

CHAPTER 6

Metaphor

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This essay examines the relationship between fictionality and tropes in visual and verbal images of immigration to argue that “metaphorical imagining” constitutes a form of fictionality (Del Mar, *Artefacts* 296). Taking seriously the profound recalibration of the fictional/factional divide that theories of fictionality have brought with them, I demonstrate how tropes of immigration function similarly in texts framed as poetic or as political to heighten affectively loaded sentiments concerning migration. I understand tropes to encompass nonliteral forms such as metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, allegory, and irony as well as recurrent devices and motifs in aesthetic works. Yet, in this essay, I concentrate on how, as a preeminent trope, metaphor functions like fictionality as a particular form of mental projection and signification. Fictionality is defined here as the process by which implicitly or explicitly marked forms of “inventedness” are employed to elicit an appreciation of nonliterally true information. Fictionality, like “metaphorical imagining” (296), calls out heightened affects in those responsive to it, thus shaping political beliefs.

As in my other work, this essay aims to bridge analyses of literary texts with the interpretation of other types of cultural-political artefacts, such as legal texts and political slogans. Theories of fictionality help to unpack the

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imaginative and affective qualities of legal texts, in a discourse that is largely regarded as entirely factual. Literary and narrative studies cannot be separated from the cultural-political processes in which they participate. And form-centered methods of analysis and concepts derived from them, such as fictionality, can be fruitfully employed to perform political critique. Thus, I look at figurative instances of anti-immigration discourse as instances of fictionality to better understand the cultural-ideological work they do. After defining terms, I apply fictionality theory to tropes of migration in two poems and in instances of anti-immigration discourse. The case studies first reveal how “inventedness” can be produced metaphorically, suggesting a possible recalibration of metaphor theory to include seeing it as a productive form of fictionality. This could be termed “metaphoric fictionality.” Secondly, the case studies demonstrate the political functions of tropic instances of fictionality. This includes their facility for awakening increased affective responses and thus influencing political bias.

DEFINING TERMS: FICTIONALITY AS INVENTEDNESS

This essay takes fictionality to be the signaling of inventedness, while acknowledging quite differing definitions of the concept, as discussed in the introduction. A conference paper by Henrik Skov Nielsen from 2011 describes how inventedness reveals “general” rather than “particular” truths through readers’ recognition that a story is not “real” in the sense realness is used to denote an exact correspondence to extradiegetic context. Similarly, Simona Zetterberg Gjerlevsen defines fictionality as “a rhetorical act of invention and not just as a quality of the novel” (“Novel History” 175). This last point is central to arguments ventured here, as it points to a conception of fictionality that is not exclusive to narrative.

Nielsen and Stefan Iversen assert that fictionality can be politically educative, as in documentaries that initiate experiences of extreme ethical and generic incongruity. Joshua Oppenheimer’s *The Act of Killing* (2012), for instance, relays how war crime perpetrators were invited to reenact the mass killings of Communists in Indonesia during the 1960s. One man acts out the role of his former victim, causing an (apparent) change of heart regarding his earlier crimes. In turn, the audience is forced to question whether the film imposes a narrative of moral awakening on the perpetrator, given the heightened fictionality of the reenactments and other highly artificial aesthetic choices the documentary makes. We cannot forget the documentary’s fiction-

ality and our responses to it. In such cases, fictionality's "aesthetically and ethically arresting forms, reproduce[] difficult choices and dilemmas inherent in their politically charged topics" (Iversen and Nielsen 260). Fictionality signals more than the multivalencies traditionally ascribed to literary fiction, about which teachers are fond of saying "there can be no single correct interpretation." Fictionality also does affectively resonant work when it "makes truths and facts appear that would otherwise remain hidden" (260). Note that I do not regard fictionality to be exclusively educative or ameliorative in its effects on those who interact with it. Rather, as will be shown, "metaphoric fictionality" can be used to reactionary and xenophobic ends. Due to their affective resonance, metaphoric instances of fictionality can have ideologically disastrous effects.

A response theory is implicit to theories of fictionality, also in Richard Walsh's original account of fictionality as a rhetorical mode. It is announced in the following defense of fictionality: "The *assumption* of fictionality is an auditor's or reader's inference that a communicator intends such a rhetorical move" (Nielsen, Phelan, and Walsh 105). Nielsen and Zetterberg Gjerlevsen delineate this response as imagining of an alternative "contigu[ous]" reality through interactions with fictionality, which in turn inspire a changed relationship to the actual one (36). This change, I hypothesize, occurs in the appreciation of what is felt to be affectively correct rather than true in an evidentiary sense.

The discussion of the arresting, incongruous, and contiguous effects of fictionality bears an uncanny similarity to the philosophical account of metaphors offered by the German Jewish philosopher Hans Blumenberg. Blumenberg's pre-WWII work has only recently been received in Anglophone circles. For Blumenberg, certain metaphors are "'translations' that resist being converted back into authenticity and logicity"; they possess an "irredeemable expressive function" that defies absolute correlations between words and strict denotation (3). Absolute metaphors are irreducible. And metaphors give rise to meanings that go beyond the sum of their parts. The "surplus of expressive achievement" that Blumenberg finds in metaphors necessitates a new method of philosophical investigation, a human anthropology of metaphors. This metaphorology obviates the traditional distrust of metaphor as a form of false or ornamental speech or the narrow consignment of metaphors to a type of comparison. According to Blumenberg, the study of metaphorology uncovers meanings that cannot be denotatively grasped but are appreciated through intuitional means. In a similar vein, the legal theorist Maksymilian Del Mar describes the central quality of metaphor in law to be "its capacity to generate associations and transform classifications" through the imagination ("Metaphor").

I want to highlight the expansive quality of Blumenberg's and Del Mar's understandings of what the latter calls "metaphorical imagining" as embodied, affective, and non-one-directional experiences (*Artefacts* 296). Metaphor creation and appreciation initiates an epistemological process analogous to witnessing fictionality. Alternative forms of experience are evoked through interactions with generative metaphors and other types of figuration. Connotative, affectively resonant meanings are revealed "phenomenologically" in metaphor processing and with reference to past embodied experiences and the new meanings these experiences are given in relation to the trope (299). This is rather like Plato's description of knowledge as a form of remembering what is innately within the learner. Similarly, interactions with fictionality occur in realms of potentially heightened affectivity, due to the pull of inventiveness and the indirect form of mental processing it involves, a process that I will illustrate in the case studies. Metaphors can be understood as instances of fictionality, more largely, and are integral to fictional and nonfictional texts alike (linguistic, visual, multimodal). Their recognition as examples of metaphoric fictionality depends on how arresting, affectively resonant, and incongruous they are as well as the level of engagement people bring to them.

TROPES AS ASPECTS OF COGNITION— METAPHOR RELOADED

I concentrate on metaphor in this essay for several reasons. First, work on fictionality has only begun to focus on how inventiveness figures into revised conceptualizations of metaphor (see Phelan; Zetterberg Gjerlevsen, "How"). Second, metaphors can be viewed as exemplary forms of figuration. Not only are "metaphor" and "figuration" used synonymously to denote all manner of trope types, but two generations of cognitive theorists have led the way in understanding metaphor-making as a high-level mental process that belongs to the architecture of mind. In contrast to the traditional distinction between metaphor and metonymy, cognitive research suggests that simile, synecdoche, and metonymy all belong to an overriding process of mental projection. Processes of "categorization, schematization, metonymy and metaphor" are closely related and provide the basis for creating abstract models (Chilton 48). Third, the understanding of metaphor as expansive and expressive that is espoused by Blumenberg, Del Mar, and myself ("On Narrating") extends beyond previous cognitive accounts. Metaphorization, the process of creating and apprehending metaphor, is an affective, embodied, and generative meaning-making process.

Unlike narrative, whose minimal elements are generally taken to include causally explained changes from one state to another, identifiable settings, and/or agents displaying some form of humanlike consciousness—what Monika Fludernik calls “experientiality” (*Towards*)—metaphors are non-plot-driven and non-causal. Further, metaphors do not necessarily involve an identifiable setting or humanlike consciousness. Metaphor theory has gone through a number of radical changes since one used the terms “tenor,” “vehicle,” and “ground” to describe a metaphor’s three parts. This led to the conceptualization of all tropes as elements of thought that precede individual verbal and visual iterations. Accordingly, I do not understand metaphors to be exclusive to verbal communication and agree with W. J. T. Mitchell’s description of metaphors as standing at the interface of the verbal and visual. Therefore, I do not distinguish between linguistically and visually transmitted metaphors in terms of their resonances.¹

A first generation of cognitive metaphor theorists, led by George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, and Zoltan Kövecses, insisted that understanding the world by way of metaphors was fundamental to cognition and basic to world-making as narrativization. Core metaphors such as “Good is up” or “Body is container,” based on generalized physical experiences, form the basis for most metaphorical expressions as well as the systems of meaning constructed around them (Lakoff and Johnson 22). A second generation of cognitivists, spearheaded by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, suggested that metaphor creation constitutes a process in which ideas taken from one or more mental spaces or “source domains” (“the vehicle” in earlier theories) are projected onto a target space (traditionally termed “the tenor”). More than one source domain can contribute to a blend, that is, a mentally projected space in which information from multiple source domains is combined and reconstituted as something new (Fauconnier and Turner, “Conceptual” and *The Way*). In conceptualizations of metaphor as mental mapping or conceptual blending, a noncausal relationship is set up between the source or sources and the target of the metaphorical relation. Accordingly, an instantaneous form of recognition of one thing in terms of another takes place in the by no means mono-directional blending process. I believe that this instantaneity of appreciating or feeling something in the new metaphoric blend is one reason for metaphors to initiate heightened levels of affectivity, which I understand to be embodied sensations or feelings.²

1. See, for instance, Alber on film metaphors, Butler on visual metaphors in advertising, and Olson (*Criminal*) on visual and verbal tropes that figure criminals as animalistic.

2. For an overview of affect theories, see Leys; Olson, “Love.”

Blending theory has gone on to surpass metaphor theory in analyses of figuration in poetry (see Fludernik, Freeman, and Freeman), for instance in Margaret Freeman's readings of Emily Dickinson's poems. In an interpretation of Dickinson's Fascicle 2, A 80-5, 32 (F60; J44), she identifies blends in the metaphorically rich opening lines: "If She had been the Mistletoe / And I had been the Rose." Freeman describes how the poetic speaker maps a counterfactual identity first onto mistletoe and then onto rose:

The ability to create multiple mappings of mental spaces enables us to project ourselves cognitively into the past and the future, into hypothetical and counterfactual situations, to create correspondences and identities, to manipulate complex relationships, and ultimately to construct new conceptualizations of the world. (471)

Note the similarity between Freeman's account of poetic blends as creating counterfactual possibilities or "new conceptualizations of the world" and fictionality as a means to access insights about the world through clearly invented modes. More than the sum of their parts, poetic blends resemble fictionality in that they generate "truths and facts that would otherwise stay hidden" through their inventedness. This, again, suggests that "metaphorical imagining" can be viewed as a type of fictionality. The poem's opening "If She had been the Mistletoe" signals an alternative form of expression. The conspicuous inventedness and the haptic quality of the construction Mistletoe and Rose to describe the relationship between self and other presents a subjectively marked, affectively felt form of knowledge. This points to a more general function of fictionality, as I understand it, to produce insights that are experienced personally and with heightened affect.

CASE STUDY 1: METAPHORIC FICTIONALITY IN POEMS

I want to take fictionality and an understanding of metaphor as generative of new, expressive, surplus meanings to two poems about immigration by Li-Young Lee, "Persimmons" (1986) and "The Cleaving" (1990). Lee (b. 1957) is known as a prominent Chinese American or "Chinese" or Mandarin Chinese poet. His "Persimmons" has become a multiply anthologized exemplum of New Asian American literature and experience. It is unfortunate if also endemic of treatments of Asian American poets that Lee's work is generally interpreted as the definitive expression of an essentialized minoritarian Chinese American identity. Pushing back against any reduction of his work to a

single identity, Lee's poetry features biblical imagery and narratives as well as American transcendentalist and Modernist poetic motifs. All combine to determine the author's field of references as much as do any putative aspects of "Chineseness."

Lee's best-known poem "Persimmons" centers on a recognition of linguistic and identitarian difference arising out of the experience of migration. In "Persimmons," the relation of moments of alienation is clustered around culinary differences between the poetic speaker and his family, on the one hand, and a generalized Anglophone American environment, as personified by the speaker's former schoolteacher Mrs. Walker, on the other:

In sixth grade Mrs. Walker
 Slapped the back of my head
 And made me stand in the corner
 For not knowing the difference
 Between *persimmon* and *precision*.
 How to choose (*Rose*)

During the course of the poem, persimmons take on cumulative meanings. They are rendered symbolic of the speaker's sense of cultural alienation as a boy, his loss of specific cultural memories as he communes later with his white lover, and his uneasy assimilation into dominant US culture. They also stand in for the alternative reservoirs of knowledge that his parents possess, which are—echoing the central wordplay of the poem—infinately precise. By contrast, Mrs. Walker is imprecise in her actions and words. She fails to register that the boy's inability to render this distinction between "persimmon" and "precision" phonemically does not mean that he does not understand the difference denotatively, and, as the poem shows, also connotatively. Her serving a persimmon to her class as a "*Chinese apple*," and her cutting it up rather than peeling it demonstrate failed mental mapping in which the meanings of persimmon are narrowed down. By serving the fruit unripe, she illustrates her paucity of cultural and gustatory insight. She also marginalizes the poetic speaker by associating his person with the foreign, and unripe, sour fruit. Mrs. Walker's lack of precision is contrasted with the poetic speaker's parents' rich knowing of persimmons, as expressed in his mother's saying they have "a sun / inside, something golden, glowing, / warm as my face." Here, the expansive quality of metaphor is demonstrated as well as its capacity to evoke embodied experience. The flesh of the fruit warms, glows, and gives light. The reader feels these intimations of warmth and light on a corporal level and relates them to her remembered bodily sensations, which she relives in an altered fashion in her interactions with the tropes. Later in the poem, the speaker's

father is described as able to paint persimmons even after having lost his sight. A particular, accretive form of knowledge takes place in the mouth and the brain and the father's wrist that resembles metaphoric imagining itself. The poem offers multiple metaphors for persimmons, such as warmth, light, sun, swollen, sweet, and love. The expansive quality of these conjoined tropes reveals an alternative meaning of "precision" than that achieved through phonemic differentiation. "Precision" marks loving, careful, and thoughtful relations to objects and people. It involves not mistaking one thing for another, as in "Chinese apple."

Lee's later poem "The Cleaving" also centers around experiences of culinary difference as related to migration. The poem's central action is provided by a butcher's cutting meats in the Hon Kee Grocery store. His rapid chopping provides a visualization of the contrary meanings of "cleaving"—an act of violent separation and the process of adhering. The poem plays with the contronym "cleaving" and its homographs, to adhere and to split. The iteration of cleaving in literal and figurative forms leads to a growing sense of complexity about the poem's central subject. That is exploring the degree to which one is permanently held apart from dominant cultural experience as an immigrant.

The initial image of cleaving reads as follows:

He gossips like my grandmother, this man
 With my face, and I could stand
 Amused all afternoon
 In the Hon Kee Grocery,
 Amid hanging meats he
 Chops; roast pork cut
 From a hog hung
 by nose and shoulders (*The City in Which I Love You* 77)

In the 335-line free verse poem, the contrary meanings of "cleaving" highlight immigrants' experiences of discrimination in the United States. The poetic speaker first connects the butcher's face to a number of his own relatives, thereby consciously eliding intra-ethnic differences and suggesting a commonality of Chinese identity. This is emphasized by the butcher's offering the speaker a roasted duck's brain to eat:

The butcher sees me eye this delicacy.
 With a finger, he picks it
 Out of the skull-cradle
 And offers it to me.
 I take it gingerly between my fingers

And suck it down.

I eat my man. (*The City in Which I Love You* 79–80)

Parodying American prejudices that Chinese people “will eat anything,” the speaker relishes the proffered delicacy and celebrates a sensory experience that he and the butcher share that surpasses their linguistic differences (Yao 169). The movement of the duck brain from the chopping board to the speaker’s mouth provides a visual play on the antithetical meanings of “cleaving.” The rest of the poem is devoted to the speaker’s desire to take up discriminated against ethnicities within himself through symbolic consumption. He proposes to devour the racism directed at Chinese people by eating up this history of physical, legal, and ideological violence:

The deaths at the sinks, those bodies prepared
for eating, I would eat,
and the standing deaths
at the counters, in the aisles,
the walking deaths in the streets,
the death-far-from-home, the death-in-a-strange land, these Chinatown
deaths, these American deaths.
I would devour this race to sing it,
this race that according to Emerson
managed to preserve to a hair
for three or four thousand years
the ugliest features in the world.
I would eat these features, eat
the last three or four thousand years, every hair.
And I would eat Emerson, his transparent soul, his
soporific transcendence. (*The City in Which I Love You* 83)

“Eating” subsumes the dual meanings of cleaving as a biting apart and a forceful bringing together in the mouth’s masticating motions. Eating also constitutes a symbolic strategy for dealing with the history of violent American prejudice toward Chinese immigrants, as signaled by “the Chinatown / deaths, these American deaths.” This entailed early twentieth-century immigration quotas directed against Chinese persons, imposed to avoid the “yellow peril.” These quotas were based, in part, on prejudices concerning hygiene, including eating habits.

On a second level, the speaker devours the canon of American poetry, out of which the poem emerges. Lee’s poetics have been compared to those of Ralph Waldo Emerson, the poet he imagines devouring (Xu 153–54). The

speaker invokes Transcendentalism not only by eating Emerson, whose racist diary passage he quotes from in italics (Partridge 111), but also by alluding to Walt Whitman's effort to sing for a multitude of Americans by singing himself, as in the line "I am large, I contain multitudes" from *Leaves of Grass* (Whitman 87). Lee's poem replaces Whitman's iconically American "I sing" with an equally American "I would eat." Cleaving provides a dual-faced image of immigrant experience as a perpetual cleaving to a minoritarian identity, while simultaneously attempting to integrate into a white commonality that either holds the immigrant apart or swallows her down in majoritarian experience. As in "Persimmons," the tropes are affectively evocative in that they recur to embodied experiences of articulating, tasting, feeling, eating, and defecating.

As an imaginatively experienced, affectively resonant form of communicating, fictionality is signaled locally when the poetic speaker states that "I would eat" and "I would devour." The modal verb does not denote a literal intention to consume the history of racially motivated killings, or to erase differences between Chinese ethnicities, other types of immigrants, or Americans more widely. The reader recognizes the speaker's fictional mode in his arresting reaction to history. He wants to eat it up and shit it out to performatively negate an inconsonant past. Fictionality allows for the affectively heightened, nonreferentially accurate disclosure of experience that occurs through the arresting image of the speaker's speaking back to racist Emerson, while using Transcendentalist tropes to do so. A subjective, personalized experience of growing up in a poetic tradition as well as a nation that have consistently discriminated against one's ethnicity is revealed, as is the dilemma of immigration more broadly—a perpetual moving toward another culture and a holding or being held apart. The overt signaling of fictionality in the poem functions like the use of metaphor to expand the sympathetic reader's engagement with immigrant experience.

CASE STUDY 2: ANTI-IMMIGRATION TROPES AND FICTIONALITY

As instances of fictionality, metaphors and other tropes of migration function effectively in texts framed as nonliterary to produce politically charged, affectively laden responses. Indeed, "strong metaphors" like *Atomtod* (nuclear death) have been credited with initiating major alterations in public opinion, because they are immediately appreciated by a like-minded group of people (Grutzpalk). Since my investigation of metaphor and figuration pertains to visual as well as verbal instantiations, I hypothesize that the framing of a given case of inventedness can be signaled in various ways. Signaling occurs not

only overtly, as with a modal verb such as “would” or with a signal phrase such as “once upon a time.”

I want to examine a few metaphors that were commonly used to describe the arrival of large numbers of refugees in Europe in 2015 and 2016. Some, like “refugee crisis,” grew so conventionalized that they typically went unremarked in public discourse, rendering the equivalences they draw largely invisible, with ideologically pernicious consequences. In German, *Krise* (crisis) is used to describe an impending threat to the environment, to a romantic relationship, or to meaning itself. It is a stirring metaphor that invokes a sense of dread. At the moment of revising this essay in 2020, *Fremdenhass* (the hate of the foreign) has played a similar role when used to relativize recent acts of racist violence in Germany. *Fremdenhass* suggests that the object of violence was foreign to Germany, rather than someone who was despised by the perpetrator for racist reasons.

Andrew Goatly describes how ideologically laden metaphors are disseminated successfully through the prominence of those who employ them and the reach of the vehicles used to transmit them: “The spread of the new meanings will often depend upon whether those who use them have powers on their side, for example access to the mass media” (*Language* 132–33). According to these criteria, the following tropes dominated discourse about the influx of refugees in 2015 and 2016:

Refugee crisis / *Flüchtlingskrise*³

Stream and/or flood of refugees / *Flüchtlingsstrom*; wave of refugees / *Flüchtlingswelle*⁴

In these instances, the arrival of numbers of refugees is figured as an imminent catastrophe or as a dangerous natural force. Variations of the second metaphor are used in expressions such as a “wave,” “flood,” “stream,” or a “tsunami of refugees.” These metaphors overlap somewhat with those suggesting that the arrival of refugees constitutes an infestation or attack, as in phrases such as “an incursion,” “an influx,” or “an inundation of refugees.” All of these examples highlight metaphors’ liminal status between the verbal and the visual, their haptic qualities, and their emotional resonances. The visual image that underlies the water-related metaphors can be seen in a 2015 cartoon (see figure 6.1).

What is common to these metaphors is that they deindividualize refugees by relating them to naturally occurring dangers. In visualizations of the tidal wave of immigrants, Europe is figured as an intact body politic, with a middle-

3. For examples of this metaphor, see Wittig; Kitzler.

4. For examples of this metaphor, see Schultz; Ettl and Zschäpitz.

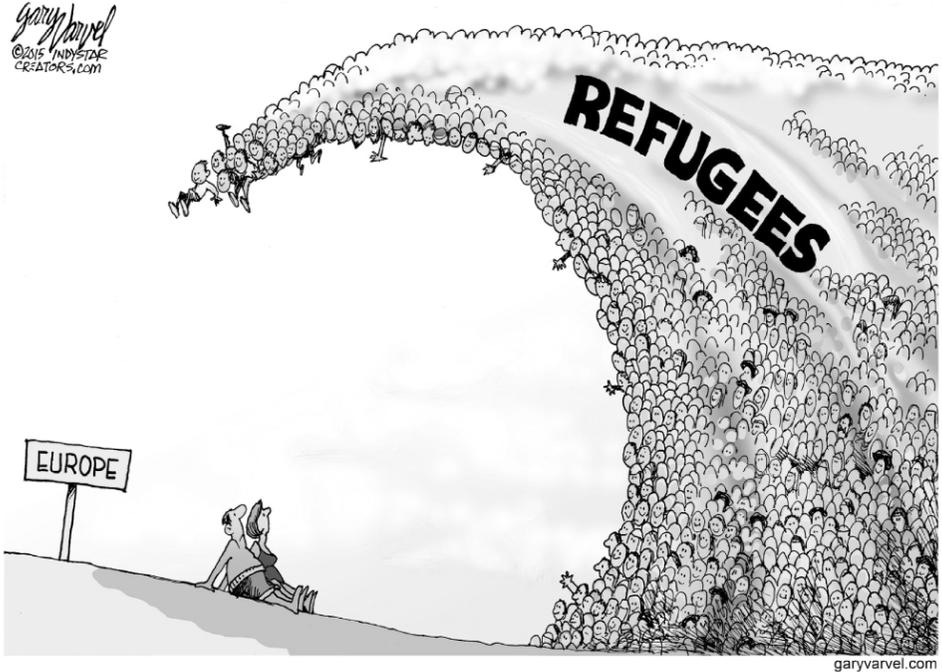


FIGURE 6.1. “Waves of Syrian Refugees in Europe” political cartoon. Available at <https://www.indystar.com/story/opinion/columnists/varvel/2015/09/16/cartoonist-gary-varvel-waves-syrian-refugees-europe/32499967/>.

aged white couple its preferred inhabitants. This idyll shall be destroyed, the metaphor resonantly suggests, by the mass of undifferentiated bodies about to crash over it. In the cartoon, the literalization of the wave metaphor, with its associations of flooding and drowning, is accompanied by another visual pun. The wave of people resembles an enormous mouth that is about to consume the European couple. Inclusive in this imagery is the notion that refugees shall destroy “us” / “our” land.

All of these metaphors provide vehicles for ideological viewpoints to be effectively disseminated.⁵ Often described as a social myth or as the prime source for a false consciousness, ideology comprises how individuals imagine their relations to their social worlds. This includes power structures that they experience as given and therefore also as “right.” As outlined above, “metaphorical imagining” creates new and surplus meanings that have the capacity

5. For more complete accounts of the relationship between ideology and metaphor, see Chilton; Charteris-Black; Fludernik, “Metaphoric” and *Metaphors*; Goatly, *Washing*; Olson, “Metaphors” and *Criminals*.

to alter the trope, its sources, and the feelings of the person who interacts with the trope. By presenting things in terms of other things and adding to them, metaphors can create slippages of meanings that reify inequitable social relations. Sebastiaan Faber describes the categorical mistakes involved in ideological assumptions as functioning similarly to when a metaphor “upgrades a relation of analogy (life is *like* a river) to one of identity (life *is* a river) [and] involves a certain falsification of reality” (142n15). According to Faber, metaphor resembles fictionality in its expansive capacity to “create” and “presuppose” (142n15). New meanings are forged, and a degree of likeness is presented as an equivalence. Whether or not a metaphor is recognized as an instance of fictionality rests on its framing as well as the sensibility of the person reacting to it.

Let me illustrate this hypothesis. The fictionality of the “Waves” cartoon is likely to strike viewers. The cartoon’s improbability in denotational, referential terms and the hyperbolic quality of the wave—its enormity—highlight its inventedness. Syrian refugees do not approach Europe in enormous waves of barely differentiated bodies, even if the real, dead bodies of individual refugees do tragically wash up on the shores of the Canary Islands. The affective charge of the cartoon is greater because of its evident, heightened imaginativeness. The viewer ascertains the unlikely juxtapositions and equivalences the cartoon makes on an immediate visceral level.

The point that I wish to make here is one that I have made about legal texts elsewhere (Olson, “On Narrating”): Fictionality provides a way to comprehend the expansive and potentially affectively charged use of figuration (as well as of narrative) as instances of pronounced inventedness. If understood as an arresting mode of non-strictly denotative expression, often indicated through the incongruity of what is brought together or through framing, fictionality can be understood as calling forth a cognitive process of imagining something to be invented and thus appreciating it as in some larger sense affectively true.

Fictionality opens perception to an alternative invented reality that is experienced with a different affective register. This point can be made manifest in an analysis of logos concerning refugeeism. Figure 6.2 is a badge of pride in Germany for pro-immigration sentiments. Figure 6.3 has been used in anti-immigration demonstrations since 2016.

Figures 6.2 and 6.3 contain many metaphorical elements. They are visual and linguistic blends that combine familiar images from several source domains into an alternatively fictive mental space. They are also cases of noteworthy and conspicuous inventedness. Figure 6.2 works through the sum of elements that lend the nonverbal image context. Only few viewers will know



FIGURES 6.2 AND 6.3. Refugees welcome / not welcome political cartoons. Available at <https://refugeeswelcomecampus.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/refugees-welcome.png> and <https://www.splcenter.org/file/12585>.

that the original image of a running family was from a California roadside sign that was used in the 1990s to warn drivers to be aware of the danger of hitting people running across the border from Mexico. The artist intended the silhouette to be emotionally appealing, with the girl's pigtails alerting drivers to the risk of children crossing the highway (Gold). This positively connoted synecdoche of people in danger was later adapted as a symbol of

immigrant pride in the United States and also transported to Germany. From 2003 onward, the silhouette of the running family was combined with the logo “Refugees Welcome” to indicate the conscious wish to greet refugees in what has been called a “culture of welcome” (Carrel). The image is evident in its inventedness because it is clearly not directly referential. It does not pertain to a specific girl with pigtails and her parents, but to all refugees. Larger, emotionally felt truths about (many) Germans’ readiness to open their country to refugees are disclosed by it.

The image in figure 6.3 has been seen throughout Germany since shortly after what has been called the *Kölner Silvesternacht* of December 31, 2015. During this night, women and girls reported being attacked at the Cologne Central station, a popular place to watch fireworks at midnight. Over 1,200 charges were made of sexual molestation and assault, robbery and theft; 330 men were accused, the majority of whom were of Moroccan and Algerian descent, some German nationals and some refugees (“1200 Anzeigen”; Dietze, “Die Story”).

A dyad of figures is presented in figure 6.3 that plays on the schematic family in figure 6.2. This includes a victim (the fleeing woman) and the men (the refugees/rapists/Muslim men who pursue her). This coheres with a pattern in affectively resonant images of human rights violations. There, “a powerless, helpless innocent,” the victim, is represented as the object of abuse by a monstrous human rights violator (Mutua 244). So-called preferred victims such as (white) children and women tend to produce strong affective responses in viewers, as do the villain-like perpetrators. The implied recipient of the image is the person who might rescue the helpless woman from her attackers. Figure 6.3 functions through visual substitution, hyperbole, and blending. The pigtailed girl has morphed into a long-haired young woman, whose askew arms and legs and flowing hair inform the viewer of her desperation. Rather than sprinting across the border, she flees from men bearing weapons. A standardized trope of a person requiring care—the helpless child—has traveled across time and geo-national borders and, in the modified form of the terrified woman, continues to evoke heightened affect. The woman’s singularity announces her vulnerability. The “good” refugee family from figure 6.2 has been replaced by the figures of three men in pursuit, ready to commit sexual violence. At least one of these men is marked as a Muslim in Orientalist terms due to his caftan-like garment. The word “Rapefugees” blends mental images elicited through the combination of the lexemes “rapists” and “refugees.” This portmanteau suggests that “all refugees are rapists.” The use of English in a German language context is also marked. Given the ubiquity of Anglophone advertising in Germany, the choice of language lends the image an official

quality, like a brand name, suggesting universality. This assumption of general validity detracts from the illocutionary force and racism behind the phrase “Rapefugees Not Welcome.” The equivalent word combination in German might mark the person who utters it (even) more obviously as a neo-Nazi.

In the invented world presented by the image, an ideologically effective mental shorthand functions to reveal information that cannot be discovered in any literal reading of the image or its individual parts. Expressive surplus meanings are created through the image’s inventedness, with its allusion to the earlier image of “Refugees Welcome.” Visual hyperbole works through the suggestion that refugees are sexually violent and all German women therefore in peril. The image also equates refugees with Muslims and terrorists. Note the bomb-like objects in the first and third pursuers’ hands. Part of the imagined quality of the image rests in its denial of the messages conveyed by figure 6.2. Figure 6.3 effectively refutes the sentiments of those who subscribe to the “Refugees Welcome” logo, implying that their welcome culture naively puts German women at risk.

Gabriele Dietze traces a pattern of ethno-sexism in which prejudices about the supposedly universally aggressive and patriarchal nature of Muslim men are deployed to elide the continued presence of sexist discrimination in German society. This discourse functions similarly to lynching rhetoric in American history. As Dietze points out, in pro-lynching rhetoric as well as in culturally racist discussions of events in Cologne, the “native” (white, non-Muslim) girl is depicted as needing protection from the predatory ethnic man (“Das ‘Ereignis Köln’ und ‘Ethnosexismus’”). This pattern can be witnessed in right-wing populist Tatjana Festerling’s statement on January 11, 2016, that “this was a terror attack on German women, on blonde white women” (“Die Story”).⁶ This racist utterance differs from the “Rapefugees Not Welcome” image, because it was intended as a literal interpretation of events in Cologne and not as an instance of inventedness used to express larger supposedly universal validities, such as the purported hypersexuality and dangerousness of refugee men.

Figures 6.2 and 6.3 can be read as instances of fictionality, due to the incongruous juxtaposition of their parts as well as the graphic cut-out figures, and the made-up lexeme in figure 6.3. The simplified silhouettes and words express observations that have no strict referential correspondence to extratextual objects. As cases of what I call metaphoric fictionality, figures 6.2 and 6.3 invite viewers to interact with their surplus meanings affectively and

6. Original: “Ein Terror-Anschlag auf deutsche Frauen, auf blonde, weiße Frauen” (18:32–18:40).

relate them to their political beliefs and identities. Figure 6.2 remains a badge of pride for those who declare, “We support refugee rights.” Figure 6.3 works through an evocative elicitation of fears that have a specific German context and history.

CONCLUSIONS

This essay has queried the relationship between fictionality and metaphor to point out their structural similarities in arousing affect, embodied responses, and offering access to surplus meaning. It posits metaphoric fictionality as a subtype of fictionality. Fictionality theory helps to understand how sympathetically expressed tropes of immigration function in Lee’s poems. Invented reality is marked locally through the use of modal verbs and other signals. Metaphors and other tropes are employed to expressive ends to give insights into the ambivalences involved in being a migrant. I then inquired into anti-immigration metaphors in a selection of lexemes, lexical phrases, a cartoon, and a logo concerning refugees that appeared during the so-called migration crisis of 2015 and 2016. Fictionality explains how these figurations signal inventedness through incongruity and via framing. An excess of meaning is presented by these instances of inventedness that is original as well as subjectively resonant, as in the visceral metaphors in “Persimmons” and in the “Waves” cartoon. Experiences of fictionality lead to heightened affective responses due to the illustrative and embodied perceptions to which they lend access. Such responses need to be analyzed, not only for their educational and ameliorative qualities but also for their potential to be used to unsavory ideological ends.

In conclusion, what is the added value of recognizing the structural affinity between what Del Mar calls metaphorical imagining and fictionality, particularly with regard to literary theory and literature? First, my case studies, albeit limited, demonstrate the prevalence, even the ubiquity of metaphoric fictionality in literary and nonliterary texts. Consequently, let us continue to tear generic and discipline-related boundaries down between the fictive and the factual. The case studies show how, in Lee’s poems, metaphors of taste and feeling are used to open up migrant experience sympathetically, including profound hostility to ethnic prejudice. Yet metaphors and other tropes were also shown to be effective in anti-immigration discourse to the effect of solidifying a collective feeling of resentment and fear, as in the “Rapefugees Not Welcome” image. In other words, metaphoric fictionality is, like narrative and like literature more widely, not the locus of the good and the morally

edifying. “Strong metaphors” can concretize a sea change in a collective feeling, as when, to my infinite regret, many Germans went from espousing or at least tolerating a culture of welcome to having a shared sense that refugees pose a profound threat to “their” women and “their” culture after the *Kölner Silvesternacht*. Similarly, the invention of *Atomtod* to describe the dangers of nuclear energy became a lightning rod for Green activism in the 1970s that changed the course of German politics (Grutzpalk).

Second, my attention to visual metaphors supports theories of fictionality that argue that this type of expression is not exclusively linguistic, but is multimodal, like human signification itself. Third, my musings on the affective and embodied components of metaphorical reasoning and fictionality may point to the need for fictionality proponents to address the role of affect and corporality in greater depth. My own interest is in uncovering the affective, excessive, and nondenotational aspects of fictionality in law and in political discourse more widely. Ideological critique is, I believe, the next step to opening fictionality theory to its wider implications.

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