

## *Foreword*

Whether viewed as essential ingredients of language acquisition, i.e. as a natural and normal phenomenon (Rumelhart), or as heavily relying on systematic violation of semantic rules (Cohen), as a feature of language per se (Sadock) or as more likely to be located in thought rather than in language (Reddy), whether creating new similarities (Black) or, in social contexts, resulting in cognitive myopia (Schön), metaphors definitely make all the difference in the run-of-the-mill drab life of nowadays' zoon technikon.

Still, with the number of books on metaphors running into the thousands, why the compelling urge to add yet another one to this huge host? The answers are not that hard to find. One of them looms as large as life in the very definition of metaphor, as adroitly demonstrated by **Paweł Wałowski** in his "*Metaphor forever*" – *Einige (wenn auch nicht bahnbrechende) Bemerkungen zur Geschichte und zum Wesen des (literarischen) Phänomens*, by pointing "the analytic finger [...] towards the difficulties arising in the attempt to precisely define metaphor". Another one is elicited from **Klaus Müller-Richter** and **Arturo Larcati**'s *Die Metapher – Brennpunkt der Autorenpoetik*, who make so bold as to shift discussion epistemology-wise "from a model of metaphors as substitution (of direct representations) to a more constructive and non-mimetic model [of metaphors] derived from Immanuel Kant's transcendental philosophy" and then gently steer it towards the poetics of key 20<sup>th</sup>-century German authors.

*Obiter dictum*, the epistemological dimension of metaphors manages to sneak into almost every nook and cranny of the volume at hand and can therefore be viewed as a hallmark of metaphoricality. However, investigation of a more 'down-to-earth' dimension of the phenomenon in question is

apt to provide still a further compelling argument for prospective readers. And indeed, ‚space metaphors’ are leitmotivically running through all four sections in this issue.

For openers, **Alina Marcela Banea** (*Metaphorical Ways of Narrating the City*) analyzes the centrality of metaphor in various contexts of reception, in that she invites us to London, the “macrometaphorical city”, with Peter Ackroyd and Penelope Lively as our postmodern guides on two different ways of narrating the metropolis. Taking it one step further, from city to planet level, **Carmen Cerasela Drbu** then acquaints the reader with the supreme space metaphor *Gaea* (or ‘Mother Earth’, in: *Gé – principe passive; la symbolisation sociale du mythe*), as magnificently depicted by two outstanding representatives of French Naturalism and Romanian Realism: Emile Zola (*La terre*) and Liviu Rebreanu (*Ion*).

In the “Contrastive Linguistics” Section **Maria Constantinou** (*Avatars sémantiques et enjeux interprétatifs du phénonyme tsunami dans les discours journalistiques grecs et français*) tackles the subtopic of novel metaphors generated via semantic innovation by springing upon the unsuspecting reader a ‘space-sweeping’ Caliban of a metaphor: the phenonym *tsunami*. Relevant samples of re-contextualization in journalese are most conveniently analyzed in terms of Rastier’s Interpretive Semantics. Along the same metaphorical lines, yet blending a new, temporal, ingredient into the spatio-epistemological mixture, **Renata Maria Rusu** (*Representations of the World Axis in the Japanese and the Romanian Culture*) compares culture-specific metaphorical mappings of the *axis mundi* as exhibited by modern Japanese festivals and Romanian symbols related to dendrolatry and other idiosyncratic rites.

With epistemology and spatiotemporality so closely knit together, it is only logical that another recurring theme should emerge throughout the volume – and, with it, as good a motivation as any for the reader to peruse it: the human mind

metaphorically viewed as the most significant LOCUS, since it accommodates REASON, KNOWLEDGE and IMAGINATION, which fact, chopping logic even further, in turn ‘exposes’ it as *fons et origo* of metaphors. Revisiting **Alina Marcela Banea**’s *Metaphorical Ways of Narrating the City. London - A Macrometaphorical City* we find the collective-individual dichotomy perfectly mirrored by two metaphorical readings: of the *city*, as the site of common experience, and of the reader’s or writer’s *mind*, as the site of meaning.

Two sections further below, in *Traduire la métaphore dans le discours quotidien*, **Carmen Ecaterina A tirbei**, too, views the principle of the individual or collective imaginary as underlying the structure of metaphors, while the author of the preceding article, **Ioana Irina Durdureanu** (*Possibilité et impossibilité de la traduction des métaphores comme particularité du langage poétique*) investigates the translatability of metaphors as vehicles of *forma mentis* in poetry, which is, by definition, the utmost defier of normative models and canonical patterns.

Concluding the “Translation Strategies” Section is **Ioana Rosto** and **Mihai Crudu**’s *Das Thema als Metapher des Denkens*, where theme, as a metaphor for thought, is made the major focus of a study on language philosophy concepts and terms as employed by two salient academics versed in Romance philology: Michael Metzeltin and Ioan Oprea.

In her psychologically based *Zum alltagsmetaphorischen Gebrauch des Wortes ‘schizophren’*, **Constanze Fiebach** anatomizes a, so to say, ‘mind-splitting’ novel metaphor, with pragmatic implications turned to good account in everyday slang usage. Steering research even nearer to the metaphors we live by, **Carmen Ecaterina A tirbei** finds metaphorical ‘implicatures’ of slang equally attractive and worth debating, only this time viewed as a major language barrier to accurately translating this type of informal discourse.

Two other authors chose to shed revealing light on disadvantages of metaphoricity, which, to be perfectly candid about it, more often than not come with the territory. Thus, in Section 3, **Anissa Daoudi** submits to the reader a fascinating case study on the various strategies deployed by bilingual Arab learners in coming to grips with *Semantic Analyzability and Idiom Comprehension*. However – as the thoroughly conducted field research seems to imply –, the undeniable fact remains that even the most versatile bilingual figurative competence can sometimes be completely baffled by the fine array of ambiguities which idiomaticity lines up as a last resort. And, if it does not come as a big surprise that some linguists claim – with good reason too, I daresay – that “Metaphors in linguistics should be used sparingly” (cf Aikhenvald, A. I. and Dixon, R. M. W. (eds.), 2008, *Grammars in Contact. A Cross-Linguistic Typology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p 6), **Laura-Elena Mih ileasa** in her *Der Zweifel an der Metapher* (Section 1) shows Franz Kafka, one of the most famous representatives of the *belles-lettres* province – where metaphor is usually expected to rule supreme –, to be also one of its most formidable opponents (“[...] metaphor is not a way of revealing the essence of reality, much rather a trap that alienates the writer from the essence of things”).

Since, nevertheless, the distinction between metaphorical and non-metaphorical is growing ever fuzzier, and since, again, the editor’s Foreword is always expected to end on an optimistic note, I saved for the ‘grand’ finale of my survey three articles which unequivocally state their authors’ pros in the matter. Thus, in a painstaking interidiomatic scrutiny of three Romance languages and a Slavic one (*Le support vocalique comme véhicule de la métaphore linguistique: une étude comparée quadruple*, Section 2), **Angela Co ciug** provides yet another answer to the opening question of the present Foreword by adducing fresh evidence to

support the interpretation of the vocalic system as a vehicle for linguistic metaphors in contact-induced changes.

Charting the meandering course of metaphors in the area of aesthetics – but from clearly different vantage-points –, are the first and last articles in the Section on “Cross-Cultural Strategies”. In *(Trans-)Gendered Metaphors* **Danielle Verena Kollig** goes with a fine-tooth comb over Nietzsche’s aesthetics and view of language as a system of metaphors, thus highlighting a further philosophy-oriented facet of the topic at issue which, rather than confirming, sets out to challenge gender dichotomies. Last but not least, **Ulrike Schröder**’s “*DAS LEBEN (DES MC) IST KRIEG*“: *Einbettungen einer konzeptuellen Metapher des Textgenres „rap“ in zwei divergierende kulturelle Kontexte* is a meticulously documented case study approaching metaphor as a model of mediation in transcultures, more precisely divergent discourse contexts accommodating the conceptual metaphor (RAPPER’S) LIFE IS WAR as a vehicle for mapping the adversary in German and Brazilian rap lyrics.

I sincerely hope that the synopsis at hand, if not completely bringing a hesitating reader round to the editor’s point of view, at least did not ‘make the worst of a good job’ by scaring her/him off altogether. For, all things considered, if one had half a mind to doubt the utility of the present volume, one might just as well be inclined to query the necessity of electronic libraries when hard versions of books are still in use – with internet and printing viewed as contemporary and modern second-degree metaphors, respectively, for the sacred fire stolen from heaven by Prometheus, while knowledge is a first-degree metaphor for same on an imaginary scale of metaphoricality.

And, since the editor is as a rule allowed to have her/his final say in the matter, I will hazard yet a further function of metaphors, for which I am perfectly willing to take both the

blame and the credit – if any : metaphor as a vehicle for colonization of fiction by writers. For what are writers, deep down, if not a distinct species of – and hence a second-degree metaphor for – modern colonists, which can in turn perform as a first-degree metaphor for ancient Aeneas, with fiction thus automatically converted into a metaphorical rendition of the Promised Land?

Pursuing the matter to its logical consequences, this interpretation would accordingly make the reader of any book – who is the ultimate decoder of metaphors – a present-day Ulysses bringing home (both literally and figuratively speaking) to her/his fellowmen the hidden meanings extracted from it. Which just goes to show that our argumentation has come full circle, for, rather than relying on the writers of the articles to provide the right answers, it is the reader alone who must be credited with the final and most unbiased decision on the utility of the present book for the advancement of the research area it is investigating.

**Gina M ciuc**