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THE EXHILARATIONS OF CHANGES:  
AN INQUIRY INTO THE MOTIVES OF METAPHOR

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## **Abstract**

Metaphor, once regarded most favorably as an ornamental device and least favorably as an impediment to perspicuous communication, has recently been the subject of numerous studies in disciplines ranging from literary criticism to cognitive science. Despite the insight that they may afford into the functions and characteristics of metaphor, these studies often neglect the context in which metaphors actually develop. Even accounts most sensitive to metaphor frequently analyze metaphors in relative abstraction from their contexts. Context, however, is crucial to understanding the difference between two modes of metaphor: ordinary metaphor and poetic metaphor. Only poetic metaphor, on account of its ontologically creative function, can provide insight into the world. Ordinary metaphor, by contrast, relies on antecedent structures in the world to establish a shared perspective between metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver, as a consequence of which it cannot be considered genuinely creative. The distinction between ordinary and poetic metaphor is helpful in overcoming many of the perplexities and mischaracterizations that detract from accounts in which this distinction is ignored.

One way to distinguish between these two modes of metaphor is to evaluate their respective motives. While the motive of poetic metaphor is defined by its ontologically creative function, the motive of ordinary metaphor is defined by its interpersonal dimension. By using motive as a means of differentiating between these two modes of metaphor and of determining their individual merits, the view proposed in this paper establishes a more fruitful approach to understanding the creative aspects of metaphor.

Following this analysis, an afterword serves as an appreciation of poetry, guided by the reflections of Jorge Luis Borges, and offers a recommendation for the poetry of Wallace Stevens.

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And you have made the world (and it shall grow  
and ripen as a word, unspoken, still).  
When you have grasped its meaning with your will,  
then tenderly your eyes will let it go...  
—“Initiation,” Rainer Maria Rilke

## Introduction

“[T]he signals we give—yes or no, or maybe— / should be clear: the darkness around us is deep” (19-20), pronounces William Stafford in his poem “A Ritual to Read to Each Other,” expressing the difficulties that arise in communication, over which always looms the possibility of misunderstanding. While it is helpful to be clear and to use direct, comprehensible language so that one’s meaning is not mistaken, communication remains an inexact process that, to some extent, thwarts attempts to share meaning, despite precautions taken to ensure clarity and comprehension. Particularly as regards efforts to articulate more profound states and experiences of the human condition, such as death, beauty, and existence, language often fails to convey fully one’s feelings, beliefs, and insights. The question then is why anyone would want to complicate further the hardships of communication by employing figurative uses of language that seem to defy clear understanding in their refusal to confine meaning to literal, established patterns of interpretation, thus subverting the standard expectations of discourse.

The attainment of clarity is not always feasible or preferable, however. In some cases, such as those indicated above, clarity would indeed be defeated by recourse to more common modes of language—the more conventional locutions that act as superficial aids to secure understanding. It should be acknowledged that some subjects ostensibly exhaust the known vocabularies according to which experience can be articulated and thus compel the search for alternative and new ways to express and understand them. More intimate and expressive modes of communication are required to overcome the communicative gaps created by these subjects. The purpose of these modes of communication is to seek out and articulate new dimensions of reality, generating new insights into the world.

It is in poetry that this process attains its most profound function. In their most poetic mode, metaphors serve not merely to reveal such connections but actually to create them. Poetry can, therefore, be regarded as creative to the extent that it is defined by such metaphors, which will here be labeled 'poetic' or 'creative'. The motive of poetic metaphor is to initiate the creation and discovery of reality. The relation between poetic metaphor and reality entails an ontologically creative function, which is absent from ordinary metaphor. In ordinary metaphor, an interaction occurs whereby a set of associated commonplaces, comprised in the implicative complex of the secondary subject, are projected onto the primary subject, the focus, which naturally retains its original reference. By contrast, in poetic metaphor, the radical interaction of meaning units, within a metaphorical context established by the interconnections of metaphors, produces changes in both sense and reference.

In consequence, poetic metaphor should not only be contrasted with dead metaphor, i.e., metaphors that have lost their status as metaphors as a result of their adoption into general usage. Poetic metaphor should also be contrasted with every mode of metaphor that is not sufficiently poetic. Only poetic metaphors are creative in the sense of offering insight into the world. Such metaphors, it should be noted, do not occur only in poetry, although it is in poetry that they are most often found, poetry naturally being the primary site of poetic metaphor. If oral discourse were to contain poetic metaphors, it would need to satisfy the conditions under which poetic metaphors can emerge, conditions that in poetry are established by the inextricable connection between the poetic context and the poetic metaphors themselves. Given the divergent structures of oral and poetic discourse, it does not seem possible for oral discourse to satisfy such conditions. Therefore, in the context of the present analysis, poetic metaphors will be discussed in relation to poetry. What should be obvious from these remarks is that the relationship between

poetic metaphor and its context is of the utmost importance. The focal relationship in ordinary metaphor, by contrast, is the relationship between metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver. Evident in nearly every account of metaphor, even in those that focus specifically on poetic metaphor, is the general neglect of context. Metaphors are frequently analyzed as though they existed in a void. Such accounts, despite whatever valid and insightful observations they may contain, effectively diminish and misrepresent poetic metaphors by abstracting them from the poetic context with which they are intimately associated.

Metaphors, to be sure, can be put to many uses, some of which deviate considerably from their poetic use. Though still related to poetic metaphor, these types of metaphor, which will be called 'ordinary metaphor', function differently from poetic metaphor. One way of understanding the differences between ordinary and poetic metaphor consists in identifying their divergent motives. In this process of identification, context serves a primary role. Indeed, in the absence of context, the differences between poetic metaphor and ordinary metaphor vanish. Differentiating between ordinary and poetic metaphor will help to resolve many intractable difficulties and misapprehensions that debilitate otherwise discerning approaches to metaphor. Without this distinction, metaphors are often construed as entirely creative or entirely ordinary, resulting in equally tendentious perspectives on metaphor. Accounts of poetic metaphor, for example, dismiss or seek to invalidate accounts of ordinary metaphor, and the same trend can be observed working in the opposite direction in accounts of ordinary metaphor.

With a view to advocating the cognitive capacities of metaphor, which have for the greater part of the history of the study of metaphor been repudiated, many scholars have of late assumed a much broader perspective on metaphor. While overall this development has been beneficial to the study of metaphor, especially in its invitation to multidisciplinary research,



theories informed by an extended view of metaphor often neglect the actual operations of metaphor, replacing specific considerations of metaphor with general statements about metaphorical usage. To establish the significance of metaphorical language for everyday communication, philosophers, moreover, tend to analyze more common metaphors such as Max Black's "Man is a wolf," which has become an archetypal example of metaphor for studies of metaphor in philosophy. One of the major problems with this tactic is that it limits the scope and function of metaphor, especially if this more common mode of metaphor is viewed as representative of all metaphor. This tactic encounters further difficulties when it is used to explore the creative aspects of metaphor.

Counter to these reductive approaches to metaphor, our inquiry seeks to distinguish between creative metaphor, characteristic of poetic language, and ordinary metaphor. On the basis of this distinction, it will become evident that only creative metaphor is capable of expressing something ontologically creative. Rather than a reversion to past conceptions that reduced metaphor to a simple figure of speech and thereby constrained both the operation and understanding of metaphor, the view of poetic metaphor to be presented in what follows will attest to the creative capabilities of metaphor as it develops in poetry, capabilities that have import both within and, more significantly, outside the realm of poetry. Poetic metaphors develop in a metaphorical context with which a reader engages, whereas ordinary metaphors result from the joint efforts of metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver. The motive of poetic metaphor—which should under no circumstances be confused with the motive of the poet—is fundamentally different from that of ordinary metaphors inasmuch as poetic metaphor can create genuinely new meaning.

Using motive as a means of distinguishing between these two modes of metaphor will confirm the significance of creativity in metaphor and establish the requisite conditions under which poetic metaphors develop. Further, an account of motive will resolve the complications that vex theories compelled by their commitment to the creativity thesis to concede creativity to all forms of metaphor, thereby prompting them unnecessarily to revise views that do not espouse this thesis. A critique of contemporary views of metaphor, predominantly those of Max Black, Paul Ricœur, and Carl R. Hausman, will help to illustrate this point. Although none of these accounts fully expresses the motive and function of poetic metaphor, each contains incisive observations that, upon further development, will reveal the motive of poetic metaphor.

## Chapter 1: Ordinary Metaphor

To begin, it will be necessary to gain an understanding of the history of the study of metaphor, which will reveal what in the study of metaphor has changed over the years and what has remained the same. Metaphor, as a literary device, has been recognized from at least the time of Isocrates, in whose *Evagoras* 9 the word is first reported to appear (Stanford 3). It is, however, the theory developed by Aristotle, in *Poetics* and *On Rhetoric*, that is regarded as the first, and certainly the most influential, account of metaphor. In these two works, Aristotle's seminal remarks, despite their brevity, inaugurated the study of metaphor, which for the next two thousand years was to be dominated by Aristotle's understanding of the device.

The simplest definition of metaphor, according to Ted Cohen, is "a way of speaking of something by talking about something else" ("Metaphor" 2). Recent research on metaphor has extended this seemingly simple operation, promoting metaphorical language as a vehicle for elucidating the processes by which human beings produce meaning. In general, the trend has been to attribute more, rather than less, power to metaphorical language. One such totalizing view has been put forth by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, whose research establishes metaphor as "a fundamental principle of human understanding that operates in all forms of our symbolic activity" (Johnson 208). For Lakoff and Johnson, the structure of thought is itself deeply metaphorical. As a consequence of this condition, human beings are classified as metaphorical animals, "whose experience, thought, and symbolic communication are the product of deep metaphoric processes" (Johnson 212). Likewise, in recommending that "[a] string of options describing man as a 'social' and 'political', 'symbolic' and 'analogical' animal should be complemented with an additional characterization of man as a *metaphorical animal*," Zdravko

Radman advances the notion of metaphorical minds, which develop world-views through metaphors, so that “[w]ays of world-making become at least partly dependent on the *ways of metaphorizing*” (xv). At present, it is not uncommon for philosophers, psychologists, and cognitive scientists to classify the processes of combination and synthesis involved in abstract reasoning as an extension of the metaphorical process. From a trope of limited application to a process that structures all thought, metaphor has undergone a radical revitalization. One thing is now certain: metaphor can no longer be dismissed as a simple and expendable stylistic device.

In sum, metaphors have been regarded as mysterious, confusing, decorative, and omnipresent. Some accounts uphold metaphor as the basis of all speech, whereas others denigrate it as a superfluity. Indicating the general state of disharmony over how metaphors should be understood, these views of metaphor demarcate a range of possible interpretations and reveal the elusiveness of the phenomenon. Nevertheless, they often fail to provide insight into the actual nature of metaphor.

As stated above, it was in the work of Aristotle that the study of metaphor originated. First, in *Poetics*, Aristotle defines metaphor as “the movement of an alien name from either genus to species or species to genus or species to species or by analogy” (295). A more robust treatment of metaphor is found in *On Rhetoric*, in which Aristotle notes the “very great effect” (200) that metaphor has in poetry and in speeches. Aristotle goes so far as to praise the qualities of metaphor and the genius of its producers: “Metaphor has clarity and sweetness and strangeness, and its use cannot be learned from someone else” (200). Metaphor can, in addition, provide names for things that do not have names. What is essential, in this respect, is that a good metaphor be proper to the object signified and be most apt in “bringing-before-the-eyes.” These criteria seem to signify a belief in a natural link between some words and their meaning, so that

even though words may refer to the same object, certain words do so more beautifully and thus signify their objects in a more pleasing way. Although Aristotle's observations do not necessarily reduce metaphor to merely an instrument of pleasure, they led some to conclude that metaphor primarily serves to amuse or to please.

This conclusion is complicated by Aristotle's emphasis on the heuristic, cognitive function performed by metaphor. In accordance with his belief that "whatever words create knowledge in us are pleasurable," insofar as all people, according to him, derive pleasure from learning, Aristotle asserts that "[m]etaphor most brings about learning and knowledge" by creating understanding through the transfers of meaning that reveal similarities between dissimilar things. For Aristotle, similes are less pleasing than metaphors "because [a simile] does not say that this *is* that, nor does [the listener's] mind seek to understand this" (Aristotle 218). One can learn from the experience afforded by metaphors, if the metaphors are not too strange—"for that would be difficult to perceive"—or superficial—"for that causes nothing to be experienced" (Aristotle 219). These criteria imply that metaphors stimulate understanding by inspiring an image in the mind of the speaker.

The traditional objectivist view of metaphor, derived from Aristotle's formulations, though not identical with them, posits an ontology and epistemology that limit the imaginative capacities of metaphor. One such popular theory of metaphor was the comparison theory, which reduced metaphor to a comparison in which preexisting similarities between the constituents of the metaphor determine the literal meaning underlying the metaphorical expression. Metaphor is, on this view, an impediment to reasoning and conceptualization, since additional steps are required to ascertain what a metaphor actually means, i.e., its literal import. Thus, literal meaning prevails over figurative meaning, which is ultimately reducible to the literal. Still, as was

demonstrated above, some of Aristotle's statements suggest that metaphor has a cognitive aspect.

After Aristotle, metaphor was often marginalized or neglected outright. Following Aristotle's classification of metaphor under the category of rhetoric, Marcus Tullius Cicero, the illustrious Roman orator, construed metaphor in the context of oratory as chiefly a source of delight. Over the next two millennia, a number of notable philosophers also offered opinions on metaphor. For instance, references to metaphor can be found in the works of Hobbes, Locke, Nietzsche, and Hegel. Nevertheless, these philosophers' engagement with the subject was largely confined to explanations of its presence with regard to their respective philosophies, and none of them devised a theory of metaphor as such. A less favorable perspective, entertained by Hobbes and Locke, regarded metaphor as a deceptive device. Hegel, in *Philosophy of Art*, denied metaphor figurative power, and classified it as "a simple ornament for a work of art" (41). Since "metaphor can not pretend to the value of an independent representation" (41), Hegel considered metaphor expendable and largely unnecessary beyond the domain of art. Metaphor suffered more severe disparagement in subsequent years under the influence of logical positivism.

Until the 1950s, no attempts were made to conduct genuine, systematic studies of metaphor qua metaphor. Of course, in poetry, the relevance of metaphor has been generally acknowledged. As the prime producers of metaphor, poets were consequently the ones most sympathetic to the subject. The Romantics, for example, in their theories of poetry, often cited metaphor as a central feature of poetic language. As Shelley avers in *A Defence of Poetry*, the language of poets is "vitaly metaphorical" (17). Certainly, metaphors abound in poetry and are perhaps most commonly associated with poetic language. Hausman, on this point, succinctly remarks that "metaphors are important to poets—metaphors are the heart of poetry; they constitute it" (*Metaphor and Art* 6-7). It is partly due to this intimate relationship between poetry

and metaphor that metaphors were for the most part relegated to the domain of poetry. Unlike the conception of poetic metaphor that is to be advanced in this paper, which seeks to illuminate the ontologically creative function of metaphor, this initial identification of metaphor with poetry stifled the development of the study of metaphor and circumscribed its application. On the basis of its so-called poetic function, the traditional view of metaphor maintained that the purpose of metaphor is to give language variety and color. As a result, metaphors were viewed as nothing more than an ornament or stylistic flourish aimed at pleasing the reader. While acknowledging the aesthetic aspect of metaphor, literary theorists, rhetoricians, and philosophers nearly categorically denied that metaphor could have cognitive value. The one notable exception to this perspective is voiced by Nietzsche, who defines truth as a “mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, and anthropomorphisms—in short, a sum of human relations, which have been enhanced, transposed, and embellished poetically and rhetorically, and which after long use seem firm, canonical, and obligatory to a people” (46-47).

Against this background of neglect and dismissal, Max Black’s account of metaphor can be better appreciated. Max Black’s “Metaphor,” published in 1955, has the distinction of being the first text since the texts of Aristotle to compel philosophers to regard metaphor as a topic of philosophical interest. After the publication of this article, philosophers of language began to conduct more rigorous examinations of metaphor, evaluating its truth value, its means of identification, its function in ordinary discourse, and its claim to meaning. At last, these incisive examinations overturned the monolithic conception of metaphor that had predominated for over two thousand years, inspiring a renaissance of scholarship on metaphor. New inquiries by scholars from a number of disciplines soon proliferated. Now, studies of metaphor can be found in philosophy, linguistics, literary criticism, history, rhetoric, psychology, and cognitive science.

Fundamentally, Black identifies metaphor as a semantic phenomenon, specifically, an “instrument for drawing implications grounded in perceived analogies of structure between two subjects belonging to different domains” (“More about Metaphor” 446). Black proposes his interaction view as a development and modification of I. A. Richards’s account, and states that it should be understood in opposition to the substitution view and comparison view, both of which interpret metaphor as expendable, as nothing more than a source of pleasure or variety gained in “stating figuratively what might just as well have been said literally” (“More about Metaphor,” 441). Unlike Ricœur and Empson, who are mainly concerned with “vital” metaphors, Black chooses to focus on less “vital” metaphors. His interest lies in “the ‘cognitive aspects’ of certain metaphors, be they located in science, philosophy, theology or ordinary life, and their power to present in a distinctive and irreplaceable way, insight into ‘how things are’” (“More about Metaphor” 434). Black’s account is particularly useful for our inquiry into poetic metaphor, for it serves as the basis for the development of a form of interactionism that will reveal the creative function of poetic metaphor.

In “More about Metaphor,” an essay, published in 1977, that elaborates his “interaction theory of metaphor,” Black comments on the recent proliferation of scholarship on metaphor: “The extraordinary volume of papers and books on the subject produced during the past forty years might suggest that the subject is inexhaustible” (“More about Metaphor” 432). In the course of two decades, the status accorded to metaphor underwent such a radical reversal that Black is compelled to criticize the hyperbolic character of some of the more recent accounts of metaphor, which are guilty of espousing “ungrounded profundity” (“More about Metaphor” 432). According to Black, these accounts, in addition to making sweeping, unsubstantiated statements about metaphor, often fail to illuminate metaphorical speech itself, preferring



declarations of “ontological morals” (“More about Metaphor” 432) to scrutiny of actual metaphors. Thus, Black, who refrains from making such declarations, helps to establish the course of future studies of metaphor. Indeed, the theories of Paul Ricœur and Carl R. Hausman are to varying degrees influenced by aspects of Black’s interactionism.

Early in the essay, Black notes the somewhat perverse aspect of metaphor that results from its asserting something to be what it clearly is not. It could be concluded, on the basis of this observation, that the metaphor-producer does mean what he says. Taken literally, the metaphorical statement is false and absurd, two qualities that, nonetheless, seem essential to a metaphorical statement; otherwise the statement would be literal rather than metaphorical. These observations, however, fail to apply to metaphor, for the metaphor-producer does intend to say what he says. That is, he is not making a mistake in what he is trying to communicate. It would therefore be erroneous to view metaphor as merely a “deviation” or “aberration” from proper usage. Such an approach creates an invidious distinction between literal and figurative language, in which what is literal is standard and unproblematic and what is metaphorical is problematic and mysterious.

Still, a difference can be observed between literal and figurative language: there is at least a *prima facie* and observable difference between metaphorical and literal statements” (Black, “More about Metaphor” 435). This difference does not, however, preclude one from acknowledging “the validity of some ‘deeper’ insight that might eventually reject the commonsensical distinction between the literal and the metaphorical as superficial and ultimately indefensible” (Black, “More about Metaphor” 435). To gain such an insight, one must first determine the point of using metaphors and the power of metaphorical utterance. At this point, Black alludes to the function of poetic metaphors, the most potent variety of metaphor: “A

successful metaphor is *realized* in discourse, is embodied in the given 'text', and need not be treated as a riddle" ("More about Metaphor" 436). The meaning produced by a metaphor of this type is typically new or "creative," which is to say that it cannot be inferred from the standard lexicon, in which words can exist in isolation. Despite this allusion to creative metaphor, Black's concern lies in metaphors not as they appear in 'texts' but rather as they function in ordinary language. His study consequently seeks to explain how meaning is produced in ordinary metaphor.

What is perhaps Black's most crucial contribution to the study of metaphor is his proposal that metaphor be understood at the level of the sentence, as opposed to the level of the word. A metaphor, therefore, consists of a sentence or a series of sentences: a metaphor must "occur in specific and relatively complete acts of expression and communication" (Black, "More about Metaphor" 437). For this reason, context becomes crucial in evaluating metaphor. In contrast to this type of metaphor, Black identifies a "metaphor-theme," namely, a metaphor presented without any indication of context. Metaphor-themes most often take the form "A is B." Such themes, Black stipulates, should not be taken as the basis for standard evaluation of metaphor. As a product of rule-violation, metaphor cannot be regulated by rules: "[T]here can be no rules for 'creatively' violating rules" (Black, "More about Metaphor" 438). Nor can a dictionary of metaphor be compiled, given the lack of absolutely standard responses to metaphor. Metaphor-themes notwithstanding, metaphor requires context to be understood.

Black's interaction view of metaphor concerns two aspects of a metaphorical statement: frame and focus. The "focus," regarded as the salient word in the metaphor, is the word "whose occurrence in the literal 'frame' invests the utterance with metaphorical force" (Black, "More about Metaphor" 439-40). Black identifies two primary characteristics of active metaphorical

statements: emphasis and resonance. Metaphor is emphatic insofar as it is not expendable or ornamental and resonant insofar as it “supports a high degree of implicative elaboration” (Black, “More about Metaphor” 440). Metaphors that are both emphatic and resonant are meant to be dwelt upon so that their unstated implications can be explored. Herein, Black’s emphasis on “implications” is important to understanding the function of ordinary metaphor.

On Black’s view, a metaphorical statement consists of two subjects: one primary, the other secondary. The secondary subject comprises a system, a set of relationships, which Black identifies as an “implicative complex.” Metaphorical utterance operates by projecting upon the primary subject a set of ‘associated implications’—that is, an implicative complex, which could be based on common opinions shared by members of a certain speech community or which could be a novel creation introduced by the metaphor-producer. Features of the primary subject are then selected, emphasized, suppressed, and organized by the application of statements isomorphic to the features of the implicative complex of the secondary subject. In the final step of this process, the two subjects interact. In this interaction, properties of the secondary subject are selected based on those of the primary subject, thereby creating a parallel implicative complex for the primary subject, through which parallel changes in the secondary subject are reciprocally induced. This final stage, in which the secondary subject is correspondingly affected by the primary subject, does not seem plausible, or, for that matter, sustainable, within the framework of interpretation for oral discourse. Nor do Black’s examples substantiate the occurrence of this process, despite his remark in *Models and Metaphors* that “[i]f to call a man a wolf is to put him in a special light, we must not forget that the metaphor makes the wolf seem more human than he otherwise would” (44). For instance, Black’s explanation of how the metaphor “Love is a zero-sum game” is to be interpreted on the interaction view does not involve

a symmetrical exchange between implicative complexes. What does become evident in this example, however, is how implicative complexes depend on antecedent meanings and how these meanings can increase one's appreciation of a particular metaphorical utterance. In his analysis of the metaphor "Love is a zero-sum game," Black notes that someone with knowledge of zero-sum games will be able to draw additional implications from the metaphorical utterance. Thus, the more background knowledge one has of the subjects of the metaphor, the more elaborate the implicative complex one will be able to create. In this capacity, metaphors can be said to have informative value.

Black's account of metaphor is notable for examining not only the interaction between subjects of the metaphor—an interaction capable of occurring, with certain qualifications, in both poetic and ordinary metaphor—but also the interaction between the producer and receiver of the metaphorical expression—an interaction appropriate only to ordinary metaphor and indicative of the primary motive of ordinary metaphor, namely, the creation of shared perspectives. The interaction of the subjects of metaphorical statements results in a shift in understanding between producer and receiver, a shift in "what both of them understand by the words, as used on that particular occasion" (Black, "More about Metaphor" 443). Metaphor fosters the relationship between producer and receiver by emanating ambience, prompting the formation of "suggestions and valuations" (Black, "More about Metaphor" 443). With no firm bounds set on admissible interpretations, this suggestiveness necessarily produces ambiguity. It is, moreover, the element of suggestiveness that serves to distinguish metaphor from other tropes. Unlike metaphors, similes and analogies lack ambience, as well as the "imposed 'view' of the primary subject, upon which the metaphor's power to illuminate depends" ("More about Metaphor" 445). For this reason, the metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver must mutually negotiate these ambiguities.

These remarks are especially helpful in comprehending ordinary metaphor—generally defined as metaphors that appear in oral discourse or, more widely, in any type of discourse that is not sufficiently poetic. For ordinary metaphor, the failure to understand a metaphorical statement is akin to a failure of appreciation. Appreciation signifies both understanding and feeling about what is being observed. Cohen recognizes the most common motive of this mode of metaphor:

Although it is possible that a metaphor be used only to describe something, it is far more common for a metaphor to be used also to indicate how the metaphor-maker feels about something, and in such a case it is not uncommon for the metaphor-maker to hope to induce this feeling in those who appreciate his metaphor...But perhaps a typical case is one in which a metaphor is both: it offers a novel way of seeing something, and that novel sight brings a feeling with it. (“Metaphor” 21)

This connection between the metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver is, according to Cohen, best understood as intimacy. What should be emphasized in this connection is that the failure to understand ordinary metaphor amounts to a failure to appreciate the metaphor, appreciation being defined as a domain that encompasses both comprehension and caring.

Resistance to the view that metaphor produces intimacy stems from the desire to uphold the cognitive function of metaphor. To preserve this function, exponents of metaphor are apt to deny proposals that threaten once again to reduce metaphor to its previous aesthetic or emotive function. Although Cohen recognizes Black’s view for its influence on subsequent theories of metaphor, Cohen observes that Black situates his theory in a positivist framework, and thus operates under positivist constraints to the extent that he subscribes to the principle that “metaphors are relatively inconsequential unless they are cognitive” (“Intimacy” 5). On this

principle, to be worthy of philosophical investigation, metaphors must bear knowledge: “[U]nless metaphors are full-fledged entities of the preferred sort, there can be nothing in them worth true philosophical investigation” (Cohen, “Intimacy” 6). Holding in suspense the question of whether metaphors have cognitive content, Cohen undertakes an exploration of what metaphors might offer beyond their semantic possibilities. To this end, Cohen wants “to understand better than we do how metaphors are actually created and reacted to” (“Intimacy” 7). Cohen argues that metaphor represents an achievement of intimacy: the metaphor draws the metaphor-producer and the metaphor-receiver closer together. Even the most simple metaphors, the ones that “can be paraphrased literally with so little remainder as makes no difference” (Cohen, “Intimacy” 7), participate in this cultivation of intimacy. Although the transaction prompted by metaphor is a transaction common to ordinary literal discourse, metaphor calls attention to this process. As regards metaphor, this process involves three steps: a speaker issues an implicit invitation in producing the metaphor; a receiver accepts the invitation by engaging in an interpretation of the metaphor; and this transaction eventuates in the acknowledgment of a community.

Once again, Cohen employs the term “appreciator” to refer to the metaphor-receiver, whose job it is to realize that the expression is a metaphor and attempt to understand it as such. This understanding requires the metaphor-receiver to make a number of assumptions about the speaker, namely, assumptions about what the speaker believes and what the speaker thinks the hearer believes. In oral discourse, it is not usually difficult to determine when someone is speaking figuratively. Cohen cites the example of calling somebody a “Bolshevik,” at, say, a departmental meeting (“Intimacy” 9). How this figurative utterance will be interpreted depends on what the metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver know about the term in question and

about each other.

Even this simple example testifies to the complexities associated with the usage and interpretation of metaphors. What is gained by this act, however, does not simply lie in the explication of the statement. The expression directs the metaphor-receiver to look for meaning beyond mere words. To appreciate the metaphor, the metaphor-receiver necessarily examines the metaphor-producer, and because the “import is not exactly *in* the remark itself,” the metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver come to form an “intimate pair” (Cohen, “Intimacy” 9).

Although literal language can create a degree of intimacy, metaphor “[initiates] explicitly the cooperative act of comprehension which is, in any view, something more than routine act of understanding” (Cohen, “Intimacy” 9). One use of the intimacy created by metaphor is to identify members of a close community. Whereas literal language is generally accessible to all users of a language, “figurative use can be inaccessible to all but those who share information about one another’s knowledge, beliefs, intentions, and attitudes” (Cohen, “Intimacy” 9). Cohen, moreover, states that “metaphors are surprisingly like jokes” (“Intimacy” 10), in that neither can be identified or interpreted by the deployment of a routine method. Toward the end of “More about Metaphor,” Black, noting the seemingly natural ability of interlocutors to differentiate between literal and non-literal uses of language, argues that distinguishing a metaphor from a non-metaphor is analogous to distinguishing a joke from a non-joke (“More about Metaphor” 450).

In view of these statements, it is clear that the cultivation of intimacy is particularly suitable to the motivation and use of ordinary metaphor. By contrast, poetic metaphors, although they do include a kind of intimacy, certainly do not establish intimacy through the identity of metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver. Not only does the structure of poetry resist this

cultivation of intimacy, but, as was stated in the introduction, poetic metaphor remains detached from the poet himself. Briefly, metaphor in poetic discourse is distinguished from metaphor in oral discourse given that in the former case, metaphors are “explicitly elaborated and amplified by the rest of the poem” and that the metaphorical line itself is “deeply embedded in a context” (Cohen, “Metaphor” 3). Thus, a poetic metaphor can be construed as a “poem in miniature” to the extent that it reflects the processes of meaning creation active in the poem as a whole. This idea of metaphor as a “poem in miniature” will be of particular importance later with respect to the creative function of metaphor.

Richard Moran elaborates the way in which a speaker’s beliefs contribute to the production of a metaphor and its appreciation by a listener. When a speaker says “Man is a wolf,” he reveals something about his beliefs, which inform his production of the metaphor. These beliefs directly lead to what Moran calls the “framing-effect” and “perspective” of metaphor (108). The achievement of a metaphor is dependent on “bringing someone to adopt this perspective momentarily” (Moran 108). To understand a metaphor, the metaphor-receiver must first adopt this fundamental perspective. Only by understanding the beliefs of the metaphor-producer can an audience attain this perspective: “the audience...depends on these beliefs both for any framing-effect at all (without which we don’t yet have a metaphor) and for the provisional interpretation of it” (Moran 109). Rather than look to the world, the metaphor-receiver at this stage of the exchange must look to the metaphor-producer to determine his beliefs. Moreover, the perspective shared by metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver is not directed at some new creation; rather, it is focused on “a portion of the *world*” (Moran 109), and can subsequently be interpreted in ways that deviate from the initial beliefs of the speaker, since the portion of the world to which the perspective pertains remains stable. Throughout this



process, these formative beliefs continue to be essential to the “structure and content of this framing-effect,” an effect that “prompts and guides elaboration of the metaphor in thought” (Moran 109). Crucially, Moran offers a caveat about literary metaphor that reflects the unique function of the metaphorical context in which poetic metaphors develop:

One hazard of discussing literary metaphors outside the context of the texts in which they operate is that it draws attention away from the otherwise obvious fact that the choice and development of a particular metaphor is also answerable to the whole metaphoric system of the text, both intra-and intertextual. (109)

The implications of this dependence of literary metaphor on the metaphoric system of the text will be expounded in Chapter 2.

Another motive of ordinary metaphor, related to the creation of a joint perspective, is to extend polysemy. In his study of metaphor, Paul Henle identifies two abilities that, in his estimation, contribute to the semantic function of metaphor: the ability to extend language to meet new situations and the ability of metaphor to give language “color and nuance” (173). The reductive strategy of the second ability is plainly objectionable to our argument. Nonetheless, Henle’s prejudice against poetic metaphor is consistent with the way in which prevailing accounts of metaphor, owing to their endorsement of either creative or ordinary metaphor, marginalize the other mode of metaphor, which does not seem to conform to their accounts.

The first ability cited by Henle, however, elucidates another motive of ordinary metaphor. Of the two, this ability indicates the more general function of metaphor: “The function of metaphor in general is to extend language, to say what cannot be said in terms of literal meanings alone” (Henle 186). Henle depicts this function as necessary to the intelligible development of language. As a means of extending language, metaphor can be used to give new

things a name, or to describe some undesignated aspect of something already in existence. By virtue of this function, a person, upon first hearing a metaphor, can apprehend the meaning of what is being presented by the metaphor because of the reliance of the metaphor on previously known terms. A purely new word, by contrast, would be basically unintelligible to a person in this scenario, especially if it is encountered in isolation. Even with their reliance on antecedent meanings, the production of the metaphor still reflects the perspective of the metaphor-producer, given that he is making a connection between two things where previously no connection was recognized. This type of metaphor demonstrates how an intelligible perspective can be achieved between metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver, in spite of the departure from literal, commonly accepted meanings of words.

This type of metaphor, moreover, becomes literal over time. For example, the word 'hood' went from designating apparel worn on a person's head to also designating the part over the motor of an automobile. The invention of the automobile necessitated a terminology capable of classifying the parts of the automobile. Just as a hood covers a person's head, what came to be identified as the hood of a car covers the motor: "it was what stood in the same relation to a car that a hood did to a person" (Henle 187). Eventually, with repeated usage of the word in this capacity, the clash of terms required by metaphor disappears, eliminating the metaphorical import of the word. In becoming literal, the word then functions as its own paraphrase. As can be seen in the preceding example, these metaphors add to language, expanding its range and enabling language users to comprehend new situations more readily. For a more elaborate illustration of this process, Henle refers to the work of Eric Havelock, which traces the development of Greek philosophical concepts. To realize the prevalence of metaphors in the process of language change, one need merely consult an etymological dictionary (Henle 189).

Paul Ricœur, likewise, affirms the connection between metaphor and polysemy, polysemy being “the property of words in natural languages of having more than one meaning” (“Creativity in Language” 10). More generally, then, metaphor can be shown to increase the polysemy of language.

One of the most extraordinary aspects of Black’s account is his proposal that metaphors are creative—what he calls a “strong creativity thesis” (“More about Metaphor” 451). Indeed, he suggests that metaphors be viewed as “miniature poems” or “poem-fragments” (“More about Metaphor” 451). Metaphors, on Black’s view, should be able to generate new insights and knowledge “by changing the relationship between the things designated” (“More about Metaphor” 451). This suggestion, however, does not apply to the mode of metaphor that Black speaks of in his essay, namely, less vital metaphors—for us, ordinary metaphors. In their most potent form, ordinary metaphors can reveal, but not create, connections between previously disparate entities. What ordinary metaphor does create are new perspectives. Black compares the new perspective that metaphor might inspire in the metaphor-receiver to the “view” of the slow-motion appearance of a galloping horse. Before the invention of cinematography, no such perspective existed. According to Black, metaphors show “how things are” in the same way as charts, graphs, and models do. If it is remembered that ordinary metaphors, unlike charts or graphs, involve a speaker and hearer, such remarks are consistent with the motive of ordinary metaphor to produce shared perspectives. Ordinary metaphors, therefore, should be understood to “reveal connections without *making* them” (Black, “More about Metaphor” 451). That is not to say that there is not a type of metaphor that is creative. This type of metaphor, which is most evident in poetry, will be the subject of Chapter 2.

It will be helpful at this point, before transitioning to poetic metaphor, to review briefly

the motive of ordinary metaphor. As Black, Cohen, Moran, and Henle have demonstrated, ordinary metaphor involves a prominent interpersonal dimension that enables the mutual understanding, or, rather, appreciation, of metaphor in oral discourse. The various motives of ordinary metaphor can all be subsumed under the motive of producing a shared perspective. Grounded in antecedent meanings, the beliefs of the speaker, and the relationship between metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver, this shared perspective can lead to the acknowledgment and establishment of communities and to the extension of language. As a result of this capability, ordinary metaphor should be regarded as a significant use of language.

## Chapter 2: Poetic Metaphor

### I

In their studies of metaphor, Paul Ricœur and Carl R. Hausman are guided by the work of Max Black inasmuch as both their theories are framed as a response to what Black calls a “strong creativity thesis” (“More about Metaphor” 451), i.e., a thesis that asserts the possibility of ontologically creative metaphors. Toward the end of “More about Metaphor,” Black suggests that metaphors might be “self-certifying, by generating the very reality to which it seems to draw attention” (“More about Metaphor” 451). This creative function entails the motive of poetic metaphor, namely, to create and discover reality. Although Black states, “It would be more illuminating in some of these cases...to say that the metaphor creates the similarity than to say that it formulates some similarity antecedently existing” (“More about Metaphor” 451), Black’s interactionism, with its reliance on implicative complexes, cannot account for or support this radical creativity.

Both Black and Hausman integrate elements of Black’s view into their own accounts, critically reformulating Black’s interactionism. While the theories proposed by Ricœur and Hausman intersect in curious and illuminating ways and provide valuable insight into the ontologically creative function of poetic metaphor, neither, taken individually, proves the “strong creativity thesis.” Thus, what is needed is a reevaluation of Ricœur’s and Hausman’s views that will reveal the way in which poetic metaphors can be ontologically creative.

Ricœur and Hausman agree that Black’s view, at least on his presentation of it, is deficient with respect to its understanding of creative metaphor. Referring to Black’s essay “Metaphor,” Ricœur observes the “surreptitious substitution” performed by Black, whereby Black, upon introducing “richer examples in the initial list,” i.e., more literary metaphors,

ultimately selects the more common “Man is a wolf” as the metaphor to be analyzed (*Rule of Metaphor* 88). In “More about Metaphor,” however, Black explains that he has chosen to focus on less “vital,” more common metaphors characteristic of everyday discourse, i.e., “metaphors complex enough to invite analysis, yet sufficiently transparent for such analysis to be reasonably uncontroversial” (434). Metaphor as it functions in poetic texts does not conform to any of the accounts that have been discussed thus far. Literary metaphors take part in a larger metaphorical context that constitutes the text as a whole.

For ordinary metaphor, the distinction between frame and focus is helpful in distinguishing figurative from literal language. On the basis of this distinction, the figurative word in a metaphorical statement is embedded in a literal frame. The figurative word, however, does not perform its metaphorical function in isolation from the sentence; only within the literal frame of the sentence can the interaction distinctive of metaphor occur. The “system of associated commonplaces” that supports this metaphorical interaction refers to “the opinions and preconceptions to which a reader in a linguistic community, by the very fact that he speaks, finds himself committed” (Ricoeur, *RM* 87). This system, as was demonstrated in the previous chapter, serves to illuminate the operation, as well as the motive, of ordinary metaphor. The commonplaces that are shared by metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver and that organize the interaction of the subjects of the metaphor itself illustrate how by the use of metaphor, intimacy can be created and language can be extended. Bolstered by implicative complexes based on a system of associated commonplaces, such interaction attests to the interpersonal dimension of ordinary metaphor.

Because he does not distinguish between ordinary and poetic metaphor, Ricoeur objects to this account of metaphor. From Ricoeur’s perspective, Black’s view not only fails to appreciate

more creative varieties of metaphor, such as those found in poetry, but, when taken as explanatory of all metaphors, in fact jeopardizes the function and motive of metaphor. Thus, for Ricœur, Black's claim that metaphor relies on associated commonplaces trivializes metaphor: "In one stroke, the explication is limited to trivial metaphors" (*RM* 88). On Ricœur's view, the system of associated commonplaces represents "something dead or at least something already established" ("Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics" 353). Further, with respect to the interpersonal dimension of metaphor in Black's account, Ricœur argues that Black is as much interested in pragmatics as in semantics: "What is called the 'weight' or the 'emphasis' attached to a particular use of an expression depends largely on the intention of the one who uses it" (*RM* 89). Such remarks are, of course, consistent with the motive of ordinary metaphor to create shared perspectives.

In much the same way, Hausman condemns Black's account for its ostensible congruence with traditional views of metaphor. Like Ricœur, Hausman finds that Black's account trivializes metaphor: "If metaphors offer insights that reveal analogies of structure or isomorphic connections between subjects, then they seem, after all, to be compressed analogies, if not elliptical similes" (*Metaphor and Art* 37). Hausman rejects Black's interactionism on the grounds that it "seems prima facie contrary to the preceding claim that metaphors may create similarities rather than formulate 'some similarity antecedently existing'" (*Metaphor and Art* 37). By failing to distinguish between ordinary and poetic metaphor, Hausman is compelled to revise Black's account, refining his arguments to establish the creativity of metaphorical utterances.

To overcome the shortcomings that he identifies in past views, Ricœur begins by declaring that "one must adopt the point of view of the hearer or reader and treat the novelty of

an emerging meaning as his work within the very act of hearing and reading” (RM 98). Ricœur’s approach clearly favors metaphors found in literature, where the reader is tasked with recreating the literary work. According to Ricœur, only by taking the perspective of the reader engaged in the task of metaphorical recreation can one escape the theory of substitution that he detects operating under revised terms in the accounts of Black and of Monroe Beardsley (RM 98). The strategy of reduction to preformed meanings and values is also objectionable to Hausman, who disparages interpretations of metaphor that “turn out to be attempts to reduce them to familiar linguistic expressions or familiar concepts” (*Metaphor and Art* 10). Instead of denying these systems of shared connotations and commonplaces or deeming them inconsequential, it is more appropriate to reserve them for ordinary metaphor, for whose exposition they are perfectly well suited. Therefore, in the context of our inquiry, Ricœur’s and Hausman’s views, to the extent that they revise Black’s account, should be regarded not as a replacement of Black’s account, but rather, as a counterpart of Black’s view on the side of poetic metaphor. Their revisions take the first step toward constructing the framework in which the motive of poetic metaphor can be determined.

While Black implies that metaphor might have a strong creative function, this implication, in his account, remains undeveloped. Indeed, as has been argued, it cannot be developed in the context of Black’s account. To demonstrate how metaphors can actually create similarity and not merely highlight that which was already present yet undetected, Hausman develops his own version of interactionism, complete with a new notion of creativity that he opposes to the notion of creativity found in Black’s horse example: the creation of a “view” of a galloping horse. For Black, the new perspective generated by metaphor adds to the world, which he defines as “necessarily a world *under a certain description* - or a world seen from a certain



perspective (“More about Metaphor” 454). While metaphors can create new perspectives, the world should not, according to Hausman, be regarded as consisting merely of “stabilized, antecedently unrecognized perspectives” (*Metaphor and Art* 84). Rather, the world must be capable of admitting something new, beyond any perspective. On this description of the world, something new can be added to the world so that the new perspective afforded by the metaphor may be “faithful to a new constituent or aspect of the world that itself conforms to the creative metaphor” (Hausman, “Metaphor, Referents, and Individuality” 183). Black’s account, however, fails to develop an ontology in which metaphors could constitute aspects of reality.

Hausman consequently proposes a revision to the isomorphic complexes that govern the interaction of primary and secondary subjects in Black’s account. The relationship between the two implicative complexes, according to Hausman, is not one of identity. Any apparent similarity in the interaction depends on the “function of dissimilarities” (*Metaphor and Art* 38). To be novel, a metaphor must create a complex of meaning beyond that of the primary or secondary subject. It is not clear whether Black’s account is capable of supporting this conclusion. It is moreover debatable what Black means by creative. His suggestion of a “strong creativity thesis” appears late in the essay, and Black expresses uncertainty about its viability. Hausman admits the possible deviance of his account from that of Black: “Whether Black would agree to this rendition of his interactionism is questionable” (*Metaphor and Art* 39). Indeed, this deviation is considerable. The mode of interaction that Hausman develops results in “a peculiar dual subject with its new and irreducible meaning complex—its new implication-complex” (*Metaphor and Art* 39). Black never explains how a novel implicative complex could be instituted by a metaphor-producer and subsequently comprehended by a metaphor-receiver, and the examples of metaphor that he adduces involve metaphors that have implicative processes

derived from shared commonplaces. Furthermore, in his suggestion that a new implication-complex might be introduced by a metaphor-producer, Black does not indicate that this new implication-complex gives rise to a dual subject. One reason that Black fails to articulate how metaphor can be truly creative is that he attributes the creative function of metaphor to the metaphor-producer. According to our view, only poetic metaphor supports a creative function, and this creative function derives not from the metaphor-producer but rather from the metaphorical context of the poem.

For poetic metaphor, tension and paradox are key factors in generating new significance. Hausman notes the inevitable tension generated by metaphor owing to the interaction “between creation and discovery, novelty and antecedent ground, and variations of these polarities” (*Metaphor and Art* 39). Before articulating this tension, however, Hausman must first address the fact that Black excludes tension from his interaction view of metaphor. To rectify this exclusion, Hausman tries to reinsert tension into Black’s account by indicating passages in Black’s study that seem to imply tension. It, nonetheless, remains the case that if tension concerns creativity, tension as such is absent from Black’s account. For Black, creating is more akin to “making explicit what is implicit” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 40). Therefore, “creating is not generating but, rather, is discovering what is made explicit and identified as an isomorphism” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 40). Unsatisfied with this view of creation, Hausman posits a new vision of creation:

Unrecognized similarities may be discovered and play a role in interpreting metaphors, but more than these will be involved if the metaphor creates. If this were not so, then we would have once more a kind of the comparison view and implied determinism by which metaphorical insight is predictable in principle, or deducible in a system that contains the

connections among similarities known and becoming known as the system is worked out.

(*Metaphor and Art* 40)

On our view, whether the insight, or perspective, afforded by ordinary metaphor could be produced by another statement does not, in principle, damage the general motive of ordinary metaphor. Even if the insight can be reduced in such a way or another statement could produce this insight, the motive of ordinary metaphor consists in creating intimacy and ambience through a shared perspective. As Moran and Black demonstrated, such a perspective is what a person in producing an ordinary metaphor intends to accomplish, the informative value of ordinary metaphor being, to some degree, subordinate to its interpersonal dimension. As regards the motive of poetic metaphor, Hausman is correct in asserting that creation must bring about more than a change in perspective. To this end, Hausman introduces the notion of “integrated wholes”: “metaphors create *integrated wholes* that generate more than linguistic items and are something more than conceptual perspectives” (*Metaphor and Art* 45). Nevertheless, true creativity, entailing the creation of new referents and subsequent senses, is paradoxical and disruptive, hence the tension that gives rise to metaphorical reference. Through tension and paradox, poetic metaphor can produce new meanings, yet without the poetic context with which the metaphor is fundamentally integrated, it seems that such radically new meaning would be unsustainable and would thus require the support of implicative complexes.

In addition to its creative role, interaction also performs a less creative role, since interaction is, to some degree, necessary for the construction of all meaning. In both literal and figurative uses of language, it is the interaction of meaning units that produces meaning. Figurative language, nonetheless, is distinguished by “a more complex and subtle interaction” and, moreover, serves as the “condition for new significance” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 53).

For literal utterances, meaning is direct, controlled by rules that specifically identify the meaning units of a statement so that “its components can be identified, conceptualized, and understood with reference to terms and sentences other than those with which the interpreter started (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 53). Consequently, literal utterances admit to translation “without loss of reference” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 53). Because literal expressions are not creative in the sense of creating a new referent, they are fundamentally replaceable by any other statements that sufficiently express their significance, a significance entirely based on antecedently established meanings. Thus, literal statements demarcate a closed system, ensuring stability. Antithetically, figurative language engages in the transformation of language, inviting diversity: “The function of [metaphor’s] interacting terms is not to narrow a range of given, established, and fixed meaning so that something already given as a referent by the subject of the expression can be characterized” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 54).

For our purposes, this evaluation concerns only creative metaphor: metaphor “that is fresh and creative rather than hackneyed or frozen” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 54). Creative metaphor effects a transformation in the words that constitute it, impelling them toward new significances. Literal language, by contrast, reveals something about the subject of the sentence. In literal language, the subject of the sentence designates the referent that the words of the sentence serve to explicate. In figurative language, changes in the words themselves create new significances and new subjects. To achieve this novelty, creative metaphors allow for bidirectionality, or multidirectional. The divergence and convergence of the concepts associated with the components of a creative metaphor establish an internal order that facilitates the multidirectional relation of meanings. In poetic metaphor, diverse components converge: “the terms cooperate and direct divergent meanings toward a new significance” (Hausman, *Metaphor*

*and Art 7*). Significance is thus attained through tension. Tension, on this view, represents “the negative dimension or the incongruity attributable to metaphor, which is a structural condition” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art 59*). Hausman attributes the revelation of this “negative aspect of metaphors” to Monroe Beardsley (*Metaphor and Art 59*).

Ricœur also emphasizes the negative aspect of metaphor, evolving his notion of tension from Beardsley’s theory of metaphor, which stresses logical absurdity. According to Beardsley, a clash between modifier and subject at the level of primary meaning motivates a movement to secondary meaning:

Accordingly, incompatibility is a conflict between designations at the primary level of meaning, which forces the reader to extract from the complete context of connotations the secondary meaning capable of making a ‘meaningful self-contradictory attribution’ from a self-contradictory statement. (Ricœur, *RM 95*)

This process, however, is better suited to explaining interactions as they occur in ordinary metaphor, where the metaphor itself is not incorporated into a larger metaphorical context and, accordingly, where implicative complexes are needed to resolve cases of semantic impertinence through the predication of connotative values associated with the secondary subject. Further, it is worth mentioning, at this point, that the task of extracting meaning is different from that of creating it. On Ricœur’s view, however, this process enables the creation of new meaning. For him, the negative aspect of the metaphorical process, with its deviation from semantic pertinence, is overcome by the “grasping of resemblance” (“Creativity in Language” 107). In the next section, it will be determined that this procedure ultimately fails to provide the novelty that is required of poetic metaphor and necessitates the rejection of Ricœur’s approach, especially in view of Ricœur’s extension of this procedure from the description of metaphor—sense—to the

interpretation of the poem as a whole—reference.

Hausman's account of tension, with some qualifications, is more consistent with poetic metaphor and literary experience than that of Ricoeur. For Hausman, tension is created by "incompatible relations among an expression's meaning units" and by "the context in which the expression occurs" (*Metaphor and Art* 60). When combined into a poem, words, according to Hausman, "have a larger meaning context of the whole expression, which in turn has its context of assumptions linked to the linguistic tradition and the culture of speaker and interpreter" (*Metaphor and Art* 60). In reference to this context, Hausman states that poetic metaphor "has a force outside its original poetic setting and thus belongs to context not limited to its poetic origin" (*Metaphor and Art* 60). Outside its seminal poetic context, however, a metaphor is intelligible only on the basis of the aforementioned "context of assumptions" shared by speaker and interpreter. Once the metaphor is removed from its poetic context, the deep, internal tension by which poetic metaphor generates meanings is replaced by an exchange between metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver controlled by what can be readily identified as an implicative complex. Clearly, under such conditions, a metaphor is incapable of creating new meanings. On this point, Hausman's view fails to appreciate the interdependence of poetic metaphor and poetic context.

Hausman attempts to defend this position by citing an example of a friend who utters a metaphorical statement extracted from the work of Shakespeare. According to Hausman, this statement would be construed in oral discourse as having an "import overlapping, if not identical with, its import in Shakespeare" (*Metaphor and Art*, 62), implying that metaphors can be removed from their poetic context and still retain their status as "poems-in-miniature." This status, however, stems from the interrelation of a metaphor and the poem as a whole. When

uttered by a particular speaker, a metaphor assumes a new motive, namely, that of the speaker himself. In Hausman's example, a friend utters the metaphorical statement "The world is a stage" in order to describe how he must treat visitors to whom he must be polite, despite his somewhat antagonistic feelings toward them. The metaphor, as it is interpreted in this exchange between friends, assumes a personal, intimate dimension and affords the friend, as metaphor-receiver, insight into the speaker, as metaphor-producer, revealing the speaker's attitude toward entertaining his guests. The motive of the metaphor is accordingly that of ordinary metaphor despite its poetic origin. Thus, removing a poetic metaphor from its poetic context invariably alters the metaphor and its creative import. The metaphor ceases to be an integral component of a totality of discourse that exceeds its specific significance and yet, simultaneously, relies on this significance for its being. Lacking this vitally metaphorical poetic context, the metaphor will fail to be creative in the way in which Hausman understands the term.

Perhaps it is best, at this point, to examine this interrelation between metaphor and poem in greater depth. Cleanth Brooks provides an insightful commentary on the tension between part and whole as it operates to create meaning in poetry. In a poem, paradox and tension are, on Brooks's view, generated by the relationships between metaphors and the poem as a whole. Brooks articulates this relationship in his cogent argument against paraphrase. The poet, according to Brooks, should be regarded as "a *poietes* or maker, not as an expositor or communicator" (75). The poem thus constitutes a creation, an "organic thing" (Brooks 75), and should be treated as such. Brooks identifies the "essential structure of a poem" (203) as congruent with "that of architecture of painting" (203), as a "pattern of resolved stresses" (203), or most aptly, as a play, owing to its correspondence with the characteristic dynamic of drama: "the very nature of drama is that of something 'acted out'—something which arrives at its

conclusion through conflict—something which builds conflict into its very being” (204).

Metaphor—a primary internal source of tension—is instrumental in generating the active conflicts that impel the drama of the poem, giving it “dramatic force” (206). The experience of the poem, in which one can share, revolves around this context, that is, on the poem itself, not the poet. As a consequence, the experience of reading a poem and participating in the poetic experience is qualitatively different from the experience of engaging in a dialogue with another speaker. The content or subject matter of poem must be evaluated in terms of its structure, which, however, is “everywhere conditioned by the nature of the material which goes into the poem” (Brooks 194). Nonetheless, the unity established by the poem does not reduce or simplify the elements of the poem to form a specious homogeneity. Much like metaphor itself, “[the poem] unites the like with the unlike,” achieving a “positive unity” (Brooks 195). It is important to observe that this unity results from a “dramatic process, not a logical” (Brooks 207). Accordingly, any attempt at paraphrasing a poem, and thereby rendering its meaning into propositional form, will fail to capture “the real core of meaning which constitutes the essence of the poem” (Brooks 197). The total pattern of the poem, in which imagery and rhythm prominently figure, creates tensions that challenge and resist statements about the “meaning” of the poem. As Brooks observes, “all such formulations lead away from the center of the poem—not toward it” (199).

The process by which the poet composes the poem attests to the intrinsic relationship between part and whole, between content and form. Suggesting the dynamic of creation and discovery that will appear in both Hausman’s and Ricœur’s accounts, the poet is regarded as working through his medium, in this case poetry, to intuit his object. In a poem, any statement, metaphorical or otherwise, acquires “its precise meaning and significance by its relation to the



total context of the poem” (Brooks 205). After its completion by the poet, the poem stands alone, with each element intimately related to the “effective and essential structure of the poem” (207). When “taken with a general reference” (Brooks 207), any individual line in a poem will consequently lose its import, its vitality.

To the extent that the context of poetry is determined by metaphorical language, the metaphor in its original context will be part of a nexus of metaphors. This nexus, which exhibits many of the characteristics of metaphor, can be submitted as validation that “the entire literary work may constitute a metaphor that serves as the sentence’s immediate environment” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 62). The metaphor “The world is stage” in its original context thus exists as part of such a network, where, as Hausman aptly notes, “its connections are almost always with expressions that are themselves metaphorical” (*Metaphor and Art* 62). Instead of interpreting this relation as evidence for the fact that poetic metaphor, to be creative, must be situated in such a network, Hausman remains committed to the view that such metaphors can be removed from their original context and retain a creative function. According to Hausman, “when the [metaphorical] sentence is extracted and put into a literal context, it enriches its literal context to the extent that a sense of its original setting is carried with it” (*Metaphor and Art* 62). While it may “enrich” its literal context, this utterance does not have the same creative function that it had in its original poetic context. It will become more evident why Hausman’s assertions in this regard are problematic once Hausman’s theory of metaphorical reference is introduced. What is at issue here, however, is Hausman’s failure to define “creative metaphor.” Although he identifies some metaphors as “creative,” he never defines the process by which he is making this identification. Indeed, he seems to think that all metaphors are creative by virtue of being metaphors, insofar as he observes that some statements are not metaphors because they are not

creative. It is possible, he says, to think that “an expression is not metaphorical unless it is creative” (*Metaphor and Art* 3), and, as will be seen, his evaluations of metaphors throughout *Metaphor and Art* confirm this viewpoint.

Despite this flaw, Hausman’s account does offer insight into poetic metaphor with respect to the components internally involved in metaphorical interaction. As Hausman observes, inner tension “occurs in the most dramatic metaphors that belong to a type most readily recognized as creative” (*Metaphor and Art* 63). This tension, according to Hausman, results from a conflict between the domains in which the meaning units of a metaphor are situated. In the metaphorical expression, properties of one domain conflict with those of the other domain, and this inner tension can extend over multiple sentences. Metaphors can accordingly function as a guide to understanding the larger metaphorical context of the poem. Citing a passage from Shakespeare to indicate “how the lines establish a context in which explicit terms interact” (*Metaphor and Art* 64), Hausman concludes that “[t]he verse is a complex metaphor, containing metaphors within metaphors” (*Metaphor and Art* 64), and that, moreover, “whole poems can function in the way a metaphor does” (*Metaphor and Art* 65).

One of Hausman’s most salient contributions to our understanding of poetic metaphor is his recasting of interactionism. Exponents of interactionism typically identify two subjects of a metaphor: the grammatical subject and qualifying subject. While Hausman retains this arrangement, he wants to resolve a common misconception about the interaction of the terms of a metaphor. According to Hausman, in a truly interactive relation, the main terms of the metaphor interact in such a way as to create a new referent. Hausman’s interactionism takes a more radical approach than other types of interactionism, like the type that Black proposes, in which one of the subjects merely functions as a frame or lens that illuminates aspects of the other subject, an

operation that effects a change of perspective on a particular subject but is not sufficient to create an entirely new significance. Only through a true interaction, in which each subject affects the other, can the antecedent meanings of both subjects be overcome, so that one is not simply left with what one had prior to the interaction. Hausman analyzes the metaphor “The world is an unweeded garden” to demonstrate the outcome of this interaction. The ‘world’ in the metaphorical expression, because of its radical interaction with the predicate, is not merely reidentified through a screen supplied by “unweeded garden.” The ‘world’ is in fact transformed by the interaction, such that “[t]he world referred to is not the world of prior literal reference” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 67). The interaction of the subjects does not, however, eliminate the antecedent significances of the words; rather, “this interaction occurs against the backdrop of the tensions among complexes of standard meanings” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 69). Literary works, by the operation of such metaphors, acquire new significance, “a new meaning as a whole” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 68).

It would seem, however, that the process of integrating meaning through tension renders the metaphor unstable, insofar as “what functions as the anchoring terms may shift” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 71). The degree of interaction in such cases is so forceful that “it is questionable whether the subject term, which can be singled out in metaphorical expressions, is stable” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 71). Given this instability, there would need to be some structure in which the metaphor is embedded, to aid both in sustaining and interpreting the metaphor. Without a poetic network composed of a nexus of metaphors, the meaning of such metaphor cannot be sustained. Thus, such radical interaction, in which the normal order of predication becomes unstable, resulting in genuinely new meanings, cannot be attributed to a metaphor outside a poetic context; namely, it cannot be attributed to ordinary metaphor.

Nevertheless, Hausman fails to restrict this radically creative interactive process to poetic metaphor alone, thereby diminishing the explanatory value and feasibility of this process. For instance, he analyzes apparently “frozen” metaphors appearing in ordinary conversation, such as Black’s “Man is a wolf,” as though they were creative. He asserts that “Man is a wolf” displays a bidirectional change of meaning, causing man to appear more wolf-like, and a wolf to appear more human-like—echoing Black’s earlier remark. The vital instability created by this radical interaction requires a more comprehensive and supportive context than that which is found in oral discourse. Overcome by this radical creativity, the statement, when uttered in oral discourse, will perforce collapse and its meaning will be lost. To be sure, the metaphor will not reach this point of collapse. In the absence of this vital context, one will automatically have recourse to an implicative complex through which one can select the most salient and culturally relevant attributes of the secondary subject to apply to the primary subject. Henle explains that in the absence of a context, it falls to convention—to a “system of associated commonplaces,” in Black’s terms—to determine which connotations are to be selected (185). The structure of ordinary discourse is, in this way, opposed to that of the poem, which provides its own “relational network” (Henle 185) for interpreting poetic metaphor. Thus, when abstracted from a poetic context, the meaning of a metaphor must be derived from pre-established meaning complexes, the sort that Hausman believes are overcome by creative metaphor.

For Hausman, metaphor, true to its grammatical form, asserts an identity in the form of a merged subject that develops by virtue of interaction. Consistent with Brooks’s description of a poem as a “positive unity,” metaphor, as a “poem-in-miniature,” exhibits a corresponding unity that incorporates internal tension. For example, Hausman states that in the metaphor “He was bathed in light,” the merged subject would be “one-bathed-in-light” (*Metaphor and Art* 72). The

limitations of language, which prevent this identity from being rendered more precisely than “one-bathed-light” might imply that the merged subject represents a fusion, an implication that Hausman is quick to dismiss. As opposed to a fusion that eliminates dissimilarity, the integration performed by metaphorical interaction preserves the vital tension between the terms of the interaction. As Hausman states, “A metaphor does not say, ‘See this *as* that’ but rather ‘See that this is what it is not’,” the result being a statement that expresses, “this is that which is not that and is this which is new” (*Metaphor and Art* 72). The tension and newness of metaphor can be achieved only if, at the same time as they are brought together, the terms of a metaphor are “kept apart as distinct, determinate meanings” in order that they may retain their original meanings, their “original identities” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 72).

Integration, as Hausman understands it, functions as an ordering system, in which the individual parts do not lose their identities in the formation of a whole, but rather, are ordered in such a way as to support the whole while preserving their individual natures, thereby creating a system comparable to an “integrated community” (*Metaphor and Art* 73). Thus, even as a whole, the metaphor continues to exhibit tension. It is difference as well as similarity that sustains the significance of metaphor. As a way of illustrating how the meanings of a metaphor relate to one another, Hausman advances the notion of “family resemblances” (*Metaphor and Art* 73), suggesting that meanings of a metaphor resemble one another just as members of a family do, inasmuch as they resemble one another and yet are clearly different. In the case of metaphor, however, the clash of meanings is emphasized, resulting in “an intelligible cluster of clashing meanings” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 80).

Metaphorical meaning is more complicated in poetry, in which metaphor is ineluctably complex; multiple meaning units interact in surprising and challenging ways, hazarding the

stability of meaning. Thus, as Hausman states, “When we try to extract a meaning unit by identifying it and saying something about its meaning, we inevitably distort the extracted expression (*Metaphor and Art* 73). For poetic metaphor, new meaning is created by “the transformation of antecedents, through their function as constituents” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 74). Hausman defines constituents as “the terms regarded as components that function in internal interaction” (*Metaphor and Art* 74). When integrated through internal relations, constituents “cannot be identified and used in discursive speech” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 74). As a result of this integration, none of the terms is identifiable as the source of the new meaning, although all indubitably participate in mutually forming the “whole of the metaphor” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 74). The “consequent meanings” that emerge from the interaction represent the “metaphor’s creative achievement,” which is irreducible to the antecedents that were first introduced into the metaphorical interaction. This process of advance toward future meanings is, for Hausman, “especially evident in poetry” (*Metaphor and Art* 74), where, owing to the interaction of internal relations, “[e]ach component depends on the whole complex, and the whole depends on these components” (*Metaphor and Art* 75). The meaning of a metaphor is the result of the combination of “abstract concepts, particular images, and feeling tones” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 80), without which no whole could be formed.

Whereas Hausman concentrates on the relationship between a metaphor and its components, Ricœur is primarily concerned with the relationship between metaphor and the poem as a whole. Given the hermeneutical nature of his project, his analysis is thus of particular interest to our analysis of poetic metaphor. He explicitly states that metaphor, construed as a “work in miniature” (350), can be used as “a guide to the understanding of longer texts, such as a literary work” (“Problem of Hermeneutics” 353). For Ricœur, determining the meaning of

metaphor is the task of explanation, a procedure that operates on the level of 'sense', "the immanent pattern of discourse" ("Problem of Hermeneutics" 353). The first step in this process, according to Ricœur, is to reach the text by way of metaphor, working at the "level of 'sense' and the explanation of 'sense'" ("Problem of Hermeneutics" 353). Contrary to Hausman, Ricœur contends that the type of metaphor that can provide insight into a work is not to be found in examples of metaphor like Black's "Man is wolf." The process of explanation requires metaphors that create new meanings. "Trivial examples" of metaphor, for that reason, "elude the major difficulty, that of *identifying a meaning which is new*" (Ricœur, "Problem of Hermeneutics" 353). The creation of meaning initiated by this process, for the purposes of our inquiry, is definitive of poetic metaphor. As opposed to the systems of associated commonplaces that regulate interaction in ordinary metaphor, metaphorical attribution, on Ricœur's view, should be understood as "essentially the construction of the network of interactions that causes a certain context to be one that is real and unique" (RM 98). Ricœur's "network of interactions" is consistent with Hausman's "new implication-complex," insofar as both involve the creation of a radically new system of relations for the interaction of meaning units of a poetic metaphor. Ordinary metaphor, dependent on the conventions of language use in a community, lacks such realness and uniqueness. For metaphor to have the capacity to "inform and enlighten," there must be something more than merely an interaction governed by implicative complexes. As they are described by Black, such complexes do not do justice to the truly creative power of metaphor. On one hand, Ricœur is correct. As Hausman demonstrated, Black's interaction view as such does not support genuine creativity. On the other hand, Ricœur presupposes that informing and enlightening denote a particular kind of intellectual operation, namely, a purely semantic operation that leads to radically "new meaning in a new contexts" ("Problem of Hermeneutics"

353).

While he “entirely [agrees] with the ‘interaction view’ implied by this explanation,” Ricœur, owing to his interest in “new metaphors in new contexts,” pursues an inquiry into “the process of interaction itself” (“Problem of Hermeneutics” 353). Thus, Ricœur, too, attempts a revision of interactionism. As was previously noted, what primarily distinguishes Ricœur’s account from that of Hausman, at the level of sense, is Ricœur’s emphasis on “logical absurdity.” In metaphor, the clash of literal meanings, for Ricœur, results in a failure of the literal meanings of the term to make sense in the context of the metaphorical statement and in the disclosure of clues for new metaphorical meanings. This failure of literal meaning is, according to Ricœur, caused by “logical absurdity” (“Problem of Hermeneutics” 352). In fact, Ricœur takes logical absurdity as contributing foremost to the creativity of poetry: “In poetry, the principle tactic for obtaining this result [i.e., the genuine creative character of metaphorical meaning] is logical absurdity” (“Problem of Hermeneutics” 354). Upon encountering a metaphor in a poetic text, the reader is faced with a choice between accepting logical absurdity or attributing new meaning to the modifier. To avoid “[binding] creative processes of metaphor to a non-creative aspect of language,” Ricœur denies that the question of metaphorical meaning can be answered by finding the source of the new meaning, since the “new, emergent meaning is not drawn from anywhere” (“Problem of Hermeneutics” 354). Like Hausman, Ricœur regards metaphor as “a semantic innovation which does not have a status in the language as something already established, whether as a designation or as a connotation” (“Problem of Hermeneutics” 354). Ricœur’s formulation of the process by which this meaning can be identified as new is decidedly vague, however: “The only way of achieving this identification is to construct a meaning which alone enables us to make sense of the sentence as a whole” (“Problem of Hermeneutics” 353). In the



next section, it will be argued that Ricœur's account of this process ultimately proves ineffective in demonstrating how genuinely new meaning can be created.

Ricœur's account is nonetheless crucial to revealing the general processes of explanation and interpretation by which a poem is understood. Especially important is his description of the role of the reader in this process and the reader's relation to the text. Ricœur explains why the task of reconstructing a poem must be undertaken by the reader: "[I]n the asymmetrical relation between the text and the reader, one of the partners speaks for both. Bringing a text to language is always something other than hearing someone and listening to his speech" ("Problem of Hermeneutics" 354). The text, on Ricœur's view, is an "autonomous space of meaning which is no longer animated by the intention of its author" ("Problem of Hermeneutics" 354). The text is given to the reader, who is the sole interpreter of the text. It is thus the responsibility of the speaker to "[bring] the text to language" (Ricœur, "Problem of Hermeneutics" 354). Beyond being something written, the text is a work, and as such, it constitutes a "singular totality," presented to the reader as an "architecture of themes and purposes which can be constructed in several ways" (Ricœur, "Problem of Hermeneutics" 354). For the work, the relation between part and whole is "ineluctably circular": "The presupposition of a certain whole precedes the discernment of a determinate arrangement of parts; and it is by constructing the details that we build up the whole" (Ricœur, "Problem of Hermeneutics" 355). Understanding a work and understanding metaphor is "homologous": "In both cases, it is a question of 'making sense', of producing the best overall intelligibility from an apparently discordant diversity" (Ricœur, "Problem of Hermeneutics" 355). It is thus through the explication of metaphor that "[a]n entire logic of explication is put into play in the activity of constructing meaning" (*RM* 96).

In both the explanation of metaphorical statements and the explanation of the work, what

is sought is the most probable explanation, as opposed to “narrow or forced” explanations. For Ricœur, such an explanation is one that “takes account of the greatest number of facts furnished by the text, including its potential connotations....and offers a qualitatively better convergence between the features it takes into account” (“Problem of Hermeneutics” 355). Along with this congruence, an explanation must also display plentitude: “the poem must mean all that it can mean” (Ricœur, “Problem of Hermeneutics” 355). The first principle of explanation identified by Ricœur is “fittingness,” which involves finding connotations that are suitable to the subject. The reading of a poem, in this sense, is an exercise in delimiting meaning: “As we read a poetic sentence, we progressively restrict our breadth of the range of connotations, until we are left with just those secondary meanings capable of surviving in the total context” (Ricœur, *RM* 96). A counterbalance to the first, “plentitude” is the second principle of explanation. The meaning of a poem, contrary to that of scientific or technical texts, involves multiple meanings, all of which are more or less acceptable in the context. Poetic language inspires the liberation of meaning, causing meaning to become manifold. The multiplicity of meaning in poetry naturally challenges attempts at explanation. Ricœur relates the process of reading and understanding a text to that of playing a musical score. Each player can give a performance that is correct with respect to the musical notation and, at the same time, individual and distinct from other performances. This process leads to the maximization of tenable meanings: the achievement of the greatest possible significance in a poem. These two principles beget a system of counterbalances in which “the principle of plentitude complements the principle of congruence and...complexity counterbalances coherence” (Ricœur, *RM* 96). What is crucial to note about these two principles is that their operation is controlled by and is ultimately dependent on the context of the poem. Coming up against the boundary of what is expressible and inexpressible, such plentitude

introduces reference, which “takes as a measure of plentitude the requirements stemming from an experience which demands to be said and to be equaled by the semantic density of the text” (Ricoeur, “Problem of Hermeneutics” 355). As Ricoeur avers, “the principle of plentitude is the corollary, at the level of meaning, of a principle of full expression” (“Problem of Hermeneutics” 355).

Both Hausman’s and Ricoeur’s claim that reference is needed to realize the full meaning of a work challenges a tradition that espouses the purely linguistic analysis of poetry. The traditional approach maintains that the language of poetry “[consists] in constituting a sense that intercepts reference, and in the limiting situation, abolishes reality” (Ricoeur, *RM* 222). This supposed poetic function acts to uphold the message of the poem for its own sake. With the alleged suspension of denotation, literature is viewed as consisting solely of connotations, a view advocated by literary criticism and Frege’s theory of denotation. Accordingly, the poetic function and the referential function are antithetical to each other, since the former is oriented toward the language of the poem, while the latter is orientated toward the non-linguistic context. Moreover, sense in poetry is dominated by the principle of equivalence, which contributes to selection and connection. The role of this principle in prose, by contrast, contributes only to selection. The dual role of equivalence in poetry can be seen in the recurrence of phonic forms, rhyme being the obvious example. Such strategies of language emphasize the interplay of sense, in which the message exists for its own sake and does not extend to reference. In fact, this “strategy of sense” seeks to destroy reference, according to Ricoeur. On this view, the poem, to remain an “enduring thing,” must occupy its own domain, where meaning is obtained “within the haven of sound” (Ricoeur, *RM* 224). Hausman also gives an account of how qualitative aspects of poetry contribute to the cognitive meaning of metaphors. Metaphors develop in the totality of their

poetic context, which includes “[a]lliteration, rhythm, loose or strict rhyming, suggested visual qualities, or imagery and feeling,” all of which are vital not only to the “the total effect of many or most poems” but also to “the intelligibility of what is understood as a whole in metaphors” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 57).

Given his manifest desire to represent the full capacity of metaphor, Ricœur is not content with any theory of metaphor that, despite demonstrating fittingness and plentitude, does not recognize the full creative potential of metaphor, a potential that consists in the power “to describe, to fix and preserve, the subtleties of experience and change” (*RM* 99). Such potential directly implicates the ontologically creative function of metaphor—and thus initiates the transition to reference. Part of the appeal of metaphor to philosophers is the potential in metaphor for the integration of experience, for grasping the whole of things. As Hausman declares, “We want to establish coherence where there is diversity” (*Metaphor and Art* 6). Correspondingly, Cleanth Brooks identifies the task of the poet as that of “[unifying] experience”: “He must return to us the unity of the experience itself as man knows it in his own experience” (213).

Before an account of reference for poetic metaphors can be given, it is first necessary to dispel the misconception that poetic metaphors do not have reference. Ricœur’s analysis is instrumental in refuting past views that denied reference to poetic metaphor. To begin, Ricœur attacks Frege’s conception of reference, which he accuses of bias about truth and literary texts. Frege denies that the normal shift from sense to reference occurs in literary texts. Motivated by the desire for truth, such a shift does not, for Frege, apply to literary texts, which contain solely “the sense of sentences and the images and feelings thereby aroused” (Ricœur, *RM* 220). Only scientific investigations, according to this view, can present facts and express truth. Artistic pleasure, a corollary of sense, prevails over truth, a corollary of reference. Ricœur challenges this

dichotomy by formulating a new postulate of reference for literary texts: “[D]iscourse in the literary work sets out its denotation, as a second-level denotation, by means of the suspension of the first-level denotation of discourse” (*RM* 221). Metaphorical statements are possibly the most helpful in understanding the relationship between suspended and displayed reference.

Consequently, “[j]ust as the metaphorical statement captures its sense as metaphorical midst the ruins of literal sense, it also achieves its reference upon the ruins of what might be called (in symmetrical fashion) its literal reference” (Ricoeur, *RM* 221). Ricoeur, thus, revises Frege’s concept of reference: “[I]nstead of saying that we are not satisfied with the sense and so presuppose reference besides, we would say that we are not satisfied with the structure of the work and presuppose a world of the work” (*RM* 220). In this analysis, sense corresponds to structure and reference, to world. Hermeneutics would thus be defined as the theory that controls this shift from structure to world, the goal being to reveal the world of the work, comprising story, characters, attitudes, feelings, and overall insights. These elements concern reference, i.e., “the ontological import of the work” (Ricoeur, *RM* 106). For Ricoeur, metaphor is ontological in that its “meaning is the projection of a possible and inhabitable world” (*RM* 106). Later, he will use the term “ontological vehemence” (*RM* 354) to describe the movement of meaning toward a new domain where its full figurative potential can be realized.

To illuminate this ontological function, Ricoeur first defines the relationship between metaphor and hermeneutics, particularly as concerns the hermeneutic circle that interpretation inevitably generates. Given that only poetic metaphor is subject to hermeneutical analysis, Ricoeur’s investigation of metaphor in this capacity is critical to exposing the character of poetic metaphor, generating key insights into its motive. What differentiates oral discourse from written discourse is the autonomy of what is expressed in the latter, i.e., “the independence of the text

with respect to the intention of the author, the situation of the work and the original reader” (Ricœur, “Problem of Hermeneutics” 349). In contrast to oral exchanges that facilitate comprehension between speakers, written discourse must communicate what it means for itself. Past hermeneutical approaches, informed by Romantic sentiments, demanded subjective input from the reader so that, in making sense of the text, the reader could simulate what the writer felt in writing the text, thereby construing the text on the basis of this network of subjective impressions. This model of interpretation is reminiscent of the way in which transactions are conducted in oral discourse, where, as was previously indicated by Cohen and Moran, a main condition for understanding metaphor lies in understanding the mental state of the metaphor-producer. Thus, there emerges an appreciation that fosters a communion between metaphor-producer and metaphor-receiver. Trying to implement a similar procedure for the interpretation of metaphor in literary texts, however, fails to acknowledge the strikingly dissimilar conditions under which metaphor is encountered in its literary context. A work differs from other types of discourse insofar as a work is defined as a “closed sequence of discourse which can be considered as a text” (Ricœur, “Problem of Hermeneutics” 350).

According to Ricœur, reference concerns the poem as a whole, as a totality of discourse: “If the metaphorical statement is to have a reference, it is through the mediation of the ‘poem’ as an ordered, generic, and singular totality” (*RM* 222). Ricœur introduces what he calls “split reference,” which arises in literary texts through “the abolition of the reference by means of self-destruction of the meaning of metaphorical statements, the self-destruction being made manifest by an impossible literal interpretation” (*RM* 230). With the suspension of normal reference, there emerges what according to Ricœur is a more fundamental mode of reference, a virtual mode capable of revealing the function of poetry to establish another world, a world that “corresponds

to other possibilities of existence, to possibilities that would be most deeply our own” (*RM* 229). Ultimately, it is the task of the interpreter to construct this world, that is, to “elaborate the design of a world liberated, by suspension, from descriptive reference” (Ricœur, *RM* 229). This process requires “heuristic fictions,” which represent the “*power of a work* to project a world of its own and set in motion the hermeneutical circle, which encompasses in its spiral both the apprehension of projected worlds and the advance of self-understanding in the presence of these new worlds” (“Problem of Hermeneutics” 353). On Ricœur’s view, the ultimate significance of creative metaphor depends on the revelation of new worlds: “The creations of language would be devoid of sense unless they served the general project of letting new worlds emerge by means of poetry” (“Problem of Hermeneutics” 358).

For Hausman, it is the ability of metaphors to generate insight that necessitates an examination of metaphorical reference. Hausman articulates the paradoxical nature of creative metaphor with regard to the processes of insight and discovery:

[Metaphors] generate something that constrains them as does something already in the world. On the one hand, to be creative is to bring about something that was not in the world before the creation took place; on the other hand to have an insight is apparently to discover something that was in the world, though unnoticed, before the creation occurred.

(*Metaphor and Art* 82)

With a view to overcoming the initial form of this paradox, which assigns understanding to something radically new, Hausman expresses a desire to preserve the newness of creative metaphors, as against accounts of metaphor that reduce metaphorical meaning and sense to the antecedent meanings and senses of its constitutive terms. While such accounts emphasize sense and neglect reference, Hausman introduces a different project that recognizes the newness of

reference as well as sense. Accordingly, metaphorical meaning can no longer be understood to consist of merely a complex of senses existing in abstraction. Despite the arguments devised by conceptual perspectivalists and nominalists, which assert that the extra-linguistic reference of a work concerns language as a whole, Hausman denies that appropriateness and faithfulness depend on previously recognized perspectives, since it is in fact these perspectives that are challenged by the new insight that results from metaphor and the insight itself cannot serve to validate the appropriateness of the insight.

Hausman therefore associates the referential function of metaphor with ontology: “To attempt to understand the structure of metaphor is to attempt to understand the structure of something that contributes to the intelligibility of the world” (*Metaphor and Art* 9). For Hausman, metaphors contribute to the expansion and shaping of language by means of the “introduction of irreducible newness that is intelligible” (“Metaphor, Referents, and Individuality” 193). Metaphors are thus defined as “reference fixers that mediate the interaction of language and an extra-linguistic condition and that enable us at once to create and discover” (“Metaphor, Referents, and Individuality” 187).

Hausman argues that creative metaphors enable creative designations of extra-linguistic conditions. As a result, he extends the interaction view of metaphor by appealing to the central function of metaphorical reference neglected by Black’s view and other views that explain metaphorical meaning in terms of sense alone. If metaphors are to be considered creative, that is, if metaphors do not merely discover previously neglected similarities but actually create meaning, what is needed is an account of metaphorical reference.

For creative metaphors, Hausman specifies that “to ‘refer’ is to pick out, identify, or to relate an expression to a single term or a single, finite set of items” (“Metaphor, Referents, and



Individuality” 186). The creative designation involved in metaphor is, according to Hausman, distinct from the assignment of a proper name to someone or the fixing of literal meaning by description:

A metaphorical expression functions so that it is creative of its significance, thus providing new insight, through designating a unique, extra-linguistic, and extra-conceptual referent that had no place in the intelligible world before the metaphor was articulated. (“Metaphor, Referents, and Individuality” 186)

Based on this definition, a metaphor, to be considered creative, must be unique and extra-linguistic—unique because the referent of the creative metaphor is novel and extra-linguistic because the metaphor is “appropriate” or “faithful” or “fits the world” (Hausman, “Metaphor, Referents, and Individuality” 94). Together, these two conditions define creative metaphor.

Uniqueness in metaphorical reference is characterized as the property that “no other referent is appropriate to the reference of the expression, for no other reference could be substituted for what is designated by the referring expression without change in significance” (Hausman, “Metaphor, Referents, and Individuality” 188). Creative metaphor designates something unprecedented, something “not already designatable” (Hausman, “Metaphor, Referents, and Individuality” 188). Only in this way can the unparaphrasibility principle be upheld. Consequently, creative metaphor amounts to a “determinate of interlocking determinables” (Hausman, “Metaphor, Referents, and Individuality” 188). Although each individual determinable has an established, duplicable determinate, these determinables combine in metaphor to form something without precedence—an absolute determinant.

The created referent is, furthermore, “extra-linguistic,” adding an ontological dimension to uniqueness. An object in reference is not necessarily spatial or physical. In its broadest

definition, an object is whatever is presented for cognition. Extra-linguisticity becomes the controlling factor for the metaphor, serving as “a locus for senses”: “Its function is to constrain certain senses and resist others” (Hausman, “Metaphor, Referents, and Individuality” 190). The possibility for extending a metaphor relies on the new referent that it creates, because “once a metaphor is understood (makes sense), further sense can be made of the referent, because other senses, senses not recognized before, are relevant to the new referent” (Hausman, “Metaphor, Referents, and Individuality” 190). Hence, Hausman characterizes a referent as a “center of relevance” (“Metaphor, Referents, and Individuality” 190).

When combined with extra-linguisticity, the unique thing becomes an individual. To be truly creative, the referent must not be a sense or property antecedently associated with the constituents of the metaphor. For creative metaphors, the resistance to and constraint on conceptualization and language is generated by the third referent, created by the metaphorical statement itself. The referent, as opposed to a sense or a second level of meaning, is what is responsible for the functions characteristic of creative metaphor. By departing from antecedently established schemata, the reference of creative metaphor can be regarded as faithful or appropriate, despite its ostensible deviation, and can accordingly motivate changes not only in language and thought but also in the constitution of reality. New senses directed toward the new referent can be created, but the referent itself, as an individual, should not be taken as a finite sequence of properties capable of being elaborated completely. On account of its novelty, the referent represents a “core of possibilities” (Hausman, “Metaphor, Referents, and Individuality” 192), inviting the creation of new senses that could possibly determine but not exhaust its core. The implication that poems also give rise to unique referents is the primary concern of the next section.

## II

It has been necessary to give such a full account of these views because while each view develops ideas that are essential to understanding the motive of poetic metaphor, none individually is sufficient to reveal this motive. A way to begin the process of integrating Ricœur's and Hausman's views is to analyze each account on the basis of what it identifies as the underlying mechanism by which meaning is created.

Since Hausman's revision of Black's interactionism with respect to the creation of sense was discussed at length in the previous section, it will be sufficient here to provide only a brief summary of Hausman's view. The main idea that governs his account is that meaning units are interrelated in a metaphorical statement. He proposes a radical version of interaction in which the anchoring terms of a metaphor shift, owing to the multidirectionality of the interaction. What is produced, then, is an identity, a "positive unity," in which the parts of the metaphor are integrated into "an intelligible cluster of clashing meanings" (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 80). The significance of poetic metaphor is thus not dependent on any antecedently established meanings or references. Moreover, the tension that generates this significance in the first place is not overcome by the unitive function of the metaphor. Parallel to the force of paradox that Brooks identified in poetry as a whole, the force of tension in poetic metaphor makes the metaphor resistant to any attempt at paraphrase. Poetic metaphor in fact creates unity in the same way that a poem does by "[uniting] the like with the unlike" (Brooks 195).

What is additionally valuable about Hausman's account is the continuity that it establishes between ordinary and poetic metaphor. Although Hausman's account is not sensitive to the distinction between ordinary and poetic metaphor, his revision of interactionism nicely complements this distinction by revealing a fundamental similarity between the operation of

ordinary and poetic metaphor. For both modes of metaphor, an interaction of meaning units occurs, only in ordinary metaphor, this interaction is unidirectional, and in poetic metaphor, it is multidirectional.

Ricœur endorses logical absurdity as the means by which meaning in poetry is generated. In “Creativity in Language,” he describes how logical absurdity prompts metaphorical action: “[T]he dynamics of metaphor consists in confusing the established logical boundaries for the sake of detecting new similarities which previous categorization prevented our noticing” (108). This rearrangement of categories, however, is not creative in the same way that the creation of an extra-conceptual, extra-linguistic, unique referent is creative. Moreover, metaphor accomplishes this recategorization by means of resemblance, particularly as resemblance pertains to the iconic in metaphor, which is “nothing else than grasping of similarities in a preconceptual way” (Ricœur, “Creativity in Language” 109). This insistence on resemblance and similarity betrays the comparative, rather than creative, function of logical absurdity.

Hausman, with reference to Beardsley’s “verbal-opposition theory,” argues that, although Beardsley, in “The Metaphorical Twist,” announces his intention to manifest the creativity of metaphor, “his explanation does not make clear just what is novel” (*Metaphor and Art* 32). It seems that, unfortunately, Ricœur’s description of logical absurdity suffers from the same lack of clarity as that of Beardsley. As regards both accounts, there is difficulty determining what is created, if anything: “The selection of properties does not seem to be a creation. Instead, it is simply a rearrangement of antecedent properties as these are identified for inclusion in that to which the term’s connotation refers” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 34). Logical absurdity, as conceived by Ricœur, plays a vital part in the destruction of the ordinary mode of sense that operates within the structure of previous logical categorization, a destruction that enables a new

mode of sense to emerge. This new mode of sense is coordinated with a new mode of reference, that of heuristic fiction. Ricœur's explanations of the functioning of this strategy of poetic discourse, however, continue to imply its essential relation to the workings of resemblance and similarity. Developing his own variation on Aristotle's account of tragic *poiesis*, Ricœur contends that *mimesis* and *muthos* correspond respectively to the heuristic fiction and its attendant process of redescription. As a trait of *muthos*, as well as lexis, metaphoricity describes human reality through the tragic tale, casting the less known domain of human reality in light of relationships within the better known domain of the tragic tale, a method that "[utilizes] all the strengths of 'systematic deployability' contained in that tale" (Ricœur, *RM* 244). Herein it remains unclear how redescription and the process of casting the less known domain in light of relationships within a better known domain involve the creation of genuinely new meaning.

According to Janet Soskice, Ricœur's view is ultimately committed to comparison, not creation:

Ricœur's language of redescription inevitably suggests comparison because, even accompanied by talk of an ontological tension, it implies that there is some definite, pre-existing thing (the principle subject of the metaphor in Max Black's terms) that the metaphor is *about* and simply redescribes. (149-150)

Thus, even at its conclusion, the strategy of logical absurdity, which, for Ricœur, "the entire strategy of poetic discourse plays on" (*RM* 271), fails to create genuinely new meaning.

Hausman is explicit about the creation that occurs in his account. Metaphors, on his view, contribute directly to the constitution of the world, by which he means more than simply that they contribute to the formation of language or to the development of a particular art form. Indeed, what Hausman argues is that "[metaphors] are active forces in the world" (*Metaphor and Art* 198) and have an "evolving intelligibility" (*Metaphor and Art* 199). Metaphors create

individuals that constitute an independent reality, thus contributing to the growth of an ever-evolving world. As “focal resistances,” the referents of metaphor have both a positive and negative aspect: they are responsible for “resisting innumerable possibilities of intelligible meanings” and, at the same time, serve “as propulsions toward affirmations of relevant intelligibility for the future” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 199). Thus, as Hausman asserts, “these foci are components of evolving reality insofar as that reality is not yet available to fully explicit interpretation” (*Metaphor and Art* 199).

As Ricoeur has indicated, there is a critical link between a poem and its metaphors, such that each depends on the other for its meaning. This dependence also has an effect on individual metaphorical reference. Certain features of the poem, especially its qualitative aspects, such as rhymes schemes and line arrangements, are, according to Hausman, “intrinsic to the intelligibility of what is understood as a whole in metaphors” (*Metaphor and Art* 57). Qualitative aspects have an effect on how the lines of a poem are understood in relation to the poem as a whole. For instance, rhyme schemes cannot be identified on the basis of just one line of a poem. In the movement from explanation to interpretation, the presence of such factors should cause certain metaphors in the poem to increase in significance, as the effects of the poem as a whole affect the meaning of individual metaphors. This process is involved in what was earlier described as the “ineluctably circular” movement of a poem, whereby, as Ricoeur states, “[t]he presupposition of a certain whole precedes the discernment of a determinate arrangement of parts; and it is by constructing the details that we build up the whole” (“Problem of Hermeneutics” 355). As a consequence of this interdependence of metaphor and poem, the meaning of each poetic metaphor is to some degree bound up with the meaning of the poem as a whole. Further corroboration of this connection is provided by Moran’s observation that “the

choice and development of a particular metaphor is also answerable to the whole metaphoric system of the text, both intra-and intertextual” (109).

Because both the metaphor and the poem have metaphorical reference, insofar as “whole poems can function in the way a metaphor does” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 65), it should be the case that the unique referent of a poetic metaphor, while not identical with that of the poem as a whole, will no longer be designatable if the poetic metaphor is removed from its poetic context. Like the connection between the individual meaning units of a poetic metaphor and the meaning of the metaphor as a whole, the connection between a poetic metaphor and its poem is necessary for the creative designation of a unique referent, both for the metaphor and for the poem. The meaning of the poem and the meaning of the metaphor are linked to the extent that both contribute to the creative determination of the unique referent of the other. Although the referent of each metaphor in the poem constitutes an individual, the significance of the referent is to some degree established by the interworking of the entire metaphorical context, which, as was indicated earlier, provides necessary support for the radical interaction of meaning units of a poetic metaphor.

Even though Hausman rejects Ricœur’s proposal that reference depends on a “network of interaction” (*Metaphor and Art* 104), his objection to this conception of reference is on the ground that “this necessity of a conceptual network does not require that the referent of the metaphor itself be the same as the referent of the network” (*Metaphor and Art* 104). Hausman does not deny the connection between poem and poetic metaphor. For example, he suggests that “[t]he network [of interaction] acts as a way to help organize the senses of the metaphor so that it refers to a new referent” (*Metaphor and Art* 104). He also notes the effect of poetic metaphor on the poem as a whole by referring to the way in which metaphors in a sonnet establish a new

significance for the sonnet as a whole (*Metaphor and Art* 68). Most significantly, he asserts that “the entire literary work may constitute a metaphor that serves as the sentence’s immediate environment” (*Metaphor and Art* 62). Nevertheless, Hausman remains committed to the view that an individual metaphor is ultimately responsible for its own referent. For this reason, he can argue that when a metaphor is abstracted from its poetic context and introduced into ordinary speech, it retains its unique referent.

Our position differs from that of Hausman and of Ricœur. On our view, a metaphor has an individual referent but its referent must to some extent be determined by the larger metaphorical context, a context that supports the internal interaction of meaning units of a metaphor and that interacts with the metaphor itself. Because metaphor is instrumental in constituting this metaphorical context, the referent of the metaphorical network is partially determined by individual metaphors; if a metaphor is removed from its constitutive context, this context, i.e., the poem, will no longer have a reference to the referent that it had when the metaphor was implicated in the creation of the metaphorical context. The two are in this way interdependent: without the poem, the metaphor does not have the unique referent that it has when it is part of the poem; and without the metaphor, the poem does not have the unique referent that it has as a consequence of the contribution of the metaphor to its metaphorical context. This situation derives from the fact that a poetic metaphor serves as both an identifiable unit of the poem and a participant in the metaphorical context of the poem. Its unique referent must reflect its dual role, its double interaction. By double interaction, what is meant is not that there are two separate interactions. The interaction of the poetic metaphor with its poetic context and the interaction of the individual meaning units of the metaphor are so thoroughly interconnected that it is impossible to identify one without also identifying the other. Further,



poetic metaphors cannot be isolated from the poem in which they develop because it is, in fact, difficult to determine where they truly begin and end. As Hausman observes, the inner tension produced by a metaphor can actually extend over multiple sentences, thereby expanding the metaphorical context of the poem as the metaphor itself expands: “If sentences in external tension with one another belong to incompatible categories, they might together create a metaphor and thus be constituents of an inner tension within a larger metaphor including more than one sentence” (*Metaphor and Art* 63). As a result of the more expansive system of interactions into which it is integrated, poetic metaphor is capable of producing a radically new implicative complex, one that departs from the system of associated commonplaces that governs the interaction of the primary and secondary subjects of ordinary metaphor. Brooks confirms that, in a poem, each element is intimately related to the “effective and essential structure of the poem” (207). Consequently, the metaphorical context contributes to the creative designation performed by the individual metaphor and that the individual metaphor contributes to the creative designation performed by the poem. Moreover, since referents of metaphorical expressions, as “centers of relevance,” have a reality that is not yet fully intelligible by means of explicit interpretation, such interpretation, to be effective in producing future intelligibility, must focus on the poetic metaphor as it develops in its poetic setting. It must be remembered that the poem is a work, i.e., a “closed sequence of discourse which can be considered as a text” (Ricoeur, “Problem of Hermeneutics” 350), and that in this closed sequence, “[a metaphor’s] connections are almost always with expressions that are themselves metaphorical” (Hausman, *Metaphor and Art* 62).

Metaphor can attain its most potent form in poetry, where multidirectionality provides the necessary internal tension to generate an integrated whole with a novel significance and unique

referent. The capacity of poetic metaphor to sustain this new meaning depends largely on the metaphorical context in which the metaphor is embedded, a context that the metaphor helps to generate and at the same time depends on for its meaning—demonstrating in a more immediate way the dynamic of creation and discovery by which metaphors create meaning. As opposed to the creative designation of poetic metaphor, reference in ordinary metaphor remains stable. Its framework consists of implicative complexes through which antecedently recognized meanings are selected from the secondary subject and then applied to the primary subject, thereby generating a new perspective on the primary subject. The subject, in this interaction, remains what it was prior to the interaction. Indeed, the interaction of the two subjects depends on the stability of the subjects. Without this stability to ensure the possibility of a common perspective, the motive of ordinary metaphor would be negated. It is for this reason that the perspective of the metaphor-producer is focused on “a portion of the *world*” (Moran 109). What is crucial to ordinary metaphor is the relationship between the metaphor-producer and the metaphor-receiver. Ordinary metaphor is both relative to a specific event and suggestive of a particular belief. In this way, Hausman’s example of a friend’s use of the metaphor “All the world’s a stage” demonstrates the opposite of what Hausman intended it to demonstrate. Once removed from its vital poetic context, a poetic metaphor can no longer be considered creative. Uttered by a particular speaker in a particular situation to a particular audience, a metaphor, regardless of its origin, attains the specificity and motive of ordinary metaphor. Poetic metaphor does not have such specificity, because poetic discourse is more expansive. As Ricœur articulates, in the act of interpretation, one positions oneself in front of the work and lets “the work and its world enlarge the horizon of the understanding which [one] has of [oneself]” (“Problem of Hermeneutics” 356). In contrast to the mutual perspective afforded by ordinary metaphor, the type of

perspective gained through poetic metaphor is perspective on oneself.

Apart from its unfeasibility in oral discourse, poetic metaphor is trivialized by Hausman's account. Conceivably, on his view, every metaphorical statement creates, to some extent, a unique individual that constitutes an aspect of independent reality. Ricœur expresses greater sensitivity to the essentially poetic nature of creative metaphor and, although his conclusion does not support the creativity thesis, the hermeneutical process that he outlines provides key insights into the relationship between reader and poem, as well as the interrelation between poetic metaphor and the poem as a whole. Still, Hausman's analysis, for our purposes, is the more significant, since it is crucial to understanding how the referent of a poetic metaphor, as unique, extra-linguistic, and extra-conceptual, is capable of generating new insight into reality. As has been argued in this section, the only way for poetic metaphor to be ontologically creative is for it to be intimately connected with the metaphorical context of the poem. Such a context is necessary for poetic metaphor to perform an ontologically creative function and to realize its motive to initiate the creation and discovery of reality.

## Conclusion

Distinguishing between ordinary and poetic metaphor helps to resolve the difficulties and misapprehensions that stymie theories of metaphor in which metaphor is defined as either something that is wholly capable of creating similarity or something that is wholly dependent on antecedent meanings and relations. One approach to making this distinction between modes of metaphor involves examining the motive specific to each mode of metaphor. As the preceding analysis demonstrated, the separate motives of ordinary and poetic metaphor reveal crucial differences between the functioning of metaphor in ordinary and poetic discourse. From a practical standpoint, it should also be possible, on this view, to determine how successful a metaphor is by evaluating whether it has achieved the purpose given by its motive.

To conclude, ordinary metaphor is dependent on antecedent relations and involves interpersonal communication. The motive of this mode of metaphor is to establish a common perspective between people. Poetic metaphor is dependent on its poetic context and requires the active engagement of a reader. The motive of this mode of metaphor is to initiate the creation and discovery of reality.

## Afterword: An Appreciation of Metaphor

What is frequently lost in the philosophical study of metaphor is the beauty of metaphorical language and the genuine surprise and pleasure that can result from experiencing metaphor. Surprise and pleasure do not necessarily detract from what has been related about poetic metaphor. In fact, returning to Aristotle's initial conception of the device, it is this feature of metaphor that makes metaphor especially suitable as a means of learning. While philosophical accounts such as those advanced by Black, Ricœur, and Hausman are invaluable for understanding the processes and functions of metaphor, particularly the more complex functions that metaphors can perform, metaphor itself is largely absent from their accounts. It makes an appearance only when it helps to corroborate more general claims about metaphor. Even Ricœur, who offers possibly the most lyrically sensitive analysis of poetic metaphor, rarely refers to actual metaphors in poetry. My account, I am sorry to say, is guilty of the same neglect. As a way of remedying this neglect, this afterword is to serve as an appreciation of metaphor.

Perhaps no author has so deeply appreciated metaphor as has Jorge Luis Borges, whose commentary on the subject reveals the rapture that he experiences upon encountering an exquisite metaphor. Borges celebrates poetry, especially verse written in the English language. Espousing his "love for English literature" (11), he takes obvious relish in its sounds, its language combinations, its beautiful lines. In the musicality of such metaphors as "two red roses across the moon," he perceives "inexhaustible beauty" (86). As a non-native speaker, he is in perhaps a better position to appreciate the music of the English language, an appreciation to which native speakers, owing to their constant exposure to the language, are less inclined. In his lecture on metaphor, Borges identifies a number of metaphorical patterns that have been repeated throughout the centuries: stars and eyes; time flowing; life as a dream; sleeping and dying. Even

in elaborating these patterns, however, he continually testifies to the beauty of metaphor. For instance, the common pattern that links sleeping and dying is vitalized in Robert Frost's

"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening":

The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep. (13-16)

Addressing the subtle change in meaning executed by the repetition of the last line, Borges suggests the confirmation of Emerson's statement that "arguments convince nobody" (31). (This observation also demonstrates how in the case of two identical lines, one can be figurative and the other literal, revealing the vital need for context in understanding and evaluating metaphor.) Indeed, Borges recounts how he had initially read the works of Martin Buber as though they were "wonderful poems" (32), and was astonished to discover, sometime later, that Buber is actually a philosopher, not a poet. Having read the philosophical texts as poetry, Borges says that he was more inclined to accept Buber's books: "Perhaps I had accepted those books because they came to me through poetry, through suggestion, through the music of poetry, and not as arguments" (32).

Although Borges demonstrates that many extraordinary metaphors conform to more general metaphorical patterns, his intent is not to diminish the meaning or beauty of the metaphors that he cites. As he affirms, the "patterns are capable of almost endless variations" (33). Further, Borges limns the common metaphorical patterns that traverse Irish, Persian, Norse, American, English, and Greek poetry, offering access to the poems of diverse cultures by way of shared metaphorical designs.

With this exuberant approach to metaphor in mind, we can now turn to what would be the next step in this inquiry into poetic metaphor: the examination of actual metaphors (in their full metaphorical context, of course). In this endeavor, it would be advisable to focus on the oeuvre of one poet in particular so as to gain a sense of that poet's language and, in particular, his way of using metaphors. Alas, the limits of the current analysis prevent this transition to actual poetry, to actual metaphors, in all their splendid vitality. Although this step cannot be taken in this inquiry, I encourage the reader to take this step himself. Indeed, it is perhaps best that this experience, the intimate encounter with poetry, be left for the reader to pursue on his own, so that he may, in his own way, come to appreciate, to love, the metaphors that he encounters. Here, we may just have hit upon another distinction between ordinary and poetic metaphor. That is, it is possible to love poetic metaphor.

Let me suggest, to this end, the poetry of Wallace Stevens. The poetry of Wallace Stevens, notable for its brilliant use of metaphor, has not in fact been absent from the foregoing accounts evaluated in this inquiry. Ricœur, Hausman, and Black all make reference to the poetry of Wallace Stevens. Recognizing the richness of Stevens's metaphors, Black and Hausman select examples of metaphor from Stevens's poems as subjects for their analyses. Hausman cites two lines from Stevens's "The Man with the Blue Guitar" ("Greenish quaverings of day / Quiver upon the blue guitar"), and Black cites Stevens's metaphor "A poem is a pheasant." In an interview with *The Manhattan Review*, transcribed in an article entitled "Poetry and Possibility," Paul Ricœur affirms his fondness for Wallace Stevens's poetry. He states, "I like this double allegiance to the pure quality of language in terms of sonority and the horizon of this service of language for its own sake, and the emergence of new shores" (461-462).

Having discussed the motive of metaphor, let us now transition to the motive for

metaphor, the poetic counterpart of my philosophical inquiry:

You like it under the trees in autumn,  
Because everything is half dead.  
The wind moves like a cripple among the leaves  
And repeats words without meaning.

In the same way, you were happy in spring,  
With the half colors of quarter-things,  
The slightly brighter sky, the melting clouds,  
The single bird, the obscure moon--

The obscure moon lighting an obscure world  
Of things that would never be quite expressed,  
Where you yourself were not quite yourself,  
And did not want nor have to be,

Desiring the exhilarations of changes:  
The motive for metaphor, shrinking from  
The weight of primary noon,  
The A B C of being,

The ruddy temper, the hammer  
Of red and blue, the hard sound--  
Steel against intimation--the sharp flash,  
The vital, arrogant, fatal, dominant X.



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**LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES**

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**Phi Beta Kappa, Lambda Chapter of the Pennsylvania State University, Vice President**

- Design and organize events for the chapter.
- Plan the chapter's Initiation Ceremony.

**Kalliope Literary Magazine, Poetry Council**

- Evaluate poetry submissions to the magazine.
- Select the poems to be included in the magazine, released annually.

**SHC Speaker Series Committee, Co-Chair**

- Conduct committee meetings and delegate tasks to other committee members.
- Arrange and direct speaking events by choosing speakers, determining speaking locations, and presenting speakers on stage.
- Advertise speaking events to the community.
- Coordinate upcoming events and activities with Honors College staff.

**SHO TIME Mentor, Academic Committee**

- Oriented freshmen and gateway scholars to the Honors College.
- Hosted "Decoding the SHC," a program in which Honors College staff apprise incoming scholars of their academic obligations.

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**SKILLS AND INTERESTS**

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- Proficient in speaking and writing French
- Passionate about grammar

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**HONORS: AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS**

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- Phi Beta Kappa
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