
**Introduction**

There has been a phenomenal growth of interest in metaphor as a subject of study in recent decades. While literature and the arts, as far back as Plato, have always recognized metaphor as a source of poetic meaning, this new interest in metaphor is part of a shift in thinking which asserts that the metaphorical creation of meaning holds significance for the way we understand the construction of knowledge and the world. The following works give a good indication of the scope of metaphor research, and contain extensive bibliographies: Barcelona 2000; Gibbs 1994; Kövecses 2002; Knop et al. 2005; Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 1999; Ortony 1993; Ricoeur 1978a; Sacks 1978. However, despite the large volume of material published on the cognitive potential of metaphor, little has been done to assess how claims made within the field draw upon continental philosophy, or how continental philosophy might contribute to our understanding of the cognitive reach of the figure. These omissions are addressed in this book. The continental tradition from Kant to Derrida, I maintain, provides arguments which not only inform and support existing claims for the cognitive value of metaphor, but also extend the significance of the figure to the point where it becomes an ontological tension, operating in between the fundamental distinctions of philosophy.

How is it that metaphor, the description of one thing as something else, has become so important for questions of knowledge and cognition? There are, I suggest, a number of reasons. Firstly, the linguistic turn in the humanities – following the work of Saussure (1916/1983), Frege (1962), Wittgenstein (1922; 1953), and Whorf (1956) – has foregrounded awareness of the role our linguistic categories play in the organization of
the world into identifiable chunks. This position can be regarded, to some extent, as an elaboration of Kant’s thesis that concepts within the mind of the subject are responsible for determining the nature of reality, or human reality at least (I comment on the difference below). A key question for this view is how objectivity can be confirmed given that the task of organizing the world has been assigned to subjective consciousness. As several commentators have observed, metaphor itself raises this question (Black 1979; Hausman 1989; Ricoeur 1978a). An original, freshly minted trope (the argument runs) is an instance of creative, subjective language yet, far from producing nonsense, a new metaphor offers insight on its subject and, as such, could be said to be objective or to contain an objective component. If the world is in some sense determined by the order and distribution of human concepts, then metaphor, as the creation of new combinations of concepts, would appear to be a mode of thinking in which human creativity constructs an objective world. Therefore, to confront metaphor is to confront one of the central themes of Kant’s epistemology and the linguistically-inclined humanities.

It is not just in the humanities that these questions have arisen. Science too has begun to explore the notion that human concepts construct the world rather than merely correspond to a pre-determined reality. Two related developments are significant here: the ‘science wars’, and recognition of the role metaphor plays in science. The ‘science wars’ refers to a series of debates involving scientists, cultural theorists, sociologists, and philosophers in dispute over the status of scientific knowledge (Collins and Pinch 1993; Franklin 1996; Levins 1996; Martin 1996; Rose 1996; Shapin and Schaffer 1985; Snow 1964; Sokal 1996). Is science a disinterested reflection of the world as it really is or a discourse whose findings are heavily influenced by the interests and prejudices of those who work within it? The orthodox view of science merely ‘reading off’ knowledge from a mind-independent reality is challenged on the grounds that it is primarily political, ideological or economic interest which determines the course of science and, therefore, which determines what counts as new knowledge about the world. Metaphor bears on this because of the role it plays in the formulation of scientific theories and models. Do the scientific concepts derived from metaphors actually refer to entities in the world or are they merely heuristic terms, coined to facilitate investigation? The
debate occurs as part of the mid- to late-twentieth-century challenge to positivist philosophy of science, and its preoccupation with determining the conditions for the identification of entities and the verification of claims. What emerges in the wake of positivism is a renewed commitment to broader questions of epistemology and ontology, including the Kantian ‘linguistic’ thesis that concepts do not just refer to reality but also shape it. The science wars are fought against this backdrop, and theses on metaphor as the generator of scientific concepts are advanced by realists and anti-realists alike (for example, Boyd 1979; Kuhn 1979). I return to this contest below.

It is another area of science, however, which has seen the largest growth of interest in metaphor. Since the 1970s, cognitive science has become increasingly aware of the dependence of concepts and reason upon the body, and the extent to which conceptualization relies upon metaphor and imagery. This is in contrast to the view of thought, held by ‘first generation’ cognitive science, as a process which can be formalized in purely functional or symbolic terms, away from any bodily or cognitive context. As a part of this new awareness, cognitive linguistics emerged, using the discoveries of ‘second generation cognitive science to explain as much of language as possible’ (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 496). For cognitive linguistics, metaphor denotes one of the mechanisms (if not the principal mechanism) whereby thought and perception are generated from our condition as physically embodied beings (Gibbs 1994; Johnson 1987; Kövecses 2002; Knop et al. 2005; Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 1999). This embodiment is manifest, according to Lakoff and Johnson, in the derivation of the concepts we use for thinking and perceiving from concepts ‘that optimally fit our bodily experiences of entities and certain extremely important differences in the natural environment’ (1999: 27). Hence, the concepts we use to describe relations and values have a spatial origin, such as ‘happy is up’, ‘intimacy is closeness’, and the concepts we assign to objects and events in general (‘starting’, ‘stopping’, ‘running’, ‘grasping’) derive from bodily movement and action (1999: 38-39). Thus, the importance of metaphor for cognitive linguistics lies in the fact that it represents the territory to be explored in order to achieve a fuller understanding of the transpositions which draw the structure of thought and experience from our physical being.
Finally, the popularity of metaphor is also evident in the questioning of boundaries – between subject areas and between the wider concepts of the moral, the political, the epistemological, and the aesthetic – that has arisen from the tension between modern and postmodern thought. Principal concerns in these debates are the status of knowledge and the way in which concepts of truth and objectivity are understood. Philosophy has been under attack on this score with its history of ‘universal truths’, e.g. Descartes’ cogito, Kant’s table of categories, and Hegel’s Absolute Consciousness. The main arguments against this universalism invoke metaphor on two related accounts: (1) the fact that key epistemological concepts have metaphors at their root, for example, ‘mirroring’, ‘correspondence’, ‘sense datum’, is taken as evidence of the contingent, communal, subjective basis of knowledge, and (2) because metaphor (as a form of dislocated or dislocating predication) works by testing the appropriate with the inappropriate, it is seen as a means of challenging the boundaries whereby one subject defines itself in relation to another.

This book locates the recent interest in metaphor, including all the debates outlined above, within the tradition of continental philosophy from Kant to Derrida. As I have already indicated, Kant’s critical philosophy lends itself to being a framework for the theorization of metaphor on account of it representing experience as the subjective determination of an objective world. The idea here is that metaphor is something creative and subjective which nevertheless produces meaning that has the characteristics of being objective and a discovery. Ricoeur (1978a, 1978b) and Hausman (1989), in constructing their theories of objective metaphor, both suggest that Kant’s epistemology may, in some way, be able to explain the subjective creation of objectivity. Philosophers in the continental tradition after Kant, I would argue, work within the ontological space opened up by him, to devise (alongside Kant) structures and relations which challenge the dualisms of orthodox, Cartesian metaphysics, and to demonstrate (beyond Kant) how these new structures and relations work upon, challenge or transform experience and our conception of what is possible within it. In describing philosophers after Kant as working within the space ‘opened up by him’, it is not my intention to make them footnotes to Kant. The space which he opens up, I maintain, is the region of possibility which emerges once one departs from dualistic thought, i.e.
thinking which remains within the boundaries created by oppositions, such as mind—body and subjective—objective. Without the comfort of these neat oppositions, the work of building new theoretical structures which can articulate the textures and complexities of experience is a daunting prospect, and a philosophical endeavour which cannot be reduced to a footnote, as my ‘beyond Kant’ indicates. The relevance of philosophers in this tradition – I concentrate upon Nietzsche, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Bachelard, Ricoeur and Derrida – lies in that they either identify metaphor as one of these ontological structures working within experience or introduce arrangements whose operations parallel the transpositions and cross-conceptual mappings of metaphor.

This is also the reason why I am examining metaphor in relation to continental, as opposed to analytic, philosophy: continental thought has more to say on the ontological implications of metaphor, whereas analytic accounts invariably examine the figure within the confines of the philosophy of language (for example, Cooper 1989, Davidson 1978, Guttenplan 2005, Kittay 1989). There are exceptions within the analytic tradition, however, and, interestingly enough, all the clues they give to ontological metaphor point towards theses developed at length within continental philosophy. Black asserts that metaphors can create new yet objective meaning and, to explain his thinking, he adopts images of a Kantian nature (Black 1979). Metaphors, he declares, are like ‘cognitive instruments’ in that they create new perspectives on objects, allowing us to see things in a new way, as in the case of the first cinematograph ‘creat[ing] the aspect’ of a horse appearing to gallop in slow-motion (1979: 39); the Kantianism here, I suggest, lies in the notion that a different appearance is determined for reality by our new cognitive, conceptual perspective on it. Another exception within analytic philosophy is Kittay (1989). Although she explores the cognitive potential of metaphor in purely linguistic terms – her debatable reason for doing so is that ‘our present understanding of language exceeds our understanding of any other expressive medium’ (1989: 15) – she nevertheless acknowledges Nietzsche in her final chapter as a philosopher who might afford some insight into the fundamental nature of metaphorical truth, but the link is not pursued (1989: 327).
Chapters 1 and 2 consider the importance of Kant for an understanding of metaphor. Chapter 1 examines the metaphorical creation of objectivity in relation to Kant’s epistemology and, in particular, Heidegger’s retrieval of the schematism. As indicated above, both Ricoeur (1978a, 1978b) and Hausman (1989) suggest that Kant’s philosophy may, in some way, be able to explain the subjective creation of objectivity. Unfortunately, gaps or uncertainties are left in the ontological claims they make as part of their explanation of objectivity. The key element in Kant’s epistemology for Ricoeur is the schematism – the process which ensures that the structure of experience meets objectively with the content of experience – but the contribution which he sees this making to his theory of metaphor is not spelt out. To make matters worse, the schematism is that part of Kant’s critical epistemology which he notoriously dismisses as ‘an art concealed in the depths of the human soul’ (1929: A 141, B 180-1). However, Heidegger’s retrieval of the schematism in Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, I argue, can assist both Ricoeur’s and Hausman’s theories. This is because the ontology that Heidegger constructs in order to retrieve the schematism articulates a mode of encountering the world which does not repeat the conventional opposition between subjective structure and objective content. For Heidegger, we encounter the world as a series of possibilities, and it is his claim that any one concept anticipates a range of possible appearances which enables the resolution of the uncertainties left by Kant, Hausman and Ricoeur, and the completion of Hausman’s and Ricoeur’s theories of objective metaphor.

In chapter 2, metaphor is shown to have significance for Kant independently of Heidegger’s interpretation when I assess the structure of his argument in the Critique of Judgment. Kant returns to the area of the schematism, except he faces it here in moral as well as cognitive terms. The first Critique asks how (supersensible) pure, transcendental concepts can accommodate (sensible) empirical intuitions cognitively, and the second Critique asks how a (supersensible) universal moral imperative can serve as a principle for showing us how we ought to act in (sensible) particular situations. These lead to the central question of the third Critique: how is it possible to reconcile the supersensible basis of nature with the supersensible basis of our freedom to act independently of nature. The answer: through metaphor. As I show, it is through a series of nested
analogies and ultimately the ‘density’ of metaphor itself that Kant is able to hold nature and freedom united (to demonstrate the possibility of their interaction) yet distinct (to maintain the object-directedness of experience) at the same time. This means that Kant relies on metaphor to the extent that (a) his philosophy cannot be rendered systematic without it, and (b) metaphor is situated as a condition of possibility of judgment. Tracing the analogies within the third *Critique* also affords a perspective on a number of recent studies of the structure of Kant’s theory of judgment. I consider the impact which my reading has on accounts from Derrida, de Man and Lyotard.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 consider metaphor as an ontological principle in Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger and Nietzsche respectively. Metaphor can be seen to occur for the three thinkers as a relation or process whose operation is responsible for determining the structure of experience, where this structure is prior to and constitutive of the human subject, the world, and the interaction between the two. In addition, this position on metaphor unfolds for all three from a reappraisal of the nature of the senses and human embodiment. Quite why there should be this tie between metaphor and the senses becomes apparent once it is recognized that the concept of metaphor has, in this context, been broadened to represent a process of interaction or transposition out of which ordered, intelligible experience arises. It is therefore being considered as a process which works within the same cognitive space, so to speak, as the senses, as the sensory transmission of material from the world to the mind. Except, of course, that this describes the senses in empiricist terms, when, within the theories of Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger and Nietzsche, they are theorized in a quite different way. Common to all three is the view that the senses operate not as receivers of impressions but as transformative creators of experience and the world. The place which this metaphorical structure of transposition occupies in the ontologies of Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger and Nietzsche is examined in these three chapters.

Metaphor is often associated with the senses on occasions when we try to describe a sensory experience, and find ourselves drawing upon other senses in order to determine the character of the experience, for example, ‘a bitter, lemon yellow’, ‘tinselly, stream-like percussion’, and ‘the sound of a trumpet is scarlet’. These descriptions might
loosely be called ‘synaesthetic’ in that they combine different sensory modalities. They are, strictly speaking, distinct from neurological cases of synaesthesia on account of their involving active metaphorical association, in contrast to involuntary neurological combination. I do not address synaesthesia as a subject in its own right, but I do show, in chapter 3, that the history of classification, including the classification of the senses, is bound up with the distinction between literal and metaphorical language. The customary division of the senses into five channels, I argue, is indicative of those theories of knowledge in the history of philosophy which understand truth as a one-to-one correspondence between categories and things in themselves. I focus on Locke’s epistemology as an example, since it lets us see the relationship between arguments for the individuality of the senses and those for the existence of individual essences, epistemic access to which is gained through ‘correct’, literal language. In contrast, post-Kantian philosophy theorizes sensation as the ‘generation’ or ‘brining into being’ of certain forms of appearance, for example, colour, sound, texture. Of particular relevance to this area is Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology, since it presents metaphors of the type ‘bitter, lemon yellow’, ‘tinselly, stream-like percussion’, and ‘the sound of a trumpet is scarlet’ as paradigm forms of the conceptual and sensory transitions through which we organize the world. I draw out the differences between Locke’s and Merleau-Ponty’s understandings of the metaphor–sensation relation, and show how Locke’s concept of the relation prompts him to condemn metaphor as an unreliable form of description, whereas Merleau-Ponty’s understanding of the relation positions metaphor as a fundamental condition of our embodied being.

Chapter 3 also gives me the opportunity to compare my notion of ontological metaphor with the theory of embodied metaphor given by Lakoff and Johnson. The comparison is made because Lakoff and Johnson cite Merleau-Ponty as the forerunner of their ‘embodied mind’ thesis in *Philosophy in the Flesh* (1999: xi). Leading metaphor theorists in the field of cognitive linguistics, Lakoff and Johnson situate basic bodily acuities as the foundation of a theory of knowledge, and present metaphor as an extension of the process whereby the human body deals with the world through adaptation and articulation. Most metaphors, they argue, involve conceptualizing a subjective experience in terms of bodily, sensorimotor experience, e.g. understanding
an idea (subjective experience) in terms of grasping an object (sensorimotor experience) (1999: 45). However, despite Merleau-Ponty’s influence, their concept of embodied metaphor is the inverse of his: whereas ‘metaphor is embodied’ for Lakoff and Johnson, I argue that ‘embodiment is metaphor’ for Merleau-Ponty, on account of his redefining the body as the ontological schema which structures human being in the world through transposition.

Although Heidegger does not provide an explicit, systematic account of the senses, the redefinition which they undergo as part of his rethinking of metaphysics nevertheless provides a revealing insight into the direction of his thought. Indications as to how the sense are transformed by Heidegger can be gleaned from the occasional references he makes to them. The relevance of these for us is that his transformation of the senses implicates metaphor. In chapter 4, I consider the relation he constructs between human being and truth as aletheia: Da-sein (human being) and aletheia, he asserts, are related ‘in terms of the temporality of existence’, and fathoming this arrangement is the ‘central problematic’ of Being and Time (1996: 357; original emphasis). His concept of temporality is in fact introduced in my first chapter. It is the process which opens up a world for human being as a realm of possibility. This is time conceived not in the ordinary sense of a sequence of moments but as an ontological structure which creates the ‘space’, so to speak, in which reality can appear before the human subject. This action, for Heidegger, is also a form of truth as aletheia. Instead of referring to the correspondence between statement and world, as truth is conventionally understood, aletheia denotes the process of disclosure which allows a world to come into being in the first place. The senses are located within this temporal articulation of disclosure, and metaphor’s role is to be the process which allows this articulation to take place.

Heidegger does not actually use the word ‘metaphor’ in this context, but he does refer in Being and Time to ‘something as something’ as the relation which coordinates the disclosure of any object (1996: 359), and he arguably reinforces its metaphor-like nature in The Essence of Truth when he refers to it as making ‘something out to be what it is not’ (2002: 184). What this ontological as-structure does, I argue, is institute a latticework of possible similarities and differences, and this provides the coordination necessary for
the continuous, coherent disclosure of an object. The generation of sensibility as world-disclosure has metaphor play a constructive role in the formulation of a new ontology, an ontology distinct from Cartesian metaphysics. Its latticework of similarities and differences promotes a realm of possibility which does not conform to the oppositions of conventional metaphysics. This idea of metaphor as metaphysically transcendent though is at odds with Heidegger’s confinement of metaphor within Cartesian metaphysics in *The Principle of Reason* (Heidegger 1991). Conventional metaphysics, he argues, has cut certain divisions into reality, for example, the Cartesian split between mental thinking and physical hearing. Thus, metaphor ‘only exists within metaphysics’ because the conjunctions it makes always start from or are in terms of concepts shaped by metaphysics (1991: 48). I consider this discrepancy in chapter 4 and again in chapter 8.

Nietzsche is the philosopher who most explicitly formulates perception as a metaphorical process. In the fragment ‘On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense’, he describes cognitive judgment as a series of metaphorical leaps from nerve stimulus to retinal image (first metaphor) to sound as signifier (second metaphor) (Nietzsche 2000: 55). Our perception, he argues, can never correspond to things in themselves because it is formed through a series of transformations which ensures that ‘there is no causality, no correctness, and no expression’ connecting the first stage (the stimulus) with the last (the concept) (2000: 58). This metaphoricity though, for Nietzsche, is not merely perceptual. Arguably, in his view, it defines human being entirely. I say ‘arguably’ since this is an extrapolation from his epistemology to his will-to-power ontology. In contrast to the orthodox ontological scheme of subjects confronting a world, Nietzsche presents being in general (of nature and the human subject – no distinction is made at this point) as a set of competing perspectives or wills to power, out of which emerges human experience of an external world. The metaphorical dimension of this lies in the necessarily transpositional nature of the contest between perspectives. No one will to power exerts itself in isolation; rather, power in Nietzsche’s ontology is always asserted against a rival or an opposite, where the ‘assertion against’ is realized not as annihilation of the other viewpoint but as the capacity to see from it. On this understanding, metaphor is not a structure of world-disclosure, as I have claimed with Heidegger, but a
network of transpositions, where any individual item, any individual identity, be it a person, an experience or a meaning, occurs as a tensional interaction between competing forces.

Chapter 5 explores the idea that the will to power is metaphorical in nature. I challenge Kofman’s opposition to the idea, and argue that the metaphorical nature of the will to power ontology makes certain conceptual resources available which can remove the paradoxes generated by Nietzsche’s will to power ontology. To give one example: all things are wills to power or perspectives, Nietzsche affirms, including the perspective which grants me the knowledge that this is what the world is like. The paradox here is that Nietzsche’s assertion of perspectivism appears to cancel or deflate itself as just another perspective: if it is the case, as Nietzsche tells us, that all things are perspectives, then his view is *purely his perspective*, with the same cognitive force as the next person’s. However, the paradox only stands because certain assumptions are made about what belongs to or is available from a perspective. What the notion of a metaphorical will brings to the debate, I argue, is the recognition that something belonging to or being intrinsic to a category, including the category of perspective, cannot be taken for granted, with the consequence that the individuation of perspectives as items with equal cognitive force – the key claim within the paradox – cannot proceed.

Chapters 6 and 7 consider metaphor in relation to epistemology and the science wars. As announced above, the ‘science wars’ refers to a series of debates in which the status of scientific knowledge is contested by scientists, cultural theorists, sociologists, and philosophers. The epistemological debate within the wars is akin to the contest between realism and anti-realism: the former is committed to the existence of a mind-independent reality underlying appearances which is either *directly or indirectly* knowable through appearances, whereas the latter asserts the Kantian view that it is our concepts which shape and determine the nature of reality. However, the realism–anti-realism contest is in danger, as McDowell puts it, ‘of falling into interminable oscillation’ between the concepts of a mind-independent reality and a mind-determined reality, due to the undecidability over whether order and the possibility of knowledge have a
mental, subjective or an external, objective origin (McDowell 1994: 9). Chapter 6 argues that the oscillation between realism and anti-realism is attributable to the metaphors that are at work in the competing theories of knowledge. Two cases I cover in detail are ‘cutting nature at the joints’ and the concept of ‘world’ used as a metonym. In both cases, it is ambiguous whether what is being described is the (noumenal) world as it is in itself or the (phenomenal) world as it is accessed and made available to us through perception.

My intention though is not to accuse metaphor of disrupting the passage of rational thought but, rather, to suggest that we look to metaphor to find an alternative theme whose imagery can avoid the oscillation. In chapter 7, I argue that Heidegger and Bachelard do just that. In different ways, they configure the encounter between subject and world as an opening, which is to say that subject and world meet each other not as two pre-formed components but as entities who acquire their being through their mutual participation in or as an opening. What this achieves, I argue, is a new application of the concept of belonging within epistemology. I say ‘new application’ because the concept is already active in epistemology, encouraging us to think in terms of what belongs to the subject and what belongs to the object. However, the new application presents ‘belonging’ as a question. Rather than being something that can be taken for granted, with the subject possessing some qualities and the object possessing others, belonging is left as a question, on account of knowledge being theorized as a process in which mind and world are mutually sustaining. The state of having something left permanently as a question might seem unsatisfactory or vague but this, I argue, is an epistemological adjustment which Heidegger and Bachelard invite us to make in order to express the openness of the tensile relation between subject and object. As such, it is also an epistemological arrangement which avoids the oscillation between realism and anti-realism. There are differences between Heidegger’s and Bachelard’s positions, and Bachelard even constructs his poetic ontology as a response to Heidegger’s ‘language of agglutination’, the network of prefixes and suffixes in his vocabulary which, on Bachelard’s interpretation, only serves to reinforce the very ontology which Heidegger claims to overturn (Bachelard: 1969: 213). I draw out the differences in their accounts, but find that their shared interest in metaphor as the
The final chapter examines the various ways in which metaphor and metaphysics are interwoven in the work of Heidegger, Ricoeur and Derrida. The ‘interwoven’ metaphor is deliberate, since in Ricoeur’s and Derrida’s responses to Heidegger’s metaphysics, and in Ricoeur’s and Derrida’s responses to each other, there is a dense network of agreement and disagreement over what the relations between metaphor and metaphysics might be. Discussion follows Heidegger’s declaration, noted above in the context of chapter 4, that ‘the metaphorical only exists within metaphysics’ (Heidegger 1991: 48). According to Ricoeur, there is a ‘theoretical core common to Heidegger and Derrida, namely, the supposed collusion between the metaphorical pair of the proper and the figurative and the metaphysical pair of the visible and the invisible’ (1978a: 294). But Derrida is surprised by the way his analysis in ‘White Mythology’ is read by Ricoeur. He finds that the criticisms of his position made by Ricoeur are statements which he (Derrida) in actual fact supports and, more surprisingly for Derrida, are views which (he thinks) are already evident in ‘White Mythology’.

I explore the ways in which ‘intersection’ and ‘entanglement’ operate as concepts in the relations of metaphor and metaphysics drawn individually by Heidegger, Ricoeur and Derrida, and argue that these concepts determine how the three thinkers stand in relation to one another. While Ricoeur presents his theory of the intersection discourses in contradistinction to Heidegger’s ‘metaphorical within the metaphysical’, Derrida traces the ways in which the metaphorical themes in Heidegger’s text cross over, entwine and generally exceed any ‘X within Y’ containment relation. What comes to light here is that one of the contradictions Derrida finds in Heidegger is the very same contradiction which Heidegger uses to create the as-structured opening of truth as aletheia in *The Essence of Truth*. That is to say, what Derrida finds as a textual contradiction in one context is put to work by Heidegger as a coherent ontological condition in another. The possibility that Heidegger and Derrida might intersect at the point of relying upon ontological or transcendental structures is considered by Gasché (1986). However, whereas Gasché ultimately dismisses the possibility of their
intersection on account of the discourse–experience distinction, I assert that the two philosophers do in fact meet as a result of the opposition between discourse and experience being removed by Heidegger’s ontology. Their meeting on these terms, I argue, also brings them closer to Ricoeur’s interactionism, but their proximity to one another should not be mistaken for unity.

My study of metaphor in continental philosophy takes the figure from being a creative and objective poetic device, through being a mode of cognition, to being the structure of belonging and transposition which constitutes the possibility of experience and the world. I emphasize ‘and the’ because epistemology conventionally distinguishes experience from the world, creating two distinct regions: the world, and our experience of it. In contrast, I present the two as conjoined within metaphor. This is not to say that they are seamlessly fused together or that experience is all there is. Rather, it is to assert the claim (from chapters 5 and 7) that metaphor can serve epistemology as a structure whose internal transpositions articulate the distinction between experience and the world that is normally, and problematically, expressed in terms of regions, worlds, and other spatial metaphors. In different ways, Nietzsche (chapter 5), Heidegger (chapters 4 and 7), Merleau-Ponty (chapter 3) and Bachelard (chapter 7) show that what is conventionally regarded as the content of subjective experience, for example, a datum, a quale, a manifold, occurs because it is constructed by ontological relations or articulations which take it beyond itself, which allow it already to include a reference to the condition responsible for objectivity.

The passage described above, from poetry, to cognition, to ontology, does not run in a straight line through the book. Rather, the categories cross over and intersect throughout, each drawing upon the other. For example, ontology is brought to poetry in chapter 1 in order to explain the capacity of poetic metaphor to be creative yet objective. And in chapters 4 and 7, poetry is applied to ontology as part of Heidegger’s formulation of truth as disclosure. Here, poetic metaphor, the creative conjunction of something as something else, generates an arc of possibility between the two somethings, opening a space in which an object can appear. This intermingling of subjects could give the impression of circularity: metaphor is explained by ontology
which then, in turn, is explained by metaphor. I comment on this at several points, since the impression of circularity relies upon an image which needs redressing. Circularly represents the idea of leaving and then returning to a certain point or, in our case, a certain concept. Yet to think that we leave a point and then return to it is to reason in spatial terms, to assume the existence of an item with a boundary, which is departed from, and an external region in which we make our circular journey back to the starting point.

However, metaphor’s ontological bearing, I maintain, derives from its upsetting conventional notions of belonging, notions of what belongs on the inside and what belongs on the outside. Impressions of circularity are checked by the claim that, in moving from poetry to cognition or to ontology, we are not leaving spaces to return to them but (to adopt an image from Merleau-Ponty) moving between facets on a diamond, where each facet is visible in the face of the other (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 207). Each facet though is not clearly visible in the other but distorted, where the distortion occurs not as a disruptor of knowledge but as its generator. If this sounds nonsensical, it is because we encounter it from the perspective that knowledge arises from the clear and unmediated reception of content. However, judgment, experience, meaning, or anything which we regard as having identity or content, is shown at various points within continental thought to be constructed by transformations between terms, where the terms function not in isolation as units in themselves but as interactive components in a complex of cross-referral and implication.

The main ontological shift which results from my continental articulation of metaphor is that judgment becomes a question, a questioning of what belongs to the judgment. I use ‘judgment’ here in the Kantian sense of ‘judgment of experience’, i.e. to include the conceptualization or determination of experience. This is, in effect, to claim that my articulation of metaphor leads to experience becoming a question, a questioning of what belongs to experience. The emphasis on belonging derives from metaphor: its juxtaposition of remote or unrelated subjects, and the reassessment we are invited to make of the properties which belong to its two subject terms. Turning judgments and experiences into questions might seem an unsatisfactory outcome, given that questions
are generally regarded as incomplete, in need of answers. But on the ontology presented here, incompleteness is not a gap left through an oversight but a property that is integral to the process of drawing in judgments from other perspectives, in leading our current standpoint towards others in the world. Assigning metaphor this ontological value means I take the view that *everything arises out of metaphor*, but this is not the same as saying ‘everything is metaphor’. The latter locates everything within metaphor, has everything belong to metaphor, whereas the former, with its action of ‘giving rise’ to entities, grants us the room to question what belongs to metaphor.