

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

THE TRUTH ABOUT METAPHORS

by
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THE TRUTH ABOUT METAPHORS

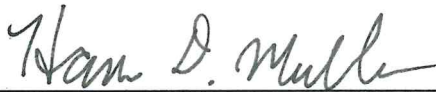
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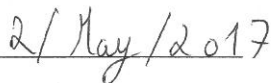
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My interest in this thesis is to draw a connection between the use of metaphors and the definition of truth. I want to show how two conceptions of truth had an impact on the usage of metaphors in philosophical and islamic discourse. The goal is to find which of these two conception of truth gives the best theory of metaphors viz. which of these two theories of truth gives us a valid account regarding the interpretation of the metaphorical expressions. On the one hand, when truth is a correspondence between language and reality, figurative speech seems like a privileged attempt to go beyond what language usually denotes by connoting abstract entities. On the other hand, when truth is taken to be inter-subjective linguistic activity, figurative speech seems to be a product of social conventions, i.e. the interpretation of metaphors in this case is tightly related to the commitments and traditions of the community in question. In order to highlight the two sharp distinctions between the two definitions of truth, which have shaped the usage and interpretation of metaphorical discourse, this dissertation will refer to the correspondence theory of truth and to the pragmatic theory of truth. Thus, throughout this thesis I will try to depict that there is a deep connection between the definition of truth and the use of figurative language: when truth is correspondence, metaphors are an attempt that violates this correspondence by pointing at entities without names, when truth is inter-subjective, the split between speaker and sentence meaning collapses by treating metaphor as an assertion which refers to the individuals commitments in the society. My hypothesis is to show that the correspondence theory of truth gives us a valid account which grounds the theory of metaphors, and hence define the metaphorical meaning, where the pragmatic theory of truth fails to. Thus I want to prove that the correspondence theory of truth provides us with a plausible theory that explains the use of metaphors in discourse because it gives us a more valuable account into the meaning of the metaphorical expressions

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Metaphors play distinctive roles in our language games. Every language game must be characterized by its rules, its players and its role within a network of other language games. My interest in this paper is to focus on the rules governing the use of metaphors. Metaphorical language plays a significant role in philosophical discourse; to such an extent that in some cases it seems inextricable. Some texts in philosophy, such as Plato's allegory of the cave, or Hay Ibn Yakzan by Ibn Tufayl, try to find refuge in the metaphorical realm. Moreover, metaphorical language also invaded the religious realm, where we clearly observe its repetitive presence in the Islamic and Christian Scriptures. The un-clarity of a text full of metaphors protects the text from the deterioration of language throughout history. This text will be protected by the diversity of interpretations attached to it and thus by the consequence of each of these interpretations for different schools of thoughts. The literal text is that which is protected by the different interpretations, it is kept alive throughout history. Therefore, the attempts which stand behind interpreting a text full of metaphorical references are the reason behind the persistence of such texts throughout history. What seems to stand behind the persistence of a literal discourse rather than the other is the fact that it can be a subject of different interpretations.

For this reason we can claim that the use of metaphor motivates the possibility of having different interpretations for the same text. The disagreement between Mutazilites and Ashaarites in the interpretation of metaphors in the Koran can be used as an example to prove how the interpretation of the metaphors is the reason behind the persistence of the text through ages. In other words, to prove how the different interpretations of the same text had created two different schools of thought which both continued to work through for decades in order to prove their point regarding the consistency of their interpretation with the text. The group of Mutazilites insisted on having an interpretation of the metaphors used in the Koran that is consistent with producing a coherent and rational set of beliefs. They directed their interpretations towards one goal which is to produce (through these interpretations) a coherent set of beliefs that must be aligned with

reason. Yet, Ashaarites did not give great importance to reason in the realm of religion since for them reason must be subordinated to revelation. For this reason they decided to only focus on the interpretation that is aligned with the hadith. These two lines of interpretation created two schools of thoughts that persisted for decades (the mutazilite school started around year 700 and ceased to exist in the 15th century)

Thus, the different interpretations of figurative speech, given its obscure nature, seem to be the reason behind the persistence of the texts. Therefore, we decided to direct our interest towards the origin of these different interpretations of metaphors. By doing so, we want to show that the definition of truth in each era guides the reader to interpret the metaphor in a different way and thus build the bridge between the sentence-meaning and the speaker meaning. By sentence meaning we are referring to the literal meaning of the sentence, by speaker meaning we are referring to what the speaker means by uttering such a sentence (the speaker's intention behind the sentence might divert from its literal meaning). Metaphors presuppose a split between sentence meaning and speaker meaning since the speaker doesn't intend to convey the literal meaning which stands behind the metaphorical expression. Our interest in the thesis is to highlight the reason behind the split between the metaphorical and the literal meaning i.e. the reason which pushes the author to use metaphors in order to convey his/her thoughts.

The aim of this paper is to show how two conceptions of truth had an impact on the usage of metaphors in philosophical discourse. The goal is to find which of these two conceptions of truth gives the best theory of metaphors viz. which of these two theories of truth give us a valid account regarding the interpretation of the metaphorical expressions. On the one hand, when truth is a correspondence between language and reality, figurative speech seems like a privileged attempt to go beyond what language usually denotes by connoting abstract entities. On the other hand, when truth is taken to be inter-subjective linguistic activity, figurative speech seems to be a product of social conventions, i.e. the interpretation of metaphors in this case is tightly related to the commitments and traditions of the community in question. In order to highlight the two sharp distinctions between the two definitions of truth, which have shaped the usage and interpretation of metaphorical discourse, this dissertation will refer to the correspondence theory of truth and to the pragmatic theory of truth. Thus, throughout this thesis I will try to depict that there is a deep connection between the definition of truth and the use of figurative language: when truth is correspondence, metaphors are an attempt that violates this correspondence by pointing at entities without names, when truth is inter-subjective, the split between speaker and sentence meaning collapses by treating metaphor as an assertion which refers to the individual's commitments in the society. My hypothesis is to show that the correspondence theory of truth gives us a valid account which grounds the theory of metaphors, and hence define the metaphorical meaning, where the pragmatic theory of truth

fails to. Thus I want to prove that the correspondence theory of truth provides us with a plausible theory that explains the use of metaphors in discourse because it gives us a more valuable account into the meaning of the metaphorical expressions.

Chapter 2

Correspondence Theory Of Language

The study of meaning plays an important role that shaped the following theory of language. Most theories of language try to find answers to the following data:

1. Some strings of words are meaningful
2. Each meaningful sentence has meaningful parts in it.
3. Each meaningful sentence has a specific meaning particular to it
4. Competent speakers of the same language are able to understand their languages sentence almost instantaneously.

(Philosophy of Language: A contemporary introduction, William G.Lycan, Chap.1) [1].

The correspondence theory tries to find answers and explanations to the facts stated above. Its main point is that the strings of words have the meaning they do because they stand for things, their meaning is identified with the thing they stand for i.e. what they mean is what they stand for. Thus, words are presented as symbols that represents things in reality. The name Smith denotes the person Smith, the noun cats refers to cats and the expression the cat is on the mat designates a cat that is sitting on a certain mat (where the cat designates the cat, the mat designates the mat and sitting on denotes the relation that the cat bears to the mat). Sentences therefore have the characteristic to mirror the state of affair they describe. Thus, there is a relation between words and the things they refer to. A string of word is meaningful if it stands for a thing. Thus, this broad understanding of the correspondence theory of language (also called the referential theory) explains the significance of all expressions in terms of them having been associated with things, facts and states of affairs in the world. Hence, the first three data stated above are explained in terms of correspondence to a state of affair in the world. The fourth one can be explained as following: the individual understands a sentence if he/she knows what the sentences components

stands for i.e. what the words that composed the sentence refer to. Therefore, the correspondence theory of language treats words as mirroring states of affairs.

For referential theorists of language, a sentence is defined as being an expression of a meaningful proposition. Propositions/ thoughts are related to the world. Thus, the syntax of any sentence refers to the thought/proposition, and the thought/proposition refers in its turn to a state of affair in the world. For example, the truth of the sentence the cat is on the mat depends on whether this sentence refers (by the aid of proposition) to the state of affair that the cat is on the mat. As a consequence, the only way to explain meaning is in terms of the correspondence between thoughts and states of affairs (a part of reality). One of the most important consequence of such a theory, is that it has created an isomorphism between two realms: the realm of language and the realm of reality. The relation which keeps these two realms in touch is a relation of correspondence. If the correspondence occurred then the expression is true.

2.1 Violation of The Mirror Characteristic of Language

What we are interested in pointing at is that by presupposing the correspondence relation between language and reality, any attempt to picture something which is not (cannot) be named will create ambiguities. By non-referring terms I mean a description of an entity, which doesn't have any name (i.e. that cannot have any word that can be ascribed to it) and thus gets substituted in the sentence by a non-referring term. Thus, if we want to keep the conception of meaning which ties the syntax to the external object it denotes (x is meaningful if it denotes a non-linguistic entity in the world), we must make room in our linguistic realm for a specific kind of expression which facilitates the meaningful use of terms which denote non-referring terms. In this case, figurative speech tries to cover the discourse about entities which lack any naming. .

In the following passages I will be pointing at three examples where the literal (in contrast to metaphorical) discourse fails to correspond, and thus gets substituted by a metaphorical discourse. The failure of correspondence in the upcoming examples stands behind the attempt to point at entities which lack names. Arguing that the violation of the mirror characteristic of language pushes the author to use metaphors will allow us to speculate regarding the reason behind the split between literal and metaphorical. Thus, we will try to show in the following section that if the correspondence theory is presupposed, its violation, which occurs by talking about a non-named entity, is the reason behind the use of metaphors and thus the reason behind the differentiation of the literal and metaphorical. Before we proceed we have to highlight the following propositions:

1. There is correspondence between words and things they refer to.

2. The violation of the theory (which I will be talking about in this section) implies that there is a missing component of the correspondence relation. The missing component is the proper naming i.e. the linguistic component.

2.2 In The Religious Realm: Discourse About God

The correspondence theory of language leads to dead ends whenever we want to talk about non-referring terms since it presupposes a relation between words and things. Yet the metaphorical speech seems to be the rescuer which might bring the theory to life. If we took truth to be the mirror between language and reality, we will resort to the use of metaphors whenever we want to denote abstract entities that lack the characteristic of having a name i.e. a word that defines them. For this reason, we can notice the abundance of metaphorical language in religious Scriptures. This conception of truth (haqiqa) and majaz (figurative language) overlaps with Abu Ubaydas presumed definition of majaz stated in Heinrichs paper On the Genesis of the Haqiqa-Majaz Dichotomy: There is a natural order of words faithfully reflecting the natural order of things, an assumption shared by the Basran school of grammarians to which Abu 'Ubayda belonged (Heinrichs, On the Genesis of the Haqiqa-Majaz Dichotomy, page 122) [2]. Thus, we can recall the dichotomy which resulted from the representational theory between the realm of language and that of reality. In this case, the isomorphism is created between the natural order of words and the natural order of things i.e. between words and essences in the world. Each expression which belongs to the natural order of words must be able to refer to an entity which exists in the natural order of things. Moreover, we can highlight in this case the compatibility between the mirror characteristic of truth which is found in the correspondence theory of language, and the use of the world reflecting by Heinrichs in order to denote the relation between language and reality. Heinrichs presupposes that there seems to be a mirror between the natural order of words and that of things. Here we can get back to the distinction that we drew in the introduction between the mutazilites and the ashaarites. The ashaarites claim is to interpret the figurative expressions that is abundant in the scripture by referring to the ahadith i.e. by referring to what the prophet said. Thus, for them in order to capture the truth that lies behind these metaphorical expressions we need to refer to sentences said by the prophet. Thus, we can highlight how there is a relation between words (said by the prophet) and things. Thus, we see how for Ashaarites truth is taken to be a mirror relation between words and things (the relation that Heinrichs presupposed). Thus, we can see how one of the major school of thought regarding the interpretation of the scripture presupposes that truth is a relation between word and things. In order to know the true nature of things (which lies under

the metaphorical expression), the scholars refer what is said or written. .

Presupposing the mirroring between words and things we need to highlight the reason behind the use of metaphors in the scripture. This reason, which we will talk about in detail, is only a product of presupposing the reflection of things in words. The abundance of metaphors in the scripture is the product of the nature of entities that are the subject matter of scripture. These entities that lie in the realm of the divine are nameless entities that we cannot point to. They present intelligible forms that cannot be pointed to. Metaphorical expression facilitates the transition towards these intelligible forms. Through the use of metaphors there seems to be a violation of the mirror characteristic of language. This mirror which relates words to things is faced with a situation where there are no words to be ascribed to entities that truly exist (such as the deity and its characteristics). This violation -i.e. the attempt to talk about nameless entities- is solved by the use of the metaphorical expression. Metaphors enhance the mirror and allow the author to talk about nameless entities. Thus, metaphors fill the bridge between words and entities that cannot be named. These entities lack any proper naming due to their nature.

Going beyond this, having this view, which finds a reflection of the natural order of things in the natural order of words, Abu Ubayda will define majaz as the violation of the mirror characteristic of language the majaz phenomena seem to cover any imaginable violation of the mirror characteristic of language (Heinrichs, On the Genesis of Haqiqa-Majaz Dichotomy, Page 122). Thus, majaz is what dulls the mirror between language and reality. He will claim that such ambiguities are permissible (here we can refer to the verb jaza which stands behind permissible and is the root of the word majaz). Thus, several configurations of words are permissible i.e. they can be taken as exception to the general rule.

The reason behind the configuration being exceptional is its violation of the mirror characteristic of language. This violation occurs only when the configuration consists of non-referring terms (in this case God and his attributes). Since every attribute or characteristic of God lacks naming, the scriptures usually refer to them analogically. For example, the use of the expression arm of God is true only insofar as it is analogical i.e. it has to be taken as a metaphor. Therefore, we can note how figurative language is used in order to cover the lack of naming by using expressions figuratively. Thus, in order to talk about non-referring terms a split between the speaker meaning and the sentence meaning is needed. This split is necessary because the sentence meaning (literal meaning of the sentence) has the function of denoting or referring to entities that have names (presupposing the correspondence between word and things). Yet, in case of discourse about God, the author is using a non-referring term. Thus, he/she is violating the function of the sentence and hence the speaker meaning diverges from the sentence meaning. This divergence is what happens in the use of metaphors. The author is obliged to use metaphors in order to talk about a non-referring term. And by doing so he/she utters the sentence by intending to go beyond what this

sentence usually denotes. What he/she is saying about God is true only insofar as we take his/her sentence analogically. Therefore, the reason behind the use of metaphors in the scripture is the necessary violation of the correspondence between language and world that is due to the lack of naming.

2.3 In The Simple Ideas Realm

In order to drive our point home, we can refer to De Mans critique of Locke in the Epistemology of Metaphor by recalling what we stated before in correlation with the violation of the mirror characteristic of language. For Locke, words are mere tokens which signify natural entities. The relation of signification can be translated into one of correspondence between words and natural entities. Whenever Locke was obliged to talk about simple ideas (which are non-natural entities in his philosophy) he was obliged to use figurative language. De Mans criticism of Lockes theory of language highlights the profound resemblance between it and the correspondence theory of language, which claims that the syntax is the medium in which the semantics of an expression denotes the natural entity: In Locke, it began in the arbitrary metonymic contiguity of word-sounds to their meanings, in which the word is a mere token in the service of the natural entity, and it concludes with catachresis of mixed modes in which the word can be said to produce of and by itself the entity it signifies and that has no equivalence in nature (De Man, Epistemology of Metaphor, Vol. 5, No. 1, Special Issue on Metaphor (Autumn, 1978), Page 42). Locke claims that words are used in the service of natural entities. Thus, the use of figurative speech starts when the word is unable to produce in and of itself the entity it signifies. Whenever a word wants to signify a non-natural entity by the use of a non-referential term such as simple ideas, the philosophical discourse takes shelter in metaphorical language. On the level of simple ideas, there seems to be no semiotic or epistemological problems [...]; since the idea is simple and undivided, there can in principle be no room for play or ambivalence between the word and the entity [...] Yet this lack of difference immediately leads to a far-reaching consequence: the name of simple ideas are not capable of any definition (Locke, Book 3, and Chap 4). Indeed since definition involves distinction and is therefore no longer simple. (De Man, Epistemology and Metaphor, Vol. 5, No. 1, Special Issue on Metaphor (Autumn, 1978), Page 37-38). Simple ideas being non-definable implied that When Locke then develops his own theory of words and language, what he constructs turns out to be in fact a theory of tropes. (deMan, Epistemology and Metaphor, Vol. 5, No. 1, Special Issue on Metaphor (Autumn, 1978), page 36). Names denote natural entities. When Locke was talking about non-referring terms such as simple ideas that cannot be definable he was obliged to use tropes. In case of the discourse on simple ideas (non-referential term), tropes are used to cover up the violation of the original function of language which was to signify natural entities. Thus,

we can conclude that in this case the discourse about simple ideas violates the actual function of the mirror characteristic of truth and thus obliges us to use figurative language. Therefore, seconding the previous section, the violation of the mirror characteristic of language stands behind the divergence between the speaker meaning and the sentence meaning in case of metaphors.

2.4 In The Platonic Realm

The correspondence between natural order of words and of things can be highlighted also in platonic discourse, where a failure of correspondence between natural order of words and things gave the allegorical frame of the theory of forms. We stated in the introduction that what we are interested in pointing out is the original terrain in which the philosophical discourse was obliged to use the metaphorical speech. And in the previous paragraphs we were trying to show how the discourse about the non-referential term pushes the author to violate the mirror characteristic of language and thus abides by the use of metaphors. In the coming paragraph we will highlight how the platonic theory of forms stands as an example of the divergence between speaker meaning and sentence meaning and how this divergence was the output of pointing to non-referential term i.e. the output of pointing at entities that have no names. In the following section we will be addressing the non-referential aspect of the platonic theory of forms.

This inquiry will lead us to Socrates. The question what is x? (x being piety, soul, holy etc.) is at the heart of the Socratic dialogue. The answer of this question provides us with the essence of x. Yet, Socrates rejects any attempt by the interlocutor if it doesn't meet three specific criteria. By asking what is x? Socrates is trying to get to:

1. The common feature between all the instances of x.
2. That by virtue of which something is x
3. A paradigm by means of which one can decide whether something is x or not, i.e., the standard which lies behind differentiating x from not x

For example, in one of the Socratic dialogues, Socrates meets Euthyphro who wants to prosecute his father for a murder, thinking that by doing so he will be doing a holy act. Socrates then asks him: what is holiness? Euthyphro tries to give an example in which an act is called holy. By rejecting these kinds of answer, Socrates emphasized that giving an example of holiness is insufficient for our knowledge of what holy in itself is. So remember that I did not request this from you, to teach me one or two of the many pious things, but to teach me the form itself by which everything pious is pious? For you said that it's by one form that impious things are somehow impious and pious things pious. (Plato, Euthyphro, Translated by Cathal Woods and Ryan Pack, Page 4-5) [3]. Thus,

we can note here the reason behind Socrates rejection of Euthyphros attempt to answer by giving an example. Socrates is looking for that by virtue of which we can denote something as pious. By other terms, he is looking at that by virtue of which we can refer to something as pious. The essence of x (that Socrates is trying to find) is that which comes before reference i.e. it is that which sets the boundaries of what can be referred to as x and what cannot. The essence of x that Socrates was trying to find is that which conditons all the references of xs (all the instances of x).

In order to have knowledge about the essence one must look at the unique, universal and objective characteristics which underline the different instances of x. Moreover, Socrates goes beyond this by agreeing that we all seem to have knowledge of what x (equality in this example) is. Equality is not defined by the equal things we see. Equality in itself is not something that we perceive through the senses. Therefore, our knowledge of what equality is cannot come about through our sensation. At this point, we can introduce the world of forms, which is the pivot of the Platonic theory. Forms are introduced in order to talk about the ordinary grasp of concepts that cannot be acquired through the senses. Moreover, in order to understand what we mean by the word beautiful when we say that x is beautiful, we must have an initial grasp of the form of beauty and this grasp occurs through recollection. The theory of recollection claims that learning consists in recollecting things we already knew before we were born, i.e., we have innate knowledge of the forms within us and we are reacquainted with them through recollection. Through recollection we remember what our soul was acquainted with and has forgotten once it was embodied. This knowledge for Plato is the knowledge of the forms. The theory of recollection was endorsed by Socrates in his dialogue with Meno. In this dialogue, Socrates invites a slave and asks him some questions regarding the area of a square. What he wanted to prove is that the slave will be able to give a correct answer about something that he is not aware of. The conclusion of this dialogue is that the slave had certain true beliefs of which he wasnt aware. The questions asked by Socrates were enough to trigger the true beliefs of which the slave was ignorant. This is only possible if the slave had previous knowledge of the matter, and this knowledge was elicited by the Socratic method of questioning. Therefore, Socrates addresses this kind of knowledge by the following assertion And if he did not acquire them in this present life, is it not obvious at once that he had them and learnt them during some other time? [...] he has had true opinions in him which have only to be awakened by questioning to become knowledge, his soul must have had this cognizance throughout all time (Plato, *The Republic*, Vol.3, translated by W.R.M. Lamb. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1967, [86a]) [4]. Thus, our knowledge of the forms is essentially eternal, beyond sensation, thus supersensible. Since change can only occur to sensible entities, and since the platonic truth is perpetual therefore, it is static. Thus, the platonic forms are not subject to change. Since the platonic forms are

perpetual, static not subject to change then the forms are non-sensible entities.

Since the Platonic concept of forms is ahistorical, in order to protect it one can no longer use socially constructed concepts that deteriorate throughout history. In order to preserve such an account which talks about an unnamed reality, figurative discourse must be used. Since the forms are universal, unique and perpetual, one must use a specific shape of language in order to talk about them. This shape of language is well presented by the metaphorical one. We can apply the same line of thought used before to explicate the need to use metaphors in order to denote the theory of forms.

Having this conception of truth will not only lead us to use metaphors in order to preserve it; it also obliges us to refer to figurative speech in using the non-referential terms. In this case we can refer to the well-known analogy of the cave discussed in the Book VII of *The Republic*. In order to make explicit the theory of abstract entities (the forms), Socrates uses the analogy of the cave. In this analogy, humans are sitting with their heads facing the cave wall and they believe that the shadows projected on the wall are real entities, i.e. what really exists. Only the philosopher who has freed himself from his chains has managed to escape the cave and encounter things in themselves, i.e. the forms. The encounter of the philosopher with the world of forms is characterized by five stages:

1. The shadows on the wall which represents the copies of copies
2. The puppets which are the cause behind the appearance of shadows. The puppet presents copies of real things outside the cave.
3. The fire that is causing the projection of the puppets on the wall. The fire also presents a copy of the sun outside.
4. Physical objects outside the cave (lake, tree etc.) which presents the forms i.e. the real essence of things.
5. The sun which is the source of visibility, which represents the form of all forms: the good.

Thus, in order to explicate the theory of forms Socrates took refuge in the analogy where he represented the form of all forms (the form of goodness) as the sun. Thus, we can see how the use of analogy facilitates the transition to discourse about the theory of the forms, where the perpetual, non-sensible forms (and thus non-named entities) are pointed at by the use of metaphors. In this case we can also refer to what Derrida pointed at in *White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy* by saying that figurative speech facilitates the degradation of the metaphysical to the physical, which is clearly the situation in the allegory of the cave where figurative language allowed us to talk about the non-sensible in a sensible register. It should be clear for the reader that the sentence meaning

diverges from the speaker meaning. By the use of sun, Socrates intends to talk about the form of the good, similarly by the use of shadows, puppets, fire, lake, Socrates intends to talk about appearances and things in themselves. In this case we must recall the Platonic theory of recollection. This theory emphasized the eternal nature of the forms. Figurative speech thus is used as a ladder facilitating the ascent of language towards that which lacks a name. By joining the conclusion that we reached from Book VII of *The Republic* and the *Meno* dialogue, we can infer that the metaphorical speech was used in order to denote non-referential terms such as the forms. And so, finally, I suppose, he would be able to look upon the sun itself and see its true nature, not by reflections in water or phantasms of it in an alien setting (Plato, *The Republic*, Book VII, Vols. 5 & 6 translated by Paul Shorey. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1969, [516b]) [5]

We can conclude that by having truth as a mirror between language and reality, metaphorical speech is used in order to go beyond the normal reflection of truth and to enhance the mirror by rendering it as a mean to reflect non-referring terms. Thus, through the past three sections we can conclude that the violation of the mirror characteristic of language occurred when we missed a component in the correspondence relation: a name i.e. a word that characterizes the entity. This violation was the reason behind the divergence between speaker meaning and sentence meaning and thus it represents the bridge that we were trying to find in the introduction. When correspondence theory of language is presupposed, the bridge between the speaker and sentence meaning points us to a violation of the initial function of language i.e. guides us towards a non-referential term. Thus, the intimacy between metaphors and non-referential terms is proven when correspondence theory is presupposed. Yet, many objections were raised against the correspondence theory of language.

Presupposing the correspondence theory of language, metaphorical expressions are attempts to violate this mirror by talking about nameless entities. Moving to another theory of language, namely pragmatism, pushes us to change the theory regarding the use of metaphors. The following part will show us how the change of the definition of truth (from correspondence to pragmatism) pushes us to revise the reason behind the use of metaphors. Where in the previous section the reason was a violation of the initial function of language by mentioning non-referring terms, the reason in the coming section will be related to social commitment. Yet, we will conclude by examining which of these two theories gives us the most plausible account regarding the use of metaphor in the discourse.

Chapter 3

Truth as Inter-Subjective Linguistic Activity

Some pragmatists reject the correspondence relation between words and things. The relation between reference and meaning is neither proven to be theoretical nor intrinsic to the components of the relation. In his paper *Meaning*, Grice argues that meaning is grounded in the mental and explicated in terms of psychological states. He points at situations in which the meaning of the sentence diverges from what the speaker means by it. Sarcasm can be a good example, which emphasizes the divergence between the two meanings. *You are so clever* can be used by someone to indicate the opposite when it is said sarcastically. This divergence clearly appears in the metaphorical realm where the user of the metaphor is not intending the literal meaning of the sentence. Thus this divergence is between the sentence meaning and metaphorical meaning (speaker meaning) where the metaphorical meaning refers to the interpretation of the metaphor. Grice tries to understand this divergence by offering us two stages:

1. First stage: reduce the sentences meaning to the speaker meaning

2. Second stage: speaker meaning runs as follow:

- (a) A uttered x intending that B forms the belief that p

- (b) A further intended that B recognizes his/her original intention

- (c) A intend that B forms the belief that p after recognizing As intention

[6] For the sake of this paper we can substitute the the belief that p with the speakers meaning which is in this case his interpretation of the metaphors. Grice proceeds to claim that for a group of people s means p the interpretation of s is p- depends on two facts: the first is that many members of the group have in the repertoire the procedure of uttering s and the second is that the members of this group assume that at least some other member of the group have the same procedure. Thus, the one to one correspondence between the speaker meaning

and the sentence meaning depends upon the consensus of the group of people, i.e. of the community. Therefore, metaphors in the pragmatic realm can be treated as instances of Gricean communication; whenever the hearer realizes that the speaker is not using the sentence in its literal sense, he/she must refer to the interpretation of such sentence which must be found in the group to which the speaker belongs to. Thus, we can start to notice the influence of the community in general in the interpretation of metaphors. The interpretation of metaphors in this case must be approved by the individuals belonging to a certain community.

However, in this case we should not confuse this distinction to be the distinction between literal and metaphorical meaning. Metaphors are only one instance where we can depict a divergence between speaker meaning and sentence meaning. However, assuming pragmatism is correct, we cannot draw a distinction between the literal and the metaphorical (First Stage of Grices distinction). Since for the pragmatist a sentence has no meaning above and beyond the intention of the speaker i.e. it has no meaning other than what the speaker intends to say by it. In the following part I will point at the work of Robert Brandom in order to emphasize where pragmatism fails to give us a valid theory of metaphors.

3.1 Assertions

Instead of explaining knowing and reasoning in terms of representation, we refer to it as an act of inference, where Inference [is] conceived as a social practice, whose component performances must answer originally not to an objective reality but to communal norms. (Brandom, *Asserting*, Page 640) [7] Robert Brandom tries to explain judgments in terms of assertions. Asserting is a linguistic activity that sanctions inferences. The concept of assertion is explicated in terms of commitments and responsibilities. To assert x is to commit ourselves to x and to take responsibility of accepting what necessarily follows from x . Thus, if one asserts it is raining one must take responsibility that this assertion committed her/him to accept that the streets are wet and to reject that the streets are dry. Instead of explaining the validity of the inference in terms of reference, Brandom explains its validity in terms of inference. We do not acquire the validity of the material inference if it is raining therefore the streets are wet in terms of abstract formal inferences. Validity is not explained in terms of a reality independent of the speaker himself and his community. Thus, for Brandom, every meaningful assertion is a deployment of a rule of inference. The inference is not a theoretical relation between words and things, it is a practical activity.

3.2 RDRD vs. Intentional Beings

We can track the normative framework of language that is traced in inferentialism. The normativity highlighted in the distinction between what is permissible and what is not, is a result of a specific skill that human being can socially acquire. Such a skill provides the speaker with the ability to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate implications of his/her own assertions. This distinctive feature that we are talking about is intentionality i.e. the ability of conceptualizing. When a child is born, he has Reliable Differential Responsive Disposition (RDRD) i.e. he is automatically disposed to respond in a certain way and to discriminate between X and not-X. This ability is common with the animals. Such an ability is mechanical and a pre-condition for one to be able to master a rule. In order to explain the concept of RDRD we have to distinguish between a parrot pronouncing an inference such as It is raining therefore the streets are wet and between a human being uttering it. The parrot has a systematic correlation between squawking and rain that is due to a continuous training i.e. the parrot is caused to squawk in a specific way by a certain trainer. The sentence is meaningless when it is uttered by the parrot but meaningful when asserted by a (human) speaker. A human being has intentionality. His/her intentionality is primarily linguistic and acquired through language use. RDRD is causally generated. Insofar as the repeatable response is not, for the parrot, caught up in practical proprieties of inference and justification, and so of the making of further judgments, it is not a conceptual or cognitive matter at all. (Brandom, Making it Explicit, Page 89). Thus, in this case we can highlight the deep relation between practical inferences and the capacity for conceptualization.

On another hand, intentionality involves aboutness of concepts i.e. a person will be able to distinguish between the acceptable implications that he/she can draw from the concept and unacceptable ones. The ability of conceptualization will push the speaker to derive the concept of wetness from rain and to reject the derivation of the concept of dryness from it. One is treating something as sapient in so far as one explains its behavior by attributing to it intentional states such as belief and desire as constituting reasons for that behavior (Brandom, Articulating Reason, Chap 5-A social Route from Reasoning to Representing). Moreover, this ability to conceptualize is called intentionality. His practical account of intentionality is well highlighted in the following citation: an original, independent, or non-derivative intentionality is an exclusively linguistic affair (Robert Brandom, Making it Explicit, p143). He explains truth in terms of the inter-subjective linguistic practices. Objectivity becomes part of subjectivities because we do not explain truth as an isomorphism between the expression and the object it denotes, i.e. the objective truth becomes swallowed into the social practices. Truth in this theory becomes a matter of what we do and say more than what there is. In asserting x, one commits and endorses x. The endorsement of x gives us a license to build other assertions. Therefore, the concept of assertions

is made explicit in terms of commitments and responsibilities. Yet, any assertion commits the speaker to more than what he/she realizes, the game of giving and asking for reason is essential in order to explicate the hidden assumptions in ones endorsements.

3.3 Truth in The Brandomean Account

Truth in this case depends on a coherence between the individuals set of commitment. It depends on what we social beings do. Thus, the consistency of the individuals commitments, will play an essential role in shaping the new definition of truth. Truth is no more a metaphysical entity which ties syntax to objects in the world; it is a subjective practice which secures a consistency of commitments in ones network. To claim that x is y is true, is not only a matter of understanding the justification behind this claim but also to endorse the claim and what can be inferred from it. Thus, we cannot explain truth independently of justification even if it is distinct from it because every attempt to explain the truth of the assertion alone will assume the myth of a given correspondence between the structure of our thought and the structure of the world. Moreover, the justification does not depend on a correspondence relation, yet it depends on linking my endorsement to other commitments that I happen to have. Every assertion contains a reason for what one ought to think and say afterwards. The truth of the propositional content of any assertion depends on its consistency with the set of commitments that the agent holds. Therefore, the act of asserting presupposes the rationality of the speaker by making him/her responsible for the commitments of what he/she endorsed. This rationality does not correspond to a metaphysical/Cartesian entity, however it is socially shaped.

Thus, inferentialism claims that meaning can only be understood in terms of a conceptual structure which is socially constructed i.e. there is a link between thinking and being a social animal. Thus, we can conclude how meaning is deeply rooted in intentionality. There is not objective meaning which lies outside the realm of the individual and the society, it is strongly tied to subjectivity. The importance of intentionality that is highlighted in Brandom and Grices work will push us to say that there is not any difference between the metaphorical and the literal since meaning is tightly related to the subject in the community. Therefore, given this line of thought we must treat metaphorical expressions as ordinary assertions.

3.4 Metaphors as Ordinary Assertions

Having this theory of language will render obscure the correspondence theory of truth. Truth is no longer taken as a mirror between the linguistic and the non-

linguistic. A proposition is no longer true if it corresponds to a certain referent or state of affair, a proposition is true if it is consistent with the set of commitments that an individual holds. Since every inference involves an assertion and every assertion involves commitments and responsibilities, metaphorical expressions are no exception and force on the utterer a set of commitments and responsibilities. In asserting x , one commits and endorses x and thus can legitimately infer from x . Taking into consideration the importance of the commitment and endorsement of any individual, metaphors just like any other expression must have implications which we can infer from. Thus, from a metaphorical sentence (treated ordinarily i.e. like every other assertion) we can legitimately imply what is consistent with it and what is not. This implication is the actual interpretation of the metaphor. Thus, what one can derive from a metaphorical expression and what one cannot depends on the individuals set of commitments which is itself shaped by the commitments of the society he belongs to. Therefore, the interpretation of metaphors is grounded on the commitments of the community in general, i.e. what the community at large takes to be legitimately derivable from a metaphor. The factor that determines what implications are consistent with asserting x (x being a metaphor), the essential characteristic which stands behind the consistency of what we can infer from a metaphor is what is made permissible by the community that the individual belongs to. Here we can refer to Abu Ubayda's insight on the definition of *majaz* as *jaza* i.e. made it permissible. What we can infer from a metaphor is permissible due to the consent of the community. For this reason, Abu Ubayda claims that All these violations (metaphors) [...] of the natural sentence are permissible, only if they are idiomatic and acceptable to the native speakers of the language (Heinrichs, *On the Genesis of the Majaz-Haqiqa Dichotomy*, Page 123).

Moreover, we can refer to the example of a metaphor that Abu Ubayda mentioned in his work, this person A is a lion where the relation between being a lion and being brave is dependent on a consent of the Arabic culture (in this specific case). The inference of bravery of A from the assertion that he/she is a lion, is only permissible through the consent of the community to which A belongs to. Here we should note that bravery is chosen out of the set of the different characteristics that the lion has i.e. we did not infer that the person A is hairy because he was compared to a lion, knowing the community's commitments we inferred that person A is brave. Thus, the relation between the metaphor and what we can imply from it is dependent on a social agreement. Therefore, figurative speech denotes a specific convention, what a certain culture in general commits itself to, whenever it uses a metaphor. Moreover, the explication of the metaphor does not require a certain capacity for mystification or abstraction, for it is only a matter of tracking the commitments of the society which is also the case for every other assertion. By tracking the commitments that shape the tradition and the culture of a specific society, anyone will be able to render explicit what is implicit by the use of figurative speech.

The different usages of one term are determined in the social sphere. The individuals constituting the social sphere are the only ones who are able to decode the figurative speech by reference to their culture and traditions. In order to make our point explicit, we can refer to Abu Ubaydas argument regarding the ability of Arabs to decode the idioms used in the Quran. His line of thoughts can be presented as follow:

1. The Quran was sent in Arabic speech
2. The Language of Arabs was full of idioms
3. Arabs knew how to decode idioms of the Arabic speech.
4. Therefore, the same method they used in decoding the idioms of their language can be used in decoding the idioms of the Quran.

Thus, by trying to make explicit what the metaphor is referring to, one must relate it to a network of traditions within a community. These traditions shape the way individuals in a specific society interpret their metaphors. For example, by saying This man is a lion only someone familiar with the Arabic culture can deduce from this metaphor that this man is courageous. The relation between being a lion and being courageous is dictated by a social surrounding. Thus, the resemblance no longer represents a natural necessity, as it used to in the platonic realm, yet it is a contingent relation based on social practices. And metaphors are no longer treated as unique expressions that diverge from the literal meaning. Metaphors are now treated as ordinary sentences that we can track their interpretation by tracking the individuals commitment in the society.

Chapter 4

Weakness of The Theory About Metaphors

Throughout the previous attempts of this paper, we were trying to highlight the deep connection between definitions of truth and the use of figurative speech in philosophical discourse. By relating the definition of truth to the use of metaphors we were trying to identify a unique terrain upon which the author is forced to resort to metaphorical language i.e. we were trying to find the reason behind the use of metaphors. By doing so, we were trying to build a theory regarding the use of metaphors. On the one hand, when truth is taken to be a correspondence relation between the word and its referent, the lack of naming pushes the author to use the word figuratively e.g. the arm of God. On the other hand, in the Brandomian conception of truth, a metaphorical assertion is treated like any other assertion. Thus, we notice a common feature that pops out in pursuing the historico-problematic terrain which led us to associate each use of metaphors to one and only one reason which stands behind its use. The attitude that was present throughout this paper is an attempt to unify and find a ground for our philosophical inquiry. Thus, the assumption that we held throughout this work was: first that we are searching a unique terrain in which we are urged use metaphors in our discourse and second that we are trying to find a unique interpretation of metaphor in every alteration of this terrain; where in the former it refers to the non-named entity in the latter it refers to the individuals commitment within the society. This line of thought assumes the existence of a specific core/ground under which we can define and trace back the metaphorical use in different discourses to one historical terrain and to one interpretation. This craving towards unity is well highlighted by Wittgensteins criticism of what was commonly taken to be a philosophical method. This craving towards unity is the consequence of applying scientism in philosophy Philosophers constantly see the method of science before their eyes, and are irresistibly tempted to ask and answer questions in the way science does. This tendency is the real source of metaphysics, and leads the philosopher into complete darkness (Ludwig Wittgenstein, Blue

and Brown Books, 1933-1935) [8]. In the coming section I will try to criticize the attitude present throughout the paper and thus concluding that we are not justified to have one and only one theory which grounds the use of metaphors and its interpretations.

In parallel to Kants work in the Critique of Pure Reason, which was regarded as an attempt to delimit the boundaries of reason, Wittgensteins work is regarded to be an attempt to delimit the boundaries of sense. By his grammatical inquiry in the philosophical discourse, Wittgensteins goal was to re-shape the boundaries of sense in order to make space for ineffable metaphysics. Any attempt to transgress the boundaries of sense will be described as nonsensical. Thus, he was trying to highlight the philosophical illusions that we were trapped in since the days of Plato. These illusions were the outcome of a misconception of philosophy as a discipline with a specific subject of its own. Yet, he regarded philosophy as contributing to human understanding and not to human knowledge. In order to highlight the illusions that philosophers were unconsciously trapped in, we will refer to G. P. Baker and P. M. S. Hacker in their work on Wittgenstein: Understanding and Meaning Part I: Essays- A revolution in philosophy. The great philosophical systems of the past rested on presuppositions: Plato presupposed a realm of abstract entities by reference to which he thought to explain the character of items in the phenomenal world. Descartes presupposed that there are indubitable propositions that constituted the foundations of empirical knowledge. Hume presupposed that the medium of thought is the ideas with which the mind is furnished by experience. Kant presupposed that there are synthetic a priori propositions that describe how things necessarily are in the world [...] in all such cases if presuppositions are challenged the whole philosophical edifice is challenged. And if the challenge is warranted the edifice collapses (G. P. Baker and P. M. S. Hacker, Wittgenstein: Understanding and Meaning Part I: Essays- A revolution in philosophy- December 2004, Wiley-Blackwell, Page 276) [9] All these example of presuppositions highlight the illusions on which many philosophical structures were based. In order to put forth the cure to these philosophical confusions, Wittgenstein tries to find the reason behind these problems.

One of the reasons which we will stress for the sake of our paper is the crave towards unity in the philosophical method. The reason why we are highlighting this problem is to conclude that we are not justified to refer to one theory or interpretation of metaphors i.e. it is not always the case that either metaphors have the violation characteristic of the correspondence as a an origin or social commitments (where the or relation is exclusive). We ought not refer the use of metaphors to one and only one unique interpretation. In order to understand the influence of the scientific method in philosophy, we will first emphasize the different characteristics of the scientific method. What scientific method seeks is to provide a theory in order to explain a phenomenon by reducing it to a set of laws, and by trying to analyze the concepts on the model of scientific analysis. Thus, scientific theory serves as a way to explain phenomena in the natural world

that stands behind the different occurrences of one phenomenon. The power of the scientific method in enhancing our knowledge about the natural world pushed philosophers to use such method in their own research. Their method now takes a scientific shape by trying to uncover what is hidden, and unify the different manifestations under one theory. Thus, two presuppositions come into place: the first one is trying to impose an implicit or veiled reality that lies behind what we ordinarily know and the second one is trying to unify different manifestations under one theory. This craving towards unity is due to the method of induction used in the scientific research. In this case, we can refer back to the quote stated above taken from the Blue and Brown Notebook of Ludwig Wittgenstein Philosophers constantly see the method of science before their eyes, and are irresistibly tempted to ask and answer questions in the way science does (Ludwig Wittgenstein, Blue and Brown Notebook, 1933-1935) [8].

The use of the scientific method in philosophy points out two implications in the philosophical realm. These two implications are the ones which will cast light upon the assumptions that one is committed to by endorsing that for every metaphor there is one interpretation and that we can trace back the use of the metaphorical speech in the philosophical discourse to one historical terrain. The craving for unity is the first implication we are interested in. Philosophers impressed by the scientific method tried to subsume multiple phenomena under one theory which explains them all. So, we try to trace back the different usages of one word by tracing it to one concept. This concept must subsume all the different usages of the specific word. In order to highlight our tendency towards unity, we can refer back to Platos quest for definitions. We stated earlier in the paper, that for Socrates a good definition of the word x must subsume these three characteristics:

1. The common characteristic between all the instances of x .
2. That by virtue of which something is called x
3. A paradigm by means of which one can decide whether something is x or not.

Thus, the unjustified attempt to render all the instances of x under one shelter emphasize the implication of the use of scientific method in the philosophical discourse. We have a craving for unity, which informs our scientific endeavors, in which we seek to subsume the greatest multiplicity of phenomena under a single all-encompassing law. And we follow this disposition of reason in our philosophical investigations too. So we are prone to assume that everything that falls under a concept-word does so because of possession of a common characteristic or characteristics (G. P. Baker and P. M. S. Hacker, Wittgenstein: Understanding and Meaning Part I: Essays- A revolution in philosophy- December 2004, Wiley-Blackwell, Page 282) [9]. Trying to find the common characteristics of the

usage of metaphors in the philosophical discourse by referring it to one historical terrain and by referring the binding of metaphor to one interpretation in every era is the consequence of the craving we have towards unity.

Chapter 5

Theory of Metaphors: Correspondence vs. Pragmatism

Although there seems to be weaknesses in trying to find a theory which grounds all the different occurrences of metaphor, one of the theories presented before fails to give us a satisfying account which deals with the obvious presence of metaphors in discourse. The impossibility of having a unique theory which grounds all the different usages of metaphor doesn't lead us to give up our search for a resemblance between different occurrences of metaphors. We can still find a resemblance between different usages of metaphors, which will allow us to explain the metaphorical meaning, even if such explanation will certainly not be exhaustive of all instances of metaphor. In our judgment, the correspondence theory of language was much more successful than the pragmatic one. It succeeded in pointing at a resemblance that relates many occurrences of metaphors. It has provided us with a more valuable insight into the metaphorical meaning than the pragmatic and the inferentialist account.

The correspondence theory of language treats metaphors as unique expressions which violate the ordinary function of sentences. The advocates of this theory presuppose that there is a correspondence between words and things. And given Heinrich's insight, metaphorical sentences violate this correspondence by pointing at nameless entities. Thus, when we have a missing component in the correspondence relation (in this case the word which stands for the object) the author uses figurative language in order to cover up this violation. Metaphorical speech therefore enhances the mirror characteristic of language and allows the author to point at nameless entities. For the pragmatics the distinction between the metaphorical and literal falls apart. Metaphorical sentences are treated the same way any literal sentence is. Since the metaphorical and the literal expressions are treated the same way, the distinction between the metaphorical and the literal collapses. Since this distinction collapses we cannot talk anymore about metaphorical expressions. We can no longer point at figurative language; it falls under the heading of literal language. And thus it ceases to exist as a unique

form of language. Since it is no longer unique it loses its description of being metaphorical as opposed to existing. Metaphors turn out to be non-existence in the pragmatic realm. Thus, metaphors seems only an instance of literal meaning, except that their meaning is different from the usual meaning since it corresponds to different set of commitments.

By presupposing the inferentialist account we will not be able to distinguish between the metaphorical and the literal meaning and thus we will have no place for the metaphorical meaning in our discourse. Both the literal and the metaphorical assertions are related to sets of commitments and the individual can legitimately infer from them certain commitments and reject others. Thus, the metaphorical assertion has an inferential function and thus a set of commitments that are legitimately tied to it. That being said, we can deduce that both the literal and the metaphorical assertions are considered the same in terms of their inferential role. Metaphors are regarded as normal assertions that involves commitment and responsibilities for the speaker who utters them. Therefore, in the inferential framework we cannot ground the distinction between the metaphorical and the literal and therefore we have no room for the metaphorical i.e. all assertions (whether metaphorical or not) are treated equally, in terms of their inferential role. Inferentialism does not provide us with a satisfactory account concerning the metaphorical meaning.

Following Grices pragmatism we will reach the same conclusion regarding the metaphorical expressions. Grices first stage that allows a plausible communication between the speaker and the hearer assumes that the sentence meaning must be reduced to the speaker meaning. Thus, there is nothing to the meaning of the expression other than the speakers meaning. Thus, in case of metaphors the metaphorical meaning is reduced to the literal one and the literal one in its turn refers to the speakers intention. Therefore, there is nothing to the metaphorical meaning more than the literal meaning. We can conclude that the Gricean communication does not set a distinction between the literal and the metaphorical in contrast, it collapses the metaphorical to the literal. Metaphors seem to have no place in the Griceans framework.

The correspondence theory of truth offered us a plausible account of metaphors, where metaphorical expressions are defined as those who violate the mirror characteristic of language by pointing at nameless entities. Given the nature of the nameless entities, which deprive them of having any names, metaphors turn out to be a privileged attempt to make sense of these entities. The believer in the divine finds comfort in the use of metaphorical language which allows him to have knowledge of that which cannot be named. Both the inferentialist and the pragmatist fail to give a plausible account regarding the metaphorical meaning. They exclude such a unique linguistic phenomenon from their philosophy by treating it equally with the literal meaning.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

In this paper, we tried to build an intimate relationship between the definition of truth and the use of metaphors i.e. we tried to show how the definition of truth shapes the definition of the metaphorical meaning. When the correspondence theory is presupposed between words and their referents, figurative language was used in order to talk about nameless entities (e.g. forms, simple ideas, God). When pragmatism is presupposed, metaphorical meaning is treated as the literal one and is considered as denoting the individuals commitments within the society. By trying to ground the use of metaphors in one theory, we presuppose the existence of the theory, i.e. of the unique terrain which grounds the different usages of metaphors. Such presupposition cannot be justified. Yet, this doesnt deny that there is a ground of resemblance between different occurrences of metaphors. The correspondence theory of truth provides us with more valuable insight into this ground of resemblance. It provides us with a better account regarding metaphorical meaning which seems to disappear in the pragmatic framework.

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