as a breakthrough, but merely as a chance parrot-like utterance.

In Kittay’s view, the doctor’s despair is conditioned by his partial understanding of language as something intrinsically purposive and communicative, which makes him unable to grasp that the use of the word to express satisfaction had cognitive as well as merely affective import. However, Kittay does not consider the boy’s use of the word to be referential, but rather ‘to *mark* an experience now *delineated* and *articulated* through the word ‘*lait*’. (Kittay, 124) I disagree here: I do not see any distinction between marking a delineated experience and referring to it. Indeed, I would go so far as to see the

here is the distinction between, *and* the necessary co-presence of meaning and reference, which Husserl insists upon with regard to literal statements.

Application of the Meaning-Reference Distinction to the Metaphorical Statement

This same distinction of and co-presence of meaning and reference in literal statements should be extended to the metaphorical statement, in which the concepts of meaning and reference are more likely to be confused, or meaning allowed to collapse into reference, because the referent is less tangible.

Despite this possibility for confusion, ordinary language use makes it fairly clear that to ask for the *meaning* of a metaphor is not the same as asking for its reference, but rather requests an interpretation. Thus, if one were to be asked, ‘What do you mean when you say that Achilles is a lion?’ then one can give the reply: ‘Well, what I mean is that he is always fierce and formidable in battle, just in the same way as a lion is fierce and formidable.’ Other meanings are possible: a person who knows the story of Achilles in a little detail might perhaps carry the comparison a little further, and expand upon it in the following way: ‘Achilles can be said to be a lion because he

boy’s utterance as an example of referentiality in its purest form: a pointing out, or invoking of an object for the pure delight of pointing it out, or for the pleasure in the relationship between referring sign and signified, oblivious of audience or communicative purpose. Children and good language learners often do this, though more sophisticated language learners may feign a purposive communicative purpose for the sake of using a newly learned referring term, and though not actually needing to communicate anything, they may also need to feel that they have ‘scored a communicative success’! Nor is the learning of a foreign language or the possession of learning disabilities a necessity for such exclamations. Surprise, delight or what Hobbes called ‘sudden triumph’ may be reasons for articulating an act of reference. One can easily imagine an ornithologist who sees a rare bird for the first time in his life exclaiming its name out loud even though there is no-one by to hear him do so.

is unpredictable and it is dangerous to provoke him'. Then again, one of Achilles' fellow Greeks fighting with him at the time of the Trojan War might well have replied in the aftermath of the death of Patrocles: 'I'll tell you what I mean! I mean that tomorrow he will fall on Hector like a lion on his prey!' Whilst one of the Trojans the following day might have said, 'Yes, Achilles is a lion. You ask me what I mean by that? I mean that like a lion he has no mercy; he has no respect for the body of the dead that he has vanquished. But I prophesy that he will also die the death of a wild beast!'

However, all of these answers are *explanations*, they are not the exact equivalent of the making of an ostensive gesture towards the intentional state in question, towards, to adopt the terminology of the later Husserl, the full *noema* or (if one prefers to see multiple references, the *noemata*) of Achilles perceived *qua* lion. Another way of saying this, is that all the answers given above comment upon, but can never convey in their entirety, the state of affairs conveyed by the metaphorical statement: 'Achilles is a lion'.

This referent of this statement, just like the state-of-affairs referent of a literal statement such as 'Achilles is a Greek' or 'Achilles is a warrior' cannot, of course, be physically touched or indicated with pointed finger. Yet this is not only the case for metaphorical and literal states of affairs; it is also the case of the long-dead Achilles himself, yet Frege himself would surely not have hesitated to say that in terms of his theory, we can nevertheless say that the term *Pelides* (= the son of Peleus = Achilles) and the term *Achilles* do not have the same sense or meaning (*Sinn*), but do have the

same reference (*Bedeutung*). Husserl makes a similar point when he states that reference to a city is only direct reference when the actual city is present before us; otherwise it is indirect reference. Most reference according to this criterion will be indirect. Nevertheless, the vital point is that when we say ‘New York’ when we are in Paris we are still making an act of reference, not simply one of meaning.

Yet let us suppose that someone should then say: *so tell me then, just what is this referent of the Achilles/lion metaphoric statement, which the above mentioned meanings so dismally fail to convey, and which can't be pointed out with a finger: if you want to prove that it exists, come out with it, state it in verbal terms, please!* The difficulty here is that in any attempt to describe this referent, reference passes over into the sphere of meaning and interpretation, and moreover only certain salient features of the interrealm are described. It is as if, like Merleau-Ponty's ‘good dialectic’,¹¹⁰ it disappears as soon as it is named.

However, looking at this referent from a Husserlian perspective identifies certain moments or non-independent parts within this referent which give us some insights into its essence.

The Concept of Sense-Fulfilment in the First Investigation

The following development of the problematic of reference in Paragraphs 9 and 10 of the First Investigation is also of vital importance for a phenomenology of

¹¹⁰ Cf. the argument that bad dialectic, which idealises its content without realising it is doing so, begins almost with dialectic (Merleau-Ponty, *Invisible*, 93-94; *Invisible*, 128-129).

metaphorisation, since they help us to conceptualise the distinction between the existence of a metaphor in the system of language and the actual consciousness of the act of metaphorisation in the human mind, and between the different aspects of the interrealm as act-species, fragment of the *Lebenswelt* and *noesis*.

In these paragraphs, Husserl deliberately puts aside the questions of communication and intimation which he had been discussing immediately before and considers expressions from the perspective of distinctions which equally pertain to dialogue and soliloquy. At first sight, two aspects then seem to remain: *the expressions themselves* and *that which they mean or express*. However, we are warned against accepting this simple opposition, as several meanings are entwined at this point, and talk about what is meant or expressed is correspondingly ambiguous: both the expression and the expressed can be analysed into a number of parts.

Firstly, the concrete phenomenon of the sense-formed expression itself can be broken up into, on the one hand, the physical side of the expression (*das physische Phänomenon*) (that is the vibrations of the air or the particles of ink), and on the other hand the acts which give it meaning (*Bedeutung*), and possibly also into a third component, that of its *intuitive fullness* (*anschauliche Fülle*), in which its relation to an expressed object (*ausgedrückte Gegenständlichkeit*) is constituted. It is in virtue of the act-aspect of expression that an expression is not a merely sounded word, but a word that means something. However, it is important that, for Husserl, this intuitive fullness (*anschauliche Fülle*) is, firstly, not a necessary accompaniment of the act of meaning, and that secondly, this fullness should not be confused with the real existence of the

object; fulfilment can also take place by the representation mental images

(*Phantasiebilde*):

This objective somewhat can either be actually present through accompanying intuitions, or may at least appear in representation, e.g. in a mental image, and where this happens the relation to an object is realized.

(Husserl, Investigations, Vol. 1 192)¹¹¹

An expression is thus quite capable of functioning significantly, and remains more than mere words, without any basic intuition giving it its object. In such a case, the relation of meaning to object is described as being *unrealised* (*unrealisiert*) and as being confined to a *mere meaning-intention* (*ein bloßer Wortlaut*). Thus, a name always names its object insofar that it *means* that object, but, if the object in question is not actually before a person intuitively as a named or meant object, then all we have is a case of mere naming or an *empty meaning-intention* (*ein leerer Wortlaut*). If, on the other hand, there *is* a conscious relation between name and object named, then we may speak of a *fulfilled meaning intention* (*Bedeutungserfüllung*) in which the relation to the object is *realised* (*realisiert*).

From this fundamental distinction made between *empty* and *fulfilled meaning-intentions*, Husserl derives a further distinction between the two types of mental acts which take place in the producing of these aforesaid intentions: *meaning-conferring*

¹¹¹ *Diese Gegenständliche kann entweder vermöge begleitender Anschauungen aktuell gegenwärtig oder mindestens vergegenwärtig erscheinen (z. B) im Phantasiebilde* (Husserl, *Untersuchungen*, 37)

acts or meaning intentions (die bedeutungsverleihenden Akte oder auch Bedeutungsintention) and *meaning-fulfilling acts (bedeutungerfüllende Akte)*, respectively.

These two acts, however, are not present successively in consciousness, nor even as an aggregate of simultaneously present given items. If both are present, they are present, also along with the acts involving an expression's physical appearance, in 'an intimately fused unity' (*eine innig verschmolzene Einheit*). (Husserl, *Investigations*, Vol. 1, 193; *Untersuchungen*, 39). In this unity, each constituent may have a differing weight according to the variety of experience of different individuals, i.e., one person may focus more on the object and less on the meaning than another. However, usually interest is focused, not on the physical sign itself, but on the meaning and on the object intuited if it is also present to consciousness. This is not, however, a question of a shifting of attention from an A to a B: A and B, sign and signified are, rather, linked in such a way that what is experienced is the unity of the thing and the thing signified.

It is, I believe, possible to transport the concept of fulfilment into the phenomenology of the later Husserl, and to speak of *meaning-fulfilling* acts as directed towards the *noema* of the object in the outside world irrespective of whether there is a transcendental referent for such an object.

The relation of the concept of fulfilment to the nature of metaphorisation is that metaphors also exist on the levels of expression, meaning-intention and meaning-fulfilment. A metaphor may be a written or recorded statement not understood or even perceived by anyone: this would be for it to exist only on the level of expression. On the other hand, we may understand what it means without focusing too deeply on the

bringing together of the metaphorised and the metaphoriser. The problematic concept is that of meaning-fulfilment. This can obviously only be fulfilled by a consciousness of the referent of the metaphor. Since in my account the interrealm of metaphor is a vague and shifting referent and – under one of its aspects – of an infinite nature, complete fulfilment is impossible. Yet neither can the concept of fulfilment be put aside in an account where metaphor possesses reference and not simply meaning. We are therefore forced to speak of partial fulfilment, which is a concept that Husserl himself deals with in Investigation VI. However, first it is necessary to look at Husserl's theory of parts and wholes, since this offers a way of breaking down the metaphorical referent into various 'moments', some of which may be fulfilled and others not.

The Third Investigation: Basic Aspects of Husserlian Mereology as a Component of the Metaphorical Statement

In Investigation III (*Zur Lehre von den Ganzen und Teilen*), Paragraph 2, Husserl advances the view that *parts (Teile)*, which are defined in the widest sense as being anything that can be distinguished in, or objectively present in, an object, are of two kinds, i.e., the independent (*selbstständig*) part or *piece (Stück)*, provisionally defined as that which can be removed from the whole, and the non-independent (*unselbstständig*) part, or moment (*Moment*), which cannot be physically removed, or even imagined to be physically removed (Husserl, *Investigations*, Vol. 2, 5; *Untersuchungen*, 228).

In a nutshell, the tail of a cat is a *piece* of the cat, but the black of a cat is a *moment* of the cat. One could go further and say that the black of the cat's tail would be a *moment* of a *piece* of the cat, and that a fleeting and incomplete glimpse of the black of a cat would be a *piece* of a *moment* of the cat, and that movement of the fleeting and incomplete glimpse of the black of the cat would be a *moment* of a *piece* of a *moment* of the cat.

Husserl then puts forward a theory according to which this distinction does not depend on the psychology of the person perceiving the whole, although as he points out here, this distinction has its origin in the psychological realm, in the phenomenology of inner experience advanced by Berkeley in his polemic against Locke.

In this polemic, Berkeley points out that we can only *abstract* (in the Lockean separative sense), and then recombine those parts of things already seen, which, although they belong to a whole, could not exist without it. This is what happens when we imagine a man with two heads, or a centaur consisting of a man's trunk attached to a body of a horse. As opposed to this, we are absolutely incapable of forming what he calls *abstract ideas*, i.e., we are incapable of separating the movement of a body from a moving body, since this movement cannot exist without the body. This inability to exist is, of course, for Berkeley, nothing more than an inability to be perceived, since *esse* is the same as *percipi*.

Husserl points out that for Berkeley, ideas are the things perceived in themselves: the contents of consciousness are ideas that we really (*reell*) live through. Rejecting this view, he makes his own non-psychological formulation, which he

believes to put forward the essential point of Berkeley's distinctions. This is, that the contents of an object fall into *independent* and *non-independent* objects, and we have independent contents 'wherever the nature of a presentational complex (complex of contents) by their very nature present their separated presentation, but we have dependent contents wherever this is not the case. (Husserl, Investigations, Vol. 2, 6; *Untersuchungen*, 230)

This definition of Husserl is relevant to metaphor because, strangely enough, metaphor *does* have the power to isolate the non-independent within an object: in a sense, it has the power to skin the black off a cat. This happens whenever we make a metaphoric statement of the kind: 'Her eyes were as black as a cat's fur.' In this comparison, the eyes of the woman or girl are obviously *not* being compared with the shape of the cat, and it is not asserted that they have tails. (Though, it is, of course, always open to the surrealist poet to take matters one stage further, and boldly assert that 'Her cat-black eyes arched their backs, raised their tails and purred with pink tongue and quivering whiskers in the hope of a saucer of milk'!) Thus the black of the cat has been detached from the cat itself, and attached to something else.

And yet, there is also a sense in which the black is *not* skinned off the cat, but has at least some cat attached to it still. For the black referred to in this comparison is not the same as the black of 'A night as black as a wolf's throat' or 'The child's trousers were as black as the lane'. In 'Her eyes were as black as a cat's fur', we have the connotations of the feline, of, let us say, slinky self-satisfied eroticism, as opposed to the connotations of danger and horror which come with the 'wolf's throat', or those

of dirt and slovenliness (perhaps nowadays softened with certain nostalgic connotations of rustic life) in the case of ‘the lane’.

Although the grammatical structure of ‘adjective plus simile’ common to the phrases given as examples might well suggest that we are actually merely making a literal comparison, carrying out a ‘work of resemblance’ in Ricoeur’s phrase, something more is taking place. A single intentional act is grasping the two foundational moments of the metaphorical statement: seizing upon *the black of the black cat’s fur* along with all the connotations that it implies and bundling it together with the *woman’s eyes* for which it is used as a metaphoriser.

In Husserlian terms, a *moment* of a whole (the cat) has become a moment of a different whole (in my terminology this whole is the *interrealm* of the metaphoric statement). Again it makes sense to speak of dependent rather than independent contents, since the metaphoric statement cannot be abstracted from the black, nor the black from the metaphoric statement. Both metaphoriser and metaphorised are here in a chiasmatic relationship: each being modified in terms of one another.

The case becomes more complicated when the metaphorical statement in question is more blunt: i.e., when a woman is compared to a cat, and we are not initially sure which of the attributes of the cat are to be considered as salient – or when the context suggests such a salience but other aspects or moments of the cat may potentially be brought into the foreground.

Potentially any moment of the metaphorised can be seen in terms of any moment of the metaphoriser, but always against the *Gestalt* of the other moments of the said metaphoriser. Thus when we metaphorise Achilles in terms of a lion, minor points

of comparison (let us say, his mane of golden hair, his belt swinging like a lion's tail, his pearl white teeth, the curling back of his lips to reveal the said teeth in moments of rage) co-exist with the more salient aspects of the metaphor, such as his fierceness, his courage, and his propensity to kill. What we call the interpretation of a metaphor depends on the emphasis which is given to the various non-independent moments of which it is constructed. An ontology of this complex interweaving is attempted in the following chapter.

The Husserlian Concept of Foundation as applied to the Metaphorical Statement

The concept of foundation arises out of Husserl's theory of dependent and non-dependent parts. Foundation is defined as follows:

If a law of essence means that an A cannot as such exist except in a more comprehensive unity which connects it with an M, we say that an A as such requires foundation by an M or also that an A as such needs to be supplemented by an M.

(Husserl, Investigations, Vol. 2, 25)¹¹²

This law applies both to pure Species (universals) and, equally, to their instantiations.

If we ask on what the metaphorical statement is founded, the answer must be

¹¹² *Kann wesensgesetzlich ein α als solches nur existieren in einer umfassenden Einheit, die es mit einem μ verknüpft, so sagen wir, es bedürfe ein α als solches der Fundierung durch ein μ , oder auch, es sei ein α als solches ergänzungsbedürftig durch an μ . (Husserl, Untersuchungen, 261)*

the metaphoriser and the metaphorised, which are co-foundational, in that the metaphorical statement cannot exist without either of them, although the metaphorised may only be stated by implication (as when we see Achilles and simply murmur ‘A lion’). Although as stated above, no verbal act can convey the nature of the metaphorical referent in its entirety, a basic phenomenology can be constructed by stating the relationship between the two terms of the metaphoric statement. Accounts of the relationship between these two terms have, of course, been given in the tensional and interactional theories of metaphor created by I.A. Richards, Max Black, Monroe Beardsley and others, but what all these theories lack is the delineation of a referent for the metaphorical statement.

This concept can be applied to metaphor in the following way: the metaphoriser and the metaphorised of a metaphorical statement are both foundational moments, without which it could not exist *qua* metaphor. Thus Achilles and lion are both necessary foundational moments in the metaphor ‘Achilles is a lion’. It is important that both foundational moments do not have to be explicitly stated in language, since a recognition of this frees the metaphoric referent from being tied too closely to the propositional statement as is the case in the theory of Benveniste adopted by Ricoeur. Sometimes the metaphoriser only is stated linguistically, but the metaphorised must always be implied, as when the phrase *a lion* is used in the physical presence of Achilles, as a comment in a discourse where it is clear that Achilles is the subject to which this predicate is being applied, or in a narrative where it has been previously established that *lion* can be substituted for *Achilles*.

An application of the Husserlian concept of foundational content (*Funderungsverhältnisse*) to metaphorical statement can be better understood in terms of the interpretation of foundation put forward by Gian-Carlo Rota in *Pensieri Discreti*, in a passage quoted by Önay Sözer in ‘The abyss of foundation and the life-world’ (*L’abysse de la fondation et le monde de la vie*) in which foundation is seen in terms of function and the facticity which supports it, and where one of the examples given is of the relationship between looking (facticity) and seeing (function):

My seeing of the signified of a printed page is founded upon my looking at the same page. I can look at the printed page without seeing it as reading matter.

(Sözer, 43, my translation)¹¹³

If we now attempt to use the looking/seeing analogy to describe what goes on when we create or understand a metaphorical statement, it is not the case that one term, either the metaphorised or the metaphoriser represents facticity and the other function, but rather that perception of the sentence statement which they construct represents the facticity of looking, and that perception of the interrealm referent itself corresponds to seeing.

¹¹³ ‘*Mon voir du signifié d’une page imprimée est fondée sur le regard de la même page. Je peux regarder la page imprimée sans la voir comme matière de la lecture.*’ (quoted and translated by Sözer,

The Relationship between Mereology and Predication as applied to the Metaphorical Statement

This basic phenomenology of the metaphorical statement can be deepened by considering the relationship between the part-whole relationship and the relationship between the different part of a sentence consisting of subject and predicate.

This theme is not developed in the *The Logical Investigations* themselves. However, unlike other aspects of Husserl's early thought, the mereology of *The Logical Investigations* is not abandoned or sidelined in the transition to the thought of *Ideas*, and is indeed developed in his subsequent works. One development which is of considerable relevance regarding the application of the theory to metaphor is that of the foundation of the linguistic act of predication in the *pre-reflective* experience of the part-whole relationship.

In the posthumously published *Erfahrung und Urteil (Experience and Judgement)*,¹¹⁴ Husserl claims that pre-linguistic experience is not a featureless blur, but that it is organised into clumps or bundles of data, which contain independent pieces and dependent moments. When we perceive a part, we do not merely perceive it *per se*, but as part of a whole. This type of perception of the 'part *qua* part' of a whole, Husserl calls explication.

Explication, for Husserl, is the germ of predication. Thus out of the tripartite structure of whole, part, and the part-whole relation which is perceived in *explication*,

43)

¹¹⁴ This work was edited from Husserl's lecture notes by Ludwig Landgrebe.

emerges the structure of predication: subject, attribute and copula. Husserl distinguishes two copula-concepts: *has* and *is*. The *has*-copula is used for independent parts, and the *is*-copula for dependent moments: thus *This cup has a handle* but *This cup is blue*. However, as Simons rightly points out, the parallel is not perfect, and we can, in fact, express any predicate with either a *has* or an *is* copula, that is, we could just as well say that the cup *has* a moment of blue¹¹⁵: Moreover, he claims that

Since for Husserl it is moments that are directly perceived [...] it would be truer to his theory to interpret *is* predications as implicit existential generalizations: *This cup is blue* would mean *This cup has a blue-moment*, just as we could say *This cup is behandled*, meaning it *has* a handle.

(Simons, 131)

This re-writing of literal sentences can also be applied to metaphorical ones. In this way, we realise that saying ‘Achilles is a lion’ is tantamount to saying ‘Achilles has a lion-moment’, or, conversely, given the chiasmatic nature of the metaphorical statement, that ‘A lion has an Achilles moment’. The metaphoric referent can thus be presented as a substantive: *the lion-moment of Achilles*. This makes it easier to see that what we have is a referent. This is not, however, equivalent to saying that what we have is necessarily a true statement: the referent can be stated both as *the state of affairs in which a lion-moment of Achilles exists*, or *the false concept that Achilles has*

¹¹⁵ The fact that different natural languages differ as to when they use the equivalent of *is* or *has* as a copula provides some support for this belief in their interchangeability. Thus French and German uses *avoir* and *haben* (*have*) for many expressions in which English would use *to be* (eg. *J'ai soif* and *Ich habe Durst* = literally *I have thirst*) and, conversely, Turkish uses *olmak* (*to be* or *to become*) for many expressions in which English would use *have* (e.g. *grip oldum* = literally *I have become the flu* = *I am the flu*).

a lion-moment, and sometimes both of these could be true according to different aspects of the interrealm in question. When Achilles is a coward and a weakling, he still has a lion-moment within interrealm₁, since he still has many moments in common with the lion (they are both animals, they both have intestines, skin, hair etc.), but as the phrase is normally used within the *Lebenswelt* it is a false concept (i.e., a lie or a mistake) to say that he has a *lion-moment*.

Nor should such moments be thought of as indivisible. Many individual moments can be contained within the lion-moment of Achilles, since both Achilles and the lion have many parts and many moments and many moments of parts: for example the swinging of Achilles' sword-arm is a moment of a part of Achilles, and the swinging of the lion's tail is a moment of a part of the lion. There is, of course, the opportunity for an infinite regress here, as the twitching of a hair on the tail of the lion is the moment of a part of a part of the lion, which can be brought into comparison with a moment of a part of a part of Achilles, such as the twitching of a hair on his chin, and so on.

Reflections on the Relevance for Metaphor of the Relationship between Predication
and the Pre-Reflective

Husserl's insight about predication being anticipated in the pre-reflective, can also be included in a more general case for the metaphoric statement having its roots in the pre-reflective and pre-linguistic (a thought which is closer to Merleau-Ponty than to Husserl, but not in contradiction to Husserl's views).

Gestures, in particular, often inhabit a fuzzy area between the symbolic and the non-symbolic (the conveying of literal meaning, or the satisfying of biological/emotional impulses.) The gesture of a handshake is often said to have had its origins in the showing a stranger that one had no weapon in one's hand, and in modern life it can have a range of significance from being a symbol that leaders have concluded a peace treaty, to being a formality of welcome (the equivalent of the so-called dead metaphor), an apparently sincere and spontaneous welcome of a friend, or, seemingly, an excuse to touch someone to whom one is sexually attracted. And, of course, like any metaphor or literal statement, on any of these levels the gesture can be used to deceive: the person shaking your right hand may have a dagger concealed in his left to stab you in the back with, and so on and so forth. We can say that joined hands are symbols of, or a metaphor for, friendship and concord, but handshakes in everyday life seem to be on the borderline between the literal and the metaphoric.

Numerous other instances could be given: an example which might cause more debate with regard to its status as literal-pragmatic or metaphoric-symbolic would be the gesture of nodding one's head in assent to a question or command. This can be seen, not just as meaning *yes*, but also as originating in a gesture of subservience, and of still conveying symbolically the meaning of 'I bow myself down in reverence before the truth/your orders', but in everyday life this symbolic meaning is seldom if ever considered, as we use the gesture automatically for pragmatic purposes, or even as a kind of nervous habit.

Likewise, in the Christian marriage service, the joining together of hands can be said to be *both* a performative act marking the point at which the couple are made man

and wife, and a metaphor for the union of their lives. The fact that lovers in everyday life often hold hands is certainly not unrelated to this formalised gesture. Yet if we turn to the question of married couples or lovers holding hands in other contexts, and ask ourselves whether this is to be understood as metaphorical behaviour, it is difficult to give an answer which will cover all cases: certainly a metaphoric interpretation can always be placed there by an outsider, but if we consider the matter from the perspective of the participants *qua* intentional act, any variation from absent-minded act of affection (or even habit persisting in the face of dislike) to formal pledge is a possibility: we can even imagine instances in which one of the persons holding hands considered the action to be of great symbolic significance and the other one not at all.

I would like to quote some lines from Larkin's poem 'An Arundel Tomb' as a poetic account of this area of the in-between of the naturalistic and the symbolic, of the roots of metaphoric predication in the pre-reflective. The theme is the depiction, in carved stone on a church tomb, of a medieval knight and his lady holding hands, seen simultaneously as statues and as the real people who were buried there. The basic insight could, however, also be extended to cover the nature of metaphor as in-between, as an *is* and *is not*:

Side by side their faces blurred
The earl and countess lie in stone
Their proper habits vaguely shown
As jointed armour, stiffened pleat
And that faint hint of the absurd
The little dogs under their feet.

Such plainness of the pre-baroque
Hardly involves the eye, until
It meets his left-hand gauntlet, still
Clasped empty in the other, and
One sees, with a sharp tender shock
His hand withdrawn, holding her hand.

They would not think to lie so long.

[...]

Time has transfigured them into
Untruth. The stone fidelity
They hardly meant has come to be
Their final blazon, and to prove
Our almost-instinct almost true:
What will survive of us is love.

(Larkin, Weddings, 45-46)

Metaphor is, metaphorically speaking, also an act of transfiguration, and it is also both untrue and almost true, the simultaneous death and survival of the literal terms on which it is based. The next chapter will explore in more detail the nature of the transfiguration in question, that is, it will attempt a phenomenological ontology of the interrealm of metaphor.

The Application of Husserl's Fifth Investigation: Metaphor as Intentional Experience and its Contents

These initial concepts of reference, foundation of the non-independent part or moment taken from the First and Third Investigations are necessary pre-requisites for a theory of metaphorisation. The more complex account of consciousness given in Husserl's

account in Investigation V (already cited for its account of the mental presentation of fictive personages such as Jupiter) enables us to refine this account, particularly in terms of the concept of consciousness as a process of interweaving.

As is well-known, the Fifth Investigation begins with an analysis of the varied ambiguity of the term consciousness, and three concepts of consciousness are isolated as being of particular interest for the author's purposes. These are firstly, consciousness as the interweaving of psychic experiences in the unified stream of consciousness; secondly, consciousness as inner awareness of one's own psychic experiences, and thirdly, consciousness as a comprehensive designation for mental acts or intentional experiences of all sorts. Obviously, this ambiguity can also be extended to the question of our consciousness of the act of metaphorisation as for any other mental act. However, the account of consciousness as an interweaving is the most important in terms of metaphor theory, given that metaphor is in itself a kind of interweaving or fusion of the metaphorised and the metaphoriser.

Husserl then goes on, in the second paragraph of the first chapter, to define the concept of an experience in terms of this first concept of consciousness as an interweaving. Experience and content are defined, first in terms of modern psychology, as events, or real occurrences, which are in flux from one moment to the next, and as component parts and abstract aspects which are also experienced and are real contents of consciousness. He adds:

Naturally, it is irrelevant whether these parts are in some way inwardly articulated, whether they are marked off by certain acts directed on themselves, and whether, in particular, they are themselves objects of an 'inner' perception

which seizes them as they are in consciousness, and even whether they can be such objects or not.

(Husserl, Investigations, Vol. 2, 82)¹¹⁶

The interesting aspect of this, from the point of view of the referent of metaphor, is that sub-divisions of an intentional act are accepted. As I shall demonstrate in the next two chapters, the interrealm of metaphor, and *a fortiori*, the interrealm created by the extended literary metaphor, contain many sub-referents, but can still be grasped as one single referent.

Husserlian Judgement and Naming

Another aspect of Husserl's thought in Investigation V which can be applied to metaphor is his sharp distinction between judgement and naming. In his view, a name can refer back to a judgement, but the very fact that we speak of such a referral proves that the naming and judgement are different. Thus, when we say the 'transcendental number π ' or 'Halle-on-the-Saale', we are not actually asserting the fact that the said number is a transcendental number, or that the said town is on the River Saale.

(Husserl, Investigations, Vol. 2, 153; *Untersuchungen*, 468-469)

Metaphorical statements of the kind 'Achilles is a lion' seem to have the nature and structure of a judgement, which we could translate as 'There is a state of affairs

¹¹⁶ *Natürlich kommt es darauf nicht an, ob den betreffenden Teile für sich irgendwie gegliedert, ob sie durch eigenes auf sie bezogene Akte abgegrenzt sind, und speziell ob sie für sich Gegenstände*

such that a lion-moment of Achilles exists'. On the other hand, a phrase without explicit predication, such as 'the lion Achilles', has rather that of a name which simply refers back to a previously made judgement. However, if we look at the metaphorical statement from the dual perspective of meaning and reference, we can say that 'Achilles is a lion' functions as both judgement and naming: its meaning asserting a judgement and its power of reference to the Achilles-lion interrealm functioning as a naming (of the said referent).

The Concept of Graded Fulfilment in Investigation VI

The concept of fulfilment put forward in the First Investigation only allowed for the distinction between complete fulfilment, and meaning completely devoid of fulfilment. However, in the Sixth Investigation, we also have the concept of partial or graded fulfilment. This is seen in terms of the degrees of fullness of intuitive content, an account of which is put forward in Paragraph 23. Degrees of fullness are assessed according to three criteria: firstly, the *extent or richness* of the fullness, according as the content of the object achieves intuitive presentation with greater or lesser completeness, secondly, according to the *liveliness* of this fullness, that is the degree of approximation of the primitive resemblances of the intuitive presentation of the corresponding moments of content in the object, and thirdly, the *reality-level*

„innerer“, sie in ihrem Bewußtseinsdasein erfassender Wahrnehmungen sind und es überhaupt sein können, oder nicht. (Husserl, *Untersuchungen*, 347)

(*Realitätsgehalt*) of the fullness, that is, the greater or lesser fullness of its strictly presentative contents. (Husserl, Investigations, Vol 2, 238; *Untersuchungen*; 551-552)

These concepts can be usefully applied to the nature of the metaphoric referent, though here the question becomes more complicated still, as we have the question not only of how many aspects of the resemblances between the metaphoriser and the metaphorised are registered in the consciousness of the creator or the receiver of any given metaphor, but also the question of whether a metaphor spells out these connections in language, as the extended metaphor often does. Thus, in principle, a sentence such as ‘Achilles with his flame-red hair like bronze-maned lion plunged his sword that bit like lion’s jaw’, should have a higher level of *richness*, *liveliness* and *reality* than ‘Achilles is like a lion’; however, a reader unfamiliar with some of the vocabulary, and repelled by the unusual syntax of the first statement might actually get a more vivid picture of the hero, and a higher degree of fullness of intuitive content and fulfilment from the simpler statement. In the interrealm of metaphor seen under an ideal perspective, not only would all possible corresponding moments between the metaphoriser and the metaphorised be present, but so would all richness, liveliness and reality. However, in the metaphor as captured by the individual human mind, or embedded in the context of a given language and culture, there will always be a certain extent to which these are lacking.

Husserl's Later Theory of Meaning and its Application to Metaphor

The theory of meaning put forward in the *Logical Investigations* thus contains within it the seeds of a theory of metaphor, in that the process of metaphorisation can be seen as an interweaving of co-foundational moments which are then intuited with varying degrees of fulfilment. However, any use of the Husserl of *The Logical Investigations* leads us to the vexed question of the extent to which Husserl's theory of essential meanings is a consistent one, and if it is not, which Husserl we are to follow.

Husserl has traditionally been interpreted as passing through three periods of mature thought:¹¹⁷ of making a transition from realism to transcendental idealism and then towards an engagement with the question of intersubjectivity. However, more recent interpretations such as that of Mohanty ('The development of Husserl's thought', 46) tend to emphasise the continuity of his thought. It is also a subject of lively debate as to whether Husserl should be seen as progressing from realism towards idealism, or as always an idealist, and as to whether his avowed transcendental idealism is as integral to his thought as he himself claimed it was, or whether, as Smith has argued, it is a superstructure which can be abandoned or bracketed.¹¹⁸

For the purpose of my account, certain of these questions can themselves be bracketed, as my concern is specifically with Husserl's theory of meaning, rather than with questions of general ontology. However, as Simons (106-137) has pointed out,

¹¹⁷ This would be to exclude the early psychologism of the 1891 *Philosophy of Arithmetic*.

¹¹⁸ Smith (323-393) reconstructs Husserl's ontology of mind and body as a monism of substrata (individuals and events being seen as monistic entities) and a pluralism of essences of body and mind (which can be applied to the same individuals and events). This many-aspect monism does not, in his view, accord with the superstructure of Husserl's transcendental idealism, which he seeks to deconstruct

there are significant changes in the focus of Husserl's theory of meaning between the *Logical Investigations* and *Ideas*, which obviously cannot be ignored. As is well-known, the radical step of the transcendental phenomenological reduction, which places in parentheses all that is not contained in, or essentially connected to, consciousness, results in a transformed perspective on the question of reference, with the referent *qua* object being bracketed and the *noema* or ideal object of *noesis*/intentional act taking its place. Simons states the case succinctly:

[...] the object-directedness of consciousness turns out to be essentially direction through a *noema* and only *per accidens* to an independent referent. Every noesis must have its noema, and variations in noesis and noema go hand in hand, but it is incidental and irrelevant to this correlation, now taken as the fundamental 'reduced' structure of conscious intentionality, whether or not a noema has a transcendent referent.

(Simons, 129)

In terms of my theory of metaphor, this transition is significant. Seeing the referent of metaphor *qua noema* gives us a way of presenting the result of the act of metaphorisation in the individual mind as an ideal object rather than some randomly generated thoughts analogous, in Davidsonian phrase, to the result of a knock on the head. I also go just a little further than Husserl himself in spelling out that the *noema* is a referent: we might call this an immanent referent as opposed to the transcendent referent of Simons' s terminology. As we regard the metaphor *qua noema*, its truth-value and its relation to the outside world are bracketed.¹¹⁹ However, a theory of

in order to reveal the monistic foundation. (Smith, 323-325)

¹¹⁹ This is, of course, only valid so long as the noetic act does not include beliefs regarding these. If

metaphor also needs to engage with questions of truth-value and the question of the intersubjective, issues which cannot be engaged with by seeing metaphor *solely* in terms of *noema*. Fortunately, one can have one's cake and eat it.

The Three Aspects of the Interrealm in relation to Husserlian Phenomenology

This is because my theory of metaphor does not force me to choose between these two Husserlian accounts of meaning (the act-species of the *Logical Investigations* or the noematic meaning of *Ideas*), but rather allows me to utilise aspects of both in my account of the interrealm which constitutes the metaphoric referent. Indeed, as Simons also points out, Husserl did not himself explicitly reject the act-species or phansic account of meaning, but only sidelines it in favour of the noematic meaning. Simons, in the course of criticising Husserl for the excessively solipsistic theory of meaning developed in *Ideas*, also speculates on the possibility of a third theory of meaning which could have emerged from and corresponded to the last phase of Husserl's thought:

[...] the social dimension of language, the fact that it is a community affair, which is learnt interactively with other competent language users, and the constraints on learning imposed by this fact, are underemphasized. In part this is the result of bracketing other people and the social world, retaining for phenomenological consideration only our sense of these things, but for the most part he is simply not interested in anything but individual consciousness. [...]

noesis includes the thought of the truth-value and relation to the outside world of the act of metaphorisation in question, then these beliefs (irrespective of whether they are true or false) are also part of the *noema*.

The later stress on the intersubjective *Lebenswelt* in the *Crisis* offered a possible way out of the individual's relative isolation which Husserl did not live to exploit in the philosophy of language.

(Simons, 132)

A notable aspect of this later stage of Husserl's thought was that he saw the constitution of our intersubjective life and the experience of the other (*Fremderfahrung*) not only in terms of direct communication with the other, but through the natural attitude to shared objects, environment, language and cultural constructs. My very experience of a tree indicates to me that it is a tree for others; in *The Cartesian Meditations* it is even asserted that the very experiences of the eidetic reduction, with their bracketing of the question of real existence, are nevertheless also experienced as an intersubjective world (Husserl, *Meditations*, 90-91; *Meditationen*, 122-123).

Therefore, although one cannot presume to say exactly what kind of theory of meaning would have emerged if Husserl had lived to develop his thought in this direction, one can assume that what applies to a tree applies *a fortiori* to a phenomenon such as metaphor, and that we can take the basic concept of the *Lebenswelt* as a presumed *Gestalt* for every metaphor-*noema*.

Thus the interrealm presented in my account has three aspects, each of them corresponding to a certain moment in Husserl's theoretical development. The account presented in a preliminary fashion in the introduction through the rose-metaphor fable can now be retold in Husserlian terms.

The first aspect is the interrealm is seen as comprising all the possible points of comparison between the metaphoriser and the metaphorised, or all the common moments which they can be seen to possess: as such it is infinite and ungraspable by the human mind. This means that although once conceptualised it can be the object of a meaning-conferring act, there can never be a fulfilled meaning intention, as this would involve all the shared moments of the metaphorised and metaphoriser in question being simultaneously present to consciousness. The moment in Husserl's development that this aspect corresponds to is that of the so-called Platonism of the *Logical Investigations*, in which meanings are seen in terms of act-species. Here meanings (sometimes called phansic or ontic meanings) are seen as the ideal species of certain mental acts. These meanings are distinguished from the mental acts themselves, from the concomitant mental states of speakers and from the physical objects if any to which they refer.¹²⁰ This interrealm of metaphor would have existed even if no human beings ever had.

With regard to this aspect of the interrealm *all metaphorical statements will turn out to be true*. This is because some point of just comparison, even that of mere existence or extension in time and space will be found between them. Usually some more subtle way of making even the most seemingly lying metaphors to be true can be imagined without too much trouble, by taking into account less salient forms of resemblance. Let us take the example, 'Hitler was a sugar-plum', and let it be presupposed, putting aside all protests of neo-Nazis and people whose children have choked to death on sugar-plums, that Hitler was one of the most evil and dangerous

¹²⁰ This is also Frege's typology in 'The Thought'.

people ever to have lived, and that a sugar-plum is absolutely delicious and completely harmless, so that the salient characteristics of the metaphorised and the metaphoriser are hopelessly and eternally at variance. Yet one of Hitler's many enemies might conceivably have said, when gloating over the news of his suicide: 'Look, in the end he melted like a sugar-plum in the mouth!'

The first aspect can also be seen as the complete fulfilment of the meaning-intention of a given metaphor. However it is a quasi-Platonic fulfilment, not a fulfilment which can ever be consummated in the human mind.

The second aspect of the interrealm corresponds to the thought of the Husserl of the *Ideas*: that of the *noema*. Here we cannot any longer speak of something which transcends the human mind absolutely: there can be no *noema* without a noetic act. Thus we have an idealisation of the mental act, by which a given metaphor is understood at a given point of time by a certain creator or hearer/reader of the metaphor. This interrealm will be less rich than the interrealm, which includes all possible ways of seeing the metaphorised in terms of the metaphoriser. Yet it may also be thought of as infinite in the sense that it has infinite sub-divisions.

The third aspect of the interrealm corresponds to thinking the unthought of Husserl in developing a theory of metaphoric meaning and reference which corresponds to the final phase of his thought, in which the main preoccupation is the *Lebenswelt*, in which the idea of solipsism is firmly rejected, and the question of intersubjectivity (the intermonadology of the Fifth of the *Cartesian Meditations*) is foregrounded. Under this aspect, we need to consider the interrealm of a given metaphor in terms of its context or *Gestalt*. That is to say, the salient features of a

metaphoric statement, and, in a sense, the ground covered by the interrealm *of a given metaphor is* determined by reference to this *Gestalt*.

The interrelations of these three aspects of the interrealm will be described in more detail in the next two chapters, in a general sense in Chapter Five, and then through the use of literary examples in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER FIVE

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ONTOLOGY OF THE REFERENT OF METAPHOR

*And I declare my faith:
I mock Plotinus' thought
And cry in Plato's teeth,
Death and life were not
Till man made up the whole,
Made lock, stock and barrel
Out of his bitter soul,
Aye, sun and moon and star, all
And further add to that
That being dead, we rise,
Dream, and so create
Translunar Paradise.
I have prepared my peace
With learned Italian things
And the proud stones of Greece
Poet's imaginings
And memories of love,
Memories of the words of women,
All those things whereof
Man makes a superhuman
Mirror-resembling dream.
As at the loophole there
The daws chatter and scream,
And drop twigs layer on layer [...]*¹²¹

'The Tower' (Yeats, 223-224)

*For no headway is made by simply seeing and saying that every presenting
refers to a presented, every judgement to something judged, and so forth ...*

(Husserl, *Ideas*, 255)

¹²¹ The epigraph from Yeats was chosen because of its depiction of the creation of a dream-world through the accumulation of multiple layers coupled with its rejection of the mimetic hierarchy of Platonism and Neoplatonism. Naturally the mystical and eschatological aspects of the Yeatsian vision are not appropriated to the interrealm theory here advanced. This epigraph, like the others, is intended to function as a *Gestalt* for the following chapter.

noema Term used somewhat confusingly in the work of Husserl.

The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy, (Blackburn, 263)

From the Starting Point of *Noema qua Referent*

It is my claim that every metaphorising refers to a metaphorised,¹²² but to say so is not enough. The end result of the metaphorisation, that which is metaphorised, I have identified as the *interrealm* referent. This referent can be provisionally described as the intersection, or fusion of the co-foundational moments of metaphoriser and the metaphorised. It is also when considered under what is perhaps its simplest aspect (the second aspect defined above), in Husserlian terminology, a *noema*, which is the product of the *noetic* act of metaphorisation.

In describing the *noema* as a referent, I am breaking with certain current commentary on Husserl, in that Küng, followed by Simons, has distinguished the *noema* from the *referent*. (Küng, 15-26) The referent according to Küng is the actual object referred to, for example, the real tree existing in the physical world, whilst the *noema* is the tree-as-subject of an intentional act. (That mysterious entity which

¹²² 'Metaphorised' here refers to the final result of the metaphorisation, not to the individual linguistic entity in the metaphorical statement which I call the 'metaphorised' (i.e the term 'Achilles' in the metaphoric statement 'Achilles is a lion'), which is so called because it is transformed in our perception by the use of the metaphorising term. To make this distinction clearer by use of a metaphor: let us imagine an egg and a whisk and the liquid whisked egg which results. Both the egg (which is whisked) and the liquid whisked egg (which has been whisked/gone through the process of whisking) can be described as *things whisked*, but the egg is analagous to Achilles and the liquid whisked egg to the interrealm. The weak point of the analogy is that the term 'Achilles' is *not* dissolved so completely as the egg!

Blackburn cannot be convinced corresponds to anything in reality; hence the contemptuous dictionary entry quoted above). The reason why I am unhappy with this particular use of terminology is not that I deny the fact that the real physical tree is referred to, but that I do not accept that reference is absent when there is no real object in the physical world corresponding to the *noema*, either in the case in which we are mistaken about an external referent (we have hallucinated a tree, or mistaken a telegraph pole for a tree) or when we speak of a fictive tree,¹²³ such as the Ygdrasil of Nordic mythology, or Tolkien's Nimloth.

The genuinely confusing aspect of the *noema* is the question of how we draw its boundaries: if a person thinks of Achilles as a lion, it is difficult to say without absolute certainty whether they think of his strength and his braveness successively or simultaneously. If I think of them successively, then the question arises of whether the two acts should be seen as one *noema* or two. The question is exacerbated when we enter into a discussion of complex or extended metaphors. If we give a wide scope to the mental contents covered by the *noema* it risks losing credibility as something which can be defined as the result of a single mental act; if we give it a narrow scope it risks taking on an atomic instability, as disappearing before it can even be named. My solution to this difficulty is to say that we can see a *noema* as being composed of other *noemata*, either rapidly succeeding one another or existing inside one another.

Noema has also been seen by Husserl commentators such as Mohanty, Smith and McIntyre, and Føllesdal as an extension of the Fregean notion of sense (Moran,

¹²³ One may also, I think, speak of semi-fictive trees: the real tree of the author's surroundings transferred to the pages of his novel.

159); and this carries the obvious implication that it is thus opposed to reference.

However, if one sees what Frege calls ‘senses’ as being in themselves referents, there is no contradiction in seeing *noema* as both referent and extension of the Fregean *Sinn*.

The description of *noema* as referent is, however, insufficient, as it only looks at the question from a subjectivist perspective: there can be no *noema* without the act of thought of an individual, a *noesis*. However, a metaphor once revealed becomes part of language, or of a shared symbolic vocabulary, a part of the *Lebenswelt*. Yet a complete and simultaneous perception of all the aspects of any given metaphor is more than any given person encountering, or even creating, a new metaphor can achieve, or even perhaps than the combined community of language-users can perceive between them. Therefore, even in the consideration of metaphorical intersubjectivity, one should not lose sight of metaphor *qua* act-species.

In this chapter, I attempt to give a phenomenological description of the main characteristics of the interrealm seen under these three aspects in such a way that the metaphoric referent *qua noema* is seen in relation to the other two aspects of the interrealm. This will explain how the *metaphor-noema* arising from any given pair of metaphoriser and metaphorised (let us say *love* and *rose* or *Achilles* and *lion*) has an intense instability. We can with equal validity see it as constantly transforming itself into different *noemata*, or as having shifting borders, which allow it to encompass different sub-referents and different shared moments of metaphoriser and metaphorised at different times. The dialectical process through which the *interrealm qua noema* is transformed through its relation with the *Lebenswelt* and with the infinite reservoir of

corresponding (or more accurately chiasmatically-linked) moments between metaphoriser and metaphorised existing in the interrealm under its first aspect will be seen in terms of what I call the infinite credit of metaphor. Given my view of the infinite possibilities of the interrealm, by definition the account cannot be exhaustive, but an account of the most salient points will be attempted: of the basic nature of the metaphor-referent *qua noema* in the light of Husserl's neutrality-modification, and then of the interrealm's characteristics of multi-layered reference, shifting boundaries, the chiasmaphoric relation between co-foundational moments and the question of infinite credit.

However, I begin by returning briefly to the question of *mimesis* which Ricoeur saw as intimately linked to the question of the role of metaphor, in order to put forward a view of metaphor as an in-between whose relations to the world of nature are much more complex than those of *mimesis*. This clears the way for the account which will follow in so far that this account is incompatible with a naive view of the mimetic process.

The Interrealm *versus Mimesis*; or, the Caves of Altamira and Lascaux *versus* Plato's Cave

I would like to begin my more detailed account of the interrealm with a philosophical fable. Like Plato's fables of ancient Egypt, or indeed of any other land, it may not be true¹²⁴. And yet, as befits a fable of our times, it is backed up with some cutting-edge

¹²⁴ *Phaedrus* 275, 97.

scientific evidence.¹²⁵ It is set up in opposition to Plato's cave-myth of *The Republic*, and its association with a contemptuous view of art *qua mimesis*, that is, of art as an imperfect copy of an ontologically superior reality. Instead it gives art the ontological status of an in-between. Metaphor will be seen to be a quintessential artwork in this respect.

According to the fable, primitive man did not create art by mimicking the external world. He¹²⁶ did not see an external object and feel compelled to make a copy of it and then continue to make copies of copies. Neither did he begin by painting animals because he wanted to hunt them and eat them, as archaeologists first thought in their extreme naiveté. Instead, he went into caves and sat in the darkness, and in the sensory deprivation induced by the darkness, he experienced hallucinations. In these visions, he saw a mixture of things that were and of things that were not.

He saw spots and geometric grids dancing before his eyes. And he also saw, according to the time and place in which he lived, herds of horses, or of oxen, or of eland, or of woolly mammoth. And he believed that what he saw was a spirit world. Then he took a brush and paints and painted the spirit world of his hallucination on the walls of his cave. A typical manifestation of this would be a horse, resembling the wild horses of the outside world, covered with dots such as were not seen there, but which still dance before the eyes of shamans and migraine sufferers.

¹²⁵ My source for this is the KCET/BBC production 'How Art Made the World', the main points of which are summarised on www.pbs.org/howartmadetheworld.

¹²⁶ He and/or she? We will probably never know. In historic times, males have tended to claim the prerogative of creating fine art, especially painting and sculpture, for themselves, and to guard it jealously. But in pre-historic times could female labour have been spared for the task of painting more

This, says the fable, is the primordial interrealm of art. Other artworks bear traces of this origin. It is wrong therefore to see them as copies, or as copies of copies. It is also the forerunner of metaphor, with its delicate balance between the *is* and the *is not*, and all metaphors bear traces of this origin.

And yet, assuming this account to be true, were the first theorists on the origins of the herds of animals on the walls of Altamira, Chauvet and Lascaux so completely and hopelessly wrong in imagining them actually to denote, to *refer to* the living, breathing animals which roamed the world outside the cave in paeolithic times?

We can only speculate on what the original artists would have said if asked whether the animals on the walls were the same as those of the real world. Perhaps they would not have understood the question. Perhaps they would have said that they were of a different, altogether spiritual kind, or perhaps that they were animals of this world which had crossed over to the spirit world through death, and perhaps could return thence. Or even that their shamans took the form of animals in order to visit the spirit world, and that it was these shamans in this form, and not animals at all that were painted.

Yet there can be no doubt that the images of animals would not have found their way, *via* hallucination to cave wall if they had not first existed in the mind of early man through his experience of nature. And when a nine-year old girl of nineteenth-century Spain saw the images for the first time in thousands of years, we are told that she said, ‘Look, papa, oxen!’ – not ‘Look, papa, pictures of hallucinations!’, or even ‘Look, papa,

easily than male labour from the hunt? Or would matriarchal societies have appointed women painters?

pictures of oxen!’ And this was despite the fact that the actual species of oxen depicted at Altamira had been extinct for several thousands of years.

Those determined to limit the scope of reference might say that the connection between these painted animals and those in the outside world is merely a case of causality, a Davidsonian knock on the head, not of reference, and the outcry of the girl in the cave is simply a verbal shorthand or a childish misidentification. Yet both these objections are radically counterintuitive.

A solution to our difficulties would come from seeing the cave paintings as a case of *référence dédoublée*, or as I prefer to call it in the interest of allowing for more than two layers of reference: multi-layered reference. Thus we have a depiction and denotation of both the animals of the outside world *and* the animals of the spirit world of hallucination, and possibly also of an in-between or in-betweens between these two, if the painter were to mix daylight memories with memories of hallucination, or with memories of other paintings by himself or others. According to this fable, primitive art is thus indeed what Davidson called a dreamwork, but a dreamwork which has not no reference at all, but at least two. This is the paradigm which can be applied to the artwork in general and to the miniature artwork, the poem (or painting) in miniature, that we call metaphor.

It is, in a sense, directly opposed to the cave myth of Plato, which illustrates and stems from an ontology in which the artwork is the result of *mimesis* and *mimesis* is a process of degradation through the creation of inferior copies. Art in my cave myth is not merely a copy of a copy, but the possessor of a power of indication and reference to the real world, to a world of its own creation *and* to the interrealm between them. It

follows that metaphorisation as a subspecies of art is not merely concerned in giving us statements asserting more or less inadequate resemblances, but possesses the same powers of reference and of indication.

The Interrealm of the Metaphoric Referent *qua Noema*

As stated in the introduction, I do not believe the interrealm to be the only referent contained within a metaphorical sentence, which may have multiple individual referring terms, and which I see as containing at least a three-fold reference, in that there is reference to the objects mentioned in their literal sense (i.e ‘Achilles’ in ‘Achilles is a lion’) and also to the absent object *invoked* by the metaphoriser (i.e *lion* in ‘Achilles is a lion’) as well as the reference of the whole sentence to the interrealm. Moreover, as stated above, the interrealm has three aspects, and is not merely a *noema*, but also act-species and intersubjective construct.

However, the simplest starting point in creating a phenomenological ontology of the metaphorical referent created by the foundational moments of the metaphoriser and the metaphorised, is to consider it *qua noema*. This will, however, necessarily involve the relationship of the *noema* with the other two aspects of the interrealm, since the semantic content of a *noema* may change, modifying both meaning and reference, as a consequence of its dialectic relationship with the interrealm *qua* part of the *Lebenswelt*, and in this process it necessarily draws on new content from the interrealm *qua* ontic meaning or act-species.

The noetic interrealm itself has, in Husserlian terms, a duality, *qua noesis* and *noema*. As *noesis*, it is an act of perceiving, not necessarily identical in those who use or respond to a linguistic metaphor. As *noema* it is a referent, but not necessarily corresponding to a real state of affairs, to the perceived overlap of qualities between the two terms in the world. It may, indeed, reveal or illuminate a given state of affairs, or a potential state of affairs in the world; but there are also cases in which a metaphor in its generally received meaning is expressing a mistaken belief or a lie, in which we might say that it illuminates an illusion. (Unless David Lewis is correct about possible worlds in which case all *noemata* would presumably turn out to be referents in the realist sense!)

Noemic Metaphor Referent and the Neutrality Modification

In order to put forward not merely a Husserlian phenomenology of metaphorisation, but a phenomenological ontology of metaphor, we need to turn from the Husserl of the *Logical Investigations* to the later Husserl. In *Ideas I*, Husserl develops the concept of the presentation of the imaginary in terms which constitute a development of his position from that of the description of our mental presentation of the god Jupiter in the *Logical Investigations*, to whom existence was rather grudgingly attributed. Instead of speaking, as he does there, in terms of a presence which is neither inside nor outside, Husserl now speaks of a neutralising of the very question of existence.

As Simons has shown (122-125), this is not a question of a sudden leap in Husserl's thought, since a transition in the theory of meaning had already been accomplished in the *Lectures on the Theory of Meaning*, which Husserl delivered in

Göttingen in the summer semester of 1908. Here Husserl continues his former analysis of meaning in terms of the species of moments of *acts of meaning something*.

However, he now distinguishes between his former concept of species meaning¹²⁷ as developed in the *Logical Investigations*, which he now calls the *phenological* or *phantic* concept, and a new concept which he here calls the *phenomenological* or *ontic* concept.¹²⁸ This phenomenological or ontic meaning will later be called the meaning of the *noema*.

Of course, the concept of *noema* is not unproblematic, as my quotation from The Oxford *Dictionary of Philosophy* suggests. Husserl himself, in Paragraph 96 of *Ideas I* admitted to having serious difficulties regarding the mode of being (*Seinsweise*) of the *noema*, and of the exact way in which it could be said to be immanent in the noetic act, and the mode of its intending of the object. I shall assume here with the majority of Husserl's commentators, that it is an ideal concept, rather than seeing it as a linguistic entity, or a ragbag concept.¹²⁹

The next step in my appropriation of Husserlian phenomenology for the purposes of giving an account of the interrealm takes as its point of departure the account of aesthetic perception in Section 111 of *Ideas I* in which Husserl deals with 'The Neutrality Modification and Phantasy'.

Here, as in the Husserlian passages on intentionality from the *Logical Investigations*, nothing whatsoever is said about metaphor, but the concepts with which

¹²⁷ I.e., meaning which stands in relation to individual transitory acts of meaning in the same relation as species stands to individual, or the same relation as a universal, such as redness, stands to a single instantiation of redness.

¹²⁸ Simons (122) recommends rejecting these terms as ugly and misleading and sticking to the terms *species* and *noematic* meaning to mark this distinction.

we are provided can be utilised in order to provide an account of a phenomenological ontology of the metaphorical referent. In this passage, Husserl describes an artwork:

Let us suppose that we are considering Dürer's engraving, "Knight, Death and the Devil." In the first place, let us distinguish the normal perceiving, the correlate of which is the *physical thing*, "*engraved print*", this print in the portfolio.

In the second place, we distinguish the perceptive consciousness in which, within the black, colorless lines, there appear to us the figures of the "knight on his horse", "death", and the "devil". We do not advert to these in aesthetic contemplation as Objects; we rather advert to the realities presented "in the picture" — more precisely stated, to the "*depicted realities*", to the flesh and blood knight, etc.

The consciousness of the "picture" (the small, grey figures, in which by virtue of founded noeses something else is "depictively presented" by similarity) which mediates and makes possible the depicting, is now an example for the neutrality modification of perception. This *depicting picture-Object* is present to us *neither as existing nor as not existing*, nor in any other *positional modality*; or, rather, there is a consciousness of it as existing, but as quasi-existing in the neutrality modification of being.

Likewise, the *depicted* too, when we comport ourselves purely aesthetically and take the same thing again as a "mere picture" without imparting to it the stamp of being or non-being, of being possible or being deemed likely, or the like. But this does not signify, as is apparent, any privation, but instead a modification — precisely that of *neutralization*. Except that we must not objectivate it as a transforming operation attached to a previous position. It can also be this on occasion. But it need not be.

(Husserl, *Ideas*, 262)

It is significant that Husserl does not make any great distinction here between the three entities here depicted. Let us presume for the sake of the argument that the Devil does not exist, that the knight and his horse do, and that Death exists in the world as a real fact, but not as an embodied entity. We thus have three different types of entities in the

¹²⁹ Debate on this issue is summarised by Dermot Moran in *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 159-160.

picture: real, symbolic and purely fictive. Variations on this classification are of course possible – the knight may be seen as mythical, and the Devil as symbolic of the real evil in the world, or we might see the knight as representing pure presence, and death pure absence, in which case the Devil is doubtless the Hegelian *Aufhebung*. Yet all are equally present to the imagination of the observer of the painting.

This account of the artwork can equally be applied to the artwork in miniature which is metaphor, in which both real and imaginary entities can play the roles of metaphoriser and metaphorised, and our ultimate perception of the metaphor-statement is neither of something existing, nor of something non-existent. The neutrality modification is another name for the *is* and the *is not* of metaphor upon which Ricoeur insists.

However, the neutrality modification of existence should not be seen to call into question the existence of the phantasy itself. Christopher Macann in his discussion of inner time-consciousness in Husserl, has noted the importance of understanding the *actual presence* of the representative phantasy described here:

Whereas presentation operates on the basis of actual impressions, representation operates on the basis of what Husserl calls ‘phantasy’, that is, the ability of consciousness to presentify an object or an event, in image, and so in its actual absence. However, it is important to note that there is an actuality of present experience. For it is in the actual present of representative phantasy that I re-present a past or a future present.

(Macann, 66)

These words can be applied to the *representation of the metaphorised* which is given to us in any given act of metaphorisation, though we should be careful here not to understand representation in the classical sense of *mimesis*. Macann's comment helps us to realise the way in which representative phantasy, and by extension the metaphorising imagination, produces something to which we can and do make reference despite the bracketing of the question of existence which takes place in the neutrality modification. However, although representative phantasy only corresponds to the second aspect of the interrealm referent, the neutrality modification can also be applied to the interrealm under its first and third aspects.

Husserl's account of the artwork in the account of the neutrality modification also shows how a single imaginative entity (the picture) may be divided up into sub-entities (the knight, the Devil and Death) which could, of course, be divided and subdivided again *ad infinitum*. The same will be seen to be true of the interrealm referent under all its aspects.

An Overview of the Salient Characteristics of the Interrealm Referent

The complexity of the metaphoric process and the many variables involved in giving an account of metaphorisation make any attempt at reification of the metaphoric referent a daunting task. Reassured by David Lewis's assertion that multiplying ontological entities costs nothing, I shall nevertheless make such an attempt. My account emphasises certain complex characteristics of the *interrealm* which need to be described if we are to avoid the Scylla and Charybdis of an oversimplified account of

the metaphoric referent or the admission that the referent of the metaphoric statement is either non-existent or impossible to describe.

The four salient characteristics which I shall describe are the *multi-layered nature of metaphoric reference*, that is, the way in which sub-referents are contained within the interrealm; its *shifting and disputed borders*, representing the way in which the scope of metaphor changes over time and can be debated at any given point of time; its *chiasmatic* nature, in which certain semantic elements from the two terms of the metaphor cross over in a two-way process of exchange; and lastly, the concept of *infinite credit*, according to which the potential meanings of any given metaphor is infinite, though the nature of the infinity differs according to which aspect of the interrealm is in question.¹³⁰

To concretise and extend the metaphor: the *interrealm* under its second and third aspects, like the ‘real’ realms of geography and politics, has borders, but borders which may shift over time, be disputed or ill-defined. Perhaps a stream changes its course, or a mountain-ridge is eroded away, or the sea deposits or washes away its beaches and cliffs. Or perhaps under the terms of some treaty an area of marshlands is ceded to its neighbouring realm. Its denizens tend to presume a finite distance between its borders, and the presence of certain landmarks is generally beyond dispute, yet, nevertheless, no traveller in the realm may exhaust all its possibilities, or will see the terrain in quite the same way as another. This mythical realm also has many hidden

¹³⁰ This is *not* of course to assert that any metaphor can have absolutely any meaning, any more than that an infinite series of numbers needs to contain every given number.

passageways or trapdoors through which we may enter or fall and, having done so, find ourselves in another interrealm.

Another characteristic of this mythical realm is that there is no object in it which is not connected to at least one other which may be near or distant but which is linked inextricably as by quantum entanglement. Finally, in the best fairytale fashion, whenever someone truly wishes to push at the limits of this realm, they obediently give way: in other words, the possibilities open to the traveller in this realm are represented by my concept of ‘infinite credit’, a phrase adapted from Ricoeur’s ethics.¹³¹ I use this concept to convey the fact that the *interrealm* of metaphor is infinite, not in the sense of having no boundaries but in the sense of the traveller within it (the person to whom the metaphor is told) having an infinite number of potential perspectives. This is not, however, to argue that metaphors can mean absolutely anything whatsoever, but that we cannot place an exact closure on the meaning of any given metaphor, and that almost any two terms can be metaphorically linked in a way that generates some metaphorical truth.

The *interrealm* theory is an interaction theory of metaphor, that is, a theory according to which meaning is created in the metaphorical statement by the tension between the literal meaning of the metaphorical term and the object to which it is applied. As such it needs to engage with the question of whether it is applicable to all

¹³¹ Ricoeur used the phrase ‘*crédit infini*’ in his as yet unpublished paper at the Boğaziçi University conference ‘Why freedom?’ in 2003, with reference to the infinite demands that the individual makes on the universe. In a private conversation afterwards, he acknowledged a reference to the Count of Monte Cristo, who dared to make such demands of his bank.

metaphors, or only to the more original or sophisticated ones, as has been claimed by theorists who advocate binary or plural accounts of metaphor.

Therefore, the final section of this chapter will discuss the scope of the interrealm theory, which I claim can be applied to all metaphors. This claim of universal applicability necessitates dealing with the objections that could be raised by rigid binary theories of metaphor, which try to draw a line between two kinds of metaphor, variously characterised as living and dead metaphors, poetic metaphor and metaphors used in common speech, or substitution and interaction metaphors.

Gestalt and the Multiplicity of Reference within the Interrealm of Metaphor

If we are to take any simple metaphoric statement, we will find that each of its foundational moments (the metaphoriser and the metaphorsised) has a multiplicity of parts and moments within itself, any of which may potentially be combined with any of the parts or moments of its co-foundational moment. Each of these combinations can be taken as subreferents within the interrealm referent. Moreover, each of these is potentially perceived against the *Gestalt* of any or all of the others. For example, Achilles' hair and teeth may have correspondences to the mane and fangs of the lion, and these two points of resemblance are perceived against the *Gestalt* of one another.

This process becomes more obvious when we are given an extended metaphor which includes seemingly peripheral description of the object used as metaphoriser and its background: examples of this will be discussed in the following chapter.

Provisionally, the case can be stated as being that within an extended metaphor we may

have subreferents which have a literal reference, and which are not themselves necessarily obviously connected to the process of comparison. For example, in the sentence ‘Achilles by the wall of Troy is like a lion in a shady grove of Africa’, we cannot simply abstract Achilles and the lion and see the rest of the sentence as irrelevant to the metaphor, since what the sentence gives us is a referent not simply to *Achilles*, but to the entity *Achilles-by-the-wall-of-Troy*; not simply to a lion, but to a *lion-in-a-shady-grove-of-Africa*. The entities *wall*, and *Troy* and *Africa* are all sub-referents within the metaphor and function as a *Gestalt* against which we see Achilles and the lion and the relation between them in a new light. These may function metaphorically, but also have literal reference, complicating the action of doubling.

Vagueness of Reference and Shifting Boundaries

In the past, many borders were not clearly defined lines, but were neutral zones called marchlands.

(Wikipedia, on ‘Borders’)

The above three-aspect account of the interrealm implies the shifting boundaries of the interrealm between any given metaphoriser and metaphorised. Although the first aspect of the interrealm as containing all possible relations between all possible moments of the metaphoriser, and the metaphorised remains constant, the process of metaphorisation as it actually occurs in the *Lebenswelt* is in constant flux. It passes from *noema* to *noema*, as it is given new expressions in speech and writing, and as each of these expressions is subject to being received in a different way (not only in the

sense of different interpretations and commentaries, but in the sense of how it is actually perceived (in Husserlian terminology *intuited*), of how richly it is experienced, of the extent to which fulfilment occurs.

Although all the moments of the interrealm under its first aspect cannot be simultaneously grasped, any one of them, not excluding the most far-fetched or banal of resemblances, can potentially become part of a *noema* and take its place in the *Lebenswelt*. However, any given *noema* will also exclude certain possibilities; indeed often a particular interpretation of a metaphor excludes others (for example to call someone *dog* might be a metaphorical expression of either selfless and unwavering loyalty, or the most selfish and contemptible characteristics), and we should be showing a serious contempt for the ordinary functions of language if we were to insist that any given metaphorical statement as actually used in discourse refers to every aspect of the similarity between the two terms of the metaphoriser and the metaphorised.

The shifting of boundaries naturally implies the changing of the content enclosed within them, and the shifting nature of the referent. The referent is thus vague, but we need to be clear about what we mean by vagueness. The referent under its first aspect of all-inclusiveness is not ontically but epistemologically vague, since it is ungraspable. If we can once isolate a single *noema*, or even a sum-total of *noemata* co-existing in the *Lebenswelt* at any one moment, it will have clear boundaries; the difficulty lies in so doing. The same applies to the sum-total of all the *noemata* which have ever existed in the *Lebenswelt*. However, if we take any given pair of terms standing in the relation of metaphorised and metaphoriser and think of them in terms of

their possible realisations under the second and third aspects of the interrealm, then vagueness results.

Reversibility and Chiasmaphora

But Bernard goes on talking. Up they bubble – images. “Like a camel,” [...] “a vulture.” The camel is a vulture; the vulture is a camel, for Bernard is a dangling wire, loose, but seductive. Yes, for when he talks, when he makes his foolish comparisons, a lightness comes over one.

The Waves (Woolf, 26)

As discussed above, one of the fundamental tenets of Ricoeur’s theory of metaphor is his belief that a substitution account of metaphor is not sufficient, but that an interaction account is also necessary. The Aristotelian *epiphora* of metaphor, a one-way movement in which one word nudges another out of its proper place, thus now becomes, by implication, a two-way movement between the two terms of the metaphorical statement; if a camel is a vulture, then *ergo*, a vulture is also a camel.

However, there is also a sense in which metaphors seem to be less ‘reversible’ than ordinary literal sentences in which the copula is used for the purpose of asserting identification, in the sense that they cannot be so easily turned around without damaging their meaning. In literal statements involving either definite descriptions or co-extensive general classes, the position of two nouns on either side of the copula does not modify the meaning: for example, ‘The Evening Star *is* the Morning Star’ means exactly the same as ‘The Morning Star *is* the Evening Star’ and ‘Persians are Iranians’ the same as ‘Iranians are Persians’ (presuming these two terms to be co-extensive): the only difficulties which could possibly emerge would be if we begin to attach symbolic

or emotional meanings to these objects.¹³² However, this is not the case with the metaphorical statement. *A man is a fly* and *A fly is a man* have distinctly different implications though these may be synthesised into a final world-view: which is exactly what happens in William Blake's poem 'The Fly' where two distinct questions are asked, posed as alternatives and fused together: 'Am not I/A fly like thee?/Or art not thou/A man like me?' (Blake, 220) Thus, it seems to be an essential aspect of metaphor that the qualities of the metaphorised are not transferred to the metaphoriser to the same extent as the qualities of the metaphoriser are transferred to those of the metaphorised and that 'Man is a fly' can never mean exactly the same as 'A fly is a man'.

However, having admitted this distinction, my claim is that, in metaphorical statements, there is always a weak sense in which the second noun is also understood in terms of the first: the lion has his Achilles moment, though in a weaker sense than that in which Achilles has his lion-moment.

The position which I shall put forward with regard to this two-way movement will constitute a development upon previous tension theories attributing metaphoric meaning to the interaction between the two terms of the metaphoric statement, and also on Ricoeur's own account.

¹³² If symbolic meanings were to be attached, so that, for example, the evening star is a metaphor for death and the morning star for resurrection (as is indeed the case in the passage from Tennyson's *In Memoriam CXXI* quoted above), then different shades of meaning would be brought out by the reversal of word-order.

The concept of the two-way movement is, however, already raised in Ricoeur's discussion of the tensional theory of Max Black in *La Métaphore Vive*, though it is not then incorporated into the definition of the metaphoric referent. Pointing out that the major difficulty of Black's system, recognised by Black himself, is that the presumed network of pre-existing implications surrounding any given term does not remain unchanged by the metaphorical utterance produced, he suggests that, in a phrase such as 'Man is a wolf', not only is the man seen under the perspective of lupine characteristics, but the wolf is also subtly humanised:

To apply the system is to contribute at the same time to its determination – the wolf appears more human at the same moment that by calling man a wolf one places him in a special light.

(Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 102)¹³³

One could also say that to see the human in terms of the lupine is always already to see the wolf in terms of the human because the aspects of the wolf implicitly emphasised in this comparison (cruelty, ruthlessness, wildness etc.) only truly make sense in a human context; another way of expressing this would be to say that the 'Man is a wolf' metaphor as it exists in the *Lebenswelt* only takes account of certain aspects of the wolf which are also aspects of the human, excluding shared aspects which exist under the

¹³³ [...] *appliquer ce système, c'est en même temps contribuer à le déterminer (le loup paraît plus humain au moment même où, en appelant l'homme un loup, on place l'homme sous une lumière spéciale).* (Ricoeur. *Métaphore*, 115)

first aspect of the interrealm, such as all those arising from their membership of the same group (mammals, animals, three-dimensional objects etc.)

I would like to take Ricoeur's account of this movement, and thus his theory of metaphor in general one stage further, through a combination of the Husserlian account given above, and the application of some key concepts taken from Merleau-Ponty, a thinker with whom Ricoeur has acknowledged a great deal of affinity.

The main concepts in question are *reversibility* and *chiasm*, terms used by Merleau-Ponty in *Le visible et l'invisible (The Visible and the Invisible)* to describe the nature of a number of relationships which have the structure of a crossing-over, primarily the relationship between the experience of perceiving and that of being perceived, the simultaneous leaving of the self and return to the self which takes place in the process of perception, and the experience of living in the flesh (*chair*) which is seen as neither subject nor object, but as a *chiasm* between them.

The terms have been selected as the most appropriate to my purpose; they do not imply that the acceptance of Merleau-Ponty's position in its entirety is required by my theory, though there are interesting points of comparison, a detailed consideration of which is beyond the scope of the present discussion, such as the analogy between Merleau-Ponty's discussion of the artwork as a reversible structure which cannot be imprisoned in immanence,¹³⁴ which is analogous to Ricoeur's insistence on the transcendent nature of the metaphorical statement, which cannot be imprisoned within a semiotics of linguistic immanence.

¹³⁴ This view is most clearly expressed in the essay 'L'oeil et l'esprit'. ('Eye and Mind', in *The Primacy of Perception*).

Another reason for my choice of this term is that an important aspect of Merleau-Ponty's theory is that this process of *crossing over* is never absolutely complete or perfectly symmetrical: there is also always something which cannot quite be carried over – an escape or seepage of inert content. Reversibility is an asymmetrical movement in which the two terms involved can never pass over into each other entirely. It is thus related to, and may indeed be seen in terms of the concept of *dialectic without synthesis* – a two-way crossing of the boundaries, where at the same time what is carried over is never complete – where there is always something left behind, an inert content which cannot be integrated, a residue which cannot be caught up in a higher synthesis. It distinguishes itself from Hegelian dialectic by the fact that *something*, but not *everything* is carried forward.

This account corresponds very closely to what happens between the two terms of a metaphor, where our understanding of each of the terms is modified by that of the other, but where a complete identification does not take place, since we are aware that they are connected to us not only by the copula *is* but also by the *is not*.

My application of the reversibility concept defines, then, the relationship between the two terms, or foundational moments, of a metaphor as a *crossing over* or *chiasm*. It can also be applied to the relationship between individual moments within the sub-referents of metaphor.

Chiasmaphora is the back-and-forth movement of semantic content between two realms in the process of metaphorisation: between the worlds of the two terms of the metaphoric statement, the metaphoriser and the metaphorised, and also between

different individual parts or moments of the metaphoriser and the metaphorised. It follows from this, that under the second and third aspects of the interrealm, some instances of *chiasmaphora* are more intense than others. This variation of intensity can take place on at least three counts. Firstly, variation of intensity results from both the number of individual moments which are linked through *chiasmaphora*, and secondly, to the intensity of the identification in each of the individual moments linked through *chiasmaphora*, and finally to the degree in which the functioning of each moment as a *Gestalt* of the others contributes to the heightening effect.

Chiasmaphora is the path through which, in Husserlian terminology, metaphor receives its fulfilment, but also a path through which complete fulfilment is impossible.

In simple metaphors, *chiasmaphora* is not so apparent. In a phrase such as ‘Man as a wolf’, the ‘humanisation of the wolf’ is not immediately apparent, and needs to be spelled out; it is much more obvious (at least to the reader who does not dismiss far-fetched metaphors out of hand) that Dostoevsky’s ‘Eternity is a spider in a Russian bath-house’¹³⁵ tells us at least as much about Russianness (and perhaps even about bath-houses) as it does about eternity.

It is also very frequently the case that in poetic expression, this chiasmatic process of metaphor is intensified to the extent that the crossing or transformation, and also the residue of *what is not carried over* become clearer than is normally the case.

This constitutes one example of what I call hypermetaphor¹³⁶ – let us say a self-

¹³⁵ Quoted by Cooper (14), as an example of a metaphor for which it is impossible to give a literal rendering. I believe, however, that an attempt could be made: something along the lines of ‘we Russians spend too long lying around meditating upon the concept of eternity, which is ultimately ugly and perhaps poisonous.’

¹³⁶ This term was chosen partly because of its analogy with Merleau-Ponty’s concepts of *hyper-reflection*

conscious metaphor seemingly aware of its incomplete powers of transformation. The phenomenon of reversibility is especially heightened in complex metaphors, and especially in poetry of the Romantic period, where, in Wordsworth's phrase, the losing of the subject in the simile is part of the prevailing aesthetic. I shall give some examples of this in my discussion of some instances of Romantic and post-Romantic poetry in the next chapter.

Infinite Credit

[...] *but the word unlimited [...] is so extremely vague.*
'Is, in fact, unlimited,' said Monte Cristo.

'Precisely what I was about to say,' cried Danglars. 'Now what is vague is doubtful; and it was a wise man who said, "when in doubt, keep out."'

The Count of Monte Cristo (Dumas, 379)

Michel Bréal, in his *Essai de sémantique*, applied the term '*infini*' to metaphor (115). However, this was with regard to the influence of metaphors upon the extension and the renewal of a standard lexicon. (Black, More, 40) My claim is that both the number of possible metaphors, and the interrealm created by the bringing together of any metaphoriser and metaphorised in any given metaphor or metaphorical statement is also infinite; the latter is infinite with regard to the first aspect of the interrealm as a reservoir of all possible correspondences, or moments linked through *chiasmaphora*, infinite in the number of potential *noemata* and their contexts within the *Lebenswelt*.

(the self-conscious and self-critical use of Cartesian or reflective thought) and *hyper-dialectic* (the self-conscious and self-critical use of Hegelian or dialectical thought). My MA thesis 'Merleau-Ponty:

(It could also be argued that there is another sense in which even the most limited of individual *noema* can also be considered infinite in terms of sub-divisibility: if I understand by the fact that Achilles is a lion only that Achilles is brave, bravery may also be seen as a quality with infinite aspects, but as all objects can be considered infinite in this sense, the claim is a less strong one.)

The first part of the claim, regarding the infinite number of metaphors, may not seem to be an integral part of my main concern with the ontology of the referent of the individual metaphorical statement, though the infinite potentialities for the creation of *noemata* by any pair of metaphoriser and metaphorised clearly is. However, the potentiality of the two terms to combine with others is also part of a *Gestalt* against which the phenomenon of metaphor is viewed, and as some of the examples of hypermetaphor quoted in the following chapter will, I hope, demonstrate, this fact may contribute to the poet's dizzying sense of the potentialities at the disposal of the master of metaphor.

If the concept of infinity expressed poetically has an emotional as well as a technical quality, this is not at variance with the thought of either Ricoeur or Husserl which has been used in the development of the phenomenology of which this concept is an aspect. Even the thought of infinity can be subject, in Husserlian terms, to degrees of richness of fulfilment; and for Ricoeur, nothing was as ontological as feeling. My phrase 'infinite credit' is itself emotionally loaded as it takes its origin from the scene in *The Count of Monte Cristo* in which the Count demands *le crédit infini*. His bemused interlocutor repeatedly asks him just *how much* credit he wants, but he does

dialectic without synthesis and the ontology of the artwork' is devoted to these questions.

not give up on his desire. He wants infinite credit. Nothing less will satisfy him.

Ricoeur in his 2002 lecture at Boğaziçi, ‘Why freedom?’¹³⁷ used the phrase as a metaphor for the infinite demands which the individual ego makes upon the universe.

The process of metaphorisation is equally demanding. Just as any two objects can be compared, so any two objects can be placed in the relation of metaphorised and metaphoriser, and thus create an interrealm between them. Within this interrealm there are also the infinite potential points of comparison between the metaphoriser and the metaphorised: points of similarity and difference aligning themselves on the side of the *is* and the *is not* of the metaphorical statement respectively.

Every Object is Potentially a Metaphoriser and a Metaphorised

It was a common medieval view that every physical object was a metaphor in the mind of God. Umberto Eco has called this belief ‘metaphysical symbolism’ when it is related to the philosophical habit of divining the hand of God in the beauty of the world, a world which is in the words of Hugh of St. Victor, *quasi quidem libro scriptus digito dei*¹³⁸ and ‘universal allegory’ when it sees the whole world as a work of art, in which every object possesses not only a literal, but a moral, allegorical and anagogical meaning. (Eco, 56-55) Eco quotes Alan of Lille as giving the best account of the attitude of mind of those who inhabited a world in which everything was seen as a personification:

¹³⁷ Publication forthcoming, Boğaziçi Press.

¹³⁸ Hugh of St Victor, *De Triebus Diebus*, Ch. 4 in Migne, 176.

Every creature of this earth
Is like a picture or a book:
it is a mirror of ourselves.
It is a faithful mark
of our life and of our death,
of our state and of our fate.
The rose is a picture
A fitting image of our state,
a lesson on our life;
for it flowers in early morning,
and the fading flower flowers
in the evening of age

To rework this pious belief for a more secular age, I would like to use the concept of the mind of God as a kind of ‘limit case’, and to put forward the claim that every object is potentially both metaphoriser and metaphorised, although the empirical fact that there are many existing objects of which human beings have no knowledge, or in which they have little or no interest, has prevented the actual creation of metaphors concerning them. Going beyond Alan of Lille’s interpretation, which places all ‘natural objects’ as the metaphorisers of the human condition, and puts the human being in the privileged position of the metaphorised, I would say that we can combine any given pair of objects as metaphorised and metaphoriser. Thus, each of the two terms in any given metaphorical statement has an infinite potentiality to be recombined in others.

Of course, all these combinations can never be made. Yet the infinite nature of metaphor is worth insisting on, if we view the potentiality of a thing to be as important, or even more important, in defining its essence than its actuality. A sense of this infinite potentiality of metaphor harmonises with, and in a sense completes, Aristotle’s meditations on the nature of poetry as a more philosophical and higher thing than

history in that it deals with the universal rather than the particular, with what may happen, rather than what happened. (*Poetics* IX, 1451b)

The infinity of possible objects to be used in metaphorical statements is, however, only one aspect of the infinity of metaphor.

Countering Objections to the Infinity of ‘Anything can Metaphorise Anything Else’

One objection to the above claim would be that there are certain objects which are just too dissimilar, or too similar, to be brought together in a metaphor, or cases in which the potential metaphoriser and metaphorised are both too remote from human experience for us to be concerned with them. It is true that there are many such potential metaphorical sentences which it will never occur to anyone to make, but not, I think the case that meaningful metaphorical statements could not be constructed.

Paradoxically, their general characteristics of strangeness, distance or irrelevance easily lend themselves to being abstracted as moments which could be used as points of comparison and as elements in a metaphoric *chiasmaphora*.

Perhaps more interesting is the case of extremely similar objects. What is at issue here is not so much physical similarity as the ‘so what?’ factor. I would like to illustrate this by discussing the way in which we make comparisons between members of a single category by giving some examples of metaphorisation using metaphorisers and metaphoriseds from the animal kingdom.

Non-human animals are among the most common metaphorisers of human beings, and, from an anthropocentric perspective, we may already seem to be moving

into an area of extreme similarity in using them to metaphorise each other, though of course the metaphorisation made can usually have a second layer if the metaphorical statement in question is taken to apply to human beings: an example of the latter would be the phrase ‘A lion is a pussy-cat really’, used, let us say, of the kind of man who indulges in a great deal of macho posturing, but who really wants nothing so much as to be stroked and petted, and of course, metaphorically speaking, given warm milk in a saucer in front of the fire. The examples below are intended both to illustrate the factors determining the ease or difficulty with which we feel that we can make meaningful metaphorical statements in such cases, but above all to show how metaphorisers and metaphoriseds which might seem incapable of functioning because of excessive similarity can in fact create a rich interrealm.

Let us begin with the example of a cat and a kitten as the two terms in a metaphorical statement: we can suppose that they have a strong physical similarity, almost identical DNA, and we can even imagine such an act of metaphorisation being made between two animals which are seemingly identical except for size. From this perspective they might seem to be too similar to create a metaphor, let alone a meaningful and interesting one. However, since these are animals whose behaviour patterns have been observed fairly closely by most human beings (as opposed to more rarely seen animals) and also because the relationship between youth and age, or parent and child tends to be significant to the human mind, meanings readily emerge: therefore ‘A cat is a kitten’ means (among other things) that cats never really grow up, that they are always playful, that they are fragile, that they are resilient etc.

Conversely, 'A kitten is a cat' means that kittens have the same instincts as an adult cat, and should not be trusted too far, especially if you happen to be a mouse, etc. Likewise, a swan and a goose, though of different species, are not very dissimilar in appearance, but 'A swan is a goose' or 'A goose is a swan' are phrases that we could easily imagine being used by a poet just because of the different symbolic significances which have been traditionally attached to these birds. They could be seen, among other things, as a protest against the tradition which places swans above geese, and, by implication, beauty over utility, or aristocracy over the commonality.

However, the significance of the metaphorisation would not be so apparent to most if someone were to write 'A mallard is a shelduck and a shelduck is a mallard', or 'A tabby is a Siamese and a Siamese is a tabby': even though an interrealm and referent is created just as it is in the swan/goose example, the average person would probably reject it as meaningless. Yet even if we are not given a specific *Gestalt* in terms of which we can interpret the sentence we may find in it either a mystical assertion of the identity of all particulars, or something along the lines of: 'I, the creator of this metaphor, assert that I just couldn't care less about the different species of duck/cat (and perhaps also about any other such fine distinctions)'.

Moreover, if the speaker/writer has provided us with a *Gestalt* according to which we can interpret the metaphor, or we choose to invent such a *Gestalt* ourselves, other possibilities open up. A possible one might be the context of racial politics: what we are really asserting could be that a white person is not really different from a black person or a Chinese person: they are equally valuable, or valueless, or indeed potentially edible: the same under their skins, or the same when skinned. Or we might

interpret *mallard* and *tabby* as representing the common variety of duck or cat as opposed to a rarer and more aristocratic version. Then we may suppose that cats are here the *metaphorisers* of women, and that what is asserted is that the most homely and everyday of them has their proud and aristocratic side, and that, conversely, the most proud and aristocratic of them will gladly stoop to the human equivalent of mouse-hunting and caterwauling when given the occasion.

Likewise, we could easily imagine a poem including the lines, ‘A butterfly is a moth’ and ‘A moth is a butterfly’, perhaps asserting the identity of day and night, and of good and evil, or else having the meaning that women who are flighty social butterflies are ultimately akin to those who immolate themselves in the flame of love. Again, ‘A fly is a spider’ and ‘A spider is a fly’ could be interpreted as meaning that the victimiser is victim and *vice versa*, or else that the two creatures are deadly in different ways, the one killing by spreading disease as the other does by web and venom. In both these cases the interrealm created is easily accessible since these terms are already familiar and symbolically loaded and have a relationship based on clear oppositions in one case and on the prey/predator relationship in the other.

We will have more difficulties when the two terms employed are both more unusual and more similar to one another: let us say, a crane-fly and a horse-fly; but if we put our minds to it, we will manage: perhaps taking as a starting point their common ability to irritate human beings and the implication that the two methods of the insects are not really so very different. In the case of very similar objects described with the simile structure *like*, it does seem, as remarked above, that metaphorisation is lost: ‘Kale is like cabbage’ does not belong in the same category as ‘Love is like the

lion's tooth', but even such cases might by an effort of mind be seen in terms of a bringing together of semantic content. In other words, metaphor is not simple comparison, but wherever a simple comparison can be made, there is a potential metaphor.

The attempt to find exceptions to the rule that any two objects can be compared thus leads us to more extreme cases of similarity, indeed into similar philosophical terrain as that explored by those dealing with Leibniz's law (the identity of indiscernibles): that is, the question of what constitutes indiscernibles.

Perhaps someone might suggest Max Black's spheres¹³⁹, sole existing objects in an otherwise empty universe, only distinguished by not occupying the same space, as strong candidates for objects which could not function as metaphoriser and metaphorised. Yet to get out of this predicament we need only to invent a mystical poet of the medieval period, a contemporary of Boethius, who in his masterwork, translated from the Latin or the Persian, gave us some verses which run something like this:

*Essence does not live in shows
Here is there and there is here.
This rose is that rose
And that rose is this.*

*This sphere is that sphere
And that sphere is this.*

*Their properties are still the same
Beneath the cloak of double name*

¹³⁹ From the famous thought-experiment in 'The Indiscernibility of Identicals'.

*Two spheres alike in different place
A single aspect of God's face.*

Numbers and measurements might also be suggested off-hand as possible candidates for exclusion. Yet there is, of course, a whole literature concerning the symbolism of numbers going back to Pythagorean cosmology at least. The Pythagorean saying 'Justice is five' furnishes an example of how a number might function as a metaphoriser – or if the saying were to be reversed, as a metaphorised.¹⁴⁰ (Justice is also *four* according to the twelfth-century theory of *homo quadratus* derived from Chalcidius and Macrobius, in which four is the number of moral perfection and men experienced in the struggle for moral perfection were called 'tetragonal'.¹⁴¹)

Moreover, numbers can function as *both* metaphorisers and metaphorised within the structure of a metaphoric statement. Examples would be the Trinitarian theologians assertion that 'Three is one', or, on a more mundane level, a catchphrase such as '50 is the new 40'. This is used of age, and can be somewhat inadequately paraphrased as something along the lines of 'A person used to be considered to have reached a certain level of maturity, and to be leading a certain kind of lifestyle at age forty, but we now think of age fifty as marking such a threshold.' However, it could potentially be applicable to all kinds of other countables.

¹⁴⁰ The interpretation of this saying is complicated: it was glossed by Nichomachus as entailing 'a long explanation of the mathematical characteristics of the pental in which the basis of the identification would emerge.' (O'Meara, Pythagoras, 21).

¹⁴¹ Cf. Umberto Eco: 'The medieval love of allegory was here enriched by an account of the relationship between macrocosm and microcosm which was couched in terms of mathematical archetypes. According to the theory of *homo quadratus*, number is the principle of the universe, and numbers possess symbolic meanings which are grounded in correspondences at once numerical and aesthetic. [...] It was commonly believed, in fact, that the number four had some kind of fundamental significance. [...] However, *homo quadratus* was also pentagonal, as five was another number of arcane significance

From these examples we can go a step further and imagine a civilisation (perhaps created by a future human race or some extra-terrestrials who have the same fascination with numbers usually only displayed by certain autistic persons) which attaches symbolic or emotional importance to every conceivable number. The numbers might thus either be seen as metaphors for other things or merely intensely significant in their own right. In either case, one number could be compared with another and one could be seen *as another* through the medium of metaphor. In this imaginary civilisation a conversation between fashion-victims might include observations such as: ‘They tell me that 56,598 is really *in* this season. In fact, it is the new 89,333! But 900,000 is really *so* forty-sixed’.

Obviously, once we have thus included every conceivable number as a potential metaphoriser and potential metaphorised, we have, given that the number series is infinite, already proved that so is metaphor, without even having recourse to the vast and possibly infinite number of possible non-numerical metaphors created, or potentially creatable, in natural languages, living, dead and to come. This infinite potentiality of metaphor, its *crédit infini*, exists despite the fact that the number of instantiations of metaphor as metaphoric statements actually made by human beings in written and spoken language, and even in non-verbal arts and in thought, is finite though unknown. The final section of the following chapter will include some examples of how poetic language can give this sense of the infinite credit of the interrealm.

[...] Hugh of St Victor said [...] the [s] piritual life [...] is founded on the perfection of the number ten. ’ (Eco, 35-36)

Infinite Points of Comparison

Although the interrealm of any given metaphoric statement is not of infinite extension, that is, it does not cover everything, and though the meanings of metaphors are limited by convention, and by context, the interrealm of metaphor under its first aspect, imagined as removed from *Gestalt*, convention and context contains all the potential relationships between all the aspects of the two terms in the metaphorical relationship.

It goes without saying that most of these inter-relations are not usually foregrounded in the minds of the creators and recipients of metaphors: when we say that man is a wolf, we do not care about the fact that men and wolves have the possession of two ears and two eyes in common, or that there are certain similarities between their digestive systems. Yet, nevertheless, it is not possible for us to give an answer to the question: *just how many interpretations does this metaphor have?* As I shall argue in the following chapter, one of the characteristics which poetic language frequently possesses is its ability to bring the more neglected aspects of the interrealm to light.

Moreover, although the second and third aspects of the interrealm *qua noema* and as part of the *Lebenswelt* may at first sight seem to be finite, this is not actually the case, though what we are given here is more like the infinity of a grain of sand than that of the starry heavens. The second aspect interrealm of metaphoric referent *qua noema* or idealisation of noetic act, and the third aspect interrealm of metaphoric referent in context also have an aspect of infinity, since they consist of innumerable individual moments and since each moment is potentially sub-divisible to infinity.

Binary Theories of Metaphor

What is meant by binary theories is accounts which create a dichotomy between heuristic and non-heuristic metaphors, such as that advanced by Martin (1982) in her discussion of the role of metaphor in expressing theological concepts, or that put forward by Leppard (1982), who sees individual metaphors as being either substitutional or interactional in nature.

It is perhaps a weakness of Ricoeur's text that he never seriously considers the possibility that all metaphors cannot be explained according to a unitary theory. It is indeed impossible to refute the possibility that some metaphor might be discovered which somehow breaks all the rules. However, in the course of my discussion I have attempted to illustrate the functioning of metaphoric reference in metaphors of various kinds, drawn from different types of discourse. This examination suggests the conclusion, that although a variationalist perspective on metaphor is perfectly valid, the concept of *interrealm* can, in fact, be applied to any kind of metaphorical statement.

However, there are also certain types of metaphor in which the existence of the interrealm or of some of its qualities is more obviously apparent: we can say that the *interrealm* concept applies *a fortiori* to many examples of poetic metaphor or simile, and that its aspect of being a world within a world applies in particular to the so called 'epic simile.'

Therefore, despite my defence of a very wide definition of metaphor, and my rejection of rigid binary theories, I nevertheless distinguish certain kinds of poetic metaphor which display a foregrounding or 'self-consciousness' of the basic

characteristics of the interrealm, and which I call *hypermetaphor*. As stated above, this term is adapted from the concept of ‘hyperdialectic’ used by Merleau-Ponty in *The Visible and the Invisible*, where it is used to describe a kind of dialectic or dialectical thinking which does not achieve a final synthesis of the opposing elements within it, and which is aware of ¹⁴² the partiality of its own attempt at synthesis.

I use the term to convey the fact that these metaphors are both, in a vague sense, more powerful than the average metaphor, and that they contain within themselves a more than usually sharp illustration of some of the salient features of metaphoric reference: multiple reference, shifting boundaries, chiasma and reversibility between metaphoriser and metaphorised, and infinite credit. Analysis of such complex types of metaphor, and the subsequent testing of the limits of paraphrasibility, will, I hope, give a clearer indication of the nature of the interrealm referent. Through an analysis of various types of metaphor I attempt to show that a single metaphor creates and refers to an interrealm, which in itself contains multiple referents. Using examples from literary metaphor and simile, I suggest that it is more appropriate to see a metaphoric statement as having multiple reference rather than a simple split between the literal and the metaphoric, and that in some cases it is difficult to disentangle the literal and the metaphoric referents, their relationship being best expressed by the metaphor of facing mirrors, which reflect one another to infinity.

¹⁴² The *locus classicus* for the description of the hyperdialectic is Merleau-Ponty, *Invisible*, 92-95; *Invisible*, 126-129.

CHAPTER SIX

CASE STUDIES IN POETIC METAPHOR

In this chapter, I will give some examples of poetic metaphor which illustrate the main characteristics of the *interrealm* outlined above: the multiple layers of the interrealm with its sub-referents inside the main referent, its shifting boundaries in terms of its second and third aspects *qua noema* and *qua* portion of the *Lebenswelt*, *chiasmaphora*, the incomplete carrying-over of *chiasmaphora*, and infinite credit. This will involve detailed analysis of certain quotations, sometimes placed in the context of an author's work. What follows is not, however, literary criticism,¹⁴³ but an attempt to clarify certain aspects of the metaphorical statement with regard to its power of double or rather multiple reference, and the nature of the referent in question, that is, the interrealm.

The examples I have chosen to illustrate my theory are also examples of hypermetaphor, that is, metaphors which 'self-consciously' foreground the metaphoric process. Though these are all taken from poetic texts, I do not therefore claim that

¹⁴³ Poetic metaphors have been chosen because of their tendency to illustrate the characteristics of the interrealm by giving instances which show up a particular characteristic *a fortiori* and/or because of their self-conscious quality: the hints that the author gives of his awareness of the process of metaphorisation. I do not, however, mean to confine this quality to literature written in traditional poetic form or metre or dealing with a limited so-called 'poetic' subject matter. Though most of my examples are taken from canonical poetry, the quality of hypermetaphorisation could also be found in prose works or in a chance utterance overheard in the street. Indeed, to define poetic language as that which hypermetaphorises is in a sense circular, since I would consider any language which has the intense quality of hypermetaphorisation to be poetic. (This would not however be a complete definition of poetic language, which is, of course, notoriously difficult to define with any rigour: suffice it to say that in my view, other heightened qualities of language created by metre and rhythm or the role of context can make

hypermetaphor can only be found in such texts, and still less, that such metaphors are the only ones to which the interrealm theory applies, though I would claim that they can be seen as cases to which it applies *a fortiori*.

Hypermetaphorisation can take two forms (which sometimes co-exist). One is that of the author creating a metaphor which draws attention to one of the characteristics of the interrealm referent, in which such a characteristic can be said to be ‘writ large’. The second form is that of the author deliberately giving us an account of the nature of metaphor and symbol, even as he or she creates it. The first of these forms may sometimes be a manifestation of the latter, though it is also possible that the *a fortiori* metaphoricity is only perceived by the reader. Self-consciousness in the literal sense can, of course, only be attributed to the author, and as such can perhaps never be fully proved, though one would need to be an absolute sceptic to deny the self-conscious use of metaphor in an author who writes something along the lines of ‘I am using a metaphor here’. However, I also use the term ‘self-conscious’ metaphorically to describe hypermetaphorical writing itself.

One element of hypermetaphorisation is thus self-conscious fictionality, sometimes combined with the belief that the created fiction is in an emotional, or even in a mystical sense, more real than everyday reality. The example below, taken from Yeats’s poem ‘The Fisherman’, in a sense answers Husserl’s question: ‘How can I say in one breath “the object presented” and “that very same thing does not exist”? How can I say “There is an object that the idea presents” and at the same time “in truth there

the most literal of sentences ‘poetic’.)

is no such object?'" (Husserl, *Vorlesung*, paragraph 9a, 39, translated and quoted by Simons, 123-124) The poet manages to do so without shame:

[...] Maybe a twelve-month since
I suddenly began,
In scorn of this audience,
Imagining a man,
And his sun-freckled face,
And grey Connemara cloth,
Climbing up to a place,
Where stone is dark under froth,
And the down-turn of his wrist
When the flies drop in the stream,
A man who does not exist,
A man who is but a dream;
And cried, 'Before I am old
I shall have written him one
Poem maybe as cold
And passionate as the dawn.'

'The Fisherman' (Yeats, 167)

This same self-consciousness can be applied to the metaphoric process itself. Yeats's Fisherman can perhaps be seen as a metaphor in that he is a symbol of an idealised Irishness, but other examples of the self-conscious poetic aside could be taken from the same poet which bear even more directly on the nature of metaphor *qua* '*référence dédoublée*'. In particular, Yeats's later work is full of passages in which the poet constantly tells us what is behind his symbols (usually his frustrated passion for Maud Gonne, who is presented metaphorically as a number of heroines in his poems and plays). However, the same explications also insist that there is something more to the

symbols, to the metaphorisers, than to the literal and biographical truths which they metaphorise. I quote two of many possible examples:

[...] But that great queen, who more than half the night
Had paced from door to fire and fire to door.
Though now in her old age, in her young age
She had been beautiful in that old way,
That's all but gone; for the proud heart is gone;
And the fool heart of the counting-house fears all
But soft beauty and indolent desire.
She could have called over the rim of the world
Whatever woman's lover hit her fancy,
And yet had been great-bodied and great-limbed,
Fashioned to be the mother of strong children;
And she'd had lucky eyes and a high heart,
And wisdom that caught fire like the dried flax,
At need, and made her beautiful and fierce,
Sudden and laughing.

O unquiet heart,
Why do you praise another, praising her,
As if there were no tale but your own tale,
Worth setting to the measure of sweet sound?
Have I not bid you tell of that great queen
Who has been buried some two thousand years?

'The Old Age of Queen Maeve' (Yeats, 451-452)

What can I but enumerate old themes?
First that sea-rider Oisín led by the nose
Through three enchanted islands, allegorical dreams,
Vain gaiety, vain battle, vain repose,
Themes of the embittered heart, or so it seems,
That might adorn old songs or courtly shows;
But what cared I that set him on to ride,
I, starved for the bosom of his faery bride?

And then a counter-truth filled out its play,
The Countess Cathleen was the name I gave it;
She, pity crazed, had given her soul away,

But masterful Heaven had intervened to save it.
I thought my dear must her own soul destroy,
So did fanaticism and hate enslave it,
And this brought forth a dream and soon enough
This dream itself had all my thought and love.

[...]

Players and painted stage took all my love,
And not those things that they were emblems of.

‘The Circus Animals’ Desertion’ (Yeats, 391-392)

These examples are classic hypermetaphor in that they spell out at length both sides of the split reference of the metaphoric process, the *is* and the *is not* which characterises the tension within the copula of the metaphoric statement. Other examples will be less obviously self-conscious, however all will function as examples of split reference *qua* metaphor and in their status as fiction also illustrate Ricoeur’s claim that the same kind of second-order reference that he attributes to metaphor functions within the fictional text. That is, according to the account of poetry and fiction which he puts forward in *Time and Narrative*, the poetic text, however mythical and fictional it may be, is, nevertheless, necessarily tied to the world, that is to say, it *refers to* it. In Ricoeur’s phrase, it always speaks *of* the world, even when it does not do so in the fashion of a literal description:

I tried to demonstrate in *The Rule of Metaphor* that language’s capacity for reference was not exhausted by descriptive discourse and that poetic works referred to the world in their own specific way, that of metaphoric reference. This thesis covers every nondescriptive use of language, and therefore every poetic text, whether it be lyrical or narrative. It implies

that poetic texts, too, speak *of* the world, even though they may not do so in a descriptive fashion. Metaphorical reference, it will be recalled, consists in the fact that the effacement of descriptive reference – an effacement that as a first approximation makes language refer to itself – is revealed to be, in a second approximation, the negative condition for freeing a more radical power of reference to those aspects of our being-in-the-world that cannot be talked about directly.

(Ricoeur, *Time*, Vol. 1, 80).^{144 145}

Metaphor within a poetic text can thus be seen as doubly inscribed within second-order reference.¹⁴⁶

The rest of this chapter will thus be devoted to analysing certain examples of poetic metaphors as a way of illustrating various aspects of the interrealm theory. I see certain literary periods as, broadly speaking, furnishing more suitable examples of certain aspects of the interrealm referent of metaphor than others, and this is reflected in the structure of this chapter, which begins with an analysis of classical and

¹⁴⁴ *J'ai essayé de montrer dans la Métaphore Vive que la capacité de référence du langage n'était pas épuisée par le discours descriptifs et que les oeuvres poétiques se rapportaient au monde selon un régime référentiel propre, celui de la référence métaphorique. Cette thèse couvre tous les usages nondescriptifs du langage, donc tous les textes poétiques eux aussi parlent du monde, bien qu'ils fassent pas de façon descriptive. La référence métaphorique, je le rapelle, consiste en ceci que l'effacement de la référence descriptive – effacement qui, en première approximation, renvoie le langage à lui-même – se révèle être, en seconde approximation, la condition négative pour que soit libéré une pouvoir plus radical de référence à des aspects de notre être-au-monde qui ne peuvent être dits de manière directe.* (Ricoeur, *Temps*, Vol. 1, 150-151)

¹⁴⁵ Mooij (Study, 146-9) makes a similar point against the theory that literature has no reference, as advanced by A.G. Pleydell-Pearce in 'Sense, Reference and Fiction' and F.C. Maatje in *Literatuurwetenschap*. Mooij attempts a *reductio* of the no-reference theory by arguing that it would be absurd to claim that general statements mentioned in novels which apply to the real world only have validity within the world of the novel itself, and that our understanding of devices such as poetic irony depends on our making reference to the real world.

¹⁴⁶ Although, as previously mentioned, I think Ricoeur somewhat overstates the case in his identification of the fictive and the metaphorical, and the assumption of the non-descriptive nature of both these, the account of the interrealm that I have put forward could in principle be extended to cover the relation between the fictional world of a text and the real world. This question is, however, beyond the scope of this thesis.

Renaissance metaphor and goes on through the baroque ‘Metaphysical’ conceits of the seventeenth-century, and the ‘organic’ metaphors of the Romantic period, to the hyperconscious use of metaphor in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, using metaphors which are characteristic of each literary period or *genre* as a way of illustrating the aspects of interrealm which they elucidate most clearly.

However, a strict historical progression is not adhered to, particularly in the first section, where the multiple layers of the interrealm are illustrated by both the similes characteristic of epic poetry, and by examples taken from Romantic and twentieth-century lyric poetry. The implied chronology of metaphor is an idealised one, not an attempt at an accurate literary history.

I take as my inspiration here the way in which Hegel in his *Aesthetics* uses the history of art in order to provide us with idealised moments in the relationship between form and content, though my own approach will be much more modest, and avoids any claims of a ‘grand narrative’ in the development of metaphor. I am also very much aware that most of my examples are taken from English poetry, and do not make the claim that other literatures follow the same path of development in the use of metaphor.

As stated above, I do not claim that the examples I give constitute a unique class of ‘live’ or ‘literary’ metaphors which should be clearly distinguished from the ‘dead’ or commonplace metaphors current in ordinary discourse. They are rather *a fortiori* illustrations of the interrealm thesis, which can help us to understand how it can also be applied to simple and well-worn metaphors – and thus revivify them. Indeed, as the emphasis on the potentiality for re-interpretation and reinvention in the interrealm theory implies, no metaphor, however time-honoured, is ever entirely dead.

I shall begin by illustrating the multi-layered and overlapping nature of the interrealm referent(s) through an examination of the ‘world within the world’ created by the classic epic simile, that is, the so-called ‘long-tailed’ simile, used in Greek and Roman classical epics such as those of Homer and Virgil and, within the English tradition, most notably by Milton and the later poets who used ‘Miltonic’ similes. Here the details which build up a world within the world of the poem, often including many physical details which do not have point-to-point correlation with the object which is metaphorised, can be shown to have a split reference to the microcosm or microcosms which they create, to the larger world of the poem and to the world outside it. These examples thus emphasise the necessity of seeing the interrealm arising from the metaphoric statement as not being merely a case of single reference, or even of *référence dédoublée*, but as potentially possessing a multiplicity of referents within it. I shall also give examples of ways in which the context of metaphor functions as a *Gestalt*,¹⁴⁷ which creates the *effect* of a layer of reference.

I then attempt to show how the Metaphysical ‘conceits’ of seventeenth-century English poetry, with its delight in shifting between radically different meanings of the same metaphor best illustrate the shifting borders of the interrealm. This poetry, renowned for its far-fetched baroque conceits and its delight in contradictions, shows both how a single object can be assigned contradictory qualities through the use of an array of metaphors, and also how a single metaphor can have its various implications

¹⁴⁷ The concept of *Gestalt* has been applied to metaphor by Lakoff and Johnson, but only to describe the basic act of metaphorisation: ‘we understand experience metaphorically when we use a gestalt from one

explored within a poem in such a way that the referent of the metaphorical statement is seen to cover different territory on different interpretations.

Then in the third section of the chapter, I shall discuss *chiasmaphora* with reference to examples taken from Romantic and ‘post-Romantic’ poetry, focusing on some passages from Keats and Tennyson. Here we are confronted with symbols whose meaning is less clearly spelled out, and where the metaphorised and the metaphoriser often seem to merge into one another. These examples aim to show how the *epiphora*, or movement, of metaphor is necessarily a crossing-over movement, or *chiasmaphora*.

Finally, I discuss the self-consciousness of certain examples of ‘post-modern’ metaphor, which can, I suggest, be taken as hyper-hypermetaphors. The ultra self-conscious use of metaphor by certain recent poets – my chosen examples are Ted Hughes and Jane Griffiths – are discussed as *a fortiori* examples of hypermetaphor since they are self-conscious both in the obvious sense of an authorial intention to discuss metaphor in poetry and in the sense of foregrounding the nature of metaphoricity itself.

I discuss, firstly, certain aspects of the poetry of Ted Hughes, which can be taken as expressing the incomplete nature of the *chiasmaphora* of metaphor, the sense in which metaphor is always as much an expression of an *is not* as an *is*. Secondly, I look at a number of poems by Jane Griffiths in which again we have a foregrounding of the sense of the incomplete nature of the chiasmatic movement of metaphor (*chiasmaphora*), and what I shall call *veiled metaphoric reference*, but also a strong

domain of experience to structure experience in another domain’ (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, 230).

sense of the of the multiplicity of interpretations of any given metaphor: its infinite credit.

Multiple layering and *Gestalt* effect

The Worlds within Worlds of the Epic Simile

As I have suggested above, certain metaphors demand a much more complex theory of reference than that formulated by Ricoeur, as in reading and interpreting them we have to deal with more worlds and more layers of reference than the simple ‘double reference’ of the literal or ‘real’ world, and a fictive or imaginary one: they exist within the *Lebenswelt* as well as *qua* isolated *noema*, and the nature of the *noema* referent is subject to constant modification as a result of its existence within this *Lebenswelt*.

Ricoeur himself gives us the meta-metaphor of metaphor as a *poem in miniature*, but despite this, he does not in *La Métaphore Vive* give us a full account of the tension between this world and the larger world of the surrounding poem, or indeed of the colliding worlds within a complex or extended metaphor. This is a serious omission, as such metaphors are worthy of analysis as a way of showing the multiplicity of reference which can inhere within a short section of discourse.

The most obvious examples of this can be found in the class of metaphors usually described as epic or ‘long-tailed’ similes, which create one or more vividly-realised worlds within the world of the main narrative, sometimes having a ‘disjunctive’ structure, in that they create alternative pictures, or alternative worlds

within the world of the poem, linked by the connective *or*, each of which is put forward as a metaphoriser of the same metaphorised.

A classic example of the long-tailed, or disjunctive, simile would be Milton's description in *Paradise Lost* (Book One, ll. 300-313) of the fallen angels at the moment when they are summoned by Satan to arise from their abject floundering upon the waves of the Lake of Fire:

[...] he stood and called
His legions, angel forms, who lay entranced
Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
High overarched embower; or scattered sedge
Afloat, when the fierce winds Orion armed
Hath vexed the Red Sea coast, whose waves o'er threw
Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious haste they pursued
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcasses
And broken chariot wheels, so thick bestrewn
Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.

(Milton, *Paradise*, 79-80)

Here within the grammatical structure of a single disjunctive simile we have successive images of the angels as leaves, as sedge floating on the Red Sea and as the drowned Egyptian cavalry referred to in the Biblical Book of *Exodus*. Each of these three worlds within worlds is vividly realised, and can be seen as a miniature poem in itself. In terms of my theory, each also overlaps with the others, and with the image of the angels prostrate on the lake of fire in Milton's Hell, in order to create an *interrealm*. In

terms of the Husserlian concept of fulfilment, each of the succeeding images can be seen as contributing to the fullness of the presentation, to its richness, liveliness and reality-level.

However, the picture is more complicated yet, in so far as the succession of images is not arbitrary: one image of vegetation covering the surface of water (the fallen leaves of Vallombrosa) leads to another (the sedge on the Red Sea coast), and then one image of the Red Sea leads to another, and all containing the idea of objects tossed about violently and helplessly in water. We can imagine the relationship between these three images as being partly expressed by a Venn diagram in which a circle representing the set of similes containing Red Sea imagery intersects with a circle representing the set of similes containing vegetation imagery.

But the three images could also be seen as three circles intersecting, which are overlaid upon each other, each of which has an overlapping content with each of the others, and all of which illuminate one aspect of the condition of the fallen angels. It is more difficult to find a point shared by the image of the first and third images, but not by the second, but we could say that each of these emphasises the fact of being ‘strewn’ whereas the second is an image of being afloat on ‘vexed’ water.

Each of these worlds, that is, the world of the floating sedge, the world of the Egyptian cavalry drowning, the world of the floating leaves on the brooks of Italian Vallombrosa, I would contend, is not merely a subjective vision of author, or of reader, but a *noema* in Husserl’s sense. In my account, it functions as a *noemic* referent. However, there are also other sub-referents within these referents: referents such as Busiris, Vallombrosa, Orion, Etruria, the Red Sea, Memphis, Goshen, chariot, wheel,

carcass *et cetera*. The simple fact that a historical/mythical personage, geographical location, constellation or everyday object is mentioned merely in the context of a metaphor within a fictional text is not a justification for setting it down as a term without reference or without meaning.

Reference even multiplies itself within such individual terms. We might ask: does Orion refer to a constellation, or to a mythical character, or to both? Even in the case of the Red Sea, the question remains, does the metaphor refer to the real Red Sea, or to some mythical Red Sea of Milton's imagination, which would also be a noemic referent, or to both?

This question can, of course, be raised with regard to every real location mentioned in any poem or work of fiction, or indeed any piece of apparently factual writing, and we might also raise the question of whether the degree of accuracy in the description or the degree of authorial knowledge of the area is a relevant factor.

We know that Milton never visited the Red Sea; and I might object that I have visited it, that I have swum in it and dived in it, and that I noticed a distinct lack of anything resembling floating weed or *sedge*, and from there I might come to the conclusion that Milton was obviously superimposing on the Red Sea, which he knew only from the Bible and other written sources, what he knew of English waters by direct observation: perhaps he had, in the back of his mind, the weedy river Cam, of which he uses the word *sedge* in his earlier poetry¹⁴⁸, and perhaps also the seaweed-strewn British coast. Even supposing I am mistaken in this matter, we can easily

¹⁴⁸ Cf. the personification of the River Cam in *Lycidas*, ll. 103-104: 'Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,/His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge.' (Milton, Shorter, 250).

imagine analogous cases which would be correct: there are, indeed, plenty of gross examples of geographical errors, historical anachronisms and so forth to be found in literature, including canonical literary texts, some of the most notorious being Shakespeare's attribution of a sea-coast to landlocked Bohemia in *The Winter's Tale*, or his anachronistically placing a book and a clock in the Roman world of *Julius Caesar*.

Often modern day productions of Shakespeare pay homage to this strange double reference. An example is the BBC production of *Cymbeline* placed in an early seventeenth-century setting. I recollect this being announced before the television showing as if it were a transposition made by the director, but the case is actually more complicated. *Cymbeline* is a play which is formally set in a pre-Christian Britain with diplomatic relations with the Roman Empire, in which Roman legionnaires appear as Cymbeline makes peace with Rome at the end of the action, and which yet also seems to speak of the Italy of the Renaissance.¹⁴⁹ It makes no sense to ask when the action of the play was 'really set': it is in an imaginary in-between, which is also a kind of interrealm. Likewise, with geographical setting in Shakespeare, as in *As You Like It*, nominally set in France, also in the Forest of Arden, which is arguably both the Ardennes region and also the Forest of Arden of Shakespeare's native Warwickshire.

¹⁴⁹ Thomas Love Peacock explains this state of affairs more wittily when he speaks of the golden age of English and European poetry as having 'an infinite licence, which gave to the poet the free range of the whole field of imagination and memory. This was carried very far by Ariosto, but furthest of all by Shakespeare and his contemporaries, who used time and locality merely because they could not do without them, because every action must have its where and when: but they made no scruple of deposing a Roman Emperor by an Italian Count, and sending him off in the disguise of a French pilgrim to be shot with a blunderbuss by an English archer.' (Peacock, Ages)

In all these cases, we are presented not merely with a case of multiple meanings, but of split and/or multiple reference.

To return to the Vallombrosa simile: in addition to the aforementioned aspects of such a simile-interrealm, we also need to take into account the *Gestalt* effect created by the interaction of the world of the simile with the world of the surrounding epic. This *Gestalt* cuts two ways: the main plot of the epic, and the more specific events and setting of the Hell presented in Book I of *Paradise Lost* function as a background to the simile, and the simile is a background against which the rest of the epic in general and the surrounding events of Book I are portrayed.

The second part of this assertion is perhaps less obvious than the first, as the part is not usually considered as a background to the whole. The way in which the simile functions as a *Gestalt* to the poem as a whole can be clarified by Geoffrey Hartman's interpretation of the Vallombrosa metaphor in terms of his theory of 'plot counterplot' in *Paradise Lost*. (Hartman, 368-397) Hartman's argument, as paraphrased by Margarita Stocker, is that:

Arguing against the belief that the charismatic figure of Satan is, as many critics believed, the true hero of the early books of *Paradise Lost*, Hartman puts forward the view that Milton suggests an alternative plot to that dominated by the Devil through his similes: this plot is the serene plot of God's Providence, in which the demonic characters are unwitting actors: thus the lifelessness of the fallen leaves of Vallombrosa is an ironic commentary on Satan's attempt to rouse his troops to battle, and the reference to the overthrow of the Memphian army is an allusion to God's power to scatter the rebel angels, as he has done before.

(Stocker, 48)

Stocker summarises and comments upon Hartman's position with the words: 'The counterplot that we experience in reading *Paradise Lost* is an indeterminacy, in effect, a sliding of meanings which reflects the difficulty of the ethical life when we possess free-will, an ability and responsibility to make choices.' (Stocker, 48) It is, in short, another interrealm. Nor should we forget the fact that *Paradise Lost* as a whole can itself be seen as an extended metaphor: perhaps, as Louis Martz has suggested in *Milton: Poet of Exile*, it can be taken as a metaphor for Milton's intense feelings of political and emotional exile in the period following the end of the English Commonwealth and the Restoration of the monarchy.

Even this is not the end of the possible layers of reference. As is well known, Milton criticism, or indeed the pluralistic practices of literary criticism in general, provide us with many other backgrounds against which we can read any particular passage of this canonical text, backgrounds which can function as a *Gestalt* which modifies the perception of the interrealm, colouring it in such a way as to add a further layer of reference. The most obvious examples would be taken from the politics of the English civil wars and Restoration: it can be argued that in the Vallombrosa passage, as indeed throughout *Paradise Lost*, there is a sense in which the fallen angels are seen as cavaliers and the angels Roundheads.

We could then add intertextual relationships with numerous other literary works: for example, we might look backwards to Glaucus' comparison of the generations of men and falling leaves in the Book VI of *The Iliad*,¹⁵⁰ or in taking a

¹⁵⁰ 'Like the generations of leaves, the lives of mortal men. Now the wind scatters the old leaves across the earth, now the living timber bursts with the new buds and spring comes round again. And so with

‘backwards’ T.S. Eliotian approach to influence, look forwards to later texts dealing with falling leaves, fate and mortality which may modify the contemporary reader’s reception – perhaps to Gerard Manley Hopkins’s ‘Spring and Fall’,¹⁵¹ or we might even make a ‘sideways’ comparison in terms of comparative theology to a concept from Islamic mythology almost certainly unknown to Milton: that of the shaking of the Lote Tree of Extremity on the night of Shab-e-Barat, and its fallen leaves on which the names of those who are to die in the following year are inscribed.

Then, finally, there are the subjective resonances which any individual reader may find within the world of a given text including a metaphor: one’s own experiences of loss, or exile, hideous change or of falling leaves. Some of these may be extremely quirky. To give a personal example, the ‘Etrurian shades’ of the Vallombrosa passage has a private meaning for me, which has probably never been shared by anyone else. This comes from the fact that Etruria is not only a region in Italy, but also an area in my hometown, Stoke-on-Trent, so named because of the common associations of pottery production. Etruria was the site of a steelworks, which in my childhood produced nightly spectacles of flowing molten metal and fumes which seemed worthy of Milton’s Hell. Better still, for the addict to literary ironies, the post-industrial age saw the shades of the infernal steelworks replaced with the site for a rather shoddy *Paradise Regained* in the shape of a national *garden* festival.

men: as one generation comes to life another dies away.’ (Fagles, *Iliad*, 200.)

¹⁵¹ ‘Margaret are you grieving/Over Goldengrove unleaving?/Leaves like the things of man, you/ With your fresh young thoughts care for, can you?/Ah, as the heart grows older/It will come to such sights colder/ By and by, nor spare a sigh/ Though worlds of wanwood leafmeal lie;/And yet you will weep and know why./Now no matter, child, the name:/ Sorrows springs are the same./ Nor mouth had, nor mind expressed/What heart heard of, ghost guessed:/It is the blight that man was born for/ It is Margaret you mourn for.’ (Hopkins, 50)

It may be objected that all such textual readings with their varying degrees of subjectivity belong to the domain of interpretation, not of reference. According to the Davidsonian theory of metaphor, my Etruria example would be the ultimate instance of metaphor acting like a sharp knock on the head to trigger a series of personal associations, and it would, of course, have absolutely nothing to do with meaning, let alone reference. This is to confuse the distinction between public knowledge and personal feeling with the distinction between that which can and cannot be the bearer of reference (or indeed meaning). Reference, as I have argued above, *can* be a private act, though of course any private reference may potentially be shared and placed in the public domain, as I have just done with the above example.¹⁵² What is there singled out is the double-referent of a sub-referent of an extended metaphor. My claim is that although they may or may not be perceived by a particular reader, once they have been identified and pointed out they take on the quality of reference, that is, they become *referents*. If it should be the case that they are never pointed out by anyone they remain nevertheless *potential referents*.

A final point to be made concerning the epic simile is that it does not always draw together such dissimilar worlds as find intersection in the Miltonic habit of comparing great things with small. I would like to quote a few passages from epic simile in the post-Miltonic tradition to show the way in which metaphorisers which

¹⁵² A great deal of modernist and later twentieth and twenty-first century poetry plays the trick of grafting a secondary reference onto a well-known literary text. Thus the 'many' of *I had not thought death had undone so many* in *The Waste Land* is made to refer both to the a crowd flowing over London bridge and to its original referent of the damned in Dante's *si lunga tratta/di gente, ch'io non avrei creduto/che morte tanta n'avesse disfatta*. (*Inferno* III, 55-57). (Eliot, 62; 77)

have a closer resemblance to the metaphorised also give us worlds within worlds and the effect of multiple layering.

My first example is from Matthew Arnold's 'Sohrab and Rustum', describing the moment when Sohrab challenges the Persian host on behalf of the Tatars, unaware that this will result in the tragedy of his fighting and being slain by his own father:

As, in the country, on a morn in June,

When the dew glistens on the pearled ears,
A shiver runs through the deep corn for joy—
So, when they heard what Peran-Wisa said,
A thrill through all the Tatar squadrons ran
Of pride and hope for Sohrab, whom they loved.

But as a troop of pedlars, from Cabool,
Cross underneath the Indian Caucasus,
That vast sky-neighbouring mountain of milk-snow;
Crossing so high, that, as they mount, they pass
Long flocks of travelling birds dead on the snow,
Choked by the air, and scarce can they themselves
Slake their parch'd throats with sugar'd mulberries—
In single file they move, and stop their breath,
For fear they should dislodge the o'erhanging snows—
So the pale Persians held their breath with fear.

(Arnold, 69-70)

The final and culminating simile makes a comparison which, in Davidsonian phrase, is indeed painfully trivial: that holding the breath from fear is like – well, holding the breath from fear. Yet as poetry, the passage is not trivial or bathetic. I would claim that this is because what is going on here is much more than a comparison, or a comparison with decoration or 'dreamwork' associations added. Instead, we have a collision, an intersection and a super-imposition of worlds.

Within the interrealm as metaphoric referent, we are seeing the Persian host as ‘the travellers from Cabool’, and the plain by the Oxus as the landscape of the overhanging snows on the pass below the Caucasus, and the whole attendant world within a world, the world of scant oxygen, of choked birds and of sugared mulberries, is functioning both as *Gestalt* and as interrealm: its atmosphere of imminent catastrophe being not only apposite to, nor forming an appropriate backdrop for, but actually *metaphorising* the moment within the main action of the poem: the hush which precedes the fatal encounter between father and son.

Additionally, the first simile, where the shiver running through the corn on a morning in June metaphorises the thrill passing through the Tatar host: this also functions as a *Gestalt*, colouring and altering the second simile: the heat of the morn in June functions as a contrast to intensify the sense of the cold of the snows in the following passage, and in the same way, the use of the pathetic fallacy, according to which the corn in the field feels and expresses joy, intensifies the sense of the brutal indifference of nature as experienced by the troop of pedlars in the mountain pass. Lastly, in terms of Arnold’s original target audience, the British readership, we can say that the cornfield of the first simile is at least potentially a homely landscape as contrasted with the foreign and exotic high altitude world of the second simile.

As such the tension between the two similes viewed from this aspect metaphorises the collision between the two aspects of Sohrab’s meeting with Rostum and his ultimate death at his hands: that of an encounter with the alien and that of homecoming in the final recognition of and reconciliation with his father. The same collision also symbolically presents in advance the death scene of Sohrab and his desire

to be buried in the land of his father which he never saw in life. Taking the plot of the poem as *Gestalt* in this way enables us to recognise some of the complexity and richness of the interrealm created by the simile microcosms.

My second example of a post-Miltonic epic metaphor, taken from Samuel Taylor Coleridge's 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner', is also an uncanny metaphorising of the unfamiliar by the familiar, but it is also a simile which, in pointed contrast to Arnold's 'breath as breath simile', emphasises the *unlikeness* of the metaphorised to any other object. It is chosen for its hypermetaphorical quality in illustrating, self-consciously and, with a particularly striking effect, the way in which *Gestalt* functions within the interrealm of the metaphoric referent. The quotation is from the seventh and final section of the poem, from the moment where the ruined and supernaturally propelled ship and its sole survivor return, after many adventures, to their homeland:

'Strange by my faith!' the Hermit said —
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks look warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were
Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

(Coleridge, 206-207)

Here the core of the simile-comparison is simply that the masts of the ship with their dirty and tattered sails look like bare autumn trees with a few remaining brown leaves.

The mention of the forest brook and its flora and fauna could be dismissed by the literal-minded as not part of the real simile at all, but a mere background which creates a certain atmosphere and colouring. If we are only concerned with the simile *qua* literal comparison, this would be correct. But if we are also concerned with the simile *qua* metaphor and creator of a metaphoric referent, then the other features of the extended simile become important: the metaphor within a metaphor of the 'brown skeletons', the wintry landscape, the death and violence existing within the natural world, and even the strange ambiguity as to whether it is the owlet or the wolf which eats the she-wolf's young, and the incorporation of the *unheimlich* within the strangely homely in the phrase 'My forest brook along' all become part of the metaphoric referent itself.

Thirdly, I would like to take an example from Coleridge to show how a metaphor can be given an added layer of reference by another metaphor immediately preceding it. The lines in question are taken from 'The Eolian Harp':

And that simplest Lute,
Placed length-ways in the clasping casement, hark!
How by the desultory breeze caress'd,
Like some coy maid half yielding to her lover,
It pours such sweet upbraiding, as must needs
Tempt to repeat the wrong! And now, its strings
Boldlier swept, the long sequacious notes
Over delicious surges sink and rise,
Such a soft floating witchery of sound
As twilight Elfins make, when they at eve
Voyage on gentle gales from Fairy-Land,
Where Melodies round honey-dropping flowers,

Footless and wild, like birds of Paradise,
Nor pause, nor perch, hovering on untam'd wing!

(Coleridge, 101)

Here the first metaphor of the coy maid half yielding to her lover forms such a *Gestalt* to the second metaphor of the sound of the 'elfins' in fairy-land that the second metaphor acquires an extra layer of reference as a metaphorical description not just of the music of the harp, but of what takes place when the maid abandons some of her coyness and yields completely to her lover.

I hope that the above account has gone some way towards showing how a metaphor may contain within itself layer upon layer of *noemic* referent. However, this type of multi-layered reference is not only the prerogative of the Miltonic or other epic simile: I would also contend that much shorter and simpler metaphors can contain this multiple-layering, in instances where the surrounding context of the poem, the world surrounding the microcosm of the individual metaphor, functions as a *Gestalt*. The process is less obvious, and therefore the account of the more striking instances of multiple referents within the epic simile is perhaps a necessary background or *Gestalt* for its identification. The following analyses of examples from lyric poetry are given as illustrations.

Gestalt Effect as Multi-Layering in Some Examples of Lyric Poetry

Perhaps the most compressed form of metaphoric multi-layering is when a straightforward metaphor of the 'x is a y' type is followed by a simile metaphor giving

the effect of three images (the *x*, the *y* and the subsequent simile image) being superimposed upon one another. The classic example would be Wordsworth's description of the girl Lucy (the *x* in the metaphorical statement) in 'She dwelt among th' untrodden ways':

A Violet by a mossy stone
Half-hidden from the Eye!
—Fair as a star when only one
Is shining in the sky!

(Wordsworth, Poems, 147)

We have here a girl seen as a violet which is seen as a star, and the images are superimposed upon one another to create a multi-layered interrealm. The interplay of similarity and difference is also more complicated than the very simple language might suggest. The stanza might be paraphrased in terms which emphasise difference: the contrast between the intense beauty of the young woman and her obscure situation (and perhaps also her shy nature if we read in the pre-existing metaphor of 'shrinking violet' for a shy person.) Yet visual or quasi-visual images may also be summoned up, either successively or simultaneously, as the mind creates a picture in which the two symbols are seen together (perhaps in an imagined Lake District landscape, or perhaps in a composite image of a star shining through the petals of a violet) and where their similarity as common images of the beauty of nature is the dominant factor.

My second example of lyric multi-layering shows the superimposition of frames of reference functioning in a more subtle way in a very short metaphorical statement

which concludes a descriptive poem. This statement will be seen to have, as it were, absorbed into itself layers of reference from the preceding lines of the poem which it concludes. The poem in question is a twentieth-century poem with an apparently much simpler structure than the Miltonic metaphor discussed above: the contrast is deliberate, as my intention is to demonstrate that a very simple metaphoric statement may also possess multiple *noema*, and that it gains extra layers not only of meaning, but of reference, by its position within the world of the poem of which it is a part.

The poem in question is '*Lo spiraglio dell'alba*' ('The beam of light from sunrise') by Cesare Pavese: and the line in question, the apparently very simple metaphor: *Sei la luce e il mattino* ('You are the light and the morning').

This simple, some might even say clichéd or 'dead' metaphor is, however, transformed by its position at the end of a poem which describes *one specific morning*, and which also makes explicit connections between morning and the more abstract qualities of life and reawakening, which paradoxically give rise to an even greater degree of specificity, since they thus give a description of one particular morning considered in one particular way. The intersection of this description with the final line enriches the interrealm of the metaphor created within the metaphor statement of this line by the overlapping worlds of light, morning and the poet's beloved. Let me quote the poem in full to illustrate how this happens:

The beam of light from sunrise
breathes through your lips
at the end of empty paths.
Gray light of your eyes

Sweet dewdrops of dawn
engulf the houses.

The city appears
The stones smell
You are life, the reawakening
Star lost
in the light of dawn,
the whispering breeze,
mild warmth, breath –
The night has reached an end.

You are the light and the morning.^{153 154}

Here the *noemata* of a path, a stone and a dewdrop, among others, are superimposed on the *noemata* of the light and the morning in the final line. It is a superimposition which functions as a kind of *Gestalt* effect, since the body of the poem forms a background building up to its final statement, yet also changes what we might metaphorically call the colour of this statement in the same way that a grey plate on a green cloth might be

¹⁵³ Translated by Chris Dolezalok, www.dolezalek.com/chris/poesa.htm

¹⁵⁴
Lo spiraglio dell'alba
Respire con la tua bocca
in fondo alle vie vuote
Luce griglia i tuoi occhi,

Dolci gocce dell'alba
sommergono le case.
La città abbrivisce
Odorano le pietre -

sei la vita, il risveglio.

Stella sperduta
nelle luce dell'alba,
cigolio della brezza,
tepore, respire –
è finito la notte.

Sei la luce e il mattino.

infused with a pink tinge because of its background. This is a morning in a particular city, with a particular smell, and also a morning which somehow still contains the lost light of the extinguished star. We can also say that this superimposition does *not only* add something, but actually limits the scope of the final line: the woman is not being compared with just any morning or any light, but with one morning and its light in particular, with mild warmth and a whispering breeze, not with chill air and a hurricane.

Sometimes this kind of superimposition limits the scope of a metaphor in a more radical way, giving a clear and obvious meaning to what might otherwise have been a very vague and mysterious metaphor. Again we have a case of a multi-layering of the *interrealm* of metaphor, but a multi-layering with a more radical function, as in contradistinction to the case of the above poem, the nature of the metaphorised of a given poetic metaphor is clearly indicated only by the surrounding lines, but could not have been identified from the sentence itself in which the metaphor occurs.

An example of this would be the phrase ‘Still the long chapter led me on’, which I quote from a 1951 poem by Lawrence Durrell. Now, in isolation this phrase could be taken either literally or metaphorically, and indeed a literal interpretation would probably be considered the most likely. Presuming the statement to be metaphorical, the *metaphoriser* could be taken to be used to convey any of a large number of *metaphoriseds* related to lengthy activities which the person performing them might feel led on to pursue to the very end. The chapter of a book might be imagined to be ‘substituted’ for a stage in a journey, for example, or perhaps for the hunter’s pursuit of his quarry, or again, perhaps for the ploughman’s compulsion to

continue his movement onwards towards the end of the furrow. The list of possible *metaphorised*s is very long, although certain activities would obviously be ruled out. According to my theory, the metaphor would still have a *referent*, but an extremely vague one.

However, when we are given the line embedded in the context of the poem the perception of the reader changes according to this *Gestalt* (let us assume for the purposes of the argument that the reader in question is possessed of reasonably developed powers of interpretation). The entire poem reads as follows:

Chanel

Scent like a river pilot led me there:
Bedroom darkness spreading like a moss,
The polished wells of floors in blackness
Gave no reflections of the personage,
Or the half-open door, but whispered on:

‘Skin be supple, hair be smooth,
Lips and character attend
In mnemonic solitude.
Kisses leave no fingerprints’
‘Answer.’ But no answer came.
‘Beauty hunted leaves no clues.’
Yet as if rising from a still,
Perfume whispered at the sill,
All those discarded husks of thought
Hanging untenanted like gowns,
Rinds of which the fruit had gone...

Still the long chapter led me on.
Still the clock beside the bed
Heart-beat after heart-beat shed.

(Durrell, 220-221)

Once the line is taken in context only an extremely young, obtuse or deliberately perverse reader could imagine that it is literally reading that is going on in the bed in question. The scene described, the heavily charged atmosphere of eroticism, and even the previous use of metaphoric language combine to leave us no reasonable doubt of the underlying metaphor being one of 'Sexual intercourse is reading' (rather than, let us say, for example, 'Dreaming is reading' or 'Dancing is reading'). A more detailed paraphrase of the specific metaphor (and one which incidentally kills all the poetry) would be: 'This particular instance of pleurably extended sexual intercourse is like a long, perhaps unexpectedly long, and fascinating chapter in a book which absolutely compels the reader to go on until he has reached the end'.

The fact that this paraphrase would be impossible without the other lines of the poem which place it in a context, means that we need to consider the relationship between the contextualising lines and the metaphoric referent *qua noema*. Once we realise that this is the case in this fairly extreme example, we can look back upon the Pavese poem quoted above and see that such an account is also necessary there.

Here the concept of *Gestalt*, as a way of theorising the modification of foreground by background, is helpful to the project of giving a phenomenological account of what is going on here. Just as a juxtaposition of green and grey in a painting may cause us to see pink superimposed on a canvas when the artist has never in fact dipped his brush in a pink paint-pot, so in the Durrell poem, the juxtaposition of the line 'Still the long chapter led me on' with the erotic elements in the preceding and following lines causes us to see a sexual content in lines which might otherwise have

none. This kind of *Gestalt* effect functions as a layer of reference in the metaphoric interrealm.

Text as Metre and Text as Physical Artifact as Layers of Reference

Finally, I would like to draw attention to the fact that even the metre and rhythm, and indeed even the ink and paper of the poem as physical artifact can constitute a layer of reference within a text and also within the interrealm of a metaphor: a fact which Husserl also dwelt on at some length in Paragraph 19 of his Fifth Investigation, where he pointed out that the ink of a written word is part of the presentation of a word.

(*Logische Untersuchungen*, 407; *Logical Investigations*, Vol. 2, Paragraph 19, 117)

To illustrate this, I would like to quote another extract from Coleridge in which he elaborates on a metaphor which compares his hexameters to animals of the hunt: they are both ‘like stags pursued by stag hounds’ and the horse (‘the hunter’) ridden in the chase. He invites his reader to create the interrealm in which they actually appear and can be seen as such, firstly, by giving instructions for making physical movements with the paper itself, and secondly, through the rhythm that the words themselves create, giving us the rhythm of a gallop, the final nine monosyllables enacting the rhythm of the lamed horse which is forced to slow down to a walk:

[...] Smooth out the folds of my letter, and place it on desk or on table;
Place it on table or desk; and your right hands loosely half-closing,
Gently sustain them in air, and extending the digit didactic,
Rest it a moment on each of the forks of the five-forked left hand,
Twice on the breadth of the thumb, and once on the tip of each finger;

Read with a nod of the head in a humming recitativo;
And, as you live, I shall see my hexameters hopping before you.
This is a galloping measure; a hop, and a trot, and a gallop.
All my hexameters fly, like stags pursued by the stag-hounds,
Breathless, and panting, and ready to drop, yet flying still onwards,
I would full feign pull in my hard-mouthed runaway hunter;
But our English Spondeans are clumsy yet impotent curb-reigns;
And so to make him go slowly, no way left have I but to lame him.

‘Hexameters’ (Coleridge, 304)

The Shifting Boundaries of the Interrealm of Metaphor

The above discussion took as one of its premises the assumption that the meaning of metaphors, understood in the rough definition of the relationship between metaphoriser and metaphorised, shifts. These meanings may shift according to the immediate context or to the wider socio-cultural context (*Lebenswelt*), and it is also reasonable to speak of meaning shifting according to the speaker/writer’s intention, or according to the understanding of the listener/reader. It is also possible to meditate on a metaphor in such a way as to extract as many meanings from it as possible, in a process corresponding to the Husserlian eidetic variation. The unattainable sum total of all these would be the totality of the interrealm as it is perceived under the first aspect of my theory. However, some of the correspondences found between metaphoriser and metaphorised will be contradictory, in the sense that they cannot co-exist in the same place and time in the real world. It is not possible to hold all these interpretations in a single noetic act, though possibly they may co-exist in consciousness at the same time.

To give an example, I may decide to perform the Husserlian eidetic variation on a triangle. I imagine a pink triangle and a blue triangle, a triangle made of fur and a triangle made of ice-cream. I understand that these are all triangles, but that I cannot imagine a triangle with four sides or with three and a half sides, and thus I have understood what the essence of a triangle is. I can perhaps hold all of these ideas, that is, all the triangles that I have succeeded in imagining, in my consciousness at the same time, but they are not part of the same noetic act, and the fact also remains that I cannot imagine a triangle which is simultaneously completely pink and completely blue, or completely made of fur and completely made of ice-cream all at the same time.

In the same way, I may make an eidetic variation on Burns's famous simile-metaphor 'My love is like a red, red rose' in such a way that I highlight the salient features of the rose's perfume or the rose's thorns¹⁵⁵, or indeed I may hold the two together in the same intentional act, giving them equal weight as essential moments in the bitter-sweet experience of being in love. We can, however, also find conflicting interpretations which can, indeed, be present to consciousness at the same time, but which cannot be part of the same noetic act. For example, 'My love is like a red, red rose' could conceivably mean 'She is physically beautiful to the same degree that a red rose is' or 'She has a bright red face which makes her rather ugly, but I love her anyway': both of these could not be true at the same time.

Similar plays of interpretation can also, of course, be made with statements in literal language. But the phenomenology of the meaning-shift of a metaphor differs

¹⁵⁵ The context of Burns's poem as a whole is, of course, such that negative aspects of the rose seem to have no place in the metaphor.

from that of a literal statement, in that it involves a shift in the relationship between the metaphoriser and the metaphorised. Many writers have self-consciously highlighted this fact, and perhaps none more so than the poets of the so-called 'Metaphysical' period of English literature, such as John Donne, George Herbert and Andrew Marvell. I shall take some quotations from Donne as examples of hypermetaphorisation of the shifting borders of the interrealm of metaphoriser and metaphorised as they are realised in various *noemata*.

My first example is of some famous lines from Donne's 'A Valediction Forbidding Mourning', a poem of consolation against the necessity of parting, in which it is asserted that the lovers' souls are one, or

If they be two, they are two so
As stiff twin compasses are two,
Thy soul the fixed foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if th' other do.

And though it in the centre sit,
Yet when the other far doth roam,
It leans, and hearkens after it,
And grows erect, as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to me, who must,
Like th' other foot, obliquely run;
Thy firmness makes my circle just,
And makes me end, where I begun.

(Donne, 84-85)

Here we have the simile of two lovers compared to the two legs of a compass: the woman is represented as the leg of the compass which remains fixed, and the man forced to be absent from her on a journey is the leg of the compass used to draw a circle.

The movement of the compass is a symbol for a number of emotional states: for the longing of the female partner for her lover, for the feeling of support and reassurance that will be experienced by the traveller because of the constancy of the woman at home, and for the consoling sense of the inevitability of the man's safe return and the subsequent lover's reunion. The simile is traditionally represented as innovative and daring, in that it speaks of love in terms of a hard and scientific object like a compass, rather than in terms of roses and Cupids and other commonplaces of Renaissance poetry.

Yet what is perhaps equally striking is that the metaphor does not quite add up. Two separate movements of the compass are described to represent different aspects of the experience of parting and reunion: the separating and drawing together of the compasses, and the drawing of a circle. However, it is clear that the 'ending where you begin' which is involved in drawing a perfect circle simply cannot involve a bringing together of the two legs of a compass, since these must remain separated when the circle is completed, and yet the completion of the circle is also meant to symbolise homecoming.

We have thus two compatible, if rather difficult to paraphrase, metaphors, which we may call *returning to the origin* and *achieving completion*, which are represented by two completely incompatible metaphors, metaphors which in

Husserlian terms could not be part of the same *noetic* act: the bringing together of the compass legs and the completion of a circle drawn by a compass.

What has happened here in terms of a phenomenological ontology of metaphor is that the boundaries of the interrealm of a given metaphorical statement consisting of metaphoriser and metaphorised ('The two souls of lovers are like the two legs of compasses') have shifted as the image is explored within the context of the extended Metaphysical 'conceit' or metaphor.

This is just one example of the many different ways in which a lack of constancy in the relationship between the metaphoriser and the metaphorised can be foregrounded. We can find in Donne's poetry, in particular, many examples of a self-conscious use of metaphor which shows the different meanings which can be extracted from the bringing together of two terms in this way. Whilst in 'A Valediction Forbidding Mourning', a host of metaphorisers bring out different aspects of a single metaphorised (the poem as a whole invokes the peaceful death of a virtuous man, the unfelt trembling of the spheres, and gold beaten to airy thinness, as well as the pair of compasses as metaphors for the separated but faithful lovers), other poems show how a single symbol may be open to a myriad of interpretations: that is, how a single metaphoriser may have multiple metaphoriseds.

A good example of this is the poem 'A Jet Ring Sent', in which we are given a lesson as to how a single object, in this case a ring, could metaphorise contradictory properties by virtue of the correspondence of certain of its moments to each of them. The jet black ring sent as a lover's token has its individual properties or 'moments',

such as blackness, circularity, brittleness, fashionableness and cheapness analysed in such a way as to draw forth opposing metaphorical significances:

Thou art not so black, as my heart,
Nor half so brittle, as her heart, thou art;
What wouldst thou say? shall both our properties by thee be
spoke,
Nothing more endless, nothing sooner broke?

Marriage rings are not of this stuff,
Oh, why should aught less precious, or less tough
Figure our loves? Except in thy name thou bid it say,
I am cheap, and naught but fashion, fling me away.
Yet stay with me since thou art come,
Circle this finger's top, which didst her thumb.
Be justly proud, and gladly safe, that thou dost dwell with me,
She that, oh, broke her faith, would soon break thee.

(Donne, 61-62)

Another example could be taken from the poem 'A Valediction of Weeping', in which the different aspects of the comparison of a tear to the earth are explored:

On a round ball
A workman that hath copies by can lay
An Europe, Afric and an Asia,
And quickly make that which was nothing, all
So doth each tear,
Which thee doth wear,
A globe, yea world by that impression grow,
Till thy tears mixed with mine do overflow
This world, by waters sent from thee, my heaven dissolved so.

(Donne, 89)

In these examples, we see how the borders of the interrealm created between metaphoriser ('world') and metaphorised shift. The image of the tear as a world metamorphoses itself from that of an artificial globe, to that of the world as earth deluged by floods from the skies: an earth which could just as easily be believed to be flat as round for the purposes of the image. Likewise, tears are both worlds and world-dissolvers.

This kind of poetry has often been used to support the case for seeing language as mere rhetoric, as signifiers without signified. Looked at from a more rigorous phenomenological perspective, it becomes a clash of meaning-intentions and of meaning-fulfilments.

Illustrations of the *Chiasmaphora* of Metaphor

A chiasm is a *cross-over* with the structure of an X, a passage of substance or content in two directions. The term is used by Merleau-Ponty in *The Visible and the Invisible* to describe, among other things, the relationship of reversibility between the seer and the seen, and between the seen and the unseen. In terms of my theory of the interrealm as metaphoric referent, the concept of chiasm is superimposed upon Aristotle's original concept of *epiphora* to emphasise the fact that the 'movement' of the metaphorical statement is not merely the replacement of one term by another, but also involves the cross-over of semantic content from the metaphoriser to the metaphorised, and from the metaphorised to the metaphoriser.

I would like to illustrate this aspect of the interrealm with certain examples taken from the Romantic and Victorian periods of English poetry. This period is chosen for this purpose, since, in contrast to earlier and later periods, its most typical metaphors are ones in which the two terms of a metaphor, instead of violently clashing, appear to be in Wordsworth's phrase 'lost in each other'.

My first example is some lines of Tennyson's from *In Memoriam*, which poignantly describe one aspect of his response to bereavement following the death of his close friend Arthur Hallam:

[...] my regret
Becomes an April violet
And buds and blossoms with the rest.

In Memoriam, CXV (Tennyson, 261)

Here the meaning expressed is ambiguous between 'Grief is increased' and 'Grief is diminished, or indeed destroyed, through the process of being metamorphosed into something other than grief'. Indeed, Tennyson spells this out in the following stanzas:

Is it, then, regret for buried time
That keenlier in sweet April wakes,
And meets the year, and gives and takes
The colours of the crescent prime?

Not all: the songs, the stirring air,
The life re-orient out of dust,

Cry thro' the sense to hearten trust
In that which made the world so fair.

In Memoriam, CXVI (Tennyson, 261)

Were we to attempt to rewrite the metaphor to describe the state of affairs after the process of becoming was completed, we might be at a loss to say whether we should write 'my regret is a violet' or 'my regret has disappeared and in its place is a violet' – violet being here a metaphor for, let us say, peace, joy or regeneration.

There is thus here a very obviously chiasmatic relationship between the metaphoriser and the metaphorised: the violet becomes the emblem of sorrow just as much as grief becomes sweetened and perfumed by the image of the violet. These lines can thus be taken as an extreme example of the way in which metaphor functions as *chiasmaphora* rather than merely as *epiphora*. That is, both metaphoriser and metaphorised are modified through the perception of each in terms of the other.

The insistence on *becoming* in Tennyson's metaphor concretises the relationship between the pre-reflective and metaphor which is presented as crucial to Ricoeur's theory of metaphoric reference, since for Ricoeur metaphor is not just a 'seeing-as', but also the revealer of a 'being-as' on the deepest ontological level, with metaphorical reference as well as metaphorical sense, and with the true locus of metaphor being situated in the copula 'to be' (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 6; *Métaphore*, 11). In other words, metaphor is a feeling for the object of reference which illustrates Ricoeur's conviction that there is nothing more ontological than feeling.

Tennyson's use of metaphor in *In Memoriam* also furnishes good examples of the way in which the relationship between metaphoriser and metaphoricised in the metaphoric statement is not necessarily a straightforward passage from the visible to the invisible. Let us take the simile from *In Memoriam* XXXVII:

(And dear to me as sacred wine
To dying lips is all he said),

(Tennyson, 239)

Here the words of the dead, which are invisible, are metaphorised by sacred wine, which is both physical, sensual, consumable, and yet also, in terms of the belief system invoked, belongs much more to the realm of the invisible than the words themselves, and the metaphoriser of wine is intimately connected to the metaphoricised of the word by the image of the dying lips which evoke the dead lips of the speaker.

As a further, more complex example of *chiasmaphora*, I would like to put forward a reading¹⁵⁶ of certain well-known passages from John Keats's 'Ode to a Nightingale':

Oh, for a beaker full of the warm South
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim
And purple-stained mouth
That I might drink and leave the world unseen [...]

(Keats, 526)

I once saw a copy of this poem with the gloss ‘wants wine’ written in the margin and thought this comical because so obvious. Now, I wonder if the case is so simple. Is it exactly wine that is being spoken of here, since the Hippocrene, despite being sacred to the Muses and reputedly formed by the hoofprints of Pegasus, is nevertheless actually a spring, not of wine, but of *water*?

Everything hinges on the value of the word *true* in the phrase ‘the true, the blushful Hippocrene’: is it to be taken merely an assertion that it is wine, rather than any sacred spring, that is the true source of inspiration? Or, more subtly, is it an assertion that the true water of the Hippocrene actually *remains* within the wine? As Miriam Allott has pointed out in her edition of Keats, the trope of ‘blushful water’ was common in 17th-century references to the miracle at the wedding-feast at Cana in which Christ transformed water into wine. According to the trope, water is, metaphorically, a nymph who is transformed into wine when she blushes at the presence of the Lord God. (Keats, 526) What I think we are actually given in this passage, is a description of wine metaphorically represented as water, yet as water that is in the process of metamorphosis, assuming the characteristics of wine.

A little later in the poem the reverse process takes place with the phrase ‘The coming musk-rose full of *dewy wine*’. (Keats, 528) Here water is metaphorically described as wine, which is then adjectively described as water once again. We have a

¹⁵⁶The following interpretation is a slightly revised version of part an article on the relationship between flesh and narrative. (Tomkinson, Crossing, 211-220)

miracle at Cana that works in two directions, and leaves traces of wine in water, traces of water in wine.

This reversibility goes beyond the level of individual metaphors in the poem. A similar ambiguity might be found in the penultimate stanza which speaks of the nightingale's voice as:

The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in fairy lands forlorn.

(Keats, 528)

It is possible to question the way in which those *magic casements* open: are they magic windows which float on the sea-foam and open into underwater palaces, or the windows of fairy palaces on the strand overlooking the foam? Perhaps the answer is that they, also, open both ways at once, into what Ricoeur called 'mytho-poetic depths' (Ricoeur, Power, 67) which are both inside and outside. They are like another casement in Keats's poetry, that which stands open at the end of the final stanza of the 'Ode to Psyche', celebrating the opening of the mind on the universe, and of the universe to the mind. I shall quote the stanza in its entirety as an example of an extended metaphor which foregrounds its own reversibility, as Psyche, goddess and metaphoriser of the mind, passes back into the mind.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane,
In some untrodden region of my mind,
Where branchèd thoughts, new grown with pleasant pain,

Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind:
 Far, far around shall those dark-clustered trees
 Fledge the wild-ridgèd mountains steep by steep;
 And there by zephyrs, streams and birds and bees,
 The moss-lain Dryads shall be lulled to sleep;
 And in the midst of this wide quietness
 A rosy sanctuary will I dress
 With the wreathèd trellis of a working brain,
 With buds, and bells, and stars without a name;
 With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign,
 Who breeding flowers will never breed the same:
 And there shall be for thee all soft delight
 That shadowy thought can win,
 A bright torch, and a casement ope at night
 To let the warm Love in!

(Keats, 519-521)

In this passage as metaphor for the mind's relationship with itself and with the universe, shows how, to quote a thought of Hegel taken up by Merleau-Ponty: the leaving oneself is a retiring into oneself and *vice versa*. (Merleau-Ponty, *Invisible*, 49). It is also an example of hypermetaphor, in that it shows metaphor's own awareness of the chiasmatic movement between metaphoriser and metaphorised/metphorised and metaphoriser. The reversibility of the metaphoric process within the stanza mirrors that of the relationship between the mind and that which is outside it, which is the overt theme of the passage.

Extreme Hypermetaphor in Twentieth- and Twenty-first-century poetry

In this section, I aim to continue to show, through examples taken from the work of two poets of the twentieth and twenty-first century, how some extreme examples of

hypermetaphor function in poetic language. One might even speak of hyper-hypermetaphor here, as the degree of self-consciousness is much greater than in the previous examples given, though at the same time both poets present natural objects as implied rather than stated metaphors. The poets in question are Ted Hughes and Jane Griffiths, who I have taken as examples of the inert content of the metaphoric statement (the intractable and inescapable fact that Achilles is not a lion after all and that something is lacking in all of his lion-moments) and of the complexities of referentiality, of the back and forth movement between the physical world and the *noema* of the interrealm, of the incomplete nature of *chiasmaphora*, and of the potentiality inherent in metaphorical language which I call *infinite credit*.

Ted Hughes and the Inert Content of Metaphor

a fox and not a fox

(Hughes, Pollen, 14)

The question of what I have called the inert content of metaphor can be best illustrated through the poetry of Ted Hughes considered as a case of hypermetaphorisation. As this can be best seen in the context (against the *Gestalt*) of Hughes' work as a whole, the following analysis makes use of some general comments on Hughes' work, as well as the discussion of individual passages.

One of the most striking aspects of Hughes' work is the use of a vividly and often violently described natural world to evoke a sense of the invisible.¹⁵⁷ Animals and other natural objects thus function as symbol-metaphors without necessarily falling within the framework of the classic 'x is a y' metaphor statement. Yet this is not done by travelling along the well-worn paths of Renaissance allegory or High Romantic symbolism, in which the physical world is used as a metaphoriser for one or more metaphoriseds consisting of moral, political, religious or spiritual truths.

Instead we are given a poetry which tantalises us by situating itself in an uneasy relation with the tradition of metaphors which point towards the invisible. Sometimes this takes place in terms of one physical object being unrelentingly portrayed in terms of other physical objects, so as to deny us any escape into more ethereal realms. Sometimes it takes place in terms of showing how a physical object can never be entirely translated into a metaphor for something else, nor yet *completely* expressed in terms of metaphors, however apt or numerous. Reading Hughes is thus a salutary antidote to the whole metaphysical, and allegedly post-metaphysical, tradition of attitudes to metaphor as primarily a conduit between the visible and the invisible: a tradition which continues from Plato through to Heidegger and even to the Derrida of 'White Mythology'.

The use of metaphor in question can be illustrated by one of his best known poems, 'The Thought-Fox', from his early volume *The Hawk in the Rain*:

¹⁵⁷ The ideas in this section are partly a reworking of some thoughts on the relationship in Hughes between the self and world, the visible and the invisible. (Tomkinson, *Beginnings*, 79-93)

The Thought-Fox

I imagine this midnight moment's forest:
Something else is alive
Beside the clock's loneliness
And this blank page where my fingers move.

Through the window I see no star:
Something more near
Though deeper within darkness
Is entering the loneliness:

Cold, delicately as the dark snow,
A fox's nose touches twig, leaf;
Two eyes serve a movement, that now
And again now, and now, and now

Sets neat prints into the snow
Between trees, and warily a lame
Shadow lags by stump and in hollow
Of a body that is bold to come

Across clearings, an eye,
A widening deepening greenness,
Brilliantly, concentratedly,
Coming about its own business

Till, with a sudden sharp hot stink of fox
It enters the dark hole of the head.
The window is starless still; the clock ticks,
The page is printed.

(Hughes, Selected, 13)

Here we have a description of a fox, which is an extended metaphor for poetic inspiration, but not in such a sense that we could translate the characteristics of the fox point by point into an account of a series of steps that the composing mind goes

through, and then having accomplished such a paraphrase, simply let the fox disappear as having accomplished its usefulness. This is because the fox is also the content of the poem which is produced. As Hughes himself wrote as a commentary on this poem in his essay 'Poetry in the Making':

It is about a fox obviously enough, but a fox that is both a fox and not a fox. What sort of a fox is it that can step right into my head where presumably it still sits, smiling to itself when the dogs bark. It is both a fox and a spirit. It is a real fox [...] If I had not caught the real fox there in the words, I would never have saved the poem.

(Hughes, Pollen, 14-15)

Here we have an explicit acknowledgement of the *is* and *is not* of metaphor and also a poetic enactment of *epiphora* as the visitant from the external world is seen as passing into the human mind. In so doing, however, it is not spiritualised; it remains carnal, even stinking. As in another animal poem of Hughes', 'The Otter', where the otter is described as bringing 'the legend of himself', the fox of the poem gives us the sense that he also brings the legend of himself, not merely a self with a legend attached – a thought which is echoed again in Hughes's short story 'The Deadfall', in which the poet's brother buries a dead fox, which should legally speaking have been handed over to the gamekeeper, with the words 'This fox belongs to itself.' (Hughes, Difficulties, 17)

The hypermetaphorical quality of 'The Thought Fox' as a drawing of our attention to the inert content of metaphor becomes all the clearer when perceived

against the *Gestalt* of Hughes' work in general. Hughes' poetry is filled with other metaphors which place a stress on this carnality of thought: 'Blood is the belly of logic', he says in 'An Otter', and there are numerous other points particularly in his early work in which this thought occurs with something of the status of a manifesto. Notably, in 'Crow Hill', he celebrates the 'arrogance of blood and bone', and his own gloss in the essay 'Poetry and Violence' on the poem 'Thrushes' – a poem in which the violence of birds tearing up and devouring worms is celebrated, and, controversially, at the time of its initial publication, likened to the activity in Mozart's brain – makes it clear that the central image of Mozart's brain has 'a single plain meaning: divine activity in something fleshly.' (Hughes, Pollen, 258)

The same attitude to the relationship between spirit and flesh, the visible and the invisible, comes out in his celebration of the last words of Bishop Farrar as he is chained to the stake: 'If I flinch from the pain of burning, believe not the doctrine I have preached' (Hughes, Selected, 33) and is present as he sinisterly collapses the concepts of thought and flesh into one another in his description of the death of the rat in 'The Rat's Dance':

The rat understands suddenly. It bows and is still,
With a little beseeching of blood on its nose end.

(Hughes, Selected, 100)

In a similar vein, the use of metaphor in the poem 'Relic' is a protest against the use of metaphor as *apotheosis*, as a means of softening the harsh facts of violence and

mortality by gesturing towards the invisible, by making, in Shakespeare's phrase, a sea-change into something rich and strange:

Time in the sea eats its tail, thrives, casts these
Indigestibles, the spars of purposes
That failed far from the surface. None grow rich
In the sea. This carved jawbone did not laugh
But gripped, gripped and is now a cenotaph.

(Hughes, Selected, 53)

In another very well-known poem, 'View of a Pig', this focus on the inert content of a dead body goes one stage further as a dead pig is presented in a way which emphasises its materiality and rejects the possibilities of symbolism or sentimentality:

The pig lay on a barrow dead.
It weighed, they said, as much as three men.
Its eyes closed, pink white eyelashes.
Its trotters stuck straight out.

Such weight and thick pink bulk
Set in death seemed not just dead.
It was less than lifeless, further off.
It was like a sack of wheat.

I thumped it without feeling remorse.
One feels guilty insulting the dead,
Walking on graves. But this pig
Did not seem able to accuse.

It was too dead. Just so much
A poundage of lard and pork.
Its last dignity entirely gone.
It was not a figure of fun.

Too dead now to pity.
To remember its life, din, stronghold
Of earthy pleasure as it had been
Seemed a false effort, and off the point.

Too deadly factual. Its weight
Oppressed me – how could it be moved?
And the trouble of cutting it up!
The gash in its throat was shocking, but not pathetic.

Once I ran at a fair in the noise
To catch a greased piglet
That was faster and nimbler than a cat,
Its squeal was the rending of metal.

Pigs must have hot blood, they feel like ovens.
Their bite is worse than a horse's –
They chop a half-moon clean out.
They eat cinders, dead cats.

Distinctions and admirations such
As this one was long finished with.
I stared at it a long time. They were going to scald it,
Scald it and scour it like a doorstep.

(Hughes, Pollen, 118)

The dominant metaphors of this poem are those which mediate not between the visible and the invisible, but between one aspect of the sensual or physical world and another: the pig is a sack of wheat, a doorstep, an oven, a rending of metal. The immediate *Gestalt* of the poem is likewise that of a certain concretely evoked time and place: of an area and period where pigs are routinely eaten, and where front doorsteps are routinely scoured clean by diligent North of England housewives. The doorstep image is the most striking in that it functions by linking pig and doorstep not through visual, auditory or tactile similarities, but through their common property of being the passive object upon which a certain activity (scalding and scouring) is practised.

There is also a sense in which the apex of the poem is the moment when metaphor passes over into metonymy with ‘Just so much/A poundage of lard and pork’, which is not metaphoric – or is it? Since the pig has not yet been chopped up and still also has an existence as and the aspect of a corpse, it is at least true to say that it is *not only* that. Therefore there is a residual *is* and *is not* about this statement too – perhaps, we might say metaphorically, the ghost of a metaphor within a literal statement. Yet even some of these are in a sense rejected as being no longer relevant to the dead pig who was ‘long finished with’.

However, the fact that the poem consists of a long list of the things which the dead pig *is not* means that these aspects are not completely consigned to oblivion, but rather placed under erasure. They are crossed out, but nevertheless visible. Indeed, one might object that if Hughes had actually naïvely and uncritically held the pragmatic, down-to-earth view of the pig that he claims in the poem to hold, or indeed if he had really had the job of carrying it and cutting it up to worry about, then he might not have troubled to write the poem, with its long list of irrelevant ‘distinctions and admirations’ in the first place.

It is significant that a great deal of the content which is crossed out in this way consists of metaphor (metaphor in the marked sense and simile): ‘Its squeal was the rending of metal’ and ‘they feel like ovens’. Yet if the metaphors are thus placed under erasure, even in a sense apologised for, they still continue to exist in the poem. In Hughes’ later work, metaphor becomes something in itself more sinister than false consolation. In his final volume, *Birthday Letters*, Hughes seems to suggest that one of the reasons why his marriage to Sylvia Plath was poisoned, and perhaps even one of the

reasons for her suicide, was their joint obsession with metaphors, which resulted in dark symbolic interpretations of commonplace events taking over daily life. He says of Plath:

You had only to look
Into the nearest face of a metaphor
Picked out of your wardrobe or off your plate
Or out of the sun or the moon or the yew tree
To see your father, your mother, or me
Bringing you your whole Fate.

(Hughes, Letters, 64)

Likewise, describing an incident in which a rift between the couple develops after Plath becomes angry at the sight of snares laid for rabbits in the English countryside and tears them up; what went on is described not in terms of a conflict of moral priorities, but of a clash of symbol-metaphors:

I saw the sanctity of a trapline desecrated
You saw blunt fingers, blood in the cuticles,
Clamped round a blue mug. I saw
Country poverty raising a penny,
Filling a Sunday stewpot. You saw baby-eyed
Strangled innocents, I saw sacred
Ancient custom.

I saw you
Ripping up precious precarious saplings
Of my heritage, hard-won concessions
From the hangings and the transportations
To live off the land.

(Hughes, Letters, 144-145)

The theme of the dangers of obsession with the metaphorical is developed in 'Astringency', another poem from *Birthday Letters*, a poem in which Plath is described as looking at the Hudson River, and seeing a rock sticking out of the water, says that it is 'like a lariat', that is, the loop of a rope which can be used as a lasso: a potential metaphor for metaphor itself. Hughes takes up the image of the rope, turning it into a metaphor for both the repression of metaphor by the poet and the capturing of metaphors in poems. The phrase 'like a lariat' is, says Hughes:

The sole metaphor that escaped you
In easy speech, in my company –
Past the censor? Past the night hands?
Past the snare
Set in your throat by whom? Who caught all
That teeming population, every one,
To hang their tortured eyes and tongues up
In your poems? To what end? The constrictor
Not to be tugged out, or snapped.

(Hughes, Letters, 81)

This exploration of metaphor in these passages has a significance beyond the psychological and biographical: it gives us a sense of the infinite potentiality of the world to give birth to metaphor (from sun, moon, wardrobe and plate) and of metaphor to give birth to the world again (Fate appearing in the face of a metaphor).

The final violent metaphor for metaphors as dead animals strangled in a snare and hung up by a gamekeeper perhaps goes as far as poetry can possibly go in presenting the tension inherent in metaphor which Ricoeur's theory continually emphasises. This image of the metaphor snared, tortured and trapped can also be seen

to express both the danger inherent in metaphor itself and the danger of repressing it. It is Ricoeur's tensive theory of metaphor given nerves and flesh. At the risk of increasing the agonies of these metaphorical metaphors, we can also wrench them from their context in order to describe the attempts (critiqued in my third chapter) to strangle the life out of metaphor by confining their meaning to the literal.

Yet, poets are usually convinced that metaphor will win the day: will somehow escape from its tormenters. I would like to turn now to a discussion of a living poet, Jane Griffiths, whose work also has a strong meta-metaphorical aspect, and who in the first poem which I discuss, suggests such an optimistic outcome.

Jane Griffiths: the Meta-Metaphorical, Veiled Reference, Self-conscious

Chiasmaphora and Infinite Credit

[...] *doubled up and amazed at our luck as at the glimpsed
sign near Alexandria Palace which claims trains
may run on either line in both directions*

'Crystal Palaces', Griffiths, *Icarus*, 33

My epigraph is chosen to suggest the *chiasmaphora* of metaphor; the cross-over of semantic content between the metaphoriser and the metaphorised; a relationship of which the poet in question appears to be sharply aware. Jane Griffiths, the final poet that I will consider in this chapter, through a discussion of her volume *Icarus on Earth*, provides us with extremely self-conscious illustrations of the chiasmatic nature of metaphor, an *a fortiori* sense of the qualities of impure or veiled reference, and, above

all, a sense of the infinite credit of metaphor and the infinite potentiality of the world to be metaphorised. If, in the meta-metaphorising of Hughes, the emphasis is on the inert content which cannot be carried over in any given *chiasmaphora*, Griffiths, while showing, as we shall see, an awareness of this aspect of metaphor, focuses more on a celebration of the stealthy lightness of touch with which transitions between metaphoriser and metaphorised can be made. Her verse thus touches on two extremes, in the sense that metaphors are both concealed and self-consciously discussed.

This is epitomised in ‘Kitty’s Song’, a poem defending the resistance of the metaphorical imagination to scientific modes of thought. ‘Kitty’s Song’ is written in the *persona* of a dead cat suffocated in an oven in an eighteenth-century experiment intended to prove ‘that Fire is the Radix of Life’, the instructions for which read: ‘Let a cat and a candle be put together in an Oven ... and you will perceive that the Instant the Candle goes out, that Instant the Cat dies.’ Kitty the cat, the hapless subject of the experiment, then speaks:

Observe the cool, the empirical
certainty that knows each soul
has a housing and fire
belongs in ovens. That science
can’t breathe the air of metaphor
but grasps at the soft blue quiver
of flame distilled to a vital spark
on the flatbed of the oven.
They’d have to pan for it:
it wouldn’t stir a feather.

To indulge in a slightly malicious reading of this passage: Griffiths might well have

been describing the fine analytic mind of Davidson as it attempts to get to grips with the meaning of the metaphorical statement and finds it absent, rather than the empirical-rationalist executioner of the age of Enlightenment. The rejection of metaphor is, needless to say, not a theory which the poem endorses: the cat-voice of the narrator continues:

Still too quick for the dead
hand of the recorder, when
they come to break the seals
and bury the evidence, it slips
like metaphor or a slim burglar
headfast through an eye-patch
window and come to rest
among flowerpots on a ledge
where you find me catlike
and ready for rehousing.

Griffiths, Icarus, (my italics)

Kitty, the dead cat, then tells us what will happen 'if you take me in'. It is not an enterprise for the faint-hearted. She warns: 'I shall inhabit you/as I inhabit my own skin'. If, instead of simply seeing metaphor as a metaphor for the cat-ghost, we also see the cat-ghost as a metaphor for metaphor, this may lead to the interpretation that she will be that metaphor from which thought cannot be detached or purified. The extended metaphor then continues: I will sometimes, continues Kitty the metaphor, in the daytime be 'domestic/slack on the sofa as an unbent bow'. Thus she becomes a metaphor for the half-living or lazy metaphor, which philosophers have sometimes so rashly imagined to be dead. Yet such metaphors can be revitalised and such also is the

case with Kitty:

[...] but nights, or when I

sense the pressure of a door
or window shutting me in,
my swansdown fur will ruffle
blue as metaphor as I observe
the rites of the corridor, rake out
the embers in my throat, and sing.

(Griffiths, *Icarus*, 47, my italics)

The meta-metaphor of the burglar is an appropriate one for metaphor as theorised by Ricoeur and those, including myself, who defend its power of reference to reality.

Metaphor is a burglar because it breaks into the world, shattering its windows, dragging out some stolen goods from the realm of the pre-reflective. Or, alternatively, it is a burglar because it steals from the realm of the imagination and converts its loot into the currency of everyday language. As in the case of the windows in ‘Ode to a Nightingale’, we may become confused as to the direction in which the windows open. One might add: metaphor is a *slim* burglar because it always manages to sneak in and out; it never gets stuck, feet dangling undignified in the air, its belly on the window-sill, waiting haplessly for the thought-police to arrest it and ask it its business, in the liminality of the interrealm between the world of reference to everyday objects and the world of metaphoric reference.

If the burglar reference is relatively obvious, perhaps the second meta-metaphor

is less so. To say *blue as metaphor* is to assert that metaphor is blue. What exactly does this mean? Blue as a clichéd metaphorical phrase for ‘feeling depressed’? Blue as suffocation? Blue as poison? Blue as the light on a police-car? Blue as blueberry pie and its all-American associations of normality? Blue as the Bombay sapphire gin-bottle which is referred to in ‘Floating Poem’? (Griffiths, Icarus, 34) If one were to subscribe to a ‘Humpty-Dumpty’ theory of metaphor, in which a given metaphor in any context can mean anything you wish, all interpretations would be equally valid.

Certainly all are valid in terms of the first aspect of the interrealm.

However, in my interpretation, or more technically in the *noema* which I have created, and which I believe at least overlaps with that of the author, we can say that in the context of this poem, with its half-concealed image of the dying swan launching itself into the skies and the beyond, the privileged interpretation of the blue of metaphor would be *blue as infinity*: the infinity of metaphor’s infinite credit, of its multiple and uncountable metempsychoses and metamorphoses.¹⁵⁸

The link between metaphor and infinity is, of course, rooted in the history of philosophy, in the sense that infinity is identified with the eternal and invisible. Plato’s metaphors of the Sun, the Cave and the Line were created to enable us to conceive of the world of the Forms. Despite his well-known distrust of rhetoric and poetics, it seems that metaphor for Plato was alive in a sense of a live wire, of a conductor, of a conduit, or of that which when speaking of *eros* in the *Symposium* he called a *metaxu* (*Symposium* 203b). But if we no longer believe in the world of Platonic forms,

between which two worlds does metaphor mediate?

Put like this, the question of the nature and role of metaphor in a world which has increasingly abandoned an otherworldly metaphysics, seems rather like the question of the role of thought posed by Hannah Arendt in *Between Past and Future* and *The Life of the Mind*. Escaping from the old dream of metaphysics, from its aspirations to carry us to some otherworldly realm, we must somehow find a way to theorise the role of thought within the locus of the everyday world of mortals.

Analogously, we should find a place for metaphor as a *metaxu*, an in-between held in tension between thought and the pre-reflective, carrying us not to a Platonic heaven but to a second order of reference. As I have implied, if we are to do this, the insights of philosophy should not be detached from those of poetry and poetic metaphor.

I would now like to turn to a discussion of metaphoricity in Griffiths' work in general. Her poetry is remarkable for the way in which it manifests tension between the way in which the natural object can be made to function as metaphor or symbol, and its resistance (or indeed the poet's own resistance) to the metaphorical process. Making the natural object into a metaphor could be seen either as domesticating it, or as distancing us from it, and Griffiths's poetry invites us to ponder the implications of this, without delivering any simple answers. Bernard O'Donoghue has remarked that 'The extraordinary exuberance of Jane Griffith's poems is a product of their strange balancing between the image and the idea',¹⁵⁹ and Griffiths herself seems to be keenly aware of this balancing act. In my terminology, she gives us a consciously

¹⁵⁸ Griffiths also refers to writing as 'a kind of metamorphosis'.

¹⁵⁹ Quoted on the back cover of *Icarus on Earth*; I have been unable to trace the reference.

foregrounded and troubled *chiasmaphora* of metaphor.

Her recent collection *Icarus on Earth* is as an example of this process. The complex interplay of the literal and metaphorical is evident from the opening poem of the collection onwards. In this poem, 'By the book' – a title which already teases us by bringing to life a clichéd metaphorical phrase and applying it to a situation in which a person is literally sitting by a book – images of external nature interplay with nature seen through the medium of a translated text and natural images used as metaphors for emotional life.

As in most of the poems in this volume, character and action are understated, and we are left to infer the basics of what is really going on. In other words, we are confronted with problems of reference at the most basic level: we might ask 'Just what is she talking about?' This has created a negative reaction in some readers: Wayne Burrows, reviewing *Icarus on Earth* (Look, 102) complains: "Even after several attempts to unravel them, the poems seem to slide off the mind, leaving little, if anything behind."

For those who appreciate the poems, however, the very slipperiness, the lightness of touch and the deliberate vagueness of reference, is part of the attraction. All that happens in 'By the book' is that a woman goes into a library, which is not named, but which from certain hints concerning the way in which gates are locked in the evening and so on, we can deduce to be no other than the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and that a man waits outside, hoping that she will come out, but finally leaves without speaking to her.

The poem begins, 'When he went to tell her, she went to the library'; but we are not explicitly told *what* the man in the story told or wanted to tell. However, *if* we infer a connection with other poems in the volume written using the first and second person instead of *he* and *she*, and apparently telling the story of a long-distance relationship between Britain and North America, we may deduce that the man in 'By the book' is informing the woman of his decision to leave England, and wants to talk through the implications for their relationship.

Throughout the collection, we are given the possibility of constructing a referent from context using the surrounding poems and our knowledge of the outside world as a *Gestalt*. We may also infer a certain identification between the waiting male character of 'By the book' and the 'Icarus' character of the volume's title sequence, whom a character described merely as 'Girl' addresses with the words: 'Now you write with the weight of the Atlantic behind you/ That even the stars look different' (Griffiths, Icarus, 21) and 'Tonight you say you'll be flying, and to Phoenix'. (Griffiths, Icarus, 23)

Within this poem we also have a metaphor which functions as a poem in miniature setting the tone for the rest: 'if on descent/ the plains are starred with cacti, a near/subliminal pricking of thumbs, you'll stall'. (Griffiths, Icarus, 23) We may well ask ourselves: 'What is the nature of the *near subliminal*, since the subliminal is already a borderline state: is it that which is only just about to break through into being registered by consciousness subliminally, or that which has gone beyond it to be registered – just about? Or perhaps both?' One is tempted to say that metaphor itself

in Griffiths has the paradoxical quality of the ‘near subliminal’: sometimes just under and sometimes just over the surface.

This is apparent in the way in which the relationship between the male and the female protagonists is introduced to the reader in ‘By the book’:

He watched the paint blister on the door to Admissions.

She found the three things she wanted under Fable
with tight calf spines. With the palm of her hand
she smoothed out the rucked pages as wind
flattens a pond. She took up her pen.
He placed his head between his hands against the flat
of the wall. It was like talking to a stone, he said.

She sat by the window and translated: *Child*
did you not see the pike in the reeds? – that was why
we flew. Did you not see the hawk? Her mind
vaulted like sunlight off a pigeon’s back.
He looked at the towers and the twist of the stairs
taking up the argument the way a pen takes up ink.
He heard footsteps and laughter; it was the librarian.
Darkly, a pigeon cut an inverse parabola in the air.

And when it struck six and they came to lock the gates
and he left without speaking, she was translating:
Carissimi, most beloved, you should know that these things
signify – And stopped. And smiled, thinking of him vaguely
as an undercurrent in the soft skein of water across
her wrists, and how the sentence would go on the next day.

(Griffiths, *Icarus*, 9)

Here the foregrounding of the chiasmatic relation between the outside world and the mind is just as intriguing as the relationship between the two characters. We do not remain for a long time within a single mode of reference, either literal or metaphoric. The natural objects occurring in these lines such as birds, stone, fish and water switch

their status in the sense that they are sometimes real, sometimes imagined or fictive and sometimes metaphors for the visible or for the invisible world.

Griffiths's comments on other poets reveals a fascination with the way in which natural objects stand in a chiasmatic relation to that which they can metaphorise. In her review of *Public Dream* by Frances Leviston she commends the 'shock of surprise' in the closing lines of the poem 'Humbles' caused by a metaphor for the entrails of a road-kill deer:

the burst bowel fouling the meat
exposed for what it is, found out – as Judas,
ripped from groin to gizzard, was found
at dawn, on the elder tree, still tethered to earth
by all the ropes and anchors of his life.

Griffiths comments:

The comparison is extraordinary. At first it seems to work entirely on a physical level, and perhaps rather troublingly *not to* work in any other way: what point of contact could there possibly be between a deer and the archetypal traitor? But even as this doubt arises, it is resolved by the last two lines, which take an entirely new direction, linking Judas and the deer by their mortality, and by the traces of their lives that continue (like the deer's beating heart) long after the technical moment of death. Their lingering sense of 'I am' recognised – perhaps even shared – by the poet too.

(Griffiths, *Dream*, 1)

What Griffiths is emphasising here is the extreme clash of *is* and *is not* which make for a striking metaphor; in my terminology, the way in which the *chiasmaphora* of the metaphoric process carries over some, but not all, of the content from metaphoriser to

metaphorised. The flow of meaning here is very obviously in two directions: the metaphor gives us even more of a new perspective on the metaphoriser, Judas, than on the metaphorised deer.¹⁶⁰

In similar vein, reviewing Jennifer Moxley's *Imagination Verses*, Griffiths writes that Moxley's central concern 'is the attempt to make sense of the relation between the self and its surroundings, a concern explored repeatedly through a number of different voices.' (*Poetry Review* 93-4) The same could be said of Griffiths's own work; however, whilst Griffiths makes a faint implicit criticism of Moxley for collapsing the natural world into subjectivity, describing her poems as 'strikingly depopulated' (*Poetry Review* 93-4), Griffiths's own poems tend to display the reverse process: the self veils itself behind, or is even lost within the natural objects which it perceives, which are not placed in traditional metaphoric statements, but which nevertheless function as quasi-symbols or quasi-metaphors for the self and the emotions. She has gone beyond Wordsworth and the Romantics in the losing of subject and simile in one another.

As such, not only does her poetry give us veiled metaphors in the sense that we do not immediately recognise them as such, but it also furnishes us with excellent examples of the interrealm of metaphor as a vague referent with indeterminate borders. The striking thing is that we have a simultaneous exploration of the limits of metaphor and an illustration of its central characteristics. We have come a long way from the

¹⁶⁰ Though, one may add that it is not absolutely clear from the syntax here whether 'Judas' is the metaphoriser or the metaphorised, and it is also unclear whether the other term of the metaphorical

simplicity of a metaphor such as ‘Achilles is a lion’, whilst ultimately remaining in the same (inter)realm.

This veiling process in Griffiths, however, often functions as a veiling which is also simultaneously a revealing, an opening upon truth in the sense of the Heideggerian *aletheia*.¹⁶¹ In this way, reasons for falling in love are presented in terms of an opening upon the presence of the objective world in the poem *Crystal Palaces*:

Because there are three stones in a whorled glass
shell in the bathroom. Because the light is grey.
Because there is a pelt of may and snow petals
across the panes. Because the wind has a shard-
like edge to it. Because the reception is poor.
[...]
Because we have both seen these things,
at different times [...]

(Griffiths, *Icarus*, 32)

Here what is described is an interrealm (not the interrealm of metaphor but one analogous to it), an interrealm created between the two persons (two lovers as we may imagine) through the intermediary of the external world and their shared perception of it. It is more than the description of a shared world, it is the description of shared ‘moments’ in the life of two beings. ‘Moments’ in Husserl’s technical sense as well as the everyday one, since what is shared by the two people who have ‘seen these things’ is not only a moment in time, but a something which has become a non-independent, perhaps non-detachable, part of themselves.

statement is actually the deer or, more specifically, the humbles, or the deer’s entrails.

¹⁶¹ Cf. *Being and Time*, H 33-34, Macquarrie and Robinson, 56-58.

The sentences are on the surface literal, and not at all metaphorical. However, when we start to focus on the meaning of *because*, the poem begins to function on the limits of the literal and the metaphorical. We are never told exactly what happens *because* of all these things: we can infer a literal and prosaic meaning along the lines of: ‘We fell in love because we bonded with one another as a result of our shared environment’, but there is also the possibility that what is referred to is a particular mental state, or a way of being which cannot quite be paraphrased, and a state which exists so absolutely *within* the objects mentioned that it is a case of metaphorical language to say that it depends on them, is *because* of them. (We might compare this to the chant ‘*We’re here because we’re here because we’re here because we’re here*’ of which it is also problematic whether or not we are given a literal sentence conveying a fact concerning causality.)

Another example of this liminal area between the literal and the metaphorical is to be found in ‘Hours in New York’, a poem describing a lovers’ meeting in terms of the surrounding objects:

This is how it is on meeting –
an interlude, shafts of the streets deep below
the deep blue-gold of windows springing
the sky, at impossible heights the visible
air, and miles below, the surface
negotiations of the sidewalk, the margins
the burning slush. [...]
my cherry leather bracelet in your hand weaving
against the stopped sentence of the traffic.
Blood like lapis veining your wrist.

The slow salt tidemarks rising from your boots.
Static, a single hair twisting from your sleeve.

(Griffiths, Icarus, 37-38)

Again and again we are given the sense of a mysterious something which inheres in the natural object, which nevertheless remains just on the edge of passing into a symbol or metaphor for something else, as in the opening of the poem 'Oxygen':

It's in the off-white squares of the plan
for the new house, the two whole bedrooms,
half-moon doors, and five children

poring over it. In grass to bare feet,
the steep of garden falling
to a stream, curl of petticoats

on take-off and laced shadows
of blackcurrant leaves.

(Griffiths, Icarus, 48)

What exactly, we may wonder, is the reference of the pronoun *it*? Is it simply oxygen, or is it oxygen as a metaphor for life? Or does *it* have a vaguer reference, simply referring to the exuberance emanating from selected aspects of a certain time and place and air? Or is it, perhaps, all of these things?

But Griffiths does not merely evoke objects which have gained personal significance by being present at particular times; she is also keenly aware of the uncanny and perhaps dangerous ease with which the natural world becomes a symbol

for something other than itself. In 'Translation' she plays with the image of a cliff-face as an extended metaphor for the translator's craft:

We might have said, it is like
flight, like hedging your doubts –
the cliff-face exposure, the harsh white

gutturals of scree and sea and bird
and the scrabble for a foothold –
the long too-much of the world

before the plunge, a reef of wind
muscling under the wing and all sense
suspended for the span you inhabit

like the pure white interval over
the page before the broad sweep of ink
flows upwards and outwards as a rope

(Griffiths, Icarus, 58)

This follows a passage in which translation is described in sentences beginning with 'It is' or 'It's', some of which have an ambiguous status between metaphors for translation and descriptions of the surroundings in which the work of translation takes place:

It is a house with a bay,
Windows the grained green
Of total immersion.
The sea beyond the glass.
It is the three steps down
To the workroom, is lifting

aside the crewel curtain heavy
with the twenty-six animal
letters of the alphabet, squared

It's the cursors rapid pulse
in a half-dark room

(Griffiths, Icarus, 57)

These words cut two ways into the visible and the invisible: *total immersion* could be in the sea, or in a language, the letters of the alphabet are *squared* on the square keys of the keyboard, and mathematically to the power of two through their bi-lingual use, perhaps with a glance at the perfect virtue of *homo quadratus* thrown in. Squaring might also be taken as a meta-metaphorical metaphor if interpreted in terms of Nietzsche's comment 'even the concept which is as bony, four-square and transposable as a die – is nevertheless merely the residue of a metaphor'! (Nietzsche, Truth, 84-85)

The poems quoted so far are all examples of hypermetaphor in that they illustrate *a fortiori* the vagueness of the interrealm referent, but Griffiths also deliberately dwells on the question of metaphor itself, on the movement of transposition which takes place in metaphorisation, and even hints at the difficulties of giving a theory of metaphor. In the same poem she uses the phrase 'unassimilable/as similitude' (Griffiths, Icarus, 58), words which recalls Ricoeur's comment that 'it is impossible to talk about metaphor unmetaphorically'. (Ricoeur, Metaphor, 18)¹⁶² Her poems taken as a whole, not only show a mastery of metaphor, but a meta-metaphorical slant, shown not only in 'Kitty's Song', as discussed above, but also in 'Elegy (*for Giles*)', where the movement of another cat (one of the many cats which appear in the collection) through grass is a metaphor for the process of the artist sketching, or indeed

for the process of metaphoric transformation itself: the book with its corner turned
down at

the page where in pen and ink
your cat fits in an edgy arm-chair

and around him are the fish-bone
the wish-bone, the open cage –
things that stuck, these surroundings,
like the passenger's door-handle
that sheepskin rug, and the way
you'd stride slantwise from the car

to house, or pencil the scrollwork
of a cast-iron chair circuitous as
the cat's tack record round the edge
of a field, so faint it's only the weaving
of the ears in grass that shows where
it passes into something else again.

(Griffiths, *Icarus*, 61, my italics)

The passing into something else again might be taken as the wished metempsychosis of the subject of the elegy. Yet this 'something else again' into which the real and symbolic cat passes could equally be taken to represent the impure or vague reference of the interrealm of metaphor, which Davidson magisterially dismissed as a 'well, something'.

However, the other aspect of this meta-metaphoric awareness in Griffiths is that her poetry includes epiphanies of nature as the absolutely other, as that which, beyond

¹⁶² 'il n'est pas possible de parler non métaphoriquement [...] de la métaphore' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 25)

similitude, and *like similitude*, refuses to be assimilated. In 'Postcard from Penwith', the speaker addresses her absent lover:

Since you've gone there have been no rumours
Beached whales are just rocks, rocks are not
castles, a deadhead spider's only a tease
in a teacup, and thunderstorms last night were
no more than themselves.

(Griffiths, Icarus, 15)

The New World to which the lover has escaped is also associated with an escape from a heraldic or symbolic nature into a nature of pure alterity, eluding metaphor, though just as all inexpressibility *topoi* express something, metaphors are hinted at, even as they are suppressed. The poem continues:

We'll both head West.
Come Canada, you say, I should let distances
take over – frame after frame of nothing in particular
but mountain ranges in the heat haze tidal

as islands are.

(Griffiths, Icarus, 15)

Likewise, in the poem 'Translation' Griffiths says of the Canadian landscape:

There are no likenesses here, there are only the mountains
behind the mountains, the lakes
the snowcap and the combed black peaks –
this summit is not a pyramid
that ridge is not a fortification
though it looks like one.

Though this range with its improbable
enjambements springs to mind your line
breaks and their soaring double-jointed descent
down a sheer surface

it is not a poem.
The lake has a boat-station and a name
a creek flows out of it to the north:
these are things to hold on to.

[...] You could imagine anything:
voices of the dead from Spirit Island,
the high articulated laughter of a loon.
Two moose swimming in the lake left
to right and bobbing slightly –
not standing for anything, just getting across
the wake of the returning launch under
the clattering rise and fall, the uninterpretable toothcomb
notes of a jay.

(Griffiths, *Icarus*, 59-60)

Here, as in Ted Hughes' 'View of a Pig', potential metaphoric idealisations are evoked only in order to be dismissed. We also have the expression of a (perhaps only momentarily held) attitude which sharply distinguishes between simile and metaphor in its narrower sense, or between metaphorisation and the mere work of resemblance: the phrase 'this summit is not a pyramid/that ridge is not a fortification//though it looks like one'. This can be interpreted as a claim that to metaphorise and to compare are not the same thing at all: in the language of phenomenology, that the *noetic* acts of comparison and of metaphorisation are different. The implication is that it is the emotional state of the observer, perhaps itself proceeding from the influence of the landscape and its perceived spirit, which determines this difference.

Alternatively, however, the phrase ‘though it looks like one’, could be taken as an ironic hint that the metaphoric attitude will, like Kitty the cat, sneak in through the back door sooner or later: after all the author is a poet, necessarily addicted to metaphor even in her attempts to remain in what we might call the literal attitude. It is in keeping with this paradox that even as she calls the notes of the jay untranslatable, she attempts to translate them through the apt metaphoric description ‘toothcomb’.

However, if we attempt to think of the presentation (the Husserlian *Vorstellung*) of the ridge as an ideal entity or *noema*, we can say that both act of presentation and *noema* itself differs according to whether it is seen as being a fortification or as simply resembling one.

Moreover, a statement which asserts that something is *not* something, when it very obviously is not, has an ambivalent status between the literal and the metaphoric. Its *raison d’être* is not to give literal information, but to reject the metaphorical attitude. This is not, however, the same as not evoking the metaphors at all. The metaphors of fortification, pyramid etc., are rather, in Derridean phrase, placed *under erasure*.

Even this position is not, of course, a final one, even within the context of the *Icarus on Earth* volume. If ‘Translation’ ends with an apparent rejection of the metaphors and interpretations which the poet has used so freely in the earlier sections of that very poem, we also have another poem, ‘Postcard from Penwith’ which moves in the opposite direction, concluding with a sublime lapse into the realms of hyperbolic fantasy worthy of the Metaphysical poets, as a lover’s trans-Atlantic message is tapped on those rocks that are no more than themselves:

I'll be looking for a way
across, tapping Jasper's solid rock.
You'll be interpreting tremors in the dust,
rubble sounding a crevass in Santa Fe.

(Griffiths, *Icarus*, 15)

This metaphor of communication could also be applied to the function as metaphor itself as *metaxu*, as a go-between. Griffiths's use of the metaphorical and the hyper-metaphorical in the collection as a whole contributes to its underlying unity, as the charting of the relationship between separated lovers is counter-pointed by the relationship between the natural world, the self and metaphor. Perhaps a long-distance relationship with intermittent and passionate meetings could itself be a metaphor for the relationship between the human mind and the external world as brought together through the metaphoric imagination and metaphoric process in these poems. As such the poems function as a hypermetaphorisation of what Ricoeur called the tension in the heart of the copula, in the *is* and the *is not* of the metaphorical statement.

This is not quite the case with the concluding poem in the collection, 'Russian Dolls', which, on the surface, dwells more whole-heartedly on things in themselves, and which I shall therefore use to illustrate the concept of 'veiled reference'. This is possible because 'Russian Dolls' is not only a poem about physical surfaces, but is simultaneously about a couple (at least a 'they') settling into a house, discovering a new centre of life, and implicitly about the consequent Russian-doll-like accumulation of layers of meaning, one inside another. It is a poem in which interrealms are

superimposed upon interrealms, referent upon referent, and which as such forms a suitable conclusion to the illustration of a theory of multi-layered reference.

Appropriately enough, it has to be read in terms of the *Gestalt* of the preceding poems in order for us to infer that it is the story of the reuniting of the lovers separated in the opening poem. And here, also a run of garden walls constitutes the vaguest of boundaries, and the cat, which, once read against the *Gestalt* of the cat of 'Kitty's Song', as well as the other cats of the poems, becomes a symbol of the stealthy movement of metaphor or metempsychosis, is caught in a temporary pose of arrested movement:

Russian Dolls

So they arrived, and found the shape of things
was a pear tree, a run of red brick
garden walls like the anatomy of a lost
civilisation, and a black and white cat
balled against pink peonies.

So they bought paint and papers and made
the house an interior. They took things in.
Suns spotted the ripening pears.
The evenings stretched like an elegy.
And they looked down on the skeletal north-

north-westerly semaphore of aials, grew
self-contained. In autumn, as the fruit fell,
they could feel it: a new core shouldering
into place like a gold pear hardening
under the motley pear's skin.

(Griffiths, *Icarus*, 64)

This is a poem which is heavy with things, with the fecundity of the natural world, yet also containing a tension between fecundity and dissolution strongly reminiscent of Keats's ode 'To Autumn'. This sense of dissolution is hinted at through the use of metaphor and simile, through the mention of the anatomy of the lost civilization, the elegy, and the skeleton. This delicate balance leads us, I think, to ponder the case of the relationship between the concrete images sensuously presented and the idealisations for which they might stand, while at the same time remaining themselves.

Again, as in the opening poem, nothing is said about the two people who arrive: taking the poem in isolation it is even an assumption to say that they are two, not three or more. It is to make a further assumption to see them as a couple, let alone a heterosexual one. Only our sense of symmetry, and perhaps an old-fashioned desire for a happy ending, might lead us to conclude that these are the man and woman of the opening poem, 'By the book' (and dare we then make the leap of reference, which allows us to say 'Griffiths and her lover', or shall we alternatively conclude that this poem is her elegy for 'a life not lived'?¹⁶³) We may then fill in the gaps and imagine that 'they' are transforming a trans-Atlantic relationship into living together in some country cottage, an English cottage, an Oxfordshire cottage, together with the inevitable cat. This is in itself an example of the vague reference which also characterises Griffith's metaphors.

¹⁶³ The introduction to *Icarus on Earth* tells us that 'Icarus stands for the people in many of the poems, passionately concerned to test the limits of what is possible in many different kinds of flight, both literal and metaphorical. It is a book of elegies for lives not lived as well as actual lives.' (Griffiths, *Icarus*, backpage)

In 'Russian Dolls', subjectivity is entirely mediated by natural objects, and the reference of the metaphors in the poem is not so much vague as veiled: the process of reference is analogous to a pointing to a definite object which is nevertheless swathed in the mist. If the golden pear refers beyond itself by functioning as a metaphoriser and co-foundational moment in an interrealm, there is no question but that its primary metaphorised is the new life of the inhabitants of the house, not, let us say, the benefits of a new Utopian political system, or a change in styles of architecture, but the metaphor is not spelled out, remaining on the level of a symbol, or a metaphoriser that could have multiple metaphoriseds.

We may also, through intertextual reference to other poems by Griffiths in the same volume, find further layers of meaning, and of metaphoric reference. The ripening fruit may be the metaphoriser of less salient metaphoriseds, which nevertheless undercut the more obvious symbolism, creating not merely a new interpretation but a new referent. Thus there is almost certainly a glancing reference to the world of Arthurian romance portrayed in an earlier poem in the volume, 'Elayne', which also refers to a walled garden, to objects multiplying themselves into the distance and to the skin of ripening fruits. If we see in 'Russian Dolls' an intertextual reference to this poem, a reading of it becomes a *Gestalt* for the symbol-metaphor of the ripening pear. I quote the poem in full:

Elayne

Some things the book doesn't mention –
the way she would walk the walls daily
and compass the horizon, Brittany

beyond it, and beyond that, island upon
island to the end of the world walled
like a garden. Or how she'd woken
that night to hear his breathing turn
like a change in the weather, swell
of a slack sail, the first whisper of rime

on a ripened fruit's skin, and saw him
adrift in the sheets, straight and naked
as a needle. And saw the shape of his

dreams, something like the a ship's bow wave
going on ahead, because love
was different then, how he'd think of her,

if at all, as the catch and drag of her skirt
life's element of resistance: the skin
of an apple to the teeth, frostbitten grass

to the feet, a horse's straw-sweet breath
in air, or hawk in crewel work: like
the thing he lacked. And how she'd be

the heavier for it, but for all that how
they'd have twinned, his idea and hers,
like sail and wind, wind and wing,

if life had been different then. Or still
like tapestry and needle: the turning
under, and the stitching in.

(Griffiths, Icarus, 14)

The veiled reference in this poem is to Malory's story of Lancelot and of Elayne, the lady who pretends to be Queen Guinevere in order to spend a night in Lancelot's bed and become pregnant ('the heavier') with Galahad, after having narrowly escaped being put to the sword when her deceit was discovered. The skin of the fruit here is associated with Lancelot's rejection of Elayne in the interests of his fidelity to his

adulterous relationship with Guinevere: the image of a fruit covered in frost is a metaphor for the change in Lancelot's breathing as he sleeps, post-coitally, by Elayne's side – a prelude to rejection. Seeing the ripening fruit of 'Russian Dolls' as referring back to this poem, makes the concluding poem of the volume edgier than would otherwise have been supposed. The fact that neither this link nor the story implicit in the 'Elayne' poem (in which Lancelot is not even named) is spelled out completely contributes to the overall effect of veiled reference, of a Holy Grail revealing itself incompletely.

Yet it is perhaps partly the intriguing quality of the veiled reference which might make the reader – or at least makes me – suspend more sophisticated strategies to return to the equiprimordial naïveté of the listener of fairy-tales, who for all the ambiguity of the *is* and *is not*, of the *aixo era y no era/ bir varmis bir yokmuş*, may well focus on the couple settling down in the house, and naïvely ask, 'Will they live happily ever after?' Perhaps to find this ultimate question implicit in such an indirect or veiled symbolism is the ultimate example of the infinite credit of metaphor, of the complex functioning of the interrealm referent, and of the basic intentionality of the process of metaphorisation, of its pointing to *something*.

A poem like 'Russian Dolls', with its layers of hidden interiors, and its tantalising suggestions of what is going on within, gives the impression of providing a window on the windowless. In the next chapter, I shall discuss how metaphor also functions as a window on the windowless in its relation to subjectivity.

CHAPTER SEVEN

METAPHORIC REFERENCE AND RICOEUR'S LATER THEORY OF SUBJECTIVITY

*I am a part of all that I have met
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
Forever and forever when I move.*

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 'Ulysses'¹⁶⁴

*I was the world in which I walked and what I saw
Or heard or felt came not but from myself;
And there I found myself more truly and more strange*

Wallace Stevens, 'Tea at the Palaz of Hoon'¹⁶⁵

*The explanation of [...] the true relation between the nature of things
and the nature of the mind, is as the strewing and decoration of the
bridal chamber of the Mind and the Universe.*

Francis Bacon, *The Plan of the Instauration Magna*¹⁶⁶

The last chapter closed with reference to a poetic account of a 'they' only glimpsed through the symbolic value of their surroundings. In this final chapter, I shall consider the question of the relation between the theory of the construction of human

¹⁶⁴ Tennyson, 89.

¹⁶⁵ Stevens, 51. The poem in its entirety reads: 'not less because in purple I descended/the western day through what you called/the loneliest air, not less was I myself./what was the ointment sprinkled on my beard?/what were the hymns that buzzed beside my ears?/what was the sea whose tide swept through me there?/out of my mind the golden ointment rained,/and my ears made the blowing hymns they heard./I was myself the compass of that sea./I was the world in which I walked, and what I saw/or heard or felt came not but from myself;/and there I found myself more truly and more strange.'

subjectivity¹⁶⁷ and the theory of metaphoric reference which has been put forward. As a point of departure, I shall develop the analogy of the relationship between the co-foundational moments of the act of metaphorisation (the metaphoriser and the metaphorised) and the relationship between self and the world (which can also be considered as being co-foundational moments of a self-in-the-world). This, I believe, could be the beginning of a fruitful area of exploration between the areas of metaphor theory and theories of subjectivity, towards which I can only offer some preliminary steps here.

In so doing, I also suggest that taking Ricoeur's theory of metaphoric reference seriously, rather than seeing it, with Kaplan (49), merely as something which Ricoeur outgrows, may lead to a fruitful re-reading of a number of aspects of his later philosophy. My discussion takes up both Ricoeur's question at the close of the Seventh Study of *La Métaphore Vive*: 'Now what are the repercussions of such a concept of metaphorical truth on the very definition of reality?' (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 302),¹⁶⁸ and also his question in the Eighth Study of *La Métaphore Vive*, as to what general ontology is implied by his theory of metaphor, and goes on to consider the ontological implications of the development of Ricoeur's theory which have been advanced in the preceding chapters.

This will be done primarily through suggesting a modification of the theory of subjectivity which Ricoeur elaborates in *Oneself as Another (Soi-même comme un*

¹⁶⁶ Bacon, 17.

¹⁶⁷ I use the term 'subjectivity' both to refer to selfhood in general as an object of philosophical discourse and to what Ricoeur called the *soi*; selfhood as a something constructed through the interplay of the bare consciousness the Cartesian *cogito* and the outside world.

¹⁶⁸ 'Quel est maintenant le choc en retour d'une telle conception de la vérité métaphorique sur la

autre) in order to present the self not only in terms of narrativity, but also of metaphoricity. This modification is, to a certain extent, the application of Ricoeur's own theory of metaphor to his later work, but the developments that I have made to this theory, in terms of placing metaphoricity in the realm of phenomenology rather than simply hermeneutics, and of seeing the act of metaphorisation as not exclusively dependent on the linguistic act of predication, make the drawing together of subjectivity and metaphoricity an easier task.

Ricoeur's theory of subjectivity, as it stands, privileges narrativity and temporality, and downplays the concept of metaphor, but it is not incompatible, and would indeed be complemented by an account of the human subject as also perceived in terms of metaphoricity.

Seeing the self in terms of metaphoricity does not mean simply that the human condition is such that one of its essential aspects is the potentiality to be described in spoken, or written, metaphors, any more than the seeing of the human condition in terms of narrativity means only that we could tell a story about it. It is rather to claim that the human condition has an underlying structure not only of narrativity, but also of metaphoricity.

This is because we exist as temporal and worldly beings conscious of our own temporality and worldliness, worldliness being the state of affairs of our dwelling in and also as a part of something which is not ourselves. My claim is that metaphor stands here in the same relation to worldliness as narrative does to temporality. Seen from the perspective of metaphoricity, subjectivity is constructed as a type of

definition même de la réalité? (Ricoeur, *Métaphore*, 321)

interrealm between the self and the not-self, founded upon the tension between the *is* and the *is not*, and partaking of both identity with, and difference from, the external world. This interrealm of self-in-the world resembles the interrealm of the metaphorical statement in that it is not a physical object, but it *is* something which can be referred to, and indicated.

The self has a metaphorical structure in the sense that it exists as a referent constructed out of a set of shared ‘moments’, in which the ‘bare self’ of the Cartesian *cogito* and the world are co-foundational. It can also be seen under the tripartite perspective of the interrealm of metaphor: it is, thus, under the first aspect, the sum total of all possible resemblances and interrelations with the external universe, most of these beyond the grasp of the subject’s own comprehension, or indeed that of its fellow-mortals, but it is also the subject’s own grasp of its relations with the external world seen *qua noema*, and the subject’s self-in-the-world seen under the perspective of intersubjectivity in a shared *Lebenswelt*. Again, as is the case with metaphor, these last two perspectives are in a dialectical relationship with one another.

The epigraphs that I have chosen for this chapter are meant to reflect some of the complexities which hold true both of the relation between both the self and the world, and of the metaphoriser and the metaphorised: both relationships are characterised by the dialectic between belonging and distanciation, between intermingling and the fear of intermingling.

As in the Tennyson quotation, the self is constituted by the world, yet there are always aspects of the constituting world which elude the self, and horizons which cannot be delimited. As in the Wallace Stevens quotation, the self constitutes the

world, but, in so doing, also constitutes itself as a new self, both more authentic and more alienated than a naked Cartesian *cogito*. Bacon's metaphor of carnal union celebrates the coming together of world and self through the mediation of knowledge, yet, on closer examination, what is celebrated in the imagery of decking the bridal chamber is a carnal union perpetually deferred. This structure can be translated to the act of metaphorisation, where, likewise, the metaphorised is constituted by the metaphoriser, and *vice versa*, and yet there are always aspects of each which evade the other. Their ultimate union is a consummation ever to be wished.

The first two quotations, in particular, also function as moments of what Ricoeur calls *self-attestation*: the recognition of the self, which I shall discuss in more detail below. It is, however, a different kind of self-attestation from that which Ricoeur privileges in *Oneself as Another*, where it is seen as the recognition of the self as the author of actions, or as a character in a narrative or actor in a drama. It is rather an act of recognising *the self in relation to the world*, as standing in a metaphoric or quasi-metaphoric relation to the world which both is and is not the same as the self. It is this aspect of subjectivity which has been submerged in Ricoeur's later work and which I believe is worth bringing back to the surface.

It is submerged not only in the sense that in this later work, Ricoeur sees the self above all in terms of *narrative* identity, and this amounts to a privileging of narrativity over metaphoricity. There is also a certain surprising neglect of the concept of metaphoricity itself. In the process of turning towards narrativity, and subsequently subjectivity and history, Ricoeur never repudiated his work on metaphor, and indeed briefly refers to it, but it is never seriously taken up for further development.

The neglect is surprising since the early work on metaphor dovetails with the major preoccupations of the later works. In *Oneself as Another*, Ricoeur advances a theory of the self (*soi*) as something distinct from the ‘I’ (*je*) – something not immediately given to consciousness, but constructed by a process of reflective mediation, and he emphasises that this means that the self is not immediately given to us in its completeness, but is constructed by the *narratives* that we create for ourselves.

One might object, however, that it is equally possible to say that we create a sense of self through the *metaphors* which we use to describe ourselves. (To this we can also add the role of the metaphors with which we describe others, and with which others describe us, and the metaphors with which we describe our connection to the world in general.) In terms of his over-arching hermeneutic theory, Ricoeur could equally well have seen the self as constructed through both metaphoric and narrative identity, and have put forward a theory of this metaphoric and narrative self, but he does not appear to consider the possibility within this text. Since his works on metaphor and narrativity were initially conceived as two halves of the same project, this is almost tantamount to a repression of metaphor.¹⁶⁹ It is at least a definite sidelining of this question to which he had previously devoted so much energy, which

¹⁶⁹ The repression is not total. Notably, in his discussion of the ontological commitment of attestation in the tenth and final study of *Oneself as Another*, the question of metaphoric reference is invoked. In speaking of the chiasm between reflection and analysis, he writes: ‘I find here the sort of ontological vehemence whose advocate I have been elsewhere in the name of the conviction that – even in the uses of language that appear to be the least referential, as in the case with metaphor and narrative fiction – language expresses being, even if this ontological aim is as though postponed, deferred by the prior denial of the referentiality of ordinary language.’ (Ricoeur, *Oneself*, 301) (*‘Je retrouve ici la sorte de véhémence ontologique dont il m’est arrivé ailleurs de me faire l’avocat, au nom de la conviction selon laquelle, même dans les usages en apparence les moins référentiel du langage, comme c’est le cas avec la métaphore et la fiction narrative, le langage dit encore l’être, même si cette visée ontologique se trouve comme ajournée, différée par le déni préalable de la référentialité littérale du langage ordinaire.’*) (Ricoeur, *Soi*, 350)) Other references to metaphor in the later work will be discussed below.

is all the more striking in the light of Ricoeur's general tendency to return to and reuse themes from his earlier work.

What I recommend is a return of the partially-repressed of metaphor: by offering a supplementary account of the self in terms of the theory of metaphor previously elaborated, I hope to demonstrate that bringing about a return of Ricoeur's early account of metaphor, with certain clarifications and modifications, into the later philosophy gives a fuller and truer account of the nature of the self and its relation with other worlds, fictive and otherwise.

Ricoeur's Theory of Subjectivity in terms of Narrative Identity

First, however, a brief summary of the most relevant points in Ricoeur's theory of subjectivity. In *Oneself as Another*, Ricoeur defines a position on the question of human subjectivity, which sought to avoid both the errors of the Cartesian viewpoint, which he believed separated the ego of the *cogito* too distinctly from the surrounding world, and the opposite errors of the radical proclaimers of the death of the subject, such as Nietzsche and Freud, who, in his view, submerged the self in the surrounding world too absolutely, giving us what Ricoeur calls the shattered cogito (*le cogito brisé*) and a denial, or humiliation, of the very concept of selfhood. The third way, which he proposes as an alternative, is that of what he calls the hermeneutics of the self:

As credence without any guarantee, but also as trust greater than any suspicion, the hermeneutics of the self can claim to hold itself at an equal distance from

the cogito exalted by Descartes and from the cogito that Nietzsche proclaimed forfeit.

(Ricoeur, *Oneself*, 23)¹⁷⁰

Ricoeur's intermediate position advances, as stated above, a 'self' constructed through narrative. The end result of this process is the moment of self-attestation which serves as a foundation for moral responsibility in Ricoeur's ethics. This self-attestation is a very fragile mode of knowledge, more a *believing in* than a *believing that*. It is the recognition of oneself as a character in a narrative, of which one can say, 'It's me here!' (*me voici!*) (Ricoeur, *Oneself*, 22; *Soi*, 35)

Self-attestation, as seen by Ricoeur, has a three-fold structure. Firstly, there is a bringing together of reflection and analysis to construct a sense of the self. Secondly, it involves a recognition of the difference between, on the one hand, *sameness* (*mêmeté*) and unchangeability through time, which Ricoeur also calls *idem* identity, and which the human subject cannot possess, and on the other hand, the *selfhood* (*ipséité*) which persists through changes, and which Ricoeur also calls *ipse* identity. Lastly, it involves a fuller understanding of the dialectic between self and other already present in the first two stages. (Ricoeur, *Oneself*, 16; *Soi*, 28) The other referred to here is polysemic, referring not only to another person or persons, but also to what are normally considered parts of the self, that is, to the flesh and to the conscience, before both of which, in Ricoeur's view, the self is passive, and also to the fact that the very self

¹⁷⁰ 'En tant que créance sans garantie, mais aussi en tant que confiance plus forte que tout soupçon, l'herméneutique du soi peut prétendre se tenir à égale distance du Cogito exalté par Descartes et du Cogito proclamé déchu par Nietzsche.' (Ricoeur, *Soi*, 35)

which we recognise in the moment of self-attestation has a certain characteristic of alterity.

It is striking that this dialectic between self and other has fundamentally the same structure as the dialectic between distancing and belonging, which is referred to in the conclusion of *La Métaphore Vive*. For the self to be other, it must be that which it is not: it must internalise the essence of metaphor. This point is not, however, made by Ricoeur himself.

Yet metaphor has not disappeared completely without trace in this work. In the Fourth Study, devoted to the relationship between action and agency, in the context of a discussion of Aristotle's metaphors of paternity and mastery for the relationship between a man and his deeds, the concept of metaphor re-emerges:

Could one not say that the tie between action (*arkhē*) and self (*autos*) is not profoundly metaphoric, in the sense of "seeing-as," which I discuss in *The Rule of Metaphor*?

(Ricoeur, *Oneself*, 93-94)¹⁷¹

Moreover, the work itself has a 'metaphorical structure', not only evident in the simile-structure of the title, but in terms of the phenomenological structure of seeing one thing in terms of another, which is a fundamental premise of the work.

This position had already been implied by the stated analogy between metaphor, narrative and judgement as syntheses of the heterogeneous which is put forward in his

¹⁷¹ *Ne pourrait-on pas dire que le lien entre principe (arkhē) et soi (autos) est lui-même profondément*

preface to the first volume of *Time and Narrative*. Ricoeur makes this connection explicit in the case of metaphor and narrative, showing the resemblance between the predicative assimilation in the semantic innovation of metaphor and the ‘grasping together’ (*prendre ensemble*) of multiple and scattered events in a plot (*Time and Narrative*, Vol. I, x; *Temps et récit*, 1. 10).¹⁷²

The connection between subjectivity and metaphor is further hinted at in a passage from Ricoeur’s last book-length work, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (*La mémoire, l’histoire, l’oubli*), which is also a work in which, not, I believe, coincidentally, Ricoeur explicitly asserts his return to Husserlian phenomenology. The passage occurs in a section discussing the concept of personal identity in Locke, in which Ricoeur summarises the Lockean standpoint as being the belief that it is not the soul which makes the man, but the same consciousness, and states that thus with regard to the enquiry into the nature of memory in hand, the matter has been decided: consciousness and memory are the same, irrespective of any substantial basis, and in the matter of personal identity, sameness equals memory. However, he then adds:

Having said this, what otherness could then slip into the folds of this sameness of the self?

On what is still a formal level, we can observe that identity continues to be a relation of comparison that has opposite it diversity, difference; the idea of something other continues to haunt the self-reference of the same. The

métaphorique, au sens du voir comme que je propose en La Métaphore Vive?’ (Ricoeur, *Soi-même*, 115)

¹⁷² This point is expanded on elsewhere in the text, where he makes it clear that the process of selection involved in emplotment (the construction of plot) is also tantamount to the exercise of judgement, and that ‘a narrative that fails to explain is less than a narrative.’ (Ricoeur, *Time*, Vol. I 148). (*un récit qui échoue à expliquer est moins qu’un récit*’ (Ricoeur, *Temps*, 264)) Metaphor, narrative and judgement are all instruments for structuring, shattering and enriching our sense of reality.

expression, “the same with itself, and no other” contains the antonym which is stated only to be crossed out.)

(Ricoeur, *Memory*, 105-106)¹⁷³

This is as close as Ricoeur gets to saying that subjectivity is metaphoricity.

The passage is striking in that, just under the surface, we find the preoccupations of the dialectic between identity and difference which had characterised the earlier work on metaphor re-emerging: one answer to the question posed here is that it is precisely *metaphor* which can slip into the folds of sameness in order to express the same in terms of that which it is not. To which one might add that any experiencing of or attempt to theorise the self as something more than the naked Cartesian *cogito* has a metaphoric or quasi-metaphoric structure, even when it is not expressed in a metaphorical statement, or even not expressed in language: it is a seeing of the self as something outside the self, as something which by definition it is not.

Perhaps one reason why Ricoeur does not say directly in *Oneself as Another* that subjectivity is metaphoricity is that the account of the metaphoric referent in *La Métaphore Vive* is tied closely to the referent of a sentence, and therefore to language. However, the modification which I have suggested to Ricoeur’s theory of metaphoric reference in terms of allowing it to include the single word, and even to exist on the level of the pre-reflective, instead of merely existing as as a product of the sentence-

¹⁷³ ‘Cela dit, quelle altérité pourrait encore se glisser dans les plis de cette mêmeté du soi? À un niveau encore formel, on peut observer que l’identité reste une relation de comparaison qui a pour vis-à-vis la diversité, la différence; l’idée de quelque chose d’autre ne cesse de hanter la référence à soi du même. L’expression: une chose même qu’elle-même et non un autre contient l’antonyme qui n’est nommé que pour être biffé.’ (Ricoeur, *Mémoire*, 127)

statement, makes the transition towards seeing the self as having an equi-primordial structure of metaphoricity an easier one to make.

Ricoeur himself was also moving in a similar direction in his later works, where he is less concerned with language *per se* and more with the questions of subjectivity¹⁷⁴ and history and their relationship to the pre-reflective. His increasing sense of the pre-reflective, of that which can never quite be captured in language, is encapsulated in the poem with which he concludes *Memory, History, Forgetting*, which expresses the thought of what Merleau-Ponty would have called the *échappement* of life from language:

Under history, memory and forgetting.
Under memory and forgetting, life.
But writing a life is another story.
Incompletion.

(Ricoeur, *Memory*, 506)¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Though the first two studies of *Oneself as Another* pose the questions of subjectivity in terms of analytical philosophy of language.

¹⁷⁵ *Sous l'histoire la mémoire et l'oubli*
Sous la mémoire et l'oubli, la vie
Mais écrire la vie est un autre histoire
Inachèvement.

(Ricoeur, *Mémoire*, 657)

I would, however, prefer to translate the poem as follows:

Beneath history, memory and forgetting.
Beneath memory and forgetting, life.
But writing life is another story.
That can't be finished.

In this passage, which constitutes a poignant signing off of Ricoeur's *oeuvre*, the incompleteness of the cross-over between the pre-reflective and the reflective, and the incompleteness of the imperfect chiasmatic relation between life and writing, corresponds to the incomplete nature of what I have called the *chiasmaphora* of metaphor.

The Relation of Metaphoricity to Ontologies of the Life-World

However, another intriguing hint as to the relations between metaphor and general ontology was made as early as 1978 in the essay 'The Metaphoric Process as Cognition, Imagination and Feeling'. This essay constitutes an important addition to the account of metaphor in *La Métaphore Vive*, since it gives a new orientation to the question of split reference by an increased emphasis on the question of the rôle of feeling in the metaphoric statement, claiming that there is a structural analogy between cognitive, emotional and imaginative components. I would, however, like to focus on what is almost a throw-away comment, in which Ricoeur raises, only to set aside, the question of how his theory of metaphor would fit into a more general ontology of the life-world, such as that of Husserl or of Heidegger:

This is not the place to discuss the ontological implications of this contention nor to ascertain its similarities and dissimilarities with Husserl's concept of the *Lebenswelt* or with Heidegger's concept of *In-der-Welt-Sein*.

(Ricoeur, *Process*, 240)

This passing comment amounts to a suggestion that there *is* somewhere a place for such a discussion, and that our existence as metaphorising beings is something to do with our place in the life-world and our manner of being in the world, though perhaps not in exactly the same sense in which these concepts were conceived of either by Husserl and Heidegger.

I should like to close by taking up this hint of Ricoeur's and, as a final stage in my account of the metaphoric referent, considering the relationship between ontologies of being-in-the-world and the tension between narrativity and metaphoricity.

The first, and very obvious point, is that the narrativity-based account of human subjectivity in *Time and Narrative* and *Oneself as Another* is based, above all, on the relationship of the human being to time. As stated in the opening of the first volume of *Time and Narrative*:

Whether it is a question of affirming the structural nature of historiography, including the philosophy of history, and fictional narrative [...] one presupposition commands all others, namely, that what is ultimately at stake in the case of the structural identity of the narrative framework as well as in that of the truth claim of every narrative work, is the temporal character of human experience.

(Ricoeur, *Time*, Vol. 1, 3)¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁶ 'Qu'il s'agisse d'affirmer l'identité structurale entre l'historiographie et le récit de fiction, [...] une présupposition domine toutes les autres, à savoir que l'enjeu ultime aussi bien que l'identité structurale de la fonction narrative que de l'exigence de vérité de toute oeuvre narrative, c'est le caractère temporel de l'expérience humaine.' (Ricoeur, *Temps*, Vol. 1, 17)

However, what is ultimately at stake in Ricoeur's privileging of narrative over metaphor, and in his taking narrativity as the master metaphor for the human condition, is his relationship to Heideggerian ontology. In this privileging of narrative, he remains very much within the confines of the Heideggerian view of human existence, even as he critiques it.¹⁷⁷ That is to say, he remains within the paradigm of Being-towards-death, of the belief that true authenticity can only be achieved by the worldly and embodied human being (*Dasein*) looking forward in time to the end of its own narrative, that is, to its death. I cannot here go into the full complexities of Ricoeur's treatment of this Heideggerian theme in *Time and Narrative*: suffice it to say that even his critique of Heidegger ontology is made in terms of tales about *time*:

Our tales about time thus lend support to that which I had to say above about the legitimacy of the Heideggerian analysis of Being-towards-death [...] It is precisely the work of the imaginative variations deployed by tales about time to open up the field of existentielle modalities capable of authenticating Being-towards-death. The limit-experiences that, in the realm of fiction, confront eternity and death serve at the same time to reveal the limits of phenomenology, and to show that its method of reduction leads to privileging subjective immanence, not only with respect to external transcendence but also with respect to higher forms of transcendence.

(Ricoeur, *Time*, Vol. 3, 141)¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ In his late period, Ricoeur was to criticise this account as being based too much on fear. (Ricoeur, *Oneself*, 327-328; *Soi*, 378) and even in *La Métaphore Vive*, he puts forward a trenchant critique of Heidegger, which accuses him of overstating his own importance within the history of Being, and over-emphasising the radical nature of the break which his own work makes with the metaphysical tradition. (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 368-370; *Métaphore*, 395-398)

¹⁷⁸ *Les fables sur le temps donnent ainsi quelque crédit au doute que nous avons émis, le moment venu, sur le bon droit de l'analyse heideggerienne de l'être-pour-la-mort [...] Il appartient précisément aux variations imaginatives déployées par les fables sur le temps de rouvrir le champ des modalités existentielles susceptibles d'authentifier l'être-pour-la-mort. Les expériences limites qui, dans le royaume de la fiction, affrontent l'éternité à la mort servent en même temps de révélateur à l'égard des limites de la phénoménologie, que sa méthode de la réduction conduit à privilégier l'immanence subjective, non seulement à l'égard des transcendances extérieures, mais aussi à l'égard des*

In my view, a more thorough-going critique of Heideggerian ontology would emphasise the self's relation with space and the world¹⁷⁹ as being at least equally important as its relations to time; we exist towards action and re-action in the world rather than primarily towards our deaths.

Such a critique would point the way towards a different phenomenology of subjectivity: one which does not over-privilege temporality, or whole-heartedly embrace the ontology of *Being and Time*, with its emphasis on Being-Towards-Death, or indeed seek to supplant it with the opposing concept of natality which Hannah Arendt created in response to this, but which also makes room for the quasi-spatial and quasi-eternal aspects of metaphoricity. I aim to do this by reinserting certain elements of Ricoeur's account of metaphor into the ontology of his later work, and by constructing subjectivity in terms of the metaphoric relation of *is* and *is not* with that which is outside it, rather than purely in terms of narrativity.

Thus taking *metaphor itself* as the master metaphor for the human condition, or, more modestly, as a supplementary, perhaps dangerously supplementary, metaphor to that of the narrativity metaphor, would lead to a privileging, or at least an enhanced status for a Being-of-the-World-Towards-Self-and-of-Self-towards-the-World. Far from being imprisoned in immanence in the negative way which Ricoeur ascribed to Husserlian phenomenology in *Time and Narrative*, the result would be the celebration of a transcendence which takes place *within the physical world*, rather than in a flight

transcendences supérieures. (Ricoeur, *Temps*, Vol. 3, 202)

¹⁷⁹ Both these questions are of course discussed by Heidegger in *Being and Time* and elsewhere, but an

to eschatology, or, indeed, to Heideggerian quasi-eschatology, or any negative eschatologies of reified annihilation.

The self would thus be seen not simply as existing in the Between of birth and death, the *Zwischen* of *Being and Time*, but in terms of a Between of identity and difference with the world which is not-self. As such, it exists as a middle which is not always focused on its beginnings or its end. This structure of metaphoricity exists already on the level of the pre-reflective, but can also be understood on the level of reflection as we metaphorise ourselves, and on the level of hyper-reflection as we theorise about metaphor.

Supplanting the supremacy of Being-towards-Death through supplementing it with a Being-in-Relation-to-the World which is neither the care-ridden attitude of the Heideggerian *Sorge*, nor even its inverse, the *Gelassenheit* (Letting Be) of the later Heidegger, harmonises with certain other aspects of Ricoeur's philosophical project. It might, for example, help in completing the work of mourning for the Hegelian view of history – another narrative-driven and *telos*-driven philosophy – which Ricoeur speaks of as necessary in *Time and Narrative*, and it also harmonises with his recommendation of a shift from a 'love of fate' to a 'love of creation' in the praise of poetry in 'Religion, Atheism, Faith', in which he reworks the Heideggerian *dichterisch wohnt der Mensch* ('Poetically...man dwells'):

In terms of its total extension and radical comprehension, poetry is what locates the act of dwelling between heaven and earth, under the sky, but on the earth,

analysis of these discussions is beyond the scope of my argument here.

within the domain of word. [...] This mode of being is no longer the ‘love of fate’ but a love of creation ...

(Ricoeur, Conflict, 461)¹⁸⁰

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In terms of ethics, seeing the self in terms of metaphoricity provides a theoretical justification for valuing the the relationship between self and world rather than focusing on a *telos* of death or final judgement. What Peter Kemp has referred to as Ricoeur’s narrative ethics¹⁸² can thus be supplemented from the perspective of metaphoricity.

This is not a radically new departure in ethics, but rather involves a recognition of the underlying structure of the pre-existing ethical imperatives which Ricoeur recognised: the Christian ethics which he saw as universal ethics. The command to love one’s neighbour as oneself can thus be seen in terms of an underlying

¹⁸⁰ *Selon son extension totale et sa compréhension radicale, la poésie est ce qui enracine l’acte de habiter entre ciel et terre, sous le ciel, mais sur la terre, dans la puissance de la parole. [...] Ce mode d’être n’est plus l’ <<amour du destin>> mais un amour par la création [...]* (Ricoeur, *Conflit*, 456)

¹⁸¹ This is a view to which I do not entirely subscribe, as its tone of elevated resignation excludes much of what has actually been thought and expressed through the medium of language and poetry, and of metaphor in particular. Metaphor may be protest as much as *Gelassenheit*, nausea as much as acceptance: its sole function is not to offer consolation. Besides, consolation, albeit a rather different one from that which Ricoeur celebrates, may be found through the kind of metaphor which wittily, or in a tragic or melancholy mode, exposes the miseries of life on earth. We cheer ourselves up by stating the worst. A good example of this is the poetry of Philip Larkin, full of bleakly inspirational phrases such as:

Man hands on misery to man
It deepens like a coastal shelf
Get out as early as you can,
And don’t have any kids yourself.

‘This Be the Verse’ (Larkin, *Windows*, 30)

Nevertheless, what metaphor necessarily gives us is a relationship with the world, whether it be one of love and acceptance, or of hatred and rejection.

¹⁸² Kemp, *Ethics*, 371-394.

metaphorical structure: *a seeing oneself as one's neighbour, or one's neighbour as oneself.*¹⁸³

Temporality, Spatiality and Metaphor

What justification then, do I put forward for the partial displacement of temporality with spatiality?

It would certainly be difficult to find any counter-arguments to the fact that we human beings are 'timely' beings: indeed, even if we were to become immortal and thus freed from most of our human anxieties concerning time, we would not completely lose our structure of temporality; perhaps even disembodied and other-worldly beings could not do so.

However, it is equally incontestable that human beings do not *only* live in the dimension of time, and I would propose two related starting-points in this liberation from the excessive preoccupation with time of Heideggerian ontology: firstly, the recognition that a narrative also has non-temporal qualities; and, secondly, the recognition of the connection between metaphoricity and spatiality.

In terms of the narrative, we should recognise that it possesses other salient characteristics in addition to temporality, characteristics which determine its aesthetic

¹⁸³ I have no wish to overstate the case here. Perhaps seeing the subject as being necessarily caught up in the web of metaphor, and as being largely defined in metaphorical terms, and thus in terms of what it is not, of what is outside itself, *might* furnish an additional motivation for following such ethical behaviour. But this is not something which could be verified, and I freely admit to a serious scepticism as to whether a theory of metaphor can cure any of the moral evils of the world!

value and indeed its truth value: among these are the metaphoric aspects of a narrative, which connect the human subject to the external world through the dialectic of *is* and *is not*. A subject, let us say the hero or heroine of a novel or a tale, described purely in terms of temporality would be such an empty subject that it is questionable whether the description would be worth making. A narrative that tells us, as Heidegger affirmed of Aristotle, simply that *x* lived, worked and died, would not be a narrative worthy the name. A judgement based on such a narrative would be equally empty. We also need to know *how* *x* performed the actions between birth and death, and in order to discover this we almost inevitably stray into the realm of metaphor. Moreover, the human subject cannot be described in its adventures through time without an account of its relation to that which is outside itself, either metonymically or metaphorically.

Another related point with regard to the phenomenology of narrative is that a written narrative is not entirely the slave of chronological temporality. Indeed, Ricoeur in *Time and Narrative* devotes a great deal of consideration to such imaginative variations on time. (Ricoeur, *Time*, 127-141; *Temps*, 184-202) Not only does the author frequently re-order the chronological sequence of events, but the reader is also free to start reading at the end, to skip around in the text, to re-read; and if the characters in a novel are in one sense like human characters moving towards the end of their story, whether or not this coincides with a narrated account of their deaths, they are also given a quasi-eternity: the book will continue to be there and the reader will be able to return and rediscover them at any given point of their history. Even though the individual reader is mortal and the individual book as artifact can easily be destroyed, it

is at least possible to imagine the continuance of the world of a given narrative for as long as human beings exist.

Narrativity as written text, or indeed even as the recorded reading aloud of an audio-book, thus already has a spatial identity and a certain rejection of the absolute hegemony of temporality. Another way of putting this would be to say that the interrealm of the world in which the characters live and move, what Ricoeur in *Time and Narrative* saw as the referent of a fiction, continues to exist outside time in the ordinary sense. This is something which it shares with the interrealm of metaphor, in which the fixity of the copula *is* freezes the moment even as it is in the process of describing mortality and change.

I mean by this that a metaphor such as the Biblical *All flesh is grass* (Isaiah 40:6) may indeed have transience as its theme, and yet nevertheless fix us by means of the present tense of the verb *to be* in a frozen moment of ideal existence. Another example of poetic metaphor which makes this process even clearer is a metaphor of Gerard Manley Hopkins, from 'The Wreck of the Deutschland':

I am soft sift
In an hourglass – at the wall
Fast, but mined with a motion, a drift,
And it crowds and it combs to the fall;
I steady as water in a well, to a poise, to a pane,
But roped with, always, all the way down from the tall
Fells or flanks of the voel, a vein
Of the gospel proffer, a pressure, a principle, Christ's gift.

(Hopkins, 13)

Here human mortality, seen from Hopkins's Christian perspective, is presented through metaphor as being simultaneously a condition of intense instability and of absolute steadiness. The metaphor could, however, be given a secularised version as a presentation of the human condition as caught between steadiness and flux. It could also function as a meta-metaphor, describing the action of the metaphor within the poem itself as it enacts movement yet is caught in stasis, and also the general quality of steadiness within flux possessed by all metaphors through their power to arrest temporality even as they describe it.

This perspective on metaphor reminds us that, although we are indeed temporal beings, we are also spatial beings, and beings with certain qualities which can be described (accurately or otherwise) as they exist at certain frozen or idealised moments of time. In any attempt to make a philosophy or phenomenology of historiography (or indeed narrative fiction) we should not forget that there can be no history without geography, and conversely, no geography without history. Indeed, time itself can notoriously only be described by spatial metaphors, such as flow or passage.

This brings me to the second point: the connection between the spatial and the metaphoric. Metaphor connects two distinct objects and as such deals with what is either actually spatially distinct, as in the case of *Achilles* and the *lion*, or that which we imagine to be so, or metaphorically see as so being, as is the case where one or more of the terms is not spatially extended, as in *love* as abstract entity and a *rose*.

Thus, metaphorically speaking, metaphor is, among many other things, a geography: hence the metaphors of realm and interrealm. It follows that, like a

physical geography describing a landscape, although it can and must deal with processes in time, it is often an idealised and frozen description of something at a particular given moment of time. It is against and through this symbolic geography as much as against and through physical geography that the dramas of narrativity are played out.

My previous comments on the infinity of metaphor in Chapters Five and Six also provide a way of relating metaphor to spatiality which is not confined to either of the two ways in which space was conceived by Heidegger: that is to say, the Present-at-hand and the Present-to-Hand. Through metaphor we can relate to external objects existing in space neither through mere contiguity, nor through the scientific attitude, nor through our needs to use them as tools for our present comfort or survival. To coin a new phrase, the object which is Far-from-hand is also within our grasp through metaphor. Any distant and perfectly useless object may be intimately related to the self through the process of metaphor, as we take it as a metaphor either for the self, for some other object connected to us in one of the practical ways previously mentioned, or even for another object equally distant and useless.

The Metaphorical Structure of the Self

The suggestions for the modification of Ricoeur's philosophy offered above go somewhat against the grain of traditional interpretations of Ricoeur, which tend to see his achievement precisely in terms of breaking away from the classic phenomenology of Husserl towards hermeneutics, and by implication away from the frozen moment of

phenomenological description towards an engagement with temporality and the narrative path. A typical example of this attitude is Richard Kearney's opening of his essay on 'Paul Ricoeur and the Hermeneutic Imagination' in *The Narrative Path The Later Works of Paul Ricoeur*:

Most phenomenological accounts of imagination have focused on its role as vision, as a special or modified way of seeing the world. Imagination is thus defined in terms of its relation to perception, be it positive or negative, continuous or discontinuous. Husserl describes the act of imagining as a "neutralised" mode of seeing, Sartre as an "unrealised" mode of quasi-seeing, and Merleau-Ponty as a dialectical complement of seeing.

The privileging of the visual mode is no doubt related to the primary role granted to "description" in the phenomenological method. With the hermeneutic turn in phenomenology, this privilege is significantly revised. As one moves from description to interpretation, from *Wesenschau* to *Verstehen*, the imagination is assessed as an indispensable agent in the creation of meaning in and through language – what Ricoeur calls "semantic innovation".

(Kearney, 1)

The above passage seems to contain a number of unspoken assumptions, which, in my view, are highly questionable: the implied absence of imagination from phenomenological description, and the hierarchical progress from passive description to active imagination, and, above all, the implication that description is something which can be more or less abandoned once the work of imagination has commenced.

The account of metaphor put forward by Ricoeur himself, rather than reinforcing such conclusions, actually suggests opposing ones. Indeed, *La Métaphore Vive* leads us to a deconstruction of the dichotomy of description *versus* imagination, or indeed of description *versus* innovation or interpretation, since it presents metaphor as

at least potentially both a work of imagination and a work of resemblance. It draws our attention to existing similarities – though not simply in visual terms – but an act of imagination may well be necessary before we can perceive that similarity.

Moreover, the tension which Ricoeur perceived at the very heart of the metaphoric copula, that is, the tension between the *is* and the *is not*, means that the work of metaphor is simultaneously a work of description and a work of fiction. This tension is present not only in a metaphoric statement which strikes us as first and foremost a vigorous statement of an impossibility ('Her smile is a tectonic plate') but also in the most well-worn of similes ('She ran like the wind') where the tension which Ricoeur identified as existing between the *is* and the *is not* can also be found in the tension between the *is like* and the *is not like*.

Indeed, the general tenor of Ricoeur's thought, despite his phase of privileging Heidegger over Husserl, is not ultimately incompatible with Husserlian phenomenology on the questions of metaphoricity or subjectivity. What I am proposing in my suggested revision of Ricoeur's hermeneutic approach to the self is not a return to the phenomenological descriptions of the Husserl of *Ideas tout court*, but rather an account of subjectivity in terms of metaphoricity which gives a sense of the way in which Husserlian *noesis* can co-exist with, and is indeed still necessarily present at the heart of the hermeneutic approach. That is, the metaphoric referent of self-in-the-world is seen *qua noema*, and yet this *noema* is determined among other things by the world of meanings in which it is embedded. This, of course, also brings us close to the preoccupations of Husserl in the final stage of his philosophical development in which he engaged with the problems of the *Lebenswelt* and intersubjectivity, and of what he

called the intermonadic. The structure of subjectivity thus has the structure of a *chiasmaphora* of the interrealm. The interrealm is here the 'between' of human consciousness and the external world, which consists not only of physical nature, but also of pre-existing cultural and social constructs, including those previously created by the self in question.

I thus see the self as being in a process of constitution through the two-way interaction with the world which closely corresponds to the structure of metaphor. To see this position as already present *in nuce* in Ricoeur's philosophy of metaphor is to resist the temptation to see him as ultimately a religious thinker preoccupied with higher forms of transcendence. It rather presents Ricoeur as being, doubtless to a certain extent *malgré lui*, a this-worldly philosopher.

When the human subject is thus seen, not primarily from the perspective of death, but from the perspective of the dialectic of sameness and difference with the not-self of the world, and as existing not only within a web of resemblances, but as a co-foundational moment, *qua* metaphoriser or metaphorised, in an infinity of interrealms, we are able to say: not only is metaphor live; but life is metaphor.

To conclude: we tend to see the interpretations and descriptions which we give to ourselves as *meanings*: either meanings attached to a substance, or meanings floating over a non-substantial self. However, if we once accept that metaphor has a referent as well as a meaning, the referential attribute of metaphor can also be extrapolated to the metaphoric structure of the self. The self seen as another and also the self in chiasmic relation to the world of the non-self thus have a referent as well as a meaning. To the moment of narrative self-attestation, of the recognising oneself as a character in a

narrative, we can then add a moment of metaphoric self-attestation, such as those celebrated in the epigraphs to this chapter. The moment of metaphoric self-attestation is the identifying of oneself as an interrealm referent, albeit a shifting and unstable one, as the sum-total of the conjoined moments of self and the world.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

The thesis has developed Ricoeur's concept of the referent of a metaphorical statement into a phenomenological account of metaphor, which includes both a phenomenology of the mental process of metaphorisation and a phenomenological ontology of the metaphoric referent. As such it offers a description of the vital human ability to perceive something in terms of something else.

I have presented the referent of the metaphorical statement, or metaphor, as an interrealm, created out of the co-foundational moments of the metaphorised and the metaphoriser, and possessing a three-fold aspect: firstly, as an ideal entity conceived as an act-species containing all possible interconnections between moments of the metaphorised and metaphoriser, secondly, as a *noema* created by the noetic act of the creator or interpreter of a metaphor which grasps only certain salient characteristics selected from the reservoir of possible connections between the two terms, and thirdly, as a metaphoric referent existing in the *Lebenswelt*. The second and third aspects of the interrealm are seen as being in a dialectical back and forth relationship. On each of these levels the interrealm referent is created out of the chiasmaphoric movement between metaphoriser and metaphorised, which is in turn composed of the *chiasmaphora* of the individual corresponding moments of which both metaphoriser and metaphorised are constituted.

In the description of the metaphoric referent which I have outlined, I have given an account in which reference is not confined to physical or external objects, nor to the specific and clear-cut, which has necessarily involved a defence of a definition of reference *per se* which includes ideal phenomena, such as the Husserlian *noemata* as well as real physical objects, and which also puts forward a defence of reference to the indeterminate.

My account of metaphor has offered an explanation for the flux in metaphorical meaning which furnishes a viable alternative to three misleading accounts of the relationship between the metaphoric statement and the world: the belief in metaphor as being without meaning and/or reference as advanced by Davidson; the belief that a specific metaphor must possess a fixed and specific reference; and the contrary belief that any given metaphor can be assigned any meaning or reference whatsoever.

My account of metaphoric reference is built upon Ricoeur's, and has defended his major thesis of the referentiality of metaphor from opposing positions, but it has also made a number of modifications to his position. It has extended the scope of his theory by demonstrating that metaphoric reference can be found in individual words as well as in sentences, and it has broadened the scope of his definition of reference to cover that which his account would, following Frege and Benveniste, attribute not to reference but to sense. It has also extended the scope of his theory by demonstrating that metaphoric reference can be found in individual words as well as in sentences, and it has broadened the scope of his definition of reference to cover certain aspects which his account would, following Frege and Benveniste, attribute not to reference but to sense.

More radically, it does what Ricoeur stopped just short of doing in its presentation of the metaphoric referent *qua* intentional act, *qua noema* and, lastly, *qua* a chiasmatic intermonadology of the *Lebenswelt*, through its opening of a window between the metaphoriser and metaphorised which can operate both as intersubjectivity, interobjectivity and as the interrealm of subject and object. The three-aspect account of the interrealm also gives a way of understanding the heuristics of metaphor and the relationship between metaphor and truth.

I have given a detailed description of certain aspects of the interrealm in terms of the potential multiplicity of layers of reference within it; its shifting boundaries, its chiasmatic structure and the 'infinite credit' of potential interpretations of any given metaphor.

My analysis of a number of individual passages taken from poetic metaphor shows the way in which the most salient characteristics of the interrealm function in poetic language, though the interrealm itself is not seen as necessarily imprisoned in language, but also has aspects which transcend the linguistic.

Finally, I have put forward a theory of how my modification of Ricoeur's account of metaphorical reference can be applied to a general ontology, and in particular to the question of subjectivity which preoccupied Ricoeur in his later period. His theory of subjectivity had built on his previous theory of narrativity, but more or less neglected the account of metaphor which formed the first half of his overarching hermeneutic theory. I have argued that this constituted a partial repression of the concept of metaphor, and that a return of this repressed content is necessary for the construction of a more complete account of subjectivity.

My account of subjectivity and metaphor shows how seeing the self in terms of the chiasmaphoric structure of the interrealm of metaphor opens the way for a more detailed phenomenology of the self in terms of an interplay of identity and difference with the external world, and in so doing enriches and deepens the narrativity-based account which Ricoeur has given of subjectivity.

The chiasmatic relationship between life (that is, the life of the subject in relation to the metaphorised and metaphorising *Lebenswelt*) and metaphor finally emerges as such that metaphor can be seen in terms of life, and life of metaphor. This chiasmatic meta-metaphor functions on a number of levels.

The chiasmatic relationship between self and the world even on the pre-reflective level is seen as having the structure of metaphor, and the self as creator and perceiver of metaphors is seen as living through this chiasmatic relationship on the level of reflection. Lastly, the hypermetaphorisation of poetic metaphor corresponds to a level of hyper-reflection. In all of these levels, self as another has the structure of metaphor, and, like metaphor, can be seen as having a referent as well as a meaning, the unstable interrealm referent of the sum-total of the conjoined moments of the self and the world.

Metaphor is thus, in an adapted Husserlian phrase, an *intermonadology*: a window into what is otherwise windowless: the other monads are not, however, merely other consciousnesses, but any object which can function as either metaphoriser or metaphorised. The potential for metaphorisation between individual intentional acts/*noemata* is infinite: each individual *noema* can function as metaphoriser or

metaphorised for any other. The world will end before its possibilities of metaphorisation have been exhausted.

Identifying the referent of the metaphoric statement is, I believe, a contribution to the philosophy of language, but it is also not merely a question of the philosophy of language, but also a question of understanding our manner of Being-in-the-World through *noesis* and through the interplay of *noemata*. This interplay includes the dialectic relationship between the *noema qua* metaphoric referent with, on the one hand, the infinity of possible meanings ungraspable in their entirety by human beings, and on the other hand, with the other *noemata* existing in the *Lebenswelt*. This thesis has thus offered an account of the process of metaphoric reference and a phenomenological description of the metaphoric referent as an opening upon a hermeneutics of Being-in-the-World.

I do not claim to have exhausted the process of providing a phenomenological ontology of metaphor in this thesis; indeed, given the infinite credit of metaphor, such a process cannot by nature be definitively completed. However, I hope that – to close with a deliberately mixed metaphor, and to create a complex interrealm straddling the realms of agriculture, architecture and journeying as *metaphorisers* for the philosophical project – that by *grafting* certain basic phenomenological concepts from Husserl onto the *foundation* laid by Ricoeur's insistence on the existence of the metaphoric referent I have opened a *way* along which a philosophical account of the content of metaphor can proceed.

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