INTRODUCTION: APPROACHING METAPHOR IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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It would be impossible to deny the importance of metaphor in political discourse. Everywhere we look - in the media and social media, in political debates and social campaigns - discussions of local, national and international issues are peppered with metaphorical language. This is so much the case that the very ubiquity of this kind of language often leads us to trivialise it, and to underestimate its significance. But we need to be extremely aware that metaphors are not just a conventional feature of everyday language. The specific metaphors we use to talk about a given issue actually matter, because they shape our ongoing mental representations of that reality and colour our reactions and appraisals: it is not the same to call our society a "melting pot" or a "mosaic", and it is not indifferent whether we talk about our dealings with antagonistic groups as a "war" or as a "shared journey". In this introduction I briefly review some of the background to these ideas, and then explain the rationale that underlies the rest of the volume.

It seems logical enough to begin this introduction by saying something about the importance of metaphor, and to discuss briefly the place of metaphor in politics. If we go back to the earliest reflections on the nature of metaphor, we find that Aristotle defined it, rather ponderously, as "the application of a strange term either transferred from the genus and applied to the species, or from the species and applied to the genus, from one species to another or else by analogy" (Poetics 1457b). Thus, Aristotle tells us, "old age is to life as evening is to day", so he calls the evening "day's old age" and he calls old age "the evening of life". As Levin comments (1982: 24), this theoretical formulation is somewhat unprepossessing, and

it has indeed come in for many criticisms over the years. Even on its own terms, it is not particularly consistent: as Brooke-Rose (1958: 4) pointed out, the third type ("from species to species") really covers all metaphors, since "all metaphors involve a mental transfer from one type of object to another, from one domain of thought to another". Other critics have decried it for being "unsystematic" and "incomplete" (Stanford 1936), or even "peculiarly useless" (Brooke-Rose 1965). But it would be hard to deny its influence. Centuries of rhetoricians and literary scholars have taken Aristotle as a starting point for their discussions of language and literature. Yet we should remember that Aristotle was not, primarily, a literary scholar: he was a philosopher and natural scientist, passionately concerned with understanding the world, society and the human being. Levin (1982: 25) argues cogently that Aristotle's main purpose in analysing metaphor is not to make startling revelations about the workings of poetry, but rather, on a more philosophical level, to "explain how metaphor promotes to consciousness an awareness of relations that subsist between the objects and concepts that make up our universe". His underlying objective is to explain "the teaching function of metaphor and the role it plays in the transmission and acquisition of knowledge" (Levin 1982: 25).

This is an interesting assertion, because metaphor was –for many centuries– firmly situated in the scheme of rhetorical devices as a "trope", alongside irony, euphemism, hyperbole, and so on, as a kind of elegant extra feature that can be used to decorate a speech or text (Lausberg 1960/1998). Rhetoricians habitually considered its role as subsidiary to ideas (*inventio*) and their arrangement in argument (*dispositio*), since metaphor was regarded as simply an aspect of style and language (*elocutio*), at most an "*ornatus*". Yet this is only half the truth. The persuasive function of metaphor was not ignored or forgotten: indeed, from ancient times onwards, the role of metaphor in persuasion –and in deception– was clearly a matter of concern. In fact, there is an undercurrent of thought that originates with Aristotle himself which accords much greater importance to metaphor than to other tropes. Aristotle himself underlined the "strangeness" of metaphor, which gives it a peculiar power to attract our attention: "we must introduce an element of strangeness into our diction because people marvel at what is far away, and to marvel

is pleasant" (*Rhetoric* 3 1404b9-12). Yet this very "strangeness" encapsulates the ambivalence that Aristotle himself seems to associate with metaphor: it is not transparent, it is a kind of artifice, and so we should be distrustful of it. Although metaphor is extremely useful to teach new concepts, it can also be misapplied to deceive or manipulate an audience: to use a metaphor about metaphor, it functions "in such a way as to make us see one thing as another" (Moran 1996: 100). In other words, even in ancient times, the special power of metaphor to persuade, manipulate and, indeed, indoctrinate listeners was evidently a matter of concern. In the intervening centuries, however, a long-standing intellectual tradition persisted in situating metaphor as a trope, alongside onomatopoeia and litotes, with the result that its singular role in structuring thought, though perhaps acknowledged, was somewhat sidelined.

With the rise of cognitive approaches in literature and linguistics in the 1970s and 1980s, however, new interest was kindled in metaphor as a subject in its own right, as scholars undertook a major reappraisal of metaphor as a primarily cognitive phenomenon. The principal differences between these contemporary concepts of metaphor and earlier ones lie mainly in the central importance we attribute to metaphor as a phenomenon today, and in our current awareness of the deep embeddedness of metaphor in the ways that we think and speak. Of course, it is only fair to say that both these aspects were present from the very beginning, but it is true that their significance has only recently been brought into the foreground. Although Lakoff (1993: 202) brashly declares that "the classical theory turns out to be false", maintaining that all previous theories situated metaphor purely in language rather than in cognition, a glance at Aristotle's notions about the educational role of metaphor as a route to understand "an awareness of relations that subsist between the objects and concepts that make up our universe" suggests that this was not the case. In fact, Lakoff's own thesis statement that "the generalisations governing poetic metaphorical expressions are not in language, but in thought" (1993: 202) comes surprisingly close to echoing Aristotle's own formulation that it makes us "see one thing as another".

In retrospect, Lakoff's outright dismissal is probably an overgeneralisation arising out of the insistence on metaphor as a trope in

poetry, as taught in American liberal arts programmes. None the less, few would deny the importance of Lakoff's contribution. The cognitive turn in language and literature, facilitated by the groundbreaking work of Lakoff himself (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Lakoff 1987), has now carried metaphor into the epicentre of our understanding of how human language and cognition work. Rather than being a mere decoration, or a useful educational resource for communicating about difficult concepts, metaphor is intrinsic to the way we think and operate on many levels. The fundamental point in the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) propounded by Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 4) is that "Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" and therefore "the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor". In other words, metaphors are everywhere, shaping the way we think and speak about the world, to the extent that we could affirm that metaphors actually "create realities for us" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 158). In this spirit, volumes of research have since been published to illustrate how metaphors work in everyday language to interpret and shape experience across a wide variety of languages and cultures.

However, at this point it is also important to establish that the ubiquity of metaphor in everyday language and thought does not mean that its special persuasive role in discourse is in any way lessened. The vindication of the role of metaphor as fundamental to cognition does not in any way detract from the capacity to sway, convince and manipulate that has been attributed to metaphor over the centuries. A review of real and fictional political speeches in the millennia since Aristotle would clearly show that adept speakers have always been well aware of the potential of metaphor to sway a crowd. Since metaphor is so central to cognition – that is, metaphor is so much part of the way we think –its use is particularly important in situations where power is at stake, and where one person wishes to exert an influence over others. Studies from many different areas of applied linguistics (e.g. Cameron 2003; Deignan 2005, 2010; Musolff 2016; Gola and Ervas 2016) have drawn our attention to the specific importance of recognising this particular aspect, which constitutes "an independent dimension of metaphor in

discourse next to the ones of metaphor in thought and metaphor in language" (Steen 2011: 86). To highlight this point, Gola and Ervas (2016: 9) call this the "communicative dimension of metaphor", illustrating how metaphor "yields certain communicative effects" in specific domains (2016: 17).

Other scholars have talked about the "discourse-level conceptual effects" (Browse 2013: 249) that may result from the habitual use of particular metaphors to talk about particular social and economic phenomena, colouring our ongoing perceptions of the world: metaphor reduces highly complex socioeconomic features to a human scale, which facilitates comprehension but entails serious information loss and high potential for bias, with evident political implications. In politics, in concrete, metaphor is particularly associated with communicative strategies that lead people to think in a particular way about social phenomena, or instigates them to perform specific actions.

In fact, the area of politics has long been singled out as one where metaphor has a particularly salient role. The long-standing awareness of the special, sometimes sinister, power of metaphor has informed a large number of studies on political rhetoric over the years. When a cognitive dimension is added to this, we end up with an extremely powerful tool to understand how discourses work. In combination with critical approaches, such as critical discourse analysis, analysis of underlying cognitive metaphors can help us interrogate the intersection of language, ideology and power in political discourse (Charteris-Black 2004, 2005; Chilton 2004). The point is that metaphors seem to be able to operate on a variety of levels, shaping our basic assumptions about the way society should be, and constantly reinforcing these, but also sometimes remodelling them, offering a new understanding of phenomena that previously passed unnoticed, a new interpretation of the status quo, or a new vision of the future. To take one example, when the relationship between EU countries stops being depicted in the media as squabbling in the family and starts to be framed in terms of a possible divorce, public perceptions are likely to adjust and modify accordingly. Moreover, if the metaphors habitually used to communicate about a particular subject cluster around particular cognitive schemata shared by the audience, then these tend to re-

inforce each other, coalescing as a coherent narrative accepted by large sectors of society. The extent to which a metaphor convinces its audience will depend at least partially on that audience's expectations, or what we could term their pre-formed mental models of the way the world works. For example, it has been cogently argued that current American politics offers a choice between two different worldviews, which can be roughly described as conservative and progressive, and that each of these is underpinned by a metaphorical model of family relations, memorably encapsulated by Lakoff as the "strict father" and the "nurturant parent" (Lakoff 1996). Depending on one's underlying representation of the family, which is probably based on one's own earliest experiences, one will identify more profoundly with one or the other – without necessarily being aware that one is doing so.

In politics, then, metaphor is rarely innocent. As Musolff (2016: 4) puts it, metaphors always "have pragmatic 'added value'" in that they express evaluations, persuade, appeal to the emotions in a positive or negative way, or reassure people that new phenomena fit into existing patterns or experience and can be dealt with in familiar ways. As well as explaining reality, metaphors can also distort reality, by emphasising one aspect at the expense of another, by concealing some facet of reality completely, or by fostering catastrophic thinking and disproportionate responses. Politicians who characterise immigrants as "parasites", or who speak of social campaigns in terms of "war", are simplifying and distorting complex social realities, reducing them to the lowest common denominator in order to position their listeners and promote facile solutions.

Put like this, the analysis of metaphors in political discourse looks enticingly simple. However, in reality, everyone who has embarked on a study of the metaphors in a text knows that writers and speakers are far from logical and consistent in their use of metaphor. It would be so easy if they took one analogy and worked through it systematically from start to finish, but this is rarely the case. As some observers have noted, political uses of metaphor are often particularly unclear, ambiguous, and even obscure (Damele 2016). Speakers start by using one comparison, then allude to another, perhaps veer back to the first, and then end up with a third. This is odd, not least because "mixed metaphors" are frowned upon

by purists, and would seem to be likely to lead to confusion. However, mixing is so common that scholars have argued that it is a phenomenon in itself, and have devoted time to investigating its cognitive workings (Kimmel 2010). One of the reasons why language users can cope with mixing is that we appear to be able to take in each metaphorically-elaborated proposition separately and somehow integrate these ideas into our underlying schemes representing states of affairs. This, in turn, suggests that our minds have pre-formulated categories, mental models of different events, concepts, actions, people, etc., and when we are exposed to discourse that contains multiple references to different cognitive metaphors, we are somehow able to relate one thing to another, identify what belongs where, and generally follow the speaker's drift.

However, the messy nature of metaphorical language in real samples of political and media discourse still poses a challenge to the analyst. One way of approaching the fragmented metaphors that we find in real political discourse is by trying to group examples together. Thus we can try to organise them in terms of their source domains (e.g. metaphors which use WAR or JOURNEY, for example), or we can look from the perspective of the target domain (e.g. metaphors to explain the financial crisis). Both of these approaches are productive, providing insights about how matters are conceptualised, but they do not fully account for the particular force of metaphors in a given discourse or text. One proposal for solving this problem is that put forward by Musolff (2006), who suggests that in political discourse, we should focus our attention particularly on what he calls the "metaphor scenario".

The concept of the scenario is more focused than that of the domain, in that it takes on board the shared assumptions and evaluations that a discourse community makes about a source domain and fills in more details about the way that domain is being presented in any given case. In his words, a metaphor scenario is a "discourse-based, culturally and historically mediated version of a source domain" (2016: 30). It is thus close to the concept of the "semantic frame" (Fillmore 1975), which enables hearers to integrate new information into their existing schemata, or to the notion of "framing" frequently used in media studies (Entman 1993; Jiménez-Yáñez 2018), which explains how the media shape messages in such

a way that they tell one story rather than another. Like these concepts, the metaphor scenario has a bearing on the way people organise information in their minds. Unlike them, however, the metaphor scenario is still emergent, created in an ongoing context, but open to modifications and contestations. To elucidate this further, Musolff explains that metaphor scenarios are "mini-narratives" that carry "evaluative and attitudinal biases" (2006: 23). They thus represent a step forward from the "domain", which is simply an area, but they are not as fixed and coherent as the "frame". Referring back to Lakoff's example, the idea that the nation is a family would simply indicate a source domain (FAMILY) for talking about a target domain (nation), while the "strict father" view of the nation would be a "scenario" that provides us with much more information about how the different participants are expected to behave, and with evaluative parameters that enable us to judge that behaviour. Musolff puts it like this (2006: 28):

> we can characterise a "scenario" as a set of assumptions made by competent members of a discourse community about "typical" aspects of a source-situation, for example, its participants and their roles, the "dramatic" storylines and outcomes, and conventional evaluations of whether they count as successful or unsuccessful, normal or abnormal, permissible or illegitimate, etc.

To take one example, in Musolff's (2006) comparison of British and German press reporting on European Union issues, he finds that the general assumptions about the domain structure (FAMILY) differ little, but within this, the scenarios, that is, the metaphorical mini-narratives used to envisage/compare events within Europe are quite different, with the German press focusing on Franco-German "marriage problems" within the EU, while the British devote more attention to possibilities of the UK's divorce from the EU. Such scenarios pervade reporting on European affairs, they are rarely worked out in full, and their inherent normative or evaluative biases are not binding in a logical sense. However, by bringing rather abstract ideas like relations between states into the familiar context of interpersonal relationships, these scenarios facilitate people's understanding and evaluation of those ideas, and have the potential to

shape the way people see European Union affairs. As Musolff says (2006: 36):

> Scenarios enable the speakers to not only apply source to target concepts but to draw on them to build narrative frames for the conceptualization and assessment of sociopolitical issues and to "spin out" these narratives into emergent discourse traditions that are characteristic of their respective community.

Against this background, this volume contains six detailed studies of metaphor use in recent political discourse that complement each other in different ways. In what follows, I briefly comment on the selection of chapters, the material they analyse, and their methodology and focus.

First, it is not coincidental that all of these chapters deal with situations in which there is controversy or conflict. As we saw above, the way of speaking about an issue both reveals and shapes the way we think about it, and metaphorical language is used both to sharpen and, sometimes, to obfuscate political ideas that are controversial or inflammatory. It is often when the political situation is particularly tense that we start to be aware of the metaphors used on one side or the other. Addressing situations ranging from the 2017-18 US-Iran conflict, the 2017 Catalan Independence crisis, the present-day rise of populism in Italy, and the ongoing relationship between the UK and the EU, the chapters in this volume reflect the nature of national and international political conflicts in the second decade of the 21st century, and bring out the particular relevance of metaphors in these situations. Not only does the choice of metaphor domain or metaphor scenario in each case shed light on the exercise of persuasion or manipulation in political discourses, but more subtly, the metaphor scenarios used may also reveal themselves to be sites of struggle (Fairclough 1989) in which different parties attempt to construct different narratives with the same ingredients.

Second, concerning the material on which these analyses are based, most of the studies centre on speeches by well-known political figures, but from a variety of settings. Some make use of large sets of data, while others are detailed studies of one or several speeches. Starting from the broader studies, Margaret Rasulo's chapter pre-

sents contrasts from a corpus of high-profile speeches delivered by Barack Obama, Donald Trump, David Cameron and Theresa May over the last ten years, while Jenni Räikkönen's chapter is based on an analysis of over six thousand contributions to debates about EU-related issues in the House of Commons from 2000 to 2016 by three pro-EU and three anti-EU UK politicians.

Carola Schoor's study also draws on the results of a larger study characterising different political styles, but uses this to define three styles (populist, elitist and pluralist), and then conduct an in-depth analysis of one speech by each of three politicians characterised by each style, namely Dutch Freedom Party leader Geert Wilders (populist), British (then) Foreign Minister Boris Johnson (elitist) and former president of the USA Barack Obama (pluralist).

Also motivated by the need for comparison between different political styles, Liudmila Arcimavičienė's chapter looks in detail at two speeches each by Donald Trump, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to the United Nations General Assembly, asking to what extent these leaders make use of populist communication strategies, and how this is materialised in their use of metaphor.

The chapters on speeches are rounded off by Lorella Viola's contribution, which can also be firmly situated among studies of populism: her chapter looks in depth at the 2018 end-of-year speech published in Facebook by (then) Italian Interior Minister Matteo Salvini, exploring how his metaphor use resonates with that of other recent populist leaders, particularly Donald Trump.

The last chapter in the volume (Jiménez-Yáñez and Breeze) moves away from speeches by politicians to the equally important field of media communication about politics, examining metaphor scenarios used in editorials from four major newspapers, two based in Barcelona and two in Madrid, published on the eleven days between the Catalan Independence Referendum (1 October 2017) and the Unilateral Declaration of Independence. This chapter in particular shows how subtle differences in the way particular metaphor domains are used give rise to different scenarios –with important consequences for the way the target domain is likely to be understood.

Third, as the foregoing overview has suggested, the methodological approaches adopted are also quite varied, within the lim-

its of metaphor studies. Several of the authors make use of corpus linguistics to detect patterns in large bodies of text (Rasulo, Räikkönen), while Schoor applies a model that she had previously built on the basis of a large corpus of speeches. Other studies are strictly qualitative in their methodology (Arcimavičienė, Viola, Jiménez and Breeze). All adopt a principled approach to determining whether particular words or expressions are being used metaphorically, or to resolve difficult cases, mostly based on MIP or MIPVU (Pragglejaz Group 2007; Steen *et al*. 2010). Moreover, all recognise the notion of the metaphor scenario, although this is developed and used in the chapters in different ways.

Viola's chapter identifies three scenarios that run through Salvini's speech –the proud Italian, the Robin Hood and the rescuer– which serve to establish Salvini's credibility and attract support among his viewers. Jenni Räikkönen starts from frequently occurring metaphorical words used to talk about Europe and the EU in a small sample of texts, and then collects the instances of these "metaphor keywords" throughout each speaker's corpus in order to conduct a qualitative discourse analysis of these keywords in context. Jiménez and Breeze proceed by identifying all the potentially metaphorical uses of language in the editorials, organising them into roughly similar categories, and then exploring similarities and differences in the way that each newspaper characteristically develops various scenarios. Schoor similarly identifies metaphors used by each speaker through close reading, but then systematises them differently, looking at the cognitive (ideational), social (emotional) and presentational (strategic) use of metaphors for the key populist concepts (Zienkowski and Breeze 2019) of 'the people', 'the elite', 'politics', 'government' and 'political context' in each case. Following a procedure familiar from the bibliography of corpus assisted discourse studies, Rasulo runs a corpus search for the verbs that have 'people' as subject, using this to tease out the way peoplehood constructs are realised through different verbal processes. She also extracts the various multi-word expressions from each leader's corpus that synthesise that leader's main aims and concerns. On this basis, she proceeds to identify four main metaphors of peoplehood that underpin the different politicians' arguments and narratives, which in turn cluster around two principal metaphor models for

representing the people used by different types of politician. Thus the model that represents the people as endeavouring individuals is associated with Obama and Cameron, who both prefer to focus on the people's strengths and active civic engagement. On the other hand, the model that envisages the people as yielding collectivities who are somehow identified with the politician himself against variously defined 'others' is characteristic of Trump and May. For her part, Arcimavičienė develops the notion of legitimisation and examines politicians' use of metaphors to build their legitimacy on the basis of categories (targeting, mobilisation, victimhood, etc.) proposed by Maynard (2015).

Finally, as the foregoing paragraphs have suggested, these chapters also shed light on the multiplicity of functions that metaphors have in politics, in the media, and in social life in general. It is no surprise that in the metaphors analysed in these studies of political discourse, the persuasive function seems to predominate over the educational-explanatory one. This in no sense undermines the importance of their cognitive dimension, since the metaphors used here tend to reflect socially available ways of thinking about a particular issue, and to reinforce the ideologies that underlie these. In their different ways, Räikkönen, Arcimavičienė, Rasulo and Schoor all look at the range of metaphors used in formal political discourse, showing how they are used as a subtle discursive tool to attribute blame or to obscure agency, conveying ideological positions in a way that is implicit yet highly persuasive. Such metaphors often seem to serve as shorthand for more complex concepts within a particular debate, enabling participants to dialogue about more abstract ideas in a simplified way, with both the positive and negative consequences that this implies. For her part, Viola also examines the framing and persuasive roles of metaphor, relating Salvini's metaphors quite explicitly to the way he adds colour, force and vigour to his anti-European stance, and takes upon himself metaphorical roles calculated to appeal to a popular audience. In particular, certain issues such as nationalism, identity and European unity stand out in these authors' analysis as sites in which discursive struggle is forcefully conducted through the careful use of certain recurring conventional metaphors. Lastly, from a slightly different starting point, Jiménez-Yáñez and Breeze explore the way that specific metaphors

are subject to quite subtle variations in the way they are used by newspapers with different political allegiances to legitimise or discredit controversial political movements. Thus one metaphor, such as fire, gives rise to a very different set of implicatures depending on whether it is presented as a natural disaster or as arson. Taken as a whole, these chapters provide many interesting and sometimes alarming insights into the ways that public debates are coloured, conducted and even profoundly shaped through the use of metaphor.

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