

Living Metaphors

Exploring Freedom and Heuristic Insight in Aesthetic Appreciation, Character Development, and Learning

By

Dylan Mackenzie

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Approved: John E. MacKinnon
Supervisor

Approved: Scott Edgar
Examiner, Internal

Approved: Steven Burns
Examiner, External

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Abstract

I open this thesis by arguing that complex metaphor is neglected by prominent theorists in the theory of metaphor. Specifically, Max Black's and Donald Davidson's accounts of metaphor not only leave complex metaphor aside, but cannot account for extended metaphor, one variant of complex metaphor. I proceed to explore how revising our conception of metaphor accordingly generates a more robust understanding of both metaphor and the related notion of metaphoric competence. Paul Ricoeur's account of metaphor is more convincing than Black's and Davidson's for this very reason. Subsequent to comparing these theories and arguing that the resultant view of metaphor enables us to appreciate better its role in both speculative thought and communication more generally, I consider implications of this emerging view for the fields of aesthetics, ethics, and pedagogy. Finally, I review an example of a complex metaphor, one which fittingly counts as a metaphor of metaphoric competence itself.

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1 *Figuring out Metaphor*

The shape of metaphorical thought is also the shape of wisdom: what a human mind must do in order to comprehend a metaphor is a version of what it must do in order to be wise. But of course we are not wise in a vacuum; we are wise about things, situations, people, the world. Thus ... those who think metaphorically are enabled to think truly because the shape of their thinking echoes the shape of the world.

Jan Zwicky¹

The greatest thing by far is to have a command of metaphor. This alone cannot be imparted to another: it is the mark of genius, for to make *good* metaphor implies an eye for resemblances.

Aristotle²

Literalness we cannot have.

C. S. Lewis³

Not only are metaphors important objects of study in all disciplines, but studying the general phenomenon of metaphor is crucial insofar as it helps us become better communicators. The current breakdown in social, political, and intellectual dialogue that thinkers such as Jonathan Haidt and Joshua Greene seek to help us overcome might well be countered, or at least mitigated, by study in this area. And yet, the collapse they seek to redress is nothing new in the view of traditional rhetoric, however exacerbated it may be in our time. For the objects of study in rhetoric have long been the causes of misunderstanding. On Paul Ricoeur's view, an integral part of any such remedy is to develop "'command' of the shifts of meaning that assure the effectiveness of language in communication," that is, metaphoric mastery (*RM*, p. 79). Equating this kind of competence with "the poetic effort to look at the world and ourselves aslant," Charles Baxter goes further, contending not just that this talent and what it requires is

¹ *Wisdom and Metaphor* (henceforth, *WM*), foreword.

² *Poetics*, 1459a8, translated by Richards in "The Command of Metaphor" *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, p. 89, quoted in Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language*, p. 336, fn. 24, emphasis added. Hereafter, the latter will be abbreviated *RM*. I would like to thank Joseph Khoury for recommending Ricoeur's work as a starting point for researching the theory of metaphor.

³ From "Bluspels and Flanasferes," in *Rehabilitations and Other Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press 1939 pp. 135-58), quoted in Warren A. Shibles, *Metaphor: an Annotated Bibliography and History*, pp. viii, 174.

indispensable to intelligible and “legibly political” life, but that such abilities bring order to society by enlarging our capacity to cohabitate, communicate, and change.⁴ The potential for metaphoric competence to reduce confusion and re-orient us to the good life is one of the motivations for the present study of metaphor. If metaphoric competence alleviates significant problems, however, and, as such, merits study, then we must first ask: what is a metaphor?

Certainly, there are established accounts that answer this question in distinct ways. Comparison theory treats metaphor either as an implicit simile or as an analogical relation in a proportional ratio such that one term relates to another as a different term relates to yet another; accordingly, we can infer the analogical relation even if we are only given the first and last or second and third terms. Substitution theory takes metaphor to be the use of a figurative word in place of a literal one. In these cases, the substitution is a swapping in of a species for a genus, genus for a species, or a species for a different species; in each case there is a direct logical relation. Interaction theory, as we will see below, goes further, insisting that in certain metaphors one subject implicates another such that the one being implicated is somehow seen through the metaphor in a new and untranslatable manner. Fusion theory takes a somewhat different tack, elaborating another knowledge-producing species of metaphor as the unification of the abstract and sensual through a tangible symbol, whether this be at the level of a phrase, sentence, or even work as a whole. Each of these theories, and yet others, garners considerable support and surely offers lasting insights into the phenomenon of metaphor.

Notwithstanding the promise of these respective theories, the problem becomes that arriving at an agreed upon conception of metaphor is no easy task. It is, to say the least, a hotly

⁴ John MacKinnon, “Narrative Rhyme and the Good Life,” p. 8, in *Philosophy and Literature* (Johns Hopkins UP, Vol. 42, No. 1, April 2018). According to MacKinnon, Baxter associates the achievement of perceiving the world and ourselves aslant with a high tolerance for ambiguity, and a capacity to recognize “human motivations and predicaments” (ibid.).

contested topic, not just in the philosophical literature, but in literature as a whole.⁵ Efforts at establishing a theoretical foundation for the associated phenomena—such as those cited above—frequently give rise to disputes. On the other hand, there are many points on which commentators agree, largely revolving around the use of metaphor. Ideally, we would procure a working theory that addresses the formal, efficient, material, and final causes of metaphor, taking advantage of the wealth of literature on the subject that has been published in a variety of disciplines before, during, and since the “metaphor mania” of the past century.⁶ In other words, a

⁵ In addition to advancing our understanding of the linguistic “features and conceptual implications” of metaphor, recent theories demonstrate that “it is not simply one critical problem among others, notable only for the number of disagreements it causes,” for disagreements on this subject stem from disagreement on fundamental, perennial, philosophical issues. Some hold that for this reason each system can define itself by its approach to this topic (Wallace Martin, “Metaphor,” *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, pp. 765, 766). As naturally comes to mind when attending to the structure of the word “metaphor” itself, it resembles other terms beginning with “meta,” such as “metaphysics.” It is often the case, however, that this connection reflects more than a phonetic similarity, as evidenced by a long tradition of thinkers who view metaphor as connected to reality. See, for example, Zwicky in *WM*, p. 19, along with Ricoeur. Cf. also Gracian: “The conceit reveals reality rather than mere appearance” (Shibles, p. 120). This contributes to the proxy function that debates on metaphor assume in relation to other philosophical debates.

⁶ While Shibles’ 1971 bibliography and history outlines the initial proliferation of literature on metaphor theory, the “mania” continued for a considerable time afterwards, and even since this scholarly activity diminished in volume, a considerable number of studies of metaphor continue to be published. See, for example, Jan-Pierre van Hoppen’s and Edith Hols’ *Metaphor II: A Classified Bibliography of Publications from 1985-90*, or *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*, ed. Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr., a more recent guide to this vast literature. It is no wonder that metaphor research and publications increased in volume in the past century. With the advent of Max Black’s work in logical grammar, the topic once again became “worthy” of philosophical analysis. Prior to this, thinkers such as Hobbes and Locke argued for philosophical work in the area to cease, as they worried about a persuasive element of metaphor that seemed to bypass our rational faculties (Ted Cohen, “Metaphor and the Cultivation of Intimacy,” pp. 1-3). In addition, following Locke, there is a tradition that holds that metaphors do not bear knowledge (p. 4). In spite of the merit of the former complaint, this authoritative deprecation “in Western philosophy, especially in that strain running from British empiricism through Vienna positivism, which has denied to metaphors and their study any philosophical seriousness of the first order,” has been overturned (p. 1). Similar stories can be told in relation to other subjects that are themselves inextricable from the metaphoric process. For instance, creativity went through a dark ages in the field of psychology. Ironically, William James, “the founder of the field of psychology,” was the last psychologist to take it seriously as a topic of research for generations, until the mid-1940’s, when certain experts in the field refused to accept the authoritative view that creativity was “unscientific, mysterious, disturbing, and too corruptive of the scientific training of graduate students” (Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind*, p. 70; Rollo May, “The Nature of Creativity,” in *Creativity and Its Cultivation*, p. 55). Again, the story of imagination theory echoes this trend, especially in psychology, but to a lesser extent in philosophy as well. For instance, up until the recent empirical demonstration in neuroscience of the “imagination network’s” existence (made, incidentally, by “rogue” researchers who refused to accept received assumptions on the subject), “the subject realm of inner experience [was] treated as mere noise” (Kaufman and Gregoire, p. xxvii). As for the theoretical treatment of imagination in philosophy, a comparable argument could be made, which we shall consider when we return to this point in chapter 2. Early examples of such advances substantiate Shibles’ claim that “A look at the change in the definitions of metaphor in the various editions of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* shows its changing fortunes and its present high evaluation” (p.

rigorous and interdisciplinary approach is needed.⁷ And yet, as Carl R. Hausman warns, such a task regarding metaphor and, by extension, creativity is an “enormous undertaking.”⁸

Accordingly, I leave such a project to more powerful minds, focusing on one particular problem in metaphor theory instead, albeit in such a way that I hope will open out onto a larger whole.

What follows is an inquiry into metaphor in the spirit of Aristotle. Metaphor, however, like philosophy more generally, exceeds the range of Aristotle’s account. The goal here is to suggest directions towards a theoretical framework that both reflects and expands our experience of metaphor. Despite “the widespread disenchantment with the search for definitions that currently prevails in the philosophical community,” this project is, in the words of Bernard Suits, “philosophical in one traditional sense of that word,” for I aim to work towards discovering and formulating “a definition, and to follow the implications of that discovery even when they lead in surprising, and sometimes disconcerting, directions.”⁹ To this end, I review contributions from both traditional and contemporary thinkers.

17). Conversely, later advances reveal his criticism of theories that conflict with Skinnerian behaviourism to be unfounded.

⁷ Gibbs writes, “research on metaphor is now as multidisciplinary, and interdisciplinary, as perhaps any topic being studied in contemporary academia” (“The State of the Art,” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*, p. 4).

⁸ “An Outline of an Ontology Evolved from Metaphor,” in *Metaphor and Art: Interactionism and Reference in the Verbal and Nonverbal Arts*, p. 204. See pp. 201-8 for his elaboration of this point.

⁹ *The Grasshopper: Games, Life and Utopia*, p. 21. My thanks to Sean Hermanson for directing me to this underappreciated classic as a compelling example of how we need not confuse the difficulty of finding necessary and sufficient conditions with their being impossible to find. At the same time, however, we ought not to expect all phenomena to be reducible to categorization in objective terms of scientific precision and completeness, though I would still insist that we can uncover relevant objective elements, be they essential, necessary, or even accidental features. Refusing to endorse this approach in the case of metaphor, Mark Mercer contends that there is no “general way in which metaphors work,” that is, no “way in which a sentence must work if it is to be a metaphor,” nor any way in which metaphors “convey or make their point, or evoke images or feelings, or set moods.” Ultimately, argues Mercer, there is not a “particular way that we can describe as the way of metaphor and about which we can theorize” (“Metaphor and Sentence Meaning,” p. 9, in *Facta Philosophica: International Journal for Contemporary Philosophy* [Switzerland: Peter Lang, Vol. 8, 2006]). I would, of course, resist this claim, but, moreover, argue that such essential features of which Mercer denies the possibility are more easily grasped by considering more novel examples of metaphor. Indeed, Mercer himself grants that we should evaluate particular cases of what we take to be metaphor, arriving thereby at “interesting generalizations” about metaphor. Similarly, he grants that studying particular cases can shed light on further ones. On his view, however, we ought to remain “skeptical about the projectability of those generalizations we discover” and refrain from imposing such “findings as criteria for being a

While my aim in this work is to offer a critical analysis of metaphor, it is nevertheless “lateral” thinking that drives this exploration. That is, my approach does not always unfold in clear stages, though each section is intended to advance and defend the basic argument I present. This is, in part, because there is a plethora of connections, which comes as no surprise given Ginsberg’s emphatic assertion that in philosophy we learn that “*problems are interconnected and the treatment of one has implications for the treatment of others.*”¹⁰ Furthermore, philosophy is not ahistorical.¹¹ Although I do not intend to provide a “complete” theory of metaphor, I strive for what one might think of as panoramic analysis in miniature.¹²

As a result of this methodology, I find several mainstream philosophical theories of metaphor deficient, particularly since their scope leaves out more interesting kinds of metaphor. For certain metaphors that have a great impact on our lives, whether constituted by works of art as a whole or in part, do not lend themselves well to brief analysis. I call these extended metaphors. In what follows, I maintain that such metaphors invalidate aspects of the arguments of prominent theorists. Extended metaphors turn out to be, in general, more complex and affective than the metaphors that these accounts focus on, so much so that the views in question

metaphor” (Ibid). In various sections below, we will return to the idea that our experience of examples of metaphor, like our exposure to telling commentary on the subject, advances our knowledge of its essence.

¹⁰ Robert Ginsberg, *Welcome to Philosophy! A Handbook for Students*, P. 69 (San Francisco, California: Freeman, Cooper & Company, 1977). Ginsberg’s related point is that, while we may treat problems in isolation, it would be wrong to think of them as *existing* in isolation.

¹¹ “We can study history for history’s sake,” writes Louis Groarke, “to better grasp what earlier individuals were doing and thinking. But we can also study history in order to access the knowledge and wisdom that has been obscured by contemporary prejudices. In the latter case, historical research becomes a tool to a better philosophical understanding. The study of the history of ideas advances *hand in hand* with critical philosophy” (*An Aristotelian Account of Induction: Creating Something out of Nothing*, p. 14, emphasis added). Hereafter, abbreviated AAI.

¹² See Louis Groarke’s *Parallel Lines Converge at Infinity: Aristotle’s Theory of Religion and Literature* (forthcoming) for an example of applying a panoramic analysis methodology. Groarke describes it as belonging to the Chicago tradition of criticism, though his is a more metaphysical, epistemological, and theological approach. For practical reasons, proper panoramic analysis is beyond the scope of this inquiry into metaphor, although the literary approach applied here is in keeping with it. Many contemporary authors would, of course, discount such methods as lacking epistemological rigor, holding literary inquiry to be unscientific and soft. While this is not the place to offer an adequate response to such critiques, my hope is that the present project, taken as a whole, will speak for itself in this matter.

are exposed as inadequate.¹³ As we shall see, other theorists rise to the challenge that these intriguing metaphors pose and, consequently, offer a more convincing interpretation of metaphor in principle.

1.1 *The Problem*

“One trouble with metaphor analysis,” writes Warren A. Shibles, “is that we often want too simple an interpretation. An interpretation often gets to be nothing but a sterile deductive, mathematical system or a visual model, thereby missing all of the subtlety of the metaphor itself as a ‘form of life’” (p. 18). Indeed, a typical way both laypeople and academics think of metaphor conforms to the *A is B* template, an entrenched conception which, though appropriate in many cases, encourages underestimation, and even ignorance of, various dynamic aspects of metaphor.¹⁴ In the same vein, as Paul Werth laments, certain “traditional philological/linguistic accounts of metaphor,” such as that of I. A. Richards, “essentially concern themselves with the

¹³ It would be worthwhile to name these kinds of metaphors, since “extended” carries with it connotations related to allegory that we may not intend (see section 1.2 below). Similarly, one might criticize the term “complex” for suggesting that the metaphor be made up of parts, rather than being a single entity. As Lakoff explains, many recent commentators, viewing most metaphors as complex precisely because they are “built up out of simpler metaphors,” argue that this description is acceptable (“The Neural Theory of Metaphor” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*, p. 17). For the sake of the present inquiry’s scope, we will leave aside the question of whether the Neural Theory of Metaphor advances an adequate account of this phenomenon. The labels “overarching” and “underlying,” though each appropriate in many cases, raise another issue when using them to speak about complex metaphor, namely, that the figurative senses of these two adjectives seemingly contradict one another. Perhaps this issue is avoided, however, if we do not equivocate between these two present participles in particular cases. In lieu of a better term, I will in the main refer to such metaphors as extended, though I will also refer to them as complex, overarching, and underlying.

¹⁴ Zoltán Kövesces, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction Second Edition*, p. 72. Providing an example of this, Kövesces explains the conceptual metaphor theory view that “metaphoric thinking is largely automatic and below the level of conscious awareness,” which is suggested by the fact that gesture usually “precedes the onset of speech in a way the speaker is unaware of” (ibid.). We will, in the main, leave aside conceptual metaphor theory in this inquiry. For a thorough and penetrating recent account of research on the role of unconscious metaphorical communication in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, see Linda M. McMullen, “Putting It in Context: Metaphor and Psychotherapy,” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*. In addition, Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr.’s and Teenie Matlock’s “Metaphor, Imagination, and Simulation: Psycholinguistic Evidence,” from the same anthology, serves as a complementary guide.

mechanism of the single metaphor, which linguistically will normally be contained within one sentence.”¹⁵

Adding to these accounts the early efforts of Lakoff, Johnson, and Turner, who initiated conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), which focuses on the paradigmatic aspect of metaphor, Werth proceeds to sum up the problem with these approaches by insisting that metaphors can not only take the form of “single spies” or “battalions,” but also count as “lengthy campaigns.”¹⁶

¹⁵ “Extended Metaphor – a Text-world Account,” p. 79.

¹⁶ P. 80. In a way, Werth’s approach bridges the cognitive linguist approach of Lakoff and company with the Generative Grammar tradition initiated by Noam Chomsky, from which the former wish to distance themselves. For he attempts to resolve this problem by erecting a theoretical framework for analysing the *conceptual* metaphors that occur at the discourse-level of a text, what he proceeds to christen “megametaphors.” We will not explore the intricacies of his account here, however. Rather, we will note that his system is susceptible to the same criticism that Shibles provides above, though his equivocation concerning whether megametaphors, that is, metaphorical “undercurrents,” are shown explicitly in a text complicates matters (ibid.). In other words, he sides with Black in supporting the idea that some metaphors (what Black would refer to as interactive) cannot be paraphrased, while establishing a system to do just that. This computational model amounts to a method that we might regard as inadequate for two reasons. First, history warrants that we be wary of turning over the study of literature to linguists. See R. H. Stacy, *Defamiliarization in Language and Literature* (hereafter abbreviated *DLL*), p. 90 and especially p. 104, fn. 21. And second, as Groarke argues, in cognitive science there is an “underlying reductionism” at play. In claiming, as Thagard does, for example, that “thought can be understood in terms of computational procedure on mental representation,” cognitive scientists mistakenly reduce actual human thought to an algorithmic caricature. Their desire to depict all life as language that allows for eventual translation “into computational procedures on machines” simply resurrects “the old mistaken idea that conditional statements in propositional logic can adequately replace universal statements in syllogistic logic” (*AAI*, pp. 332-3). And, since Werth’s system falls within cognitive linguistics, it is what Chris Sinha calls the *avante la lettre* of cognitive science (“Cognitive Linguistics, Psychology, and Cognitive Science,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics* [Oxford; New York: OUP, ed. Dirk Geeraerts and Hubert Cuyckens, 2007; pp. 1266ff.]). The extent to which we might criticize Werth along these lines is unclear, however, for he does grant that the text-worlds in which megametaphors occur are “rich worlds – they represent human experience, rather than mathematical modeling” (p. 90). In any event, it does seem that, in important respects, he attempts to account for the kind of metaphors that, I argue, certain mainstream theories fail sufficiently to take into consideration, what Werth variously calls underground metaphors that “never quite surface into explicit form,” compelling subliminal messages that “obvious surface metaphors in the text combine to point to,” sustained metaphors enabling “extremely subtle conceptual effects to be achieved,” and, finally, “the metaphorical gist” of a text (pp. 87, 85, 89, 101). Furthermore, the “metaphorical structure” of texts and oral discourses eludes “clear divisions” (p. 100). One of Werth’s aims is to arrive at a method for presenting logical advancement from a megametaphor “to the metaphors actually occurring in the text” (p. 100). This enterprise would kindle no small amount of ire in today’s age of heightened sensitivity, given that the gist a megametaphors represents is “close to the primal metaphors of our conceptual life,” representing, in turn, “the most prototypical and primitive frames in our culture and ... the basic building-blocks of our world-view[s],” which are usually, “in modern terms, far from ‘politically correct’ (a notion which often seems to replace old repressions with new ones)” (p. 101). The closest Werth comes to approximating the argument I present here is when he insists that, in those cases where a certain passage can *redefine* the audience’s perception, we do not notice and cannot understand the related megametaphor “*unless the whole text had been taken into account*” (p. 89, emphasis added). For if the metaphor is understood on the basis of the text rather than the sentence or phrase, then we are, at the very least, attending to a metaphor outside the scope of many mainstream theories of metaphor.

Werth takes issue with how “a form of description which is limited in principle to the single sentence will not be adequate to the task of capturing this notion” (p. 80). What, then, are “lengthy campaigns” of metaphor? Why must we account for them in defining metaphor? Finally, is it the case that mainstream approaches aside from those Werth specifies leave them unaccounted for? These are the questions I explore below.

Although we will treat the first question at greater length in section 1.2 and chapter 4, in the meantime let us equate these lengthy campaigns with extended metaphors, typically associated with great works of literature. I address the second question in this section. As for the third question, I argue that, in spite of contributing obviously worthwhile points about metaphor to the literature, Max Black’s and Donald Davidson’s accounts fail to address the kind of metaphors which motivate Werth’s analysis. This shared shortcoming is confirmed by the failure of either account to cite any example of metaphor other than those that we can view at the level of the phrase or sentence.

The reason I propose to focus on this debate is fourfold. First, this exchange shapes the recent philosophical dialogue on metaphor, functioning in large part as the backdrop against which the arguments of thinkers such as Ricoeur proceed.¹⁷ Related to this, Black’s and Davidson’s discussions bring to our attention many prominent ideas, issues, and questions, vital to establishing a convincing account of metaphor. Ultimately, however, both Black’s and

¹⁷ Ricoeur writes, “Richards made the breakthrough; after him, Max Black and others occupy and organize the terrain” (*RM*, p. 84). Martin adds that, after Black’s philosophical work on the heuristic elements of metaphor, many others take interest, including figures from other fields: Thomas Kuhn and Mary Hesse go to great lengths to elaborate the insight itself; French philosophers such as Derrida become sufficiently incited to fight back against this claim, insisting that it is problematic to view our experience of metaphor as “merely” heuristic (though I do not address Derrida directly, more on both the French school and the “heuristic” process associated with metaphor can be found below); Lakoff and Johnson respond by demonstrating the extent to which we regularly organize our personal and social experience by metaphor; similarly, Schön and Steinburg take interest in how metaphorical analogies assume a narrative dimension when we employ them in ordering our understanding of the past and planning for the future; and, closely allied to this project, in spirit at least, following Pepper, White argues that one of the four kinds of metaphor Ramus and Vico identify underpins the primary methodology contemporary historians apply (p. 765). Clearly, Black’s work ignited the conversation.

Davidson's views lack the resources to account for extended metaphor, rendering each untenable. In light of that very fact, examining these views puts the problem alluded to above into sharper relief. However, given that Black seeks to establish a theoretical foundation for interaction metaphors and that Davidson's comments on the parallel between metaphors and poems, the role of implication in metaphor, and the notion of metaphorical truth contribute to this same effort, their shared fascination with novel metaphors illuminates the notion of extended metaphor. Therefore, the debate furnishes a fitting starting point for seeking principles by which we might adequately account for metaphors not just in the sentence or clause, but in extended passages, or indeed that constitute complete works of literature.

Let us consider, first, Black's interaction theory. According to Black, this position is distinct from two others, namely, the substitution and comparison views ("Metaphor," p. 292). He holds that if (and only if) a metaphor qualifies as the kind which can, strictly speaking, be understood in terms of the interaction view alone, then it merits philosophical interest. Any metaphor that either of the other two theories can account for can be translated into a precise and complete expression of information. In cases where this is not possible, there is an "*intellectual operation*" involving our experience of learning.¹⁸ This operation is dependent on a "simultaneous awareness of both subjects but not reducible to any *comparison* between the two" ("Metaphor," p. 293). This distinguishing characteristic is one reason why they are of "philosophical interest." Since he interprets Davidson's view as being a species of the comparison view, Black regards the capacity of interaction theory to account for such cases as a

¹⁸ In a way, Black's interaction view is an implicit argument against what MacKinnon describes as "propositional reductionism, the view that literary expressions can be rendered in propositional form with no remainder, reduced to some theme or thesis" (p. 28 fn. 33). For anyone holding the latter view would perforce resist the interaction view, or at least the "un-paraphrasability" thesis which accompanies it. Much more will be said concerning this claim below.

distinct advantage over Davidson's position.¹⁹ But all of this just raises the question, how does Black define key terms in such a way as to establish his view as superior to Davidson's proposed alternative?

Since his writings on the topic are extensive, I outline Black's position by looking primarily at his articles "Metaphor" and "How Metaphors Work: A Reply to Donald Davidson."²⁰ What some students of metaphor, following Richards, refer to as, respectively, the tenor and the vehicle of a metaphor, Black calls the "principal" and "subsidiary" subjects ("Metaphor," pp. 286-7).²¹ A sufficient familiarity with "the system of associated commonplaces" related to the subsidiary subject is a necessary precondition for understanding a particular metaphor ("Metaphor," p. 287).²² In a metaphor, applying a subsidiary subject as a predicate of the principal subject "evokes the ... system of related commonplaces" that we associate with the subsidiary subject, a procedure which allows a "suitable hearer" subsequently to "construct a corresponding system of implications about the principal subject" ("Metaphor," p. 288).

The "hearer" is able to do this because there are many implied assertions in a given "system of related commonplaces." The more appropriate the metaphor, the more implications there will be. Furthermore, the hearer conceives of these implications in terms of a scale of

¹⁹ It is unclear if Black's interpretation of Davidson's position is fair. The fact that Davidson suggests that some metaphors can be non-propositional in content protects his position from the charge that he only has in mind metaphors that are translatable. Black could respond, however, that while Davidson may be aware of these kinds of metaphor, the position Davidson defends cannot account for them. As we shall see below, Mercer challenges the claim, first, that Davidson's view is strictly a comparison view, and, second, that this is a view of metaphor in the manner in which Black's position is a view of metaphor.

²⁰ The latter article will hereafter be abbreviated HMW.

²¹ See David Hills, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2017 Edition, ed., Edward N. Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/metaphor/>), s.v. "Metaphor," for an account of how Richards explains metaphor in terms of "tenor" and "vehicle."

²² Cf. Cohen.

prominence according to the degree of ease with which each implied assertion of the subsidiary subject fits with the principal subject (“Metaphor,” p. 288).

It is by virtue of the subsidiary subject’s belonging to a larger “system of ideas, not sharply delineated, and yet sufficiently definite to admit of detailed enumeration,” that this fittingness is made possible.²³ In other words, this flexibility enables us to suppress certain details, while emphasizing others, when we utilize subsidiary subjects. In this way, a metaphor “organizes our view” of the principal subject. Black argues that the principal subject is, therefore, “‘seen through’ the metaphorical expression.”

Black proceeds to modify his interactive theory. For instance, he notices that the “[r]eference to ‘associated commonplaces’ will fit the commonest cases.... But in a poem, or a piece of sustained prose, the writer can establish a novel pattern of implications for the literal uses of the key expressions, prior to using them as vehicles for his metaphors.” Consequently, “specially constructed systems of implications” can also support metaphors (“Metaphor,” p. 290). For Black, then, a metaphor works by applying to a principal subject a system of “associated implications” characteristic of a subsidiary subject (“Metaphor,” p. 291).²⁴

But what more can we say about Black’s interaction theory? First, there is a certain flexibility to the larger system of ideas to which that of a subsidiary subject belongs. On Black’s account, this enables the use of metaphorical utterances to comment on something larger than,

²³ All of the references in this paragraph are from “Metaphor,” p. 288. See Hausman, pp. 84-88, 102, and 116-7 for a thorough examination of the implied metaphysics of Black’s position in relation to what establishes a metaphor as apt. Hausman takes Black’s account to task for bordering on vacuity in this regard. The problem with Black’s view, in part, is that he ignores the tension involved in metaphors, a gap that reflects his disagreements with Monroe Beardsley. Ricoeur’s objection to Black’s idea of a system of associated commonplaces is that Black’s explanations leave “unsolved the problem of innovation,” a criticism that is closely akin to Hausman’s, and that we will return to in chapter 2 (“The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling,” p. 145, fn. 2). (Henceforth, Ricoeur’s article shall be abbreviated MP.) In *The Rule of Metaphor*, Ricoeur expands on this criticism. We will return to this later in the current section.

²⁴ Black deems this theory to be a special case of a “*semantic* interpretation of metaphor.” See HMW, p. 140.

though related to, the principal subject. For example, Wallace Stevens' memorable suggestion that a poem is a pheasant might, as a *metaphorical* comment, illuminate the nature of poetry rather than merely assert that a particular poem (the given principal subject in the utterance) "is a bird" (HMW, p. 138).²⁵ This is more readily noticed when a sentence or phrase with a "familiar standard sense or meaning" is used as a subsidiary subject to say something strange (HMW, p. 138).²⁶

To justify his claim, Black cites an example of someone applying the baking metaphor, "No pie from that flour," to comment on a chess match.²⁷ Such a use will have no *literal* sense in that context, but will nonetheless *apply* to the situation. Examples of this kind "truly apply," inasmuch as they relate to the nature of the situation. Thus, the baking metaphor Black alludes to has nothing to do with baking in the literal sense, though it would have arisen as a metaphor, that is, a lesson, out of someone's experiences in baking, which the chess commentator subsequently found applicable to the match.²⁸ For Black, this confirms how the interaction theory provides an account of metaphor that the other two theories cannot.

²⁵ At this point in his response to Davidson, Black notes the extent to which Davidson's emphasis on the importance of ordinary literal meaning in metaphorical attributions has merit, conceding that "awareness of" such meaning "is necessary if the metaphor is to be recognized and understood" (HMW, p. 138). Cf. Zwicky, *WM*, p. 60 Left.

²⁶ In the same vein, I would argue that the "making strange" element of metaphorical phenomena is more easily understood when we consider cases of overarching metaphors, since these, as authors I discuss below explain, render such effects more profound. That Ricoeur accounts for this element and these kinds of examples makes his theory of metaphor all the more compelling. Cf. chapters 2 and 4.

²⁷ All references in this paragraph are to HMW, p. 138.

²⁸ See HMW, p. 138, fn. 27 for further contextual and bibliographical information about the baking metaphor. Black's elaboration of the pheasant and baking metaphors constitutes one clear point of (semantic) disagreement with Davidson. For this elaboration offers a response to Davidson's concern that to say a metaphor means anything other than what the words constituting the metaphor mean in their literal usage is to jeopardize the systematicity of regular language usage. On the contrary, we might understand part of the speech-act aspect of newly identified metaphors as a change in the given system of language. Dead metaphor is a key topic of interest in this connection, and, as Martin claims, one that most of Black's more enduring insights concern (p. 764). For a dead metaphor is not considered ordinary language, in the sense of being opposed to metaphorical. Many, perhaps all, euphemisms, for example, fall into this category. But as Mercer claims in his defense of Davidson's account of metaphor and meaning, dead metaphors are not metaphors at all. This may highlight how Davidson's rigid conception of meaning leads to such intractable debates.

Another qualification to Black's position is that he does not regard this view as exhaustive. According to him, none of the three possible theories he discusses account for exactly what "it means to say that in a metaphor one thing is thought of (or viewed) *as* another thing" (HMW, p. 142). Black writes:

To think of God *as* love and to take the further step of identifying the two is emphatically to do something more than to *compare* them as merely being alike in certain respects. But what that 'something' more is remains tantalizingly elusive: we lack an adequate account of metaphorical thought. (HMW, p. 143)

While Black concedes there is something about the cognitive content involved in metaphor that escapes our attempts at propositional explanation, he insists that his view is better at accounting for the "something more" than Davidson's comparison view. Still, when they each speak about metaphorical thought, Black's and Davidson's discussions converge. This is especially true concerning their respective claims about the cognitive insight that arises out of novel metaphors. A brief examination of the relevant characteristics of Davidson's position reveals this overlap.

Davidson's thesis in "What Metaphors Mean" is that "metaphors mean what the words, in their most literal interpretation, mean, and nothing more."²⁹ For him, the meaning of a metaphor does not include the affect of a metaphor on whoever apprehends it. He grants, however, that "there is such a thing as metaphorical truth" (WMM, p. 41). On his view, although a metaphor leads "us to notice what might not otherwise be noticed," and although we are justified in saying that "these visions, thoughts, and feelings inspired by the metaphor, are true or false," any such cognitive content is due to what the metaphor intimates rather than what it means (WMM, p. 41). After all, for Davidson, "intimation is not meaning" (WMM, p. 41).

Of vital importance to Davidson's position, then, is the premise that a metaphor does not have a distinctly metaphorical meaning, though it does elicit "visions, thoughts, and feelings."

²⁹ P. 32. Henceforth, abbreviated WMM.

Presumably, he associates metaphorical truth with these intimated thoughts. Moreover, these thoughts can be non-propositional in character. In light of this, his distinction between the effect of metaphor and its meaning seems merely semantic. Whether we conceive of metaphorical thought, meaning, or truth as what is *meant* by a metaphor or as what a metaphor *intimates*, surely the epistemic status of metaphorical thoughts, meanings, or truths has not changed. It is not clear that Davidson adequately resolves, or even addresses, this question.³⁰

Despite any reservations we might have concerning Davidson's claim that there is no such thing as metaphorical meaning, his raising the issue of meaning is precisely one of his lasting contributions to metaphor theory, and in two ways. First, in general, argues Martin, single-minded "emphasis on the meaning of [metaphor], apart from the semantic and grammatical details of its realization, can lead both modern theorists and traditionalists to questionable interpretive practices."³¹ Against one of these practices, namely, jumping to conclusions about the specific meanings of given metaphors in poetry, Forrest-Thomson suggests that such a move loses sight of the metaphor's aesthetic and affective functions. For the same

³⁰ Neither is it clear whether any substantive result follows from this distinction. Perhaps Davidson's insistence on restricting the use of the term "meaning," in particular, follows from the theory of meaning to which he subscribes. Martin characterizes Davidson's view in this regard as reducible to the assertion that meaning "involves *only* the relation between [language] and reality" (p. 765, emphasis added). If this is the case, then his remarks on how he uses the terms "meaning" and "effect" may be more of an entailment of his theory of meaning than an effort to construct an alternative theory of metaphor to Black's. According to Black, Davidson's distinction between what is intimated and what is said corresponds to what Austin identifies as the perlocutionary effects of semantic discourse. In Black's view, this opens Davidson to criticism, for since we express metaphors not just to others but also to ourselves, a speech-act theory approach to metaphor is problematic. See HMW. Black's claim may be unjustified, however, for it is neither self-evident nor supported by any compelling arguments or examples. Furthermore, Davidson might respond that any supposed "expression" of metaphor to oneself is simply the *recognition* of a metaphor accompanied by intimations of said metaphor. Nonetheless, a speech-act approach may be problematic, though for different reasons than Black supposes. The counterexample lies not in expressing a metaphor to oneself, but rather in recognizing a metaphor that has not yet been articulated. Metaphors of this kind come in an endless variety. We might think of a metaphor we have learned in a work experience, or one that is a work of art in virtue of its composition, but that the artist did not have in mind while constructing the work. There is no speech-act involved in these cases. While Davidson might reply that the significant implications are to be found not in the meaning of the metaphor itself, but rather in its effect, speech-act theory could not account for this, though Davidson might consider using speech-act theory analogically. See Martin, especially pp. 764-5, for a concise comparative analysis of Davidson's and various speech-act theorists' views on metaphor in light of their conceptions of meaning.

³¹ P. 762.

reason, some modern poets actively resist attempts to reduce metaphors to paraphrastic statements, favoring those “that do not lend themselves to assimilation by the discursive elements of the text.” Following Shklovsky, the Russian formalist, many critics go further, asserting that the purpose of new metaphors “is not to create meaning but to renew perception by ‘defamiliarizing’ the world.”³²

Second, the lexical meaning of the words in the metaphor is surely relevant. Not one to pull her punches when addressing Davidson’s opinions, Zwicky nonetheless occasionally adopts a Davidsonian manner in her talk about metaphor, a similarity confirmed by her discussion of metaphors as analogous to both living organisms and healing. “Metaphoric language depends on non-metaphorical language,” suggests Zwicky, “the way communities of plants and animals depend on supplies of fresh water,” or, better yet, “the way the art of healing depends on the presence of injury and disease” (*WM*, p. 30 Left).³³ Defending Davidson’s view of the meaning of metaphor, Mercer writes, “it seems that use or effect comes by or through meaning and, thus, cannot constitute it” (p. 12). Alternatively, “illocutionary or perlocutionary effects do not give locutionary meaning; locutionary meaning, rather, is a basis from which illocutionary or perlocutionary effects arise” (p. 21). That Zwicky’s intertwined proportional metaphors and Mercer’s remarks on the dependency relations concerning this aspect of metaphor converge on the point of meaning confirms the importance of this point, which Davidson’s discussion highlights.

I would argue that the most compelling elements of Davidson’s account arise from his treatment of novel metaphors as works of art. For instance, he writes, “there is no limit to what a

³² Ibid. As we shall see in chapter 2, integrating this point is one of the strengths of Ricoeur’s theory.

³³ See *WM*, p. 92 Left, where Zwicky takes Davidson, in contrast to Dewey, to “prefer the conveyance of knowledge over the facilitation of understanding.”

metaphor calls to our attention, and much of what we are caused to notice is not propositional in character” (WMM, p. 46). Just as in the case of interpreting art, implies Davidson, the possibilities are never closed for elaborating metaphors. This inexhaustibility allows us continuously to stretch the bounds of our imagination as we elaborate them.³⁴ The insight a metaphor can elicit, therefore, is, in principle, always open to development. This appears to confirm the parallel with works of art, which have the same “open-ended” characteristic.³⁵

Davidson’s thought, here, refers implicitly to metaphorical truth being a matter of “what a metaphor calls to our attention.” As we have seen, this is not, for him, a matter of a metaphoric meaning, but rather the metaphor’s intimation. And what the metaphor intimates, furthermore, is not merely propositional in character. In his analysis of a particular poem, Davidson suggests that, insofar as the poem intimates, it transcends literal meaning and achieves something akin to metaphor.³⁶ Although he does not treat the poem *as* a metaphor, poems fulfill the same criteria that he has stipulated, as do works of art in general. Therefore, Davidson’s comments provide epistemological warrant for treating poems as extended metaphors, though this support is diminished by both his insistence on literal interpretation and his suggesting an analogous relation between poems and metaphor, as opposed to viewing poems as necessarily metaphors.

Still, establishing that a work of art *is* in some sense a metaphor may be unnecessary if we are able to use Davidson’s analysis to treat a work of art in the same way. As he points out, a

³⁴ Cf. Andrew Ortony, “The Role of Similarity in Similes and Metaphors” in *Metaphor and Thought* (Cambridge UP, 1993), where he observes that predicate introduction metaphors—in contrast to ones that simply reiterate previously identified apt assertions of the subject—expand the limits of a given language, adding that this phenomenon accounts for the elasticity of language itself. See also Julian Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*. Like Ortony, Jaynes argues that it is “by metaphor that language grows” (p. 49). We will revisit the implications of the comment on the growth of an individual’s imagination in the continual elaboration of a given metaphor in sections 3.3, 4.1, and 4.2.

³⁵ As we will see below in section 3.1, this corresponds to Hilde Hein’s account of the best kinds of public art.

³⁶ Beardsley makes a similar, though stronger, claim in relation to the kinds of metaphors which Davidson has in mind here, insisting that these metaphors *are* miniature poems, a point which Ricoeur reiterates (Hausman, p. 105).

metaphor intimates something that is more than just propositional. This becomes easier to appreciate the more novel a metaphor is, and works of art, treated as metaphors, provide us with distinctly novel examples. Therefore, works of art satisfy his criterion that a metaphor intimates something which is not just propositional. Conversely, as he suggests, metaphors can be called works of art on the same grounds. This parallel becomes even more striking when Davidson suggests there is a “beauty or aptness” to some metaphors, which he calls their “hidden power” (WMM, p. 47).

This is where the importance of resisting explicitness in art arises. For whether we view metaphors as works of art, or works of art as metaphors, in neither case are the implications of what is conveyed made explicit. As a result, neither metaphors nor works of art direct us towards an inevitable response. They leave room for interpretation. Davidson alludes to this in his comments regarding the endlessness of interpretation of the more novel cases of metaphor.

Nonetheless, Black insists that Davidson’s position cannot account for this phenomenon. In his view, Davidson’s account lacks the resources to explain metaphors other than those that can be translated, and which are, accordingly, not indefinitely open to interpretation. Black is confident that his own theory can account for these more interesting cases. At first glance, this seems another point of disagreement between the two authors. But a comment by Davidson suggests otherwise.

Davidson argues that, in trying to teach a concept, our method is not designed to explicitly tell the student the necessary knowledge. Rather, the aim is to assist the student “to learn it” (WMM, p. 36). In this case, our “purpose [is] metaphor, not drill in the use of language” (WMM, p. 37). Davidson considers the point of metaphor in this connexion to be that of

directing the audience “to what language is about,” instead of to language itself (WMM, p. 37).³⁷

This argument seems in keeping with Black’s conception of the object of our understanding when we apprehend novel metaphors.

Assuming, then, that the aim is not to communicate something merely linguistic, Davidson must be referring to some process or moment which will inevitably defy translation. On this point, Davidson’s and Black’s comments converge even more closely. Still, Black incorporates this phenomenon into his account more convincingly than Davidson does when he states that “[r]ecognition of an ‘extended’ nonce meaning is not intended to be a ‘complete’ explanation of how metaphor works” (HMW, p. 141).

Why is this resistance to explicitness so important, however? As Davidson suggests, it clearly has something to do with the learning process.³⁸ We simply face a set of facts when something is explicitly given, whereas when such explicitness is withheld we are provided with an opportunity for heuristic learning. But further, when we try explicitly to paraphrase the cognitive insights of metaphors, we encounter a problem analogous to that which we encounter when trying literally to paraphrase humour, irony, beauty, love, and so forth.

These pedagogical and methodological issues are contemporaneous. When either the beauty of a work of art evokes a response, or the insight afforded by a metaphor dawns on us, they can be said to move us in a way that explicitly stating the associated information and expression cannot. Hence, Black’s assertion that the paraphrase of a metaphor

will not have the same power to inform or enlighten as the original. For one thing, the implications previously left to a suitable reader to educe for himself, with a nice feeling for their relative priorities and degrees of importance, are now presented explicitly as having equal weight.... [A] metaphor leaves a good deal to be supplied at the reader’s

³⁷ We will return to the pedagogical implications of this point in section 3.3 and again throughout chapter 4.

³⁸ We might add, in the same vein, that it involves valuing the autonomy of the learner.

discretion. To say something with suggestive indefiniteness is not to say *nothing*. (HMW, p. 142)

Here again, the debate about the nature of metaphor supports the impulse to conceive of a work of art as a metaphor, inasmuch as a work of art “says something with suggestive indefiniteness,” “informs” and moves. To attempt to define our experience of metaphor in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions is to ignore the relevance of this “suggestive indefiniteness.” That is not to say, however, that essential properties cannot be found for metaphor. It is our *experience* of particular instances of metaphor that cannot be either exhaustively paraphrased or reduced to propositional format. We can get a better sense of Black’s concern, here, if we consider how two other authors present what is, in effect, the same case.

Roger Scruton identifies further reasons why it is important to resist explicitness in the context of explaining our experience of metaphors. As he argues in his article “Modern Philosophy and the Neglect of Aesthetics,” neither the sentiment of the sublime nor of beauty can be translated into a reasoned argument because they are “forms of understanding (*Wissenschaften*) which do not possess the objectivity of natural science, being derived from man’s self-conception, rather than from impersonal observation of natural processes.... Nevertheless, they possess their own kind of objectivity, a convergence upon a common fund of superficial truth, which entitles them to their own claims to knowledge.”³⁹ By “superficial” truth, Scruton does not mean “trite” or “inconsequential.” Instead, he is referring to truth as it *really* appears to us. A literal interpretation will not be able to convey the feeling of such knowledge. Neither will it be able to carry the same force of insight associated with “intimations of the

³⁹ See “Modern Philosophy and the Neglect of Aesthetics,” pp. 104, 108.

transcendental,” such as occurs, according to Scruton, during aesthetic experience of a work of art, or, as I insist, when we recognize a work of art *as* a metaphor.⁴⁰

Ted Cohen echoes Scruton’s point by analyzing a hitherto unacknowledged characteristic of the successful apprehension of metaphors, what he calls the cultivation of intimacy. Cohen begins establishing the grounds for this essential feature of metaphor by raising a question. If metaphors are philosophically irrelevant, to the extent that they have no “cognitive content” and thus do not count as a “serious” use of language, “then of what use are they?”⁴¹

In Cohen’s view, it would be absurd to think that all metaphors amount to exercises in either linguistic incompetence or immoral misdirection and agitation, for this would ignore certain teleological considerations.⁴² Refuting this negative assumption about metaphors, Cohen raises the issue of a particular kind of metaphor that meets the above criteria of “serious” language usage. Since metaphors that can be literally paraphrased have the same truth-value in either the metaphorical or paraphrased form, why resort to them? One answer, he grants, is that they are eloquent or decorative. Hence his assertion that “metaphors are peculiarly crystallized works of art” (p. 5). Beyond this, however, Cohen’s aim is to challenge the assumption that knowledge is the only relevant concern in the study of metaphor.

⁴⁰ Arguably, recognizing an overarching metaphor as a work of art is just what Scruton means by an intimation of the transcendental. But to explore this point is beyond the scope of the present thesis. Further, notice that Scruton’s claim here, while intended as a critique of the analytic approach, involves an unstinting commitment to precisely such an approach. The “intimations” Scruton refers to are also in line with what Black associates with our experience of interactive metaphors, for they are, on Scruton’s account, strange and untranslatable (p. 104). Connected with this point is his appreciation of Husserl’s reservations regarding the tendency of the paradigm of scientific objectivity to pervade other spheres of learning, resulting in a shallower understanding of them. As Scruton argues, it is one of philosophy’s responsibilities to protect these other “forms of knowledge, to anchor them once again in human consciousness, and to strike down the pretensions of science to give us the whole truth of what we are” (p. 108). For a concrete example of a philosopher attending to this duty, see William Sweet’s *Religion, Science, and Non-Science*.

⁴¹ Cohen, “Metaphor and the Cultivation of Intimacy,” p. 5.

⁴² By specifying “all,” Cohen is not insisting here that misdirection and agitation cannot be the aim in some cases, which we know is possible by experience.

As his article illustrates, the intimacy that is cultivated through metaphor is worthy of philosophical inquiry in its own right. Cohen holds that this aspect of metaphor is independent of both “the question of its cognitivity” and “its aesthetical character.”⁴³ The unique manner in which the speaker and hearer of a metaphor achieve intimacy involves three things.

- 1) The speaker of the metaphor “issues a kind of concealed invitation.”⁴⁴
- 2) The hearer of the metaphor “expends a special effort to accept the invitation.”
- 3) The “transaction constitutes the acknowledgment of a community.”

Cohen maintains that, while this process also happens in ordinary language, metaphors render such elements noteworthy. With regard to the “special effort” of the hearer, Cohen argues that, initially, the metaphor is recognized as such, on the basis of which an inference is made about its point.

Both steps require the hearer to make assumptions relating to the speaker’s beliefs, including those about the hearer. Offering one interpretation of “what is gained” by this, Cohen suggests that, since the effort of the hearer necessitates engaging with the speaker’s beliefs, the speaker’s anticipation of this prompts him or her to do the same with respect to the hearer (p. 7). The “gain,” then, provided both that a speaker offers such an invitation and that a hearer accepts it, is that the pair begin to cultivate an intimacy with each other’s beliefs. For Cohen, intimacy can also occur in the literal use of language. However, we sometimes prefer to “initiate explicitly the cooperative act of comprehension which is ... something more than a routine act of

⁴³ Cohen, p. 6. As will be evident below, while it does seem that the aspect of metaphor that Cohen focuses on is distinct, it is not clear that this part of the metaphoric process is strictly independent of either the associated aesthetic or cognitive elements. However, Cohen might reply that *exploring* this aspect is independent of inquiring into these other aspects.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

understanding.” Cohen insists that the intimacy that speaker and hearer achieve does not result solely from their engagement with each other’s beliefs.

Without metaphoric competence, a person can neither offer nor accept such an invitation, which distinguishes this kind of intimacy from that found in the routine use of language. Such competence presupposes moving “through a network of assumptions, hypotheses, and inferences,” on the basis of the figurative expression at hand, including its literal sense.⁴⁵ In any case of linguistic interaction with another, the result is a shared awareness of “information about one another’s knowledge, beliefs, intentions, and attitudes.”⁴⁶ Furthermore, just as an individual can recognize and comprehend a metaphor without having it expressed to him or her by another, so too can the manner of thought this presupposes be restricted to “the self-dialogue of the soul” (p. 8).

On Cohen’s view, awareness both of the metaphor’s implications and the (possible) limits on who could either offer or accept such an invitation is required for metaphoric competence in the case of both social interaction and self-dialogue. He provides examples of jokes with varying levels of complexity, demonstrating that a person’s potential for both recognizing and comprehending becomes less common in more complex cases. The case of the esoteric joke illustrates how relying on exegesis ruins the effect of complexity. Besides the complex case, it may be difficult to find the humor in a relatively mundane joke also, if we are lacking vital background information, what, as we will see, some commentators on the theory of metaphor regard as encyclopedic knowledge. Insufficient metaphoric competence, then, whether with respect to the power of our mental faculties or to our knowledge, leads either to our missing

⁴⁵ Ibid. Cf. Davidson.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

the humor of a joke or negating the purpose of a metaphor.⁴⁷ Because paraphrase cannot reproduce this effect, it is not clear that there can be concrete rules either for the detection or explaining of metaphors.

Aside from a variety of ways in which a speaker's invitation and a hearer's acceptance contribute to the achievement of intimacy, the examples of jokes Cohen discusses confirm a third contributor to this cultivation, namely, "the capacity to form or acknowledge a (progressively more select) community" (p. 9). Cohen regards these examples as providing sufficient support for his claim that, like jokes, metaphors require all three elements to cultivate intimacy. Cohen concludes by advising that further inquiries be made into the character of linguistic intimacy, its attainment and use. Anticipating such considerations, he notes that intimacy is not necessarily friendly, "nor is it intended to be" in every case. Because intimacy can be a harmful condition to achieve, we must be wary, argues Cohen, of the idea that metaphors always generate communal insight.

Beyond missing out on the power of the metaphor, then, an interlocutor's attempt to explain a metaphor removes the potential for that heuristic encounter whereby one achieves such intimacy. And yet, this need not be the case across the board. There are surely ways in which paraphrase itself can be, as Black maintains, suggestively indefinite, that is, metaphorical, such as Socrates frequently exemplifies in Plato's dialogues.⁴⁸ Clearly, Cohen, Scruton, and Black are

⁴⁷ Cf. Black, "Metaphor."

⁴⁸ Ginsberg relates how we need "patience and willingness to see the connections" when Socrates resorts to this form of explanation in Plato's dialogues, a point which complements Cohen's discussion of what the achievement of intimacy presupposes in the case of metaphor. As Ginsberg notes, this way of discussing principles—which Socrates favors for discussing "the high notions of piety, justice, and virtue"—involve argument by analogy. Ginsberg's related discussion is weakened in two ways, however. First, having couched this argument form solely in terms of analogy, he explains the latter, in turn, precisely as Aristotle conceives of proportional metaphor, that is, metaphor by analogy. Here, Ginsberg fails to mention metaphor, thereby, neglecting the connection between Socrates' pedagogical style and the rich and varied function of metaphor. A second weakness follows from Ginsberg's concession that explaining things in this manner is unproductive to the extent that, due to how "there are endless kinds of similarity to be detected," we can argue through a different analogy to demonstrate the *dissimilarity* between the objects under consideration (p. 66). This supposition does not square with how many theoreticians think

defending a notion of the irreducible complexity of certain phenomena, and, by doing so, implying the value of the heuristic elements of such experiences. In other words, it is imperative that we ensure freedom in appreciation of both metaphors specifically and art more generally.⁴⁹

I am not claiming that any work of art can be a good metaphor. (The task of clarifying what accounts for such successful instances, at least with respect to literature, is taken up in chapter 2, section 3.1, and chapter 4.) Nor is it the case that “anything goes” in our interpretation of works of art as metaphors. According to Black, we can offer reasons for whether or not a metaphor appropriately applies, adding, as we saw above, that some metaphors are more fitting than others (HMW, p. 134).⁵⁰ This is because certain metaphors more closely reflect what Scruton refers to as our experience of the way the world “really” appears; that is, the way we perceive through aesthetic experience “the fittingness of the world, and of our place in it.”⁵¹ Novel works of art, then, are examples of metaphors which carry a force that eludes propositional explanation. But the intensity of this force is contingent upon how closely the given metaphor’s implications cohere with whatever truth we infer about the world and our experience of it.

Several points follow from the debate between Black and Davidson as assessed here.

First, both clearly contribute many insights to the philosophical literature on metaphor.⁵² They do

of fittingness with respect to metaphor. On these alternative views, we may infer that, in principle at least, there will not always be a counter-argument by analogy available that is as fitting as the one originally intended.

⁴⁹ The same applies to morality and education, as I argue in chapter 3.

⁵⁰ Cf. Goodman: metaphors have their own kind of truth; consequently, they can also be false. Thus, we can test their aptness by way of comparison, investigation into relevant circumstances, and repeated efforts to attend to the metaphors themselves (Shibles, p. 118). For these reasons, encyclopedic knowledge becomes helpful for metaphoric competence in general, familiarity with specific context when it comes to particular esoteric metaphors is required even more (as Cohen observes), and, above all, to determine the aptness of novel metaphors we perform need a keen awareness, along with a willingness to go the required distance Goodman insists upon in order to determine the aptness of these cases, especially in regards to those on the edge of our ken.

⁵¹ P. 110. Attending to Cohen’s admonition, while many potential metaphors fittingly apply, we also ought to exercise restraint in selecting which ones to apply, as some are appropriate and others harmful.

⁵² I would argue that this is even more the case when their arguments are considered dialectically.

so from positions that appear staunchly opposed. For example, in reference to Davidson's "intimation" that "metaphor is the dreamwork of language," Black notes that it is arbitrary to presume that the meaning of this metaphor is restricted "to what is *explicitly* expressed by it," rather than including its implications (WMM, p. 31; HMW, p. 134, fn. 15). It could be that, while their views converge concerning the implications of metaphor as a phenomenon, Black's and Davidson's entrenched semantic commitments preclude them from accepting each other's *wording* with regard to what a metaphor intimates.⁵³

Second, in spite of the apparent discrepancies between their views, it is clear that Black's and Davidson's opinions converge on the subject of how we experience metaphorical thought. For example, Davidson endorses Black's view that metaphors "provide a kind of lens or lattice ... through which we view the relevant phenomena" (WMM, p. 45).⁵⁴ It is on the basis of this shared view that Davidson proceeds to argue that novel metaphors are little works of art.⁵⁵ The success of this argument suggests, in turn, that works of art are more complex forms of metaphor. Indeed, novel works of art fit the criteria that Davidson establishes in his discussion of the effects of the more interesting cases of metaphor.

This conception is also consistent with Black's characterization of the interaction achieved within those metaphors which are of philosophical interest. As is evident above, the

⁵³ Consider the following example of how word-selection might be the source of their disagreement. If we look to HMW, p. 134, Black takes his belief that metaphors can imply truth claims to be one with which Davidson cannot agree. But, we have seen, Davidson claims there is evidence that a metaphor's implications can be "true or false." Therefore, while Davidson's account might be at odds with Black's in some sense, it remains unclear whether Davidson actually disagrees with this particular view.

⁵⁴ This idea, which originates with Richards, is the last element of Richards' theory that remains once Black shifts the discussion away from tenor and vehicle to principal and subsidiary subject, though Black's explanation of *how* metaphors organize our thought in this respect proceeds in rather a different direction than Richards' (Ricoeur, *RM*, pp. 87-8; MP, p. 147).

⁵⁵ The analogy between metaphors and works of art is not something that is incidental to Davidson's discussion of metaphor. It is something that he explicitly and repeatedly draws to our attention: "What we call the element of novelty or surprise in a metaphor is a built-in *aesthetic* feature we can experience again and again..." (WMM, p. 38, emphasis added).

importance of resisting explicitness, in metaphor no less than art, lends crucial support to this characterization. The nature of complex metaphors allows that our interpretation of their implications be ongoing, without being merely subjective, while simultaneously precluding the possibility of any explicit and exhaustive interpretation.

Recall that, as Black says, we can evaluate the appropriateness of particular metaphors. It follows that we can treat many of our interpretations of a metaphor's implications in the same way, even if part of our experience of apprehending a metaphor is non-propositional. Given all of the above, there is clearly a role for metaphors to play in exercising our powers of inquiry.⁵⁶

On the one hand, according to Black, the use of metaphor for pedagogical purposes "seems to so many students of metaphor an indispensable resource" (HMW, p. 140). This is because, as Davidson points out, "the act of interpretation is itself a work of the imagination. So too understanding a metaphor is as much a creative endeavour as making a metaphor" (WMM, p. 31).⁵⁷ Something about the creative lengths we must go to in order imaginatively to grasp a metaphor results in our being in a better position to appreciate the insight to which the metaphor-maker attempts to direct our attention.

On the other hand, adds Black, "*strong* metaphors work to express and promote insight" (HMW, p. 140, emphasis added). If we grant that many works of art are more novel than most simple sentences, then particularly novel works of art turn out to be the "strongest" means of evoking the sort of imaginative response that enables us to apprehend the object(s) to which a metaphor directs our attention.⁵⁸ In any event, there is surely "something more" to determine about how works of art function as metaphors that *exercise* our "powers of inquiry."

⁵⁶ See "Metaphor," p. 294.

⁵⁷ Cf. Mercer, p. 8. A similar point arises in Groarke's discussion of Michelangelo's views on art; see *AAI*, p. 357.

⁵⁸ Granted, not all simple phrases or sentences with a figurative aspect are less novel than all pieces of art. Some examples on either side might be so novel that it is simply impossible to determine which is more so. For instance,

The problem remains that Black and Davidson only attend to examples of metaphor that are contained in phrase or sentence, thereby neglecting the generally more interesting cases of extended metaphor. Thus, metaphors of the kind that inspired Joseph Campbell's work on archetype, that is, "metaphors of man, man's hope, man's faith [and] man's dark mystery," for example, are ignored.⁵⁹ But it is this kind of metaphor that is particularly suitable for inspiring knowledge of transcendental concepts. After all, such universals as these, due to their complexity, "elude logical definition."⁶⁰ This is not to disparage such an effort at definition. Rather, I would insist that any satisfactory definition simply goes *beyond* logic, insofar as it must resort to complex metaphor, thereby recalling the semantic view of metaphor that eludes paraphrase. Indeed, literary examinations of such concepts are in large part attempts to direct our attention towards the ineffable.⁶¹ Such an element resists purely logical explanation, a point that Black would likely grant, given his claim that some metaphors are beyond paraphrase.

But the problem here is not just that Black, like Davidson, neglects to *explore* more complex kinds of metaphor. As Ricoeur observes, Black's formulation of interaction theory, in principle, leaves them aside. The "system of associated commonplaces" includes only

the Delphic inscription, commonly translated to English as "know thyself," is a phrase so novel in its implications that, like metaphorical experience, aesthetic experience, our experience of humor, love, and so forth, it might never exhaust its novelty. A similar case can be made with respect to great paintings, sculptures, and works of literature. For example, more than two thousand years have passed and we still have not exhausted the implications of many metaphors in the Bible, let alone those in terms of which we might appreciate the Old or New Testament, or the Bible as a whole. But this just reinforces the importance of resisting explicitness in art, though in a slightly different respect than above. For part of the beauty of the Bible and of the Delphic inscription lies in our ongoing interpretation of the implications of underlying or overarching metaphors.

⁵⁹ Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 223. On Campbell's psychological reading of the phenomenon of myths (taken as metaphors), "such magnificent cosmic metaphors as those reflected in the great Homeric series, the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, the Book of Genesis, and the timeless temples of the Orient," were, until Campbell's era, "the support of all human life and the inspiration of philosophy, poetry, and the arts." In the same connection, Campbell argues that when such "inherited symbols" are utilized by masters of the spirit, "the profoundest moral and metaphysical instruction" ensues (pp. 220-1).

⁶⁰ Sister Miriam Joseph, *The Trivium*, p. 80: transcendentals such as being and its transcendental attributes (for example, truth, goodness, beauty and so on) defy logical definition, since they extend "through and beyond all categories" of classification; see also p. 274, fn. 11.

⁶¹ See *Parallel Lines Converge at Infinity*.

“connotations that are already established” (*RM*, p. 88). Consequently, this view can only explain “trivial metaphors” (*RM*, p. 88). Since Black’s interaction theory is supposed to improve upon the substitution and comparison views of metaphor—according to which we conceive of metaphor as, respectively, replacing a standard word with a deviant, figurative use of a different word, or predicating a likeness between two different things—he runs into a contradiction of sorts by explaining how interaction metaphors are *new*, untranslatable, and yet able to retain a degree of cognitive significance.⁶² It is one that he is aware of, however.

For example, he responds to Ricoeur’s criticisms by insisting that interaction metaphors necessarily involve *endoxa* of the speech-community involved in the production and reception of metaphors, while creating a “novel and non-platitudinous implication-complex” (Hausman, p. 35). Therefore, argues Black, the encyclopedic knowledge we carry with us affects our experience of interaction metaphors. Calling the lion the “king of beasts” and intending this to suggest courage, for instance, presupposes “prior mapping of culture on nature,” that is, the shaping of cultural conceptions in terms of dead and inherited metaphors. The frame of the metaphor is either the predicate or all of the sentence apart from the subject, and yet all of these other understandings contribute to the organizing of our knowledge of the focus.⁶³ This cognitive experience cannot be reduced.

In contrast to this interaction view, we have the substitution and comparison views, both of which are “compatible with the reductive conception of [metaphor] as ‘saying one thing and meaning another,’ thus implying that the poet has gone out of the way to say something other

⁶² Although Black thinks the comparison view is a species of the substitution view, he gives independent accounts of each, a maneuver that redeems his efforts in the eyes of Ricoeur, who disagrees with Black on this species-genus relation. See *RM*, p. 86.

⁶³ Martin, p. 764. Black initially does not refer to this as encyclopedic knowledge; Morier U. Eco adds this to the discussion later (*ibid.*).

than what was meant” (Martin, p. 761). Neither of these views is sufficient to sustain Aristotle’s claims regarding the superiority of metaphor among the various features of poetic style, nor do they explain how this pre-eminence is achieved more strikingly through *new* metaphors, which “spring from the poet’s heightened emotion, keen perception, or intellectual acuity,” establishing expression as more “vivid or interesting,” able to “convey “meanings concisely,” but also as a source of “words to describe things that have no literal name,” or means of rendering “complex abstractions easy to understand through concrete analogies.”⁶⁴ Essentially, Black wants to make the case that, for these reasons, interaction metaphors can be new, require notable wit on the part of the creator, and elude paraphrase. In addition to the system of associated commonplaces at play, there can be implications generated on the spot by the producer of the metaphor, or even perceived by either the metaphor-maker or their interlocutor *ad hoc*. And yet, even in light of his later amendments, Black’s theory cannot entirely account for this, since it does not overcome the contradiction to which Ricoeur refers.⁶⁵

Nonetheless, Black, like both Richards and Beardsley, helps clarify the debate on metaphor, primarily by incorporating “insights into the workings of [language] and meaning derived from 20th [century] analytic philosophy” (Martin, p. 763). In this process, all three of these views diverge from the substitution, comparison, and fusion accounts. It is noteworthy that Black does not even seem to consider the fusion view, presumably regarding it as being either implied by, or a species of, substitution. What is the fusion view? Fusion theorists argue that metaphor “unifies the concrete and abstract, the sensual and the conceptual in a concrete

⁶⁴ Ibid. Martin notes that both Beardsley’s controversy theory and the more traditional fusion view agree with Black’s interaction view in this respect (ibid.). The fusion view will be discussed below.

⁶⁵ Both Ricoeur and Hausman detail this failure at length. Perhaps it is further explained by how far Black is determined to distance his interaction theory from the substitution and comparison views, along with his characterization of these views themselves (*RM*, pp. 85-7).

universal ... or symbol,” and that, therefore, we can call an entire poem a metaphor “if it is organically unified.”⁶⁶ Thus, while various of Black’s insights apply to the idea of extended metaphors, because of the limitations of his theory, as well as his apparent neglect of fusion theory, his account is inadequate when it comes to addressing more complex metaphors, such as we find in literary works of art as wholes.

Two further points may help us understand Black’s neglect of extended metaphor. First, he may not feel the need to address those forms many associate with extended metaphor—allegory, parables, fables, and the like—since on his schema, the frame of a metaphor is used literally and the rest metaphorically, which distinguishes metaphor from proverbs, riddles, allegories, and larger works of symbolism, concerning which all the terms are used metaphorically (*RM*, p. 84). Second, Black is not so concerned with the notions of figure and figurative language in metaphor, only discussing these in relation to his claim that comparison theory is a variant of substitution theory (*RM*, p. 86). Therefore, the problem may be less a limitation in conceiving of metaphor, and more a consequence of how he erects his critical

⁶⁶ Martin, p. 761. This view is a central feature to the later conceptual theory of metaphor. As we will see in chapter 2, it is also a central feature of Ricoeur’s account. The fusion view is often associated with the Thomistic view of metaphor, since Thomists emphasize the emblematic nature of metaphor, its capacity to “express what is beyond experience, render the abstract by the concrete, picture the unfamiliar, and express thought in sensuous terms” (Shibles, p. 62). The Thomistic view, then, shares much with the fusion view, in particular, the idea that metaphors can reveal the abstract or transcendental, though it is not clear that the Thomistic view is reducible to the fusion view, especially given the extent of Thomas’ understanding of Aristotle (see *RM*, pp. 257ff.). Highlighting the benefits and drawbacks of fusion theory, Martin points out that while it frees study of metaphor from an inconsistent classification system, this can entail “a loss of precision leading to the neglect, if not the dismissal or misperception, of many tropes.” Moreover, habituating a conception of metaphor as an invariable equation or fusion of entities “reduces the varied effects of [metaphor] in poetry to a single register. Poets may intend their figurative renderings of process, attribute, and attitude to evoke a range of relations, from suggestiveness to total fusion. If so, they are not well served by theorists who translate every figurative velleity into a declaration of equivalence” (Martin, p. 762.). Black, of course, would endorse this last criticism, although it is not necessarily the case that all fusion theorists would grant that all such fusions are reducible to this extent.

framework. Still, that he leaves unaddressed the question of what makes language figurative suggests a blind-spot in Black's theory of metaphor.⁶⁷

What about Davidson's view? To begin with, Davidson's work on metaphor in "What Metaphors Mean" may be better understood as a critique of Black's work than an effort to advance an independent theory. Associating Davidson's work with an "account of what metaphors mean" and Black's with a theory of "how metaphors work," Mercer insists that Davidson's view is not a theory of metaphor, at least not in the manner of Black's (p. 10). On Mercer's view, there is no conflict between Davidson's position and either the comparison or interaction views, although his position does conflict with the substitution view.⁶⁸ Still, as Mercer grants, an important issue remains between the two, namely, that of the meaning of

⁶⁷ One of the merits of Ricoeur's account of metaphor is that he addresses the issue of what makes a metaphor figurative, as will be discussed in chapter 2. For further elaboration on how complex metaphors bear on this question, see Shibbes: "Symbol, archetype, allegory, parable, and such terms seem to be various types of metaphors" (p. 21). If these phenomena are forms of metaphor, it must be the case that what makes a phenomenon *metaphorical* is not adequately encompassed by Black's view.

⁶⁸ Others insist that Davidson's account of metaphor is fundamentally opposed to the semantic view. According to Johnson, Richard Rorty, whom he calls "the flamboyant spokesman" for Davidson's theory of metaphor, draws this hard and fast distinction. Interpreting Rorty's position as allied with Davidson's, as well as John Searle's speech-act theory of metaphor, Johnson argues that the evidence of CMT disproves these prominent "objectivist/literalist" philosophies of metaphor. While Johnson's main concern is to defend the notion that thought is fundamentally metaphoric, we should be wary of reducing thought to metaphor alone. That being said, given that empirical observation is fundamental to elaborating conceptual metaphors, it is not clear that Johnson and company intend to imply that thoughts are merely "figurative," in the sense of excluding literal meaning. Consequently, it is hard to determine whether Johnson's argument that philosophy constitutes a long tradition of ignoring its metaphorical heart is justified ("Philosophy's Debt to Metaphor," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*, pp. 39-52). After all, one of the most significant insights of *The Rule of Metaphor* is Ricoeur's challenging the interpretation of Aristotle as treating metaphor as merely decorative, or reducible to a means of comparison. Two further points come to mind concerning Johnson's treatment of Davidson. First, Johnson ignores the extent to which Davidson agrees with the semantic view in regards to the cognitive significance of metaphor. Second, the views advanced in CMT seem akin in certain respects to Black's interaction view, for Johnson contends that one of Davidson's central errors is to fail to identify metaphor's semantic nature. Clarifying the relationship between Black's interaction theory and CMT, Charles Forceville explains that conceptual metaphor theory, beginning with Lakoff and Johnson, "captures Black's ... basic idea that a metaphor triggers an interaction between phenomena from two different domains" (Black's primary and subsidiary subjects become in CMT the target and source domains), such that features and associated relationships of the one domain get mapped onto the other, resulting in a transformation of the latter. However, if Black's theory is focused on metaphor as a linguistic phenomenon, CMT takes the theory further, conceptualizing it as first and foremost a matter "of thought and action" and, accordingly, applying the principles of interaction theory to examples in which language is not "necessary for the construal and interpretation of what, in the spirit of Black's interaction theory of creative metaphors, must be called metaphors" ("Metaphor in Pictures and Multimodal Representations," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*, p. 462).

metaphor. Following Davidson, Mercer thinks metaphorical meaning is an empty concept. He argues, therefore, that it is a mistake to say that paraphrase of a metaphor fails *because* the power of the metaphor is left behind in the process. Rather, attempting to paraphrase metaphor is destined to fail because there is no meaning to capture (p. 11, fn. 13). Then again, while Mercer maintains that Black errs in positing a meaning beyond the literal, blurring the distinction between the meaning of words and sentences and their use, this is not a “necessary feature” of a theory of how metaphors work (pp. 22, 10).

In the same vein, Mercer praises Black’s view for accounting for particularly novel metaphors that the comparison view cannot (p. 11). But, although Mercer claims that Davidson is concerned with the issue of metaphorical meaning, rather than how metaphors work, and that he endorses the comparison theory “only so long as we understand such a theory as simply an occasionally helpful general description of what goes on when we come to appreciate a metaphor,” Davidson’s position appears in some way to presuppose a conception of how metaphors work (pp. 10-1). This being the case, the question becomes, is Davidson’s objection to Black’s account merely verbal or is Davidson denying that metaphor has a cognitive impact that paraphrase cannot convey?⁶⁹

Because Black holds that there is such a cognitive component, he may disagree with Davidson here, but given our reflections above, and especially recalling Davidson’s “use” of the pedagogical example, it is difficult to determine whether the latter’s position really conflicts with

⁶⁹ Mercer provides further grounds for understanding the apparent disagreement between Davidson and Black concerning the question of meaning as a verbal one. Championing Davidson’s view, Mercer grants that metaphor-makers indeed *mean* what they say when issuing a metaphorical statement, in that they intend for their audience to suppose that the statement in question is true and, subsequently, be better prepared “to find patterns where they might not have looked before, or types of patterns they might not have perceived before” (p. 14). This is a further example of how the apparent point of departure between Davidson and Black concerning the issue of meaning may be a verbal one, since Black would likely agree with this, but would proceed to question whether insisting upon a disjunction between the meaning and use of language presents us with a false dichotomy.

Black's in this regard. Consequently, since it is unclear if Davidson's treatment counts as a theory of metaphor, it may be hasty to object that his "theory" of metaphor leaves aside extended metaphor. Yet insofar as his comments bear on our conception of metaphor, overlooking such cases of metaphor is a weakness of his analysis.⁷⁰ Furthermore, it follows from Davidson's comments that, like metaphorical meaning, ontological meaning would be an empty concept, though, of course, it also follows that there be such a thing as ontological "implication."⁷¹ But when we think of extended metaphors in literature, or even of the kind of narrative metaphors we identify for ourselves when framing our past experiences, surely they *mean* certain things to us in the ontological sense of bringing "meaning" to our lives and the world.⁷² There seems a discrepancy between this phenomenon and Davidson's account.

⁷⁰ There could be a further line of criticism to which Davidson's position is susceptible, however, since extended metaphors seem to challenge the very idea that the sentences in which they arise could have only a literal meaning. Each metaphor that contributes to an extended metaphor in literature, for instance, surely contributes to it by way of its metaphorical significance, at least in part, in which case the more expansive metaphor relies not just on the literal meaning of these sentences, but on what they intimate. That is, what is intimated by the subsidiary metaphors appears identical in function to the literal meaning of the utterances that, according to Davidson, are used by metaphors of phrase and sentence. Another issue concerns whether there is any further substantive disagreement between Davidson and Black. For the latter argues that interaction metaphors depend on the lexical meaning not just of the focus (subsidiary subject), but of the system of associated commonplaces as well (*RM*, p. 87). Here, the effects of how this predicate "organizes" the way we conceive of the primary subject are occasioned not, as Davidson would maintain, by lexical meaning alone, but rather by both lexical and metaphorical meaning, including whatever symbolic relevance the given predicate or larger focus may have for the individual.

⁷¹ That is, if we define ontological meaning as that which lends significance to a human life, as opposed to lexical meaning.

⁷² Cf. fn. 68 above. The idea of metaphor as a conceptual framework through which we view our own activities has increasingly become the focus of attention in the literature, as Gibbs notes (p. 3). Graham Low objects to the assumption that we use metaphor in this manner, however, and argues at length against outlining pedagogical recommendations on the basis of this idea ("Metaphor and Education," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*, pp. 212-31). Yet Low's concern is not so much with metaphor in the most general sense, as it is with metaphor as distinguished from metonymy. Furthermore, Low's methodological concern for substantiating such beliefs by providing empirical evidence, as opposed to rigorous analysis, raises a number of questions for anyone committed to the philosophical method. Incidentally, Low insists that teachers need to be aware of what is, in essence, the primary point of this inquiry, that metaphors occur at the level of discourse, not just that of vocabulary (Gibbs, p. 9; Low, p. 212). The attempt to require empirical evidence for making claims about metaphor is perhaps less demanding than it seems if we take McMullen's view to reflect psychological and psychiatric understandings of the term "empirical," since her elaboration of this demand is simply to suggest that investigations into metaphor attend more closely to the actual "conversational exchanges and cultural contexts" in which the metaphors in question arise, so as to more "fully understand what metaphors do for us in psychotherapy and other situations" (Gibbs, p. 11).

In any case, both Davidson and Black would presumably be open to the possibility of extended metaphor, as confirmed by their discussions of the dramatic impact metaphors can have. In fact, Black explicitly addresses this topic in his later work on archetype. Plus, ignoring extended metaphors to focus on simpler instantiations of the phenomenon has its own virtues. For it is practical to start with these in order to work towards an understanding of the more complex varieties.

Discussing how ordinary language philosophy affects the “philosophical hermeneutics” that underpins his inquiry into metaphor, Ricoeur explains that while “analytic” philosophy will in all likelihood not have “the last word” on the subject, it is nevertheless “a necessary first stage in [such] philosophical inquiry,” contributing to the process in two primary ways (*RM*, 321):

First, it has proved that ordinary language does not, cannot, and must not function according to the model of ideal languages constructed by logicians and mathematicians. The variability of semantic values, their sensitivity to contexts, the irreducibly polysemic character of lexical terms in ordinary language, these are not provisory defects or diseases which a reformulation of language could eliminate, rather they are the permanent and fruitful conditions of the functioning of ordinary language. This polysemic feature of our words in ordinary language now appears to be the basic condition for symbolic discourse and in that way, *the most primitive layer in a theory of metaphor, symbol, parable, etc.*

Secondly, ordinary language now appears ..., following the work of Wittgenstein and Austin, to be a kind of conservatory for expressions which have preserved the highest descriptive power as regards human experience, particularly in the realms of action and feelings. This appropriateness of some of the most refined distinctions attached to ordinary words provides all phenomenological analysis with linguistic guidelines. Now the recapturing of the intentions of ordinary language experiences may become the major task of a linguistic phenomenology, a phenomenology which would escape both the futility of mere linguistic distinctions and the unverifiability of all claim to direct intuition of lived experience. Thanks to this grafting of linguistic analysis to phenomenology, the latter may be cured of its illness and find its second wind. (I surmise that the same thing may be said of ordinary language philosophy....) (*RM*, pp. 321-2, emphasis added)

Ricoeur proceeds to suggest the same for hermeneutics.⁷³ Given the intersubjectivity presupposed in understanding an interlocutor, “to understand discourse is to interpret the actualizations of its polysemic values according to the permissions and suggestions proposed by the context” (*RM*, p. 322). Consequently, what “happens in the far more intricate cases of text-interpretation and what constitutes the key problem of hermeneutics is already foreshadowed in the interpretive process as it occurs in ordinary language,” all of which suggests that text-interpretation, such as is involved when attending to extended metaphors in literature, is renewed when we recognize “its roots in the functioning of ordinary language itself” (*RM*, p. 322).

⁷³ See *RM*, pp. 316ff. for Ricoeur’s account of how hermeneutics became a necessary part of his various philosophical projects and a concise explanation of the complications the term assumes in his usage, especially given that he employs “hermeneutics” in two ways that other authors typically think of as fundamentally opposed, as reductive explanation and as recollection or retrieval “of the original meaning of the symbol” (*RM*, p. 318). We will return to the problem and method of hermeneutics briefly in chapter 2. In illustrating the necessity of advancing to a hermeneutical level of considering certain aspects of metaphor, that is to say, the level of the entire discourse, Ricoeur comes close to endorsing the thesis advanced in the present inquiry, namely, that thinking of metaphor as a phenomenon which occurs *only* in word, phrase, or sentence is a mistake. Moreover, we need not associate this kind of hermeneutics with the Straussian brand so often used as an unassailable platform from which interpreters issue statements, supposedly unknowable by those outside of their tradition, with a view to discovering hidden meanings (*RM*, p. 317). In “Transgressing Boundaries: a Discussion Concerning Methodology, *Epōc*, and Politics in Symposium and Platonic Philosophy,” Peter Haskett provides a compelling criticism of such interpretive trends (<https://curve.carleton.ca/85c820c8-792f-4b1e-a3ad-9ad82ccade5f>). For a concise introduction to hermeneutics as it relates to Postmodern thought, along with a compelling account of how alternative positions, such as Collingwood’s, incorporate, while at once transcending, hermeneutics, see William Sweet, “What Remains of Modernity: Philosophy and Culture in the Transition to a Global Era” *Philosophy, Culture, & Traditions (A Journal of the World Union of Catholic Philosophical Societies)*, Vol. 5: 2008-2009, pp. 119-35). By the time he develops split reference theory, Ricoeur conceives of hermeneutics as “simply the theory that regulates the transition from structure of the work to world of the work. To interpret a work is to display the world to which it refers by virtue of its ‘arrangement,’ its ‘genre,’ and its ‘style.’” Elsewhere, he contrasts this with “the romantic and psychologizing conception of hermeneutics originating with Schleiermacher and Dilthey, for whom the supreme law of interpretation is the search for harmony between” the author’s and reader’s spirits. Because Ricoeur considers this latter view to entail “always difficult and often impossible” quests “for an intention hidden behind the work,” he prefers to embark on the interpretative path of addressing “the world displayed before the work.” Further, Ricoeur argues that the issue becomes not whether this is more justified than the romantic conception, but whether we can “pass from the structure (which is to the complex work what sense is to the simple statement) to the world of the work (which is to the work what the denotation is to the statement),” a point which returns us to the continued relevance of ordinary language for inquiry into extended metaphor (*RM*, p. 220).

1.2 *Regarding Allegory*

The Ring ... is written in my life-blood, such as that is, thick or thin; and I can no other.
J.R.R. Tolkien⁷⁴

It is all very well, one might respond, to criticize Black and Davidson for ignoring extended metaphor in their inquiries, but is such metaphor not simply allegory and, as such, irrelevant?⁷⁵ On the contrary, I would insist, to begin with, that allegory is by definition extended metaphor. Consequently, a theory of metaphor must be able to account for such cases. Beyond this, however, there are legitimate concerns about equating all extended metaphors with allegory. We can get a better sense of the significance of these reservations if we consider Tolkien's resistance to attempts at reducing *The Lord of the Rings* to an allegory. For the purposes of the present inquiry, one of the most perspicuous observations that arises from Tolkien's commentary is that there are complex metaphors that are no mere allegories, since they are closer to what he associates with mythic timelessness and what he calls the "applicability" of story.

"I cordially dislike allegory in all its manifestations," comments Tolkien, "and always have done since I grew old and wary enough to detect its presence."⁷⁶ In keeping with this, whether in response to fans in America seeking "an authoritative exposition of the allegory of *The Hobbit*," or to Rayner Unwin, a beta reader of *The Lord of the Rings* who assumed the story

⁷⁴ *The Letters of JRR Tolkien*, ed. Humphrey Carpenter, p. 122.

⁷⁵ Denis Donoghue, as sage as any when it comes to analysis of metaphor, sums up this attitude in identifying allegory as metaphor's narrative form (*Metaphor*, [Cambridge and London: Harvard UP, 2014, p. 184]).

⁷⁶ The Foreword to the second edition of *LR*, quoted in Tom Shippey, *Tolkien: Author of the Century* (henceforth, *TAC*), p. 161. Elsewhere, Tolkien exudes this seeming distaste for allegory in stronger terms. In reference to the example of nature myths, in which allegorizing by means of personifying natural phenomena in characters occurs (such as we find in the Olympian constellation of tales), he goes so far as to say that the more closely the story approaches its "supposed archetype, the less interesting it is, and indeed the less is it ... a myth capable of throwing any illumination ... on the world" ("Tree and Leaf," in *The Tolkien Reader*, pp. 49-50). Henceforth, this work will be abbreviated TL.

was an allegory, Tolkien remains steadfast: allegory is one thing, and his work another.⁷⁷ What is it about allegory that so alarms Tolkien? And how is fantasy, on Tolkien's view, metaphorical without being allegorical? Answering these questions requires a brief consideration of Tolkien's idiosyncratic view of literature and fairy-stories (Fantasy), as well as the distinction he draws between applicability and allegory. As we shall see, his complex and often implicit understanding of metaphor lies at the crux of his concern about allegory's misuse, both as a term and as a way of writing and reading (*TAC* p. 162). Insofar as he concedes his work's applicability, Tolkien's commentary belies his apparent hostility to allegory in itself, while elaborating the ways in which allegory can be misunderstood. This nuanced view of allegory furnishes us with many insights relevant to understanding extended metaphor, its complexity, and its relation to truth.⁷⁸

We can begin exploring Tolkien's extensive discussion of this issue from a number of angles, since his related ideas, elaborated intermittently over the course of his long life, are both connected to and consistent with each other. For our purposes, we can order our analysis so as to progressively clarify Tolkien's view while gradually resolving the *prima facie* incongruity between asserting the applicability of a given metaphor while refraining from recognizing this as an allegorical function. Accordingly, let us consider, first, how Tolkien distinguishes the moral of a tale, which he insists can be found "in any tale worth telling," from allegory.⁷⁹ In genuine cases of the former, though the individual actors all "contain universals" (since otherwise "they would not live at all"), they never *typify* these universals as such.

⁷⁷ *Letters*, pp. 41, 121.

⁷⁸ For an alternative argument concerning the distinction of allegory and metaphor see Ricoeur's discussion of Fontanier and the "family of metaphor" (*RM*, pp. 59-61). As we will see below, Fontanier's conception of allegory closely resembles Tolkien's, although the former's conception of metaphor is much more rigid than the latter's, if we take Tolkien's work on literary expression to be, in effect, on metaphor.

⁷⁹ All references in this paragraph and the next are from *Letters*, p. 121.

Conversely, Tolkien contends that both “Allegory and Story converge, meeting somewhere in Truth,” adding that, paradoxically, “the only perfectly consistent allegory is a real life; and the only fully intelligible story is an allegory.” Moreover, the further an allegory advances in quality and consistency, the easier we can read it “just as a story.” Likewise, when a story meets these same conditions, “the more easily those so minded find allegory in it. But the two start out from opposite ends.”

Consequently, when those of us “so minded” search for the meaning of a complex moral in a passage or work, what Tolkien calls “mytho-philosophical reflection,” we can translate elements of stories into allegories for our own times.⁸⁰ For example, one might make the ring of the nemesis in *The Lord of the Rings* into “an allegory of the inevitable fate that waits for all attempts to defeat evil power by power, ... because all power magical or mechanical does always so work” (*Letters*, p. 121). In this case, the nature of power constrains the story itself, provided the story takes such things seriously in its portrayal of events. But, while the characters do not exemplify this universal, they carry it with them, which allows us to apply the moral of their tale to our own if we so choose. The same goes for other universals.

Notice the significance of this to philosophical inquiry into metaphor: Tolkien implies that universals, which (as we shall see again in chapter 2) are transcendentals, first principles, concepts, and the like, are the *conditions* of applicability. In the same vein, he argues, the law of non-contradiction (a first principle of logic) and the author’s own finiteness are the only constraints on authorial production, apart from humility (that universal which Dante convincingly established in the *Purgatorio* as the foremost condition of redemption and growth).⁸¹

⁸⁰ *Beowulf: a Translation and Commentary*, p. 243.

⁸¹ *Letters*, p. 195.

Tolkien proceeds to observe that “attempts to explain the purport of myth or fairytale must use allegorical language.”⁸² So, far from regarding allegory as objectionable in all its forms, Tolkien concedes that it is indispensable to the search for a story’s moral.⁸³ (As we begin to identify a moral, we step towards being able to apply it metaphorically to our own circumstances.) In addition, he argues that “the more ‘life’ a story has the more readily will it be susceptible of allegorical interpretations while the better a deliberate allegory is made the more nearly will it be acceptable just as a story.” Given all of this, what, after all, is this “Truth” to which Tolkien refers when discussing the convergence of “Allegory” and “Story”?

There are a number of strands to Tolkien’s conception of “Truth” that confirm his insistence that certain things can only be explained in a mythical (a term that we can roughly equate with metaphorical) mode. Consider, first, his reflections on the difference in form between the portrayal of the Fall in the network of myths (primarily outlined in his posthumously published book, *The Silmarillion*) into which he inserts *The Lord of the Rings*, on the one hand, and that of Christianity, on the other. Tolkien’s myths are “new” in the sense of not being “directly derived from other myths and legends,” even though they “inevitably contain a large measure of ancient wide-spread motives or elements” (*Letters*, p. 147). This, he argues, is because “legends and myths are largely made of ‘truth’, and indeed present aspects of it that can only be received in this mode.”⁸⁴ Moreover, “certain truths and modes of this kind” have been

⁸² All references in this paragraph are from *Letters*, p. 145. This point will become significant in another respect once we turn to Tolkien’s account of fantasy, for he carefully qualifies the scope of his claim to refer only to fantasy as a genre. Tolkien’s familiarity with the artistic process involved in this particular genre allows him what Somerset Maugham would call a perspective of “impartiality,” and, in turn, insight into the subject (*The Vagrant Mood* [London: Vintage Books, 2001, p. 137], quoted in MacKinnon, p. 2). According to Anthony Quinton, novelists’ philosophical bearing or background both orders and explains how they think about the subject matter explored in their work (*From Wodehouse to Wittgenstein: Essays* [Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1998], quoted in MacKinnon, p. 2).

⁸³ We will return to these points below, especially in chapter four.

⁸⁴ Here again, notice the agreement with the semantic theory of metaphor.

discovered from time immemorial “and must always reappear.” Tolkien contends that, in general, the writer’s job is to elucidate truth and encourage “good morals in this real world, by the ancient device of exemplifying them in familiar embodiments, that may tend to ‘bring them home’” (*Letters*, p. 194). This requires, he adds, “humility and awareness of peril,” a set of conditions that Tolkien himself displays (*ibid.*).

For example, in response to a reader’s letter describing her encounter in *The Lord of the Rings* with a “sanity and sanctity” that was “a power in itself,” Tolkien writes, “Of his own sanity no man can securely judge. If sanctity inhabits his work or as a pervading light illumines it then it does not come from him but through him” (*Letters*, p. 413). This recalls a lasting insight from Plato’s *Ion*, according to which the inspired poet ultimately enlivens his audience (in a cumulative fashion, building momentum the larger the crowd), bringing all those affected into contact with something greater than the poet himself, and thereby meriting glory not on the grounds of his own finite mastery of the subject matter, but rather as a medium for the divine.⁸⁵ Surely, Tolkien’s response to his correspondent is an exemplary case of humility, one which avoids the seemingly inexorable slide into pride, since he does not claim that a higher power *does* pervade his work.⁸⁶ Examples of Tolkien’s awareness of “peril” also abound.

In a letter to his son, Tolkien offers a perceptive summary of developments near the end of WWII, identifying various social trends as dangerous and mistaken, all of which relate to a lack of imagination in the public mind. “The appalling destruction and misery of this war mount hourly,” observes Tolkien, destroying

⁸⁵ In aesthetics, this line of thinking, which resurfaces in both Plotinus’ view of the unifying nature of art and Tolstoy’s idea of art as infectious, is clearly relevant to the theory of metaphor. So long as we notice that what is inspiring, here, are divine—that is, eternal—truths, we spare metaphor of the criticism that it is a tool that warps perception. Such a worry was commonly expressed by Enlightenment figures, and we can find forerunners of this concern in both Plato (*Republic*) and Aristotle (*Rhetoric*).

⁸⁶ For an entertaining and telling discussion of this problem, see C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*, pp. 81-85 (*Letter 14*).

what should be (indeed is) the common wealth of Europe, and the world, if mankind were not so besotted, wealth the loss of which will affect us all, victors or not. Yet people gloat to hear of the endless lines, 40 miles long, of miserable refugees, women and children pouring West, dying on the way. There seem to be no bowels of mercy or compassion, *no imagination*, left in this dark diabolic hour. By which I do not mean that it may not all, in the present situation, mainly (not solely) created by Germany, be necessary and inevitable. But why gloat! We were supposed to have reached a stage in civilization in which it might still be necessary to execute a criminal, but not to gloat, or to hang his wife and child by him while the orc-crowd hooted. The destruction of Germany, be it 100 times merited, is one of the most appalling world-catastrophes.... Well the first War of the Machines seems to be drawing to its final inconclusive chapter – leaving, alas, everyone the poorer, many bereaved or maimed and millions dead, and only one thing triumphant: the Machines. As the servants of the Machines are becoming a privileged class, the Machines are going to be enormously more powerful. What's their next move? (*Letters*, p. 111, emphasis added)

His metaphor of the “Machines” aside, Tolkien’s concerns and insights in this excerpt surely demonstrate his “awareness of peril.” Therefore, the case can be made that Tolkien’s arguments concerning the job of the writer are not just advanced in the abstract, but by concrete example as well.

The reasons Shippey offers for the continued appeal of Tolkien’s work, then, should come as no surprise, while at the same time confirming just how serious are the extended metaphors Tolkien’s myths amount to and the truth they direct us towards. As Shippey relates, *The Lord of the Rings* is “a deeply serious response” to significant problems: the cause and essence of evil (an issue which, though universal, was “terribly re-focused” in Tolkien’s lifetime), the nature of existence in the absence of “divine Revelation” (an issue which is also addressed in Christian story, but in a very different manner), “cultural relativity, and the corruptions and continuities of language” (*TAC*, xxxi). Part of what makes Tolkien’s efforts in this area so worthwhile is that he does not just question these things; he provides solutions, an approach that stands in stark contrast to that of proponents of the Bloomsbury view, which had little or nothing to do with “the immediate issues of evil in the twentieth century” (*TAC*, pp. xxxi, 158). As Freud’s views crept into “general consciousness in the early years of the twentieth

century”—dissolving “responsibility or any sense of personal guilt” through, in part, a growing reliance on words such as “‘repression’, ‘complex’, ‘unconscious’, [and] ‘trauma’”—many of the Bloomsbury tradition, notes Shippey, explored evil by attending to, above all, human relationships (*TAC*, p. 158). To the extent that Tolkien’s method adds historical and psychological dimensions to such efforts, it redresses imbalances in the popular imagination introduced by more shallow Bloomsbury treatments of the relevant issues.

We can attribute the seriousness of Tolkien’s offerings not only to his critical astuteness, but also to how *The Lord of the Rings* conveys it in the form of complex metaphors, or, as Shippey prefers, the way in which, as a whole, it “can be taken as a myth” (*TAC*, xxxii). Myth, in the sense Shippey intends, involving the mediation of apparent incompatibles, ranging from comedy and tragedy to heathen and Christian varieties, recalls, of course, a basic theme of theology; namely, the idea that in reflecting upon divine puzzles we may arrive at postulations concerning spiritual matters that will subsequently guide us in the ordering of our lives. In this context, there is evident in Tolkien’s writings “an attempt to reach out beyond contemporary relevance” towards a “timelessness,” what Shippey calls “the mythic dimension,” that governs this applicability (*TAC*, xxxii).⁸⁷ Here, we encounter notions of “‘true myth’, or gospel, or revelation,” or as Tolkien prefers, “*evangelium*” (*TAC*, p. 223). Tolkien’s literary efforts furnish “a glimpse or gleam of this,” without forcing such “universal and mythic meaning” upon us in the manner often associated with allegory (*TAC*, p. 225).⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Cf. *RM*, p. 333, fn. 78. On Ricoeur’s reading of *Aristotle’s Poetics*, Hardison asserts that in Aristotelian terminology poetics universalizes actions by interpreting history intelligibly.

⁸⁸ See also, *TAC*, pp. 317-8. Cf. Pope John Paul II’s notion of new evangelism (Lawrence S. Cunningham, *An Introduction to Catholicism*, pp. 189-91): Tolkien’s myths proclaim his faith in action, not by resorting to the kind of overbearing allegorical vehicle of theological opinions that non-Christian literary figures find so appalling in those examples where the Christological hints are all too obvious, but rather by a metaphorical method that invites, rather than demands, those so inclined to ponder such eternal truths for themselves (Philip Zaleski and Carol Zaleski, *The Fellowship: The Literary Lives of the Inklings* [New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015, pp. 385, 391]). The “religious element is absorbed into the story and the symbolism,” observes Shippey, which is unsurprising, given

How does this view of myth, connected with, and yet distinct from, the Christian variant, contribute to Tolkien's views of fantasy and literature? To answer this question, let us begin by considering various philological concerns and insights of Tolkien's. Setting the stage for his discussion of the value and function of "fairy-stories" (largely emblematic of, yet in certain respects distinct from, literature generally), Tolkien laments:

Philology has been dethroned from the high place it once had in this court of inquiry. Max Müller's view of mythology as a 'disease of language' can be abandoned without regret. Mythology is not a disease at all, though it may like all human things become diseased. You might as well say that thinking is a disease of the mind. It would be more near the truth to say that languages, especially modern European languages, are a disease of mythology. But Language cannot, all the same, be dismissed.... The human mind, endowed with the powers of generalization and abstraction, sees not only *green-grass*, discriminating it from other things ..., but sees that it is *green* as well as being *grass*. But how powerful, how stimulating to the very faculty that produced it, was the invention of the adjective: no spell or incantation in Faërie is more potent. And that is not surprising: such incantations might indeed be said to be only another view of adjectives, a part of speech in a mythical grammar.... When we take green from grass ... we have already an enchanter's power.... (TL, pp. 48-9)⁸⁹

In defending myth, which implies a certain variety of metaphor, on philological grounds, Tolkien identifies the kinship between literary history and "the philologist's study of the tangled skein of Language" (TL, p. 46). But he is careful to point out that, when studying language, it is "both more important to seize and far more difficult to make explicit" those "essential qualities and

Tolkien's views of the power of story generally, his resistance to allegory, and his apparent agreement with the idea of there being complex metaphor(s) which the artfully written text points us towards (*TAC*, p. 172). (What I refer to as complex metaphors Tolkien prefers to call truths, morals, or divine revelation.) We will consider these implications below, especially in chapter 3 concerning Hein's view of public art. Shippey takes Tolkien's view that such precious and rarely observed objects are true to be the feature that distinguishes his method as mythical, not literary. More specifically, Tolkien's work takes seriously the ideals of modernity. In refusing merely to play around with these, his method rejects "the underlying ... and always potentially snobbish and élitist claim of so much modernist writing, that it was produced for and could only be appreciated by the thoroughly cultivated individual, the fine and superior sensibility." But, in retrospect, this was tantamount to provoking "the critical rage, and fear" issuing in the wake of his work. For it threatened "the authority of the arbiters of taste, the critics, the educationalists, the *literati*. He was as educated as they were, but in a different school." Despite the roar of popular approval, such high-brow naysayers could not forgive Tolkien's work, produced from the start for a mass market, for presuming to explore "ideas above the proper station of popular trash" (*TAC*, pp. 315-6). It is, in fact, Tolkien's very "professional authority," his philological training, that not only underpins his distinctly mythical method, but contributes to its surpassing the merely propagandist brand of allegory (*TAC*, ix).

⁸⁹ Cf. Fontanier's notion of description, *RM*, p. 61.

aptitudes” embodied in “living monuments” of particular languages than it is to detail the development of these languages over time (TL, p. 46). In the same vein, “with regard to fairy-stories,” it is more fruitful and challenging to reflect on their nature, what meaning they have come to hold for us individually and collectively, and what values have accrued to them than to ponder their origins. For Tolkien, this amounts to an inquiry into the origin of “language and of the mind,” which he leaves aside (TL, pp. 46, 44).

Such examinations of literature are often misguided, since they incline toward reductionism. Whether for the sake of anthropology, studies in folklore, or, as in his case, philology, Tolkien concedes that digging into literary evidence is a “perfectly legitimate procedure in itself.”⁹⁰ But a problem arises when we ignore or forget “the nature of a story (as a thing told in its entirety),” for “strange judgements” follow. For instance, inquirers are “apt to get off their own proper track, or to express themselves in a misleading ‘shorthand,’” since they are “inclined to say that any two stories that are built round the same folk-lore motive, or are made up of a generally similar combination of such motives, are ‘the same stories.’” To arrive at such conclusions, on Tolkien’s view, confirms not just a mistaken methodology, but a mistaken understanding of myth, and, by extension, metaphor.

Tolkien grants that these kinds of conclusions have a certain degree of merit. Yet in fairy-stories, along with literature and art, more generally, it is “the colouring, the atmosphere, the unclassifiable individual details of a story, and above all the general purport that informs with life the undissected bones of the plot, that really count” (TL, p. 46). Clearly, if Tolkien understands literature as nuanced metaphorical expression, it is a conception that at least implicitly includes complex, or extended, metaphor. He attributes his own appreciation of this

⁹⁰ All references in this paragraph are from TL, p. 45.

“purport” and all the rest to his philological training as a young adult, on the one hand, and a harsh tempering of his worldview by his experiences in WWI, on the other (TL, pp. 64-5).

Furthermore, Tolkien regards such appreciation in the case of fairy-stories as contingent upon our being “enchanted,” for otherwise we miss out on part of the value and function of these tales (TL, p. 34). Why?

“Enchantment,” on Tolkien’s views, is what philosophers typically refer to as one side of a certain vexed relation, in this case, both the result and condition of a work’s beauty. But we need not think of this as paradoxical. Rather, it is symbiotic, even though there must be some capacity for enchantment in the first place. If this recalls our earlier discussion of Cohen, Tolkien’s related point confirms the parallel even more strongly, for he proceeds to describe such beauty in the context of fairy-stories as “an ever-present peril,” in the sense that our appreciation may take the form of both “joy and sorrow” simultaneously (TL, p. 33).⁹¹ Still, there is a larger problem that this reliance on “enchantment” addresses both in principle and practice.

Besides the “prime value” that fairy-stories “share with other literary forms,” says Tolkien, they are distinctive in promoting four worthwhile avenues of experience (TL, p. 67). Here, Tolkien provides an idiosyncratic, but philologically and philosophically consistent, view of literature, construing fantasy as a literary genre comprised of four elements: “fantasy,” “recovery,” “escape,” and “consolation.” (We shall address escape presently, and consider recovery and consolation in greater detail in chapter 2.) Fantasy, in Tolkien’s sense of the term, encompasses two linguistic senses, both of which, again, recall Cohen’s discussion of the intimacy involved in metaphor. Tolkien writes,

The mental power of image-making is one thing, or aspect; and it should appropriately be called Imagination. The perception of the image, the grasp of its implications, and the

⁹¹ Cf. *TAC*, p. 155: Tolkien steers clear of a more modern sense of happiness as a state precluding sadness, portraying it in a way that more closely resembles instead the older sense of a determined or settled state.

control, which are necessary to a successful expression, may vary in vividness and strength: but this is a difference in degree in Imagination, not a difference in kind. The achievement of the expression, which gives (or seems to give) ‘the inner consistency of reality,’ is indeed another thing, or aspect, needing another name: Art, the operative link between Imagination and the final result, Sub-creation. For my present purposes I require a word which shall embrace both the Sub-creative Art in itself and a quality of strangeness and wonder in the Expression, derived from the Image: a quality essential to fairy-story. (TL, p. 68)

For this purpose, Tolkien selects “fantasy.” He distinguishes enchantment from magic, associating the latter with domination both of things, and wills and the former with a state “into which both designer and spectator can enter, to the satisfaction of their senses while they are inside,” even though “in its purity it is artistic in desire and purpose” (TL, p. 73). And such enchantment is bound up with fantasy. Consequently, the “keener and the clearer is the reason [of the designer], the better fantasy [he or she] will make,” as “creative Fantasy is founded upon the hard recognition that things are so in the world as it appears under the sun; on a recognition of fact, but not a slavery to it” (TL, p. 75). Fantasy, then, helps Tolkien elaborate his conception of enchantment, applying his related ideas about allegory and truth to literature by establishing it as the condition of a particular genre.

There are further characteristics of Tolkien’s view of allegory, however. He himself uses allegory to wondrous affect in his autobiographical tales *Leaf by Niggle* and *Smith of Wootton Major*.⁹² In his groundbreaking lecture in 1936 on *Beowulf*, titled *The Monsters and the Critics*, Tolkien uses allegory as a *reductio ad absurdum*, allegorically portraying translators’ and scribes’ destructive handling of the poem so as to reduce to a contradiction the audience’s sympathizing with the poem’s critics, transferring this sympathy to the tale itself (*TAC*, pp. 161-3). Literary stewards occasioned this damage by attempting to allegorize *Beowulf* further, so as

⁹² See Shippey, *TAC*, pp. 266-77, 296-304 for a compelling account of Tolkien’s use of allegory in these cases.

to make “more explicit” its moral.⁹³ For Tolkien, the more we adorn a tale, new or received, with “homiletic allegory of our [own] day,” the more we damage the work itself.⁹⁴ And yet, his allegorical refutation of muddled critics is fundamentally different from *The Lord of the Rings*. In the case of the latter, there are no clear equivalences for each element of the tale. Without being able to “consistently and without error fill these in” for each subject of a given allegory, its sense dissolves (*TAC*, p. 163). His view, therefore, is that allegory has “its place, and its rules,” so we can attribute his scorn to its use and detection “outside that place” (*TAC*, xxxiii).

If Tolkien relies on a narrow definition of allegory, it is nonetheless rigorous, incorporating various elements and their limits in its proper extension. Applicability is, as shown above, foundational to this. Hence his preference for “history, true or feigned, with its varied applicability to the thought and experience of readers,” which he thinks many mistake for allegory. According to Tolkien, though, “the one resides in the freedom of the reader, and the other in the purposed domination of the author.”⁹⁵ Notice that the repercussions of his commitment to the dignity of enchantment extend beyond his specifications concerning fantasy to literature in general.

As it happens, Tolkien is far from alone in bemoaning the pervasive misconceptions of allegory specifically, and literature more broadly, that erode the freedom of the reader, while diminishing the creative process itself. Baxter’s complaints about novels in which details have only “‘a single function,’ support ‘one central theme,’ and contribute, in turn, to

⁹³ *Beowulf*, p. 311.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* See also p. 188.

⁹⁵ The Foreword to the second edition of *LR*, quoted in *TAC*, p. 164. See Shippey, p. 164ff., for a penetrating discussion of the hints of correspondence between Tolkien’s feigned histories and our own. Of import for our inquiry into how metaphors can be outside the scope of the sentence—even taking the form of the entire body of a work—is Shippey’s discussion of these resonations as instances where “the overall picture” is “all too familiar” (p. 168). Since, as Shippey says, points of resemblance to our own experiences are inevitable, we are tempted to call this allegory, but really we are just applying the overarching metaphor as we understand it (p. 167).

characterizations that are merely ‘allegorical or bland,’” cases of “artistic overcontrol,” and, in particular, of authors’ “overparenting” of characters, reflect Tolkien’s dislike of “the conscious and intentional allegory” (MacKinnon, pp. 15, 5, 3; *Letters*, p. 145). The Canadian novelist Steve Rune Lundin (who uses the pseudonym Steven Erikson) shares this view, insisting that, in truly free fiction writing, the work takes on a life of its own.⁹⁶

Tolkien conveys this point to his publisher in an effort to distinguish his work from allegory:

When I spoke ... of this sequel getting ‘out of hand’, I did not mean it to be complimentary to the process. I really meant it was running its course, and forgetting ‘children’, and becoming more terrifying than the [*Hobbit*]. It may prove quite unsuitable. It is more ‘adult’ – but my own children who criticize it as it appears are now older.... The darkness of the present days has had some effect on it. Though it is not an ‘allegory’. (*Letters*, p. 41)

Here, Tolkien’s concerns are better understood as an extension of the view that metaphorical expression in literature involves not just metaphor, but symbol also. As Chris Baldick explains, the difference between these two is that, in the latter, implications are left unstated; thus allegory, for example, is extended metaphor, but not an extended symbol, according to Baldick’s terminology.⁹⁷ As Tolkien argues, the = signs of each element to the allegory are readily filled in. To say that the allegory is not symbolic since it states its implications seems to contradict the assumption that whoever interprets the allegory is free to fill in these implications using his or her imagination. It is not as if the allegory itself details these implications in propositional format. Still, allegory is more often associated with *obvious* implications, with an inevitable

⁹⁶ See “Steven Erikson Answers Your *House of Chains* Questions” [<https://www.tor.com/2011/11/23/steven-erikson-answers-your-house-of-chains-questions/>], and “Steven Erikson Answers Your *Midnight Tides* Questions” [<https://www.tor.com/2012/03/09/steven-erikson-answers-your-midnight-tides-questions/>]. It seems that allegory improperly applied is dominative, hindering the work’s vitality, though we must not jump from here to the erroneous conclusion that authorial intent, therefore, is irrelevant or fanciful. For a recent defense of the notion of authorial intention, see Daniel Trainor-McKinnon’s Master’s thesis, “The Resurrection of the Author” (defended at Saint Mary’s University, December 6th, 2018).

⁹⁷ *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, pp. 219, 5.

interpretive resolution towards which the author's will drives the reader. And, to all appearances, this is the view of allegory Tolkien defends. On this view, what Werth calls a megametaphor, comprising undercurrents of an entire text that allow for multiple perspectives, cannot be counted as allegory.

But Tolkien is amenable to viewing *The Lord of the Rings* as an allegory in some sense. Distinguishing among varieties of allegory, he says that, while there are many fair assessments of his work that he staunchly disagrees with, the ones he takes serious issue with are those "in the mode of *simple* allegory: that is, the particular and topical."⁹⁸ For Tolkien, then, the difference between fantasy and allegory is less of kind than of style. As Tolkien puts it,

Fairy story has its own mode of reflecting 'truth', different from allegory, or (sustained) satire, or 'realism', and in some ways more powerful. But first of all it must succeed just as a tale, excite, please, and even on occasion move....

But, of course, if one sets out to address 'adults' (mentally adult people anyway), they will not be pleased, excited, or moved unless the whole, or the incidents, seem to be about something worth considering, more e.g. than mere danger and escape: there might be some relevance to the 'human situation' (of all periods). So something of the teller's own reflections and 'values' will inevitably get worked in. This is not the same as allegory. (*Letters*, p. 233)

Recalling his resistance to reducing characters to types, Tolkien proceeds to argue that it is unfounded to presume that we can wholly calculate any character, real or imagined, that is, unless we are thinking of a type, as in the case of allegory.⁹⁹

Nevertheless, we can exemplify general principles in real life or in fiction. The potential for applicability that such exemplification of universals provides is part of what makes mythical

⁹⁸ *Letters*, p. 212, emphasis added. Tolkien continues, "In a larger sense it is I suppose impossible to write any 'story' that is not allegorical in proportion as it 'comes to life'; since each of us is an allegory embodying a particular tale and clothed in the garments of time and place, universal truth and everlasting life."

⁹⁹ Tolkien cites the example of Gollum's final moments. Since Gollum does not become a type at any point, the related scenes become "mechanically, morally, and psychologically credible" (*Letters*, p. 233). At the same time, though, there is exemplification at work, for the final scene recalls those underappreciated lines of the Lord's Prayer concerning keeping us from temptation and delivering us *from* evil. Tolkien's discussion of what exactly is recalled here, namely, a metaphor (directing us towards truth), indicates compatibility between his views and the semantic theory of metaphor, along with the basic thesis of this inquiry, for he notes that what is recalled is simply *an* aspect of the metaphor, not the metaphor as a whole.

metaphors more than a mere source of entertainment. Detailing one example of *The Lord of the Ring* 's applicability, Shippey refers to a pattern that comes to light in the hobbits' return to their homeland as "Sandyman's disease," a characterological trend that "starts as intellectual curiosity, develops as engineering skill, turns into greed and the desire to dominate, [and] corrupts further into a hatred and contempt of the natural world which goes beyond any rational desire to use it" (*TAC*, p. 171). Similarly, in light of the larger narrative, Saruman, a prominent character in the story who turns to evil purposes, becomes "an image of one of the characteristic vices of modernity, though we still have no name for it, ... a kind of restless ingenuity, skill without purpose, bulldozing for the sake of change," an attitude that, like Sandyman's disease, is *applicable* to our own circumstances to the extent that "the thought fits" (*TAC*, p. 172). Anyone with "any memory of recent history" will find thoughts occurring to them when reading *The Lord of the Rings* that resemble allegory, but this applicability need not render Tolkien's work "a veiled rewrite of recent history" (*TAC*, p. 174). Rather, it is the patterns we discern in *The Lord of the Rings*, the ironies, and the larger moral these direct us towards, that "can be applied to recent history and indeed to future action" (*ibid.*).

Naturally, this point highlights another difference between the respective pairings of "applicability and allegory," on the one hand, and "myth and legend," on the other; namely, the timeless quality of applicability and myth, as distinct from the time-constrained aspects of allegory and legend (*TAC*, p. 188).¹⁰⁰ Here, Shippey provides insight that bears upon the notion of overarching metaphors: within literary works, poetic elements can be "new and old at the same time, highly personal and more-than-personal, subject to continuous change while retaining a recognizable frame" (*TAC*, p. 191). In this sense (which recalls Black's notion of the frame of

¹⁰⁰ In some cases, stories harmonize both of these qualities, however.

sentence-level metaphors), different story arcs, songs, and actions in *The Lord of the Rings* reflect the same myth (*TAC*, p. 201).

But these frames, or myths, are always within our reach, available for individual innovation and application, without our “ever gaining control or permanent single-meaning possession” of them (*TAC*, p. 192). Assuming the mantle these constitute, however, is an intensely arduous process, for as *Letters* testifies, achieving this “simultaneous immediate relevance, and wider symbolic application,” takes an enormous amount of care, perspicuity, and resolve (*TAC*, p. 196). Still, succeeding in finding this balance situates authors in a tradition that produces both “otherworld vision” and “real-world insight.” According to Shippey, mythic timelessness as a state of being that entails both awareness of “the physical and literal world” and cognizance of “some deeper symbolic meaning,” what he calls “liminal uncertainty,” allows for this production (*TAC*, p. 200). In other words, the state related here is the efficient cause of those complex and mythical metaphors Tolkien describes as applicable, not allegorical.

To appreciate better how each point in the narrative of *The Lord of the Rings* remains immediately relevant, while there is applicability outside of that context of a “far more general, indeed universal” nature, let us consider two senses of “myth” (*TAC*, p. 205). Shippey explains, we understand myths as traditional stories involving some level of belief, and perhaps even memory and nostalgia. Yet myths are also sets of images through which we are witness to a world view (*TAC*, pp. 201-2). Therefore, in, for example, the myth of the stars and trees in *The Lord of the Rings*, which “presents life as a confusion in which we all too easily lose our bearings and forget that there is a world outside our immediate surroundings,” we catch a glimpse of Tolkien’s perspective and convictions (*TAC*, p. 205). It is common to interpret

allegory as sub-textual social commentary veiled in ambiguity, as in the case of Orwell. This idea is wrong in one sense, and right in another.

First, it is wrong to think that Tolkien wrote “an allegory for England in the aftermath of the war,” for it is more accurate to *apply* Tolkien’s work “to a more general situation: of a society suffering not only from political misrule, but from a strange and generalized crisis of confidence” (*TAC*, p. 219). The metaphor constituted by Tolkien’s work serves to critique the social paralysis that derives from giving in to “the insistent persuasion of modern political jargon” (*TAC*, pp. 200-1). Shippey observes that such paralysis, “the cloud of post-war disillusionment, depression, [and] acquiescence,” emerged twice in Tolkien’s lifetime, each time, strangely, following victory (*TAC*, p. 221). In the face of this, Tolkien’s myth, or extended metaphor, pushes back and, in so doing, fits a template recognized by Crow leader Plenty Coups, who suffered a more pressing form of cultural devastation in his own life.¹⁰¹ If, for Plenty Coups, the hope for the Crow’s overcoming their troubles following the destruction of all the symbols that gave their lives meaning is the singular imagination of a poet, Fantasy represents, for Tolkien, the same kind of commitment in miniature, since it is a “quality of vision” that enriches, rather than detracting from, normal life (*TAC*, p. 300).

This returns us to Tolkien’s view of fairy stories, more specifically, to his notion of escape. He urges us not to confuse this “Escape of the Prisoner with the Flight of the Deserter” (*TL*, p. 79). For escapism, he says, has an “even wickeder face: Reaction” (*TL*, p. 80). What is this a reaction to or an escape from? Tolkien answers, “hunger, thirst, poverty, pain, sorrow, injustice, death” (*TL*, p. 83). Fantasy provides a kind of escape not just from these harsh realities, but also from “ancient limitations,” thereby satisfying and consoling “old ambitions and desires”

¹⁰¹ Jonathan Lear, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

(TL, p. 83). If, by itself, this provides little clarification, elsewhere, Tolkien's language is more illuminating.

By "escapism," he means, in effect, "transforming experience into another form and symbol" (*Letters*, p. 85). This calls to mind Egginton's paraphrase of Cervantes' autobiographical reflections: "in the form of a lie I reveal the truth, and thereby exorcize my personal demons by creating a work that will delight others while bringing them to greater understanding."¹⁰² In similar language, Richard Shiff contends that "in a changing world, metaphor renders the truth of experience as the truth of knowledge."¹⁰³ Even closer to the spirit of Tolkien's point is Shippey's claim that "we all (now) know that fiction allows a writer to express something, perhaps metaphorically or by analogy, which could not be expressed by history" (*TAC*, pp. 327-8).

Accordingly, "it is our ability to read metaphorically" that makes Tolkien relevant to our time (*ibid.*). The fantastic creatures of *The Lord of the Rings* may not exist, but the larger problems they address permeate contemporary society, just as they have human history. What Tolkien achieves, then, is the introduction of "a new, or possibly ... old and forgotten taste into the literary world. A taste, a trace-element, perhaps a necessary literary vitamin," in any case something which, for the competent applier of metaphor, is all too timely and powerful (*ibid.*).

Still, if one wants to resist differentiating between allegory and applicability, he or she might do so on the basis of the notion of reading metaphorically. In other words, reading

¹⁰² William Egginton, *The Man Who Invented Fiction: How Cervantes Ushered in the Modern World*, p. 87. Cf. Sir Philip Sidney's *Defense of Poesy*, according to which poetics brings to life the truth of experience, but is not bound by the actual historical example. Relying heavily on the insights of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, Sir Philip establishes that poetics not only delights and teaches, but moves us.

¹⁰³ "Art and Life: A Metaphoric Relationship," p. 106. Cf. section 2.3, below. This aspect of metaphor is essentially inductive, just as it is heuristic: no algorithm for this has been made to date and attempting to do so for the purposes of artificial intelligence, or to advance the bizarre agendas of the Trans-humanism movement, as is currently being done, seems in principle wrong.

metaphorically is an essential feature of allegory, such that if something can be read in such a way it is allegorical. But C.S. Lewis' appreciation of *The Lord of the Rings* offers a better interpretation. Lewis draws an analogy between allegory and sacramentality, since both lend an imaginative substance to the immaterial, which, as noted above, is a central feature of the fusion view of metaphor.¹⁰⁴ This, for Lewis, is "the whole fun of reading and writing allegory": one can be imaginatively Catholic without assenting to the authority of Rome.¹⁰⁵ And, of course, since Dante especially, sacramentality implies that the entire world is infused with God's presence and love.¹⁰⁶ So, it would be easy to insist that anything applicable is also allegorical.

But this would be to stretch the term's sense unduly and ignore Tolkien's concerns about allegory. Lewis himself, in fact, seems to imply precisely this point when he writes that Tolkien's work is supreme among imaginary worlds in which the content projected "is at once so multifarious and so true to its own inner laws; ... so seemingly objective, so disinfected from the taint of an author's merely individual psychology, ... so *relevant* to the actual human situation yet so *free from allegory*."¹⁰⁷ Thus, while we may debate whether to call something allegorical or applicable on the grounds that it can be read metaphorically, surely we ought to acknowledge that the *simple* sense of allegory as a form of writing is distinct from this. And more, we can appreciate that what Tolkien cherishes and defends is storytelling in which beauty lies to some extent in the freedom of the writer in composing the tale, the freedom of the interpreter's

¹⁰⁴ *Allegory of Love*, pp. 321-3. It may be that concerns about both fusion theory's reduction of the rich and varied effects of metaphor to a single register coincide with the overparenting of characters in a story in much allegorical writing. For allegory, in either its complex form or in the easily convertible form Tolkien exemplifies in his *Beowulf* interpretation, is less a problem than insisting that this species of metaphor be conceived as the form of all storytelling. As Tolkien argues, and as Shibles would agree, this is but a type of storytelling and metaphor (Shibles, p. 21). Therefore, while Tolkien is in some sense a fusion theorist, he shares Martin's concerns about fusion theory's reductive tendencies.

¹⁰⁵ *Fellowship*, p. 291.

¹⁰⁶ See Christopher Booker, *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories* (London and New York: Continuum, 2004, p. 632).

¹⁰⁷ Quoted in *Fellowship*, p. 423, emphasis added. Lewis adds these comments to the dusk-jacket of the first installment of *The Lord of the Rings*.

reading, and the extent to which both can glimpse universal truths while being party to a unique imaginative vista (a point to which we shall return in section 3.1).

1.3

A History of Metaphorical Understanding

The Lord whose oracle is at Delphi neither speaks nor conceals, but gives signs.

Herakleitos¹⁰⁸

Leopards break into the temple and drink up the sacrificial wine; this is repeated over and over again; eventually it becomes predictable, and is incorporated into the ceremony.

Franz Kafka¹⁰⁹

Tolkien is one among many thinkers who explicitly (in theoretic terms or systems) or implicitly (in their works, literary or otherwise) demonstrate awareness of complex metaphor. In this sense, the central thesis I am defending in this inquiry is nothing new. Further, newer theoretical points are often far older in application. Aside from this, certain scholars and literary critics are more concerned with practice than theory, and, therefore, typically accept traditional accounts of metaphor even when imprecise.¹¹⁰ Following Quintillian, we can see how practical it is for thinkers simply to apply the same principal conceptions of the figures from classical times onward, for clarifying the particular species of metaphoric language “has given rise to interminable disputes among the teachers of [literature], who have quarreled no less violently with the philosophers than among themselves over the problem...” (Martin, pp. 761, 760).

However, since recent attempts to clarify the more general status of metaphor have shifted the inquiry to include the relation of metaphor “to propositional truth and meaning, to the

¹⁰⁸ Quoted by Wheelwright, *Metaphor and Reality*, p. 172.

¹⁰⁹ “Leopards in the Temple” in *Parables and Paradoxes* (New York: 1961, trans. Ernst Kaiser and Eithne Wilkins, p. 93), quoted by Shiff, p. 118. Shiff alters the translation into that cited in the epigraph, here.

¹¹⁰ Martin, p. 761. See also Werth: “Literary critics ... have long been aware of the phenomenon of *extended* metaphor, whereby a specific metaphorical concept is developed through a *discourse*, e.g. an entire poem, play or novel” (p. 80).

origins of [language] and myth, to world views, scientific models, social attitudes, and ordinary usage,” there is renewed hope that we may arrive at a more agreeable exposition of the theoretical foundations of metaphor (Martin, p. 761). With Black and Davidson in the vanguard of such progress, it becomes all the more important to examine their theories critically so as to maintain this momentum. As we have seen, extended metaphors serve as counterexamples to Black’s and Davidson’s works on the subject. While raising various questions of interest, though, this does not provide us, by itself, with a better account.

For this reason, I will now take up the task of identifying the foundations of a theoretical framework that can account for such fascinating phenomena. Now that we have a clearer understanding of the problem, we shall turn to Ricoeur’s account, which offers a broader and more extensive view of metaphor, as illustrated by its accommodating the phenomenon of complex metaphor. Thus, while the first chapter focused on the problem of complex metaphor, we will shift our attention in the next to Ricoeur’s proposed solution.

Accordingly, chapter 2 begins with a few introductory observations, after which I will examine Ricoeur’s theory of metaphor as presented in “The Metaphoric Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling,” along with potential objections and questions in section 2.1. In section 2.2 I consider a particularly important aspect of his view that, for the most part, Ricoeur ignores in “The Metaphoric Process,” but which figures prominently in *The Rule of Metaphor*, namely, fusion. Section 2.3 incorporates Louis Groarke’s work on induction into this emerging view of metaphor, while discussing how Zwicky’s view converges with both Ricoeur’s and Groarke’s. From there, we shall proceed in section 2.4 to consider the value of this developing theory of metaphor for understanding defamiliarization. In the final section, I briefly relate how this view of metaphor contributes to Ricoeur’s theory of speculative thought.

In the third chapter, we will consider various implications of this, focusing on the areas of aesthetics (section 3.1), virtue ethics (section 3.2), and pedagogy (section 3.3).¹¹¹ Finally, in chapter 4 we will consider a concrete example of extended metaphor to further substantiate the claims made earlier concerning the existence of complex metaphor. As this example is largely a metaphor for metaphoric competence, the chapter will also allow us to explore the phenomenon in such a way that enhances the working theory of this inquiry. We will conclude by returning our discussion to its opening concerns, locating the notions of metaphor and metaphoric competence within the orbit of reflections upon the issue of how, in this age of fractured communication, we might better communicate.

2

Towards a Better Account: Metaphor as a Process

Metaphor is a way of understanding the world; it comes naturally to nearly all language-speakers. Any account that makes it out to be odd or queer in relation to ‘the norm’ is itself odd or queer. We think we need such an account only because we have misconstrued the nature of ‘the norm’. A good account will be as much a critique of standard Western European assumptions about meaning’s relation to language as it will be a positive discussion of metaphor.

Jan Zwicky¹

The stylistic catastrophe of analytic philosophy is a subject for another occasion. I shall merely record my opinion that the alienating prose of our philosophers is due not to expertise but to idleness – to a failure to pursue a thought to the point where it *speaks itself*, in words of its own.... Style is the search for simplicity and naturalness, for the phrase which not only says what you mean, but also embodies within itself all the nuances and hesitations that would enliven the reader’s judgement.

Roger Scruton²

¹¹¹ When using the term “pedagogy” in this work, I intend the current usage, which in fact combines the pedagogy (child-focused) and andragogy (adult-focused) arts and sciences of fostering learning. My thanks to Bob Daley for bringing the historical conflation of these terms to my attention.

¹ P. 115 Left.

² “Modern Philosophy and the Neglect of Aesthetics,” p. 103.

Ricoeur makes considerable headway on the subject of metaphor in a number of ways, not least of which is his advancing philosophical efforts to arrive at its foundations. Indeed, as Martin observes, prior to the advent of Ricoeur's *The Rule of Metaphor*, theorists tended "to privilege different moments in the interpretive process" (p. 765). By contrast, Ricoeur tackles the problem of how these moments might fit together into a more complete picture. In keeping with his view that the metaphoric process is to some extent the basis for all poetry, his work offers support for the idea of defamiliarization in a way that previous philosophical theories of the subject do not (*RM*, p. 2). Why else is Ricoeur's work on metaphor so compelling?

One reason is that, though he treats metaphor as a process, he formulates his synoptic theory on the basis of various theories focussing on one or more associated parts, whether they are concerned with "intralinguistic relationships, or relations between signs of any sort," investigations into differences between the meaning of a sentence and that intended by the speaker, the "relations between words and reality, or sense and reference," or "non-linguistic relationships" customarily studied within other disciplines (Martin, p. 764). Yet Ricoeur is careful to incorporate only those theories that contribute the most convincing accounts of specific aspects of metaphor. And although such views are frequently opposed, he is able to subsume these dichotomies into a coherent conception of metaphor. Moreover, he embarks on his inquiry with a masterful understanding of the history of philosophy, thereby availing himself of a wealth of insights in his efforts to address various problems in the theory of metaphor.

On a macro-level, Ricoeur's survey draws on resources from both the Anglo-American and Continental schools of philosophy. This enables him to avoid the respective failings of each school, an advantage that extends to his assessment of findings from disciplines outside of

philosophy.³ Fittingly, the theory that results is an audacious one, at least in terms of scope. More specifically, upon entering the fray, Ricoeur takes up the question Black leaves on; concerning the “something more” that is at work in cases of novel metaphor. By making progress in this area, Ricoeur’s theory is more powerful than Black’s.⁴ Let us turn now to the project itself.

2.1

Transcending Theoretical Boundaries: Ricoeur and Split Reference Theory

This, then, is how the work unfolds. It does not seek to replace rhetoric with semantics and the latter with hermeneutics, and thus have one refute the other, but rather seeks to justify each approach within the limits of the corresponding discipline and to demonstrate the systematic continuity of viewpoints by following the progression from word to sentence and from sentence to discourse.... With respect to their origins, some of the decisive doctrines are taken from English-language literature and some from the French. This is an expression of the double allegiance of my research as well as my teaching in recent years; and I hope by this to help reduce the mutual ignorance that persists among specialists in these two linguistic and cultural worlds.

Paul Ricoeur⁵

Not only does Ricoeur’s astute analysis of the relevant literature clarify various advances and divergences in the field, it expands upon the roles of imagination and feeling in the metaphorical process. In “The Metaphoric Process,” Ricoeur elaborates his understanding of these roles as a solution to what he regards as a problem with the semantic theory of metaphor; namely, that it fails sufficiently to account for semantic innovation.⁶ I will refer to this failure as the incompleteness problem.

³ For an example of the latter kind of instance, see *RM*, pp. 66-7: Ricoeur recognizes that while, historically, there may have been some warrant for logicians and epistemologists to ignore the findings of linguists when working on the theory of discourse, “with the contributions that the linguistic study of language has made to the humanities, one cannot any longer simply disregard the relationship between discourse and language.”

⁴ Ginsberg writes, “The more a theory can explain, the more powerful it is,” though, of course, there are many other considerations that are relevant to gauging the merits of a theory (p. 70).

⁵ *RM*, pp. 7-8.

⁶ While “The Metaphoric Process” is to some extent a distillation of *The Rule of Metaphor*, in the former Ricoeur adds structural elements to his theory concerning the role of feeling (Hausman, p. 58). This role, while alluded to, does not feature prominently in the earlier work. Ricoeur’s assertion in *The Rule of Metaphor* that feeling is bound up with the notion of metaphoric truth (a thought which we can independently infer from the above discussion of

Ricoeur describes the semantic theory of metaphor as an inquiry into how metaphors both “provide untranslatable information” and “yield some true insight about reality” (MP, p. 141). Ricoeur insists that a psychological theory of imagination and feeling is indispensable to any inquiry of this kind. Therefore, he argues, theories of metaphor such as Black’s are incomplete *semantic* theories insofar as they do not assign “a semantic function to what seems to be mere psychological features” (MP, p. 141).⁷ In other words, Ricoeur maintains that factors besides that of informative content must be addressed. The problem arises, he says, from the point where a semantic theory of metaphor and a psychological theory of imagination and feeling meet.

Ricoeur’s project, then, is to reconcile these two theories in order to solve this problem. For he aims through his analysis of the three functions of imagination and feeling concerning metaphor to account for semantic innovation. In this section, I will summarize this solution. In addition, I will refer to *The Rule of Metaphor* in order to clarify certain stages of the argument. This will allow us to situate his solution within his larger project. Subsequent to this, I will consider whether some aspects of Ricoeur’s discussion merit further consideration. As I will argue below, Ricoeur’s main aim in “The Metaphoric Process” is to demonstrate that we cannot adequately understand metaphorical sense “without a description of the *split reference* which is specific to poetic discourse” (MP, p. 156).

From the outset, Ricoeur recovers various insights of Aristotle’s that bear upon the incompleteness problem. His first attempt to describe the function of metaphor is a prime example of this. On Ricoeur’s account, the function of metaphor transcends, or at least calls into

Black and Davidson) is one of the most prominent anticipations of his later work on the function of feeling in the metaphorical process (*RM*, p. 255).

⁷ Ricoeur lists other prominent figures who propose semantic theories of metaphor, including Richards, Beardsley, and Berggren. Recent figures, such as Zwicky, likewise fall into this category, to the extent that they maintain we are unable to translate metaphor (*WM*, p. 19).

question, the dichotomy of sense, that is, the “objective content of an expression,” and representation, that is, the imaginative and felt mental actualization of the given expression (MP, p. 142). In support of this claim, he refers to Aristotle’s comment about the “*picturing function* of metaphorical meaning,” an implicit suggestion that imagination, no less than feeling, is semantically relevant in this context (MP, p. 142).

Ricoeur proceeds to say that, while Aristotle and other classical theorists of rhetoric only hint at this, if we consider that the word “metaphor” is itself a metaphor, we ought to realize that spatial metaphors *about* metaphor, insofar as they provide our means of communicating with “a quasi-bodily externalization,” are necessary (MP, pp. 142-3). Therefore, we need to determine the nature of this role. This is where Ricoeur thinks considerations of resemblance and discovery ought to enter the inquiry. However, he insists that in order to avoid confusion about resemblance we must first reflect on the history of metaphor theory.

Various approaches in metaphor theory examine different linguistic entities in the hope of accurately describing metaphor. In classical rhetoric, “the unit of reference” is the word (RM, p. 3). Underpinning the related explanation of metaphor is “a theory of substitution” (RM, p. 3). During the Renaissance, this tradition declines into tropology, wherein “rhetoric terminates in classification and taxonomy” (RM, p. 4). Ricoeur asserts that, while, on the one hand, the tradition of rhetoric is warranted in describing metaphor in terms of deviance, on the other, it is unwarranted in ascribing this solely to denomination. Ricoeur refers to this later stage in the tradition of rhetoric, which treats the word as a sign in a lexical code, as semiotics. The problem with this theory is that “it fails to explain the production of meaning as such, of which deviation at the level of the word is only the effect” (RM, p. 4).

In contrast to this tradition, semantics transfers metaphor into the framework of the sentence. On this view, the sentence as a whole, as opposed to the word, becomes the bearer of meaning. This shift allows Black to articulate the problem of resemblance by distinguishing interaction from substitution theory. Though the latter accounts for metonymy, a species of metaphor that involves substitution, it cannot account for the *interaction* of a logical subject and a predicate in certain metaphors. Thus, “deviance” becomes a case of impertinent predication (also known as a “syntagmatic deviance”) rather than “deviant denomination.” On this basis, Ricoeur suggests we can reincorporate resemblance into our analysis of metaphor, provided we subsequently inquire into the sufficient conditions for a “deviant predication” to obtain (MP, p. 143).

Before exploring these conditions, Ricoeur clarifies a related point. The metaphorical statement reduces this “syntagmatic deviance by the establishment of a new semantic pertinence.”⁸ Because it produces “a lexical deviance,” it further supports itself by becoming “a paradigmatic deviance” consistent with the shared view of classical scholars of rhetoric.⁹ Thus, we see how these scholars’ positions are warranted in one sense, and unwarranted in another. Their error was to restrict a metaphor’s effectual sense to the level of the word rather than including the level of the semantic twist. The upshot here is that semantic theory is able to account both for how a word constitutes the focus for “the effect of sense” and how the entire utterance produces this sense.¹⁰ Ricoeur proceeds to make this point clear in his subsequent discussion.

⁸ All references in this paragraph and the next are from MP, p. 144.

⁹ For a further breakdown of Ricoeur’s related reasoning, see *RM*, pp. 149-57.

¹⁰ By referring both to the ‘utterance,’ that is, the overall speech act, *and* to semantic theory, Ricoeur might bypass the apparent intractability of Black’s and Davidson’s dispute on metaphorical meaning. It is not clear that he avoids such entanglement, especially because of his specific emphasis on semantic theory, but his “semantic” selection leaves this possibility open.

There are two stages to Ricoeur's ensuing analysis. In the first stage, he aims to explore "how resemblance works in [the] production of meaning" in metaphorical utterances. In the second, he aims to identify the relation between this function of resemblance and "the pictorial or iconic moment." With respect to the first of these aims, Ricoeur notes that we only want to call something a metaphor which is congruent. Strictly speaking, that is, a metaphor is an utterance eliciting new understanding or awareness, which, while *deviant*, is nonetheless *acceptable*. As we saw above, Ricoeur aims to address the incompleteness problem concerning semantic innovation. Acknowledging the importance of resemblance remedies this problem, because *reinterpreting* resemblance necessitates examining how the imaginative faculty is involved in the metaphorical process.

According to Ricoeur, semantic theories such as Black's provide us with a starting point for this first stage of inquiry by noting that the "transition from literal incongruence to metaphorical congruence between two semantic fields" makes semantic innovation possible (MP, p. 145). Ricoeur asserts that "the innovation proper to this shift" involves resemblance, which Aristotle calls "the *epiphora* of the metaphor" (MP, p. 145). As Ricoeur has already hinted, proponents of a semantic theory of metaphor do not adequately explain this because they do not rely on imagination. If a theory of imagination proves indispensable, however, this raises a question: which theory should we utilize?

Initially, Ricoeur seems to defer to the Humean theory of image by describing our imagination as a "perceptual residue" which is integral to "the predicative process itself" (MP, pp. 144-5).¹¹ However, to address the incompleteness problem, he argues, we must move beyond this model to "Kant's concept of productive imagination *as schematizing a synthetic operation*"

¹¹ For a more recent look at Hume and imagination, see Shelagh Crooks' article "Hume, Images and the Mental Object Problem" (*Dialogue*, Winter 2000, Vol. 39: 1, p.3).

(MP, p. 145).¹² Only then, Ricoeur contends, can we revise semantic theory with a “psychology of imagination” (MP, p. 145).

On Ricoeur’s account, there are three stages to combining semantic theory and this “psychology of imagination.” First, he identifies imagination as the seeing which brings about the metaphorical congruity between two disparate semantic fields. In Kantian terms, this seeing is “homogenous to the discourse itself” (an operation “homogenous” to predication), such that “this insight into likeness is both a thinking and a seeing” (MP, p. 145).

Citing an example of what Aristotle refers to as proportional metaphor, Ricoeur explains that “this insight” is “a thinking,” insofar as it “effects a restructuration of semantic fields; it is transcategorical because it is categorical.”¹³ It is “a seeing” insofar as it involves an instantaneous awareness of how the proportionality allows for certain “combinatory possibilities,” which demonstrates that the resolution of the two relevant ratios justifies the proportionality itself. Ricoeur concludes that we can call this “*productive*” character of the insight “predicative assimilation.”

Ricoeur notes a potential interpretive trap in relation to this. He advises against conceiving of predicative assimilation “in terms of the old association of resemblance,” for this would leave out the semantic role. As he has already argued, this role “consists precisely in *making* similar, that is, semantically proximate, the terms that the metaphorical utterance brings together.”

Here, anticipating a potential objection, Ricoeur clarifies his reasoning by deferring to tensive theory.¹⁴ Predicative assimilation involves a tension “between semantic incongruence

¹² Cf. *RM*, p. 189.

¹³ All references in this paragraph and the next are from MP, p. 146.

¹⁴ See *The Rule of Metaphor* for his more extensive treatment of tensive theory, which he there equates with semantic theory by establishing them as corresponding elements distinct from semiotics and substitution, without

and congruence,” to the extent that metaphors are appropriately called such if and only if we can, through the resultant compatibility, still see the prior incompatibility (MP, p. 146).¹⁵

Imagination, accordingly, is this *ability* to produce new kinds by assimilation and to produce them not *above* the differences, as in the concept, but in spite of and through the differences. Imagination is this stage in the production of genres where generic kinship has not reached the level of conceptual peace and rest but remains caught in the war between distance and proximity, between remoteness and nearness. In that sense, we may speak with Gadamer of the fundamental metaphoricity of thought to the extent that the figure of speech that we call ‘metaphor’ allows us a glance at the general procedure by which we produce concepts. (MP, p. 147)

Clearly, Ricoeur’s view is that this tension is a necessary component of metaphors. The uniqueness of semantic fields entails that there will be a tension when, subsequent to identifying “generic kinships” between two or more such fields, our imagination approaches the genus to which they belong as respective species (MP, p. 146-7).¹⁶ So much, then, for the first function of the imagination, which Ricoeur calls the “quasi-verbal aspect,” and which amounts to the first stage of his effort to combine semantic theory with a psychology of imagination (MP, p. 147).

Ricoeur turns to the second function of imagination, which he calls the “quasi-optic aspect,” and which has as its condition the “quasi-verbal aspect” (MP, p. 147). In order to proceed with this account, Ricoeur argues that “semantic innovation is not only schematized but pictured” (MP, p. 147). By this, he means that there is an iconic aspect to semantic innovation through which the intended thought is presented. And, given Kant’s insight, we recognize this provision of images for a concept as a function of the schema.

implying that substitution theory is necessarily linked to one side of this distinction rather than the other. He also uses “tensive” and “tension” interchangeably.

¹⁵ It may be that Ricoeur is touching upon the difference between living and dead metaphors, here.

¹⁶ Ricoeur makes explicit his debt to Kant here, saying that this discussion has essentially been about “the schematization of metaphorical attribution” (MP, p. 147). Similarly, when he suggests that this study allows us a view of the conceptualization process in general, it is no accident that he describes the first function of imagination *as* a schematizing process.

At this point, Ricoeur notes, the issue of “the development from schematization to iconic presentation” arises (MP, p. 148). The problem here is that the second function of the imagination will not be coherent with a semantic theory of metaphor unless we establish that it is both an additional function of and dependent upon the first. *If* we insist that what is being depicted in predicative assimilation is an “image as a mental picture, that is, as the replica of an absent thing,” then either the issue remains, or at least this iconic presentation remains enigmatic (MP, p. 148).

Ricoeur’s response to this problem is to assert that, rather, we ought to consider the image as intrinsic to the metaphoric process, for “a certain production of images ... is the concrete milieu *in which and through which* we see similarities” (MP, p. 148, emphasis added). On this view, imagining is understood not as having “a mental picture of something,” but as displaying “relations in a depicting mode” (MP, p. 148). In semantic innovation, that is, we grasp either an iconic description or a depiction of “the new intended connection” (MP, p. 148).

Ricoeur proceeds to cite Hester’s work on metaphorical meaning. In this connection, he remarks that the iconic function of the imagination is sufficient to “do justice within a semantic theory of metaphor to the Wittgensteinian concept of ‘seeing as’” (MP, p. 148). Ricoeur takes this to be Hester’s most significant contribution to the theory of metaphor, because he “expressly brings resemblance into play” (RM, p. 212).

As Ricoeur points out, Hester’s analysis of the experience of reading allows him to connect this Wittgensteinian concept to the function of poetic images. Consequently, Hester’s account of “‘bound’ images, that is, concrete representations,” which the verbal element prompts and controls, provides us with a way to specify the kind that are “relevant for a semantics of the poetic image” (MP, pp. 148-9). Moreover, Ricoeur takes this to help explain “the functioning of

the intuitive grasp of a predicative connection,” for it illustrates that in the metaphorical process “the meaning is not only schematized but lets itself be read *on* the image in which it is inverted” (MP, p. 149).¹⁷ Therefore, the picturing function of the imagination, though dependent upon the first function, is distinct from it.¹⁸

Having provided an exposition of this second function of the imagination, Ricoeur turns to the third step for completing a semantic theory of metaphor, namely, a “proper consideration of the role of imagination.”¹⁹ This “role” involves “the moment of negativity brought by the image in the metaphorical process.” Ricoeur pauses here to clarify “the basic notion of meaning as applied to a metaphorical expression.”

He notes that it is possible to define meaning as “the inner functioning of the proposition as a predicative operation,” adding that this is indeed how it has been used in the present discussion thus far (MP, p. 149). In other words, following Frege’s distinction between sense and reference, Ricoeur emphasizes how this definition of meaning corresponds to “sense.” However, as he proceeds to argue, “to ask *about what* a metaphorical statement is, is something other and something more than to ask *what* it says” (MP, p. 150). Accordingly, if we inquire into this other side of Frege’s distinction, that is, what a metaphor refers to, then we face a variant of “the general question of the truth claim of poetic language” (MP, p. 150). In this context, asking about referential value is tantamount to attempting to demonstrate how, as Nelson Goodman argues,

¹⁷ Ricoeur argues that this part of his exposition of the role of imagination in the metaphorical process transcends the supposed dichotomy between *Sinn* and *Vorstellung* arising out of the debate between Frege and Husserl. Further, this has brought us to the borderline between the “semantics of metaphorical utterances” and a psychology of imagination.

¹⁸ Another reason why Ricoeur wants to clarify this point involves his general project of exploring convergences and divergences in the historical progression of ideas with respect to the theory of metaphor. Notwithstanding his dialectical attempts to synthesize various arguments and counter-arguments, as well as various levels of analysis, he takes pains to note those occasions when other authors ignore relevant nuances in reigning theories of metaphor. This second function of imagination is an example of such an error. An awareness of this function, argues Ricoeur, is what Black’s account loses when he absorbs “Richards’ distinction between tenor and vehicle” only to reformulate it as one between principal and subsidiary subjects (MP, p. 147).

¹⁹ All references in this paragraph are to MP, p. 149.

“symbolic systems *reorganize* ‘the world in terms of works and works in terms of the world’” (MP, p. 150).

Ricoeur infers from this that the theory of metaphor corresponds to the theory of models insofar as “a metaphor may be seen as a model for changing our way of looking at things, of perceiving the world” (MP, p. 150). Ricoeur notes that the identification of this heuristic kinship between metaphor in the arts and models in the sciences is one of Black’s most significant contributions to the literature on metaphor (*RM*, p. 6).²⁰ On Ricoeur’s account, this constitutes the most fundamental argument that a hermeneutical analysis of metaphor—focusing on discourse itself—generates.²¹

But what justifies shifting the focus of analysis from semantics to hermeneutics? According to Ricoeur, it is the “connection in all discourse between sense, which is its internal organization, and reference, which is its power to refer to a reality outside of language” (*RM*, p. 6). Ricoeur argues, therefore, that instead of “the *form* of metaphor as a word-focused figure of speech,” and instead of “the *sense* of metaphor as a founding of a new semantic pertinence,” what we need to understand is “the *reference* of the metaphorical statement as the power to ‘re-describe’ reality” (*RM*, p. 6).²² Through this hermeneutical lens, we can understand metaphor as a means of communication that simultaneously preserves and develops both the *creative* power of language and “the *heuristic* power wielded by fiction” (*RM*, p. 6). Reflecting upon the term “insight,” Ricoeur remarks that it “conveys in a very appropriate manner this move from sense to reference” (MP, p. 150).

²⁰ See also p. 32. From Ricoeur’s discussion of Aristotle, we may infer that the latter’s view of metaphor counts, in some sense, a precursor of Black’s.

²¹ This supports the view that Ricoeur reconciles the seemingly disparate positions of Davidson and Black, because focusing on discourse itself allows the speech-act theory of metaphor to bear on the discussion, which Ricoeur—at least implicitly—incorporates.

²² While he regards these other levels of analysis as valuable, he also holds that they are insufficient. See above.

Elaborating, Ricoeur insists that in both poetic and “so-called” descriptive discourse, as Frege maintained, “‘we presuppose a reference,’ the ‘striving for truth,’” aside from being “satisfied with the sense” (MP, p. 150). This presupposition motivates both our “‘intention in speaking or thinking’” and our inevitable attempt “‘to advance from the sense of the reference’” (MP, p. 150). On Ricoeur’s account, metaphorical reference, like metaphorical sense, is paradoxical. To develop this point, he incorporates the notion of split reference, which becomes the main focus of his hermeneutical level of analysis.

On this issue, Ricoeur defers to Jakobson’s insight that in poetic language outward reference is not removed, but rather rendered ambiguous. “‘The double-sensed message finds correspondence,’” writes Ricoeur, “‘in a split addresser, in a split addressee, and what is more, in a split reference, as is cogently exposed in the preambles to fairy tales of various people, for instance in the usual exhortation [sic] of the Majorca story tellers: *Aixo era y no era* (it was and it was not)’” (MP, p. 151). Split reference, then, is the best way to understand “‘the referential *function* of the metaphorical statement” (MP, p. 151, emphasis added).

However, a critic might be inclined to respond to this idea of metaphorical reference by maintaining that, insofar as poetic language is commonly thought to be referring to itself, not to something else, it differs from ordinary descriptive language, and, by extension, ordinary reference. Ricoeur resists this claim, noting that there is more at work in the process of metaphorical reference.²³ While it seems inconsistent to hold both that metaphorical communication concerns reality and that poetic discourse is non-referential, this is not the case if we subscribe to the notion of split reference in poetic discourse. For if we reconceive of poetic reference as a power of second-degree reference, the sufficient condition of which is the

²³ Although Ricoeur resists this claim, he does not dismiss it entirely. See MP, pp. 151-2; and RM, p. 216ff.

suspension of literal reference, then we resolve any apparent issues ensuing from the idea that metaphorical discourse concerns reality.

This returns us to the question which Ricoeur says emerges on the hermeneutical level of the analysis of metaphor:

... poetic language is no less *about* reality than any other use of language but refers to it by means of a complex strategy which implies, as an essential component, a suspension and seemingly an abolition of the ordinary reference attached to descriptive language. This suspension, however, is only the negative condition of a second-order reference, of an indirect reference built on the ruins of the direct reference. This reference is called second-order reference only with respect to the primacy of the reference of ordinary language. For, in another respect, it constitutes the primordial reference to the extent that it suggests, reveals, unconceals—or whatever you say—the deep structures of reality to which we are related as mortals who are born into this world and who *dwell* in it for a while. (MP, p. 151)²⁴

The notion of split reference is central to Ricoeur's reflections on this question. On the basis of this hermeneutical analysis, Ricoeur brings his discussion to a thematic climax by defining metaphor as "the rhetorical process by which a discourse unleashes the power that certain fictions have to redescribe reality" (RM, p. 7). He suggests that connecting fiction and re-description in this manner recovers the key insight of Aristotle's *Poetics*; namely, "that the *poiesis* of language arises out of the connection between *muthos* and *mimesis*" (RM, p. 7).

In the same vein, Ricoeur supposes that the meaning of metaphor ought not to be exclusively placed under the word or name, as it is at the level of semiotics, nor under the sentence, as it is at the level of semantics, nor even under the discourse, as it is at the level of hermeneutics. Rather, we ought to understand metaphorical meaning as either an explicit or implicit use of "is" which simultaneously "signifies both 'is not' and 'is like'" (RM, p. 7).²⁵ That

²⁴ It may be that Ricoeur accounts, here, for Davidson's primary concern with Black's semantic theory of metaphor. It seems that the systematicity of language is preserved in this split reference, this suspension.

²⁵ Ricoeur's observation, here, anticipates our later discussion of metaphorical meaning operating at the level of an entire event or story.

is, the notion of split reference better identifies the place of metaphor. And, if so, it supports the idea of a metaphorical truth, as long as we are using “an equally ‘tensive’ sense of the word ‘truth’” (*RM*, p. 7). However, as Ricoeur points out, whatever philosophy underpins this theory of metaphorical reference must “be elucidated” (*RM*, p. 7). There are “ontological implications of this contention,” as well as other important connections to, and divergences from, prevailing Continental theories, the addressing of which he leaves aside in “The Metaphoric Process” (*MP* p. 151).

The upshot of this notion of split reference, for Ricoeur, is to establish the *vital* “role of imagination in the completion of the *meaning* of metaphor, the mediating role of the *suspension* ... of ordinary descriptive reference in connection with the ontological claims of poetical discourse” (*MP*, p. 151). With good reason, Ricoeur takes this to complement his discussion of the “functioning of sense” in metaphorical utterances. Just as the emergence of a new semantic congruence from the destruction of literal sense by semantic absurdity constitutes “the sense of a novel metaphor,” so suspension of ordinary reference is “the negative condition” for transforming the lens through which we perceive the world.

To be clear, we do not abolish the literal or ordinary sense, nor the literal or ordinary reference, in a metaphor. On the contrary, in both cases the literal and the metaphorical remain in tension with one another. This is why the notion of metaphoric competence assumes such importance for Ricoeur. He refers to Berggren’s comment that “the possibility or comprehension of metaphorical construing requires ... a peculiar and rather sophisticated intellectual ability,” what W. Bedell Stanford calls “stereoscopic vision,” “the ability to entertain two different points of view at the same time” (*MP*, p. 152). Ricoeur equates this “stereoscopic vision” with Jakobson’s split reference, that is, “ambiguity in reference” (*MP*, p. 152).

Metaphoric competence, then, requires a propensity for a certain kind of “suspension.” It follows that, without this capacity for stereoscopic vision, neither construing nor comprehending split reference is possible.²⁶ In Ricoeur’s view, our imagination enables this third element, the suspension involved in split reference. Therefore, the faculty of imagination “does not merely *schematize* the predicative assimilation,” nor does it merely “*picture* the sense.” Rather, it provides us with the ability to achieve suspension, thereby allowing for our “*projection* of new possibilities of redescribing the world” (MP, p. 152).²⁷

Even beyond that, Ricoeur argues that such suspension is in “solidarity” with this capacity for projection. That is, the achievement of the former is harmonious with the exercise of the latter (MP, p. 152). In support of this claim, he refers to Goodman’s comments about the function and power of fiction.²⁸ Through fiction, we encounter a metaphor’s split reference. As Ricoeur writes, “the poet is this genius who generates split reference *by* creating fictions” (MP, p. 153). Naturally, this anticipates his discussion of the role of feelings in the metaphorical process, for he agrees with the view of classical theorists of rhetoric that, with respect to metaphor, imagination and feeling are closely bound together. Indeed, he notes, if we recall that Aristotle defined rhetoric as that “strategy of discourse aiming at persuading and pleasing,” then the notion that imagination and feeling are intimately connected ought to come as no surprise

²⁶ Cf. Cohen.

²⁷ Such redescription, so central to Ricoeur’s account in *RM*, enjoys more colorful tributes elsewhere. Charles Simic’s commentary serves as a case in point: “The ambition of each image and metaphor is to redescribe the world, or, more accurately, to blaspheme. Stevens knew that and Dickinson suspected it. That’s why they kept a low profile. The truth of poetry is a scandal. A thousand naked fornicating couples with their moans and contortions are nothing compared to a good metaphor” (Charles Wright, “Narrative of the Image: A Correspondence with Charles Simic” *Quarter Notes: Improvisations and Interviews*, p. 73, quoted in *WM*, p. 46 Right). In effect, this language affirms Tolkien’s insights on description itself in the context of the curious interconnections between the meanings of the word “spell,” though Tolkien’s sensibilities (Catholic and otherwise) may very well prevent his appreciating Simic’s singular imagery.

²⁸ See *RM* for a much more involved treatment. This is an area where Ricoeur recovers some of Aristotle’s most significant insights relating to actualization. In particular, notice Ricoeur’s comments in his footnotes 92-8, pp. 364-5.

(MP, p. 153). Further, feeling and imagination “both *achieve* the semantic bearing of metaphor” (MP, p. 153). Therefore, without exploring feeling’s function in the metaphorical process, we will fail to provide a convincing account of metaphor.²⁹ As it happens, the psychology of feeling Ricoeur defends recalls his three-pronged account of the psychology of imagination.

Ricoeur begins by drawing an important distinction between genuine feelings and emotions, according to which the former have a more significant cognitive dimension.³⁰ It is in this strict sense of the word that we “feel” the schematization in addition to “seeing” it, which is the first function of feeling in the metaphorical process. If we do not distinguish between “genuine feelings” and “emotions,” then we might find this claim contentious. Anticipating this, he clarifies his distinction, maintaining that “feeling is not contrary to thought. It is thought made ours.”³¹ The claim here is that there is a “felt participation” in the metaphorical process; our predicative assimilation in turn assimilates us in some way.³²

The second stage of Ricoeur’s account of the role of feeling in the metaphorical process involves how feelings “accompany and complete imagination as *picturing* relationships” (MP, p. 154). “The mood is nothing other,” he says, invoking Northrop Frye’s insights, “than the way in which the poem affects us as an *icon*” (MP, p. 155).³³ Such a mood is unified, furthermore, in the

²⁹ Ricoeur argues that it is not just necessary to account for the role of feeling in addressing the incompleteness problem concerning interactive metaphors. Feeling is also involved in the kind of metaphor upon which substitutive theory bears.

³⁰ All references in this paragraph are from MP, p. 154.

³¹ In this proposition, we hear a strong echo of Kant’s unity of apperception, the “*I think*” that is necessarily attached to any thought we have. However, the idea presented here is not reducible to the unity of apperception; rather, it develops the unity of apperception.

³² This may provide further textual support for the idea that Ricoeur synthesizes Black’s and Davidson’s accounts. He explicitly situates “the illocutionary” force of the metaphor *as* speech act” within this first function of feeling (MP, p. 154, emphasis added).

³³ The structural parallel between this second function of feeling and the second function of imagination is striking.

same sense that the poem causing the mood is unified (MP, p. 155).³⁴ On these grounds, Ricoeur identifies the second function of feeling with mood, that is, with “*the icon as felt*” (MP, p. 155).

In the third stage, Ricoeur aims to identify how feeling contributes to “the split reference of poetic discourse” (MP, p. 155). Just like imagination, feelings “display a split structure pertaining to the cognitive component of metaphor.”³⁵ Through this split structure, our bodily emotions are suspended. This is the “reverse side,” he says, “of a more deeply rooted operation of feeling which is to insert us within the world in a non-objectifying manner.”

In this connection, Ricoeur refers to Aristotle’s account of *catharsis*, where the latter explicitly asserts that feelings do not deny emotions, but, rather, are metamorphoses of them. For Ricoeur, the split reference “of the cognitive and the imaginative function of poetic discourse” recovers the import of Aristotle’s account, the salient point of which is that, overall, a poem is a thought displaying certain feelings (MP, p. 155). Ricoeur restores this “import” to the theory of metaphor by insisting that a tragic work transfigures “the literal feelings of fear and compassion,” therefore, alleviating such burdens (MP, p. 156). In this way, feelings reattune us to reality. Thus, the third function of feeling in the metaphorical process involves “the reverberation in terms of feelings of the split reference of both verbal and imaginative structure” (MP, p. 156).

As Ricoeur presents it, then, the notion of split reference is a first step toward correcting the semantic theory of metaphor, to the extent that it addresses the incompleteness problem.

Noting that the respective psychologies of imagination and feeling are “still in infancy,” he

³⁴ This is consistent with the Werth’s thesis that “megametaphors” have great impact, especially in the sense alluded to above concerning the third function of the imagination.

³⁵ It is worth asking, here, if he is alluding to ambivalence. In any event, this third function of feeling is, for Ricoeur, the most important function of feeling in the metaphoric process. This parallels his earlier emphasis on the third function of imagination.

admits to a major shortcoming in the notion of split reference (MP, p. 156). Nevertheless, his discussion supports his claim that, with respect to the metaphorical process, a tension account of poetic imagination and feeling is necessary on the levels of both sense and reference. For it follows from Ricoeur's discussion of the intrinsic functions of imagination and feeling that both metaphorical sense and split reference, far from replacing the informative content, complete the "full cognitive intent" (MP, p. 156).³⁶

Before we conclude this section, let us consider several remaining questions about and potential objections to Ricoeur's split reference theory. First, when taking "The Metaphoric Process" in isolation, Ricoeur ostensibly depicts semantic theory and substitutive theory as the only theories of metaphor available at the time of Black's work. On Black's account, however, there is a third available, namely, comparison theory. Ricoeur seems to miss this nuance. And yet, his recovery and reinterpretation of Aristotle's notion of resemblance confirms Ricoeur's awareness of comparison theory. This is even more apparent in *The Rule of Metaphor*, where Ricoeur establishes that comparison is both implicit in the transfer of substitution and yet distinct from elliptical simile (p. 24).³⁷

³⁶ In *The Rule of Metaphor*, Ricoeur develops this thought further. Without split reference, or some other theory of metaphor that incorporates the tensional aspects of this process, we cannot do justice to the notion of metaphoric truth, in both the sense of positively establishing what such a thing is and of acknowledging the more extreme implications of tension theory (p. 255). Interestingly, the kind of paradox that Ricoeur suggests we would otherwise be left with is reminiscent of the problem Hausman never finally resolves in his own project, one which is exacerbated by an idealism which does not just inhibit, but in fact neglects, the Aristotelian method of *qua locution* (explained further below), which features so prominently in Ricoeur's analysis. Ultimately, for Ricoeur, if we achieve stereoscopic vision, we naturally concede ontological implications by approaching metaphoric truth in this fashion, that is, we imply a particular philosophy, a point to which we will return in section 2.5 (pp. 257, 256).

³⁷ Reiterating this point in another context, Ricoeur observes that metaphor is, for Aristotle, "not an abbreviated simile, but simile is a weakened metaphor" (*RM*, p. 248). See also pp. 85-88, where Ricoeur discusses Black's treatment of comparison theory, along with Ricoeur's more trenchant analysis of the role of resemblance, which is the focus of his sixth study (pp. 173-215). Ricoeur hones in on resemblance every time he addresses the Aristotelian notion of *epiphora*, and his preoccupation with *epiphora* permeates *The Rule of Metaphor* (for a few examples, see pp. 24-7, 89, 154). This connection becomes even more apparent when Ricoeur incorporates Wheelwright's work on metaphor. Applying Wheelwright's distinction between *epiphora* and *diaphora*, Ricoeur reflects, "Metaphor is the tension between *epiphora* and *diaphora*. This tension guarantees the very transference of meaning and gives poetic language its characteristic of semantic 'plus-value,' its capacity to be open towards new aspects, new dimensions, new horizons of meaning" (p. 250). (Recall that Black's account is weakened by neglecting the tensive aspect of

Similarly, if Ricoeur's position implicitly resolves the debate between Black and Davidson, then, like his recovery of Aristotle, it mitigates this potential shortcoming. As we have seen, however, there are problems with viewing Davidson's conception of metaphor as merely a variant of the comparison view. Indeed, Hausman regards Davidson as committed to the "seeing-as" position, a characterization that, as shown above, is central to Ricoeur's position.³⁸

Therefore, different readings of Davidson support the idea that Ricoeur's view is compatible with Davidson's, as well as Black's, thereby explicitly confirming a convergence between them. Of course, Ricoeur's view goes further, especially concerning the question of complex metaphor, and, as such, represents an improvement.

Other, more extreme, objections to Ricoeur are available. Following Wittgenstein's and Ryle's efforts to stem the tide of Freudian notions such as the unconscious, the ego, and so on, Shibles bemoans the common reliance among metaphor theorists on what he counts as a pseudo-psychology. Shibles includes Chomsky's account of "deep structure" among the range of objects of such attacks, adding that the idea that we have either an imagination or a mind, let alone a will or inner states, is a fiction (pp. 7-8). How can Shibles maintain such a bold claim?

metaphor.) Comparison is, therefore, at the very centre of Ricoeur's definition of metaphor, even though his understanding of it as resemblance is different from Black's. For a fascinating account of *epiphor* and *diaphor*, see Wheelwright, "Two Ways of Metaphor," in *Metaphor and Reality*. The other chapters in this work, especially "From Metaphor to Symbol," make clear that the inter-relations of symbol and metaphor are complex and inescapable.

³⁸ P. 24. Hausman allows us to see the semantic theory of metaphor and Davidson's position as less in conflict than Davidson's attack on metaphoric meaning suggests. "Originativism," as he calls it, and reductionism are two extremes in metaphor theory, insists Hausman, and while the former strikes us as reminiscent of the interaction view's emphasis on new metaphors, the latter recalls literalist and, by association, comparison theories of metaphor. What is intriguing, here, is that Hausman thinks Davidson falls into neither of these camps. As we noted above, Davidson shares with Black a concern about the *effects* of metaphor, regardless of disagreeing about how to define metaphor itself. But this brings us back to the appeal of Ricoeur's method; by attending to the metaphoric *process*, his position subsumes much of both Black's and Davidson's in spite of this divide. Even if, as Cohen observes, Ricoeur applies a developed theory of meaning fundamentally different from Davidson's, that Ricoeur focuses on the entire process suggests that his theory can encompass more effects (p. 4).

Besides Shibles' trust in the basic "postulates" of Skinner's brand of behaviourism, he believes that in ascribing certain effects to notions such as the imagination, we reify what are essentially metaphors, an assertion which is based on his conviction that we rely on metaphor in all fields of inquiry.³⁹ On the one hand, what seems to motivate Shibles, here, is a legitimate reservation about prevailing trends in the theory of metaphor, since claiming that either metaphor or art are expressions of the unconscious "is like stopping the conversation" (p. 10). But, on the other, if we were to follow Shibles' argument to its conclusion, then we would have to concede that it is impossible to draw distinctions and conduct conversation, since it assumes that, because metaphors are our only "reasonable" method of explanation, and because they are open-ended, there are no essential features to anything, including Shibles' own conception of metaphor!⁴⁰

Although we can infer that Shibles' reasoning is flawed, let us consider two things. First, Shibles would presumably hold Ricoeur's view in contempt, for not only does it presuppose that we have a mind, it also insists upon the relevance of imagination and inner feeling with respect to the metaphoric construal of meaning. Second, Shibles' view is, in effect, debunked by the extensive empirical study of our imaginative faculties by neuroscientists in the 1990's.⁴¹ Accordingly, the potential objections Shibles would mount against Ricoeur are substantially compromised.

An issue less easily resolved is that of Ricoeur's attempt to subsume both Aristotelian and Kantian theories of imagination. It is fair to say that Ricoeur's dialectical methods in *The*

³⁹ Pp. 7-9. Although Shibles explicitly endorses Skinner's work on behaviorism, the extent of his agreement with this position—which, along with Quine's behavioral theory of meaning that builds on it, is often associated with strict determinism—is rendered unclear by his assertion that metaphors allow us a reprieve from causal laws, a concession which flies in the face of the hard determinist view (p. 20). Cf. Tolkien's thoughts on our witness of truth through complex metaphor.

⁴⁰ This latter concern echoes one of Groarke's main aims in *An Aristotelian Account of Induction*, as we shall see in section 2.3.

⁴¹ Kaufman and Gregoire, xxvii: this discovery in neuroscience initiated a paradigm shift in psychology.

Rule of Metaphor generate a robust picture of the metaphorical process. In fact, the way in which he emulates the ancient Greek manner of bipolar thought—regarding something as being on one level some particular thing, and on another some other thing, a thought process we might associate with *qua* locution (*AAI*, p. 371)—is integral to his dialectically driven conceptual clarification of metaphor. Notwithstanding these virtues of Ricoeur’s theory, it does not seem as credible to attempt to reconcile Aristotelian and Kantian imagination. For it is difficult to see how he can maintain the mitigated metaphysics of the former, while accommodating the outright dismissal of the possibility of necessary metaphysical knowledge by the latter.⁴²

The essential role Ricoeur ascribes to the Kantian conception of the productive imagination and the extent to which he relies on Aristotelian epistemology is the particular point

⁴² Compare the lingering problem in Coleridge, another brilliant contributor to the theory of metaphor, literature, and the imagination, of not reconciling his debts to Plato and Kant (R.L. Brett, *Fancy and Imagination* [London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1969, ed. John D. Jump; p. 44]). Coleridge’s efforts prefigure our own inquiry. His defense of the Christian message against the challenge posed by literalists implicitly suggests there can be metaphors larger than a sentence. Just as the message in a sentence taken from a Gospel, for example, is not merely literal, the overarching message of the Gospels to which it corresponds is both metaphorical in some sense and too extensive and nuanced to distill into a single literal sentence without some loss of meaning. (Small wonder, then, that the rabbinical tradition of explicating sacred texts is the primary antecedent of the more recent emergence of other traditions of hermeneutics.) For an excellent discussion of Coleridge’s associated insights, see Anthony John Harding, *Coleridge and the Inspired Word* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen’s UP, 1985). Harding writes, “Coleridge’s own researches into the history and human expressiveness of the Old Testament show in a remarkable degree his capacity for what Herder called *Verstehen*: imaginative comprehension, the ability to enter into the spirit of the text and re-create the thought-world of the original author or authors” (p. 75). On Harding’s reading, Coleridge demonstrates an acute awareness of the unified message of the Bible, while understanding it to be less static than cumulative, less direct in its mode than educational in the heuristic sense, and, finally, not just revelation which may inspire the individual, but a system of symbols initially constitutive of a future hope for the Jewish people specifically, and the human race as a whole after the witness of Christ. This system of symbols, which in the figure of Christ and his promise of transcendent love becomes further unified and heightened, is conceivably an overarching metaphor. Praising Coleridge’s findings on the function of our imaginative faculty in our coming to an awareness of unified truth, Ricoeur proceeds to sum up Coleridge’s understanding of metaphoric truth in a vibrant proportional metaphor of nature: the symbol is seeded in truth just as the plant is in the earth, a metaphor by analogy that emphasizes both the growth of the symbol and its location in a larger unified whole (*RM* p. 249). Cf. Brett, p. 27. A more obvious connection between the present thesis and Coleridge is also available to us. Essentially espousing the fusion view of metaphor, Coleridge insists that, if there is an organic unity to the work of art, then it becomes “a symbol which mediates between the world of nature and the world of thought” (Brett pp. 55, 54, emphasis added). When exploring the semantic theory of metaphor, Ricoeur considers Coleridge’s legacy, which shifts the discussion to the philosophy of mythology and, ultimately, of life, a reflection which should come as no surprise given Ricoeur’s claim that in the latter “the pact between image, time, and contemplation is sealed” (*RM*, p. 250).

where these disparate metaphysical positions come to a head in “The Metaphoric Process.”⁴³ But even if there is a problem, here, it is not ultimately damaging, given the breadth and interlocking nature of Ricoeur’s arguments, which enables us to build on Ricoeur’s insights. Let us not pursue this problem further, and leave it, as Aristotle would say, for another inquiry.

2.2

The Roots of Ricoeur’s Theory of Metaphor: Fusion

The aim of this section is to consider how the fusion view of metaphor, seemingly ignored by Ricoeur in “The Metaphoric Process,” underlies his theory in multiple senses. In so doing, we can appreciate better how his approach to metaphor connects with those of others, while arriving at a broader understanding of his extensive, interdisciplinary project. We will also reveal how Ricoeur’s notion of metaphoric competence is inextricably wedded to Aristotle’s view of

⁴³ The authorities to which I appeal for accounts of Aristotelian and Kantian theories of imagination are, respectively, *AAI* and Samantha Matherne (“Kant’s Theory of the Imagination” *Routledge Handbook of the Imagination*, ed. Amy Kind. [Forthcoming. Web. 8 Nov. 2018: https://www.academia.edu/11319761/Kants_Theory_of_the_Imagination?auto=download]). Split reference, the main theme of Ricoeur’s project, suggests that an Aristotelian metaphysics is inextricable from such work. (Cf. *AAI*, p. 136: “We cannot do justice to the Aristotelian notion of resemblance ... without making reference to essence or nature. Resemblance is more than skin deep.”) Ricoeur notes that, on one level, metaphorical predication asserts a truth which unveils being, even though on another level it retains a degree of literal incongruity, perhaps even contradiction. Again, this move is undercut by his apparent acceptance of the Kantian doctrine of time and space as the pure forms of our intuition, part of a line of thinking from which it follows that being is not accessible to our human capacities for theoretical knowledge. In *The Rule of Metaphor*, Aristotelian and Kantian theories of imagination come to a head in a different, though related, way, namely, Ricoeur’s reliance on the third Critique, where Kant discusses the “aesthetic idea,” to emphasize how metaphoric comprehension can necessitate our using our imagination to think about ideas when they have not been given clearly or explicitly, what Ricoeur deems “the soul of interpretation” in the case of metaphors that enliven (*Metaphoric Worlds*, p. 21; *RM*, p. 303). Here again, the issue of grafting Kant’s insights onto a theory already richly interwoven with Aristotle’s own is that, for Kant, such representations by definition preclude the possibility of their being “definite” like a concept, whereas for Aristotle we can very *definitely* induce clear concepts, principles, and the like, including those concerning subject matter outside the forms of time and space, from our empirical experiences, whether at the time of direct observation or later, through retrospection or even some combination of the two. Although Ricoeur most prominently incorporates Kant’s arguments from the first Critique in “The Metaphoric Process,” he often invokes this connection between imaginatively constructing meaning out of symbolic resources and “the production of the concept in its schema” in *The Rule of Metaphor* as well (see pp. 199, 292-3). What is perhaps enigmatic, and certainly worth further study, is Ricoeur’s habit of bringing Aristotelian epistemology to bear, more complexly, incorporating Aristotle’s and Kant’s insights to highlight the constitutive grounds of philosophical discourse itself (see p. 293ff.).

induction, how Ricoeur's theory of metaphor accommodates the case of extended metaphor, and how his dialectical approach generates a robust understanding of the metaphoric process.

Let us begin with Ricoeur's setting the stage for resemblance, since I will argue that those aspects of his view that correspond to fusion theory are concomitant with the role of resemblance. Ricoeur observes that, on the older view of substitution, resemblance is considered a fundamental aspect of metaphor. Yet newer semantic views progressively obscure this. Anticipating the recovery of resemblance that we have already considered, Ricoeur draws attention to the dependence of metaphoric meaning on context (*RM*, p. 188). In this connection, he proceeds to describe Paul Henle's attempt to reconcile resemblance with interaction theory.

Supposing that Henle is right in calling all shifts in sense "from literal to figurative" metaphors, Ricoeur insists that this applies not just to strictly nominative action but to any and all signs, such that all figures are once again included under the general definition of metaphor. Furthermore, the "proper" meaning of a metaphor is known mediately through its figurative sign, whereas lexical senses of the terms involved are known immediately. This contrast highlights the discursive essence of metaphor, which, according to the semantic view, establishes a fundamental difference between trivial and poetic metaphor. As Black argues, we can paraphrase the latter using *both* literal and figurative terms, and can do so in virtue of our being able to bring them back to life endlessly.

This leads Henle to conclude with Charles Sanders Peirce that the icon is a fundamental component of thinking. Ricoeur deepens the debt to Peirce, arguing that, on the literal level, the metaphor is a "rule for pinpointing an object or situation" that utilizes a "symbol," in the restricted sense of the term that Peirce himself intends (*RM*, p. 189). But iconically, or, figuratively, this "rule" designates by indirect description a point of resemblance with another

“quality, structure or locality, of situation or, finally, of feeling.” Consequently, “iconic representation harbours the power to elaborate, to extend the parallel structure” we associate with non-trivial metaphors.

Resemblance is, on this analysis, what “allows us to function in new situations.

If metaphor adds nothing to the description of the world, at least it adds to the ways in which we perceive; and this is the poetic function of metaphor. This still rests upon resemblance, but at the level of feelings. In symbolizing one situation by means of another, metaphor ‘infuses’ the feelings attached to the symbolizing situation into the heart of the situation that is symbolized. In this ‘transference of feelings,’ the similarity between feelings is induced by the resemblance of situations. In its poetic function, therefore, metaphor extends the power of double meaning from the cognitive realm to the affective. (*RM*, p. 190)

Notice that Ricoeur’s use of the verbs “infuse,” “induce,” and “affect” highlights prominent aspects of the metaphoric process. We begin to see that resemblance and “fusion” are linked; fusion is made possible through an inductive act (itself conditioned by resemblance), which changes us in both our perception and feeling.⁴⁴ The beauty of Henle’s view, according to Ricoeur, is that it does not commit us to viewing the metaphoric process as functioning only at the iconic, or on the predicative level. Unfortunately, this legacy is overshadowed by later thinkers who develop the interactive view, largely because they refuse to incorporate the role of resemblance into their theories, as epitomized by Jakobson’s assuming that resemblance is associated with substitution only (*RM*, p. 191).

As alluded to above, Ricoeur’s hope is that recovering and reinterpreting resemblance may offer the best answer to “the metaphoricity of metaphor,” saving us the “embarrassment” of attempting to define the subject by means of yet another mere metaphor of metaphor (*RM*, p.

⁴⁴ This is another instance of how Ricoeur emphasizes feeling in *The Rule of Metaphor* in a way different than, though complementary to, his later approach in “The Metaphoric Process.” This should come as no surprise, however, given his tribute to the phenomenologist of aesthetic feeling, Mikel Dufrenne. For a more recent inquiry into the connections between metaphor and induction, see Robert J. Steinberg, Roger Tourangeau, and Georgia Nigro (“Metaphor, Induction, and Social Policy: the Convergence of Macroscopic and Microscopic Views,” in *Metaphor and Thought*, ed. Andrew Ortony [New York, Cambridge UP, 1993; pp. 277-303]).

193). In other words, resemblance is integral to what he later claims are structurally analogous psychologies of imagination and feeling, the solution to the incompleteness problem. To this end, he establishes resemblance as instrumental to the logical status of metaphor, insisting that tension, interaction and logical contradiction fail to render resemblance superfluous.

Ricoeur cites the example of an oxymoron. In such a metaphoric expression, the literal sense presents us with an enigma for which the metaphoric meaning of the expression, by establishing a new pertinence, offers the solution.⁴⁵ In such a case, there is a “mutation” of meaning, where resemblance plays a crucial part. But Black and others do not appreciate this. Unlike Henle, they lose sight of the fact that metaphor depends on context, attending to it instead on the level of semiotics, even when attempting to elevate the analysis to the semantics of the sentence.

This problem of scope concerning Black’s account reminds us of another, namely, that he neglects complex metaphor. Ironically, Black’s account is not just weakened by ignoring complex *metaphor*. By leaving aside resemblance, he misses out on an integral aspect of the *complexity* of all non-trivial metaphor. Remediating this allows us to see the necessary connection between the role of resemblance and the broader function of metaphor in discourse.

Resemblance, Ricoeur infers, must be a characteristic of how predicates attribute, not just of how names are substituted, a point of which Aristotle is aware and which partially motivates his acknowledgment of aptness as a necessary feature of “good metaphors” (*RM*, p. 194).

If Ricoeur takes Black to task on this front, it is important to keep two things in mind.

First, he wants to strengthen the semantic view of metaphor by illustrating how the various

⁴⁵ Cf. Aristotle’s notion that one of the functions of metaphor is to lend dignity to style, creating an enigma that, in turn, either reveals a resemblance or provides a name for something which had previously been unnamed (Martin, p. 762). Ricoeur holds that new metaphors are metaphors “*par excellence*”; as they diverge from current *doxa*, they become *para-doxa* (*RM*, p. 330, fn. 47; p. 27).

semantic theories converge on the issue of how a metaphor “makes sense,” although they undermine their understanding of this process by ignoring resemblance. Second, he clearly sides with Black over Davidson, since this “sense,” while dependent on the literal sense of terms so emphatically stressed by Davidson, amounts to a “metaphoric” meaning that Davidson would, terminologically at least, not abide.

What more can we say about the function of “seeing” resemblance in our efforts to understand metaphoric meaning? Here, Ricoeur’s debt to Aristotle is perhaps most profound. For Aristotle, metaphor involves a kind of transference—*epiphora*—whether that of genus for species, species for genus, species for another species, or second for fourth term in proportional metaphor. A good metaphor, no matter which of these categories it falls under, “implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars” (*Poetics* 1459 a 7-8, quoted in *RM*, p. 192). On Aristotle’s view, this kind of observation, understood more precisely as contemplation, “is characteristic of a sagacious penetrating intellect: like Archytas saying, that arbitrator and altar were the same thing ...; because both are the refuge of the injured or wronged” (*Rhetoric* 3 1412 a 13-4, quoted in *RM*, p. 192). Transference is a “unitive” process arising from a given apperception (insight or “genius-stroke”), though such intuition does not take place without some amount of construction, a qualification hinting at why Ricoeur subscribes to the Kantian account of concept formation in “The Metaphoric Process,” where he remarks, “resemblance is more constructed than seen” (*RM*, p. 195).

In connection with *epiphora*, Ricoeur invites us to consider the relevance of Gestalt psychology to the theory of metaphor.⁴⁶ Quick to forestall potential reservations about this convergence, Ricoeur warns that the dual visionary and technical ability aspects of metaphoric

⁴⁶ Zwicky later focuses on this in *Wisdom and Metaphor* to great effect.

competence need not persuade us that the relevance of psychology, here, constitutes a rejection of the semantic view. Accordingly, in a manner that recalls Campbell's discussion of the continual annihilation of the self, Ricoeur relates how Gestalt psychology's treatment of invention demonstrates "that every change of structure passes through a moment of sudden intuition in which the new structure emerges from the obliteration and modification of the prior configuration" (*RM*, p. 195-6).

We have already seen how Ricoeur develops this idea, elaborating psychologies of imagination and feeling precisely in order better to account for this process of generating semantic relevance out of apparently logical contradictions. However, in *The Rule of Metaphor*, Ricoeur subsumes this aspect of intuition more exclusively under the notion of resemblance. This is not to say that resemblance plays anything less than a pivotal role in the more concise framework he presents. If anything, the earlier treatment, which may be paradoxically encapsulated in Wheelright's notion of diaphor, adds to the later, for Ricoeur's oxymoron example illustrates not just how metaphors *form*, but how they can (unless cultural use leads us to forget the former senses of terms) *remain* enigmatic. With respect to metaphor, "'the same' operates *in spite of* 'the different,'" such that "enigma lives on in the heart of metaphor" (*RM*, p. 196).

It is on this basis that Ricoeur suggests that, through resemblance, *epiphora* can account for the diversity of all types of metaphor, a move mirrored in Turbayne's suggestion that metaphor constitutes what Gilbert Ryle calls a "category mistake" (*RM*, p. 197; see also p. 21). And "the instruction that metaphor provides" lies in this very capacity, grounded in resemblance, to apply a predicate over and above the differences between the terms involved. For this process

erases the hard edges of current classifications of terms by bringing to light resemblances hitherto unrecognized.⁴⁷ What has this enigmatic aspect of metaphor to do with fusion?

To begin with, Ricoeur's elaboration of the role of resemblance does not stop with the assertion that metaphor bridges diverse subjects. He supposes both that this "dynamic principle of thought ... carves its way through already established categories" and that what we have called metaphor "engenders all classification" (*RM*, p. 197). What we call metaphoric deviation is merely the reverse side of the process by which "semantic fields," from which the metaphor deviates in its meaning, are created in the first place (*RM*, p. 198). Upon closer inspection of the notion of resemblance, then, we seem to arrive at the conclusion that, in the case of metaphor, we are doing just as we do in conveying "learning and knowledge" by way of genus differentiation, even if qualified by Ricoeur's assurance that resemblance is not a glance at the finished product of the concept in its transcendence (*RM*, p. 198). Rather, in the generation of a metaphor, we catch a glimpse into the evolution of the concept through the identification of resemblance(s), what we might call a "*fusion of differences into identity*" (*RM*, p. 198, former emphasis added).⁴⁸

This is only one of multiple ways in which fusion features in Ricoeur's system, however. Another emerges from his discussion of psycholinguistics and the work of Gaston Esnault, whose insights amount to a variant of the stylistic perspective of metaphor, according to which the focus of analysis changes from the level of the phrase or sentence to "the literary *work*."⁴⁹ Ricoeur admits that this shift motivates his discussion of Esnault, since the latter's efforts suggest grounds for expanding the analysis of metaphor beyond semiotics and semantics. This

⁴⁷ This insight anticipates Andrew Ortony's work on metaphor and the elasticity of language. See also *RM*, p. 189.

⁴⁸ Ricoeur alludes to family resemblance in this context. But, given Groarke's arguments in *An Aristotelian Account of Induction*, the notion of family resemblance may not be sufficiently robust to account for the process of concept formation.

⁴⁹ All references in this paragraph and the next are to from *RM*, p. 203.

change of focus not only reveals an awareness of extended metaphor, but presupposes what Martin identifies as fundamental characteristics of the fusion theory.

The stylistic point of view concentrates on the fusion of different figures, that is, on how a work integrates “metaphoric complexes” through either the mediation of a narrative structure or, more simply, a “vast, metaphorically detailed semic field.” On this view, metaphor belongs, as Esnault argues, to a “complex stylistic organism,” an organic unity that is a central feature of fusion theory. At this level of analysis, contends Esnault, we begin to appreciate better “the value of metaphor as personal expression,” along with its poetic function, without losing sight of its “purely intellectual and dialectic” role.

Notwithstanding his praise for Esnault, Ricoeur takes him to task for neglecting how metaphoric meaning develops out of semantic impertinence, a shortcoming that leads Esnault to reduce the metaphoric process at its most basic level to metonymy (*RM*, p. 204). It would be difficult to over-estimate the harm this does to the theory of metaphor, on Ricoeur’s view, since “the whole art of metaphor is to achieve the rapprochement that motivates the search for senses capable of identifying what was ‘alien’” (*RM*, p. 205). Moreover, “properly metaphorical semantic fusion” is to be distinguished from “mathematical equality,” a point amply demonstrated by Albert Henry, another psycholinguistic contributor to the stylistic theory of metaphor (*RM*, p. 206). In other words, Esnault’s reduction of metaphor to metonymy reflects a common failing in “the mixture of psychology and linguistics” to recognize and account for the semantic role of metaphor when discussing the associated fusion of meaning (*RM*, p. 204).

Deferring to Henry’s notion of “integrating identification,” Ricoeur draws our attention to a related aspect of the problem that metaphoric expression poses, namely, what the former calls “imaginative illusion” (*RM*, p. 205). Ricoeur believes that resolving this tension in

psycholinguistics will allow us to link the semantic theory of metaphor with the preceding discussion of iconic function (*RM*, pp. 206, 207).

Here, as in “The Metaphoric Process,” Ricoeur relies on Hester, whose approach is not psycholinguistic as such. Nevertheless, it is “linguistic in the Wittgensteinian sense of the word, and psychological in the Anglo-American tradition of philosophy of mind” (*RM*, p. 207).

Furthermore, “the problem Hester addresses, the intersection between ‘*saying*’ and ‘*seeing as ...*’, is psycholinguistic” as understood above (*RM*, p. 207).

Aiming to provide an explanation for the sensible moment in the metaphoric process, Ricoeur relies on Hester’s insights to redress the exclusive focus of semantic theories of metaphor on “*verbal* meaning” (*RM*, p. 208). Ricoeur reiterates his claim that this moment is partially covered by the Aristotelian notion of resemblance, while insisting that Aristotle has it particularly in mind when noting the capacity of metaphor to set something before our eyes. In his defense of resemblance, where he brings the iconic function back into the fold, Ricoeur more or less does the same thing as the semantic theorists. Just as, for the sake of brevity, he restricts this resemblance to “the verbal aspect of the icon,” so too does he portray resemblance in “purely logical” terms as “the unity of identity and difference.”

For Ricoeur, the question becomes, can we develop this sensible element without “opening the gate of a semantic sheepfold to the wolf of psychologism?” Conversely, need there be an unbridgeable moat between semantics and psychology? This is where the theory of metaphor proves crucial, for it provides us with an opportunity to reconcile the domains of semantics and psychology, or, as some prefer, the “verbal” and “non-verbal” moments. That is to say, metaphor is the natural point in language where meaning meets imaginative sensibility. With this in mind, Ricoeur considers Hester’s suggestion, which relies significantly on the kind

of metaphor analysis that focuses on the very “sensible, sensorial, even sensual” aspects that Black’s logical grammar neglects.

Initially, three themes emerge from Hester, on Ricoeur’s interpretation. First, metaphor involves a fusion of “meaning or sense and the senses” (*RM*, p. 209). We have, here, already a hint of how prominently the fusion view, which holds metaphor to exemplify the abstract in sensible form, features in Ricoeur’s theory. By incorporating Hester’s work, Ricoeur’s own account subsumes a variant of the fusion theory. Second, poetic language results in a closed object that, instead of furnishing a medium *to* reality, is itself a concrete sign we look at, like the “sculptor’s marble.” Third, given this second theme, poetics allows for the articulation of a “fictional experience,” what Frye calls “mood,” and which Ricoeur later develops as a fundamental component of his associated psychology of feeling. It should be noted, for the sake of the present inquiry’s focus on extended metaphor, that the notion of reading that Hester develops out of these themes, and that we have seen Ricoeur make use of, applies not just to the “somewhat localized metaphor,” but “to the poem as a whole as well.”

Hester proceeds to reconfigure these themes, a move that further clarifies the sense of “fusion” that he applies. Poetry, he argues, is essentially a fusion between sense and “a wave of evoked or aroused images,” not including literal sensible data such as the phoneme; poetic fusion constitutes the “iconicity of sense” (*RM*, p. 210). This correction implicates the second theme as well, to the extent that the poetic object comes to be understood as “the meaning clothed in imagery” (*ibid.*). The problem remains, how can we justify maintaining the fusion of meaning and imagery within a semantic theory?

Following Richards, one option is to assert that meaning governs the imagery involved in iconicity. However, Hester’s reliance on the notion of association by memory when tying sense

to image is insufficient to avoid the pitfall of psychologism (*RM*, p. 211). And yet, as we have seen, Hester presses Wittgenstein's notion of "seeing as" into service in order to better illuminate the iconic aspect of metaphor, a notion that, on his interpretation, is an intuitive relation that keeps meaning and imagery in accord, undergirding the process of reading itself. When it comes to metaphor, then, "seeing as" "proffers the missing link in the chain of explanation." It is the gestalt, the way we see two things as similar by seeing the one in terms of the other (*RM*, p. 213). It is "an experience and an act at one and the same time," an experience for which "there is no rule to be learned," and an act that can be assisted even if we say, with Aristotle, that it cannot be taught (*RM*, p. 213).

Upon what is "seeing as" grounded? None other than the notion of resemblance. More complexly, "seeing as" defines the resemblance on which it is based and can, for this reason, "succeed or fail," depending on whether a metaphor is trite or inventive. This is another instance that confirms how compelling Kant's theory of knowledge is for Ricoeur, since this "half thought and half experience" phenomenon unites "the *empty* concept and the *blind* impression" (*RM*, p. 213).

According to Ricoeur, reinterpreting fusion in light of the notion of "seeing as" provides "a theory of fusion [that] is perfectly compatible with interaction and tension theory"—the two predominant semantic approaches to metaphor—while at once serving as "the necessary counterpart to a theory of interaction" (*RM*, p. 214). Therefore, in the case of metaphor meaning, "interaction designates only the *diaphora*," the enigma, but the *epiphora* is, in some important sense, something else, and obtains intuitively through fusion. Thus, "seeing as" is to be understood as what "designates the *non-verbal* mediation of the metaphorical statement."

However, Ricoeur does not conclude his correction of the incompleteness problem in semantic theory by appealing to the work of psycholinguists.

Drawing on the work of Gaston Bachelard, a phenomenologist of imagination, Ricoeur attends to what he later characterizes as semantically relevant psychological features of metaphor. For instance, he considers the potential of the metaphoric process to shape our psyche through “reverberation,” affecting the particular trajectory of our “becoming” (*RM*, p. 215). In this respect, metaphor penetrates to “the depths of existence,” cultivating our consciousness under the guidance of the poetic image as we reflect on the dreams of words, a conclusion strongly reminiscent of Davidson’s definition of metaphor as the dreamwork of language (*RM*, p. 215).

Fusion also contributes to Ricoeur’s work on metaphoric reference, specifically, his split-reference model. In this context, Ricoeur cites the example of “texts.” The way he does so is promising, since it largely overcomes what we saw in section 1.2 is the central problem with Black’s and Davidson’s theories, while presenting a theory of metaphor that is still, as he defines the position, semantic.

“The text is a complex entity of discourse,” writes Ricoeur, “whose characteristics do not reduce to those of the unit of discourse, or the sentence” (*RM*, p. 219). He does not restrict the sense of “text” to that which is exclusively “or even mainly something written,” referring instead to any “production of discourse as a work” (*RM*, p. 219). Echoing Tolkien, Ricoeur adds that the disposition of the text in the case of a poem or novel is “a totality irreducible to a simple sum of sentences,” in each case a distinctly individual thing according to its unique style (*RM*, p. 219). As Ricoeur observes, understanding texts, that is, determining reference on this level, is the whole point of interpretation (*RM*, p. 220).

Many thinkers want to exempt literary works from this generalization. Ricoeur's mission in *The Rule of Metaphor*, however, is not only to challenge the exclusively emotive view of literary texts, but "to do away with this restriction of reference to scientific statements" (*RM*, pp. 220-1).⁵⁰ Essentially, he rejects the idea of fusion in poetic metaphor as being unconnected to reality, in light of which he frames his notion of split-reference. As seen above, Ricoeur, following Jakobson, insists that reference in poetic metaphor is not eradicated, but rendered ambiguous. Jakobson's neologism, split-reference, is not simply a metaphoric reference, for Ricoeur, either, since it "contains *in nuce* all that can be said about metaphorical truth" (*RM*, p. 224).

Nevertheless, various fusion theorists mount ardent opposition to metaphoric reference. Prominent in the tradition of literary criticism with which Ricoeur was familiar is the view that, in literary works, reference is abolished, fusing the sensible and logical (*RM*, pp. 224-5). We have already touched on this view implicitly, since Ricoeur's reliance on Hester concerning the issue of understanding metaphoric meaning incorporates this extreme version of fusion theory. On Hester's view, fusion of sense and physical experience prompts the unfolding of our imagination, which, in turn, fuses with meaning, *suspending* reference to reality (*RM*, p. 225).

More radically still, Frye argues that each symbol (any recognizable carrier of meaning) within the literary work "represents nothing outside itself but links the parts to the whole within the discursive framework" (*RM*, p. 226). This recalls Davidson's insistence on the literal meaning of metaphor, since, for Frye, each symbol literally means only what it contributes to the unity of the work. Any apparent agreement, here, remains relatively shallow, however, since Frye insists that this meaning, the "mood" of the entire poem, is ironic, for what is said in the

⁵⁰ Cf. Louis Groarke, "Philosophy as Inspiration: Blaise Pascal and the Epistemology of Aphorisms" (*Poetics Today* [2007] 28 [3]: 393-441).

work is different from what each utterance means. Here again, we discern a central theme of fusion theory, namely, its emphasis on the organic unity of the work. For Frye, the literary work is not bound by reality, although, in forging a fable, it nevertheless *affirms* something. But, asks Ricoeur, is there a dubious presupposition covertly underlying these attacks on reference?

To this question, Ricoeur presents a compelling case in the affirmative. “Critiques shaped by the school of logical positivism,” he observes,

state that all language that is not *descriptive*, in the sense of giving information about *facts*, must be *emotional*. Furthermore, the suggestion is that what is ‘emotional’ is sensed purely ‘within’ the subject and is not related in any way whatsoever to anything outside the subject. Emotion is an affect which has only an inside, and not an outside.

This argument – which thus has two sides to it – did not arise originally in the course of consideration of literary works; it is a postulate imported from philosophy into literature. And this postulate decides on the meaning of truth and reality. It says that there is no truth beyond the pale of possible verification (or falsification), and that in the last analysis all verification is empirical, as defined by scientific procedure. This postulate functions in literary criticism as a prejudgment.... The ‘emotivist’ theories in ethics are an adequate demonstration that this prejudice is not restricted to poetics. It is so powerful that the authors who are most hostile to logical positivism often fortify it while fighting it. (*RM*, pp. 226-7)

Consequently, whether in Frye’s view or that of representatives of the new rhetoric movement in France, “literary theory and positivist epistemology support each other” (*RM*, p. 227). Following Mikel Dufrene, Ricoeur bemoans the bandying about of verifiable-unverifiable and subjective-objective dichotomies, especially in the context of literature, where the power of language transcends such meagre divisions.

But Ricoeur does not entirely oppose such analysis, preferring to revamp it by elaborating his notion of split reference. This more fundamental reference is, in fact, what we aim to interpret in the process of explaining the overarching metaphor a text constitutes (*RM*, p. 229). Pursuing this, Ricoeur revisits Frye’s notion of mood, claiming that, so long as we avoid a purely psychological treatment of the term, we can understand the mood that constitutes the unity of a

poem and emerges in the imagination as nonetheless “a way of finding or sensing oneself in the midst of reality” (*RM*, p. 229). Metaphoric reference, then, is tied to fusion, although Ricoeur is more careful in how he understands this than those fusion theorists whose work he incorporates into his theory. What more can we say about how fusion functions in Ricoeur’s notion of split reference?

The semantic theory of metaphor, as Ricoeur redefines it, offers grounds for establishing a framework for split reference that can make sense of the function of the text. As such, it builds upon his examinations of metaphoric meaning, second-level reference or metaphoric truth, and the innovative aspect of metaphoric competence, by means of which metaphoric meaning and reference are drawn together (*RM*, p. 230). The distinction between connotation and denotation, however, stands in the way of his theory of split reference, at least as it is typically understood. The matter of fusion is inextricable from this problem. To overcome this obstacle, Ricoeur considers the work of Goodman, aiming to situate split reference within a more general theory of denotation.

On Goodman’s account, “all symbolic operations, verbal and non-verbal,” are situated “within the boundaries of a single operation, the referential function by which a symbol ‘stands for’ or ‘refers to.’ The universality of the referential function is guaranteed by the universality of the organizing power of language and, more generally, of symbolic systems” (*RM*, p. 231). Goodman argues that it is imperative to recognize what Ricoeur presumes that prevailing philosophical and literary theories ignore, namely, the inseparability of cognition and emotion in aesthetic experience (*ibid.*). In keeping with his championing of Goodman in “The Metaphoric Process,” Ricoeur contends that symbolic re-organizations, far from being merely aesthetic

objects that display feelings, are also actions. This is seen more clearly once we reinterpret the denotation-connotation distinction.

Denotation and reference are virtually synonymous. Still, distinguishing between them helps us determine the orientation of a given reference. For instance, both “denotation” and “reference” indicate our application of “‘labels’ to events,” so that the denotations and references in question are directed from symbols to things (*RM*, p. 233). When the direction is from thing to symbol, we confront a different case. Here, the reference, which we recognize as an instance of exemplification, is to a “meaning or property that something ‘possesses’” (*ibid.*). Simply put, we have in this two-level schema of reference the label-sample relation, a categorization not restricted to the verbal, since gestures “can denote or exemplify or do both” (*RM*, p. 234). But as the example of gestures suggests, the two levels are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, both are cases of reference.

Goodman’s account of metaphor is central to this theory of symbol and reference (*RM*, p. 232). For him, “‘fact’ and ‘figure,’ are different ways of applying predicates,” that is, of “using labels as samples” (*RM*, p. 235). More precisely, if we think of metaphor as the transference of a relation or possession, the process is one of exemplification and, by extension, reference. Metaphor, though, falls outside the norm of predication, since it is an “application of a familiar label ... to a new object that resists at first and then gives in,” a reassignment that transforms literal falsities into metaphorical truths (*ibid.*).⁵¹ On this view, a painting, for example, “expresses properties that it exemplifies metaphorically in virtue of its status as pictorial symbol ...” (*RM*, p. 238). Ricoeur thinks that viewing metaphor in this manner, releasing it from the

⁵¹ According to Ricoeur, by elaborating the “heuristic device of fiction” in this context, we can understand “reassignment” of labels in terms of “redescription.”

restriction to sense and understanding it instead within a theory of reference, allows us to “rediscover the essential points of the semantic theory of metaphorical statement” (*RM*, p. 235).

On Goodman’s view, the transference at work in metaphor covers not just figures, that is, isolated predicates that are initially incongruous in application, but “schemas” as well (*RM*, p. 235-6). We can understand schemas as referring to groups of labels with characteristics that correspond to the groups of objects, which we might call “realms,” that they pick out (*RM*, p. 236). Therefore, the power of metaphor to reorganize “our perception of things develops from the transposition of an entire ‘realm,’” and the use of this “network” in its “region of origin” guides such organization (*RM*, p. 236). “For Goodman as for Aristotle,” writes Ricoeur, “metaphor is not one figure of discourse among others, but the transference principle common to all of them” (*RM*, p. 237).

On the basis of Goodman’s findings, Ricoeur resists the common understanding of connotation “as associative and emotional effects without referential value,” dispensing with the distinction between denotation and connotation in the realm of poetic function (*RM*, p. 238). Furthermore, he takes Goodman’s work to establish that qualities such as the sounds, images, and feelings of a work are “no less real than the descriptive traits that scientific discourse articulates; they belong to things over and above being effects subjectively experienced by the lover of poetry,” and, like all kinds of metaphor, “are ‘true’ to the extent that they are ‘appropriate’” The extent to which Ricoeur relies on Goodman, for whom exemplification is central to how we understand metaphor, confirms yet another role for fusion theory in Ricoeur’s system. Even so, he does not mince words in his critical assessment of Goodman, especially when it comes to the latter’s pragmatist and nominalist commitments.

For example, Ricoeur reflects, “Goodman’s nominalism will not allow him to look for affinities in the nature of things or in an eidetic constitution of experience” (*RM*, p. 236).⁵² Accordingly, if we follow Goodman’s philosophy to its conclusions, it appears pointless to attempt to explain what justifies “the metaphorical application of a predicate” (*ibid.*). “Appropriateness,” then, is the most that Goodman’s theory can offer in this regard. Thus, argues Ricoeur, while Goodman’s nominalist conception of language “has no trouble explaining the choreography of labels, since there is no essence to block re-labelling, it has greater difficulty accounting for the air of *rightness* that certain more fortunate instances of language and art seem to exude” (*RM*, p. 239).

There are two other problems that Ricoeur regards as plaguing Goodman’s contribution. One involves null denotation, the other redescription. These problems are connected. Goodman does not attend to how the suspension of the primary reference is the condition for the properly referential function of what many understand as connotation (*RM*, p. 239). So the case of null denotation presents Goodman with a difficulty: how, in such cases, can symbolization “make what it depicts”? (*RM*, p. 233) By focusing so much on defending the objective nature of aesthetic phenomena, Goodman fails to recognize the role and value of the heuristic fictions that poetic expression provides, which help us understand better the connection between null denotation and the redescription of reality (*RM*, p. 239). Apart from adopting an alternative conception of language to that of nominalism, the answer, for Ricoeur, is to correct the apparent incompatibility “between the theory of null denotation and the organizing function of symbolism” by “linking *fiction* and *redescription* very tightly” (*RM*, p. 233). Thus, Ricoeur builds upon Goodman’s insights, but does so by revising Goodman’s lines of inquiry in far-

⁵² Cf. Groarke, *AAI*. Ricoeur contends that if we adopt a nominalist perspective “the problem posed by metaphorical application of predicates is no different from that posed by their literal application” (*RM*, p. 236).

reaching ways, which involve examining the three themes that Goodman insufficiently addresses: the “creation of heuristic fiction” as the “road to redescription”; the link between referential power and the “eclipse of ordinary reference”; and the uniting of “manifestation and creation” in semantic innovation (*RM*, p. 239).

Ricoeur proceeds to explore the theory of models, beginning with Black’s proportional metaphor that equates the power of metaphors in poetics with that of models in the sciences to develop our understanding of reality. In the context of science, models are heuristic instruments that apply fictions to challenge and improve upon inadequate interpretations. We might, with Mary Hesse, call this redescription (*RM*, p. 240). Such instruments belong “not to the logic of justification or proof,” adds Ricoeur, “but to the logic of discovery,” the key to which is “intuitive grasp,” that is, “ease and rapidity in mastering the far-reaching implications of models” (*RM*, pp. 240-1). If this brings us close to Aristotle’s account of metaphoric competence and what we will consider below about his attitude toward induction, Ricoeur’s next point removes any doubt as to his agreement with Aristotle. Ricoeur refuses to identify such “redescription,” understood as the catalyst for scientific imagination to identify new connections, with direct deduction.⁵³

For Hesse, such considerations lead to questioning our conception of both rationality and reality, along with rendering the problem of the function of models a matter of metaphoric reference. Ricoeur takes a different tack, reflecting instead on how this implicates the theory of metaphor, specifically, the semantic view. To say that models are a mere psychological aid to deduction in the context of scientific discovery, observes Ricoeur, is tantamount to portraying

⁵³ Following Black, nor does he consider the scientific ideal underlying the obsession with deduction to be helpful to furthering our understanding of this process (*RM*, p. 242).

metaphor as merely decorative (*RM*, p. 243). Beyond this, the correspondence between metaphor and model “is not precisely what we have called the ‘metaphoric statement,’

that is, a short bit of discourse reduced most often to a sentence. Rather, as the model consists in a complex network of statements, its exact analogue would be the extended metaphor – tale, allegory. What Toulmin calls the ‘systematic deployability’ of the model finds its equivalent in a metaphoric network and not in an isolated metaphor.

This ... observation takes up the one made at the beginning of this Study, to the effect that it is the poetic work as a whole, the poem, that projects a world. The change of scale separating metaphor as a ‘poem in miniature’ (Beardsley) from the poem itself as an expanded metaphor calls for an examination of the constitution of the metaphoric universe as a network.... The isomorphism that constitutes the ‘rationale’ of imagination in the use of models has its equivalent only in one kind of metaphor, which Black calls archetype (hence the title of the article, ‘Models and Archetypes’). With this choice of terms, Black points out two aspects of certain metaphors, their ‘radical’ character and their ‘systematic’ character. Furthermore, these two aspects are linked; ‘root metaphors,’ to borrow the term of Stephen C. Pepper, are those that organize metaphors into networks.... By virtue of these two characteristics, the archetype has a less local, less pin-point existence than does metaphor; it covers an ‘area’ of experience or of facts. (*RM*, pp. 243-4)

Clearly, Ricoeur applies his knowledge of extended metaphor to great effect in this case,

observing that Goodman’s comments on the subordination of figures to larger schemas support

his argument that “a metaphoric network rather than ... an isolated metaphorical statement”

carries “the referential function of metaphor” (*RM*, p. 234). Moreover, Ricoeur asserts that the

“paradigmatic” power of both metaphoric statement and network arises as much from the

respective natures of each as from their inter-connections (*ibid.*).⁵⁴

⁵⁴ By reference to the “paradigmatic” aspect of metaphor, Ricoeur echoes Lakoff and Johnson, whose findings in this area eventually culminated in CMT, what Kövesces describes as the “most influential and widely used” theory of metaphor from the early 2000’s on. According to Kövesces, the common scholarly and popular conception of metaphor has five components: metaphor is purely linguistic (“a property of words” exclusively); it pertains only to art or rhetoric; it is based on comparison; it is conscious and deliberate, thereby requiring a certain aptitude; and it is dispensable, being a figure of speech, as opposed to “an inevitable part of everyday human communication, let alone everyday human thought and reasoning” (p. ix). The challenge that led to CMT adopted a fivefold inverse view and, Kövesces adds, systematized our knowledge of metaphor. Consequently, on this view: “metaphor is a property of concepts, and not of words”; its function is not restricted to the poetic or rhetorical, since it enhances our understanding of concepts; it is not universally based on similarity, as counterexamples to the “traditional” view establish; it is used even by people with minimal competence in the area; and, it is an *inevitable* epistemological process (p. x). For cognitive linguists of this movement, then, metaphor is defined as seeing one thing in terms of another conceptual domain, which distinguishes conceptual metaphor from metaphorical linguistic expressions and which allows us to more easily understand the prominent role in governing our thought that supposedly dead metaphors assume, the most basic entailment of Lakoff and Johnson’s thesis that there are many “metaphors we live

(We might wonder about the merit of our previous critique of Black's neglect of extended metaphor, given his work on archetype. And yet, his response to Davidson does not reflect a fittingly expanded scope of analysis with respect to metaphor. Although he expresses much admiration for Black's work on archetype, Ricoeur himself prefers to speak of this kind of metaphor in terms of a "metaphoric network," wishing to avoid Jungian associations with "archetype" [ibid.].⁵⁵)

This is not all that the theory of models illuminates, says Ricoeur. It also "throws into relief the connection between heuristic function and description" (ibid.). Ricoeur's elaboration of this point confirms, once again, his reliance on fusion theory, the potential agreement between his view of metaphoric competence and the Aristotelian view of induction, and his implicit support of the most basic element of the present thesis, that complex metaphors are relevant to an understanding of metaphor and, ultimately, vital to developing metaphoric competence. As we will see, this section of *The Rule of Metaphor* most clearly anticipates what Ricoeur later identifies in "The Metaphoric Process" as the third function of feeling.

On Ricoeur's view, whether concerning tragedy or some other form of poetics, we find metaphor at the heart of things. Because we compose and order *mimêsis*, the poetic portrayal of human actions, in *muthos*, is there any substantive difference, asks Ricoeur, between such

by," even if we are unaware of them (p. 4). Many in CMT attribute the formation of this theory to Black's rejuvenation of metaphor research. It seems that Ricoeur's work must have influenced it as well. What is interesting in this context about his reference to the paradigmatic function of metaphor, though, is that he developed his work around the same time as Lakoff and Johnson. This is perhaps not entirely by chance, however, as it is likely that each of these works was influenced, in turn, by Thomas Kuhn's work on scientific paradigms. Finally, in case one were to jump to the conclusion that our own inquiry can be regarded as contributing to CMT, notice that Kövesces explains how the whole movement adopts the conceptual metaphor of the mind as a machine, eventually updating this to the view that the mind is a computer (p. xi). Given what we can appreciate about Groarke's work above, no less than the brief allusions to Coleridge, this may not be an approach that squares with the results of our inquiry, notwithstanding the significant overlap.

⁵⁵ Summarizing the findings of Meyer H. Abrams, Shibles relates the concern that reducing associations in the realm of poetics to archetype, in the sense of "deep racial memory," diminishes, if not nullifies, "the individuality and aesthetic quality" of the subject in question (p. 23).

processes and “that of heuristic fiction and redescription in the theory of models?”⁵⁶ He thinks not. The kinds of narrative expression in question fulfill the same criteria Black stipulates for archetypes—“‘radicality’ and ‘organization into a network.’” And as Black convincingly argues, these kinds of metaphor correspond to theoretical models of science. Somehow, metaphoric references to human action, along with feelings inspired by poetry, provide a perspective from which to witness and more readily understand “human reality.”

Therefore, we can say with Aristotle that, through our witness of relationships in, for example, the tragic tale, we learn for ourselves about features of human life that are more essential than accidental, detecting such things more easily within narrative structure that metaphorically expresses believable human motivations and actions than in the course of everyday life. Ricoeur contends that we have difficulty realizing that the associated feeling we experience provides another dimension to this heuristic for two main reasons. First, *mimêsis* is mistakenly understood “in terms of ‘copy’” instead of redescription (which may account for the “trouble and embarrassment” this concept so often causes). Second, “‘representation’ has become the sole route to knowledge and the model of every relationship between subject and object.”⁵⁷ But the phenomenon of feeling, in the sense that Ricoeur intends (something over and above the merely emotivist sense of “mood”), challenges this belief inasmuch as, through metaphor, we find forms of “truth” that elude the reductive habits of science. The *mimêsis* that complex metaphors achieve, then, furnishes models through which we can “see” and “feel” in

⁵⁶ All references in this paragraph and the next are from *RM*, pp. 244-6.

⁵⁷ Lambert Zuidervart alleges, “If Kant’s account of aesthetic ideas drove the first modern nails into the coffin of mimesis, then Goodman’s nominalist constructivism seals the lid” (“Fictive World Projection,” in *Artistic Truth: Aesthetics, Discourse, and Imaginative Disclosure* [Toronto: Cambridge UP, 2004, p.190]). Ricoeur certainly does not grant that mimesis is rendered obsolete by these two challenges, though he is well aware of the problem Kant poses for “imitation,” citing Richard McKeon’s allusion to Kant’s “aesthetics of genius” as “the source of the pejorative interpretation of *mimêsis*” (*RM*, p. 332, fn. 70).

certain ways. Subsequently, if we become aware of feelings transformed into myths, we find heuristic paths to discovering the world.⁵⁸

What role does “fusion” play in all of this? Ricoeur tells us that experiencing feeling in the above sense presupposes “intropathic fusion” (*RM*, p. 246). Yet again, Ricoeur identifies a link between intuition and fusion. According to the OED’s fourth definition, “pathic” means something approaching intuition or perceptiveness, as opposed to cognition and deliberation. Thus, Ricoeur’s combining of this word with “intro,” which suggests something internal, seems intended to refer to an intuitive relational perceptiveness. Given the context, we can infer that Ricoeur is suggesting, here, that a fusion of such intuitions results in understanding the complex metaphor of a tale in such a way that the subject-object dichotomy is somehow overcome. This is one of multiple examples in which Ricoeur’s view of metaphor incorporates the idea of “fusion,” bringing into play various notions from theorists who, either knowingly or implicitly, advance fusion views of metaphor, while adding his own reflections as to how, and to what extent, we can interpret metaphor in terms of fusion. It seems fitting to conclude that, without using the term specifically, Ricoeur describes metaphoric comprehension in the case of complex metaphors as conforming to a process of *inducing* understanding.

2.3

Overlapping Realms: Metaphor and Induction

Do we know how we think, then apply that theory to metaphor or rather learn how we “think” by observing how metaphor works?

Warren Shibles⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Ricoeur also thinks these experiences lead to instances where the opposition between invention and discovery dissolves. Instead, we find that “creation and revelation coincide” (*RM*, p. 246).

⁵⁹ P. 15.

Ricoeur's work on metaphor and Groarke's on induction are closely aligned. Precisely where we might expect Ricoeur to elaborate on inductive thinking, however, he frames it in terms of metaphor, perhaps too much so. We must bear in mind, though, that until recently several significant problems hindered our understanding of Aristotle's thoughts on induction, each of which could explain Ricoeur's decision to focus on the metaphoric process when highlighting what we can now recognize as the inductive aspects of metaphoric comprehension. Before turning to Groarke's solutions to these problems, let us consider Groarke's general aims.

Broadly speaking, Groarke seeks to show that Aristotle furnishes a cogent view of induction that can compete with its "modern empiricist rival" (*AAI*, p. 5). As Groarke contends,

The course of intellectual history has served to obscure Aristotle's ideas. The rise of empiricism, the triumph of the Enlightenment, the short-lived victory of positivism, and the supremacy of what has come to be known as analytical philosophy has changed the direction of philosophy. Aristotle's sophisticated but commonsense realism and, in particular, his account of induction has been buried under misunderstanding after misunderstanding. Modern scholars have variously overlooked, dismissed, or misinterpreted his views. (*AAI*, p. 5)⁶⁰

Groarke's project, then, is primarily one of clarification, geared towards recovering a worthwhile account of inductive thinking from a range of entrenched misconceptions.

Unfortunately, Aristotle did not provide us with a systematized view of this subject, an oversight that compounds these other deeply rooted misunderstandings. For example, when it comes to the implications of his view that induction begins in a leap of insight, Aristotle's considerations border on inconsistency (p. 7). Furthermore, textual evidence suggests that, for Aristotle, "the process of induction is, to some degree, self-explanatory" (p. 6). Groarke remarks,

⁶⁰ Groarke adds, "modern logicians ignore what ancient and medieval philosophers had to say at their peril. The blanket rejection of past philosophy as a comedy of errors does not withstand scholarly scrutiny. Indeed, modern accounts of induction are defective, in large part, because we have forgotten or misunderstood the work of earlier authors" (p. 13). Critical philosophy, after all, "advances hand in hand" with studying the history of ideas (p. 14). It should come as no surprise, then, that the claim that the traditional account of inductive reasoning is invalid is not itself sound: Hume and his followers neither understood this tradition nor made any sincere effort to do so (pp. 154-5).

Aristotle “simply accepts that we can derive knowledge of universals from specific sense perceptions and proceeds accordingly” (p. 7). What is more, reflects Groarke, “induction itself is an elusive process,” compounding these other issues (ibid.).

Undaunted by these problems, Groarke intends that his study of induction—just as Ricoeur does in his inquiry into metaphor—synthesize “the best that has been said” on the subject in both traditional philosophy and contemporary scholarship, striving “first and foremost ... to present a critical account of induction, one that can rival predominant trends in contemporary argumentation theory, ethics, and modern philosophy of science” (p. 8). And, of course, the “received modern view,” traceable to Hume, diverges significantly from the Aristotelian account (p. 7). And yet, despite the impetus that the Humean model has provided for “a much more sophisticated account of probabilistic reasoning,” Aristotle’s “lost perspective,” argues Groarke, not only “more closely mirrors the most familiar form of induction that ordinary people regularly resort to in everyday discourse,” but also “better illuminates the inductive method of science and more deftly captures the *heuristic insight* that makes inductive reasoning possible” (p. 7, emphasis added). Clearly, even if Groarke is ostensibly concerned with science rather than metaphor, we already see, here, convergences between these two subjects, namely, a focus on mental process (as opposed to an instant or moment), the production of knowledge, and the “heuristic” aspects of cognition.

What other problems does Groarke hope to resolve? First, he takes aim at several related problems, including the relatively recent challenge to the traditional conception of intuition as an integral part of thinking, along with the attendant problem of viewing intuition as “a mere hunch or feeling” (p. 327). Given this prevailing mood in contemporary thought, notes Groarke, standard approaches lack the “resources to account for such an enlargement in the scope of the

predicate,” as happens in induction (ibid.). He asserts that, in contrast to contemporary authors who “use the term ‘intuition’ so loosely that it can refer to almost any kind of unsubstantiated opinion,” Aristotle offers a “carefully elaborated epistemological position” on the subject (p. 382). Another of Groarke’s goals, therefore, is to overcome modern unease with intuition. This is also a necessary goal, given his view that intuition contributes to induction.⁶¹

Second only to Groarke’s general aim of restoring Aristotle’s view of induction, perhaps, is his determination to re-evaluate first principles, which should not surprise us, since, according to Aristotle, induction supplies these “most basic building blocks, the *archai* of human knowledge” (p. 8).⁶² Since, as Groarke reminds us, modern scepticism has occasioned an overwhelming loss of faith in first principles, such an aim is likely to invite criticism. In fact, Groarke notes that,

[i]n the present climate, any talk of first principles may summon up images of old-fashioned claims to absolute truth. But Aristotle never makes claim to the kind of absolute infallible knowledge commonly reviled in contemporary philosophy. Indeed, the fashionable myth that earlier authors were well-meaning but gullible sorts who uncritically assumed that their own opinions were true without qualification is a conspicuous caricature perpetuated by philosophical pundits who, apparently, do not bother to read primary sources. (p. 10)

Today, we would call Aristotle a fallibilist, maybe even a pragmatist, albeit one who has not abandoned metaphysics, since he believes that while we cannot prove first principles, they are, nonetheless, inescapable (p. 10).⁶³ These principles are infallible in the sense that they are so

⁶¹ Ginsberg, for one, would agree with Groarke concerning both the importance of intuitive thinking and the predominant role historical thinkers ascribe to it, while seeming to part ways with Groarke on the idea that it is directly related to induction (*Welcome To Philosophy!*, pp. 67, 66).

⁶² Cf. Wilson’s claim that metaphor supplies the building blocks of language (*The Origins of Creativity*, pp. 165, 161-4). Remarking upon attempts by “[f]oundationalists of various stripes” to construct “comprehensive and formal systems” of first principles, Groarke elects to “leave such an intellectual tour de force to more powerful minds,” opting instead to remind us why these principles are important, “without taking a particular stance on such issues” (pp. 365-6).

⁶³ Elaborating, Groarke says that first principles “are nothing more and nothing less than an expression of the most fundamental features of reality *as we can know it*.” (p. 379, emphasis added). Cf. Scruton. Groarke rejects Jonathan M. Weinberg’s, Shaun Nichols’, and Steven Stich’s claim that, on the basis of there being (apparently) diverse fundamental intuitions across cultures, first principles are not universal, focusing both on the ambiguous

basic and obvious that they are beyond doubt, enabling us to embrace these “specific claims, concepts, definitions, rules, and so on” as the tools with which we seek to understand the world (p. 11).⁶⁴

What is the upshot of all this? In essence, Groarke’s *An Aristotelian Account of Induction* is not only about the inductive production of first principles, but also the limits to philosophical investigation.⁶⁵ It also raises two subsidiary issues, namely, that “we cannot consistently embrace the new essentialism and reject metaphysical realism,” and that, if we are to reintroduce the notion of essence to philosophy, the incompatibility of modern empiricism and “the traditional notion of ‘essence,’ or natural kind” impels us to return to metaphysics (pp. 21, 364). Thus, to reformulate the aims of his project, Groarke strives to “secure an accurate historical interpretation of Aristotle’s philosophy,” while at the same time developing “a modern theory of induction *ad mentum* Aristotle” (p. 14).

One way in which these aims exhibit promise for our own inquiry is that, if, as Groarke argues, all cognitive processes are functions of “human understanding,” then metaphor, being in part a cognitive process, is likewise such a function. Therefore, Groarke’s work on induction, itself a form of human understanding, has repercussions for our emerging theory of metaphor (p. 375). The resonance between these two projects, and Ricoeur’s own, turns out to be even richer

interpretations of “intuition” these authors offer and on that the law of non-contradiction (a first principle of logic, as we shall see below) belies their shared claims (pp. 364, 379-94). Groarke supposes that what motivates these thinkers, in particular Weinberg, is not, in fact, “divergent” cultural intuitions, but rather “epistemic discontent” deriving from our inability to prove first principles (p. 393).

⁶⁴ Groarke’s trust in first principles would no doubt set many a contemporary epistemologist to stuttering, if not outright writhing, given the current view of knowledge as true, *justified* belief.

⁶⁵ As Groarke tells us, just as human reasoning begins somewhere, namely, in induction, so too must it end somewhere, namely, “in the ineffable, in mysticism,” though he is quick to add that his book is not an attempt to reveal “what, if anything, lies beyond philosophy” (p. 11).

than this, however.⁶⁶ For the time being, though, let us postpone exploring such matters until we have arrived at a clearer understanding of Groarke's account of induction.

Induction, broadly construed, is a mental operation that produces new knowledge in virtue of an inspirational moment, by means of which we creatively move beyond empirical data to a universal insight. That is to say, our particular mental capacity, traditionally referred to as *νοῦς* (*nous*), illuminates our sense experience, allowing us to arrive instantaneously at concepts as we identify universals immanent in the particular (*AAI*, pp. 7, 159, 160). Again, by abstracting "theoretic ideas or concepts" from the sense impressions provided by our faculty of perception, we take a cognitive leap, linking our awareness of "particular objects to a universal idea that brings together a group of objects under a single rubric" (p. 160).⁶⁷

One of Aristotle's most intriguing reflections is that it is not argument, but "intelligent grasping," that lies at the heart of this process of synthesizing experience, bringing together what is "uniform, constant, or necessary about the world" (p. 8). We somehow advance from a more restricted to a more general understanding," making reasoning possible through such mental realizations (p. 9). Inductive *argument*, then, is an *expression* of this "deeper, more comprehensive mental process," which we might call a variant of intuition. The key point, here, is that argument *follows* insight (p. 178).

Such insights are contingent upon an ability, reminiscent of metaphoric competence, to seize upon underlying similarities, bringing together "otherwise divergent experiences," such that concepts "materialize" for us (*ibid.*). For Aristotle, we are able to "*see* what must be true"

⁶⁶ Let us not forget the connection with Zwicky, who champions Wittgenstein largely out of reverence for his stance on the limits to philosophical investigation and his mastery of the aphoristic style of writing philosophy. See *WM*, along with *Wittgenstein Elegies*, one of Zwicky's earlier works.

⁶⁷ Cf. Shiff's view of metaphor as a bridge between art and our world that allows us, paradoxically, to consider each in light of the other (p. 120).

about such “properly universal” theoretical kinds (pp. 9, 160). Induction must be understood, therefore, partly on the basis of this “intuitive cognitive capacity,” through which we obtain “a wide assortment of concepts, definitions, universals, logical and metaphysical laws, the most basic natural facts of science, and moral principles,” that is, “certain tools and raw materials” presupposed in our thinking (pp. 9, 10). On the Aristotelian view, inductively identifying how similar items are bound together “within a species or genus” secures “a form of logical necessity” and applies to artificial no less than natural kinds (p. 19).

A common mistake concerning first principles is to assume that they can be proved propositionally (or in propositional terms). This misguided endeavour reverses the order of operation, for it is first principles that allow us to prove propositions. As Groarke points out, we cannot “*prove* the soundness of the mental activity of induction” (p. 10). We must also be careful, though, to resist the temptation to think that this makes first principles arbitrary. If we are sufficiently attentive when analysing our experience, they force themselves upon us, rendering our understanding necessary. Moreover, it is not as if we can dismiss the problem as irrelevant to the more thoroughly understood realm of deductive reasoning. For, as the traditional view maintains, moving from the particular to the general in our reasoning amounts to inductive thinking. Thus, “deductive reasoning depends on induction,” in the sense that we must “arrive at a universal before we can reason back down to the particular case” (p. 154).⁶⁸ Therefore, if we were to reject first principles as “purely subjective or arbitrary,” we would risk undermining the validity of deduction itself (p. 21; see also, p. 162).

⁶⁸ Groarke continues, “This dependence of deductive on inductive reasoning tends to be obscured by the contemporary focus on formal logic. Formal logicians can pluck generalizations, so to speak, out of thin air. Real-world generalizations, by contrast, depend on a prior inductive inference” (p. 154).

Groarke himself concedes that there is a “deep epistemological puzzle about the success of inductive reasoning,” but maintains that this is less an issue of logical form than of creativity (p. 16; see also p. 21). In the same vein, he argues that Aristotelian induction, like Platonic recollection, depends on “some mysterious capacity for creative intuition or νόησις (*noesis*)” (p. 20).⁶⁹ Because of the fundamentally creative component to induction—analogueous, contends Groarke, to the mental process associated with artistic endeavour—contemporary “[m]athematical or computational attempts to reproduce or represent ... inductive insight ... miss the point” and, ultimately, fail (p. 21).

Granted, one might wonder whether Groarke, no less than Aristotle, applies the term “induction” equivocally. Following Paolo Biondi, however, Groarke distinguishes five levels of induction, which reduces the potential for confusion arising from speaking of induction so diversely. After all, as Groarke notes, given that each of these levels itself acquires manifold meanings in varied contexts, the task of clarifying Aristotle’s understanding of the inductive process would otherwise prove elusive.

On this schema, the first level of induction amounts to a manner of contemplation begetting “the concepts, definitions, universals, laws, and natural facts acting as the starting points for the activity of rigorous science,” as well as, “in a practical vein,” the “first principles of morality” (p. 19). Insisting, too, on a role for the mental process of abstraction, Groarke explains that, for Aristotle, the decisive factors on this level are an “unerring ability” to identify the most fundamental universal concepts and principles and, in contrast to argumentative reasoning, a “direct insight into the nature of things” (p. 157). A prime example of this form of

⁶⁹ It is not as if Groarke dismisses the cognitive intricacies of deduction. For instance, he suggests that advanced deduction can involve a similar leap of insight (p. 361). Plus, even simple deduction allows us to translate the universal knowledge provided by induction into science (p. 347).

induction is Aristotle's method of arriving at a definition through the analysis offered by an entire chapter or text.⁷⁰ For the purpose of the present thesis, it is helpful to consider the obvious parallel between interpreting such definitions and grasping the overarching metaphor of a chapter or text. Just as authors, at the end of a chapter or text, arrive at a definition of a complex item from prior observations, reflections and arguments, we seem, in comprehending the full scope of such achievements, to approximate many aspects of Black's semantic theory of metaphor, especially that of relying on what Morier U. Eco terms encyclopedic knowledge, where the "encyclopedia," in this case, is the chapter or text itself.

The second level of induction recalls our own inquiry into metaphor, since it involves, according to Groarke, leaps of cognition grasping similarities or likenesses, "general insights of a more tentative or provisional nature" that we can term "recognition." For Aristotle, arguing by analogy presupposes this "ability to 'see'" plausible patterns and likely regularities in phenomena (p. 157).

Groarke offers a helpful elaboration of these levels. The first kind of induction is "ἐπαγωγή" (*epagoge*) (pp. 158, 121). Its means of operation is our "infallible exercise of νοῦς (*nous*), through the activity of intellection, understanding, comprehension, insight" (p. 158). Aristotle's account of *epagoge* borrows heavily from Plato's of *noesis*, reflects Groarke, while redefining the role of *noesis* in epistemology (p. 282ff.).⁷¹ Instead of viewing "thinking" as a

⁷⁰ See Ginsberg, pp. 62-3, for a succinct discussion of this method of definition.

⁷¹In both Plato and Aristotle, we can distinguish *noesis* (mental illumination) from *dianoia* (discursive reasoning) (p. 283). Conversely, *epagoge* is Aristotle's solution to what he regards as a major problem facing Plato. Because Aristotle disagrees with the Platonic view of concepts existing "on their own in some immaterial realm we can access through contemplation," this initial aspect of induction explains how some concepts "inhere in each class of objects, insofar as each class has a determinate nature" (*Posterior Analytics* [Tredennick], vol. 1, ch. 18, 81b-5, [in Aristotle, *Aristotle in 23 Volumes*], quoted by Groarke, p. 161). Of course, many moderns will be tempted to dismiss anything that relies on an Aristotelian notion of substance. But, as Groarke points out, from the time of Descartes onwards, the majority of mainstream philosophers lack a robust understanding of either substance or our inducing of it, the process involving, as W.K.C. Guthrie explains, "separating out the 'form' from the 'matter'" (the principle of individuation) (*History of Greek Philosophy*, vol. 6, p.190, quoted by Groarke, p. 161, fn. 17). Groarke simplifies

process culminating in inspiration, Aristotle contends that inspiration is “where knowledge *begins*” (291).⁷²

As for “recognition,” this second level of induction is to be understood as operating through “cleverness, a general power of discernment or shrewdness, referred to by terms such as ἀγχίνοια (*anchinoia*), εὐστοχία (*eustochia*), δεινότης (*deinotes*), or even μῆτις (*metis*).”⁷³ It produces several related forms of knowledge: awareness of likenesses or similitudes, general notions of things as belonging to a specific class, and discernments of “sameness or unity.”

Whereas these first two levels both “involve some direct act of discernment or mental discovery,” the other three “require argument.” And yet, there are connections between these first two levels and the others, which are “rigorous (inductive syllogism), rhetorical (arguments by analogy), and statistical (arguments by enumeration).” For example, the third level corresponds to the first in that it produces (or rather expresses) knowledge of “[e]ssential or necessary properties (including moral knowledge).” Groarke associates the fourth level with the production of knowledge about “[w]hat is plausible, contingent or accidental; knowledge relating to convention, human affairs.” For Aristotle, this fourth level of induction is the home of dialectic. Finally, Groarke associates the fifth level with operations of “the probability calculus,” which produces knowledge “numerical or mathematical in nature.” Although the third, fourth, and fifth levels of induction constitute the categories of inductive argument, Aristotle acknowledges the third as the paradigm of inductive reasoning, regarding the fourth as weaker, while scantily attending to the fifth. Still, this five-fold schema is just a starting point for

this notion further, noting that once the material component is removed, the remaining form is universal (*AAI*, p. 161, fn. 17). For more on “substance,” see also p. 86.

⁷² Using different terminology, Thomas goes further, maintaining that knowledge begins *and* ends in inspiration.

⁷³ All references in this paragraph and the next are to pp. 157-8.

analysing Aristotle's view of induction.⁷⁴ What more can we say about these various senses of induction?

Let us consider *epagoge* in further detail, beginning with the traditional account of abstraction, which, according to Groarke, "provides a wider perspective on the alleged 'problem of induction.'" On the Aristotelian account, metaphysical substances are not the only concepts we abstract. Those "referring to predicates, qualities, or relationships, rather than individual things" are products of abstraction as well. And, with higher-level forms of abstraction, we are capable of obtaining "primitive concepts" and proceeding to "manipulate and combine them in various ways to create more complicated concepts" (p. 162). Clearly, the "creative endeavour" of abstraction assumes different forms (p. 165).

While the process of "abstraction" seems obvious once we reflect upon ordinary experience, the term nevertheless "brings with it unwanted associations" in our day, whether resulting from attacks on the subject or replies to these attacks that do not entirely do justice to the notion itself (pp. 167, 170).⁷⁵ Fortunately, argues Groarke, this account of induction does not hinge on the patchwork Aristotelian doctrine of abstraction. We can explain such phenomena alternatively by saying, with Aristotle, that, through repeated experience of the same things, we eventually come to recognize concepts (p. 170). Similarly, we might speak of

three degrees of disengagement. (1) Perceptions are not reality but a conscious representation of reality.... (2) A concept is not the same thing as a perception. [A] concept ... is an idea about something; it has its origins in perception but is not a sensation of something. (3) A concept of a property is not the same as a concept of a

⁷⁴ Thus, while it is helpful to distinguish among these levels as Biondi and Groarke do, Aristotle, nonetheless, presses *epagoge* into service on a number of fronts, relying on various precise meanings of this concept, a matter that causes John Stuart Mill some confusion (see *AAI*, pp. 156-7).

⁷⁵ Groarke holds that we can acknowledge the danger of reifying theoretic kinds without completely "jettisoning" belief in the correspondence between our concepts and the world (p. 170). For more on the challenge Groarke mounts against traditional and more recent attacks on "abstraction," see p. 163.

substance. [Such concepts do] not refer to any *thing* in the world. [They detach] a feature of a substance and consider it on its own. (p. 171)⁷⁶

However, the process of abstraction involved in “concept formulation” goes beyond such detachment of “individual features” by combining them. In certain cases, therefore, “the act of intuiting a concept” also amounts to apprehending “a unity that brings diverse properties together within the [given] idea” (p. 162). But, as Groarke explains, conceptual abstraction is only one among three kinds of abstraction, each of which occurs through *epagoge*.

The second form of abstraction is the production of first principles. Groarke defines a principle as “any combination of concepts, any rule, precept, fact, or judgment that covers a whole series of cases.”⁷⁷ For Aristotle, we know, “first” principles include “the basic rules of logic, the axioms and definitions of geometry, the starting points of the natural sciences, and the ends of morality.” The recently debunked view of G.E.L. Owen and Terence Irwin is that Aristotle thinks dialectic, and, in turn, *endoxa*, supplies these first principles. Groarke counters this claim, insisting that such principles are “first,” rather, because they “represent the very first steps in cognition” and, accordingly, “cannot be argued for.” On the other hand, he admits, abstracting first principles—which is comparable to our “distilling” concepts out of sense experience—may be assisted by our becoming aware of various *endoxen* through dialectical argument, since such discoveries are unavoidably heuristic and require keen thinking, such that “the wheat” (actual first principles) are separated from “the chaff” (opinions that, though reputable, are not first principles).

On the Aristotelian view, definitions and necessary properties constitute the third type of abstraction. In order to resolve a host of confusions arising from Aristotle’s inconsistencies in

⁷⁶ Groarke further suggests that the difference between abstractions of substances and of properties are differences of degree, not process, a point often made in the context of distinguishing extensional from intensional definitions (p. 171).

⁷⁷ All references in this paragraph are to *AAI*, pp. 173-4.

connection with this, Groarke distinguishes among three kinds of predicates. The first of these, definition, “is a composite predicate made up of the genus and the differentia of the thing taken together.”⁷⁸ The second kind, necessary property, refers to “an indispensable characteristic of a designated nature.” And the third is accidental property, referring to “contingent characteristics that may or may not characterize that nature.” Groarke proceeds to identify four broad categories of inductive predication: “ordinary,” where we fix on a universal, but do not consider which of the three types of predicate it is; “essential,” where we abstract “the essential predicate as an essential property”; “necessary,” where we proceed as in essential predication, but concerning necessary predicates and properties; and “accidental, where, we do the same, but with accidental predicates and properties.”

The decisive factor in this array of distinctions is that it enables us to see how *epagoge* “in a sense does and in another does not produce definition,” since essential induction (or predication) is the only kind that yields “definition” as such (p. 179). Beyond resolving any confusions we might have, this clarification helps us better understand the role of definition in Aristotle’s epistemology. “Real” definitions, on the Aristotelian account, report on natural kinds, revealing what things are, as opposed to nominal definitions, which merely record conventions of human language (p. 181). Science, for Aristotle, is the search for “real” definitions (p. 181).⁷⁹

Here, we enter into Aristotelian philosophy of science, which Groarke insists remains relevant, since modern science continues to rely on the notion of natural kinds (p. 182).

Identifying and isolating behavioural causality requires investigation into real definitions. For,

⁷⁸ All references in this paragraph are to pp. 177-8. This three-fold scheme is the simplified version of a more expansive list, which includes: “definition, convertible property, necessary property, genus, differentia, and accident” (p. 177).

⁷⁹ Fittingly, Aristotle conceives of logic as the best tool for this purpose. It is with a view to this that Groarke says Aristotle considers logic “a scientific tool for dealing with existent things” (p. 387).

despite our capacity to “describe behaviour in mathematical terms ... the only things actually existing in the world are substances with natures” (p. 183). Hence the continued importance of *epagoge*. To sum up how it translates into the scientific method, let us consider Aristotle’s conception of the developmental path of intellectual inquiry. As Groarke explains, we move “from sense perception, to memory, to experience, to knowledge” (p. 191). While we are justified in thinking of science as beginning in observation, induction in fact constitutes a bridge between such observation and knowledge.

This philosophy of science contrasts with predominant modern variants in several ways. First, as we have seen, far from viewing induction as a problem, Aristotle insists that it has epistemological warrant. Second, he is “an unabashed (though qualified) realist” (p. 196). Third, he thinks science uncovers essence, his essentialism boiling down “to the view that we can separate things in the world into kinds” (p. 197).⁸⁰ And fourth, by emphasizing “nature over mathematical law,” Aristotle subsumes mathematical models of science, because kind is prior to quality (the latter being itself a kind). Conversely, the most obvious improvement upon the Aristotelian model is the breadth of contemporary approaches in the sense of “including the empirical study of all necessary properties” (*ibid.*). Here again, however, we see the role *epagoge* must play. “No wonder that a contemporary skepticism about induction should inevitably lead to a more global skepticism,” writes Groarke, “not merely about definition, but even about the very existence of natural kinds and about science itself” (p. 206).

So much, then, for the first level of induction. There is still more to be said regarding “recognition,” the other form of “non-verbal induction” (p. 207). As we noted above, a variety of general Greek terms are available for describing this capacity. In contemporary English, we

⁸⁰ This is one area where Groarke resists Aristotle, speculating that, in scientific practice, necessary or accidental properties may occasionally be the best we can hope to find (p. 197).

would associate it with readiness of mind, sagacity, mental dexterity, even shrewdness or cunning (p. 207-8). Groarke assumes that it presupposes *epagoge*, for it “abstracts concepts, propositions, and principles to apply to contingent, artificial, or accidental events or things.” More specifically, it is different than the insight involved in the first level of induction insofar as what is identified at this level are “looser kinds of resemblances,” including likenesses, common links, relationships binding individuals together into single groups, likelihoods, truisms, potentialities, and “what is sometimes true” (pp. 208, 210). Recognition that deals not with natural kinds, but with “our practical everyday experience,” is not strictly scientific in the Aristotelian sense (p. 209).⁸¹

Groarke cites the example of Aristotle’s account of Aesop’s relating the fox fable before an assembly. The point of the fable, Groarke says, is “the implied resemblance” between the animal’s predicament and that which Aesop and the assembly find themselves in (p. 209). But, even if this “intuition of likeness is practical rather than scientific or rigorous,” as Groarke puts it, it might *lead to epagoge* proper. Groarke adds that “we may begin with a rough awareness of some kind of likeness and move on to a more formal awareness of a necessary or an essential property” (p. 210).⁸² From our preceding discussion of metaphor, we can conclude that we “recognize” such implied resemblances as part of the metaphoric process. Consequently, Groarke’s point, here, implicitly illustrates a vital function of metaphors. If, for example, we have a work that constitutes an overarching metaphor of some important and enigmatic principle,

⁸¹ Groarke writes, “Human affairs depend on mutable circumstance. What is the right or shrewd thing to do in this circumstance is the wrong or imprudent thing to do in another. We can have no one right way of acting all the time. Politics is an approximate science” (p. 209).

⁸² Groarke’s related remarks on p. 210 recall both Ricoeur’s and Wheelwright’s, especially their respective discussions of *diaphor*, for Groarke notes that in recognizing similarity we inevitably become aware of difference as well.

then, even if the work is not “scientific or rigorous,” it can encourage our practical learning about this subject, prompting an experience of insight.

This brings us back to the primary connection between *epagoge* and recognition. Both are, as De Rijk argues, “mere” heuristic methods of procuring universal principles.⁸³ Associating “heuristic” with either aids to understanding or trial-and-error methods, Groarke challenges this assertion, a surprising response in light of his seeming contentment in describing the intuitive moment of the first two levels as “heuristic.” Yet the reason for his reservation quickly becomes apparent. As he reflects, the tendency is to “psychologize mental states, but Aristotelian induction – whether intuitive or argumentative – is also an *epistemological* conviction. It is more than a psychological push in the right direction. It is an instance of knowledge” (pp. 210-1). Groarke’s wariness about describing the first two levels of induction as heuristic, therefore, does not concern conceiving this process as a case of “learning for ourselves,” but rather the use of “heuristic” in other contexts, as well as the threat of psychologism. Groarke concludes his discussion of the first two levels of induction by reiterating that they are both ways of knowing that have, *pace* De Rijk, “inferential force on their own” (pp. 212, 210).⁸⁴

Groarke contends that typical attempts to demonstrate the invalidity of inductive reasoning, aside from neglecting altogether the first two levels, collapse the third and fourth. As a result, such attacks on what is really the fourth level are misinterpreted as damaging to the entire operation of induction (p. 213).⁸⁵ Recall that, on the Aristotelian schema, this fourth level is, generally speaking, arguing by analogy. This rhetorical form of induction produces

⁸³ Aristotle, §4.4, “*Noesis* as Sight and Touch,” pp. 247-50, quoted by Groarke, *AAI*, p. 210.

⁸⁴ Similarly, Groarke extensively defends the epistemological warrant of the inductive syllogism that we associate with the third level of induction, adding that each is a verbal expression, logically ordered so as to communicate an experience of *epagoge*. We will, in the main, leave this effort aside.

⁸⁵ Groarke traces this oversight to two institutional issues, first, an uneasiness about the distinction between necessary and accidental properties encouraged by “a pervasive distaste for metaphysics” and, second, a weak grasp of the nature of necessary inference due to “a prevalent focus on symbolic logic” (p. 214).

“contingent, plausible, or probable claims” (p. 212). To make matters worse, most attacks leveled against induction that target this level overlook that the “contingent nature of the *subject matter*,” not of the argument *form*, creates uncertainty (p. 214). Still, because they do not “secure a necessary conclusion,” arguments of this form are not “metaphysically (or scientifically) true,” though they can be “rhetorically sound” (p. 217). This is important, for when Aristotle advises that certain subject matters “do not lend themselves to rigorous, scientific analysis,” he must envision the fourth level of induction for just such cases (p. 212). Here again, Groarke demonstrates that, just as *epagoge* and the inductive argument by which we express such insight are properly epistemological, so too, if to a lesser extent, are recognition and its verbal corollary, the rhetorical inductive argument.

If these two non-verbal levels of induction in which thought originates are so pivotal, why have they been so neglected? Groarke answers:

Investigating how we first come to know seems particularly important in light of a new rationalism that motivates and orients much of contemporary philosophical discourse.... The new rationalism stridently champions discursive reasoning, reasoning by language and argument, and overlooks, understates, or eliminates the illuminative or heuristic aspects of cognition. It is not so much a point of view explicitly argued for as a silent assumption, an underlying attitude pervading contemporary philosophical practice. It can lead to an almost exclusive focus in philosophy on constructing and evaluating arguments. (p. 284)

To counter this obsession, Groarke seeks to redress our misunderstanding of the intuitive aspects of induction (and, therewith, philosophy) by offering a wide-ranging analysis of the history of intuitive understanding in the Western philosophical tradition, including various misinterpretations to which it has been subject.

For instance, he directs our attention to the strawman that Weinberg and company make out of early elaborations of non-discursive reason, the “‘black-box’ theory of mind,” a metaphor that Groarke insists is misleading (p. 393). Contrary to the image that such a portrayal evokes,

ancient and medieval thinkers thought of the mind as “an open eye which confronts reality,” making sense of experience, rather than shut off from the world (p. 393-4).

Consider, for example, the methods and *telos* of Pre-Socratic philosophers, especially those of Thales and Herakleitos, according to which philosophy is “a search for wisdom that oftentimes reveals itself in a matter of inspiration, of direct insight, of suddenly *seeing* the truth behind appearances.” On this view, philosophy primarily concerns “how to live a good life,” and is “often closer to moral inspiration than to logic” (p. 287).

Groarke adds that “Socrates’ originality is that he proposes a method for achieving (or at least encouraging) immediate insight,” namely, through dialectic (p. 288). This prelude to inspiration somehow stimulates students’ minds, helping them work their way towards an intuitive grasp of principles (pp. 288, 290). On the Socratic view, philosophy’s task is both to incite such ideas and, subsequently, critically assess them (p. 290). As we know, Aristotle reverses this order. Instead of discursive reason preceding *noesis*, as Plato imagines, *noesis* comes first.⁸⁶ Notice that, whichever of these views we adopt, intuition is of paramount importance.

According to Groarke, the problematic contemporary dismissal of intuition’s epistemological role originates with the Enlightenment, when thinkers lost “sight of the earlier historical understanding of induction,” proposing a “mechanical replacement wholly inadequate to the task” (p. 305). René Descartes, meanwhile, falls between these two camps, maintaining the

⁸⁶ Groarke recalls Aristotle’s battle metaphor in order to help us understand this process. An army may retreat from an opposing force in spite of its determination to do otherwise. But once a single soldier makes a stand, others gather and follow suit, until the entire army successfully resists being routed. We can identify the process of inducing the intuitive grasp of principles with this pattern in a quasi-allegory. The mind, if “[o]verpowered by error and misunderstanding,” can be metonymically substituted for the army at the first stage of the events depicted, here. And yet, once we come to understand a single case, we can initiate the same sequence as the stalwart soldier, precipitating illumination, applying the same understanding of the first case to others until, eventually, “it hits on the universal principle that explains every case.” At this point, the mind is the army at the final stage, standing “firm against ... its traditional enemy, ignorance” (p. 296).

notion of intuitive thinking in the guise of “the natural light of reason,” all the while laying the groundwork for the mechanist shift in philosophy. Groarke argues that Descartes’ contemporary, Blaise Pascal, more closely approaches the appreciation of intuition that we find in the tradition. Valuing genius over careful style (and thereby returning to the Socratic approach of transcending *aporia* by intuitive leaps), Pascal prefers inducing aphorisms to constructing a discursively logical step-by-step framework. Parsing particular experiences, he finds principles “applicable to human life generally,” a quintessentially intuitive process of induction (p. 315).

We need not conclude from this that Groarke disparages the modern scientific method. Indeed, he regards it as vital for the formation and testing of hypotheses. And, in general, deduction provides us with knowledge in its own way. However, one of Groarke’s primary motivations is to challenge the assumption that the deductive method and modern science exhaust all that counts as knowledge (p. 324).

One way to avoid such tunnel vision is to acknowledge the fundamental creativity of inductive cognition (p. 325). The inductive achievement of creating “more knowledge from less,” writes Groarke, is so common that “we take it for granted” (*ibid.*). Groarke proceeds to nudge the conversation into familiar territory, insisting both that truly great art, like the principles supplied by *epagoge*, emerges from “unaccountable epiphany” and that such “artistic vision” remains beyond the purview of any “secret, step by step protocol,” a reflection that is notably in keeping with the semantic approach to metaphor (p. 326).⁸⁷

Anticipating the stock reply to this shared view, Groarke observes, “Those who want to turn the world into one great machine, the reductionists, the rationalists, the inheritors of the

⁸⁷ Cf. Groarke’s speculation concerning why many philosophers fail to recognize how *epagoge* constitutes intelligent discernment, namely, interpreting “what earlier authors propose as infallible first principles as mere propositions in any reductionist sense” (p. 394).

great Enlightenment project, those who are suspicious of anything unaccountable or mysterious or transcendent, have always worried about creativity” (p. 326).⁸⁸ But investigating the close resemblance between inductive insight and artistic creativity reveals several issues that, taken together, help us see the problem with these worries (p. 327).

On one level, induction obviously is creative, for it is the *production* of first principles. Moreover, this occurs “*through the agency* of ... the mind,” *uses* material—“the contents of sense perception”—and *constructs* something, “concepts and universals and even arguments” (p. 330). What we have, here, is nothing less than the principle of transformation identified by Aristotle in the *Metaphysics*, which demonstrates a universal that, restricted to neither nature nor art alone, inheres in both. As Groarke argues, since induction does not violate this rule of transformation, worries about its creative aspect are unjustified.

Still, such worries are bound to persist for those committed to mechanist approaches to philosophy, precisely because the creativity inherent in induction runs deeper. This can be seen in two ways that concern induction’s managing to create “something” from “nothing.” First, in its argumentative form, induction arrives at conclusions that seem to include more than the premises. Therein lies the problem, as the contemporary philosopher sees it, since this seems “less than logical.”⁸⁹

Let us briefly consider one of Groarke’s glosses on the problem of universals, the second allegedly troublesome characteristic of inductive creativity. In moving from individual experience to “universal” concepts, we create something from nothing, just as in the previous

⁸⁸ Groarke’s comments are not far removed, in letter or spirit, from Coleridge’s. One manifestation of Coleridge’s fight to contain and reverse what he calls “the general contagion” of “mechanist philosophy,” observes Brett, is his insistence on conceiving of “reason and understanding, fancy and imagination ... as processes,” since human minds are more akin to organisms than machines (pp. 56, 58-9).

⁸⁹ All references in this paragraph and the next two are to p. 331.

example. This is even more apparent in the case of moral induction, where we move past “our selfish concerns and care about other people as much as ourselves,” because “anytime we assume an objective point of view, we move beyond the confines of our own individuality and adopt a transcendent perspective.”

“The guardians and watchdogs of rationality may dismiss radical creativity as mere superstition, a metaphysical or mystical hocus-pocus,” Groarke laments. “But rationalist explanations of induction fundamentally miss the point,” namely, that Aristotelian induction involves “a kind of identification that must be seen, discerned, grasped, rather than argued to.” Alternatively, acquiring knowledge of a hidden premise, specifically that the subject and middle terms of an argument can be converted, presupposes an ability to see the universal in the individual.⁹⁰ Essentially, Groarke urges us to recognize that the nature of the human condition entails positing “the existence of a creative power that is somehow able to move us from an awareness of the here and now to one of totality.”

Responding to Bernard Lonergan’s attempt to reduce induction to “the art of the lucky guess,” Groarke explores the example of joke-telling, insisting that the same “raw intelligence” is at play in both joke-telling and induction, since the effort to determine fittingness and move from the specific to the general is common to both (pp. 333, 334). This is not restricted to those who dream up jokes either, for the audience too, insists Groarke, does “in a sense *induce* the punchline of a joke,” all of which lends support to his emphasis on both induction’s extensive role in our cognition and its creative character (ibid.).⁹¹

⁹⁰ Throughout *An Aristotelian Account of Induction*, Groarke details this convertibility at length, from a variety of perspectives.

⁹¹ Cf. Cohen.

Developing this last point, Groarke proceeds to compare induction and art, claiming that, if “there is an element of creative discovery that unleashes the artistic impetus, this element of sudden disclosure is a conspicuous feature of inductive thought” (p. 337). More specifically, at the deepest levels, induction “follows a similar pattern” to artistic inspiration, which fits with how we conceive of the first two levels of induction (pp. 336, 337). In light of this, Groarke would likely be amenable to the idea that metaphors, too, are comparable to the inductive process, that is, if we take them to involve aesthetic creation and appreciation.

At the same time, he insists that there are differences between induction and art. Great works of art are unique, for instance, whereas induction involves the production of “universal ideas we all share.” Plus, art elicits “aesthetic appreciation,” in contrast to the inductive project of “producing the common building blocks of human thought” (p. 337). Let us not rush to the conclusion that these two spheres of human life can be easily pulled apart, however. Consider Groarke’s subsequent digression into the Aristotelian account of perception, concerning which the “intuitive intellectual capacity for human creativity that expresses itself both in inductive reasoning and in art functions at a more fundamental level” (p. 338).⁹²

Aristotle analyses mental representation into three elements. Groarke explains:

In perception, the mind is aware of phantasms (sensible images) proceeding directly from the outside world. In imagination, the mind is aware of phantasms arriving inside the mind independently of any immediate stimulus. And in thought, the mind, it would appear, uses language. Language is, however, composed of phantasms – ordered sequences of sensuous stimuli-sights or sounds or even textures that have a symbolic function conveying designated meanings. The activity of thought involves actively manipulating these symbols. (pp. 337-8)

Aristotle bases his theory of perception on the relationship that lies at the heart of his account of proportional metaphor, itself adapted from “the Greek mathematical concept of an extended

⁹² Groarke’s discussion of perception focuses more on mental aspects of perception than on the physiological (p. 338).

ratio,” famously defined by Euclid as “a sort of relation in respect of size between two magnitudes of the same kind.”⁹³ For Aristotle, such relationships allow us to draw analogies. A simple proportional metaphor involves four objects: A, B, C, and D. The equivalence of the relations between A and B, and C and D, respectively, forms the basis for related comparisons. If object-relations are equivalent in this manner, however, it is because each of these “analogous equivocals” are instantiations of a common definition, concept, or principle. Interpreting Aristotle’s account of proportional metaphor *exclusively* as an explanation of analogy, therefore, misses the mark. Ultimately, it is a description of a type of metaphor (p. 339-40).

Aristotle draws his definition of perception as an “equivocal phenomenon” from this process. In seeing the color red, for example, we perceive a “red” out there in the world, but enjoy another sense of “red” also, an intellectual copy of this color in our minds. While both meanings are of “red” and, as such, analogically equivocal, they are also distinct (p. 339).⁹⁴ Small wonder, then, that Aristotle suggests that a mastery of metaphor is the true mark of genius, for such an achievement implies superior perception. In fact, metaphor and perception are even further intertwined. Aristotle insists that the latter is a “transfer” of the sensible forms of the world into our mind, such that we retain a mental copy “minus the original matter, as the copy takes up residence in the mind” (ibid.).⁹⁵

Another central feature of Aristotle’s view of perception is the distinction he draws between “actual perception and mere physical alteration,” which complements his division of the

⁹³ Euclid, *Elements* (Heath), bk 5, def. 3, quoted by Groarke, *AAI*, p. 339.

⁹⁴ On this view, we can think of our perception of red as a phenomenological experience of the color as an extended ratio, embodied by four respective states of affairs: “an object in the world, a photon, a brain state, and an experience in the conscious mind” (p. 340). Groarke is primarily interested in the conscious aspect.

⁹⁵ Aristotle conceives of this as a “*matterless* transaction between observer and object” (p. 339, emphasis added). We may have reservations about this particular conception, however, since our perception can be a force of its own in the surrounding environment, such as when the hairs on our neck rise when sensing the eyes of another. And yet, Aristotle’s point concerns the transaction of sensible form, and, therefore, does not directly oppose such a case.

mind into passive and active components (pp. 338-9, 341). Without the requisite sensibility, we would not be able to *perceive* material change, even if we went from being hot to cold. We need *conscious* awareness to discriminate among empirical phenomena. Yet the passive *nous* (mind) is the “locus of transmission” between empirical phenomena and our active mind (pure awareness).⁹⁶ As Groarke explains, we should think of the passive mind as “the movie screen” of our minds, which, like the active mind, is indispensable to our ability not only to perceive, but to imagine as well (p. 342).⁹⁷

This two-tiered system also explains how we think, since it addresses the issue of how phantasms arrive in our mind during thinking or imagining. Groarke elaborates,

If Aristotle equates thought with the use of language, we can draw a parallel with the purely mental and overtly physical means of communication. We can use language publicly or privately. We can think “out loud” in physical acts of speaking or writing, or we can think inside our heads, using the sensible forms of language. When we speak out loud, we order sounds with our voice. Using the imagination, however, we can make the same sounds “inside our heads.” When we write in letters, we make visual signs. Using the imagination, however, we can make the same *signs* “inside our heads.” How, then, does mental thought occur? Through the power of our imaginations, we can conjure up and order sounds, signs, textures into meaningful sentences. In this way, the mind can think without overt physical acts of speaking or writing. (345-5)

On this account, thought is creative in three ways: first, in the mental representation of the phantasm; second, in imagining; and third, in acquiring knowledge (p. 345).

In the first instance, our active mind “*bestows* a sensible form on the passive mind” (*ibid.*, emphasis added). In the second, phantasms *arise* without the object of which we are having the mental representation being in our immediate experience. Here again, a connection with

⁹⁶ In a way, we could compare this receptive capacity with Kant’s conception of space and time as the pure forms of our intuition.

⁹⁷ Just before listing various problems that the distinction between the passive and active mind solves, Groarke remarks on how it is “little less than remarkable to see how these issues have been ignored by contemporary ‘philosophy of mind’ and even psychology. Aristotle’s mental literalism is perhaps an embarrassment for scientific reductionists and their allies” (pp. 342-3; p. 341, fn. 52). For Aristotle, imagination is “that in virtue of which an image arises for us” (*On the Soul* [Smith], bk 3, ch. 3, 428a1, quoted by Groarke, *AAI*, p. 344, fn. 58).

metaphoric competence is apparent, for Groarke proceeds to reflect that, while phantasms depend on “the operation of memory,” we are unable to “see into the past in any literal sense” (p. 346). Memories are re-created mental representations without the stimulus. Thus, when the active mind conjures a memory, it is, in a sense, creating something from nothing, although, in another sense, it is the imagination conjuring up at will a sensible form that we have already perceived (pp. 346-7).

As for the third mental process, “the achievement of knowledge,” language is an indispensable condition, since, as we have seen, it is composed of “symbols conveying meaning.” On Aristotle’s view, this meaning comes from the mind by virtue of our active *nous* adding “conceptual content” to the “sensible forms” stamped upon it by the world, a form of creation that, according to Groarke, constitutes “the fundamental role of induction in Aristotle’s philosophy of mind” (p. 347). Inductive reasoning, in turn, uses “the intermediary of language” to devise “concepts and definitions, rules of syntax and logical order, and ultimately propositions and arguments,” that is, the universal knowledge with which we produce science through deductive reasoning. More generally, though, induction is “a bridge between sense perception and language,” opening up “a new possibility, one of the indefinite extension of understanding,” in precisely the same sense Ricoeur intends when he suggests that the process of comprehending complex metaphors never really ends (*ibid.*). Groarke recalls the semantic view of metaphor further by insisting that this creative leap is, to some extent, inexplicable (p. 348).

Thus, artistic experience, whether in the form of producing or appreciating art objects, resembles induction *because* both are heuristic. After all, just as art objects *communicate ideas* through either their form, content, or a combination of the two, so there is an *art* to the whole process of induction (hence Groarke’s chapter title, “The Art of Induction”). Aristotle’s account

of induction, then, acknowledges this creative aspect, a point of which mechanical interpretations of Aristotle's account remain unaware (p. 347). As Groarke explains, historical tendencies contribute to this ignorance:

Creativity rankles. Positivists and rationalists cling fast to the idea of a complete theory of everything. These modern champions of mechanism think that explaining rationality means accounting in full for every increase in knowledge. They want to fill up all the gaps, to reduce what looks like a leap to a mere routine of enumerating – hence their befuddlement and their dismay at the seemingly intractable problem of induction. This seems to be accounting gone astray. This seems to warrant an inescapable scepticism, hence the inevitable collapse of modernism into radical postmodernism. (p. 348)

Groarke concludes that, instead of doubting creativity, we are better served by recognizing that the intelligence underlying the beginnings of thought, *epagoge*, is the end of the line when it comes to explanation, as we would understand if Socrates' maieutic metaphor were better heeded (p. 348).

If Groarke's investigation of induction echoes Ricoeur's analysis of metaphoric competence, his comparison of induction with Michelangelo's concept of *intellecto* bears directly upon our discussion of overarching metaphor. Michelangelo believes that an artist's leap of inspiration results from observation, a process that Groarke insists converges with induction. In such cases, successful artistic images function as archetypes, synthesizing in each respective visual reference "an entire class of objects and experiences" (pp. 353-4). Leaving aside the Renaissance attitude, exemplified by Leonardo da Vinci's claim "that painting is more *universal* than literature," great works of both types of art depict universal concepts, for example, the idea of humanity, or the essence of a storm, in addition to individual human beings or particular storms (pp. 354-5). With respect to the humanity example, it is not just a universal concept that is represented, but "a universal aspect of the human condition." What is more, Groarke relates how, for this tradition, the action inherent in the way an artist depicts a figure represents "universal archetypes of specific emotions." "In a fit of inspiration," that is, "artists hit on concepts to

capture the underlying reality of an entire class of events or things. Like the inductive reasoner, artists pull out of the ordinary experience a perceptible token to capture and put on display a universal reality” (p. 355).

For Michelangelo, art is a result of the understanding, not the imagination, in the sense that it communicates “the truth about something.” This object of communication, “the concept” in Michelangelo’s terms, furnishes another way of considering complex metaphors, since the concept permeating an artist’s material “may be intended as a universal, an archetype, the definition of an emotion, a symbol, a comment on human nature, [and/or] a solution to a theological problem” (p. 356). Illustrating this point, Groarke cites Michelangelo’s sculptures *The Dying Shame* and *The Rebellious Shame*, describing them as “physical metaphors,” communicating to us something about sin’s constraints on the human condition (p. 357).

For Groarke, it is not just that artistic inspiration and Aristotelian induction both begin in observation and result in a universal idea, nor that both involve intuitive creation. Rather, both unearth “what is actually out there, bringing into full view what is already hiding underneath empirical appearances,” thereby “widening” meaning (pp. 357, 358).

Viewing the story of science as a “story of creative discovery” allows us to identify induction as “the scientific counterpart of artistic inspiration.” Still, Groarke takes Aristotelian induction to be a more appropriate, indeed more democratic model, because even if most of us fall short of Michelangelo’s genius, we all create first principles for ourselves (p. 358).

Therefore, we can say that the inductive reasoner “looks at the world and ... pulls out of particular experience concepts and principles that have universal significance,” a process that, like artistic achievement, “depends on genius” (p. 360). Groarke sums up the implications of this for our current context:

A rationalistic age that prides itself on scientific accomplishment regards the scandal of creativity with suspicion. But creativity precedes all knowledge. Without creativity, we would have no language, no science, no logic, no philosophy. Without creativity, there would be nothing to say, nothing to argue, nothing to understand. We could see the world physically, but we would be, in a deeper sense, blind. (p. 360)

This is why Aristotle's account is so compelling. Because he views knowledge as both "a kind of human self-expression and an *accurate* replica of the world," his epistemology "respects both the objective influence of the world and the creative contribution of the mind" (p. 376).

The importance of recognizing the role of creativity in epistemology naturally anticipates Aristotle's intertwined views of science, metaphysics, and essence, yet another thread to Groarke's project that is particularly relevant to our own inquiry. *Epagoge*, we know, is where thought begins, on the Aristotelian view. This is not to dispute the fact that post hoc confirmation is in some cases "a useful, even necessary tool; in complex cases, it confirms that we really know." The point is simply that the interaction between mind and world is what gives rise to our understanding of necessity (p. 367; see also, p. 405). Induction is reliable in virtue of this interaction between two things with definite natures. As we have seen, it is not as if we can prove the first principles that emerge from this, however. In fact, to try to do so, such as by tabulation, is self-defeating (p. 368).

But is induction impervious to error? The traditional answer is, in a sense, yes, and, in another, no. If understanding (*nous*) is contrasted with reasoning (*dianoia*), intellectual mistakes can be said to fall into two categories. In one, we have flawed understanding, which Groarke likens to "a dirty window," suggesting a restricted awareness, or, in traditional terms, a "sin of omission" (p. 370). In the other category belongs faulty reasoning, a "sin of commission" associated more with structural issues, for instance, the unsound ordering of premises. Nowadays, philosophers tend to focus, above all, on the latter kind of error. Yet Aristotle is also concerned with the former. It motivates his discussion of "conceptual clarification," the process

by which we can recuperate first principles as we “clean” the “windows” of our minds (p. 370-1).

When it comes to confusion over fundamental issues, argument structure only gets us so far. In such cases, Groarke insists, we need to adopt an Aristotelian approach, such as when we “disentangle various aspects of reality and resolve the ambiguities that obscure the most fundamental axioms” by means of the proverbial *qua* (“insomuch as”).⁹⁸ Once again Groarke directs the conversation into familiar territory, drawing attention to the function of *qua* locution in resolving puzzles or *aporia*, apparent incongruities kindred in spirit to metaphor (p. 371). “Sundry forms of literary expression – proverbs, aphorisms, maxims, epigrams – readily avail themselves, for stylistic reasons, of the conceptual tension that accompanies contradiction,” writes Groarke. In the face of such expressions, far from concluding, as Nisbett and company do with respect to East Asian thought, that the law of non-contradiction is neither a first principle nor universal, Aristotelian methodology encourages us to avoid such confusion (p. 384).

Because we know that the law of non-contradiction is self-evident, the above confusion is precisely the kind of case that affords an opportunity to recuperate a first principle. And yet, warns Groarke, we ought not to think of conceptual clarification as argument so much as a paring down of subject matter to its most basic elements (p. 371). In Nisbett’s case, the “sin of commission” is his conclusion about first principles, but it was preceded by a “sin of omission,” which reflects an inability to demonstrate metaphoric competence when the situation demanded. By contrast, Groarke insists that, while adages can be *prima facie* contradictions, endorsing them does *not* necessarily mean that we accept the attendant contradiction. If we were to select given modifiers that highlight the tension within an adage, we would naturally proceed to a paradox,

⁹⁸ AAI, p. 371. For further elaboration of this, Groarke recommends looking to de Rijk, vol. 1, §2.73, 172; Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, pt 1, ch. 4, 74a25-32; *On the Soul*, pt 1, ch. 1, 402b25-403a2.

but according to a more insightful reading, adages can be better understood as providing helpful warnings about certain situations, or, more generally, commenting on some universal human imperfection. Clearly, by unpacking associated meanings, we can resolve apparent contradictions (p. 384).

On Groarke's view, the inadequacy of Nisbett's interpretation finds expression in another form, namely, Thomas Kuhn's incommensurability thesis concerning scientific theories. What Brian Ellis calls "new essentialism" is largely a reaction to this threat posed by Kuhn (p. 395). According to Groarke, new essentialists develop a revamped notion of "natural kinds" in order to counter the "scientific 'relativism'" that Kuhn's argument endorses. Yet this response "opens the door to metaphysical realism," for "essence" ceases to be "nominal, conventional, or linguistic in the traditional Lockean sense." That substances' true natures exist outside of our conceptions furnishes "an independent criterion of scientific truth" that is accessible through observation, in the Aristotelian sense that includes subsequent insight (pp. 396, 405). The extent to which essentialism departs from empiricism, however, let alone requires "a return to Aristotle," is apparently unacknowledged by new essentialists like Putnam and Kripke (p. 399ff.).

The beauty of Aristotle's essentialism, explains Groarke, lies in its confirming that experience can be converted by science into theory (p. 415).⁹⁹ Moreover, if we adopt this perspective, we can dispense with the difficult task of deriving an "exhaustive or conclusive description of membership conditions, necessary and sufficient attributes, family resemblance traits, genotype, phenotype, and so on," aiming instead to, first, induce kinds, and, second, establish how a given kind can be distinguished from others by explaining its nature (pp. 415-6). Of course, the stock response to this is, what about evolution? According to Groarke, though, it

⁹⁹ Cf. Tolkien's notion of "Escape" above, and the various references to escape in the literary sense below.

is not evolution that is the “real enemy of essentialism,” but “a perennial reductionism that would divest the world of real difference” (p. 418).¹⁰⁰

Many new essentialists fail to appreciate the need for a return to Aristotle, in large part because of a common tendency to conceive of themselves as “analytic” philosophers, endorsing “the modern empiricist attack on metaphysics” (p. 405). The problem is, if we want to defend “the epistemological authority of science,” we must, as Groarke points out, “move beyond science to larger considerations, which must include careful investigation of logically prior beliefs about the nature of the world and the mind.” The irony is that tracing out such views *is* what we mean by metaphysics; it is not a matter of choosing metaphysics or not, since, even when we refrain from explicitly arguing for a particular metaphysics, we nonetheless assume one (p. 408).

Groarke proceeds to reflect on the useful ambiguity of the term “natural kind,” particularly as it bears on induction. He proposes that we extend this term “to non-substances, to activities, properties, and dispositions,” so that concepts such as courage can be included (p. 428). As Groarke concludes:

The important point is that if the world is inhabited by natural kinds (and all the evidence indicates that it is), our knowledge of the properties of one instance of a natural kind can be transferred to all other such instances. This is how induction works. We see patterns, connections, identify properties, grasp the fundamental natures of things, discover order in the world – not mechanically, not through mere enumeration, but through the kind of creative inductive insight Aristotle champions.

... Aristotle’s thought represents a perennial resource.... It proposes a mitigated metaphysical realism that acknowledges the limits of human knowledge without descending into the chaos of an unanswerable scepticism. (p. 428)

¹⁰⁰ An obsession with efficient causation compounds the issue, writes Groarke, no less than our neglect of final causation (p. 420). Hence, the modern species problem (p. 421).

However complex, the Aristotelian view of induction is clearly relevant. For our purposes, though, two further reiterations of Groarke's central points highlight the connections with metaphor.

First, as we will recall, we can associate the heuristic moment that Aristotelian induction hinges on with metaphoric competence. This is significant for Groarke's argument no less than for philosophy itself. "At the very beginning of knowledge," he writes, "at the point where sense perception is somehow transmuted into thought proper, we must all rely on that condition of immediate enlightenment that philosophers in the Western tradition variously term *nous*, *noesis*, *intellectus*, *intelligentia*, the light of nature, natural law, creativity, insight, and so on. On this, and on nothing else, everything depends" (p. 430). This heuristic moment clearly echoes the idea in the semantic theory of metaphor that there is something about the process that eludes paraphrase. But the un-paraphrasability thesis goes further.

Just as Tolkien emphasizes the uniqueness of every artistic masterpiece, so, thanks to that uniqueness, there is something unparaphrasable about each of them. Still, we can try to communicate such heuristic experiences, like Groarke does when summarizing his account of Aristotelian induction. In fact, he appeals to a substitutive (or arguably interactive) metaphor to serve as the overarching metaphor of the project, citing the famous lines from T.S. Eliot's "Little Gidding": "We shall not cease from exploration / And the end of all our exploring / Will be to arrive where we started / And know the place for the first time" (ibid.). Groarke's book, therefore, not only helps us to understand more deeply the heuristic aspect of the metaphoric process, but also provides implicit support for the notion that works as a whole can constitute complex metaphors.

Before we proceed to round out the connections between Groarke's account of Aristotelian induction and Ricoeur's of the metaphoric process, let us briefly consider how the former corresponds to the scholarship of Sister Miriam Joseph, an American nun who systematized Aristotle's teachings on logic, incorporating them into the general idea of a liberal education, while also updating the system in light of certain historical advances in thought. Taken in isolation, some of her comments in *The Trivium the Liberal Arts of Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric* may strike the reader as being at odds with Groarke's account. For instance, enumerating various universal truths in her discussion of attributives, Sister Miriam asserts that mankind "acquires knowledge by reasoning," which, on the surface, does not seem to square with Groarke's central claim that thinking begins not in discursive reasoning, but in a stroke of intuitive illumination.¹⁰¹ In the context of her broader argument, however, this apparent incongruity dissolves. For elsewhere she acknowledges that induction is an intuitive process by means of which we gather the raw material necessary for discursive reasoning to produce scientific knowledge.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ *The Trivium—the Liberal Arts of Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric: Understanding the Nature and Function of Language* (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2002, ed. Marguerite McGlinn, p. 53). Henceforth, this book will be abbreviated *The Trivium*. The context, here, is that Sister Miriam is explaining how verbs are one of the primary attributives (words expressing a substance's accidents) and have four functions: expressing the given attribute "along with the notion of time"; indicating tense; expressing "mode or mood"; and asserting (p. 52). According to Sister Miriam, the first of these functions is a verb's essential function and "constitutes its definition," a statement that recalls Aristotle's definition of verbs as words carrying with them their respective proper meanings plus "the notion of time" (p. 53). And yet, since time is a "concomitant" of these meanings, rather than the principal meaning of any of them, it is easy to confuse time (which is still an essential feature of verbs) with tense (which is not). Hence, stating general truths involves, "strictly speaking, no tense at all," (ibid). In corroborating Groarke's views, she proceeds to remark that statements of this type, "so far as our observation goes, [do] not cease to be nor come to be" (p. 54). Rather, they are continuous. That is, the truths that such statements contain are not contingent upon our perception, though without *epagoge* we cannot have access to them. Sister Miriam has more to say that is relevant for our purposes in her other book *Shakespeare's Use of the Arts of Language*. But we must, for the sake of scope, leave the bulk of her work aside.

¹⁰² See "A Brief Summary of Induction" in *The Trivium*, pp. 209-24. For example, Sister Miriam distinguishes conception from induction, associating the former with abstraction of essence that results in "a concept expressed in a term," and the latter with perceiving and "drawing forth" relations resulting in judgements expressed in propositions (p. 211). We can identify both of these with *epagoge*, however, as each is abstractive and intuitive.

Sister Miriam proceeds to delineate four moods as the various ways in which subjects and predicates can be related. While complex metaphors do not necessarily amount to subject-predicate relations in any straightforward sense, all four moods can apply to the infinitely varied array of such metaphors.

The first mood is “indicative” and “asserts the relation” with certainty, such as when, subsequent to the process of *epagoge*, we announce a discovery.¹⁰³ “Potential” mood refers to those cases where the relation is expressed “as possible, or contingent,” and surely corresponds to the fourth level of induction, according to which we express any finding induced in the manner of recognition. The third mood is “interrogative,” referring to expressions that request information and require a verbal response. Finally, the “volitive” mood “seeks the gratification of volitions” and “requires a response, usually in deeds.” Whether we are thinking of an author organizing his or her text, or a reader coming to an appreciation of how that work is assembled into an extended metaphor, the indicative and potential moods seem most readily applicable. The relevance of the third mood to complex metaphor is less apparent. Yet, as we shall see in chapter four below, there is a place for it, namely, in those cases where an author explicitly leaves the reader with a question, prompting the reader’s curiosity about something left unresolved in the work, or perhaps even necessitating further dialogue.

It is the fourth mood, however, that is most obviously relevant to the kind of complex metaphor that mainstream philosophical theories prior to Ricoeur seem to miss. For “requiring a response in deeds” seems to be what Ricoeur has in mind when considering the capacity of metaphor to reverberate deep within us, potentially altering ourselves. If we grant that a work as a whole can be expressive in this manner, we begin to see the power of *living* metaphors. It must

¹⁰³ All references in this paragraph are taken from *The Trivium*, pp. 54-5.

be noted, though, that, given the complex interrelations among the various parts of a work, there may be disputes about what the metaphor of a complete work exactly *is*, let alone the *mood* in which it expresses whatever it does.¹⁰⁴ In the same vein, we should not ignore the possibility that some complex metaphors may express multiple features at once, even to the extent that they could be described in mood as at once indicative, potential, interrogative, and volitive.

Now, let us turn to the connections between Groarke's and Ricoeur's projects. It seems safe to say that these respective contributions, different as they are in many respects, nonetheless dovetail, particularly with respect to the singular focus each of these authors directs upon the borderline between psychology and philosophy of mind. Groarke would, at the very least, repudiate some of Ricoeur's Kantian commitments. Still, both share a deep respect for Aristotle that translates into each assuming the Aristotelian inheritance in his own way. While Ricoeur engages the issue of metaphor, bringing with him a thorough foundation in metaphoric competence that derives from Aristotle's conception of recognition, Groarke wades into debates on concept-formation, retrieving an account of induction that derives from Aristotle's patchwork notes on the subject. Most strikingly, Groarke's effort takes us further precisely where Ricoeur penetrates most deeply into the issue of metaphoric competence by demonstrating the relevance of psychological theories, such as that of the Gestalt tradition, to understanding the metaphoric process.¹⁰⁵

Ricoeur is not the only student of metaphor with whom Groarke's work connects. More recently, Zwicky has taken up Ricoeur's task. In her investigation of how wisdom enfolds the

¹⁰⁴ The recent *Black Panther* film might serve as an example. While we can agree that the film provides an overarching metaphor of empowerment, we may well disagree on many aspects of the film, including about how such empowerment is to be understood.

¹⁰⁵ Groarke writes, "Inductive reason, understood as an initial capacity for intelligent discovery, provides the immovable starting points for intelligible discourse. There is often a powerful psychological side to this inductive process—grasping a universal truth may, for example, be accompanied by an aha! experience" (*AAI*, p. 9).

function of metaphor, she refers to understanding necessity in “a flash,” holding that this “seeing” is the grasping of a “gestalt” (*WM*, p. 64). Rather than our being moved by argument to these gestalts, “they announce themselves” to us (*WM*, p. 92). Furthermore, the perception of such gestalts, argues Zwicky, is the basis of philosophical insight (*WM*, p. 117). Although this line of thinking seems to corroborate Groarke’s views, especially when he acknowledges that there is “a tactile or a visual aspect” to “the intuitive moment that produces the first two levels of inductive reasoning,” Zwicky parts company with Groarke when she denies that we grasp necessity inductively (*AAI*, p. 210; *WM*, p. 64).

Yet, for her, “meaning lives through ... the recognition of what is common,” a process that, again, sounds like induction (51). Beyond appearing to endorse Groarke’s view of concept-formation, she also suggests that proper abstraction, far from amounting to reification, is the imaginative transcendence of particularity, a sensitivity which can be readily classified as either *epagoge* or recognition (p. 63). If this further confirms the convergence between her view and Groarke’s, the way in which *Wisdom and Metaphor* is written and structured demonstrates this even more.

Zwicky carefully arranges her text to leave room for what she believes cannot be spoken, all the while encouraging her reader to consider the material in such a way as to experience a flash of understanding. She restricts all her own writings to the pages on the left, with each corresponding right-hand page containing *endoxa*, including literary passages, that seem either to support, develop, or echo whatever points she has made or questions she has raised on the facing page. This arrangement demonstrates her appreciation for metaphor all the more, since metaphors on one page will frequently apply to whatever is said in a more discursive manner on the opposite page, and vice versa. If we take seriously Groarke’s Aristotelian account, it is

difficult to imagine how Zwicky's work is anything other than a mixture of proper and rhetorical induction, proceeding in discursive stages interspersed with the intuitive, or, as Zwicky prefers, "metaphorical," bits of wisdom that impel the entire discussion.

Such confidence in breaking away from stylistic norms is familiar elsewhere. Shibles follows up his exhaustive review of the literature on metaphor with a short essay on the subject that reads more like Pascal's *Pensées* than standard academic prose. It is a montage of inductions and deductions in short statements, which often connect with those that come before or after, but sometimes stand alone. At some points, these reflections even seem to contradict others in the essay, leading us to question their integrity. But what we can appreciate, here, as in *Wisdom and Metaphor*, is the way that Shibles' comments confirm an intensive study on his part of various thinkers, a grasp of the larger picture (the metaphor, if you will) of these thinkers' works, and a framing of his own findings that refers to the sense of each case, without shying away from including in these references metaphors of his own.

In other words, Zwicky and Shibles, like Groarke, not only accord metaphor the epistemological respect it deserves, but also express their findings in such a way as to encourage us, through repeated engagement with the most important themes, to grasp the overarching point of their respective works. This occurs on other levels as well. For instance, even though each of Groarke's chapters is self-contained, since no one depends on any other, all, taken together, form a coherent whole. In this way, we arrive at the final way in which Groarke's project focuses our attention on complex metaphor. Because we can take multiple experiences and arrive at a universal conclusion, because we can view a work as providing an opportunity to engage in this process, and because any impending conclusion pertains to the point of a given work, Groarke's simplest explanation of induction applies to complex metaphors. Since the point of a work need

not be understood exclusively as either literal or metaphorical, the overarching metaphor of a work can have both literal and metaphorical components at one and the same time.¹⁰⁶

2.4 *More on Defamiliarization*

We philologists sometimes enjoy frequenting the charnel houses of literature where the bones are more easily accessible for purposes of study; but this does not mean that we do not also enjoy—and recognize the aesthetic superiority of—living gardens.

R. H. Stacy¹⁰⁷

One of the benefits of perusing Ricoeur's work on metaphor is that we advance towards the goal (outlined in section 1.3) of securing an understanding of metaphor that approximates our experience of this phenomenon in our encounter with literature, especially with respect to literary masterpieces. That is to say, the emerging theory is not an example of "armchair philosophy," in the sense that it takes into account advances in the field of metaphor theory (even if these researches took place within the confines of a chair's arms).¹⁰⁸ The paradigm instance of this is our treating defamiliarization as a fundamental feature of complex metaphor. Of course, defamiliarization recalls Groarke's view that our understanding of first principles, if forgotten, may, nonetheless, be recuperated. We can see this more clearly by briefly considering a loose

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, p. 94, quoted in Zwicky, *WM*, p. 15 Right. In the same vein, Richards muses that there is nothing to stop us from holding that a certain word can support multiple metaphors all at once, in the same way that a word may mean many different things. Stacy shares this view, adding that, "A single metaphor may of course be polysemous ... but it may also 'be' different things at the same time and function on several levels: phonetic, grammatical, syntactical, rhetorical, positional, etc" (*DLL*, p. 81).

¹⁰⁷ *DLL*, p. 176.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Groarke's recommendation about how we are to think of philosophy of science. Far from deciding beforehand what "the appropriate divisions and distinctions" may be, empirical observation (often as "pragmatic" as it is "theoretical") ought to inform our theory (*AAI*, pp. 427-8). Even then, however, if we heed William James' admonition concerning what he calls "the Psychologist's fallacy," we ought not overestimate how much our inquiry might affect someone's construal of a complex metaphor (see *RM*, p. 81). Talent is not always amenable to letting theory into its house, if we are to envision its "house" as being "prodigious" and "inexplicable."

strand of the above discussion, namely, Tolkien's conception of Recovery, one of the components of the fantasy literary genre.

Although Tolkien invokes such components to explain effects that others associate with defamiliarization, the same essential process is at work. As Tolkien elaborates,

Recovery (which includes return and renewal of health) is a re-gaining—re-gaining of a clear view. I do not say 'seeing things as they are' and involve myself with the philosophers, though I might venture to say 'seeing things as we are (or were) meant to see them'—as things apart from ourselves. We need in any case, to clean our windows; so that the things seen clearly may be freed from the drab blur of triteness or familiarity—from possessiveness. (TL, p. 77)

Leaving aside Tolkien's insistence that he is not making philosophical claims, the Aristotelian metaphor of the mind as an open eye finds expression, here, as does Groarke's idea that we are capable of "re-gaining" a modicum of untainted perspective when we have lost sight of first principles. Tolkien maintains that there are means of recovery available apart from fantasy. For example, humility can enable such an achievement as well (TL, p. 77). So too can "fairy-stories." What is it about fantasy, exactly, that brings defamiliarization into focus?

Recalling Erich Fromm's claim that "the capacity to be puzzled" underlies the creative attitude, Tolkien contends that, far from making us *childish*, our experience of fantasy restores to us our natural *childlike* sense of wonder.¹⁰⁹ Hence, his musing, "Small wonder that *spell* means both a story told, and a formula of power over living men" (TL, p. 55). Tolkien conceives of complex metaphor, of the sort we find in fantasy, as the meeting place of "*logos* (the ordering power of words) and *mythos* (the regenerative power of story)" (*Fellowship*, p. 4). Such restoration affects more than just our understanding of principles. As Ricoeur asserts, this process, whether we call it metaphor, defamiliarization, or Recovery, involves feeling too. This

¹⁰⁹ See Fromm, "The Creative Attitude," in *Creativity and its Cultivation* (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, ed. Harold H. Anderson, 1959, pp. 44-54).

point is closely related to Joshua Greene's findings that, but for a few exceptions (involving those with damage to the ventromedial prefrontal cortex and, possibly, psychopaths), and given the complex interactions among our mental processes, it is unlikely that we can have a cognitive experience without a felt dimension, whether in the basic sense of emotional, or in Ricoeur's of feeling encompassing rationality.¹¹⁰

Naturally, Tolkien is well aware of this. His related views of Escape (discussed above) and Consolation combine with that of Recovery to account for it. On the one hand, Tolkien takes Escape and Consolation to be intimately connected (TL, p. 79). On the other, Consolation goes beyond "the imaginative satisfaction of ancient desires" associated with Escape:

Far more important is the Consolation of the Happy Ending. Almost I would venture to assert that all complete fairy-stories must have it. At least I would say that Tragedy is the true form of Drama, its highest function; but the opposite is true of Fairy-story. Since we do not appear to possess a word that expresses this opposite—I will call it *Eucatastrophe*. The *eucatastrophic* tale is the true form of fairy-tale, and its highest function.

The consolation of fairy-stories, the joy of the happy ending: or more correctly of the good catastrophe, the sudden joyous 'turn' (for there is no true end to any fairy-tale): this joy, which is one of the things which fairy-stories can produce supremely well, is not essentially 'escapist,' nor 'fugitive.' In its fairy-tale—or otherworld—setting, it is a sudden and miraculous grace: never to be counted on to recur. It does not deny the existence of *dyscatastrophe*, of sorrow and failure: the possibility of these is necessary to the joy of deliverance; it denies (in the face of much evidence, if you will) universal final defeat and in so far is *evangelium*, giving a fleeting glimpse of Joy, Joy beyond the walls of the world, poignant as grief.

It is the mark of a good fairy-story, of the higher or more complete kind, that however wild its events, however fantastic or terrible the adventures, it can give to a child or man that hears it, when the 'turn' comes, a catch of the breath, a beat and lifting of the heart, near to (or indeed accompanied by) tears, as keen as that given by any form of literary art, and having a peculiar quality. (TL, pp. 85-6)¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ See Greene, *Moral Tribes: Emotion, Reason, and the Gap between Us and Them* (New York: Penguin Books, 2013, p. 132ff.).

¹¹¹ The pre-eminent examples of eucatastrophe, according to Tolkien, are the birth and resurrection of Christ, where we imagine the former as set against the backdrop of mankind's history and the latter within the Incarnation narrative (TL, pp. 88-9).

Simply put, complex metaphor *moves* us.¹¹² If Tolkien attributes this to “eucatastrophe” in the case of fantasy, there seems ample room left to regard this as representative of a broader capacity of literature. This evocative term refers to a unique and very “peculiar emotion,” says Tolkien, a sudden onslaught of a “joy that brings tears.” From here, he adds, we experience a “sudden glimpse of Truth,” which not only instills a feeling of being unburdened of any apparent determinism of our physical existence, but leads us to the conviction that the narrative in question is literally true in some sense, reaffirming our beliefs about how a certain thing in our world naturally functions (TL, p. 100). I would argue that it is hardly reckless to infer that Recovery, and all that goes with it—Fantasy, Escape, Consolation, and Eucatastrophe—helps recuperate our view of first principles and more.¹¹³

More to the point, Recovery and recuperation both coincide with the idea of defamiliarization itself. Since we have only alluded thus far to “defamiliarization,” however, a proper explanation is in order. For this, let us turn to R.H. Stacy’s introduction to the topic, which begins with the word’s origins.

Defamiliarization derives from Shklovsky’s belief that art’s function is to “make one feel things....”¹¹⁴ Shklovsky coined the Russian term, “*ostranenie*,” to describe an integral component—perhaps even the most important element—of this process. As Stacy explains, we can translate this word into English as either “making strange” or “defamiliarization” (DLL, p. ix). Whereas, for Shklovsky, *ostranenie* refers to a particular kind of metaphor that affects whomever comes to appreciate it, Stacy extends the notion of defamiliarization to include “a

¹¹² Cf. Sir Philip Sydney’s *Defense of Poesy*.

¹¹³ At this point, we could extend the discussion to any number of areas that have long intrigued students of metaphor, literature, language, and so on. Shiff argues that works of art do not so much have a life on their own as instill “life or vital sensation in the observer” (p. 112). That is, a metaphorical rhythm allows for synchronization between ourselves and the work in question.

¹¹⁴ Shklovsky, quoted by Stacy, *DLL*, p. ix.

much broader range of metaphor” (p. 3). As a result, when Stacy elaborates the notion of defamiliarization, he provides a plethora of examples to establish that this aspect of metaphor applies to a wide spectrum of human activities, particularly language and literature (p. ix). Both Shklovsky and Stacy would agree, however, that defamiliarization is a common feature of great literature, even if variously achieved.¹¹⁵ But what do we do when we “defamiliarize”?

The distinguishing feature of defamiliarization is its making some commonplace object, event, situation, or tradition appear unfamiliar. Although this is more general than that achieved by particular stylistic devices, observes Stacy, it is still a facet of metaphor, broadly construed. Defamiliarization is more complicated still. Neither prose writers nor poets always desire or intend “to defamiliarize their subject matter” (p. 9). A writer can defamiliarize through language that ranges from, at one end of the spectrum, being not in any obvious way metaphorical, to, at the other, being ornately metaphorical (p. 11). In certain linguistic or literary cases, it would be odd to encounter defamiliarization. Yet “any phenomena *may* be defamiliarized” (p. 31). In spite of how most instances of defamiliarization in the arts and human action more generally “indicate purposeful employment and recognizable motivation,” with respect to many other occasions, such effects are accidental (p. 23).¹¹⁶

Of particular interest for our own inquiry, Stacy declares that “Riddles and enigmas are quintessentially forms of defamiliarization, and the word ‘enigmatography’ might well be used of a large number of poems and, especially, of many modern novels,” (p. 17). This point

¹¹⁵ Stacy describes *The Inheritors* as a case of defamiliarization “par excellence” (p. 8). While he considers this example especially fitting, we can surmise that it corresponds to the “inspired metaphors” that C. S. Lewis argues move quite beyond the scope of those “pedestrian analogies” that we use for elementary pedagogical purposes (p. 81, fn. 80).

¹¹⁶ The search for defamiliarization can be a thorny one, reflects Stacy, because it is often difficult to determine whether a work functions as such in virtue of the author’s original intention or is simply discerned by an interpreter (p. 174). Of course, the prevailing view of postmodernism is that this does not matter, for whether it is read into a work or intentionally furnished by the author, whatever import a literary piece has for us individually is what is most relevant.

supports the idea that novels as a whole may function as metaphors, or, as Stacy prefers, sources of defamiliarization. Furthermore, he notes, “the more abstract is the term subjected to defamiliarization, the wider the [general] range of possibilities (e.g., the word and concept of ‘love’ in world literature)” (p. 25). Again, Stacy’s project is consistent with our own, for given all of these complications, he organizes his review of cases of defamiliarization by largely ignoring accidental instances, instead beginning with intentional verbal and phrasal examples “as the basis for considering more complex varieties” (p. 25).

Aside from exploring a fascinating array of examples, Stacy, following Shklovsky, notes that perception tends to become habitual, retreating “into the area of the unconsciously automatic,” a cycle that defamiliarization can interrupt and even reshape or reverse (p. 32). In the words of Victor Erlich, “this inexorable pull of routine” is precisely what “the artist is called upon to counteract.” It is by “tearing the object out of its habitual context” and “bringing together disparate notions” that “the poet gives a *coup de grâce* to the verbal cliché and to the stock responses attendant upon it and forces us into heightened awareness of things and their sensory texture.” Sharpness is thereupon restored to our vision.¹¹⁷ On Shklovsky’s view, the threat of “habitualization” is not restricted to its devouring our possessions, relations, and endeavours; it can likewise afflict our emotions.

We can infer from this that if we are stuck in unconscious mode, and if we take relationships, endeavours, and emotions to be indispensable to living a full life, we are not really living. This brings us to the primary connection between poetry and reality, since “it is a function of poetry,” writes Stacy, “to concern itself with and to reveal the haecceity, the quiddity of reality,” a view that evolves into the Schellingian idea that Shklovsky endorses, according to

¹¹⁷ *Russian Formalism* (The Hague: Mouton, 1969, p. 177), quoted by Stacy, *DLL*, p. 33.

which art is understood to function cognitively, revealing “social, moral, and historical truths” (*DLL*, pp. 35-6).¹¹⁸

We find ourselves, then, at what Stacy identifies as the second fundament to Shklovsky’s conception of defamiliarization, namely, its linguistic relation to “a semantic shift.” Elaborating, Shklovsky says that poets take “a concept out of its former setting and [transfer] it verbally (metaphorically) to another setting and we feel the novelty of the object in its new setting.”¹¹⁹ As Stacy points out, this seems a roundabout way of noting there is a metaphorical process at work.

The third element of Shklovsky’s explanation is the seemingly paradoxical claim that defamiliarization familiarizes.¹²⁰ Stacy resolves this “ambiguity in Shklovsky’s application of *ostranenie*” by stating that successful defamiliarization “brings to our recognition a new or different or more striking vision...” (pp. 48-9). Addressing the use of metaphor in non-literary contexts, he argues that when philosophers, scientists, political theorists, and others employ metaphor, they do so to familiarize, that is, to clarify a concept which is otherwise difficult to comprehend. However, such uses also defamiliarize insofar as they provide new, different, or unusual perspectives on the subject matter (p. 90). Verging towards the other extreme, fragmentary and even opaque defamiliarization can serve to clarify in the same multifaceted way. Here again, Stacy provides support for the governing thesis of our own inquiry, since he suggests that, in this sense, the “whole” of a particular fragmentary Ezra Pound poem, like “many other apparently ‘unfinished’ works of art,” is, in fact, a metaphor (63).

Admitting that he uses the term defamiliarization “to cover a very broad range of linguistic and literary phenomena,” Stacy addresses the potential criticism that this stretches the

¹¹⁸ Stacy notes that the prominence of Schelling’s influence in Shklovsky is matched only by that of Kant’s.

¹¹⁹ *O teorii prozy* (Moscow, 1929), quoted by Stacy, *DLL*, p. 41.

¹²⁰ From Stacy’s perspective, this alleged problem amounts to a mere verbal dispute (p. 49).

term past its breaking point, arguing that it does not follow from a concept's being subject to varied interpretations that it ceases to be "meaningful and useful." Moreover, defamiliarization is, from its inception, "seen and meant to be of broad significance," so much so that it applies to language itself (p. 172). Thus, Stacy cites George Steiner's comment in *After Babel* that "Language is the main instrument of man's refusal to accept the world as it is."¹²¹ Any yet, reiterating his first anticipation of this objection, Stacy suggests that "not every phenomenon, literary or other, invites or involves defamiliarization" (173). What makes any phenomenon noteworthy as far as defamiliarization goes, then, is an aspect of what constitutes "great" works of art, namely, the genius embodied in them.

At this point, Stacy's elaboration of defamiliarization raises an interesting issue, namely, where does "language" end? For him, it appears, there would not be much that we are unable to "defamiliarize." In fact, we seem able to defamiliarize as readily by action as by recourse to phonemes, let alone intelligibly formulated expressions, whether spoken or written. Stacy clarifies his position, saying that just as "metaphor" may be applied "in either a very general or very particular sense, so defamiliarization may have either a very broad and general meaning, referring to *any situation* in which the familiar is rendered unfamiliar, or it may be used in literature and the other arts for various specific purposes" (p. 174, emphasis added). In fact, defamiliarization's notable extent proves to be one of its virtues, as it reinforces the view that this "common element" is epistemologically genuine (178).

If metaphor has a symbolic function, however, defamiliarization is a different, though integral, function (p. 174). Still, these respective functions may simply be different aspects of the same process. For instance, Stacy distinguishes two ways in which similes and metaphors may

¹²¹ Steiner (New York: OUP, 1976, pp. 217-8), quoted by Stacy, *DLL*, p. 172.

defamiliarize. We can compare two seemingly incomparable things, or we can compare “recondite, cryptic, or occult” things of which people generally would have no knowledge. The “essential difference” between the two is that “the former type requires primarily imagination and poetic vision, the latter primarily esoteric or at least uncommon learning. The former type is the forerunner of pure metaphor and imagery of the best kind, the latter is the model of what might often be called *Professorenpoesie*” (p. 77; see also p. 81). Regardless, in both cases, the underlying assumption is that metaphors *defamiliarize*.

Granted, this schema can very easily breed confusion, which Stacy himself addresses when he reaffirms that his aim is not so much to present a “systematic” account of defamiliarization as it is to illustrate the extent to which its forms of application vary (p. 174).¹²² In any case, “much more important than classification,” he says, “is the critical evaluation of how well or ill the device of defamiliarization and its variety of effects are employed” (p. 176). Here again, the question becomes, how do we do so?

Stacy hardly expects his answer to be considered “an elaborate theory of evaluation.” Nevertheless, recalling Goodman, he identifies “appropriateness” as the foremost standard for such judgments. More specifically, he writes, “our criteria for judging how well or effectively defamiliarization is used should be: discretion, moderation, consistency, and—most important of all—appropriateness (since even indiscretion, immoderation, and inconsistency are at times appropriate)” (p. 177). This emphasis on fittingness reminds us of Groarke’s modest claims on

¹²² Stacy offers the proviso that, if he were to focus more on the alternative aim, he would “be strongly tempted to consider defamiliarization not generically but, like symbolism, as a species of irony—irony here being taken in its broadest sense” (p. 174). Hegel, he says, specifies this meaning when he states that irony “works through the wit and play of wholly personal points of view, and if carried to an extreme amounts to the triumph of the creative power of the artist’s soul over every content and every form” (quoted by Stacy, p. 175). We might be further confused by Stacy’s subsequent contention that examples of parody are instances of defamiliarization. But it seems safe to say that, even if we are no closer to a ready-made reference chart of how these miscellaneous phenomena are related in terms of species and genus, there is no contradiction in viewing an example as polysemous, inasmuch as it is all at once a parody, an instance of defamiliarization, and a metaphor.

the subject. If we recall Ricoeur as well, this standard of evaluation may seem insufficient for making such judgments, since he suggests that “appropriateness” falls short of “an air of rightness.” The issue, here, however, is that the relevant sense of “appropriateness” is equivocal. For Stacy’s evaluative tools both allow more leeway for the metaphor under consideration to be “appropriate” and, ultimately, presuppose a conception of defamiliarization more akin, in effect at least, to Ricoeur’s theory of metaphor than to Goodman’s.

Bemoaning how “a general lack of taste” and an “inappropriateness in matching language to theme ... [is] more than common in all the literatures of the world,” Stacy contends that the majority of attempts at defamiliarization can not be so characterized (178). In a summary of his findings, however, he paints a more promising picture, presenting a wider perspective on defamiliarization (and, by extension, metaphor) that culminates in the kind of ironic defiance that any student of history can appreciate:

One need not, in order to recognize the applicability of the term and the concept, believe that man has always been ready in all of his activities to deceive himself and others, although a sympathy with this idea helps. But certainly man seems always to have longed for a new and different vision of things and the world. The theologian who attempts to invest man’s pitiful and precarious condition with transcendental significance is defamiliarizing reality as surely as the housewife does so when from time to time, and often to the chagrin of her husband, she rearranges the furniture or the garden, although of course the orders of value—not to mention the effects—may be quite different. The theories of Galileo, Harvey, Darwin, Freud, and Einstein defamiliarized and ultimately replaced traditional views, their motivation being essentially the same as that of the writer who likens a dam to a comb smoothing a Russian river, even though, again, there may be major differences on a scale of values. Defamiliarization, then, may be used for many purposes and it does many things: it amuses, saddens, angers, astonishes, ridicules, enchants, puzzles, and in some cases heralds discoveries that change our lives and alter history. And it may also wreak havoc, one of the most pernicious forms of defamiliarization being the deification of the state, an entity no more suitable (as Toynbee suggests) for being turned into a focus of emotion or an object of worship than a gas- or water-works. (p. 178)¹²³

¹²³ For a lively reassessment of the widely held assumption that Freud belongs on this list, see Frederick Crews, *Freud: The Making of an Illusion* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2017).

This conclusion clarifies two things. First, defamiliarization may be linked to language, but, as the adage that actions speak volumes suggests, language is not restricted to verbal utterance. Consequently, it is always possible for us to perform or appreciate defamiliarization at any given time and by any type of action, a fortunate state of affairs given the importance of it to our overcoming negative unconscious habits and obstacles to perception.¹²⁴ Second, we can infer from this another way of considering literary works as complex metaphors, since whether accidentally, or intentionally, the overall action conveyed by a book may very well defamiliarize in any number of the ways Stacy cites. Furthermore, while one might object that viewing everything as a potential source of defamiliarization seems to erode the relevance of the idea that literary works can be complex metaphors, Stacy mitigates the force of this objection by conceding that defamiliarizing functions are, at times, entirely irrelevant considerations. If this does not entirely overturn the objection, the way he discusses evaluating instances of defamiliarization further alleviates any concern. For he manages there to emphasize not only how such metaphors *fit* the context in which they defamiliarize, but also that they furnish a perspective that may, as he says, “change our lives and alter history.”¹²⁵

2.5

The Role of Metaphor in Speculative Thought

Before we conclude our examination of Ricoeur’s contributions to the theory of metaphor, let us return to the question broached at the end of section 2.1: what does Ricoeur’s defense of

¹²⁴ Cf. Shibles, p. 15.

¹²⁵ Donoghue likely has this in mind when he says, “The best metaphors are revolutionary, not merely descriptive—although descriptions too may be revelations” (*Metaphor*, p. 51).

metaphor leave us with? According to Martin, one thing Ricoeur's analysis makes abundantly clear is that the quarrel Plato refers to between philosophy and rhetoric is still going strong, since Ricoeur assigns literary metaphors a subordinate role to those found in "speculative discourse," which reveal the "true nature of being" (p. 766). Indeed, seeking a connection between metaphor and conceptual articulation, Ricoeur seems to find a way forward, which is no small feat.

On Ricoeur's view, various philosophers in the Western tradition elaborate the same metaphors, yet in most instances direct our attention to essences that are independent of the meanings that these metaphors are widely taken to signify. How can they do so? For Ricoeur, this has to do with the very possibility of philosophical discourse. That is to say, such communication is possible largely because concepts remain accessible, as thoughts, even when the metaphors through which they are expressed die. For this reason, Ricoeur also holds that we can "dispel the paradox of the metaphoricity of all definitions of metaphor" (*RM*, 293).

He proceeds:

Speaking metaphorically of metaphor is not at all circular, since the act of positing the concept proceeds dialectically from metaphor itself. Thus, when Aristotle defines metaphor as the *epiphora* of the word, the expression *epiphora* is qualified conceptually by its insertion in a network of intersignifications, where the notion of *epiphora* is bounded by the primary concepts *phusis*, *logos*, *onoma*, *sêmeinein*, etc. *Epiphora* is thus separated from its metaphorical status and constituted as a proper meaning, although 'the whole surface of [this discourse],' as Derrida says, 'is worked by metaphor'.... The subsequent determination of the concept of metaphor contributes to this conceptual conversion of dead metaphor underlying the expression *epiphora*. It does so either by the method of differentiation, which allows one to distinguish among various strategies of *lexis*, or by exemplification, which provides an inductive basis for the concept of the operation indicated. Let us add that the conceptualization of different metaphors is aided not only by the lexicalization of the metaphors employed, as in the case of the vocable 'transposition,' but also by the rejuvenation of worn-out metaphor, which places the heuristic use of living metaphor in the service of conceptual formation. This is true of other metaphors for metaphor evoked so frequently in the present work: screen, filter, lens, superimposition, overload, stereoscopic vision, tension, interanimation, change of labels, idyll and bigamy, etc. Nothing prevents the fact of language that metaphor constitutes from being 'redescribed' with the help of the various 'heuristic fictions' produced sometimes by new living metaphors, sometimes by worn-out metaphors that

have been revived. Far from admitting the concept of metaphor to be only the idealization of its own worn-out metaphor, the rejuvenation of all dead metaphors and the invention of new living metaphors that redescribe metaphor allow a new conceptual production to be grafted onto the metaphorical production itself. (*RM*, pp. 293-4)

While Ricoeur draws together many themes of his work in this impressive display, the basic point is clear: “speculative thought employs the metaphorical resources of language in order to create meaning ...” (*RM*, p. 310). We are left, then, with grounds for viewing metaphor as an ineluctable process that undergirds speculative philosophy itself.

And yet, Ricoeur insists, speculative thought does not merge with poetry. In other words, the metaphors of the poet are distinct from those of the philosopher. Concerning Heidegger’s juxtaposition of poetic and philosophical discourse in *Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens*, he remarks that, just as poems are not the ornamental servants of philosophical aphorisms, so the latter are not translations of the former (p. 310). As Ricoeur understands the difference, “it falls to speculative discourse to articulate, with its own resources, what is assumed spontaneously by the storyteller” who tells a story that both *is* and *is not* (p. 256). If this distinction appears idiosyncratic, a more compelling alternative is available from Groarke, specifically his arguments concerning the aphorism’s place among philosophical genres.¹²⁶ Like proverbs, aphorisms use metaphorical language and are, as L. David Ritchie explains, metaphorical descriptions of certain situations.¹²⁷ For Groarke, this “art of terse expression” is, in fact, a “venerable, if neglected, tradition in epistemology” (“Philosophy as Inspiration,” p. 393).

As Groarke remarks, Gary Saul Morson is the foremost figure in recent times to have taken seriously the philosophical import of the aphorism, situating it “within a catalog of short

¹²⁶ Groarke elaborates this defense of the aphorism in his article “Philosophy as Inspiration.” For complementary and fascinating studies on the relation of style to thought, see the anthology *Literary Form, Philosophical Content: Historical Studies of Philosophical Genres* (Madison and Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2010, eds. Jonathan Lavery and Louis Groarke).

¹²⁷ See *RM*, p. 330, fn.46; *Metaphorical Stories in Discourse* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2017, p. vii).

prose forms that includes quotations, riddles, dicta, maxims, proverbs, slogans, witticisms, and epigrams” (p. 395).¹²⁸ Of great importance to Morson’s account is the contrast between aphorism and dictum. Although he does not directly allude to Nietzsche, notes Groarke, his applying this distinction to *Oedipus Rex* dovetails with the interpretation of such works as “a clash between Dionysian and Apollonian impulses” (pp. 396-7). Morson apparently understands aphorism and dictum to represent, respectively, “a Dionysian worldview that gestures toward the insufficiency of explanation” and “a competing Apollonian worldview that self-confidently proclaims the sufficiency of explanation” (p. 397).

On Groarke’s evaluation, Morson’s efforts are helpful, especially to the extent that they impose a taxonomical framework on literary terms that are frequently applied “loosely, ambiguously, and even interchangeably” (p. 397). Yet he takes issue with Morson’s account, in particular the portrayal of this central contrast between aphorism and dictum as “a general and programmatic distinction of mutually exclusive types” (p. 398). We can, Groarke insists, read terse expressions as aphorisms in one light, and as dicta in another. Thus, we need not characterize aphorisms as “inherently skeptical” or “epistemologically opaque.”

In the same vein, Groarke argues that we can arrive at a better theoretical account of the aphorism by dramatically revising Morson’s account, giving special attention to “aphoristic consciousness,” which Morson himself identifies as a central component. Applying the Aristotelian schema of the four causes, Groarke concludes that this “mentality, aptitude, or

¹²⁸ If aphorisms are metaphors, then Morson’s appreciation of Tolstoy’s *War and Peace* as “the longest aphorism in the world” lends further support to the present thesis (Morson “Bakhtin, the Genres of Quotation, and Aphoristic Consciousness” (*Slavic and East European Journal* 50 [1]: 213-27, 2006, p. 226), quoted by Groarke, “Philosophy as Inspiration,” p. 400).

attitude” is the efficient cause of aphorisms (pp. 401-2). Essentially, Groarke is anticipating, here, the view of induction that he defends in *An Aristotelian Account of Induction*.¹²⁹

Citing the lavish array of aphorisms provided by Diogenes Laertius in his *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, Groarke observes how far such memorable remarks fall outside the scope of what, in contemporary times, we take to constitute philosophical analysis. That is, notwithstanding how these terse expressions illuminate situations “and (usually) the human condition generally,” they are not “inference tracking in the analytical sense” (p. 413). Groarke adapts Diogenes’ work to counter another of Morson’s claims, namely, that witticisms and repartees are also distinct from aphorisms. What this view ignores, Groarke says, is that all three types of remark “originate from the same efficient cause,” falling, along with dicta, into the same “overarching category” of cognitive experience, that of aphoristic consciousness (p. 414).

Groarke thereby provides us with a way to consider a given metaphor as polysemous, in the sense of an expression inspired by aphoristic consciousness that may be in equal parts aphorism and dictum, no less than witticism and repartee, which draws our inquiry back to the twin methodological and conceptual challenges of sorting out which uses of language are literal and which figurative. Approaching this range of issues in such a way, however, is not unique in this day and age. Martin reports that, in modern theories, the figural use of metaphor, which assimilates all other tropes, models, analogies, and narrative methods, “leads back to the question of whether the literal and the figurative can properly be distinguished from one another at all” (p. 765). Of course, we naturally contrast the immediacy of expository writing with the mediacy of

¹²⁹ “The aphorisms embody an intelligence,” writes Groarke, “that seeks to discover reality in a legitimate scientific spirit; but each aphorism proceeds not by moving through premises to a conclusion that is only *logically* connected to experience but by a sudden intuitive grasp that takes in the situation as a whole and, in an inexplicable bout of mental inspiration, expresses the essence of the matter” (p. 409). Further, the beauty of appreciating aphorisms as philosophical is that they can be “independent but thematically overlapping” (ibid.).

poetics, where, as Sister Miriam records, “communication occurs through characters and situations,” and, we might add, metaphor (*The Trivium*, p. 280, fn.14).

An analogy may help. Consider the inductive-deductive interplay involved in the production of an overarching metaphor. In certain cases, an author may *induce* the grand metaphor that, over the course of a book, he or she is attempting to convey without quite saying, while nevertheless applying *ratio* in an effort to order his or her tale so it can be communicated. As Groarke explains of moral reasoning, we might induce, for example, the concept of courage and, subsequently, “deduce a means of being courageous” (*AAI*, p. 239). Similarly, we can imagine a writer recognizing, or even grasping through a moment of *epagoge*, some concept or principle that he or she wishes to indicate and proceeding to determine deductively how to achieve this goal.

Narrative complexity no doubt occurs on many different levels and at many different stages. So, we may, in this example, go back and forth between inductive and deductive flashes of insight and bouts of reasoning, to the extent that it is hard to distinguish the one from the other. I will argue that the same goes for figurative and literal interpretations of narrative elements.

At this point, we may wonder whether metaphor invariably conveys, or rather constitutes, thought. According to Brett, Coleridge anticipates this very question, holding that there are cases where “symbols match the thought so exactly that the symbols and the thought they symbolize are virtually inseparable” (p. 55).¹³⁰ This prompts a further question, namely, is metaphor reducible? Ardent semantic theorists of metaphor, we know, will respond that complex

¹³⁰ “For this reason,” adds Brett, “Coleridge distinguished symbol from allegory,” suggesting that we define symbol as being part of the very whole of which it is a representative; such symbols are not allegorical “figures” on his view, but rather “Portraits” and “Ideals”—these being the characters in the given work (pp. 55-6; cf. Tolkien).

metaphors, at the very least, cannot be treated in this manner without some loss of meaning, or, as we might prefer, without limiting a person's chances of experiencing a living metaphor heuristically.

Although no semantic theorist of metaphor, Baxter echoes this point contrasting "visionary eloquence" with false insight, and referring, "with unease if not contempt, to 'discursive' insight, as well as discursive rhetoric, morality or enlightenment. To count as discursive," MacKinnon elaborates, "an insight is reducible to its content, its meaning or message. Rather than prompting genuine experience, it becomes a mere 'vehicle of opinions'" (MacKinnon, pp. 15-6).¹³¹ For Baxter, MacKinnon continues, "recourse to metaphor enriches our appreciation of [the thing itself], and can do so indefinitely" (p. 20). This generous view of metaphor is familiar enough. MacKinnon cites Donoghue, for instance, who, like Baxter, prefers "to regard the relation between objects and the figurative resources of language as a further manifestation of the tension between identity and potential."

To appreciate better this sort of tension, let us briefly consider a literary example from Steve Rune Lundin's novel *Toll the Hounds*, in which one tribal culture is described as believing that their rune-like symbol for "grief" has a precise meaning, even though it has "countless layers" that only "those who in life come to face it directly" may understand.¹³² Clearly, no less than the line between the literal and the figurative, that between identity and potential blurs time and time again. The meaning of "grief" may be exact, but its capacity for representing or eliciting a broad range of thought, emotion, and experience recalls the semantic view. Complex

¹³¹ The common feature of false insights and narrative forms that Baxter criticizes is "their intolerance of ambiguity, their aversion to entertaining new and distinct perspectives on previously encountered characters and situations" (p. 16). As MacKinnon infers, Baxter's opponent here is really edification, including "the false clarity of 'neat explanations.'"

¹³² *Toll the Hounds* (London and Toronto: Bantam Books, 2008, p. 1254).

metaphors, whether located in a phrase, sentence, or work, or even constituted by a facet of our lives, somehow *resist* reductive impulses. Since it may be futile to establish this point by citing examples outside the experience of whomever we are attempting to persuade, perhaps another argumentative strategy is in order, namely, that of vicarious appreciation.

As profound as this issue is, there are a few observations to make about the power of the vicarious connection that may allow us to conclude our discussion of metaphor and speculative thought. If we are unable to convince someone of a point, Haidt says, it may not be because we have failed on rational grounds. Rather, it could be because we are trying to talk to the “rider,” when we ought to be seeking an appointment with the “elephant.” The metaphor of the rider and the elephant features prominently in Haidt’s work. The elephant, those impulses naturally deriving from our instinctive precautionary mode of being, is what drives our behaviour, while our “rationality” is along for the ride, although this rider directs the elephant sometimes, especially during *post hoc* justifications of behaviour. Perhaps, then, conveying thoughts in an expository way is not likely to provide sufficient incentive to garner the elephant’s attention. Instead, the elephant loves a good story, which suggests a role for the beauty of mediate communication.

Directing our communication to the elephant in a way that establishes rapport manages to seize attention and build a relationship in which the person (recall the “elephant” here is “just” a metaphor) becomes invested in what is being said. In this scenario, we begin to see things more clearly. Consider, by way of illustration, two popular examples, the cult classic films *Ed TV* and *The Truman Show*. In both cases, the protagonists in the films are so beloved that audiences *live* vicariously through them. What is even more fascinating, however, is that the fictional audience members in these films, like us, somehow see more clearly those issues that bear on a given

protagonist's situation. If we are lucky, this may even lead to the grasping of truth, an outcome that, whether valuable or not, is unbidden, and a point upon which Tolkien's conception of the applicability of story, Groarke's work on induction, and Ricoeur's on feeling converge.

Maybe such happy states of affairs are possible in virtue of how metaphor lets us overcome our blind spots. As Stacy might say, familiarity is a constant cycle that hinders even as it helps. We see the example, which, even if it *is not* in some literal sense, nevertheless may *be* in some other fruitful turning of the imagination. There may be no actual Truman out there, but there *is* a "Truman" that lives on in a metaphor and applies beyond the context of the example itself, leading back to the situation that we find ourselves in to begin with. Thus, can we not conclude that taking a detour to greet the elephant and perhaps enthrall it with a story may not be so far removed from starting a conversation?

History itself, as a discipline, seems to warrant such a course of action, for the basic premise is to illustrate one's reasoning by way of concrete example, such that the reviewer of such evidence may undergo a heuristic experience. Of course, even here we will want to object: but the historian arrives at an expository *point!* Yet the historian does not arrive there without some help from metaphor, I would argue, nor will those who follow the narrative through to the end. That is to say, historians must arrange their material *to speak for itself*.

Why can this mode not be both mediate and immediate?¹³³ If the contradiction is only semantic, it seems reasonable to proceed on the understanding that, in fact, language can be both expository and metaphorical in the same instance, and perhaps is all the more powerful because of this. Vicarious appreciation underscores this power, since, paradoxically, it puts us in a more *reasonable* state. Therefore, it is not just that, as Ricoeur insists, metaphor initiates the

¹³³ Pushing this further, who is to say that a metaphorical interpretation of history is inferior to a literal one in each and every case?

conceptual articulation we associate with speculative thought. It also serves to encourage an attitude capable of such rationality in thinking and communication.

3

The Significance of Heuristic Moments for Philosophy

For this is an experience which is characteristic of a philosopher, this wondering: this is where philosophy begins and nowhere else. And the man who made Iris the child of Thaumias was perhaps no bad genealogist.

Plato¹

Clearly, neglecting complex metaphor is a problem when it comes to developing a theory of metaphor. We have seen why theories that take such intricate phenomena into account are more convincing than those that do not, since they better capture how heuristic moments function in acts of discovery, moments of understanding, and renewal. This puts us in a position to suggest several worthwhile directions in which our inquiry might proceed. What, after all, are the implications of our investigation of metaphor thus far? Let us focus on three general areas, in aesthetics, ethics, and education. Establishing these connections as promising avenues of future development will suffice for our purposes.

3.1

The Beauty of Metaphor

What beauty is for the eyes and harmony for the ears, the conceit is for the understanding.

Mere understanding without wit or conceit is a sun without light, without rays....

Baltasar y Morales Gracian²

¹ *Theaetetus* 155d, trans. M. J. Levett, rev. Myles Burnyeat.

² Quoted in Shibles, p. 119.

Lamenting how Christians (himself “as much as any”) forget the beauty underlying *Genesis* “even ‘as a story,’” Tolkien insists that “the beauty of the story while not necessarily a guarantee of its truth is a concomitant of it, and a *fidelis* is meant to draw nourishment from the beauty as well as the truth” (*Letters*, p. 109). In her arguments concerning the relation between the beauty of a work and the public debate that it inspires, Hilde Hein registers a similar insight, noting that what she calls the “critical colloquy” that surround artworks are sources of “multiple meaning and communicative exchange.”³ To illustrate her point, she cites the example of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, saying that it “manages to work as public art both in the traditional sense that it occupies public space and memorializes a public event, and in the current sense that it questions the meaning of that space and that event and draws the public into intelligent discourse with it. In doing this, it brings an additional aspect of publicity into focus, that it is multiform and multivalent, recalling that the forum is a place for debate – and not just a site for communion or collective affirmation.” Furthermore, she advises, “we should not expect consensus” in these circumstances (“What is public art?,” p. 412).⁴ It is such considerations, far more than a work’s mere public setting, that renders the work public *at all* (p. 411).

Hein is not alone in appreciating aesthetic merit that functions in this manner. And yet, her account fails to acknowledge the significance of metaphor in this process, whereas others do.

³ See “What is public art?: time, place, and meaning” in *Arguing About Art: Contemporary Philosophical Debates* (London and New York: Routledge, ed. Alex Neill and Aaron Ridley, 3rd edition, 2008, pp. 411-3).

⁴ Cf. Zwicky, p. 116 Left: “The real discovery is not the one that will let us stop doing philosophy when we want to. Philosophy is thinking in love with clarity; and such thinking, in itself, is not a source of problems. What will not let us rest is the thought that what is clear must also be single; we are addicted to the elimination of ambiguity. If a thing is *truly* the path down, we think, it cannot also truly be the path up; at least one of these, we say, must be merely an appearance. / But this is not to think clearly. It is to fail to attend to what experience shows. It is to stop short of wisdom, which recognizes clarities that non-metaphorical language cannot render. Different wholes occupy the same space. / The real discovery is the one that will let philosophy resume thinking metaphorically when it needs to.” There seems an affinity between “thinking metaphorically in philosophy” and appreciating the multivalence and multiformity of public art.

As Shiff muses, “public representation of private experience must depend on a medium or metaphor; a public art is never the equivalent of individual experience but aspires to attain that status through the perfection of its technique. As the medium which separates art from life experience is perfected, it becomes transparent: we see through it as if it were not there; we pass immediately from life to art, art to life. The ultimately successful work of art would employ a metaphor *not recognizable* as such” (p. 114, emphasis added). As it happens, Shiff, an art historian, also demonstrates how readily some students of art would welcome our overriding interest in complex metaphors when he insists that “at any given time all artistic expression is governed by a particular mode of vision or constellation of visual forms, as if they were seen through a single grand metaphor” (p. 113). Of course, Shiff’s angle seems to run aslant to Hein’s, for his emphasis is more on how different artworks exhibit certain principles in virtue of being seen through the same metaphor.

In any event, there is plenty of support for the claim that metaphor bears on art. Shibles describes his own project on the subject as “an investigation into the art of metaphor and an attempt to make clear the many aspects of that art” (p. 1). We can say, with him, that there is certainly “an art to making metaphors, seeing the world metaphorically, living metaphorically, and living metaphors.” Patrick Rothfuss’ fascinating novella, *The Slow Regard of Silent Things*, offers ample confirmation of this claim.⁵ This short book, hailed by some readers who have been diagnosed with mental and behavioural disorders as the closest literary approximation of their own experiences, tracks the protagonist, Aurri, through daily rituals in which she does not

⁵ This novel provides more support than this for the present inquiry. In fact, Rothfuss’ demonstration of such forms of art in this novella becomes, as Samuel Chapman suggests, an overarching metaphor for Rothfuss’ own meticulous approach to writing (<https://www.tor.com/2019/04/15/five-years-on-theres-still-nothing-like-the-slow-regard-of-silent-things/>). If there were a musical theme song to this story the producers would do well to select Radiohead’s *Everything in Its Right Place*. For every little piece of the story is clearly arranged with purpose, a methodology mirrored by the actions of the protagonist herself. In any event, Chapman’s appreciation of the work as a metaphor reminds us once again of the need for theories of metaphor to be able to account for this.

interact with any other person.⁶ More importantly, she treats material objects in a symbolic manner while going about her adventures with a subtle intensity. If Shibles' claim seems tenuous that whistling or arranging flowers in vases amounts to being "engaged in the art of metaphor," Rothfuss' heroine, Aurri, lends support to this view. For she refracts this notion through her very mode of being, including the way in which she perceives the world around her.

3.2 *Virtue Ethics: Clarifying Heuristics*

Beyond being worthy of aesthetic appreciation, complex metaphor has an ethical component. Specifically, metaphor provides a resource for answering what is, from the point of view of virtue ethics, the most important ethical question, namely, how do we become good people? Of course, nowadays we discuss experiential learning, to which metaphoric competence is central, as a matter of course, but this pedagogical perspective owes much to Aristotle. Let us briefly consider the relevance of both metaphor and metaphoric competence to the Aristotelian formulation of virtue ethics.

On Aristotle's account, morality is about knowing *and* doing (AAI, p. 227). Furthermore, we rely on both moral induction and moral deduction, inducing an understanding of virtue, then deducing the means to achieve it (AAI, p. 238). Action, though, is not restricted to the latter process, since beyond virtuous action being imperative, we acquire knowledge of virtue through actions themselves, as often as not by failing over and over again, until we grasp the common thread of our failings and aspire to do better. Underpinning this view is the desire to ensure that

⁶ See the discussion forum generated by Jo Walton's "*The Slow Regard of Silent Things* Part 1: A Seemly Place" (<https://www.tor.com/2015/03/19/rothfuss-reread-the-slow-regard-of-silent-things-part-1/>).

we develop both a theoretical understanding of virtue and those practical reasoning skills, which Aristotle associates with *arete*, that allow us to put this knowledge to work. Since we know that metaphor is instrumental to induction, the connection between metaphor and ethics is clear. But there is much more to be said about the overlap between these two fields.

For instance, the emphasis in virtue ethics on character development underscores the importance of metaphoric competence. This ethical tradition insists upon four aspects of morality, the cardinal virtues of temperance (moderation), fortitude (courage), practical wisdom (prudence), and justice.⁷ We come to an awareness—in some cases even a modicum of understanding—of these principles through metaphorically competent reflection upon our past experiences, as well as when we grapple with the overarching metaphors of texts. These foremost virtues, on the classical pre-Christian view, are either isolated traits of character or contributing factors to every instance of moral behaviour (*Moral Reasoning*, pp. 209-10). If, as I would argue, the latter of these options is the case, and if, as I argue above, works of art constitute overarching metaphors that can elicit heuristic experience of these virtues, then we have further evidence of vital connections between metaphor and ethics.

Of course, this ought to go without saying. Virtue ethicists place considerable emphasis on the importance of moral exemplars, whom we ought to imitate in order to become virtuous.⁸

And yet, imitation is not enough. Eventually, we need to emulate these paragons of virtue if we

⁷ See Groarke, *Moral Reasoning: Rediscovering the Ethical Tradition* (Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 2011, p. 209ff.).

⁸ *Moral Reasoning*, pp. 60-1ff.; Rosalind Hursthouse, “Virtue Theory and Abortion” in *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2265432>; Wiley, Vol. 20, No. 3 [Summer, 1991], p. 219); John Doris, “Persons, Situations, and Virtue Ethics,” in *Noûs* (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2671873>; Wiley, Vol. 32, No. 4 [Dec., 1998], p. 518). And that is all there is to the process, as many critics of the view would have it (Hursthouse, pp. 220-1). Doris is an example of such a critic. Although he acknowledges both “emulation” and “advice” models available to the virtue ethics approach, he regards both as lacking, to the extent that they encourage us to base our decisions on what the virtuous person would do without recourse to what situationist research dictates (pp. 518-20). In fact, he says that acting on such a basis can be, and often is, morally dangerous, since it is not difficult to imagine a person with a sufficiently robust moral psychology to qualify as an exemplar, such that for others to attempt to act in such a manner will often lead to disaster.

are to be truly virtuous ourselves. Furthermore, we need to *understand* the virtue in the associated behaviour, along with actually transforming this knowledge into action by *doing* virtuous things. If the moral exemplars we encounter in life or in literature show us how to *begin* being virtuous, the onus is on us to grasp how the metaphor of a moral exemplar's actions applies to our own circumstances.

Moreover, unless we take such metaphors to heart, unless we come to *live* these very models in our own unique ways, we are, as Plato says, restricted in our understanding of virtue. For it is unlikely that we have attained the self-mastery necessary to behave justly towards others, given that, in the absence of self-mastery, our appetitive and irascible desires, our fears, and even our selfish rationalizations are allowed to influence our behaviour. Classical theories of justice, like Plato's, represent a significant break from many contemporary ethical theories. The virtue ethicist is not satisfied with an emphasis on negative liberty, since it is not enough to be free from the interference of others.⁹ We need to extricate ourselves from the chains of our routine thought and behaviour, no matter whether they are imposed on us by others, or the result of our own poor decisions and habits. Meanwhile, interference may itself be moral, in spite of how, from the standpoint of liberal individualism, metaphoric sources of inspiration that shake us out of self-centredness can be construed as a form of personal invasion.

We find ourselves returning, then, to the importance of complex metaphor. Emulation of exemplars profoundly affects our lives. But this presupposes metaphoric competence. Booker nicely conveys this in concluding his discussion of what stories tell us.

⁹ It is well established that there are problems with thinking that negative liberty is enough. See Edward Feser, "Spinoza on Final Causes"; William Sweet and Hendrik Hart, *Responses to the Enlightenment: An Exchange on Foundations, Faith, and Community*, p. 150; and Louis Groarke, "What is Freedom? Why Christianity and Theoretical Liberalism Cannot Be Reconciled." That is not to say, however, that this stance is either new or unchallenged. Cf. William Sweet, *Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, pp. 4-5; and Michael J. Sandel, *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?*, pp. 8-9.

The only words for which no dictionary seems to provide the original root idea are in a way the most important of all: those words ‘hero’ or ‘heroine’ themselves. But, after many years ... I am convinced that, lost in the mists of history, they must be closely related in some way to our word ‘heir.’ In other words, the hero or the heroine is he or she who is born to inherit; who is worthy to succeed; who must grow up as fit to take on the torch of life from those who went before. (*The Seven Basic Plots*, p. 702)

The manner in which moral exemplars afford us guidance is not communicated strictly in literal terms. Hence, once again, the importance of metaphoric competence. For if we grant that exemplary action communicates both mediately and immediately, then we can broaden our perception of these actions, thereby confirming what we have concluded above about figurative and literal uses of language.

Even if we have established that metaphor plays a vital role in virtue ethics, what about virtue ethics itself? Is it a viable theory, let alone guide to life? The exhortation of virtue ethicists that we develop our character and heed the examples of others is challenged by “situationism.”¹⁰ This movement, spearheaded by John Doris, pervades the literature, attacking what its advocates denounce as an outdated reliance on the notion that character serves us in good stead in extenuating circumstances. Without entering into the nuances of this theory, let us briefly consider its central claim, that the “heuristics” of situationist research suggest that people are rarely able to act virtuously, which appears to contradict the virtue ethicist’s advice to learn for oneself by imitating the conduct of an exemplar. Simply put, we cannot develop robust character traits. Thus, according to the situationist, we should not rely on our character, but learn from empirical psychological research so that we become aware of those factors that can hinder ethical decision-making, and subsequently do our best to avoid them.

¹⁰ In an unpublished paper, presented at the 2018 Atlantic Region Philosophers’ Association conference, titled *The Character of Virtue Ethics: Unravelling the Implications from Moral Psychology*, I consider the situationist view and offer a response, arguing that moral psychology research does not debunk the traditional virtue ethics view in any definitive way. If anything, in fact, recent findings in the interdisciplinary field of moral psychology increase our appreciation of certain themes that virtue ethics prioritizes.

But how is this any less a heuristic process than learning through experience by following an exemplar? It is hardly as if, in cases of emulation, we cannot learn from past *failure* what does and does not work. Nor is it the case that we should avoid virtuous conduct in the face of a monumental challenge. If we fail to master bewildering situational forces, they will dominate our lives, directly or indirectly.

Here, the importance of defamiliarization becomes apparent. This is why Baxter recommends that we make a habit of defamiliarizing. If, as Stacy notes, habituation is inevitable, then the virtue ethics position is more plausible, because we have no choice but to rely on our character in unforeseen situations and, indeed, to work constantly at shaping it.

In fact, this is just one of the ways in which the study of metaphor bears on the study of ethics. For example, it is hard to imagine how we could conceive of a virtue like justice without thinking in metaphorical terms of the sort Black elaborates in his interaction view. If we are to assess what justice might entail in a given situation, we must broaden our perspective beyond the confines of our own background and self-interest, and consider the situation from the perspective of other people. We can, with Black, identify this process as thinking of one thing in terms of another, since it amounts to entertaining the situation from others' perspectives.

3.3 *Education and Freedom*

The most fruitful modern criticism is a rediscovery and recovery of the importance of metaphor.
C. Brooks¹¹

Therefore understanding that rests in what it does not understand is the finest.

Zhuāng Zi¹²

¹¹ "Metaphor and the Function of Criticism" *Spiritual Problems in Contemporary Literature*, ed. Stanley R. Hopper (New York: Harper and Brothers 1952), quoted in Shibles, pp. ix, and 60.

¹² *Chuang Tzu*, trans. Burton Watson, p. 44, quoted in Zwicky, p. 116 Right.

As hinted at in the last section, studying metaphor with a view to developing metaphoric competence ensures freedom in learning. Due to the heuristic requirements of grasping complex metaphors, we cannot be forced into understanding them. But we are free to come to an understanding of them, whether through independent reflection or the encouragement of others. What is more, when it comes to those complex metaphors that semantic theories focus on, they can be interpreted indefinitely, in a manner consistent with Hein's view of public art as an inexhaustible source of novel perspectives. Hence, there is a freedom in this as well. Let us now consider three points that elucidate the interconnections between, and freedom associated with, metaphor and learning.

First, metaphor is indispensable to teaching, though we ought to be discriminating in our reliance on it. Second, metaphor is an integral part of philosophy; in fact, some of the most enduring philosophies are erected upon and involve themselves in an examination of certain metaphors and, rather than giving us clear and definitive answers on such subjects, leave us with questions about them. And third, we can locate this latter phenomenon within the general idea of a liberal education itself. But what more can we say about these points?

Regarding the first point, the literature is rife with illustrations of how counterproductive it is to overload students with metalinguistic terminology. Here, we can assess the value of Shibles' claim that knowledge of metaphor's theoretical basis will help both artists and critics to understand the tension contained in their particular metaphors, to utilize, build and comment upon received metaphors, and to determine a metaphor's aptness. Shibles' point is compelling. However, the question lingers as to which theory of metaphor we are relying on, and whether it serves any purpose to apprise students about this.

But metaphor is more generally implicated in teaching. Studies demonstrate, for instance, that in second-language teaching encouraging a greater awareness of metaphor in learners speeds up the pace and depth of their vocabulary acquisition (Kövesces, p. 239). By now, of course, many theorists of metaphor regard metaphoric competence as an essential aspect of successful discourse.¹³ According to Kövesces, the relevance of metaphoric awareness to learning new languages is partially explained by the need to engage in “elaboration,” a broad range of cognitive activities involving deep thinking, comparison of lexical terms in one tongue with those of similar forms or meanings in another, and, especially, developing a mental picture of the term in question.

By “elaborating,” in this sense, we commit such lexical items to long-term memory, while our mental picture of them subsequently allows us an easy path to remembering their meaning (p. 240). Kövesces proceeds to suggest that etymological explanations are the epitome of how teachers can “enhance students’ metaphor awareness and ... stimulate elaboration (and thus retention in memory).” Metaphorical framing is a further element in this process. For adopting particular metaphors as principles of organization—that is, grouping lexical items by identifying metaphoric themes—connects novel subjects with those already familiar to us, thereby increasing our ability to explore whatever evaluative dimension underpins a given metaphorical phrase, the restrictions of its use (cf. Shibles), and how it is situated within either the history of the language in which it is uttered or the culture in which it is found (pp. 241-2).

This significance of metaphor in the context of teaching is instrumental to developing imagination. In his book *Radical Hope*, Jonathan Lear discusses Crow chieftain Plenty Coups’ sage recognition that imagination is vital to discovering new sources of meaning. Yet

¹³ See, for example, Kövesces’ explanation of M. Danesi’s related view (p. 238).

imagination is easier to develop from an early age. Examining particular metaphors in school, as well as learning elementary concepts of the metaphoric process itself, fosters such development. This point is more easily understood by considering once again Shippey's appreciation of Tolkien's metaphors: "in an age of individual authorship and defended copyright," words and images, when learned early or thoroughly, "become internalized, personal property rather than literary debt" (Shippey, 322). Just as exploring metaphor is crucial for learning new languages, so too is it crucial in developing our imagination, since once we have taken metaphors to heart it is easier for us to creatively apply the lessons derived from them.

The conceptual metaphor *ARGUMENT IS WAR* is a prime example of this, while at once demonstrating how important metaphor is to philosophy, since revamping this metaphor in students' minds is one of the most important preliminary tasks for an introductory instructor of philosophy. If we do not help students reorient their perspective on argument so that they welcome challenges from, as well as the criticisms of, others, then it becomes difficult to foster an environment in which serious philosophical debate and learning can proceed.

The most telling connection between philosophy and metaphor, though, lies in the origins of the very term "heuristic," the use of which as an adjective aptly applies to metaphoric competence. The *OED* cites the earliest English adaptation of this French word to the context of education as involving a description of the Socratic method as essentially heuristic, meaning a teaching style geared towards inciting students to seek the truth for themselves. As we have seen, recourse to metaphor can have precisely this aim.

And yet, it has been clear for quite some time that awareness of the importance of metaphor, no less than the heuristic value of philosophy, has been inhibited, if not forgotten, in some academic circles. According to Alan Bloom, the disappearance of religion from primary

learning, especially in the home, has diminished children's awareness of important themes.¹⁴ The most obvious drawback of abandoning the teaching of religious texts rich with metaphorical language is the erosion of the "imaginative existence" of both the commandments and the ideal of brotherly love. In such diminished conditions, nothing is provided "in the way of a vision of the world, of high models of action or profound sense of connection with others" (p. 57). As such, children are "raised," not "educated" (ibid.) But this does not necessarily amount to a religious point. The most important household learning, for Bloom, derives from parental recognition of "what has happened in the past, and prescriptions for what ought to be," such that children can better resist "the philistinism or the wickedness of the present." What Bloom is highlighting, here, is the distinction between a liberal and technical education.

Many would agree with him that the latter form of education does not necessarily teach anything about "morals, politics, and religion" (p. 59).¹⁵ For Bloom, unless we recognize "important questions of common concern, there cannot be serious liberal education, and attempts to establish it will be but failed gestures" (p. 343). The idea behind this style of education is to "provide the student with independent means to pursue permanent questions independently, as, for example, the study of Aristotle or Kant as wholes once did," giving students the sense that learning can be "synoptic" and "precise" at the same time. Moreover, proper liberal education fosters "the student's love for truth and passion to live a good life" (p. 345). Bloom proceeds to qualify this conception of a liberal education by saying that, while we already know the important questions, we need to address them "continuously and seriously for liberal learning to

¹⁴ *Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987, p. 56). See also Jacques Maritain's "Moral Education" in *Modern Philosophies of Education* (New York: Random House, 1971, ed. John Paul Strain, p. 456).

¹⁵ Bloom cites the example of Abraham Lincoln availing himself of what amounts to a liberal education through reading "the Bible, Shakespeare, and Euclid" (p. 59).

exist; for it does not consist so much in answers as in the permanent dialogue” (p. 380). Whether we have in mind, then, the worthwhile “visions of the world” that certain metaphorical expressions or works offer, or the extent to which they encourage heuristic experience, metaphor is inseparable from the purpose of a liberal education.¹⁶

4

Extended Example: A Meta(phor) Wisdom

An extended [metaphor], as the name implies, is one that the poet develops in some detail.

Wallace Martin¹

I do not pretend to know what deconstruction is, although apparently it tells us that texts have neither author nor subject matter, and that reading is impossible.... Surely something has been lost, when those artefacts in which every possible meaning had been deliberately concentrated, should be offered to the world as ‘unreadable’? Surely philosophy has been neglectful of its duties, if it has allowed matters to proceed to such a pass?

Roger Scruton²

The argument of this thesis is premised on the idea that there are complex metaphors. But such ideas are easier shown than explained. Accordingly, the aim of this chapter is to sketch out an example of an overarching metaphor that, from the reader’s point of view, emerges over the course of a popular modern story. Exploring metaphors by reference to character development,

¹⁶ Similarly, some complex metaphors are vital, in part, because they bring us into permanent liminal spaces, where we remain more open to learning. Liminality, in this sense, suggests a commitment to lifelong learning. For more on the developing view of liminality in education see Jan H.F. Meyer and Ray Land, “Threshold concepts and troublesome knowledge (2): Epistemological considerations and a conceptual framework for teaching and learning” (*Higher Education*, 2005, 49: 373-88); Ray Land, Julie Rattray, and Peter Vivian, “Learning in the liminal space: a semiotic approach to threshold concepts” (*Higher Education*, 2014, 67: 199-217); and Amy R. Hofer, Lori Townsend, and Korey Brunetti, “Troublesome Concepts and Information Literacy: Investigating Threshold Concepts for IL Instruction,” (*Portal: Libraries and the Academy*, Vol. 12, Number 4, October 2012, pp. 387-405).

¹ Martin, p. 760.

² “Modern Philosophy and the Neglect of Aesthetics,” p. 99.

as I frequently do in subsequent sections, is staunchly opposed by some. Indeed, Jay R. Elliot's article "Virtue Ethics and Literary Imagination" targets just this style of reading.

Elliot's criticism, though, is centered on the kind of philosophical argument concerning ethics that presses into service literary examples without paying sufficient attention to the philosophical and, more specifically, ethical ramifications of the very texts in which such examples are found. This is a legitimate concern. However, seeking to explore the extended metaphor of a text, or at least a facet of such, proceeds on the basis of understanding just what Elliot has in mind. Furthermore, his argumentative strategy is to establish that particular authors from the virtue ethics tradition offer less insightful readings of texts than his own. In particular, Elliot examines the ways in which certain authors, in an effort to reflect upon particular virtues, provide characterological readings of novels that do not square with the broader context of the stories in question. Consequently, his arguments succeed by demonstrating a better understanding of the complex metaphors that each of these texts constitute. Let us turn now to emulating Elliot's example without falling prey to the temptation to ignore character nuance that he criticizes.

For the discussion that follows, please consult the glossary on pp. 230-2.

4.1

A Subtle Portrait of Saying Less and Thinking More in Rothfuss' Bildungsroman

Thoughtlessness is an uncanny visitor who comes and goes everywhere in today's world.

Martin Heidegger³

³ "Thinking" in *Modern Philosophies of Education*, p. 475.

In a little-noticed aspect of Patrick Rothfuss' *The Wise Man's Fear*, a complex metaphor develops, an example of the kind of overarching metaphor which most mainstream metaphor theories, to their detriment, ignore.⁴ Because it addresses various issues relating to metaphorical competence, including how this aptitude connects with the creation and appreciation of beauty, character development, and pedagogy, this metaphor is a particularly fitting example for the present inquiry. While it seems misguided, given Tolkien's metaphor about the fruitlessness of cutting open a tennis ball in search of its bounce, to subject Rothfuss' elaborate offering to analysis, doing so will, in addition to making the theoretical side of the our account more concrete, demonstrate the connections among various themes central to it.⁵ In effect, this summary also serves to illustrate how—even when we succeed in linguistically capturing

⁴ Patrick Rothfuss, *The Wise Man's Fear* (DAW Books: USA, 2011); hereafter abbreviated *WMF*. Despite the astounding volume of online analyses of the work to which fans, fellow authors, and publishers contribute, commentary on the works' portrayal of metaphoric competence is strangely absent. At best, we have a few comments about particular metaphors that are developed throughout the books, including the Adem people's conception of the Lethani and the protagonist's description of music as explaining itself. Valyrian, a frequent commentator on Rothfuss fan blogs, proposes that since the two metaphors involve similar imagery, but are still slightly different, they are far from random, an observation which supports the view that Rothfuss carefully arranges his text such that these elaborate metaphors each become integral to the narrative, while remaining distinct. See <https://www.tor.com/2012/07/19/rothfuss-reread-speculative-summary-12-tinker-tanner/>. Nevertheless, this does not address the question of how these metaphors come together to form larger metaphors. Conversely, there are two grounds for holding that this online collection of commentary presupposes both that there can be overarching metaphors and that some of these can be found in Rothfuss' work. First, many fans believe that the protagonist, who is also the narrator of novel' backstory, may very well be playing "a beautiful game" by virtue of how he spins his tale. Therefore, we might see the entire series as embodying this metaphor. See the various posts and comments in relation to *The Wise Man's Fear* available at <https://www.tor.com/tag/patrick-rothfuss/>. As we shall see below, this phrase comes from the protagonist's efforts at playing tak. Second, the majority of the online discussion of Rothfuss' works centers on imagining deeper levels of meaning of various passages in the books and how these converge. These efforts explore many of the nuances that constitute metaphors of differing degrees of subtlety (<https://www.tor.com/2011/03/17/sleeping-under-the-wagon-more-spoilers-for-patrick-rothfuss-the-wise-mans-fear/>). I would argue that all of these combine to constitute a larger metaphor for metaphorical competence. Moreover, in trying to piece them together, contributors to this online discussion work their way toward recognizing a larger metaphor, even if they do not explicitly identify it as such. Here, we must consider the palpable irony: without metaphoric competence we miss out on Rothfuss' masterful literary expression of this phenomenon, and associated commentary, and yet, by being drawn into the story, readers inevitably find themselves developing this very skill in trying to piece together the protagonist's intentions, as well as Rothfuss' own. This second ground is no accident, for as we saw above, wonder is a necessary condition of metaphoric competence.

⁵ Here, Tolkien cites Roger Lancelyn Greene. For a penetrating discussion of this "short allegory," see Shippey, pp. 297-8. Shippey's related point complements the current inquiry. He defends the notion that, far from destroying literary masterpieces, investigation into their meaning can cohabit with the story itself as a living thing, even managing to awaken awareness of this life in our own minds, resulting in greater appreciation and, therewith, vividness.

particular implications of metaphors—efforts to explain the full significance of such expressions inevitably fail.⁶

In what follows, I offer a reading of Rothfuss' narrative, exploring various metaphors which coalesce into a larger one. These include: the intellectual and moral maturity of the protagonist, Kvothe, in the present time of narration; the budding metaphorical competence he displays in his youth; characterological complications regarding Kvothe as he depicts himself in the backstory; the ongoing song and dance between Kvothe and naming (a magic the art of which is beyond explication); his experiences learning tak, a board game involving extreme subtlety; and his tutelage under the Adem, whereby he is encouraged to contemplate and live by the Lethani, a morality deriving from the interpretation of sacred stories.⁷ These last three areas of encounter, to some extent or other, bear upon the subject of metaphorical competence, a cognitive ability which not only is a precondition for understanding the essence of naming, tak, and the Lethani, but also permeates any successful application of the principles gleaned from these subjects.

Both the larger metaphor that emerges through the interplay of these smaller ones, and these latter three, qualify as the kind of metaphors which so intrigue Black and Ricoeur. Therefore, one might object that, by definition, what can be understood of such metaphors through the related heuristic process cannot be paraphrased. One might extend this critique,

⁶ Rothfuss' books inspire some readers to the extent that, years after the fact, they attest how "it stayed in [their] heart," lighting them "from within like a candle flame," while leaving others stunned, having handily refuted their assumptions about the limits of how evocative, emotionally deep, and complex a novel could be (<https://www.tor.com/2017/11/08/why-the-name-of-the-wind-still-resonates-ten-years-later/>; <https://www.tor.com/2017/07/25/the-one-book-that-taught-me-theres-more-to-life-than-sniffing-unicorn-poo-the-name-of-the-wind-by-patrick-rothfuss/>). Given these reactions, if Rothfuss' work constitutes either a single overarching metaphor or a collection of them, attempting to *precisely* translate, or *exhaustively* paraphrase, what this "means" seems beside the point, at least with respect to our experience of the work.

⁷ This interpretation of the art of naming is common. See <https://www.tor.com/2016/08/15/patrick-rothfuss-name-of-the-wind-writing-process/>.

noting that even what the metaphor that we “heuristically” encounter in the first place *is* must itself be outside the reach of paraphrase, given that the metaphor is an irreducibly complex communication embedded in a literary whole. But this line of thinking misses my point regarding Rothfuss’ complex metaphor of metaphoric competence. First, I do not propose to give an exhaustive account of *all* the metaphors which constitute this larger one, nor *all* of the implications of the ones I do explore concerning the notion of metaphoric competence. At best, all we can hope for, through a detailed analysis of relevant passages, is to give a few indications of how this larger metaphor takes shape. Second, the portrayal of Kvothe’s continual development of this skill offers insight into his own experiences of this heuristic process, thereby providing a particularly evocative example of learning. How, then, does Rothfuss’ metaphor of metaphoric competence subsume these others through the very process in which they themselves are elaborated?

Let us begin with the metaphor of Kvothe’s maturity, as the reader encounters him in the frame story.⁸ In this companion piece to the backstory, Graham, a local carpenter, describes Kvothe as sensible and remarkably forward-thinking, so much so that he “know[s] things other

⁸ The frame story is contrasted with the backstory in three ways. The narrator for the frame is of the traditional omniscient variety, describing both the exterior picture which the characters might see of each other and their situations, including some of the most relevant or interesting implications of these characters’ interactions. Similarly, this narrator describes interior thoughts and emotions of various characters, though far from exhaustively, which, of course, makes the story even more interesting. In contrast to this, the backstory is told with Kvothe’s own voice, and, as such, includes those current reflections, previous convictions, and historical details that he deigns to share. The frame story is what I might call the present time of the books, whereas the backstory is, of course, all in the past, although the temporal distance between the two rapidly diminishes as the backstory develops, since the frame story covers only three days, and the backstory somewhere between twenty-five and many more years (the manipulation of time, and the lack of certain knowledge on the part of the reader of how much time has been manipulated, being important factors of the narrative overall). Finally, because the frame story includes the interior thoughts of characters apart from Kvothe, along with their sensory impressions of him, and because Rothfuss constructed the books so as to have the frame story conveniently provide breaks in the narrative without consuming an inordinate amount of the work (in a similar manner to the classic role of a Greek chorus), the frame story presents a more objective picture of the world, a safer foundation upon which the reader can hazard guesses at the motivations behind Kvothe’s actions and the larger context of the story’s events than Kvothe’s (at least partially) untrustworthy narration.

folk don't," and has "sort of a *wider view*" (*WMF*, pp. 7, 9). As we witness in the frame scenes of both *WMF* and the preceding book, *The Name of the Wind*, it becomes increasingly clear how the picture we have of Kvothe is of someone who exhibits open-mindedness, depth, patience, kindness, and metaphoric competence. But beyond this, there are hints that what seems to be a tired, beaten, hero turned anti-hero, apparently responsible for the current turmoil of the world, hiding out as an innkeeper after having faked his own death, may yet turn out to be playing a more subtle game than others realize, however unfathomable his aims may seem.⁹ What is also clear, from both the frame story scenes and the manner in which Kvothe crafts his tale, is that, in confronting complexity—including experiencing unforeseeable failures and bittersweet successes—Kvothe develops practical wisdom and humility.

Still, there is sufficient evidence in the frame story to understand Kvothe as being subject to universal human weaknesses, an observation prompted, first, by the fact that he is proud, which, when combined with certain stimuli, narrows his perspective, and, second, because he apparently lacks certain vital pieces of information about the causal factors relating to his circumstances.¹⁰ Consequently, Kvothe bears a larger burden of guilt than he should for his role in certain events that readers have yet to witness, since the third and final day of Kvothe's account of his backstory remains unavailable to readers until publication of the third and final book in the series, *The Doors of Stone*.¹¹ All of these vulnerabilities and limitations of Kvothe

⁹ This is established in the earlier book, *The Name of the Wind* (DAW Books: USA, 2009): hereafter abbreviated *NW*. If one returns to the former book after reading *WMF*, this becomes even more apparent—and interesting.

¹⁰ We might distinguish two kinds of pride: one which we associate with healthy patterns in behaviour, such as self-esteem or accomplishment, and another which excludes humility, or rather which arises *as* we depart from humility. The former kind, as I suggest above, may even easily lead into the latter under certain conditions, an outcome which often seems to transpire in human experience. Cf. pp. 184, 219-20 below.

¹¹ Small wonder that Kvothe fails to find much compassion for himself, what Zwicky contends is "the most difficult lesson," since the only clue that suggests flaws in Kvothe's comprehension of his fault does not present itself to either him or the audience in any obvious way until midway through the frame scenes of the second book (*WM*, p. 35). If Zwicky's point has merit, we have, here, another ground for viewing the Kvothe we see in the frame scenes as imperfect in his wisdom, albeit as a result of various factors, some of which being outside of his understanding and control.

transform the story into an audaciously ambiguous one, and, by extension, ensure a degree of uncertainty about his maturity.

It is clear from the narrative which Kvothe draws us into, that, while he is brilliant in many respects as a young adult, and has an aptitude for metaphoric competence, he also displays an instinctive sense of right and wrong, along with the courage to act upon it decisively, which typically indicates good character. For the most part, however, the younger Kvothe does not realize the mutual reliance between metaphoric competence and practical wisdom, on the one hand, the precedence of these traits over other intellectual and moral virtues, on the other, or how these latter culminate in the former. So much so that, when he instinctively displays either metaphoric competence or practical wisdom, he does not generally realize that he is manifesting either afterwards.¹² But what suggests that Kvothe has a considerable level of metaphoric competence to begin with?

The narrative provides a number of clues: his natural curiosity, his related determination to ask pertinent questions, a capacity for listening that we might, more generally, call, with Zwicky, “a sensitivity to resonance,” and a sense of wonder.¹³ All of these are not just conditions for metaphoric competence, but are cultivated by its exercise. For example, consider Kvothe’s

¹² As one fan puts it, “Kvothe is extremely talented, but never so much so as when he’s working on pure instinct like he was when living like a wild creature in the forest” (<https://www.tor.com/2011/05/12/rothfuss-reread-the-name-of-the-wind-part-4-entirely-the-wrong-sort-of-songs/>). His intuitive understanding seems to outstrip his rational thinking in such circumstances. One might, following Aristotle, object here that if people do not have full explicit knowledge of what they are doing and why they are doing it, they cannot, by definition, be called practically wise. For they do not exhibit the presence of a *rational* principle, demonstrating *natural* virtue instead of virtue “in the strict sense” (*Nicomachean Ethics*, bk. 6, ch. 13, 1144b1-29). This objection need not be applied to the case of Kvothe, however. Aristotle’s point, like Socrates’ own, is that practical wisdom can be *implied* as present in someone’s character by their actions. Given Aristotle’s confidence in intuitive cognition, instinctual action qualifies, then, as conduct that we can evaluate in given cases as being virtuous or not. Further, whether someone is practically wise, as judged by their actions in a particular set of circumstances, is a question of both degree *and* kind. That is, while the relevant consideration may be that one’s actions were practically wise within the context, this must be judged along a continuum of practical wisdom—in which case it could be that someone is practically wise and yet has room for improvement. On these grounds, the apparent tension in seeing Kvothe as practically wise without full conscious awareness of his practical wisdom dissolves.

¹³ *WM*, p. 60. Zwicky identifies this with the faculty of imagination.

correction of how Wilem, a close friend, assesses Kvothe's thoughts on his growing fame: "I don't wonder why they talk.... I wonder what they say" (*WMF*, p. 31). Here, not only does Kvothe *wonder*, a mental operation without which it would be impossible to achieve metaphoric competence, but his thoughts reflect a more refined discernment, one which prudently narrows his focus by prompting questions that help him anticipate his public image, as opposed to speculating about others' motivations.¹⁴ From this passage, we can suppose that what Kvothe is concerned with at this point is the general *metaphor* in terms of which people see him, rather than the multitude of circumstances facing *others* that allows his name to become ubiquitous.¹⁵

¹⁴ See MacKinnon, p. 2, for further clarification on why such focusing of our perception is important in light of Nietzsche's insights. In the same vein, Zwicky, making an argument by analogy about the limits of our perception of metaphor, insists that "it is the essence of our experience of gestalt figures like the Necker cube or Jastrow's duck-rabbit that, however adept we become at performing the gestalt shift, we can never see the two figures simultaneously. So in the awareness of one is always the shadow of the loss of the other. To understand a metaphor is always to experience loss at the same time as connexion. This is the mark of ontological comprehension in a being with language. Loss-in-connexion, connexion-in-loss, is the emotional tone of wisdom" (p. 55 Left). Interpreting Kvothe's actions in the passage as an instance of this, however, may be shallow. For surely, there is an element of exaggeration regarding the thematic effects of this back-and-forth between Wilem and Kvothe as well, not necessarily in the sense of Kvothe distorting the truth, but in the sense that the ending of the scene is sublime. The reader and, presumably, Wilem, are left in a state of confusion by the unexpected response, contributing to an experience of a kind of "awe." Certainty is not available to us in this context, for, as Rothfuss reports elsewhere, he tries to avoid hyperbole in his writing, finding it "distasteful" (<https://blog.patrickrothfuss.com/2012/05/a-different-sort-of-interview/>).

¹⁵ Conversely, as we will see below, the way Kvothe crafts his tale within the story does just that—though strictly including only those situations in which he was physically present. The narrative form, then, points to the circumstances giving rise to his infamy, albeit in a way that calls to mind, first, G.K. Chesterton's comments on selection being "the fine art of falsity," by which he insinuates how lies can be built entirely out of truths, and, second, Jacques Ellul's conceptions of both horizontal pre-propaganda and vertical direct propaganda (Marlin, pp. xvii, 25-30ff.). Rothfuss plays upon these kinds of observations and encourage us to question them by leaving ambiguous the state of narration and its correspondence with actual fact. I would argue that the overarching metaphor of the tale Kvothe spins transcends such propagandist concerns, however, since it does not force itself upon us, inevitably pushing us towards one interpretation. Rather, it invites us to consider for ourselves the meaning of the avalanche of events, not just the exterior play of characters and situations, but also the interior motivations and reflections of a principal mover and shaker behind these events, instead. Still, the frame story renders a degree of tension between this and the above concerns, as its role in implicating this larger view of metaphoric competence, among other potential overarching metaphors, adds its own twists to this latter invitation, which is why so many commentators continue to agonize over the trustworthiness of Kvothe's narration. See <https://www.tor.com/2011/03/17/sleeping-under-the-wagon-more-spoilers-for-patrick-rothfuss-the-wise-mans-fear/>. That Rothfuss presumes to leave us with such an important question to speculate upon for ourselves should come as no surprise given his appreciation for this kind of writing and his renowned familiarity with, and love for, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, stories which practically shout through metaphor that the audience ought to question the intentions and reliability of the narrator (<https://www.tor.com/2017/02/03/patrick-rothfuss-kingkiller-chronicle-book-3-update/>). Cf. fn. 37 and fn. 63 below.

Kvothe also has a keen ear, which, when combined with his proclivity to wonder, enables astute suppositions. Subtle passages throughout the text make this abundantly clear. For instance, idly overhearing a gentleman and his wife disagreeing about the potential benefits of having peasants farm acorns as opposed to wheat, Kvothe surmises that “it was a small piece of a larger argument they had been having their entire lives” (*WMF*, p. 503).¹⁶ And this perceptual acuity is not restricted to the auditory channel. Kvothe tells Denna, the woman with whom he is infatuated, that she is “a vast landscape of wonder” (*WMF*, p. 263), an assertion that recalls his confessing when he first meets her in *NW* to “wondering what [she] was doing here,” a query that, based on other textual developments, perhaps sparks her love for him.¹⁷

By itself, of course, wonder is not sufficient for metaphoric competence. The latter demands a tolerance for ambiguity as well.¹⁸ It is this sort of willingness that Kvothe exhibits when relaxed and operating primarily on instinct, and that he forsakes when, as Puppet, an enigmatic caretaker of the Archives, tells him, he is too serious (*WMF*, pp. 329-30). Puppet’s point seems to be that the tension that grips Kvothe prevents him from putting into a larger

¹⁶ Incidentally, this passage contains two other aspects worthy of mention. First, the way in which Kvothe couches the “larger argument” suggests that there is a larger metaphor underlying the couple’s ongoing debates, though it would be inappropriate to exclusively understand this *as* a metaphor. Still, there is merit to thinking of it as a metaphor, or, even beyond that, as a dispute *about* a metaphor, or even arising from differing metaphorical conceptions. We might alternatively describe it as being a dispute arising from differing political first principles, or simply different ideas of what exactly is most prudent. Either way, though, this might downplay the psychological interplay and tenacity of such exchanges, whereas understanding the debate in terms of metaphor may highlight better such nuances. Second, we can infer from the text that Kvothe was not focusing directly on this conversation, which suggests that his intuitive cognition is more active, enhancing his metaphoric competence such that he is able to look deeper at the argument.

¹⁷ See the chapter “A Sea of Stars” in *NM*.

¹⁸ Recall, the effects of defamiliarization hinge on a reader’s capacity for this. And defamiliarization is a fundamental aspect of the metaphorical process, as discussed above. It follows that such tolerance is a necessary condition of metaphoric competence. Cf. MacKinnon, p. 3. This relationship has a further level of complexity. Metaphoric competence helps us recognize ambiguity, and tolerance for the latter is required if we are to appreciate ambiguity, let alone *ambiguous* metaphors. Therefore, we have, here, a multidirectional curve of experiential learning. As Simic writes, “Ambiguity is the world’s condition. Poetry flirts with ambiguity. As a ‘picture of reality’ it is truer than any other. Ambiguity is. This doesn’t mean you’re supposed to write poems no one understands” (“Wonderful Words, Silent Truth,” *Wonderful Words, Silent Truth*, p. 88, quoted in Zwicky, *WM*, p. 59 Right). Simic’s comments help explain why encountering some level of ambiguity is unavoidable when dealing with metaphors, which are often views of the world.

context the questions he harries Puppet with, or, more simply, retaining what we might, following Baxter, call a “sense of scale”.¹⁹ Focusing too much on one aspect of a question, or on one level of meaning, much less ignoring one’s intuitions, is an inadequate method for attempting to understand things that are more complex than we might wish. Such *intolerance* for ambiguity inhibits both the scope of one’s sense of wonder and the capacity for it to assist a person both in transcending mental or spiritual problems and in arriving at practical solutions for external ones. That is, wonder and a tolerance for ambiguity enjoy a symbiotic relationship, a fact of which Kvothe remains oblivious in his youth.

Then again, when confronted by immediate danger, Kvothe acts almost as if he were a different person altogether. The distinguishing criterion here is inspiration—be it a beautiful woman, an enchanting view of nature, or his instinctual understanding of morality—and when he is thus engaged his practical judgement rises to a formidable level, so much so that his inhibitions about relying on intuitive understanding evaporate.²⁰ In these cases, Kvothe seems to synchronize his rational and intuitive resources, which, as is apparent in a more limited subset of these scenes, enables him to perform the magic of naming. At such times, his sense of wonder is

¹⁹ See the following section for a fuller treatment of the implications that Kvothe’s encounter with Puppet has on the larger view of metaphoric competence Rothfuss presents. See also MacKinnon, p. 9, for a compelling account of “a sense of scale,” one which he derives from various insights of Charles Baxter. Interestingly, disrupting this “sense of scale” compromises “our capacity for decision, action, and accountability,” an observation which speaks to Kvothe’s struggles, and, accordingly, might suggest a relation between intuitive awareness and this sense. Such considerations may be trivialized by two further points, however. For, firstly, a “sense” of scale already suggests being sensitive, and, secondly, part of Baxter’s notion, as MacKinnon explains it, is that this sense involves, in part, “our ability to come to imaginative grips with the despicable and the admirable, the villainous and the sublime.” In conjunction with what we know regarding the integral role of the imagination in the metaphorical process, and intuitive activities more generally, this is perhaps tautological. Nevertheless, it is a point worth making, and furthermore, one of which Rothfuss seems keenly aware.

²⁰ A common theme in the books is the power of nature on consciousness. Kvothe prevails as an intuitive thinker more consistently when immersed in nature. In some cases this is quasi-hypnotic: through focused observation, the beauty of a natural pattern emerges, subtly enticing his intuitive understanding into insightful leaps. As this transpires, Kvothe finds himself more relaxed and better equipped—cognitively—to reflect on pressing issues, along with becoming freer to wonder and explore new avenues of thought. See Richard Louv’s *The Nature Principle* for an excellent discussion of recent studies which demonstrate that Rothfuss’ thematic approach in this regard is not just make-believe. Rather, this it is an empirical fact that nature has beneficial effects on human cognitive performance and contentment.

given free rein, incorporating far more perceptual data than usual into the inductive and deductive interplay of his reasoning. In confronting the beautiful and deadly seductress Felurian, this state of mind allows Kvothe to bring his awareness to something approximating a highly metaphorical understanding.

I felt as if this was the only time in my life I had been fully awake. Everything looked clear and sharp, as if I was seeing with a new set of eyes. As if I wasn't bothering with my eyes at all, and was looking at the world directly with my mind.

The sleeping mind, some piece of me realized faintly.

.... I looked at Felurian, and in that moment I understood her down to the bottoms of her feet. She was of the Fae. She did not worry over right or wrong. She was a creature of pure desire, much like a child. A child does not concern itself with consequence, neither does a sudden storm. Felurian resembled both, and neither. She was ancient and innocent and powerful and proud.

Was this the way Elodin saw the world? Was this the magic he spoke of? Not secrets or tricks, but Taborlin the Great magic. Always there, but beyond my seeing until now?

It was beautiful. (*WMF*, p. 711)

Notice that, for Kvothe at least, there is a beauty to this form of understanding, and, while it hinges on the use of his unconscious resources, there is nothing *irrational* about it.²¹ Metaphoric competence, as he displays in naming, involves some degree of harmonization between our cognitive resources, both intuitive and rational.²²

As a young adult, Kvothe's intermittent trust in intuitive understanding nicely conveys the view that metaphoric competence can also contribute to right action. He feels obliged, at various times, to make snap decisions, responding to abusive social conditions instinctually, guided by his character, instead of attempting to stall and analyze the given situation through

²¹ One might, of course, be inclined to resist this, holding instead that fictional depictions of events, much less the epistemological warrant of such states of mind, have nothing to do with reality or rationality. But, as alluded to above, following Ricoeur, Groarke, Tolkien, Stacy, and Egginton (and, by extension, Cervantes), we can maintain that there is nothing less than a crucial connection between some such depictions and "reality," let alone "rationality."

²² This scene is key to understanding Kvothe's intuitional potential. Elodin later tells him that while namers are rare even among students at the University nowadays, that ratio applies to naming "simple" things like patterns in nature—elements, for instance; to name a living being such as Felurian would be vastly more complicated, something which very few namers would be able to do.

protracted consideration of ethical principles. Simmon, one of his few close friends, applauds Kvothe for this tendency, proposing that this lack of hesitancy to do what one believes the right thing, especially when it necessitates standing up to bullies or criminals on behalf of those unable to stand up for themselves, must be like the way members of the Amyr, a mythical group of adjudicators, behave.

When Kvothe corrects him, promising that he is not “always so terribly sure of himself, Simmon finds this strangely reassuring” (*WMF*, p. 338).²³ In other words, while it seems better to act upon one’s instincts when faced with a dilemma than to refrain from any action whatsoever, it is better yet to reflect upon these actions afterwards. Recognizing that one can always be wrong, and being willing to learn from one’s mistakes, are instantiations of humility, which Kvothe exemplifies in this instance.²⁴ This offers a two-fold comment on the role of metaphoric competence: first, that it is integral to the process of intuitively grasping the nature of a situation, a process which sparks Kvothe’s actions; and second, that practical wisdom involves more than metaphoric competence, even though it requires a degree of the latter both before and *after* the given action, that is, *throughout* experiential learning.

²³ There may be a further nuance to the selection of “terribly” here. Elsewhere in the books, the Amyr are depicted as terrible, even ruthless, in some of their judgments. They apparently cling to the ideal of acting “for the greater good” by treating people solely as means to ends, while being answerable only to themselves. Therefore, this could be another case where Rothfuss’ narrative incorporates a subtle aspect of the dialogue into a larger piece of the overall narrative, namely, the metaphor of absolute certainty as the mark of villainous behaviour. For the record, this is not the kind of certainty that traditional authors in Western philosophy associate with “infallible” first principles, a distinction early Pragmatists such as Peirce are quick to overlook.

²⁴ There is much that could be said here regarding how Kvothe’s learning reflects various points that Aristotle makes. For example, Aristotle’s conceptualization of character development applies to how Kvothe both acts and grows. More generally, the excerpt alludes to the experiential process of learning. In the same vein, some of the occasions Simmon presumably has in mind, those that we are also witness to through the text, involve committing acts that would be wrong in themselves, but due to the circumstances count as mixed actions. In these cases, feeling at least an initial dose of remorse accompanies proceeding with the right decision *for the right reason(s)*. Further, Kvothe’s uncertainty here, combined with the fact that he nevertheless acted, seems consistent with MacKinnon’s description of the development of practical wisdom as a process whereby we *confront* and *navigate* moral complexity, as opposed to a virtue we exercise in the *absence* of such ambiguity. See MacKinnon, p. 25, fn. 11.

Notably, as I alluded to above, Kvothe's propensity for demonstrating metaphoric competence, and the virtues of practical wisdom and humility, is frequently undermined in his youth.²⁵ Accordingly, portraying Kvothe's debilitating character flaws in the backstory heighten the contrast with the seemingly sagacious Kvothe of the frame story.²⁶ That the young Kvothe's pride displaces potential humility is a recurring theme in the story, which Kvothe's teachers lament. "You know you're clever," observes Elodin. "That's your weakness" (*WMF*, 89). Kvothe attempts to be humble in response, admitting his occasional lack of foresight. However, when Elodin gleefully describes such occasions as being "stupid beyond all mortal ken" (*WMF*, p. 89), Kvothe proceeds, in a display of an astounding lack of metaphoric competence, to miss the point and throw a tantrum:

"If you think I'm reckless, do something about it. Show me the straighter path! Mold my supple young mind—" I sucked in a lungful of smoke and began to cough, forcing me to cut my tirade short. "Do something, damn you!" I choked out. "Teach me!"

I hadn't really been shouting, but I ended up breathless all the same. My temper faded as quickly as it had flared up, and I worried I'd gone too far.

But Elodin just looked at me. "What makes you think I'm not teaching you?" he asked, puzzled. "Aside from the fact that you refuse to learn." (*WMF*, p. 90)

A close reading of this excerpt reveals a number of strands connecting it with the emerging metaphor of humility as both a condition and consequence of metaphoric competence. Viewing the passage through the lens of Dante's literary portrayal of virtue ethics may help. On

²⁵ In classic Rothfuss fashion, even this inconsistency is complicated, since in *The Name of the Wind* such a series of misfortunes and tragedies befall Kvothe as a child that it is easy for the audience both to empathize with him and to recognize some of his faults as ripple effects of these events rather than results of either his poor sense or character. Cf. the discussion of Teccam's distinction between secrets of the mouth and heart, below. Small wonder, then, that some commentators explain their appreciation of the books as arising in large part from how "nuanced" the main characters, and especially Kvothe, are (<https://www.tor.com/2011/06/16/rothfuss-reread-the-name-of-the-wind-part-9-not-that-i-would-encourage-that-sort-of-reckless-behaviour/>).

²⁶ As one commentator puts it, "The young Kvothe lacks knowledge about many things, and in his youthful passion lacks a certain maturity and depth of character which might allow him to see more deeply into many of the things that happen to him. Many of his actions in the story result from a certain teenage shallowness" (<https://www.tor.com/2011/03/17/sleeping-under-the-wagon-more-spoilers-for-patrick-rothfuss-the-wise-mans-fear/>). Another ardent fan interprets the young Kvothe as "brilliant but proud, spirited but sometimes obnoxious, heroic but lacking in wisdom.... He may strike some as a 'perfect' character who can do no wrong, but don't be mistaken. He has his flaws, but they stem largely from his arrogance, inexperience, and youth" (<https://www.tor.com/2017/11/08/why-the-name-of-the-wind-still-resonates-ten-years-later/>).

Dante's account, any vice presupposes pride. Wrath may also be preceded by envy and is, above all, associated with blindness. Therefore, we might infer that, as Elodin attempts to tell him, Kvothe is prideful, which accounts for his giving in to anger, preventing him in turn from listening closely enough to the metaphor which Elodin prompts Kvothe to realize for himself. That it is easy to be trapped in a vicious circle of short-sightedness, ill-temper, self-absorption, and ignorance when one's metaphoric competence is poor is aptly summed up by the adult Kvothe, when he concedes, "Pride and folly, they go together like two tightly grasping hands" (*WMF*, p. 753).

Not one to pull his punches, Kilvin, one of Kvothe's favorite teachers, is more explicit than Elodin in his warning to Kvothe, remarking that Kvothe's behavior sometimes suggests "a profound lack of character" (*WMF*, p. 124), while Elxa Dal, another teacher, describes Kvothe as lacking in nothing but "timing" and "social grace" (*WMF*, p. 384).²⁷ Given that both author and protagonist frequently tell the audience that these books constitute a tragedy, it seems clear that Kvothe lacks the prudence necessary for appropriate social interaction and dependent on sensitivity to nuance. At the same time, Kvothe's potential for overcoming this, along with the ample metaphoric competence, practical wisdom, and humility he exhibits by the time he relates this apparent tragedy, renders the backstory's conclusion all the more tragic, while leaving sufficient ambiguity for the reader to speculate about how these pieces of the narrative fit together. To further complicate things, as the story of Kvothe's youth continues to unfold, he makes considerable progress in developing and habituating these virtues.

²⁷ Urging Kvothe to leave the University, Dal mentions a rather dark story about a man who knew virtually everything, and yet, enjoying neither good timing nor social grace, died tragically because the person who could have saved him had no desire to intercede on his behalf. While the story lacks the subtlety for which metaphorical stories or allegories typically win acclaim, it is interesting for our purposes that Dal's success in communicating the didacticism of the tale to Kvothe requires the latter to exercise some degree of metaphoric competence. On Kvothe's part, though, even this is limited, to the extent that he interprets Dal as trying to tell him to leave the University for a little while, instead of grasping Dal's point that travelling might help him work on timing and social interaction.

We can sketch out this progression by considering three areas of study crucial to Kvothe's development: the magical art of naming, the game of tak, and the Lethani. It is not as though the learnings Kvothe gains from these various sources are achieved independently. For these kindred subjects share two essential traits: first, they can only, in the main, be taught through metaphor; and, second, there is an art to them. Beyond that, their associated images are similar, if distinct. While the Lethani becomes an interesting object of consideration on its own, we need not let all the intricacies of naming or the rules of tak detain us here. However, all three areas share a further trait, namely, that there are no algorithms available for teaching someone how to perform successfully in any of them, making these subjects curiously similar to metaphoric mastery. Let us briefly examine Kvothe's education in naming, the first of these intertwined metaphors.

A central theme in Elodin's reporting of the naming process is the role played by our "sleeping minds." According to Elodin, even the simplest names one studies and uses in the magic of naming, in contrast to the calling names we go by, comprise hundreds of thousands of aspects, rendering even the simplest of these "so complex that your mind could never begin to feel the boundaries of it, let alone understand it well enough for you to speak it" (*WMF*, pp. 126-7).²⁸ While this leads Fenton, a fellow student, to conclude that naming is impossible (*WMF*, p. 127), Fela, a more perspicuous student, humbly observes that what Elodin is suggesting is just

²⁸ One fan roughly equates this complexity with "the interaction [of a particular thing with] everything else" (<https://www.tor.com/2011/07/07/rothfuss-reread-the-name-of-the-wind-12-i-know-what-it-is-to-have-secrets/>). In the face of such complexity, it seems that namers must be generalists of the kind which Brad Leithauser, a MacArthur Fellow, describes (with himself in mind), who hold "to the sense that just sipping broadly enough, from enough flowers, strange and fruitful pollinations will arise" (*In Conversation*, March 4, 1988, Amherst College, quoted in Denise Shekerjian, *Uncommon Genius*, prior to the preface). Indeed, how could one grasp something so complex that it interacts with *everything* else unless one sips broadly enough? Rothfuss' world has intriguing parallels with our own in this respect. Just as Elodin talks about namers as being more and more rare in the world of Temerant, Edward Carr astutely notes how the generalists—or polymaths as he calls them—are becoming an increasingly endangered species in our own. See Edward Carr, "The Last Days of the Polymath" (<https://www.1843magazine.com/content/Edward-carr/last-days-polymath>).

that we can have no *certain* knowledge of such things (*WMF*, p. 128). Or, as Elodin himself contends, it is a task for which our sleeping mind must shoulder the bulk of the work. Kvothe does not grasp this point, however.

With dramatic flair, Elodin develops a lesson out of this obstinance. When he begins a class by saying that the subject under discussion concerned “things that cannot be talked about. Specifically, ... why some things cannot be discussed,” Kvothe sighs, reflecting, “Every day I hoped this class would be the one where Elodin actually taught us something.... Every day some part of me expected Elodin to laugh and admit he’d just been testing our resolve with his endless nonsense. And every day I was disappointed.”²⁹ Clearly, Kvothe has no idea of the point that Elodin is driving at. Indeed, Wittgenstein’s observation is apt, here: “What makes a subject difficult to understand—if it is significant, important—is not that some special instruction about abstruse things is necessary to understand it. Rather it is the contrast between the understanding of the subject and what most people want to see.”³⁰ Expression of Kvothe misapprehending Elodin’s wisdom continues unabated throughout the rest of the scene.³¹

Elaborating, Elodin explains, “The majority of important things cannot be said outright, [or]...made explicit. They can only be implied.” Kvothe disagrees, insisting that nothing can be understood that is unexplainable. Elodin resists this, maintaining that in some cases it is pointless to explain, since inferring is preferable. When, Fela proposes that love is such a thing, Elodin

²⁹ All of the *WMF* references in this paragraph and the next are taken from the first scene of the chapter, “More Than Salt,” in *WMF*, pp. 252-5.

³⁰ Ludwig Wittgenstein, “Philosophy,” trans. C.G. Luckhardt and M.A.E. Aue, in *Philosophical Occasions*, p. 161, quoted in Zwicky, p. 115 Right.

³¹ Here again, there is a subtext, where Rothfuss teases our empathy for, and frustrations with, the young Kvothe. In a brief scene immediately prior to this one, someone has stolen Kvothe’s lute, which he typically relies on for both his psychological and economical well-being. More to the point, playing his lute usually shifts Kvothe into a much better frame of mind, where, even if unbeknownst to him, his metaphoric competence is heightened and his “sleeping mind” thereby awakened. Consequently, as is typical in the narrative, the broader context serves to mitigate our reactions to instances of Kvothe acting the fool.

concurr, adding that, in the budding stages of romances, “You talk of small things. The weather. A familiar play. You spend time in company. You hold hands. In doing so you slowly learn the secret meanings of each other’s words. This way, when the time comes you can speak with subtle meaning underneath your words, so there is understanding on both sides.”³² Elodin derides Kvothe’s impatience about there being no clear algorithmic steps for learning the magic of naming, proceeding to argue through the example of love in the following masterful performance.

Elodin made a sweeping gesture toward me. “Then there is the path...of Kvothe.” He strode to stand shoulder to shoulder with me, facing Fela. “You sense something between you. Something wonderful and delicate.”

He gave a romantic, lovelorn sigh. “And, because you desire certainty in all things, you decide to force the issue. You take the shortest route. Simplest is best, you think.” Elodin extended his own hands and made wild grasping motions in Fela’s direction. “So you reach out and you grab this young woman’s breasts.”

There was a burst of startled laughter from everyone except Fela and myself. I scowled. She crossed her arms in front of her chest and her flush spread down her neck until it was hidden by her shirt.

Elodin turned his back to her and looked me in the eye.

“Re’lar Kvothe,” he said seriously. “I’m trying to wake your sleeping mind to the subtle language the world is whispering. I am trying to seduce you into understanding. I am trying to *teach* you.” He leaned forward until his face was almost touching mine.

“Quit grabbing at my tits.”

Clearly, Elodin is *implying* to Kvothe that he is ignoring the function of the sleeping mind, as well as trying to inspire him to an awareness of this and other things. Kvothe remains unreceptive to the subtleties of Elodin’s antics, relentlessly shrugging them off as cruel and pointless, as opposed to appreciating them as examples of a pedagogical method heavily reliant on metaphor.³³

³² This is akin to Zwicky’s description of both “our experience of meaning” and “our recognition of beauty,” where, “because we have been spoken to, pierced,” and “because we recognize the symptoms of such experience in others,” we come to “know there are other beings that see the world in roughly the way we do” (*WM*, p. 60 Left).

³³ Later in the tale, as Felurian crafts a cloak out of shadows and starlight for Kvothe—which she calls a shaed—a metaphor emerges from her musings that vividly recalls Elodin’s image, here. “[S]ometimes slow seduction is the only way,” she said. “[T]he gentle shadow fears the candleflame. [H]ow could your fledgling shaed not feel the same” (*WMF*, p. 737). Advancing her own account of the kind of imagination that metaphoric competence

Given that Elodin is trying to teach Kvothe and his fellow students *how* to listen for names, as opposed to *what* this or that particular name is, there is a strong methodological component to his teaching, one that is undercut by how easy and safe life is for the students of their generation. It is more difficult, Elodin tells Kvothe, to rouse students' sleeping minds in the absence of danger and travail. From this, we can infer that fostering the development of their metaphoric competence is likewise restricted, which leaves his teaching opaque to them. Just before Kvothe goes off to seek his fortune, Elodin intercepts him on a bridge, asking him why such a place is good for a namer. Although Elodin finds Kvothe's answer—that it is a place where a fledgling namer can easily gain access to the elements foundational to naming studies—palatable, he asks him how this makes it different from any other place? When Kvothe admits his ignorance, Elodin praises him, entreating him to remember this insightful self-reflection, which, of course, suggests Kvothe's potential in the intermingled areas of metaphoric competence, practical wisdom, and humility. Replying to Kvothe's query regarding what his own answer would have been, however, Elodin improves upon Kvothe's suggestion, holding that

It is an edge.... It is a high place with a chance of falling. Things are more easily seen from edges. Danger rouses the sleeping mind. It makes some things clear. Seeing things is a part of being a namer. (*WMF*, p. 394)

Here, "edge" is a metaphor; hence, Elodin's subsequent insistence that Kvothe consider the adventures awaiting him opportunities to work on naming by encountering more "edges." Given what we know of naming, we can also surmise that these journeys will help Kvothe learn to

demands, Zwicky says that it hinges on the "capacity to recognize other beings' gestures *for what they are*—expressions of experience like our own—that is, the capacity to experience meaningful coincidence of context, the arc of energy released when one context, laid across another, coincides in ways that refract back into individual contexts" (*WM*, p. 60 Left). If Kvothe's failure to appreciate Elodin's subtlety is a result of his blindness to the "meaningfulness" of latter's gestures, this is a telling example of his desire for logical answers inhibiting his capacity for appreciating metaphorical undercurrents. Of course, Kvothe's anger plays into this obstinacy. Once he recognizes that Elodin is humiliating him (at least in his own mind), his listening comes to a halt, leaving scant opportunity for his intuitive brilliance to rescue him.

relax, listen, absorb wisdom, and better appreciate the beauty, power, and complexity of the world, all of which require, and help cultivate, metaphoric competence.

Soon enough, Kvothe makes headway in this regard. Hired to hunt bandits, he and his team pass their evening time by sharing tales, thereby dissolving some of the tensions arising among them from being in constant danger, as well as from the graceless manner of certain members of the group. Once it becomes evident that Kvothe is skilled at telling tales, he begins to assume more of the burden for this than he would like. To forestall this development, he shares a tale his father told him, one which has anything but a clear ending or moral, leaving most of the group stymied. Marten, an older member, is astonished that Kvothe's father would mistreat his son by sharing with him such a pointless story. As Kvothe begins to respond to this criticism, he experiences an epiphany.

“Not pointless,” I protested. “It’s the questions we can’t answer that teach us the most. They teach us how to think. If you give a man an answer, all he gains is a little fact. But give him a question and he’ll look for his own answers.”

I spread my blanket on the ground and folded over the threadbare tinker’s cloak to wrap myself in. “That way, when he finds the answers, they’ll be precious to him. The harder the question, the harder we hunt. The harder we hunt, the more we learn. An impossible question...”

I trailed off as realization burst onto me. Elodin. That is what Elodin had been doing. Everything he’d done in his class. The games, the hints, the cryptic riddling. They were all questions of a sort.

Marten shook his head and wandered off, but I was lost in my thoughts and hardly noticed. I had wanted answers, and in spite of all I had thought, Elodin had been trying to give them to me. What I had taken as a malicious crypticism on his part was actually a persistent urging toward the truth. I sat there, silent and stunned by the scope of his instruction. By my lack of understanding. My lack of sight. (*WMF*, p. 620)

Notice that Kvothe makes an inductive leap, one which, according to Groarke’s schema, occurs on the second level of induction, where we come to an awareness of general truths and the like (though not universals in the strict sense), since he grasps the resemblance between his father’s telling him the unresolved story and Elodin’s efforts, concluding that each demonstrates an

awareness of the pedagogical priority that Kvothe identifies.³⁴ In other words, Kvothe *begins* to grasp the metaphor of naming *by* realizing that learning about this phenomenon comes about, in large part, heuristically. This being the case, the point of Elodin's advice impels Kvothe along a metaphorical road to truth.³⁵

³⁴ Considering what we saw above of Elodin's explanation of "edges," it is fitting that Kvothe experiences this moment when off the "edge" of the map as his companions tell him when they first start hunting for the bandits. In the same way that, as one fan notes, finding names is "easier when you're not thinking about it," I will argue that recognizing the subtle patterns expressed through metaphor often transpires in the same manner, a view that Rothfuss' narrative seems to presuppose, given how Kvothe's moments of insight are depicted (<https://www.tor.com/2011/05/12/rothfuss-reread-the-name-of-the-wind-part-4-entirely-the-wrong-sort-of-songs/>). An analogy may help. In Diana Wynne-Jones' *Chronicles of Chrestomanci*, there is a castle that is guarded by a charm. The way the charm works is that if someone attempts to travel there directly, he or she magically finds themselves turned around before reaching the castle. However, if one keeps the castle in his or her peripheral vision and walks without directly trying to get there, he or she will magically arrive at his or her desired destination. The metaphor, here, seems similar; if we keep something in mind, but do not stress about it, or focus solely on it, in the end we may arrive at a better understanding of it anyway through intuitive processes, that is, peripheral understanding.

³⁵ This moment of insight, for Kvothe, illustrates various points of Ricoeur and Groarke, and, for the reader, bears out Tolkien's and Stacy's views on literature and metaphor. We might interpret Kvothe's success in achieving this moment of illumination along other lines too. First, the Jungian conception of the relation between the power of story and archetypal factors of the unconscious would provide a worthwhile lens through which to examine this scene. Similarly, we could use the psychoanalytic discussion Joseph Campbell provides in *The Hero of a Thousand Faces* to assert that Kvothe is undergoing a process of the annihilation of the self while rebuilding this identity, and, in doing so, as Booker would say, transcending the ego (*The Seven Basic Plots*). There is another option, though. For without progressing to the level of understanding the instance as archetypal, we could, following Dal's exhortation that "All the truth in the world is held in stories," suppose that, in defending his father's actions, Kvothe identifies the moral of the story, which allows him to apply this wisdom imaginatively to later events (*WMF*, p. 383). (In connection with this third line of thinking we can better appreciate Martin Cahill's argument that Rothfuss' work, like all great stories, has the power to enrich, fulfill, teach, and warn us. For these reasons the story of Kvothe "continue[s] to age well," being better appreciated with time. Further, Cahill insists that part of Rothfuss' originality is that this piece of epic fantasy "trucks with the tropes of its own genre, only to turn them on their head, re-examine them, figure out why they work, or why they don't, and play them to a new music entirely [<https://www.tor.com/2017/11/08/why-the-name-of-the-wind-still-resonates-ten-years-later/>]. *The Wise Man's Fear*, then, is appropriate for public consumption if we grant that Hein's inquiry concerning what constitutes good public art has any merit.) Wonder is implicit in this process too. While it is not "wonder" that specifically leads to this particular heuristic moment, I will argue that wondering about whether or not the two situations reflect the same metaphor of teaching through metaphor in the form of puzzles, riddles, paradoxes, questions, and the like, is logically prior to Kvothe's metaphoric comprehension here, even if this curiosity did not explicitly come into being in the discursive thoughts the adult Kvothe deigns to share with us about this experience. That is, in this leap of cognition, Kvothe's conclusion—that the two instances are alike—presupposes this connection, which helps us see how these various metaphorical strands that Rothfuss provides can be brought together by a close reading. By itself, of course, this intertwining of wonder with metaphoric competence constitutes a relatively minor interplay of metaphors. Given the broader textual context, however, it is yet another fusion of metaphors by means of which Rothfuss furnishes a depth to the various metaphors that, taken together, invite us into a broader consideration of metaphoric competence. Cf. MacKinnon's comments on the value, in Baxter's account, of "rhyming action" (p. 6).

It is frustrating for the reader that it takes Kvothe so long to arrive at this, since Elodin warned him that naming, like metaphor, “cannot be taught by rule or rote” (*WMF*, p. 348). Still, Kvothe’s imperfection ensures that we can appreciate him as a *human* character. Perhaps the power of the metaphor here derives, in part, from how closely it reflects our own experiences, insofar as interpreting complex metaphors, debating philosophical questions, and arriving at serious decisions *takes time*. Teaching *how* to think, as Elodin strives to do, as opposed to *what* to think, as Kvothe previously thought Elodin’s role should be, assumes a greater significance in this context; for Graham’s description in the frame story of Kvothe’s thinking as taking “the long view of things” readily applies to Elodin’s pedagogical orientation (*WMF*, p. 7).³⁶

Experience confirms that this metaphor comments on the necessity of exercising perseverance when it comes to interpreting a specific metaphor, much less developing metaphoric competence. All the more fitting, then, that the overarching metaphor of metaphoric competence comes together over thousands of pages of text, as this increases the likelihood that a reader will take notice while giving them an opportunity to practice the patience required therewith *if* they do so. Metaphors can take the form of questions, and, since this larger metaphor is communicated ambiguously, encouraging readers to ponder it for themselves over time, Rothfuss’ literary elaboration of metaphoric competence not only compellingly expresses theoretical considerations, but also mediates diverse commentary on metaphoric competence *by*

³⁶ We could use more “Elodins” in today’s world considering Kaufman’s and Gregoire’s lament that “our society increasingly allows children’s creativity and imagination to fall by the wayside in favor of the passive consumption of social media and television as well as superficial learning evaluated by standardized tests—which only serve to increase extrinsic motivation, often at the expense of intrinsic passion.... Learning to solve the increasingly complex world problems of the twenty-first century—and to identify the problems themselves—will require creative qualities like originality, curiosity, risk-taking, and a tolerance for ambiguity inherent in the idea that there is not always a single correct solution” (*Wired to Create*, p. xxxii). Adam Gopnik issues a complementary warning by insisting that “curiosity and creativity ... are more important for learning in the long run” than specific facts and skills that we use direct instruction for to teach children (“Why Preschool Shouldn’t Be Like School,” *Slate*, slate.com/articles/double_x/doublex/2011/03/why_preschool_shouldnt_be_like_school.html, quoted in Kaufman and Gregoire, p. 174).

example, applying the very principles advanced by the text in relation to this metaphorical theme. That is, the work, itself an example, serves as an argument through example. Thus, just as Kvothe experiences a moment of insight in this scene, recognizing a facet of this elegant metaphor, we are repeatedly invited to do the same. In this manner, Rothfuss both allows for, and plays upon, the heuristic function of the metaphorical component of literature.³⁷ But what more can we say about how the metaphor of naming contributes to the thematic illumination of metaphoric competence in *The Wise Man's Fear*?

The essential place “listening” has to play in both naming and grasping complex metaphors must be addressed. Characters from the books, such as Elodin, Puppet, and an old man from a story (within the story, which is itself within the story), all tend to use listening as a metaphor of enlightened perception. Puppet does the same when he contrasts “seeing” with “looking” (*WMF*, p. 329). We are told “proper listening” is a “tricky” matter, taking years to learn, but “works wonders” (*WMF*, p. 655), while even listening “just a bit more closely,” can be learned after a month or so (*WMF*, pp. 657-8).³⁸

Wondering, then, presupposes this kind of listening. Since we have ample evidence that Kvothe wonders, it must be the case that he is occasionally inclined toward this kind of listening, though it seems he is only successful at this subconsciously. Associating this listening with *working* wonders, rather than simply leading *to* wondering, the old man illustrates a further point, namely, that another product of this listening is the complex mental and physiological

³⁷ After all, Rothfuss describes this very phenomenon as the true hallmark of quality storytelling, reminding us that some of the best things about Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* are the intriguing questions we are left with to answer for ourselves (<https://www.tor.com/2017/02/03/patrick-rothfuss-kingkiller-chronicle-book-3-update/>). The correspondence between this point and Elodin's teaching style is striking.

³⁸ This advice comes to us from a campfire tale Kvothe hears about a travelling youth encountering an old man in a cave. The description of this old man corresponds with what we are told about Teccam, historical founder of the University, an institution where Kvothe studies under the tutelage of Elodin, Dal, Kilvin, and others. We will return to this point, below.

changes that can occur after trying out careful listening. It is a cumulative process: once we begin to hone our perceptual abilities in this way, it gets easier as we practice, a point which both parallels and motivates Elodin's attempts to teach through metaphor rather than provide a list of objective facts for students to memorize.³⁹ The point is to push past such memorization, to understand how these facts, and the objects of our perceptions, obtain in larger patterns, and to fit these together to form relevant, perhaps even helpful, pieces of knowledge, leading us not to some impossible exhaustive comprehension of the world, but rather towards wisdom.

In light of the above, it makes sense that a correlate of Kvothe's occasional exemplifications of "proper listening" is his implicit trusting in his intuition. For we associate such perceptual acuity and internal harmony with *learning for oneself*. Kvothe's confusion about this, which, interestingly, does not extend to his understanding of music, and the effects of this on his capacity to appreciate subtlety, are evident in his initial attempts at tak.⁴⁰

According to Bredon, a mysterious figure who befriends Kvothe, tak is a game of stones where, on "the face of it, the rules are simple. In execution they become quite complicated" (*WMF*, p. 462). The rules need not detain us here. The "execution" of the basics of tak, and the subtlety required for this, is what is at issue, or, rather, what Kvothe struggles to recognize. Before we examine Kvothe's foundering in this area, however, we must question Bredon's motivation for teaching tak to Kvothe when the latter shows no penchant for subtlety. Why, that

³⁹ A parallel could be drawn here with both the cardinal and theological virtues insofar as these latter—once put into action—may become easier to achieve with time, as is commonly noted concerning generosity and charity. Studies in neuroscience and psychology are starting to identify a scientific basis for this cumulative effect. For instance, Kaufman and Gregoire refer to a variety of studies showing that intense training of new patterns of thinking brings about lasting physiological change at the neural level (p. 196, fn. 49).

⁴⁰ For example, Kvothe states: "This is why we have music, after all. Words cannot always do the work we need them to. Music is there for when words fail us" (*WMF*, p. 883). Notice, this parallels Elodin's point about there being important things which cannot helpfully be talked about. Hence Elodin's surprise that Kvothe not only fails to suggest music as a topic for which paraphrase misses the point, but proceeds to insist that there are no such subjects.

is, does Bredon stubbornly continue teaching Kvothe when there seems no merit for Bredon in terms of getting to play against a worthy opponent?

There are two good reasons we can cite for Bredon's behaviour. First, he explains that, because Kvothe is a new and mysterious figure in the court, if Kvothe would oblige Bredon's wish to play tak together, removed from the sight of any other members of the court, though not from their awareness, it will enhance Bredon's own stature. Adding to the mystery of this relationship, Bredon provides Kvothe with calling rings (similar to calling cards), the selection of which reinforces rank among the locals as equal, lesser, or greater, but Bredon neglects to reveal his own rank when informing Kvothe of this system. Since, as Kvothe guesses, "it would be terribly rude...to inquire about" Bredon's status, the latter encourages Kvothe to send him the calling ring which indicates equal status when desiring future meetings (*WMF*, p. 432).⁴¹

The second motivation for Bredon's behaviour readily appears in Kvothe's recollection of their subsequent pondering the perceptions of others from the court. While narrating the backstory, Kvothe recalls musing about this "curious footing" (as Bredon describes it):

I rolled the silver ring around in my fingers. If I sent it to him, rumor would get around that I was claiming a rank roughly equal to his, and I had no idea what rank that was. "What will people say?"

His eyes danced a bit. "What indeed?" (*WMF*, p. 433)

As we saw above, this scene echoes Kvothe's offhand response to Wilem concerning "wondering" what people say. From this, we might infer that Bredon recognizes a potential in Kvothe, confirmed by Kvothe's intuitive responses in this scene, but beginning, presumably, when Bredon heard about Kvothe's clever entry into the court with hardly any resources. Such cleverness reflects a keen mind, one which is able to put wondering to practical use.

⁴¹ Bredon, by his "rash and unseemly barging" into Kvothe's rooms, skips the normal channel of sending a ring ahead, thereby neglecting "a proper introduction" and failing to inform Kvothe as to his title and rank (*WMF*, p. 432).

Notwithstanding this promise, when Kvothe suggests he is “getting a handle on the game,” Bredon disagrees (*WMF*, p. 494). While Bredon concedes that Kvothe has mastered the basics, he laments how Kvothe is “missing the whole point,” maintaining both that “tak is a subtle game” and that Kvothe’s style of play is far from graceful (*WMF*, p. 494). Kvothe recollects Bredon’s elaboration of this point:

“I am trying to make you understand the game,” he said. “The entire game, not just the fiddling about with stones. The point is not to play as tight as you can. The point is to be bold. To be dangerous. Be elegant....”

Bredon’s expression softened, and his voice became almost like an entreaty. “Tak reflects the subtle turning of the world. It is a mirror we hold to life. No one wins a dance, boy. The point of dancing is the motion that a body makes. A well played game of tak reveals the moving of a mind. There is a beauty to these things for those with eyes to see it.”

He gestured at the brief and brutal lay of stones between us. “Look at that. Why would I ever want to win a game such as this?”

I looked down at the board. “The point isn’t to win?” I asked.

“The point,” Bredon said grandly, “is to play a beautiful game.” He lifted his hands and shrugged, his face breaking into a beatific smile. “Why would I want to win anything other than a beautiful game?” (*WMF*, p. 495)

Bredon’s deprecation of Kvothe’s forays on the tak board is better understood, then, as a further instance of a tutor warning a pupil about tunnel vision, a limitation which persists in Kvothe’s case precisely because, as Elodin and others point out, Kvothe, by insisting on being given an algorithmic template, typically ignores how the required subtlety and its motivations can themselves be the object of a lesson.

Bredon rightly brings the beauty of such uses of the imagination to Kvothe’s attention, for this aesthetic point plays a part in the emerging view of metaphoric competence. Subtle style of play makes for a beautiful game insofar as it becomes a mode for communicating the beauty of subtle thinking, but this medium remains impenetrable without some degree of metaphoric

competence. Accordingly, we may appreciate the beauty of how this subtly brings into more vivid focus the overarching metaphor both we and the young Kvothe are being shown.⁴²

If tak appears worthwhile to the extent that it reflects the turnings of a mind, the Adem attribute the worth of an action to the extent to which it reflects understanding of the Lethani, which is achieved through the turnings of a mind *and* the movement of a heart. Much of the discussion of the Lethani in *The Wise Man's Fear* is highly metaphorical and, on the surface at least, frequently paradoxical. This is unsurprising given that the Lethani is *itself* an overarching metaphor, open to endless interpretation. But this does not mean that speculation regarding the Lethani is merely subjective. For the Adem people in general have achieved such a degree of metaphoric competence that they are confident in their sense of whether a given interpretation is indicative of principles that are inherent to the Lethani. However, a person's comprehension of the Lethani is not static, but organic, suggesting that learning never stops.⁴³

This is reinforced by the Adem conveying to Kvothe that the “root” of their understanding of the Lethani, and, by extension, what it means to be Adem, is reflection on ninety-nine traditional stories (*WMF*, p. 838). Their qualification that the twin concepts of Ademic identity and Lethani comprehension *began* in these stories implies that their worldview continues to evolve. That these earlier stories, taken metaphorically, serve as commentary on a very general, perhaps universal, level, allows for a continuity between the current Ademic understanding of the world and the wisdom of their forebears. In constantly shifting contexts, understanding of the metaphors these tales constitute changes in relation to *how* the Ademic

⁴² I would argue also that what Bredon attempts to intimate to Kvothe is an awareness of the larger metaphor of the game of tak itself, particularly when he talks about finding beauty in it becoming a mirror for the movement of a person's thoughts.

⁴³ There is an echo, here, of Hein's view of what constitutes good public art, though since this is just one aspect of the Lethani it is important to note that the metaphor of the Lethani surpasses her view in its scope.

people, both as a group and individually, apply them. Because the forms of these tales remain intact, though, the timeless wisdom of the stories does not itself change.⁴⁴ But what can we say about Kvothe's understanding of the Lethani, and how does this connect with his burgeoning metaphoric competence?

Let us consider interactions he has with various characters who sporadically both teach him about the Lethani and gauge the degree to which he has taken the metaphor of the Lethani to heart. Tempi, an Adem mercenary who accompanies Kvothe on his bandit-hunting mission and is worried about Kvothe's character, takes it upon himself to give the latter his first lessons on the Lethani. A common theme in these early discussions is the attempt to introduce Kvothe to the Lethani by questioning whether certain beliefs, actions, and attitudes are consistent with the Lethani or not (*WMF*, pp. 647-52, 791ff.). There is good reason for this exercise, explains Tempi. Since the full meaning of the Lethani is beyond paraphrase, this practice allows interlocutors to, nonetheless, indirectly approach the subject through these concrete examples. Tempi's assertion here recalls, first, Elodin's urging how pointless it would be to teach naming by providing discursive rules, and, second, Rothfuss' extra-textual comments regarding how some concepts are too elusive and complex "to pin precisely with words."⁴⁵

Tempi provides a further reason for the prominence of this style of discussing the Lethani, which echoes the insistence of virtue ethicists on the importance of context, stipulating in his imperfect (but poetic) use of Kvothe's language that the Lethani is "'Not polite. Not kind. Not good. Not duty. The Lethani is none of these. Each moment. Each choice. All different.'" He

⁴⁴ This reverberates with T.S. Eliot's celebrated remark regarding the purpose of education: "It should be an aim of education to maintain the continuity of our culture—and neither continuity, nor a respect for the past, implies standing still" ("Aims of Education" in *Modern Philosophies of Education*, pp. 415-6).

⁴⁵ Rothfuss maintains that such concepts can be explained, although this hardly entails that they will be easy to grasp. Accordingly, he emphasizes that these areas elude "precise," non-metaphorical explanation. See <https://www.tor.com/2012/05/17/rothfuss-reread-pat-answers-the-admissions-questions/>.

gave me a penetrating look[, reports Kvothe]. ‘Do you understand?’” When Kvothe responds in the negative, Tempi uses “hand language” to indicate feeling happy and approving of this answer, and nods his head, saying, “It is good you know you do not. Good that you say. That is also of the Lethani” (*WMF*, p. 652). Presumably, Kvothe’s response is pleasing to Tempi because it recognizes the limits of one’s knowledge and, as such, displays humility. Given that the Adem recognize the Lethani, the guiding force of their people, as something one can never know perfectly, Kvothe’s response here is apt.

But there is another potential reason for Tempi’s approval, one which may resolve the apparently paradoxical assertion that it is good to know that one does not know. For even aside from the kind of Socratic humility this expression evokes, later passages confirm that, for the Adem, understanding of the Lethani is not due exclusively to discursive reasoning. As Tempi claims, insight into the Lethani begins not through logic, but rather through feeling, like humor and love (*WMF*, p. 791).⁴⁶ We can push the analogy further: relaxation is a prerequisite of those deep reflections through which we glimpse the metaphor of the Lethani, just as it is with respect to coming to love someone or something, or identifying a comic aspect. Moreover, all three activities—recognizing the Lethani, developing love, finding humor—can, after the fact, relax our mood, both leaving us “inspired” and generally making further “inspiration” easier.⁴⁷

In other words, it is hard to furnish someone with concrete facts about the Lethani because one can glimpse it *only* in those creative moments of understanding which go *beyond mere memorization*. That is not to suggest, however, that one cannot *remember* these moments. In fact, memory of such instances allows a better grasp of the Lethani, and accordingly, for the

⁴⁶ Cf. Joshua Greene’s discussion of the vital part feeling plays in helpful thinking in “Efficiency, Flexibility, and the Dual-Process Brain,” in *Moral Tribes*, pp. 142-3ff.

⁴⁷ Cf. the parallels Ted Cohen draws between jokes and metaphor, as well as Ricoeur’s account of the role of feeling in the metaphoric process.

Adem at least, a better way of living. Here again, we recall the heuristic theme explored above, which reminds us that, just as these fictional characters must seek knowledge of the Lethani for themselves, so too must we, when acquainting ourselves with ethical principles and the like, ponder these concepts for ourselves, at once broadening our knowledge while sharpening our ability to understand. Metaphorical thinking is integral to this process. Intuitive understanding, then, is so important to the Adem that it constitutes a distinguishing feature of their very way of life, as the path to grasping the metaphor of the Lethani, while by no means *irrational*, is more intuitive than rational.

A later discourse on the purpose of the Lethani refines our understanding of Tempi's point. Tempi rejects Kvothe's suggestion that this purpose is to "give us a path to follow," warning that the Lethani "is not a path," that it is more a guide for "*our* actions. By following the Lethani, you act rightly.... The Lethani is what helps *us* choose a path" (*WMF*, p. 791, emphasis mine).⁴⁸ Given this, it seems that teaching about the Lethani is comparable to virtue ethics, since virtue ethicists advise us not just to imitate moral exemplars, but to *emulate* them as well.⁴⁹ How

⁴⁸ This passage further portrays the Lethani as an ambiguous entity, not just in itself, but in application. For Tempi's use of "a" as opposed to "the" suggests a plurality of right paths forward concerning which reflection upon the Lethani can illuminate.

⁴⁹ See also pp. 649-51: "The Lethani is doing right things" at the right time and in the right way—provided that these actions are preceded by knowing. We might fruitfully compare the Lethani with the Tao as well, but such considerations move beyond the scope of this inquiry. Elsewhere in the text, the overlap with virtue ethics is even more obvious. After killing a band of pretend Edema Ruh (trouper) that were murdering helpless country folk, stealing their goods, kidnapping and raping their daughters, and besmirching the name of Kvothe's people, the Edema Ruh, he spends much time considering whether he was right to trust his instincts in coming to the determination that, first, they needed to be killed, and, second, he ought to be the one to do so. A peak instance of his uncertainty occurs when, while walking the girls he rescues back to their village, he remembers discussing the Lethani with Vashet. When she told him that "success and right action" were the heart of the Lethani, he asked her which was more important. To this she firmly replied, "They are the same. If you act rightly, success follows. Wrong things never lead to success." And furthermore, "Without the Lethani there is no true success" (*WMF*, pp. 964-5). If we draw out the implications to this, it seems at first glance—and Kvothe's reflections encourage this line of thinking—that he was obviously wrong, behaving immorally. That is, his actions were not of the Lethani. Of course, from Aristotle's account of mixed actions we know that even for the virtue ethicist some actions, while wrong in themselves, or at least in general, are rendered "right" through circumstantial constraints, such as killing people who are obviously going to continue committing these foul acts. So, by recalling this insight, we might acknowledge no conflict between his actions and Vashet's commentary. But it is not clear that Kvothe is willing to concede this point with regard to his own actions post hoc, though when he acted on his instincts he implied assent

we could do so without grasping the metaphors that their actions constitute, including the contextual subtleties surrounding the associated decisions, responses, or operations, is unclear. Therefore, we need to reflect deeply on these exemplars if we are to apply such metaphors to our own circumstances, taking them further by creatively arriving at solutions in varying circumstances.

The purpose of both the Lethani and the emphasis in virtue ethics on emulating exemplars, then, is to encourage us to figure out *for ourselves* how to proceed, and to realize that doing so does not take place in a vacuum, but on the basis of intuitive wisdom gleaned from a wealth of individual and shared experiences.⁵⁰ Clearly, metaphoric competence is indispensable to this process, an arc of learning culminating, gradually or in quantum leaps, in practical wisdom. The fact that Kvothe's early lessons on the Lethani precede his successful naming of Felurian is not coincidental, suggesting that learning about the Lethani complements the study of naming, and, by extension, that Kvothe's metaphoric competence is improving.⁵¹

Kvothe's study of the Lethani constantly pushes him both to rely on and hone his instincts, thereby actualizing what had previously been mere potential.⁵² Thus, when Kvothe is so exhausted by Tempi's training that he is unable to ponder questions discursively, his answers to Tempi are more incisive:

to it. Even more, his remorse after the fact establishes that his actions—dire as they seemed—were for the right reasons. Cf. p. 183, fn. 24, above. Here again, Kvothe displays the same kind of uncertainty Simmon found so reassuring, and which we nowadays regard as an important step in experiential learning. The uncertainty regarding this case is eventually checked by his witness of the girls' subsequent nightmares about their misfortunes, however. After this point, he feels only a grim satisfaction with his actions when recalling this doling out of justice.

⁵⁰ That is, *when* we proceed wisely. Recognizing this ever-present context allows us to appreciate better Hursthouse's assertion that acting rightly calls for "much moral wisdom," making it difficult for youths to be moral geniuses, since they, as Aristotle notes, are unlikely to have yet "had much experience of life," as well as Louis Groarke's conclusion that "The myth of the cultural, ethical, and philosophical Robinson Crusoe is only that, an appealing straw man, a noble lie, a caricature" ("Virtue Theory and Abortion," p. 224; *Moral Reasoning*, p. 17).

⁵¹ A similar argument could be made concerning his explorations of the subtleties of tak, though the Lethani is clearly a more effective subject in sparking Kvothe's intuitive development.

⁵² Cf. Kaufman's and Gregoire's espousal of the growing academic consensus that a faith in intuition is important for developing creativity and imagination (p. 225, footnotes 15, 16).

“You showed your mind is stronger than your body. That is good. When the mind controls the body, that is of the Lethani. But knowing your limit is also of the Lethani. It is better to stop when you must than run until you fall.”

“Unless falling is what the Lethani requires.” I said without thinking. My head still felt light as a windblown leaf.

He gave me a rare smile. “Yes. You are beginning to see.” (*WMF*, p. 793)⁵³

In effect, Kvothe has been stuck “beginning to see” for most of the book. For there are similarities between this instance and his accidental performances of naming, along with the character traits he exhibits to Simmon’s approval—his instinctual willingness to put others’ needs over his own (for the most part), his refusal to remain idle when cognizant of emerging injustice, and his propensity for snap-decisions be they in relation to moral or aesthetic considerations.⁵⁴ The emerging difference, however, is that Kvothe is gaining an element of control over his attempts to realize his potential, and, with the help of the Adem, consciously shaping his intellectual and moral habits to ensure his actions reflect the Lethani.⁵⁵ Vashet, another Adem who takes over Kvothe’s training in both the Lethani and the martial arts of the Adem, provides commentary that advances this metaphor, tying it more closely to the ongoing concern for metaphoric competence.

Kvothe calls the feeling he experiences in these passages “Spinning Leaf.” Because he can return himself to this frame of mind by focusing on the memory of it, he discovers that he can use it strategically to more adeptly discuss the Lethani. Vashet tells him that such mental exercises are basically ketans for one’s mind. A ketan is a series of movements designed to give Adem control over, first, their bodies, and, second, their surroundings. Similarly, Spinning Leaf

⁵³ Cf. Groarke’s discussion of first principles as representing the limits of human knowledge, along with his point about knowing when to argue and when argument must come to an end (*AAI*). Tempi’s comments serve to elaborate his earlier commendation of Kvothe’s display of humility in understanding the Lethani.

⁵⁴ His sympathies in this area are restricted to those he views as either friends or good people.

⁵⁵ Adopting Greene’s terminology, we could view Kvothe as developing his metacognitive skill insofar as he reshapes his instincts, and gets better at identifying which situations call more for intuitive thought and which for discursive reasoning. Cf. Greene, p. 143.

gives Kvothe control over his mind, such that his analytic and imaginative mental resources dovetail, thereby putting him in a better frame of mind for attending to his surroundings. It is fitting that he gets better at this while exercising, because, as recent studies suggest, physical activity helps us engage our *precuneus*, an essential element of what cognitive neuroscientists call the “imagination network,” and heightens “self-consciousness, self-related mental representation, and the retrieval of personal memories,” which leads to a more holistic and efficient use of our brain, the kind of mental effort that creativity demands.⁵⁶

This, in turn, corresponds to the metaphor Elodin shares with Kvothe about things being seen more easily from edges—on the assumption that Elodin has in mind instances where unbidden knowledge of something arises in our minds when our attention is consciously focused on something else. Locating this process within Aristotle’s conception of the imagination renders the idea all the more plausible, for if we commit our perceptions of something to memory, and are subsequently able to reflect on them, imaginatively situating them against the background of other beliefs and memories, then it must be, at least in part, *through* the imagination that we are able insightfully to grasp how something can be metaphorically substituted for or compared with another thing, stand as its own irreducible comment or piece of wisdom, or fuse into a larger view. In Kvothe’s case, Spinning Leaf serves as a shortcut to metaphorical competence, helping him more regularly display timing, social grace, humility, and practical wisdom.

⁵⁶ Scott Barry Kaufman, “The Real Link between Creativity and Mental Illness” (*Scientific American* 3 Oct. 2013: <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/beautiful-minds/the-real-link-between-creativity-and-mental-illness/>); Kaufman and Gregoire, pp. xxvi-ix. Kaufman’s and Gregoire’s related point reverberates with the notion of metaphoric competence. Furthermore, their argument that thinking creatively requires integration of our conscious and intuitive resources, along with our emotion, encourages us to appreciate Ricoeur’s elaboration of the metaphorical process all the more, since he developed his ideas before such views found support in neuroscience. Telling comparisons can be drawn between both the description Kvothe gives us of “Spinning Leaf” and the effects of his related experiences on his self-development with Kalina Christoff’s emphatic claim that “our drifting mind [is] a normal, even necessary, part of our mental existence,” a feature we can take advantage of in creative and enjoyable ways (“Undirected Thought: Neural Determinants and Correlates,” in *Brain Research*, 1428, pp. 51-9, quoted in Kaufman and Gregoire, pp. xxvii).

The ceremony of Kvothe's first formal initiation test for joining the Adem—the Sword Tree ritual (so named for its sword-like leaves)—is a prime example of this. Amidst an array of external pressures and internal fears, Kvothe is able to relax by appreciating the beauty of how a tree with razor-sharp leaves traces patterns in the air, which nudges him into Spinning Leaf. Thus prepared, he survives the first half of the ritual by eluding the wild swings of the tree branches unscathed, all the while feeling like he could call the name of the wind and stop the branches if he wanted to. And yet, once Kvothe wins a reprieve from these leaves at the base of the tree, he discovers his lute among the items available for him to choose from to bring to Shehyn, which angers him, dispelling the equipoise he had acquired. As he proceeds, however, he is struck by the absurd incongruity of needing to void his bladder in the middle of this extremely serious ritual, and laughs, after which he is able to return to this previous state of mind.⁵⁷ That laughter has such a profound effect is consistent with the emerging view of metaphoric competence as a process requiring an integrated mental effort, one that demands both our rational and intuitive resources, such as occurs when we relax and enable our *precuneus* to engage.

The most telling part of this entire endeavour is how he completes the second and final leg of the ceremony. Naming the wind so as to bring the branches to a halt—a feat apparently never before accomplished by the Adem—Kvothe walks back to the judges, reaching out and carefully slicing his hand on a leaf, and turning this hand into the Adem gesture for “willing” as he comes to a stop before them. As Vashet later exclaims, it is as if he were manipulating everyone's perceptions of him all along. For the townspeople previously regarded him as

⁵⁷ Kvothe explains, “It was such a horrifying and inappropriate thought that I burst out laughing. And when the laugh rushed out of me, the tension knotting in my stomach and clawing the muscles of my back melted away” (*WMF*, p. 899). Cf. Steven Burns' and Alice MacLachlan's observation that this effect of laughing to release tension, on “a standard account,” is comparable to the power of both the sneeze and the orgasm (“Getting It: on Jokes and Art,” p. 6).

uncivilized, to put it mildly. But after his conduct in the ceremony, they constantly sing his praises to each other. These appreciators find it especially remarkable that, instead of picking up a particular symbolic object from the arranged selection like everyone else, Kvothe brought back to the leader of the school “The things a barbarian cannot understand: silence and stillness. The heart of Ademre.” In response to the question, “What did he offer to Shehyn?,” they declare, “Willingness to bleed for the school” (*WMF*, p. 901).⁵⁸ Vashet’s point brings this discussion to a predictable conclusion. Why, if Kvothe is so metaphorically competent, do we not see him exhibit such sensitivity and understanding before this episode?

As I claim above, the answer is simply that he was not metaphorically competent, at least not *really*. But his experiences helped to foster his ability to imagine implication, to view things metaphorically, and to think abstractly for himself. In other words, he matures—intellectually and morally. Subsequently, his behaviour assumes a new character, and the Sword Tree ritual scene provides a compelling example of this, since Kvothe takes advantage, not just of his ability to reason discursively, but also of his newfound control over initiating, and trusting in, intuitive thinking. Without consciously shifting into the Spinning Leaf frame of thinking, he nevertheless finds this equipoise at a time when it is sorely needed, which is unsurprising given that conditioning our instincts and mental habits is a cumulative process. As he gets better at focusing on and taking advantage of his instincts, he develops a better ear for what they are telling him.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Here, “silence” metaphorically plays upon the mysterious silence in the frame story which Kvothe owns, which suggests that while the Adem appreciate the gesture’s metaphor, it could be that Kvothe’s accidental magic tendencies were at work, and that he literally took “silence” back with him as his own possession. All of which turns out to be just another way that Rothfuss leaves us with no choice but to tolerate, even entertain, ambiguity, if we are to appreciate the work’s complexity. The number of these instances, and how they complicate the story, leads Cahill to propose that Rothfuss’ work sports enough “mysteries to last several graduate level studies” (<https://www.tor.com/2017/11/08/why-the-name-of-the-wind-still-resonates-ten-years-later/>).

⁵⁹ Notwithstanding how intuitive thinking goes beyond mere instinct, the two are inextricable, though instinct is perhaps an overlapping notion with what many prefer to speak about in terms of unconscious processes.

Thanks to these experiences, and his own work reflecting on them, Kvothe attains a kind of competence, facilitating both his negotiation of the subtle circumstances surrounding the ceremony and better understanding of the Lethani. Responding to metaphor with metaphor, Kvothe addresses the attempts of a sparring partner to rebuke his characterization of the Lethani, making it clear that he is growing more aware of those things which either contribute to, or are expressions of, metaphorical competence.

“The Lethani is the same everywhere,’ she said firmly. “It is not like the wind, changing from place to place.”

“The Lethani is like water,” I responded without thinking. “It is itself unchanging, but it shapes itself to fit all places. It is both the river and the rain.”

She glared at me. It was not a furious glare, but coming from one of the Adem, it had the same effect. “Who are you to say the Lethani is like one thing and not another?”

“Who are you to do the same?” (*WMF*, p. 868-9)

Kvothe’s ensuing forays on the tak board with Bredon confirm this burgeoning taste and proficiency for subtlety. Bredon looks at Kvothe after a few tilts and some banter about rumors of Kvothe’s adventures, and concedes that Kvothe is improving dramatically. As Kvothe recalls, “It seemed I was learning how to play a beautiful game” (*WMF*, p. 1006). At this point, however, differences persist between the Kvothe of the backstory and the Kvothe who relates the tale.

An analogy might help us to understand one of these contrasts. Just as the playing of a “beautiful game” is not everything, neither is relatively consistent metaphoric competence a panacea. More specifically, it is not just how we proceed in games, or when under scrutiny, that counts, but rather our behaviour at all times. That is, while a penchant for subtlety, considered in isolation, is an enviable capacity, acting consistently surpasses it in the order of moral significance. Similarly, some metaphors are more important or helpful than others, and, while metaphoric competence is necessary to appreciate any of these, gaining metaphoric competence is not as vital as attaining practical wisdom or humility, though, again, these are all complementary developments. That the younger Kvothe remains at the mercy of, in particular,

anger and love, and that the older Kvothe carefully includes these details in his narrative, reveals abiding limitations of the former's metaphoric competence, and, more importantly, character. On the other hand, these limitations render him all the more emblematic of the complexity of the human condition.

On these grounds, I would argue that our witness of Kvothe in Rothfuss' *The Name of the Wind* and *The Wise Man's Fear*, the first two books of the *Kingkiller Chronicles*, furnishes, in an important sense, a partial picture of his formative years and spiritual education, and the vital role that developing metaphoric competence plays in this process. But it is all too easy to reduce the complexity of Rothfuss' masterpiece by, for example, attributing Rothfuss' success merely to his character development of Kvothe. As I repeatedly point out above, part of the beauty of this work is its ambiguity—of Kvothe's character and of the story itself—which elicits from us an ambivalent response, while encouraging us to exercise our own practical thinking when conceiving how we ought to face and interpret that complexity. But I am not suggesting that *The Wise Man's Fear* (and the *Kingkiller Chronicles* more generally) is *simply* a bildungsroman, or what Ritchie calls a “modern psychological novel.”⁶⁰

On the contrary, I would insist that, because it presents a compelling view of metaphoric competence, and because, like Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, the story incorporates all seven basic plots that Booker contends exhaust storytelling—overcoming the monster, rags to riches, the quest, voyage and return, comedy, tragedy, and rebirth—*The Wise Man's Fear* ought not be solely classified under one genre, such as “the bildungsroman.”⁶¹ In the same vein, this story,

⁶⁰ *Metaphorical Stories in Discourse*, p. 89. Ritchie provides this description when praising an earlier classic which prefigures the later genre: every part in the narrative “presents *two* parallel stories, an external saga of heroic adventure and an internal story of spiritual struggle and growth.”

⁶¹ Booker, p. 316. There might be a tension here in saying that something can be a comedy and tragedy. For as Aristotle noted, these two seem to preclude one another. But Rothfuss' work seems to question this very dichotomy. Presently, because of the complexities of the tale, and because the last chapter has yet to be written, the story of

which is generally sold on “fantasy” shelves in contemporary bookstores, is much more than even this categorization suggests (unless we have Tolkien’s definition in mind). That Kvothe’s descriptions of the various books he locates at the behest of Elodin readily apply to *The Wise Man’s Fear* supports this complaint. For we can easily imagine this story as a morality play, a collection of “bad” short poetry, a fencing novel, a romance, an outdated (and largely fictitious) medical text, a book about nature, an antiquated account of taxes, and, last but not least, “the journal of a madman” (*WMF*, pp. 134-5).

Regardless of which of these frames we prefer to view the story of Kvothe through, I would argue that his interior travails in coming to a better understanding of the role of intuition, and his growing appreciation of the subtle features of experience, defamiliarize the reader’s perception of these phenomena. Whether or not this characterizes the experience of particular readers, Rothfuss’ work stands as an argument *through* metaphor *on* metaphor, one which we ought to recognize as instrumental to a series of far-reaching philosophical reforms, which include epistemological warrant, the power of aesthetic experience, moral reasoning, and higher education. In other words, just as Kvothe internalizes his experiences, attaining knowledge *in action* (and being), in turn, we receive *actionable* knowledge *about* metaphorical understanding in the form of a metaphor that eludes translation.

4.2

The Plot Thickens: A More Detailed Examination of Kvothe’s Metaphoric Competence

It is indeed easier to unravel a single *thread*—an incident, a name, a motive—than to trace the history of any *picture* defined by many threads. For with the picture in the tapestry a new element has come in: the picture is greater than, and not explained by, the sum of the component

Kvothe can still be interpreted as, and predicted to become, a comedy or a tragedy. Moreover, a tragedy can enfold smaller comedy plot arcs within itself, and vice versa.

threads. Therein lies the inherent weakness of the analytic (or ‘scientific’) method: it finds out much about things that occur in stories, but little or nothing about their effect in any given story.

J.R.R. Tolkien⁶²

Return to the complex metaphor in *The Wise Man’s Fear* discussed above. Other strands to the depiction of metaphoric competence in Rothfuss’ work remain, and some of the themes already alluded to merit further consideration. Here, we must assess the impact Rothfuss’ thematic treatments of perception, memory, and ontological understanding have on the larger view. Subsequently, we must revisit Kvothe’s learning of both naming and the Lethani as this relates to discussions of, first, “chasing the wind,” second, what various characters regard as the wrong kind of mastery, and, finally, language.

Perception, the first of these threads, plays a dramatic role in the subtext of *The Kingkiller Chronicles*, especially to the extent that it can and should be viewed “as an active force” (*WMF*, p. 233). For instance, this underlies Bast’s behaviour in the frame story. His apparently secret machinations bring Chronicler to the inn, which leads to Kvothe’s decision to share his tale for the preeminent historian to transcribe. Bast thinks this will make Kvothe remember who he is, interrupting and reversing the pattern of the latter’s fading lustre, a deterioration of spirit aptly summarized by the frame-story narrator’s description of Kvothe’s “silence” as “the patient, cut-flower sound of a man who is waiting to die” (*WMFI*, p. 1107). Although the effects of this process are rendered uncertain by Rothfuss’ careful wording, there is ample evidence to surmise that Bast’s hopes are coming true.⁶³

⁶² *Tree and Leaf*, p. 47, fn. 13.

⁶³ The final scene in *WMF* is an example of this evidence. Sneaking back down to the common room after the others have either left or gone to bed, Kvothe seemingly begins to practice the ketan, an act which suggests that either he is coming back to life through forceful interaction with his former identity or pursuing a hidden agenda throughout his time as innkeeper that the others are unaware of.

Given the considerable metaphoric competence Kvothe has achieved at the time of the frame story, it is easy to imagine that reviewing his past would have a profound psychological impact on him. This is confirmed by how frequently he seems to forget his temporary guise of innkeeper, coming alive again as he immerses himself in relating the tale. The success of certain recent trends in psychology attests to the power of such immersion. For example, in the positive psychology movement, the focus is on mental health and well-being through, in large part, “nurturing what is best within ourselves,” while humanistic psychology, positive psychology’s predecessor, emphasises holistic conceptions of the person, “creative self-realization, and the many paths to personal growth.”⁶⁴ Storytelling is an outlet for such creative “self-realization,” and reflection upon one’s experiences surely can lead to “personal growth.” Further, we can understand Bast’s instigation of this process as a focus on Kvothe’s mental well-being via his recollection of what is best in himself, though this is tempered by the attendant recollection of what is worst in himself, which can certainly contribute to personal growth, even if it may initially upset one’s sense of mental well-being.

There is another way in which memory contributes to the larger subtext of the story, however, one which confirms its place in the Aristotelian schema of imagination. As Kvothe tells us, he has “a good memory. That, perhaps more than anything else, sits in the center of what [he is]. It is the talent upon which so many of [his] other skills depend” (*WMF*, 739). If, as Zwicky suggests, metaphoric competence overlaps with imagination, and if our memory allows us to draw lessons from our experiences through the imagination, then it is easy to appreciate at least one sense of Kvothe’s meaning here, namely, that his imaginative achievements would not have been possible without his exceptional memory.

⁶⁴ Kaufman and Gregoire, xxxiii. Cf. the related Aristotelian conceptions of *arete* and the good life in Groarke’s *Moral Reasoning*, pp. 151, 163-4.

Consider the following example. Kvothe has a run-in with a subtly belligerent porter who denies him entry to a pre-arranged meeting with Denna, the woman with whom he is infatuated. Thanks to his wit, his sense of wonder and refusal to take things at face-value, Kvothe gets the better of the porter, compelling the latter to announce his arrival. Kvothe recounts the memorable smile the porter offers in response as one which

was gracious, polite, and so sharply unpleasant that I took special note of it, fixing it in my memory. A smile like that is a work of art. As someone who grew up on the stage, I could appreciate it on several levels. A smile like that is like a knife in certain social settings, and I might have need of it someday. (*WMF*, p. 99)

At first glance, it may seem that we equivocate here in using the term “memory.” For its sense, when we speak of Kvothe’s committing the porter’s smile to memory, is somewhat different than that alluded to above, as this is more of a practical memory of a specific action, than that through which imaginative inspiration and associated understanding of concepts, patterns, and the like comes about. But this difference is largely a matter of degree, not kind. And later, when Kvothe summons this smile from memory, the manoeuvre is one of two crucial steps towards gaining access to his potential patron, the Maer. Ironically, not only does this suggest that Kvothe’s appreciation of the porter’s smile went beyond the mere committing to memory of a simple facial gesture, but it also shows how Kvothe takes the lesson the porter inadvertently provides, emulating him while disarming someone in a gatekeeper position akin to the porter’s own.⁶⁵

Kvothe’s excellent memory becomes particularly important to his progress in learning how to find the names of things. Elodin equates this with studying “the shape of the world,” a phrase which, in addition to referring to the literal shape of physical things, coincides figuratively with ontological understanding (*WMF*, p. 348).⁶⁶ Teccam, one of the paradigmatic

⁶⁵ See *WMF*, p. 409.

⁶⁶ When performing the magic of naming in his encounter with Felurian, Kvothe feels like he is “truly awake for the first time, true knowledge running like ice in [his] blood,” a description which calls to mind, first, Groarke’s depiction of inductive insight at the first level (and arguably at the second as well), and, second, that Kvothe is

figures of the University's past, was particularly in tune with the shape of the world, which Kvothe, after relating Teccam's distinction of secrets of the mouth and of the heart, remarks in his narration.

On Teccam's view, secrets, which he refers to as "painful treasures of the mind," ought to be distinguished from mysteries, that is, "little-known facts or forgotten truths," since secrets are "true knowledge *actively* concealed" (*WMF*, p. 541, emphasis added). In turn, secrets can be divided into two camps: those of the mouth, and those of the heart. The former fight their way to utterance, whereas the latter are "private and painful," becoming heavier the longer they are kept, eventually crushing "the heart that holds them" (*WMF*, p. 542). Of course, Teccam's insight here readily applies to Kvothe's story, for, until his autobiographical recounting to Bast and Chronicler, it seems that, despite the fact that they are the driving force of his ambitions, Kvothe never tells anyone about the disturbing events that orphaned him. Such an admission would have likely forestalled (at least) some of the friction that develops between him and Denna. And, given that Kvothe's heart in the frame story seems substantially compromised, Teccam's observation seems borne out by Kvothe's experience.

There remains a tension here, though. Teaching someone about the "shape of the world," be it in relation to subtleties of the human condition, or in regards to particular patterns in nature, "is hopeless. It cannot be done" (*WMF*, p. 348). And yet, Elodin, who tells this to his students, must intend it figuratively, because he immediately adds that, nevertheless, students try to learn, teachers try to teach, and occasionally both succeed (*WMF*, p. 348). After speaking the name of

"ontologically" at his best at this moment, adeptly speculating about what it *means* to be such a person as Felurian, all the while being entranced by the patterns of the wind in the pavilion (*WMF*, p. 737). If this is not studying "the shape of the world," it is not clear what else could qualify. Moreover, the catalyst to Kvothe's naming at the time was his *remembering* who he is, that is, his *being*. This inspires him to break through the enchantment which had been smothering his mind. *Recalling* how to call the name of the wind and, consequently, awakening his "sleeping mind," allows him to identify Felurian's deep name, which enables his escape.

fire, Dal admits to Kvothe that he does not “have the wit” for explaining how he performed this magic. But Dal insists that Elodin can, as the latter “claims to understand these things” (*WMF*, p. 198). If we associate wit with either its older connotation—intelligence or knowledge—or the newer sense of “brief and deftly phrased expression,” this concession reinforces how Elodin’s pedagogical approach (and successes) in the area of teaching naming largely hinge on his ingenious figurative uses of language.⁶⁷ In other words, Elodin both understands the essentially heuristic component of the learning experience and, as we saw above, goes to dramatic lengths to do all he can to foster such creative leaps in his students’ understanding.

Return to the scene where Puppet embodies the same teaching spirit. It was noted above that, having distinguished between looking and seeing, Puppet concludes that Kvothe is stuck in the former because he is not sufficiently able to relax. From what we know of the secret residing in Kvothe’s heart, this comes as no surprise, since—unbeknownst to the other characters in the scene—the reason he asks Puppet the questions he does is to acquire more information about both the secret group of mythical figures who killed his parents and friends, the Chandrian, and another secretive group that opposes this one, the Amyr. But two other strands in Kvothe’s interactions with Puppet contribute to the larger view of metaphoric competence.

First, Puppet relaxes Kvothe by making a wooden puppet of him and proceeding to puppeteer in a hypnotic manner. This is part of Puppet’s “work on” Kvothe, which he implies is unfinished (*WMF*, p. 332). So the extent to which one can influence an interlocutor to grasp the kinds of things Elodin strives to teach here includes hypnotically distracting peoples’ conscious minds to relax them, while encouraging them to rely more on what Tempi and company refer to as the kind of cognition associated with humor and love, that is, the instinctual datum of intuitive

⁶⁷ M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, p. 100.

thinking.⁶⁸ After all, following one's instincts dovetails with developing reasoning skills, particularly when in a liminal space.⁶⁹

Second, in conjunction with what we know of the kind of “listening” and “relaxing” that is required to name, Puppet's recommendation that Kvothe “go chase the wind for a while” suggests that the very experience of travelling around studying patterns of wind will serve a purpose parallel to that of Puppet's “work on” Kvothe (*WMF*, p. 331). The old man from the story about listening alluded to above, who, again, may well be Teccam, elaborates what “chasing the wind” entails. He tells the protagonist of that story how the cave he is dwelling in is perfect for what he does, namely, listening “to things to see what they have to say” (*WMF*, p. 654). “You need to get a long ways from people,” adds the old man, “before you can learn to listen properly” (*WMF*, p. 654). Hence, his decision to dwell in the remote cave. Chronicler shares this view, reflecting that his decision to leave the University was the best he ever made, having “learned more from a month on the road than [he] had in three years of classes.” This departure presumably led him to hone his listening skills given that he emphasizes to Bast and Kvothe that “*Telling* a story isn't what [he is] here for” (*WMF*, p. 943). Listening in the sense which Puppet advocates, then, is easier to develop when removed from people, especially those one knows, and even more so when in natural environments (particularly in those Elodin refers to as “edges”), where the beauty of natural formations and processes relaxes the mind.

⁶⁸ We need not confuse this process with hypnosis as a “brain-washing” experience, however. Ironically, this is a metaphor which hints at the potential of such endeavours as enriching and cleansing experiences that people who use the metaphor generally ignore. Jaynes writes, “hypnosis is the black sheep of the family of problems that constitute psychology. It wanders in and out of laboratories and carnivals and clinics and village halls like an unwanted anomaly. It never seems to straighten up and resolve itself into the firmer properties of scientific theory. Indeed, its very possibility seems a denial of our immediate ideas about conscious self-control on the one hand, and our scientific idea about personality on the other. Yet it should be conspicuous that any theory of consciousness and its origins, if it is to be responsible, *must* face the difficulty of this deviant type of behavioural control” (*The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*, p. 379).

⁶⁹ See section 3.3 above.

There is a further element to the tale involving the old man, however, that implicates the notion of metaphoric competence in a way that resonates with Tolkien's view of certain literary works being more applicable than allegorical; namely, that of mastery. It is common knowledge that, among the important themes in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, are those of the relation of power to corruption and the distinction between stewardship and domination. The old man's discussion of mastery corresponds to Tolkien's view of domination as a corrupt form of power.⁷⁰ Because the old man couches his conception of mastery in subtle language, and since his interlocutor lacks metaphoric competence, the latter fails to grasp that, in "chasing the wind," the old man, even when enjoying moments of "catching" it, never acquired mastery over it, or to realize that mastery can be distinguished into good and bad kinds.

Felurian's rebuke of Kvothe's definition of naming as coming to "have mastery over" something through the knowledge of its deep name is a more explicit expression of the same concern. Explaining the gap between early namers and the mastery Kvothe refers to, she says that "mastery was not given. they had the deep knowing of things. *not* mastery. to swim is not mastery over the water. to eat an apple is not mastery of the apple" (*WMF*, p. 744-5).⁷¹ Felurian and the old man are both arguing against the same kind of domination which Tolkien contrasts with stewardship and applicability. We can extend the scope of this tradition, locating in the same camp Elodin's conception of the subtle language the world is speaking and Puppet's urging of proper "seeing." As Felurian says, the world speaking this subtle language is to be *known*, not *mastered*, and proper seeing, like proper listening, according to the old man, is more a matter of

⁷⁰ For more on Tolkien's conception of problematic mastery, see *Fellowship*, p. 421.

⁷¹ This use of lower-case letters to start sentences is copied from the original. Whenever Felurian speaks in the story, her lines are formatted in this manner.

listening to *understand* than listening to *respond*.⁷² Consequently, proper mastery of listening for and knowing the deep names of things is a massive undertaking that is indistinguishable from Tolkien's sense of stewardship. It is all the more surprising that, early on in the frame story of *The Name of the Wind*, the narrator describes Kvothe as looking at the stars and knowing the deep names of all of them. As such, the state of Kvothe's mind and power is rendered all the more uncertain in the frame, while also revealing that his ability to really listen, which seems to overlap significantly with metaphoric competence, must have grown tremendously by the close of the backstory.

Let us turn now to how Kvothe's encounters with the Adem contribute to the ongoing metaphor of metaphoric competence by elaborating further on the issue of language. Three instances, in particular, highlight Kvothe's development in this area and, in turn, help us better understand the role of implication in both language and intuitive understanding. These are, first, a problem Vashet raises, second, Shehyn's questioning of Kvothe's understanding of the Lethani, and, third, Tempi's report on the Ademic art of speaking.

Trying to assuage Kvothe's agitation at the seemingly paradoxical nature of the Lethani, Vashet tells him that his native tongue is the problem,

Aturan is very explicit. It is very precise and direct. Our language is rich with implication, so it is easier to accept the existence of things that cannot be explained. The Lethani is the greatest of these. (*WMF*, p. 822)

When Kvothe demands another example, Vashet responds that "Love is such a thing. You have knowledge of what it is, but it defies careful explication" (*WMF*, p. 823). Kvothe initially disagrees, conceding that it is an elusive concept, "like justice," but nonetheless "can be defined," even though he ultimately abandons the point. Vashet continues,

⁷² We might add Chronieler's name to this elite company in light of his vehement assertion in the chapter "Interlude—Obedience" (in *NW*) that pure obedience is one of the most nauseating things, since this extends the view of mastery discussed here to those who let themselves become the passive objects of such mastery.

“When you see a mother with her child, you see love. When you feel it roil in your belly, you know what it is. Even if you cannot give voice to it in words.”

Vashet made a triumphant gesture. “Thus also is the Lethani. But as it is greater, it is more difficult to point toward. That is the purpose of the questions. Asking them is like asking a young girl about the boy she fancies. Her answers may not be the word, but they reveal love or the lack of it within her heart.” (*WMF*, p. 823)

This recalls Kvothe’s disagreement with Elodin about whether or not there are things that we cannot explain without recourse to metaphorical language, or at least language thick with implication. Vashet seems to make a more contentious point than Elodin, however, insisting that such things *cannot* be explained. And yet, he does say that to try and do so would be pointless, that it would amount to translation, and that such subtle language speaks *for itself* and loses its power when paraphrase is attempted, which renders his view more in line with Vashet’s.⁷³ Both the Lethani and the deep names of things, then, fall into the category of metaphors which interest those who defend what Ricoeur calls the semantic view of metaphor. Clearly, two things follow from this scene. One is that more and more compelling arguments are being given to Kvothe, all of which encourage him to realize that the world is more complex than he surmised. Kvothe’s growing recognition that being able to grasp implication is a fundamental component of appreciating what someone is communicating further refines his metaphoric competence.

The second consequence is a further elaboration of how the Adem gauge each others’ understanding of the Lethani. They judge this according to the extent to which someone’s behaviour reflects knowledge in action, including how, as Vashet insists, their words “reveal” metaphorical, intuitive, and felt understanding of the Lethani.⁷⁴ Shehyn’s questioning of Kvothe

⁷³ Cf. Cohen, Black, and Ricoeur, along with Burns and MacLachlan, especially pp. 6, 8, 14. Burns’ and MacLachlan’s analysis on pp. 8-9 presents a compelling account of counterexamples, however, like their own discussion, which the current inquiry strives to emulate.

⁷⁴ Cf. Max W. Wertheimer’s view that truth and falsity are beyond artificial limits such as we impose by strict association with propositions and assertions: “It is not only and primarily a question of what anyone says or states. Truth and falsity, *indeed understanding*, is not necessarily something purely intellectual, remote from feelings and attitudes. In many ... examples the most important thing is not the statement but the whole position, a man’s attitude toward the thing itself. It is in the total conduct of men rather than in their statements that truth or falsehood lives, more in what a man does, in his real reaction to other men and to things, in his will to do them justice, to live at one

is a perfect example of this.⁷⁵ She begins testing his metaphoric competence, not in general, but strictly with regard to the Lethani, by asking him: “Who knows the Lethani?” (*WMF*, p. 806) Because Kvothe uses his mental training to reach a state of relaxation and awareness, what he calls “Spinning Leaf,” he exhibits in the subsequent discussion, beginning with his answer to this question, what Vashet later tells him they are after, that is, a form of metaphoric brilliance which provides them with grounds for viewing him as having begun to take this metaphor deeply to heart:

“The windblown leaf,” I responded, though I cannot honestly say what I meant by it.
 “Where does the Lethani come from?”
 “The same place as laughing.”
 Shehyn hesitated slightly, then said, “How do you follow the Lethani?”
 “How do you follow the moon?” (*WMF*, p. 807)

The broader narrative context serves to avert our potential judgment that his success at this time is incongruous. On their way to Ademre, Tempi informs Kvothe that while his growing familiarity with the Adem language is good, his vocabulary is restricted to simple words. When

with them” (“On Truth,” in Mary Henle, ed., *Documents of Gestalt Psychology*, quoted in Zwicky, *WM*, 63 Right, emphasis added). Perhaps the most interesting thing about both the Lethani and the deep names of things is that recognizing the metaphors of these things has irreversible effects. Surely, memorization has a role to play here as Kvothe comes to an awareness of such metaphors. But once Kvothe experiences the flash of understanding accessible only through a heuristic moment, his mind retains this knowledge, whether or not he is able consciously to recall it at one moment or another. And this is why the Adem judge his understanding of the metaphor of the Lethani by his actions. Even if he cannot explain what the Lethani is in the discursive sense, on a more intuitive level, his understanding reflects his knowledge, particularly so when he trusts his instinctual responses to their probing about his view of the Lethani. We are speaking, here, as in chapters 2 and 3, of understanding which goes beyond mere memorization, the teaching of which underpins the whole idea of “liberal education.” Metaphors seem integral not just to fostering these moments, but as the ends of this knowledge acquisition process also, though this may hinge on how we define “metaphor.”

⁷⁵ Even though Shehyn and Kvothe converse, in the main, metaphorically, there is no reason to infer that they are not acting out a rational methodology when it comes to discussing important (and slippery) concepts. That is, they are coming to terms. In this sense, it seems that the Adem people are very prudent insofar as they realize that when people do not make this effort they will argue beside the point and act inharmoniously. From this, we can infer that the Adem, when discussing the Lethani, proceed to rely on arbitrary definition, as Sister Miriam defines the category, where we discuss “what is included in the term and what is excluded, dealing especially with disputable borderline instances, not merely with those obviously included or excluded” (*The Trivium*, p. 83). Interestingly, if we apply her categorization to how the Adem talk about the Lethani, other instances in their related discussions qualify as definition by etymology, synonyms, and example; along with descriptive, and, in some sense, causal definition, but not grammatical and rhetorical, nor nominative definition since the Lethani is an inherently ambiguous concept. See *The Trivium*, pp. 81-3.

Kvothe requests more words, Tempi refuses, insisting that the volume of words Kvothe already knows hinders his ability to make headway in the Ademic language, since there is an art to speaking it. According to this evaluation, the use of words is more important than the words themselves, and the paradigm is to “say many things in one thing” (*WMF*, p. 793-4).⁷⁶ The ensuing discussion is telling, and fits into the larger commentary on the importance of communicating in part through implication, such as we resort to extensively in metaphor, and on leaving room for interlocutors to fill in the gaps for themselves. As alluded to in the discussion of Cohen above, there are also analogical connections between such allowance for the heuristic process and our experiences of love and humor. In fact, Tempi’s final point in the discussion can be regarded as having pedagogical value, reflecting the love of a friend, while carrying a hilarious undertone. His phrasing leaves it up to Kvothe (and us) to decide which. Kvothe inquires,

“So when I meet a woman, I should simply say, ‘You are beautiful?’”

Tempi shook his head. “No. You would say simply ‘beautiful,’ and let the woman decide the rest of what you mean.”

“Isn’t that...” I didn’t know the words for ‘vague’ or ‘unspecific’ and had to start again to get my point across. “Doesn’t that lead to confusion?”

“It leads to thoughtfulness,” he said firmly. “It is delicate. That should always be the concern when one is speaking....”

“But what about clarity? What if you were building a bridge? There are many pieces to that. All of them must be said clearly.”

“Of course,” Tempi said. *Agreement*. “Sometimes. But in most things, important things, delicate is better. Small is better.”

Tempi reached out and gripped my shoulder firmly. Then he looked up, met my eye, and held it for a brief moment. Such a rarity for him. He gave me a small quiet smile.

“Proud,” he said. (*WMF*, p. 794)

The ambiguity of Tempi’s final comment is striking. He leaves room to interpret his utterance of “proud” as poking fun at Kvothe’s pride, while also giving Kvothe a concrete example of what

⁷⁶ Cf. Tolkien’s discussion of the “compressive art of Old English poetry” in “Commentary” *Beowulf*, pp. 189-91.

Tempi has in mind, all the while retaining a more serious undercurrent of praising Kvothe.⁷⁷ But it remains uncertain whether any or all of these are precisely what he has in mind. Judging by the scene discussed above involving Shehyn, Kvothe absorbs this lesson, at least subconsciously, since it is by relying on his “sleeping mind,” as Elodin would have it, that Kvothe successfully emulates Temp in this regard.

Moving beyond this particular lesson, we can understand it as just another in a long list of instances where Kvothe’s story (including both back and frame) acquaints us with metaphors (including some which are more typically considered poetic images) that are themselves threaded together in light of a larger view of metaphoric competence. The unity of this aspect of the plot is in keeping with the Aristotelian view of poetics, to the extent that we can associate it with the overall action of the narrative, although this particular complex metaphor is only one facet of the narrative in Rothfuss’ work. In this sense, the metaphor shows an “inanimate thing...*as if* in act” (*RM*, p. 34). That is, the literary whole presents us with evidence of metaphoric competence.⁷⁸

Some commentators would hold that this is controversial, however.

⁷⁷ Beyond being analogous phenomena, insists Wilson, metaphors are, indeed, *essential* for humor. He cites his preference for metaphorical descriptions of “reckless and domineering” extroverts and narcissists as, respectively, bulls in search of china shops and legends in their own minds (p. 162).

⁷⁸ The metaphoric process exemplified here is “ultimately the capacity to signify active reality” (*RM*, p. 35). But it is a view of reality that brings this about. Consequently, this metaphor sets metaphoric competence before us by projecting and revealing a world (*RM*, p. 93). Cf. Samuel R. Levin’s *Metaphoric Worlds*, along with Shibles’ observation that metaphor “takes us to a country hitherto unseen” (p. 18). According to Ricoeur, it is in this context that we encounter the meaning of the work. For the “possible and inhabitable world” comprising the action of the work brings to light not only a story, but characters, feelings, and attitudes, all of which, in his terminology, amounts to the “*reference*, in the sense of the ontological import of a work.” This “is what Aristotle has in mind,” adds Ricoeur, “when he combines the *muthos* of tragedy with the *mimêsis* of human actions” (*RM*, p. 92). It is all too easy to equivocate in our use of the term “action” when discussing the overarching metaphor of a work. For example, we can view the plot developments as one overall action, but, alternatively, we can refer to the ontological implications as being the action that is reflected by this overall action. We might even refer to the metaphorical process that transfers this knowledge as itself an action. Finally, we can speak about the subsidiary actions constituting any of these larger ones. Here, a literary critic might reply that we are blurring the line between a theory of metaphor and of literature. See *RM*, p. 93. And yet, since metaphor is inextricable from literature, this objection would be beside the point (cf. *RM*, p. 239). Furthermore, as Shelley argues, “Language is vitally metaphorical” (quoted in Ricoeur, *RM*, pp. 80, 336, fn. 25). Therefore, whether in literature, or in first-person interaction, as we advance from the sense of a narrator or interlocutor to the reference in an effort to comprehend their meaning, we entertain a specific worldview (*RM* p. 92). Just because we can “entertain” worldviews in this manner, though, does not mean that they are equally

Representing a tradition that interprets Aristotle's account of drama as being primarily about action and indifferent to character as we understand it, Egginton comments that, after Cervantes, "all good fiction" adopts the model of structuring the storytelling "around the interplay of desires and hidden intentions" (p. 157). Presumably, he means that great works of fiction invite us to step into the shoes of another in a way that was not encouraged in Aristotle's time. That is, through modern fiction we grasp the "subjective truth" of others' experiences, a phenomenon that Aristotle's discussion of *poesis*, on this view, fails to address.⁷⁹ On the one hand, Rothfuss' narrative lives up to this "modern" challenge. But, on the other, the action (in the sense of *mimesis*) of Rothfuss' work can be viewed as Aristotelian.

Consider MacKinnon's resolution to Aristotle's apparent indifference to the interplay between character and action. "Aristotle's considered view," argues MacKinnon, is that actions may be important, but agents nevertheless bring those actions about (p. 6). These agents have "qualities of character *and* thought," in light of which we assess their *actions*.⁸⁰ It is the character of an agent which "makes sense of" these very actions, whether they are something the agent says or does.⁸¹ Surely, a variant of individualism has emerged in our time that would be foreign

worthy of our respect or empathy, or that in entertaining them we are sympathetic to them. The commonly invoked idea of a fusion of horizons readily applies, here. In proceeding to grasp another's point of view, one of two outcomes obtain: either we come to agree with the point of view, or we come to appreciate more clearly the contrast between that view and our own. There is a trend in both academia and popular culture that conflates this distinction, thereby encouraging people to grant empathy while minimizing the actual factors by which we ought to attribute the worth of the associated actions in cases where the given narratives ought not to merit our support. See MacKinnon "Crime, Compassion, and *The Reader*" and "Law and Tenderness in Bernhard Schlink's *The Reader*" for critiques of this kind of approach and compelling defenses of the relevance of responsibility.

⁷⁹ On Egginton's account, Aristotle views *poesis*, or at least tragedy, as the imitation of an action produced by events, *not* by character(s) in any important sense, and, furthermore, contemporary prejudices which derive from innovations in aesthetics and literature flavor our perspective in regards to Aristotle's *Poetics*.

⁸⁰ Aristotle, *Poetics*, 14449b37-1450a4, quoted in MacKinnon, p. 6, emphasis added. Cf. *RM*, p. 333, fn. 82. Ricoeur explains that Aristotle conceives of thought *and* character as the "natural causes" of the action that constitutes the plot, itself the *telos* of the tale, its "*psukê*" (life and soul).

⁸¹ MacKinnon, p. 6. Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 981a5-30, especially a15. See also Henry James' remarks: "What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character? What is either a picture or a novel that is *not* character?" James continues, "if it be not an incident I think it will be hard to say what it is. At the same time it is an expression of character" (*The Art of Fiction*, p. 405, quoted in Elizabeth Dipple, *Plot*, pp. 3-4).

to Aristotle. If the action of modern fiction involves a realistic consideration of characters' interior lives, however, it is not clear that Aristotle's conception of tragedy as portraying a hero ultimately falling victim to a character flaw is so far removed from this.⁸²

According to Elizabeth Dipple, far from being an inferior view of Aristotle's, the problem with his notion of plot is that reductionists mistakenly erode it (*Plot*, pp. 1-2ff). What results, argues Dipple, is a tradition of literary thinkers who fail to appreciate how plot "carries a heavy meaning," comprising "all action in any literary genre," going

beyond scene or incident and account, to some degree at least, for the movement of mind or soul in poems or psychological novels. If we are to give the term its due as *mythos* accompanied by *praxis*, it should be seen to contain both exterior and interior action: it is the primary term whose ramifications imply the whole art of constructing temporal progression in art. (p. 3)

Dipple adds that Aristotle is right to identify plot as the most important of the six constituent aspects of tragedy, "because happiness or unhappiness depends on actions and life" (p. 3).

⁸² I would agree with Egginton, however, that a primary difference between the modern novel and what came before is an extreme skepticism, which Egginton argues Cervantes inspired, in part through his impact on Descartes. Indeed, there is a beauty to modern advances in artistic techniques of portraying the ubiquity of illusion. On Egginton's account, Aristotle's system, and, more specifically, the categories, do not enfold the subjective truth that modern fiction presents us with concerning both our representations of experience and our experience of those representations (pp. xxi, 17). We ought to resist this claim, though. If the kind of mental behaviour Egginton refers to is describable in terms of virtues, vices, attitudes, and so on, then it fits into accidental categories in one sense and into the category of substance in another. As Sister Miriam points out, accidents, such as prudence, are artificial abstractions we emphasize for the sake of our understanding, and yet "really" exist as part of substances (*The Trivium*, p. 49). Cf. Groarke's reminder that distinguishing something such as prudence "to focus on one particular aspect of the person or act" is a conceptual aid and should not be interpreted as implying that we are speaking of "different metaphysical realities" (*Moral Reasoning*, p. 212). Further, we are talking about categorematic parts of speech, rather than syncategorematic, the other side of this exclusive disjunction. Therefore, such substantives fit with Aristotle's schema—assuming the kind of truths which Egginton refers to can be classified under certain substantives—whether they be symbolic of substances or abstractions. Still, Egginton might counter that the sense of higher truth which Aristotle describes poetry as elucidating in contrast to history is simply not the subjective truth found by the reader in the modern novel, where, according to Mikhail Bakhtin's assertion, we enter into the narrative itself, and consequently, as Javier Cercas explains, *explore* questions of morality instead of having definitive answers *given* to us (Egginton, p. 17). Writers have, of course, gotten better at coaxing readers into such deliberative imaginative journeys since Aristotle's time. But this sounds like virtue ethics' emphasis on the importance of both literary imagination and learning for oneself through attempting to imitate and emulate moral exemplars, a view which originates with the Greeks. Thus, it is hard to determine the extent to which Egginton's point stands, especially since many modern writers conceive of moral truth in subjective or emotive terms, whereas for Aristotle, and, more generally, the tradition, right (objectively true) answers to such questions can be found, even if it takes careful "subjective" discernment (Groarke, *Moral Reasoning*, p. 198).

Dipple applauds realism's insistence "that life is multiform and must be rendered not singly but in its puzzling multiplicity," an appraisal that highlights how we have improved upon Aristotle's account of successful drama as the unified portrayal of *an* action.⁸³ Her greatest contribution, though, lies in her effort to recover Aristotle's understanding of plot's "possibilities" as "the action which is the soul of fiction." From this vantage point, plot can "be seen as a term capable of indefinite growth and alteration. Like modern literary works, it too is very much in progress: it both defines and is action" (p. 67). What is the soul of fiction, if not wisdom, metaphorically expressed in irreducible complexity?

In any case, Rothfuss' work is in keeping with Aristotle's conception of the action of tragic *poesis* as an unfolding of events which hinges upon the effects of a hero's hamartia. At the same time, it achieves the very outcome which Egginton takes to be the mark of good modern fiction. Still, someone might object that the action, taken here as a commentary on metaphoric competence, seems too messy to qualify as a metaphor, no matter how we might emphasize its complexity. But this would be to miss the point entirely, for as MacKinnon relates of Baxter's literary convictions, "successful fiction," like any "suitably independent life," brings to our attention all kinds of connections, an imaginative feat that, in doing so, defamiliarizes.⁸⁴ Regarding the view of metaphoric competence explored above, on one level the connections may point in readily identifiable directions; that is, various clear ideas develop regarding what metaphoric competence is, how we cultivate it, its relations to other skills, and associated problems. On another, however, in looking for the complex metaphor that arises from this, the

⁸³ P. 5. This resonates both with the view of life that most thinkers explored in this inquiry share, and with the account of metaphor developed throughout. Ricoeur's discussion of Aristotle's conception of imitation in poetics illustrates this. See *RM*, pp. 35-43..

⁸⁴ MacKinnon, p. 3. Egginton makes a complementary point in defending the complexity of implication in quality fiction. On his account, requesting brief and precise elucidation of what such a work "*means*, as if such a shorthand answer could ever be given, already misses the boat entirely" (p. 181). If we insist on wanting to know what a work means, Egginton maintains, we must look to the work itself.

connections become even more haphazard, given the ambiguity of these concepts in general, and the manner in which Rothfuss illustrates them. It follows that referring to this metaphor is far from straightforward, unless we do so by substituting another metaphor for it which fits into a sentence or clause.

For instance, we could, as I have done repeatedly in this chapter, allude to it as a metaphor of metaphoric competence. Alternatively, we might elect a more descriptive stand-in, such as Rothfuss' view of metaphor, which considers how we develop the capacity to understand this kind of language usage, why this is a crucial aspect of the human experience, and how it fits into a larger picture of the world. We could do better still, recounting how Kvothe's action, which *The Kingkiller Chronicles*' explores, reflects an organic development of metaphoric competence, while managing to confirm that this skill, by itself, is not enough, that character flaws remain, and that Kvothe, like Achilles, is not immune to weakness. The action, here, which we might regard as having been caused by Kvothe's hamartia, becomes a metaphor of many things, not least of which is an elaboration of metaphoric competence, even if only of an elusive sort.⁸⁵ The point here is that the closer we come to sharing adequately with another this metaphor through a simpler substitution, the more involved the task becomes. Beyond that, we can never guarantee that an interlocutor will enjoy a heuristic experience identical to our own. In this respect, our experience of the metaphor is, as Black would have it, "un-paraphrasable."

⁸⁵ According to Aristotle's critique of episodic works, this action is imperfect, however. This complaint is obvious in the case of *The Kingkiller Chronicles*, since the "action" is at present incomplete. And yet, there is a beauty to this imperfection as well. It encourages the type of thinking for oneself associated with the heuristic process because it forces one to imagine what happens in the forthcoming book if they are hungry for answers. A second alleviation of Aristotle's complaint in Rothfuss' case is that the opportunity for catharsis involved, though imperfect due to the episodic form, is still present, for each book has its own natural conclusion and story arc. There is another mitigating factor too. For those who have terminal illness and are so invested in the books that they cannot bear the thought of missing out on the full view of the action of Kvothe's storyline, Rothfuss has established a legal process whereby they can sign a disclaimer not to share the details and find out from him what happens.

For Ricoeur, we know, there are multiple aspects to the metaphorical process. Accordingly, if we proceed to index the overarching metaphor discussed above in some other form than Rothfuss himself provides, it is worth noting that this metaphor unfolds in a permutational experience, an event which corresponds to Ricoeur's notion of split-reference.⁸⁶ As Bloom explains, Aristotle praises the poets for treating "the passions that are dangerous to philosophy" by arousing "these passions in order to flush them out of the soul, leaving [the audience] more relaxed and calmer, more willing to listen to reason."⁸⁷ Deferring to this wisdom, we can draw an analogy between Rothfuss' courteous treatment of his audience and Puppet's treatment of Kvothe. Through the metaphorical process and, in particular, our experience of catharsis, Rothfuss transforms us, such that we can better see with "reason" into the phenomena we associate with metaphoric competence, just as Puppet affects Kvothe with his wooden puppets. In each case, the affected individual's reasoning broadens, approaching the way the Adem converse when discussing the Lethani, a form of thinking which recalls Pascal's aphoristic

⁸⁶ An interesting problem seems to remain here. In referring to the complex metaphor we must use another metaphor in some sense. This should not surprise us, however, given Shibles' insightful point that the term metaphor itself can be understood as just that—a metaphor—when thought of as a term which paraphrases an empirical experience (15). Cf. MP, p. 142-3. This may strike one as bordering on a tautology. On the Aristotelian schema, any categorematic word symbolizes "some form of being" or other (Sister Miriam, "General Grammar" in *The Trivium*, p. 47). However, syncategorematic words do not function in this symbolic manner, at least not by themselves. But even beyond that, the point of drawing attention to how metaphor itself is a metaphor is to emphasize the fundamental metaphorical nature of the bulk of language, not just in its use, but in its formation, which makes it easier to understand why we resort to "metaphor" when, as cognitive linguists emphasize, we are attempting to explain an experience which is beyond our linguistic capabilities. Language itself is indispensable primarily in virtue of its bridging our experience to that of others, just as our imagination links our experience to mind with the assistance of our memory, resulting in thought. (Clearly, Black is an antecedent of this view in conceptual metaphor theory.) In fact, this aspect of language is one of the motivating forces of the entire discipline of philosophy of language, especially where it overlaps with cognitive science. (There are many who maintain that the origins of language might have been the most crucial step in the evolution of man.) Cf. Ernest Klein's etymological study of metaphor as deriving from the Greek term *metapherein* (μεταφορά), which means "transference," in *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, quoted in Zwicky, p. 51 Right; along with Schiff's discussion of metaphor as a bridge. See also Jaynes, p. 48: "The most fascinating property of language is its capacity to make metaphors. But what an understatement! For metaphor is not a mere extra trick of language, as it is so often slighted in the old schoolbooks on composition; it is the very constitutive ground of language."

⁸⁷ Pp. 280-1. More complexly, following the likes of Leon Golden, O.B. Hardison, and Gerald F. Else, Ricoeur asserts that such catharsis is mediated through the audience's recognition of how the spectacle, thought, and characters intertwine with the plot, constituting a complex metaphor; in this case, the meaning of the associated cause of terror and pity, the action that the drama imitates. See *RM*, pp. 332-3, footnotes 74, 78, 79.

encapsulating of heartfelt knowledge as “reasons that *reason* is not familiar with.”⁸⁸ Different metaphors can be “fused to great effect,” observes Egginton. One resulting fusion of metaphors in Rothfuss’ masterpiece transfigures the concept of metaphoric competence, and, if we are lucky enough to witness this, we are likewise transformed.⁸⁹

4.3 *Epilogue*

Who does not expect the unexpected will not find it, for it is trackless and unexplored.

Herakleitos⁹⁰

Let us conclude our inquiry with two reflections. The first involves a brief consideration of how Rothfuss’ work exemplifies certain of Baxter’s appraisals. The second amounts to a re-envisioning of the value of metaphoric competence.

Baxter praises writing that, in preserving ambiguity, guides us to “a garden of forked paths,” where characters and events retain “the dignity of their own complexity” (MacKinnon, p. 16). Such “anti-epiphanic” writing, as he calls it, thrives on questions, over and above statements

⁸⁸ Blaise Pascal, *Les Pensées* 1999b: 680, quoted in Groarke, “Philosophy as Inspiration,” p. 427, fn. 24, Groarke’s translation, emphasis added.

⁸⁹ Egginton, p. 105. Egginton continues, noting that not just authors but industries do this, and it can be harmful, given the power of the phenomenon. See especially p. 104, where he elaborates the negative side of the use of metaphor, which recalls Aristotle’s concern about their persuasive potential. The problem is that the associated persuasion bypasses our rational faculty; metaphors can be passively absorbed, and yet actively shape our subsequent actions and perception. Of course, as we have discussed, this is also the part of the problem with metaphor from the perspective of Enlightenment thinkers. Further, this is the problem that contemporary conceptual theory of metaphor tries to address by examining the metaphors that covertly underlie our everyday thinking, culture, politics, and the like. And yet, this effort is not new. In fact, argues Egginton, Cervantes’ literary works (including his plays) functioned in this manner, rejecting outdated and unwanted metaphors (p. 106). One might insist that the potential for harm in the use of metaphor is still too great to tolerate its use, much less celebrate its power. Following Tolkien’s citing of the Latin phrase *abusus non tollit usum* (abuse is no argument against proper use), I would contend that the kind of metaphors consistent with the account we have arrived at invite rather than subvert, and, far from bringing out the worst, cultivate what is best in each of us, assisting us in our learning, self-mastery, and development of taste (*Tree and Leaf*, p. 751; p. 73).

⁹⁰ D-K 18, trans. after Charles H. Kahn, quoted in Zwicky, p. 177 Right.

and claims. Genuine insights are “unworldly” to the extent that, in posing questions, they elicit wonder (p. 15). Similarly, the best insights furnish truths that transform us (p. 11). Because stories written in this manner can provide us with clues but no solution, mystery as opposed to revelation, they can acquaint us with compelling perspectives without taking the form of conclusive insight, in the sense of expository wisdom or formal declaration. And yet, we have praised Rothfuss precisely for the wisdom of his writing. Therefore, we might wonder if there is a tension, here.

On closer inspection, however, Rothfuss’ style is just the sort that Baxter commends, while at once presenting an overarching metaphor of metaphoric competence. Indeed, we might speculate that Rothfuss’ own metaphoric competence must be particularly impressive, since Baxter associates this with the talent for “looking aslant,” which, along with a tolerance for ambiguity and a “recognition of the complexity of human motivations and predicaments,” facilitates the production of “convincing fiction” (p. 8). Such skills extend beyond written communication, however.

For if we have these, we have, by extension, a “faith in,” and “facility for” what MacKinnon identifies as “the expressive powers of language,” without which we are too ready to “content ourselves with expostulation, exclamation, and physical displays of emotion” (pp. 8-9). MacKinnon contends that overcoming such limitations presupposes some level of perspective, or, as Baxter prefers, a “sense of scale.” What is fascinating about this is that, by encouraging us to confront pain and contradiction, “successful fiction” helps us to ponder the implications of a given conflict in a diffuse manner, thereby growing accustomed to entertaining a variety of perspectives (p. 3). In other words, quality literature develops our metaphoric competence, not only enhancing our ability to read, but also to listen and speak with one another.

We can now gauge the merit of Ricoeur's point that if we assent to the description of metaphor as "a competence, a talent, then it is a talent of thinking" (*RM*, p. 80). What we have explored in this chapter is, therefore, simply *an* aspect of thinking, if one that is often misunderstood and undervalued. Since philosophy concerns the study of thought and thinking and their development, metaphoric competence is indispensable to this discipline. No wonder, then, that Aristotle devoted so much thought to the study of rhetoric, a discipline that Ricoeur describes as simply the "reflection and translation" of the talent in question into a "distinct body of knowledge" (*ibid.*).

Nothing fosters this talent more, though, than our engagement with metaphors. Since there are cases of metaphor that, as Ricoeur notes, necessitate taking into account the entire work to determine its meaning, we see how important it is to acknowledge the idea of complex metaphors, in addition to those of the single phrase or sentence (p. 82). Of course, we tend to prefer our metaphors circumscribed, rather than the elaborate affairs they often turn out to be. Yet this is to forget that, as Ginsberg observes, "*Great ideas are really condensations of elaborate theories*. The idea is not defined in a sentence but explained in a volume" (p. 71). Therefore, ideas expressed in brief metaphorical remarks, along with the metaphors themselves, can actually be more involved than their brevity would suggest.

The broader point is that tracing the strands of a complex metaphor requires sufficient cognitive effort to find ourselves in a position either to "accept or refuse the direction" the given metaphor "would give to our living" (*RM*, p. 83). This contrasts with, on the one hand, blindly heeding the volitive force of written or spoken communication, and even actions, and, on the other, failing to listen or pay attention to the associated elements of metaphors, whether they are written, spoken, or experiential. Therefore, becoming intimate in both a theoretical and a

practical sense with the heuristic process underlying the comprehension of complex metaphors allows us to engage more independently and effectively with each other, not just with respect to our considering the metaphorical components of written, spoken, and non-verbal communication, but in general. If, for thinkers such as Wilson, certain metaphors are the building blocks of language, complex metaphors, whether gleaned vicariously or from firsthand experience, lend momentum to motivation.

Bibliographical Abbreviations

AAI L. Groarke, *An Aristotelian Account of Induction*.

DLL R.H. Stacy, *Defamiliarization in Language and Literature*.

HMW D. Davidson, "How Metaphors Work."

Letters J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Letters of JRR Tolkien*.

MP P. Ricoeur, "The Metaphoric Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling."

NW P. Rothfuss, *The Name of the Wind*.

RM P. Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*.

TAC T. Shippey, *Tolkien: Author of the Century*.

TL J.R.R. Tolkien, "Tree and Leaf."

The Trivium Sister M. Joseph, *The Trivium the Liberal Arts of Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric*.

WM J. Zwicky, *Wisdom and Metaphor*.

WMF P. Rothfuss, *The Wise Man's Fear*.

WMMM Black, "What Metaphors Mean."

Glossary for Sections 4.1 and 4.2

Adem a people with a distinctive culture that emphasizes martial arts, cleanliness, community, and ethics.

Ademre home of the Adem.

Amyr a mythical group of beings who dispense justice, exhibit supernatural traits, and figure prominently in legends.

backstory the story told by Kvothe within the story depicting the events that led to the present state of affairs within the frame story.

Bast a magical being that is Kvothe's protégé/ward.

Bredon a mysterious noble who befriends Kvothe and teaches him tak.

Chronicler a travelling historian that is saved by Kvothe and subsequently records the tale relayed by Kvothe regarding the protagonist's past.

Denna a friend whom Kvothe is in love with.

Elodin Kvothe's teacher and mentor in the art of naming.

Elxa Dal one of Kvothe's teachers at the University.

Fae a magical race of beings.

Fela a fellow student and friend of Kvothe's.

Felurian a magical being that enchants and imprisons Kvothe for a time.

Fenton a fellow student of Kvothe's.

framestory the current time plotline within both *The Name of the Wind* and *The Wise Man's fear* that is interspersed with long stretches of the telling of the backstory; each book occupies one day of the frame story so that when the final novel is released three days will constitute the telling of the backstory within the framestory.

Graham a local carpenter in the backstory

ketan a series of movements intended for meditation, bodily training, and martial application.

Kilvin one of Kvothe's teachers at the University and his boss during his times working in a workshop and laboratory on the University grounds.

Kvothe protagonist of both *The Name of the Wind* and *The Wise Man's Fear*.

lethani a complex guiding principle for the Adem people that is based on a set of stories; a philosophy that eludes exhaustive paraphrase and yet provides a basis for right action.

Marten a man hired to hunt bandits with Kvothe and others.

naming a form of magic in the world of Temerant, involving understanding of true natures which grants a being control over the substance thus understood.

Puppet a mysterious and enigmatic figure at the University who does not teach classes but does teach Kvothe some basic knowledge while inspiring change within him.

Shehyn the leader of the school at which Kvothe both trains in his mastery of the ketan and develops his understanding of the lethani.

Simmon a close friend of Kvothe's and fellow student at the University

Spinning Leaf a mental state that Kvothe is able to use to calm his mind and better coordinate his actions in combat and responses in dialogue relating to the lethani; a mental ketan.

Sword Tree ritual a rigorous stage of the initiation process for becoming a member of a particular subgroup within the Ademic people.

tak an abstract strategy game played using pieces on a flat surface.

Teccam historic founder of the University; philosopher.

Temerant the fictional world in which *The Name of the Wind* and *The Wise Man's Fear* are set.

Tempi an Ademic mercenary hired to hunt bandits with Kvothe who becomes his friend while introducing him to both the lethani and the ketan.

The Kingkiller Chronicles the name of the series to which *The Name of the Wind* and *The Wise Man's Fear* belong.

University a place of learning that teaches a mixture of logical, scientific, and supernatural subjects.

Vashet Kvothe's mentor in the lethani and trainer for mastering the ketan.

Wilem a close friend of Kvothe's and fellow student at the University.

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