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Introduction to the thematic cluster / Uvodnik v tematski blok

ON THE "POWER" OF METAPHOR

In "On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense", Nietzsche proposes that truth and concepts only exist metaphorically:

What, then, is truth? 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: truths are illusions about which one has forgotten are illusions ... metaphors that are worn out and without sensuous power; coins that have lost their pictures and now matter only as metal, no longer as coins (Nietzsche 1986).

What is metaphor other than the failure of any objectivity, or of any possibility of truth, a pure fabrication – something that itself Nietzsche would as well acknowledge in a metaphor: the seeking of truth is only the metamorphosis of the world into a man, of the metaphor into a concept, man being the measure of all things. Importantly, what Nietzsche is pointing to is the power of metaphor: neither ornamental figure that merely accomplishes rhetorical and poetic function nor "excess" of meaning but rather strategy is what metaphor is in relation to truth, its power to create the world. Defining the role of metaphor on the classical linguistic assumption that there exists some kind of "objective law", implying that certainty, true meaning could be known or exists, somehow alludes to the existence of literal meaning. The broader notions and research on metaphor within social and political sciences challenge classical linguistics, where metaphor is a tool or a device producing nothing meaningful or significant, but rather a deviance, is what is ontologically immanent/natural to metaphor. Aristotle is considered one of the great "classics" from whom linguistics adopted the figurative notion of metaphor, even though Paul Ricoeur in *The Rule of Metaphor* (1981) argues that it was Aristotle who allows us to understand metaphor apart from its figurative notion – i.e. as the "sewing" in the word, sentence and discourse.

In *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, I. A. Richards sets a significant milestone in metaphor theory. Richards' (1965) *tenor and vehicle* (the contextual theorem of meaning), where metaphor is the construction of both halves, introduces the metaphorical nature of mind and the contextual production of meaning. Subsequently, Max Black's (1954) influential work "Metaphor" initiates the debate that later became the starting point of the non-linguistic evidence of metaphor. Black's *interaction theory* challenged the deeply rooted assumption of the existence of literal/proper language. "Interaction metaphor" implies that replacing metaphorical with literal meaning inherently induces a loss of cognitive content of the meaning. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) give an extensive

analysis on the cognitive functioning of metaphor and empirical evidence of the conceptual nature of metaphor. In general, cognitive linguistics and cognitive neuroscience were the first disciplines that theoretically and empirically challenged the "hermetically" confined linguistic analysis of metaphor. In general, cognitive linguists assume that metaphor is a way of thinking and understanding reality. Apart from creating reality, metaphor is the mental processing of things and events, for reality is irreducibly metaphorical.

Over the last decades, many studies have embraced and challenged the "cognitive theory" of metaphor. Charles Forceville in his work *Pictorial Metaphor in Advertising* (1996) restored the concept of visual metaphor. David Ortony in the preface of *Metaphor and Thought* (1993) provided a constructivist account of metaphor – thus metaphor has a creative function in language and in perceiving reality. Raymond W. Gibbs in *The Poetics of Mind* (1994) and in the Preface to *Metaphor and Thought* (2008) argues that interdisciplinary research on metaphor allows advancing classical assumptions of metaphor as a part of language, mind (psychology) and culture (anthropology). Very few theoreticians were acknowledging metaphor as being omnipresent in other academic fields, whether they be arts, music or politics. *Metaphor and Political Language* (2008), edited by Terrell Carver and Jernej Pikalo, offers methodologically and theoretically innovative approaches to the use of metaphor in political science, demonstrating the importance of metaphor in social and political discourse.

The inquiry of the descriptive and constitutive functions of metaphors in social and political sciences is lucidly addressed in three articles provided by this special issue of *Družboslovne razprave*.

Ljiljana Šarić in *Metaphors in the National Discourse* focuses on the functioning of metaphor, conventional metaphor in particular, in contemporary South Slavic (media and public) national discourse and discourse of scholars on nationalism. Drawing on cognitive linguistic methodology, she demonstrates the symbolic and ideological effects of metaphor, indicating the difference between the conceptual metaphors (conventional) and *deliberate* metaphors in discourse. Šarić points to the strategic, intentional use of metaphor (as a discursive strategy), which has an immense impact on identity formation ("directing" and provoking certain emotions) and perceiving (political) events.

In *And the Word Was Made Flesh, and Dwelt Among Us: On Zombies, Political Protests and the Transmodality of Political Metaphors*, Ilija Tomanić-Trivundža investigates how political metaphors effect, or what role do political metaphors play in, (media) portraying of protest. Through the investigation of the *zombie metaphor*, he demonstrates the multimodal functioning of metaphor, i.e. the different uses/modalities in media/journalistic coverage of Slovenian popular uprising that took place between 2012–13. By combining distinctive methodological approaches, cognitive linguistics, social movement theory and visual culture, Tomanić-Trivundža introduces the concept of the *transmodal metaphor*. He argues that the process of refeudalization (Habermas) of the political and public sphere as a consequence of a democratic deficit, general apathy of the public and the increasing power of capitalism, which favours the commercial spectacle, somehow "imposes" the *carnavalesque performance*, i.e. zombified protestors, which may, but only temporary, induce political change. At the same time, he questions whether this symbolic

mortification is an effective mode in which to challenge contemporary forms of political constellations.

Natalija Majsova in *The Metaphor of the Dawn of the Space Age in Contemporary Social Sciences and Humanities* examines the metaphorical origins of astrosociology, nooc cosmology and cultural studies of outer space in order to discover whether the metaphor of the beginning of the space age might depart from/break with previous understandings of our "world"? Adopting the Aristotelian notion of metaphor, she argues that astrosociology and noocosmology uses the "space age" metaphor as an analogy merely repeating the contemporary life on Earth, whereas, in cultural studies, Majsova observes the performative implications of the space age metaphor. The artistic approaches, such as postgravity art, are the most eloquent in demonstrating the performativity of the metaphor of the space age.

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