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Metaphor as Knowledge. A Hermeneutical Framework for Biblical Exegesis with a Sample Reading from the Song of Songs (Song 8:10)

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SUMMARY: The main purpose of this article is to provide biblical scholarship with a broad hermeneutical framework concerning the cognitive dimension of metaphorical phenomena. According to current research, metaphor is a tool of knowledge, a way through which the human mind conceptualizes reality. Despite the fact that Cognitive Linguistics (CL) is generally credited with bringing the cognitive dimension of metaphor to light, the discovery of this dimension is by no means recent. This article will show that it already appeared in Aristotle's work, was blurred in Classical Rhetoric by a more aesthetic perspective, reappeared at the very beginning of the modern age, and finally became dominant in the 20th century. CL is therefore the result of a long tradition that has the merit of clarifying the cognitive mechanisms of metaphorical processes. Its theoretical and methodological model currently represents the reference point for studies on daily and literary metaphors, shedding new light on biblical metaphors. This article shows how CL can be beneficial for biblical exegesis by analysing Song 8:10 in light of this approach.

KEYWORDS: Metaphor, Metaphorology, Cognitive Linguistics, Song of Songs

SŁOWA-KLUCZE: metafora, metaforologia, lingwistyka kognitywna, Pieśń nad Pieśniami

This article is situated within the growing interest in biblical metaphors, a theme which has recently inspired numerous international symposia and publications.[1] Within the horizon of this research context, the purpose of the present study is to provide current biblical scholarship with a broad hermeneutical framework on the cognitive dimension of metaphorical phenomena. The guiding assumption is that drawing on the reflections of leading exponents of so-called "metaphorology" – namely the scientific study of the links between metaphor, language and thought – could be beneficial for further research on biblical metaphors. To test this hypothesis, the present

1 It must be mentioned the joint meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) and the European Association for Biblical Studies (EABS) of 2001 in Rome, of 2002 at the Humboldt-Universität in Berlin, of 2003 at the University of Copenhagen, of 2004 at the University of Groningen. The research on biblical metaphors within EABS and SBL still continues.

contribution offers a sample reading of a biblical text (Song 8:10) in light of what is currently considered the reference point for studies on metaphorical phenomena, namely Cognitive Linguistics (CL).

Current scholarship on metaphor generally agrees with the following claim from Van Hecke:

> metaphors have a conceptual function, i.e., that metaphors are able to make meaningful assertions […] the long-held view that metaphors only have a stylistic function is now superseded by a more content-oriented approach.[2]

However, despite the fact that CL is generally credited with bringing the cognitive dimension of metaphor to light, the discovery of this dimension is by no means recent: indeed, it already appears in Aristotle's work (§ 1). Furthermore, whereas for several centuries Classical Rhetoric considered metaphor mostly as a decoration of refined language (§ 2), since the very beginning of the modern era several authors have highlighted that metaphor is first and foremost a question of knowledge (§ 3). Therefore, CL might be considered the result of a long tradition (§ 4). CL has already shed new light on biblical metaphors,[3] without having ever been applied to the Song of Songs.[4] In order to contribute to filling this lacuna, Song 8:10 will be analysed in light of this novel, pioneering approach (§ 5).

1. Aristotle: Metaphor as τὸ ὅμοιον θεωρεῖν

Aristotle was the first scholar who deeply engaged the mechanism of metaphor, elaborating his reflection within the wider horizon of his metaphysics, as well as of his epistemology. It could be said that, despite the fact that metaphorical phenomena was already well known before the Stagirite,[5] he was the

2 P. Van Hecke (ed.), "Introduction", *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. P. Van Hecke) (BETL 187; Leuven: Leuven University Press 2005) 3.

3 L. Boeve – K. Feyaerts (eds.), *Metaphor and God-Talk* (Religions and Discourse 2; Bern: Lang 1999); E.J. van Wolde (ed.), *Job 28: Cognition in Context* (Biblical Interpretation Series 63; Leiden: Brill 2003); Van Hecke, *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible*; P. Van Hecke – A. Labahn (eds.), *Metaphors in the Psalms* (BETL 231; Leuven: Peeters 2010); P. Van Hecke, *From Linguistics to Hermeneutics: A Functional and Cognitive Approach to Job 12–14* (SSN 55; Leiden: Brill 2011); A. Labahn (ed.), *Conceptual Metaphors in Poetic Texts. Proceedings of the Metaphor Research Group of the European Association of Biblical Studies in Lincoln 2009* (Perspectives on Hebrew Scriptures and its Contexts 18; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press 2013); B. Howe – J.B. Green (eds.), *Cognitive Linguistics Explorations in Biblical Studies* (Berlin: De Gruyter 2014).

4 See also D. Verde, "War-Games in the Song of Songs. A Reading of Song 2:4 in Light of Cognitive Linguistics", *SJOT* [forthcoming].

5 Apparently, the first author that used the term μεταφορὰ was Isocrates in the *Evagoras*, indicating just one of the many ornaments of speech, legitimate for poets only: Isocrates, *Discours*. II: *Panégyrique;*

first to articulate a profound theory on the subject, and it would take several centuries for any genuinely novel contributions to be made to his thought. As Eco writes,[6] among the thousands pages written on metaphor throughout history, only a few added anything to the fundamental concepts enunciated by Aristotle, who might be considered the founder of metaphorology.

The Stagirite tackled the problem of metaphorical language in several works and over a long period of time.[7] While his discourse on metaphor is relatively a-systematic, even full of cracks and contradictions, it is still possible to reconstruct the main lines of his metaphorology thanks to the *Poetics* and the *Rhetoric*, where the author treats the issue more widely and profoundly. In the *Poetics*, Aristotle speaks of metaphor in cc. XXI-XXII.[8] In Chapter XXI metaphor is described as one of the "forms of the name". It is important to clarify that the Aristotelian concept of ὄνομα is not comparable to that of "name" in modern grammars, since for Aristotle even the verb falls into the same category (1457a, 14-15). The term ὄνομα is rather translatable as *word*, namely the semantic core of speech. After stating that ὄνομα may be simple or multiple (1457a, 31-35), Aristotle distinguishes between three different deviances in a "proper word/name" (1457b, 1-3): semantic (gloss, metaphor and ornamental), phonetic (elongated, truncated and altered), and phonetic-semantic (neologism). Despite the fact that in light of this scheme metaphor seems rather marginal, Aristotle devotes more attention to it, starting from the explanation of what constitutes the semantic deviance of metaphor:

> μεταφορὰ δέ ἐστιν ὀνόματος ἀλλοτρίου ἐπιφορὰ ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ γένους ἐπὶ εἶδος ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ εἴδους ἐπὶ τὸ γένος ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ εἴ δους ἐπὶ εἶδος ἢ κατὰ τὸ ἀνάλογον.
> Metaphor is, instead, the superposition of a stranger word passing from genus to species, from species to genus, form species to species, or by analogy (1457b, 6-7).

The deviance of the metaphor consists in i) imposing a ὄνομα ἀλλοτρίου, *a stranger word*, stranger because it belongs to another semantic context,

Plataïque; À Nicoclès; Nicoclès; Evagoras; Archidamos (Texte établi et traduit par G. Mathieu et E. Brémond) (Collection des universités de France. Série grecque 87; Paris: Belles Lettres 1967) 9-10.

6 U. Eco, *Semiotica e filosofia del linguaggio* (Torino: Einaudi 1984) 142.

7 Aristotle, *Topica et Sophistici Elenchi*, Recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit W.D. Ross (Oxford Classical Texts; Oxford: Oxford University Press 1958) 139 b 32-140 a 11; *Metaphysica*, Recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit W. Jaeger (Oxford Classical Texts; Oxford: Oxford University Press 1957) 991 a 20-2; *Analitica Priora et Posteriora*, Recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit W.D. Ross (Oxford Classical Texts; Oxford: Oxford University Press 1964) 97 b 37-9; *Météorologiques* (Texte établi et traduit par P. Luis) (Collection des universités de France. Série grecque 289-290; Paris: Les Belles Lettres 1982) I-II, 357 a 24-8; 380 b 28-31.

8 Aristotle, *De arte poetica liber*, Recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit R. Kassel (Oxford Classical Texts; Oxford: Oxford University Press 1965).

in which it would be a ὄνομα κύριον, "proper word", ii) on a ὄνομα κύριον, iii) within a different semantic context.

This imposition, rather than merely concerning words, establishes a process between conceptual structures – namely genus and species[9] – that would already allude to a cognitive dimension of metaphorical processes.[10] The cognitive dimension of metaphor more clearly emerges from the connection made by Aristotle between "enigma" and "metaphor". According to Aristotle, "stranger words", including metaphor, produce the "enigma", whose function lies in saying true things through making the speech not immediately clear and transparent (1458a, 26-27). Through this definition of αἰνίγμα, metaphor could appear just one of those numerous "aesthetic games" of Rhetoric. Nevertheless, the author's notion of αἰνίγμα – and therefore of metaphor – goes far beyond the concept of a "bewitching expedient" of speech, since αἰνίγμα is primarily connected to the problem of "saying things that are true". In other words, thanks to its enigmatic character, metaphor is able to express the truth and to increase knowledge: paradoxically, metaphor reveals by veiling, clarifies by confusing, enlightens by obscuring. The question is: what does metaphor reveal?

> τὸ γὰρ εὖ μεταφέρειν τὸ τὸ ὅμοιον θεωρεῖν ἐστιν.
> Producing good metaphors is equivalent to observe the similarities (1459a, 8).[11]

Through this pithy remark, Aristotle clarifies that the truth contained in the riddle of metaphor is "similarity". By creating impossible combinations, metaphor allows one to observe and contemplate the resemblance between distant and diverse realities. Moreover, since θεωρεῖν denotes an action, metaphor is not so much a *fact* of knowledge, but rather a *process*, which consists in the elaboration of similarity between incongruous realities, on the basis of one or more common traits.

Furthermore, as observed by O'Rourke, Aristotle's theory of metaphor can only be understood if placed in relation both to his metaphysics and to his epistemology.[12] For Aristotle, there is similarity between all categories of

9 For a critical presentation of the four types of metaphor, Eco, *Semiotica*, 150-157.

10 I. Tamba-Mecz – P. Veyne, "*Metaphora* et comparaison selom Aristotle", *Révue des Études Grecques* 92 (1979) 79.

11 Lorusso notices that the cognitive dimension of metaphor also emerges from the use of θεωρεῖν, a *verbum cognoscendi* that involves scientific observation of human experience. A.M. Lorusso (ed.), *Metafora e conoscenza*: *Da Aristotele al cognitivismo contemporaneo* (Milano: Bompiani 2005) 11.

12 F. O'Rourke, "Aristotle and the Metaphysics of Metaphor", *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* (eds. J.J. Cleary – G.M. Gurtler) (Leiden: Brill 2005) 155-77, 186-90.

being because the world is essentially and integrally a unified whole. Therefore, metaphor is a semantic transgression through which new connections and new insights on reality are discovered, not invented, so that it allows the ontological relationships between things to come to light. With its deviations from common language, metaphor responds to the multifaceted and polysemous being that λέγεται μὲν πολλαχῶς, *is said in many ways*,[13] and imposes itself as an indispensable instrument of human knowledge.

The relationship between metaphor and *simile* also appears in *Rhetoric*.[14]

> ἔστιν γὰρ ἡ εἰκών, καθάπερ εἴρηται πρότερον, μεταφορὰ διαφέρουσα προθέσει διὸ ἧττον ἡδύ, ὅτι μακροτέρως καὶ οὐ λέγει ὡς τοῦτο ἐκεῖνο οὐκοῦν οὐδὲ ζητεῖ τοῦτο ἡ ψυχή.
> The simile, in fact, as mentioned previously, is a metaphor that differs from it by the addition of a word: consequently it is less *pleasant*, because it is longer; moreover it does not say that "this' is "that", and consequently *the mind does not try to understand* it (1410b, 15-20).

Disconnecting Aristotle's treatment of metaphor from his ontology and epistemology, Black assimilates the Stagirite's metaphorology to the "comparison theory of metaphor" which is actually typical of the later rhetorical tradition.[15] Even though the comparative aspect of metaphor is crucial for Aristotle – both in *Topics* (139b-140a 32 11) and in *Poetics* (1459a 8) the principle of similarity appears to be the basic principle of metaphoric mechanism –, for the Stagirite a metaphor has an added value with respect to a simile. This value derives not only from more agreeability, but especially from the fact that metaphor sets in motion *a process of research for meaning* that is not initiated by simile: indeed, the assertion of an identity (A is B), instead of a mere likeness (A is like B) pushes the listener/reader to try to understand how two distinct realities are identifiable.

There are three other essential concepts required to understand the cognitive dimension of metaphor in Aristotle's reflection: i) ἀστεῖα, "brilliant expressions", ii) ἐνθυμήματα, "enthymemes", and iii) ἀναλογία, "analogy".

By ἀστεῖα Aristotle denotes those expressions, especially metaphors, that produce both pleasure and knowledge (1410b, 10-13). According to Morpurgo-Tagliabue, the Aristotelian notion of ἀστεῖα would anticipate the modern idea of "conceptual metaphors" that on the one hand increase

13 Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, 1033a-33.

14 Aristotle, *Ars Rhetorica*, Recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit W.D. Ross (Oxford Classical Texts; Oxford: Oxford University Press 1959).

15 M. Black, *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 1962) 41-66.

knowledge, while on the other are the most rhetorically effective.[16] Because of these two combined aspects, knowledge and pleasure, the production of metaphors became crucial in oratory speech, whose purpose was to be both informative (cognitive dimension) and convincingly entertaining (rhetorical dimension). Regarding ἐνθυμήματα (1410b, 20-36), it is a type of syllogism based on likelihoods. Within an enthymeme metaphor is a particular form of language that creates an intellectual tension, pushing toward knowledge.[17] Finally, the concept of ἀναλογία (*Poetics*, 1457b, 9; *Rhetoric*, 1411a, 1), the most important type of metaphor (1411a, 1-2). While in *Poetics* Aristotle explains how analogy works, in *Rhetoric* he provides abundant examples, to conclude that brilliant expressions especially derive from this type of metaphor. It is generally agreed that the question of analogy is crucial to Aristotle's entire theory of knowledge. Indeed, for Aristotle analogy is a model of argumentation and a linguistic-conceptual tool that allows people to connect apparently different phenomena: all reality can be read κατα ἀναλογίαν. Once again, the relationship metaphor-analogy reveals that the concept of τὸ ὅμοιον θεωρεῖν and its cognitive meaning play a central role in the Stagirite's metaphorology.

To sum up, although a mere aesthetic comprehension of metaphor is very often attributed to the Stagirite, Aristotelian metaphorology is more complex and includes also a cognitive perspective, as emerges from i) the notion of metaphor as a process between conceptual structures, namely genus and species, ii) the relationship between metaphor and brilliant expressions, enigma, enthymeme, and analogy, and iii) the crucial notion of τὸ ὅμοιον θεωρεῖν, "to observe similarities". The result is a comprehension of metaphor in which aesthetics and knowledge constitutes a unitary whole.

2. Classical Rhetoric: Metaphor as *delectatio*

When Aristotelian Rhetoric arrived in Rome in the second century BCE, during the full flowering of Latin letters, the previously consolidated reflection on metaphor underwent a decisive and fundamental transition: while the Stagirite had included aesthetic and theoretical aspects, stylistic and cognitive

16 G. Morpurgo-Tagliabue, *Linguistica e stilistica di Aristotele* (Filologia e Critica 4; Roma: Ateneo 1968) 252.

17 A. Laks, "Substitution et connaîssance. Une interprétation unitaire (ou presque) de la théorie aristotélicienne de la métaphore", in *Aristotle's Rhetoric: Philosophical Essays. Proceedings of the 12th Symposium Aristotelicum* (eds. D.J. Furley – A. Nehamas) (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1994) 283-305.

dimensions of metaphor in a comprehensive whole, Latin rhetoricians reduced metaphor to a stylistic expedient, merely designed to make speech higher, more enjoyable and more effective. In order to synthesize the metaphorology of Classical Rhetoric (CR), it could be said that according to CR (i) the purpose of metaphor is to decorate discourse, (ii) through the mechanism of substitution, (iii) whose main content is to establish a comparison.

(i) The concept of metaphor just as *delectatio* emerges from its collocation within the framework of the *elocutio*, namely the act of shaping ideas through the use of linguistic tools. Any *elocutio* was required to have three fundamental *virtutes* or qualities: clarity (*perspicuitas dicendi*), beauty (*ornatus*), and appropriateness both to the discourse's purposes and to the concrete situation (*aptum dicendi genus*).[18] Over the centuries, the second *virtus* has been emphasized to such an extent that its infinite articulations transformed Rhetoric from a "theory of argumentation" into a "theory of *ornatus*": in other words, the central focus of CR was on the "condiments' of speech" (*condita oratio, conditus sermo*), on its "flowers" (*verborum sententiarumque flores*) and "lights" (*lumina orationis*), and metaphor was considered just one of these adornments.[19]

Among several embellishments of discourse, CR emphasized the importance of tropes (*exornationes verborum*), namely those linguistic tools that divert an expression from its original content to another, in order to make discourse more charming. According to *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Quintilianus and Cicero,[20] metaphor is nothing more than one of these tropes, and even the trope *par excellence*, since metaphor has all the characteristics that can make the speech not only charming but also particularly persuasive (*Rheth. Ad Herennium* IV.34; *De Oratore* III, 158-162).

There are some texts in which metaphor seems to acquire more than a mere aesthetic value:

> Incipiamus igitur ab eo, qui cum frequentissimus est tum longe pulcherrimus, translatione dico, quae μεταφορά Graece vocatur. Quae quidem cum ita est ab ipsa nobis concessa natura, ut indocti quoque ac non sentientes ea frequenter utantur, tum ita iucunda atque nitida, ut in oratione quamlibet clara proprio tamen lumine eluceat. Neque enim vulgaris esse neque humilis nec insuavis apte ac recte modo adscita potest. Copiam quoque sermonis auget permutando aut mutuando quae non habet, quodque est difficillimum, praestat ne ulli rei nomen deesse videatur. Transfertur ergo nomen aut verbum ex eo loco

18 B. Mortara Garavelli, *Manuale di retorica* (Milano: Bompiani 2012) 110.

19 Ibidem, 138.

20 G. Achard (ed.), *Rhétorique à Herennius* (BD; Paris: Les Belles Lettres 1989); Quintilianus, *Institutionis oratoriae libri duodecim*, Recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit M. Winterbottom (Oxford Classical Texts; Oxford: Oxford University Press 1970); Cicero, *De Oratore* (ed. E.W. Sutton) (LCL 348; Cambridge, MA: Harward Univeristy Press 1976).

> id quo proprium est in eum in quo aut proprium deest aut translatum proprio melius est. Id facimus, aut quia necesse est aut quia significantius est aut (ut dixi) quia decentius.

Let us begin, then, with the commonest and by far the most beautiful of tropes, namely, metaphor, the Greek term for our "translatio". It is not merely so natural a turn of speech that it is often employed unconsciously or by uneducated persons, but it is in itself so *attractive* and *elegant* that however distinguished the language in which it is embedded it *shines forth* with a light that is all its own. For if it be correctly and appropriately applied, it is quite impossible for its effect to be commonplace, mean or unpleasing. It adds to the copiousness of language by the interchange of words and by borrowing, and *finally succeeds in accomplishing the supremely difficult task of providing a name for everything.* A noun or a verb is transferred from the place to which it properly belongs to another where there is either no literal term or the transferred is better than the literal. We do this either because it is necessary or *to make our meaning clearer* or, as I have already said, to produce a decorative effect" (Quintilianus, *Inst. Orat*., VIII 6, 4-6).[21]

The notions of "providing a name for everything" and "making our meaning clearer" might suggest an underlying comprehension of metaphor as a linguistic tool devoted to understanding reality. Nevertheless, even if this cognitive function of metaphor was present in the mind of Quintilianus, it does not appear to be significant within the context of its discourse. Here, on the contrary, the aesthetic dimension of metaphor is much more emphasized.

(ii) Regarding the mechanism, CR considered the metaphorical process as a *translatio*, namely a substitution of a word with another, or a transfer of a word in a context which is different from its own and in which another word would be required.

> Translatio est, cum verbum in quandam rem transferetur ex alia re, quod propter similitudinem recte videbitur posse transferri.
> Metaphor occurs when a word applying to one thing is transferred to another, because the similarity seems to justify this transference (*Rhet. Ad Herennium*, IV, 34.45).

According to Cicero, the real reason why these *translationes* were invented is the poverty of language and they only became "decorations" in a second instance.[22] In other words, the original purpose was to say something that otherwise would have been inexpressible (*De Orat.* III.155).

21 The *emphasis* is mine.

22 G. Guidorizzi – S. Beta, *La metafora: Testi greci e latini tradotti e commentati* (Pisa: ETS 2000) 188.

(iii) Finally, according to CR the only content of metaphorical expressions is similarity:

> In totum autem metaphora brevior est similitudo, eoque distat quod illa comparator rei quam volumus exprimere, haec pro ipsa re dicitur. Comparatio est cum dico fecisse quid hominem "ut leonem", tralatio cum dico "leo est".
> On the whole, metaphor is a shorter form of simile, while there is this further difference, that in the latter we compare some object to the thing which we wish to describe, whereas in the former this object is actually substituted for the thing. It is a comparison when I say that a man behaved "as a lion", it is a metaphor when I say that a man "is a lion" (Quintilianus, *Inst. Orat*., VIII 6, 8-9).

According to CR, metaphor basically derives from simile – while for Aristotle it was exactly the opposite – with the only difference that in a metaphorical expression the characteristic element of any simile, namely the connective "as/like", is suppressed. As a result, according to CR there is no substantial difference between A IS B and A IS LIKE B.

To sum up:

> Similitudinis est ad verbum unum contracta brevitas, quod verbum in alieno loco tamquam in suo positum si agnoscitur, delectat, si simile nihil habet, repudiatur.
> A metaphor is a brief similitude contracted into a single word; which word being put in the place of another, as if it were in its own place, conveys, if the resemblance be acknowledged, delight; if there is no resemblance, it is condemned (Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 39 157).

In this definition it is possible to see the three leading ideas on metaphor according to CR: similarity, substitution and delight*:* "similarity" is the content, "substitution" is the mechanism and "delight" is the effect.

3. The Cognitive Veer

Despite the fact that CR clouded the relationship between metaphor and knowledge for centuries, the idea that metaphor is a tool through which human beings construct their perception of reality found several supporters in the modern era. What follows briefly shows that the current emphasis on the cognitive dimension of metaphorical phenomena has its predecessors in Tesauro and Vico (§ 3.1),[23] and was developed over the twentieth century by

23 Interesting researches have also been conducted in the cognitive dimension of metaphor according to Nietzsche and Kant. See: S. Arduini – R. Fabbri, *Che cos'è la linguistica cognitiva* (Roma: Carocci 2008) 34-35.

many authors: in the philosophical area by Richards, Black and Blumenberg, in the hermeneutical horizon by Ricoeur and in the semiotic context by Eco (§ 3.2).

3.1. The Predecessors

A cognitive veer in metaphorology began with the Jesuit Emanuele Tesauro who occupied an important place in Europe's baroque landscape thanks to his main work, *Il Cannocchiale Aristotelico* (1654).[24] Here, Tesauro re-elaborated the figures of speech, above all metaphor, paving the way for a new consideration of metaphorical phenomena. Tesauro attempted to revolutionize the fundamental baroque principles of artistic and literary creation, starting from the title of his main work, *The Telescope*, which clearly alluded to Galileo's revolution. Going back to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, which was considered a living telescope that enabled one to examine the human capacity of knowing reality, Tesauro attempted to reconsider art in general and eloquence in particular as cognitive instruments, rather than just "pleasant games". He thus oriented the whole of baroque aesthetics toward knowledge. Within this theoretical framework, Tesauro considered metaphor to be the most productive instrument that allows the human mind to penetrate the mysterious aspects of reality:

> Il più ingegnoso e acuto, il più pellegrino e ammirabile, il più gioviale e giovevole, il più facondo e fecondo parto dell'umano intelletto.
> The most ingenious and acute, the most extraordinary and admirable, the most jovial and beneficial, the most eloquent and productive birth of the human intellect (*Il Cannocchale*, p. 116).

It is worth highlighting that in order to clarify the nature of metaphor, Tesauro used the image of "birth" suggesting that, thanks to metaphors, the human intellect generates new meanings and discovers existing affinity between elements that are already known. The ingenuity of metaphor precisely consists in connecting the most varied and disparate phenomena, and in simultaneously creating knowledge, pleasure and even wonder.

Even though it is only a first hint, Tesauro already anticipated the fundamental aspect of contemporary metaphorology and this is even more surprising

24 E. Tesauro, *Il Cannocchiale aristotelico o sia idea de l'arguta et ingeniosa elocutione che serve à tutta l'Arte oratoria, lapidaria, et simbolica esaminata co' principij del divino Aristotele dal Conte e Cavalier Gran Croce D. Emanuele Tesauro patritio torinese*, *Torino MDCLXX* (ed. B. Zavatta) (Savagliano: Editrice Artistica Piemontese 2000).

if his comprehension of metaphorical phenomena is contextualized in the baroque period, so apparently narrowed in an overblown aesthetic craving.

Tesauro's insights were developed further by Giambattista Vico, according to whom metaphor, rather than being an ornament of speech, is a cognitive and linguistic tool that models the experience of the world and reflects the connection between body and mind.[25] His main work, the *Scienza Nuova* (1725, 1730, 1744) was an attempt to investigate the human mind in light of Vico's encyclopedic knowledge.[26] Within the broader framework of his theory of history, Vico was absorbed by the issue of the origin of culture in general and of human language in particular, and this question led him to discover the existence of the so-called "primitive mind" and of three "natural laws" that guide human thought:[27]

i) Imagination, the ability to reflect on perceived visual experience, creating images that provide keys for the interpretation of reality.

ii) Ingenuity, which connects individual units of meaning in order to create some "models of the world", namely categories, language and the narrative structures of verbal discourse.

iii) Memory, the faculty that registers what imagination and ingenuity produce.

According to Vico, metaphor is the result both of imagination and ingenuity, in the sense that metaphorical process consists of creating a conceptual image, starting from visual perception.[28] It is therefore a cognitive operation that Vico calls "poetic logic", which consists in creating new meanings through the experience of the sensory world.

3.2. Twentieth Century Developments

The decisive turning point in metaphorology is generally credited to Richards' work *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1936).[29] Max Black, who presented

25 S. Otto, *Giambattista Vico: Grundzüge seiner Philosophie* (KUT 410; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer 1989).

26 G. Vico, *Principi di scienza nuova d'intorno alla comune natura delle nazioni* (ed. A. Battistini) (Milano: Mondadori 1990).

27 M. Danesi, *Vico, Metaphor and the Origin of Language* (Advances in Semiotics; Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1993).

28 D. Di Cesare, "Sul concetto di metafora in G.B. Vico", *Bollettino del Centro di studi vichiani* 26 (1986) 325-334; S. Gensini, "Su Vico, le metafore e la linguistica cognitiva", *Il sapere poetico e gli universali fantastici.* La presenza di Vico nella riflessione filosofica contemporanea (eds. G. Cacciatore – V.G. Kurotschka – E. Nuzzo – M. Sanna) (Studi vichiani 40; Napoli: Guida 2004) 54-72.

29 I.A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (London: Oxford University Press 1936).

an even more comprehensive development of this new perspective, described Richards' contribution as a definitive emancipation from all the defects of traditional theories of metaphor.[30]

The most important point in Richards' theory is that metaphor is not a question of "substitution" of one term with another, but rather of "interaction". This interaction occurs between a term called "vehicle" (the *metaphorizing*) which collides with the semantic meaning of a second term named "tenor" (the *metaphorized*). The vehicle does not substitute the tenor, rather it interacts with it creating a third element that is different both from the vehicle and from the tenor: the metaphor itself. This is a radical change of perspective with respect to the traditional position that considered metaphor to be an expression "in place of" a literal equivalent: according to Richards, a metaphorical expression is not "in place of", rather it is "different and more than" a literal expression. The proof is that it is impossible to paraphrase a metaphor without losing the new insights it conveys.

Richards' second claim is that our thought is metaphorical in itself. The fact that human language is rife with metaphors is only the consequence of the metaphorical structure of human cognition that proceeds by experiencing and comparing diverse elements of surrounding reality.

Together with Richards' contribution, the interactive theory proposed by Max Black in *Metaphor* (1954) and in *More About Metaphor* (1979) is generally regarded as a milestone of the modern cognitive approach to metaphorical phenomena.[31] Black strongly criticized what he called the "substitution view of metaphor", namely the traditional approach to metaphor that considered metaphorical expressions (M) to be mere substitutions of equivalent literal expressions (L). According to the "substitution view"

> The author substitutes M for L; it is the reader's task to invert the substitution, by using the literal meaning of M as a clue to the intended literal meaning of L. Understanding a metaphor is like deciphering a code or unravelling a riddle (*Metaphor*, 280).

The reasons for this substitution are twofold: i) if there is no available L, so that M is just a *catachresis*, in order to fill a gap of the language; ii) if a stylistic choice requires something that can provoke a kind of "agreeable surprise".

Furthermore Black mentions another incorrect interpretation of metaphor, called the "comparison view", according to which

30 Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 36.

31 M. Black, "Metaphor", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 55 (1954) 273-294; "More about Metaphor', *Metaphor & Thought* (ed. A. Ortony) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1979) 19-43.

> M is either similar or analogous in meaning to its literal equivalent L. Once the reader has detected the ground of the intended analogy or simile (with the help of the frame, or clues drawn from the wider context) he can retrace the author's path and so reach the original literal meaning (the meaning of L) (*Metaphor*, 282).

According to the author, the problem connected to this perspective is that it neglects the fact that metaphor "creates" similarity rather than "formulating" some already existing similarities. The creative dimension of metaphor only emerges if a metaphor is thought in terms of "interaction". For instance, in the expression "Man is a wolf", two distinct subjects are present, the main subject (man) and the secondary one (wolf). The two subjects carry a set of clichés and the metaphorical process consists of a projection of a system of implications associated with the secondary subject (wolf) on the primary subject (man). The relationship that develops between the primary and secondary subject generates a meaning that is not obtainable by individual terms, but only comes to light when metaphor is produced.

Twenty-five years after his first work, Black attempted to deepen his original formulation in *More About Metaphor* (1979), in which the author treated the relationship between metaphors and similes. Although it is obvious that any metaphor mediates an analogy or a correspondence, this does not mean that "metaphor is a comparison":

> Looking at a scene through blue spectacles is different from *comparing* that scene with something else (*More About Metaphor*, 31).

The difference between metaphors and similes lies in the conceptual innovation that comes alive through the former. The author strongly argues that metaphor is a cognitive tool in itself, which creates a new vision and intuition of reality, describing reality as maps and charts do, namely on the basis of a theoretical model. As previously proposed in *Models and Metaphors* (1962),[32] a model is not a copy of reality, but a reproduction of its structure, and metaphor operates a re-description of something, as a lens that allows one to see reality in a new, creative way.

The same modern focus on the cognitive dimension of metaphor can be found in *La métaphore vive* (1975) by Paul Ricoeur, who presented a close comparison with Aristotle and with the most important theorists of metaphor, in light of his hermeneutic perspective.[33] His central contention is that metaphor is alive to the extent that it creates a new way of thinking reality. Like Black, Ricoeur blames CR for depriving metaphor of its cognitive and

32 Black, *Models and Metaphors*, 219-243.
33 P. Ricoeur, *La métaphore vive* (Paris: La Seuil 1975).

hermeneutic dimension, but unlike Black the author does not attribute this responsibility to Aristotle, but rather to later Latin Rhetoric, which moved away from the complex reflections of the Stagirite. Furthermore, in contrast to Black, Ricoeur attempted to integrate the most recent theory of interaction with some traditional statements concerning the importance of similarity. Indeed, according to Ricoeur, the purpose of metaphor is to establish a new similarity between diverse realities that would appear very distant without metaphor. Starting from Paul Henle's concept of icon,[34] Ricoeur considered metaphor to be an iconic representation in which an explicit term (vehicle) describes an implied term (tenor) so that the latter is "seen as" the former and metaphor provides new access to reality.

For Hans Blumenberg metaphor is likewise essentially a "cognitive" phenomenon, despite the fact that the philosopher never explicitly used this adjective. Through a thematic classification that traces the historical development of metaphor in Western culture, in the work *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie* (1960)[35] the author describes and critically analyzes the anthropological and pragmatic role of metaphor, which is to communicate a particular *Weltanschauung*.[36] According to Blumenberg, metaphor is primarily related to the problem of meaning and to the concept of the "unattainable sense" of reality. Since it is not possible to tell the entire truth about reality – reality is thick, opaque, and never completely knowable, controllable or expressible – metaphor allows one to say at least something about the mystery. Since human beings are forced to live in the *Zwischen*, between "speakable" and "unspeakable", metaphor is the only way to express anything about the *Lebenswelt* without absorbing the entire *Lebenswelt* by that expression. For Blumenberg, in fact, metaphors are "cross slashes of light that allow us to connect distant aspects, to light parts, zones, meanings".[37]

The last author presented in this paragraph is Umberto Eco who, in the context of Semiotics, addressed the issue of metaphorical phenomena several times over a period of forty years.[38] In his last contribution, *Metafora e semiotica interpretativa* (2005), Eco offers a synthesis of his research and

34 P. Henle (ed.), *Language, Thought and Culture* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press 1966).

35 H. Blumenberg, *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie* (Bonn: Bouvier 1960).

36 R. Bodei, "Metafora e mito nell'opera di Hans Blumenberg", *Hans Blumenberg*: *Mito, metafora, modernità* (ed. A. Borsari) (Bologna: Il Mulino 1999) 29-43.

37 R. Bodei, "Navigatio Vitae. La metafora dell'esistenza come viaggio. Riflessioni su H. Blumenberg", *Quaderni della fondazione S. Carlo* 1 (1987) 39.

38 U. Eco, *Le forme del contenuto* (Milano: Bompiani 1971) 95-125; *Trattato di semiotica generale* (Milano 1975) 344-358; *Semiotica*, 141-198; *I limiti dell'interpretazione* (Milano: Bompiani 1990) 142-161; "Metafora e semiotica interpretativa", *Metafora e conoscenza* (ed. A.M. Lorusso) (Milano: Bompiani 2005) 257-290.

some guidelines for the interpretation of metaphorical expressions that can be summarized as follows:

i) Metaphor implies a literal meaning. The interpreter of metaphor should not neglect that there is a *zero degree* of language and a gap between literal and metaphorical meaning. This *zero degree* should coincide with the meaning given in scientific and technical contexts. The utterance may be interpreted metaphorically only when it represents an absurdity with respect to the literal sense. By "absurdity of literal metaphor", Eco does not mean an empirical absurdity, but rather a "referential and encyclopaedic absurdity", i.e. a nonsense with respect to a system of clichés associated with the term in question. For example, the metaphor "Preacher Friars of St. Dominic are *canes Domini*" has been established because both the sememe *dog* and sememe *monk* have the properties of *loyalty* and *defence*. Through this "encyclopaedic nonsense", metaphor creates a new perspective on reality, so that once interpreted, metaphor leads one to see the world in a different way.

ii) Metaphors are not real but cultural. In light of the empirical world, metaphors can either be considered lies or can only lead to embarrassing representations of the world, such as when the Song of Songs says that the woman's legs are pillars of marble. Indeed, metaphor does not reflect the factual world *sic et simpliciter*, but the world how it is experienced and expressed through cultural conventions.

iii) Context is the only thing that allows us to read a metaphor as a metaphor. A metaphorical interpretation arises from the interaction between the interpreter and the text within a context. This context is both the utterance in itself, and the cultural framework in which the text and interpreter are located. The expression "John eats his apple every morning" should be interpreted literally if the context is the description of a breakfast; but if both the literary context and the encyclopaedic background of the text and reader are "the Bible", it could be legitimate to interpret the expression as "Every day John repeats the sin of Adam".

To sum up, modern scholars recovered the many complex aspects of metaphor and, despite their different perspectives, share some basic assumptions that on the one hand, sets modern metaphorology apart from CR, but on the other, pave the way for further CL research. Metaphor is first and foremost a way of knowing the world, and only in the second instance is it an embellishment of discourse. While there is general agreement on this cognitive dimension of metaphor, the next paragraph will show that CL currently represents a particularly productive theoretical framework to comprehend "how" metaphors conceptualize reality. Furthermore, the metaphorical process certainly implies a comparison between the "metaphorizing" and

the "metaphorized", but metaphor is more than that. As Black emphasized, comparing A to B is very different from looking at A and understanding A by wearing B as a pair of glasses. Whereas in the former case the question is the identification of the so called *tertium comparationis*, namely the element that "metaphorizing" and "metaphorized" have in common and through which two realities are compared, in the latter the question is to conceptualize A in light of B. Finally, metaphorical expressions cannot be properly understood without considering both the more immediate and the broader context. This means that the analysis of a metaphor cannot be reduced to an analysis of words, but it should include an investigation of a) the entire utterance, b) its literary context (for literary metaphors) or the contextual environment where the metaphor in question is employed (for daily, ordinary metaphors), and c) the cultural background. The relationship between metaphor and culture is particularly crucial, not only because metaphors depend on cultural conventions (Eco), but also because metaphors represent a possibility of understanding the particular *Weltanschauung* they transmit (Blumenberg). As a result, whereas on the one hand the more we know the cultural background from which an author or speaker draws, the better we understand his/her metaphors, on the other, the more we understand metaphors, the more access we have to their socio-cultural context.

4. Metaphor and Cognitive Linguistics

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson authored what is now considered to be the manifesto of cognitive linguistic research on metaphor, a study significantly entitled *Metaphors we live by* (1980), which introduced the theory named "Conceptual Metaphor Theory" (CMT).[39] Lakoff presented a more sophisticated version of his CMT some years later (1993),[40] while in the meantime his pioneering research had raised a great debate among scholars of metaphorical phenomena, inspiring further research.[41]

39 G. Lakoff – M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press 1980, 2003).

40 G. Lakoff, "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor", *Metaphor and Thought* (ed. A. Ortony) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press ^{2}1993) 202-251.

41 D. Holland, "All Is Metaphor: Conventional Metaphors in Human Thought and Language", *Reviews in Anthropology* 9/3 (1982) 287-97; A. Ortony, "Are Emotion Metaphors Conceptual or Lexical", *Cognition and Emotion* 2 (1988) 95-103; A. Wierzbicka, "Metaphors Linguists Live By: Lakoff and Johnson contra Aristotle", *Papers in Linguistics* 19/2 (1986) 287-313; L. Cameron – G. Low, *Researching and Applying Metaphor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999).

While metaphor has traditionally been treated as a decorative artifice of language, as an extraordinary instrument of rhetoric and imagination, on the contrary Lakoff argues that metaphor is a pervasive phenomenon of language, implemented on a daily basis in a variety of communicative situations. The example put forward, which has become a classic, it is the common use of a series of expressions on the occasion of a debate, such as "Your claims are indefensible", "He attacked all the weak points of my argument", "I have destroyed her reasoning", which clearly imply the metaphor THE DEBATE IS A WAR.

According to the authors, not only we constantly speak through metaphors but we also act through them. In other words, metaphor not only shapes our language, but it also informs our actions. For instance, many of the things that take place during an argument are partially structured by the concept of war: those who are engaged in a discussion really act "like" they were in war, using strategies, considering each other as enemies, winners or losers. As a result, metaphor is something "we live by", regardless of the awareness we have.

Furthermore, we speak and act metaphorically because we think metaphorically. Our ordinary conceptual system, by which we think and act, is metaphoric in itself, so that metaphor is not only a figure of speech, rather it foremost is a figure of thought. According to CMT the metaphorical process is a conceptualization of what is abstract (e.g. emotions, desires etc.), called "target", in terms of what is "concrete" (e.g. bodily experiences), called "source". Hence, the notion of "conceptual metaphor". Metaphor, indeed, creates a set of conceptual correspondences, called "mapping", between conceptual elements of the source and conceptual elements of the "target". However, not the entire structure of the Source is projected into the Target and not the entire domain Target is conceptualized through the Source. The partial nature of metaphorical mappings is well expressed and synthesized by Kövecses:

> Only a part of the source domain is utilized in every conceptual metaphor. We have called this "partial metaphorical utilization". This partial structure of the source highlights, that is, provides structure for, only a part of the target concept. We have called this "metaphorical highlighting". The part of the target that falls outside the highlighted region is said to be "hidden".[42]

After Lakoff and his CMT, many scholars tried to improve the pioneer's work. Starting from Fauconnier and Turner's idea of "blending", some authors created a new paradigm to understand metaphorical phenomena called

42 Z. Kövecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2010) 103.

"Blending Theory" (BT).[43] According to BT, the metaphorical process involves four spaces: i) Source or Input 1, ii) Target or Input 2, iii) Generic space, and iv) Blended space. While the Generic Space is the well-known *tertium comparationis*, namely what the two domains have in common and what makes the mapping possible, the aspect of novelty is the Blended Space. This is a new structure, where the elements of the first two domains are blended, producing a unitary whole which is impossible to be gathered from single domains.

To sum up, from a methodological point of view, the analysis of metaphor in light of CL should proceed in 4 steps: i) to identify the domains in questions, ii) to identify which conceptual elements of both domains are cross-mapped, iii) to identify the conceptual elements projected into the blended space, and iv) "to run the blend",[44] i.e. to analyze how the cross-mapped conceptual elements are blended into a unified whole.

In the next paragraph. I will show how the application of this methodology can enhance comprehension of Song 8:10.

5. Song 8:10 in Light of Cognitive Linguistics

אֲנִי חוֹמָה וְשָׁדַי כַּמִּגְדָּלוֹת	I am a wall and my breasts are two towers
אָז הָיִיתִי בְעֵינָיו כְּמוֹצְאֵת שָׁלוֹם	thus I was, for him, like one who finds peace.[45]

43 G. Fauconnier – M. Turner, *Conceptual Projection and Middle Spaces* (Department of Cognitive Science – Univeristy of California, April 1994, Report 9401) (Unpublished Manuscript); "Blending as a Central Process of Grammar", *Conceptual Structure, Discourse, and Language* (ed. A. Goldberg) (Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications 1996) 113-130; "Conceptual Integration", *Cognitive Science* 22/2 (1998) 133-187; "Principles of Conceptual Integration", *Discourse and Cognition: Bridging the Gap* (ed. J.-P. Koenig) (Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications 1998) 269-283; *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (New York, NY: Basic Books 2002); "Rethinking Metaphors", *Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought* (ed. R.W. Gibbs) (Cambridge Handbooks in Psychology; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2008) 53-66; M. Turner, *The Literary Mind* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press 1996); G. Fauconnier, *Mappings in Language and Thought* (Cambridge 1997); M. Turner – G. Fauconnier, "Conceptual Integration and Formal Expression", *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity* 10/3 (1995) 183-204; J. Grady – T. Oakley – S. Coulson, "Blending and Metaphor", *Metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics. Selected Papers from the Fifth International Cognitive Linguistics Conference, Amsterdam, July 1997* (ed. R.W. Gibbs – G.J. Steen) (Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 175; Amsterdam: John Benjamins 1999) 101-124; S. Coulson – T. Oakley, "Blending Basics", *Cognitive Linguistics* 11/3-4 (2000) 175-96.

44 Dancygier – Sweetser, *Figurative Language*, 82.

Song 8:10 belongs to the epilogue of the Song of Songs (8:5-14). Following Barbiero, this last section can be considered as an integral part, which is articulated in four strophes (5-7; 8-10; 11-12; 13-14).[46] According to this reading, therefore, Song 8:10 belongs to the second strophe, in which first the woman's brothers express their concern for her sexuality (vv. 8-9) and she afterwards responds to her family (v. 10).

Exum notes that the woman's words are particularly enigmatic[47]. Despite the fact that biblical scholars generally recognize that in Song 8:10 the woman is describing herself through the military metaphor of a fortified citadel, their interpretations of the conceptual content conveyed by the image diverge considerably. While some commentators contend that the woman is asserting her chastity[48], according to others she is claiming her autonomy[49], and for still others she is manifesting her sexual maturity[50]. Moreover, some scholars glimpse other possible meanings, such as readiness for marriage and acceptance by her lover,[51] while some others suggest that the concept of "sexual seduction" is also implied.[52] The result of so many different interpretations is that the meaning of the metaphor is far from clear. Although some of the aforementioned readings may be correct and that many and different explanations are possible, since metaphors are inherently polysemous, these comments nevertheless contain several drawbacks. First, current scholarship does not deter either *which* concepts precisely play a role in the metaphor in question, or *how* these concepts are blended together. Is she presenting

45 The expression הייתי בעיניו is often interpreted as if it followed כמוצאת שׁלום. The resulting, common interpretation is an expression similar to מצא חן בעיניו, "to find favour in his eyes" (Gen 39:4; Deut 24:1; Ruth 2:2): G. Barbiero, *Song of Songs: A Close Reading* (VTSup 144; Leiden: Brill 2011) 480. However, I consider חייתי בעיניו as a syntagma which expresses a point of view, in light of the other occurrences in the Hebrew Bible (Gen 27:12; 29:20; 2 Sam 4:10; Prov 26:5). The participle מוצאת can be either a *qal* of מצא , "to find", and (B) a *hiphil* of יצא, "to bring out": Othmar Keel, *Das Hohelied* (ZBK.AT 18; Zürich: Theologischer Verl. 1986) 251; G. Ravasi, Il Cantico dei Cantici: Commento e attualizzazione (Bologna: EDB 1992) 696. I prefer the first possibility mainly because the dynamic of "searching and finding" is a crucial one in the poem (1:7-8; 3:1-6; 5:6-8; 8:1). In addition, the *hiphil* of יצא never occurs in the Song. Finally, the reading of מוצאת as a *qal* of מצא is supported by LXX (εὑρίσκουσα).

46 Barbiero, *Song*, 435-441.

47 Ch.J. Exum, *The Song of Songs* (OTL; Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press 2005) 257.

48 M.H. Pope, *Song of Songs: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (AB 7c; Garden City, NY: Doubleday 1977) 683.

49 Y. Zakovitch, *Das Hohelied* (HThKAT; Freiburg: Herde 2004) 278.

50 R.E. Murphy, *The Song of Songs: A Commentary on the Book of Canticles or the Song of Songs* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress 1990) 193; E. Assis, *Flashes of Fire: A Literary Analysis of the Song of Songs* (LHBOTS 503; London: Clark 2009) 247.

51 Murphy, *Song*, 199.

52 Barbiero, *Song*, 479.

herself as keeping her sexuality (concept of "chastity"), or is she seducing him by highlighting her breasts (concept of "seduction")? Is she trying to attract her beloved (concept of "sexual maturity"), or is she challenging her brothers with her claim for independence (concept of "autonomy")? Is all of this occurring at the same time and, if so, *how* are such diverse concepts combined? Furthermore, some scholars recognize the warlike scenario in the verse, but at the same time undermine the military image by creating an opposition between concepts that the metaphor in question has in fact blended together. For example, Garrett asserts: "The 'towers' now belong to her lover, *but not* by conquest or force".[53] On my reading, if the warlike scenario is seriously considered, the concepts both of conquest and force are necessarily implied (a siege without conquest is not a siege). A similar mistake is also made by Assis: after recognizing the meaning of the military images of wall and towers as an assertion of her sexual maturity, and after the correct explanation of Song 8:10 as a polemic answer of the woman to her brothers, he concludes: "Instead of military concepts such as strength and power, she comes with the concept of 'peace'".[54] In this way, Assis contradicts the metaphor, first of all because if wall and towers introduce an image of war, the mention of peace can only have the military meaning of "the end of the war". Second, some concepts (strength/power) are essential to the employed conceptual domain of war to such an extent that one cannot neglect them without nullifying the military image. It seems that whereas the Song is perfectly comfortable in describing love in terms of war, some of its commentators tend to "sugar-coat" the poem.[55] Finally, exegetes leave the relationship between 10a and 10b and the function of the particle אָז unexplained.[56] Commentators of the Song simply translate the particle – usually as "thus, then" – without investigating the conceptual and logical transition from אֲנִי חוֹמָה וְשָׁדַי כַּמִּגְדָּלוֹת to הָיִיתִי בְעֵינָיו כְּמוֹצְאֵת שָׁלוֹם .

According to my proposal, a cognitive linguistic reading of Song 8:10 might help i) to determine and clarify better the conceptualization operated by the warlike metaphor WOMAN IS A FORTIFIED CITADEL, and ii) to understand better the role played by אָז. In light of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and

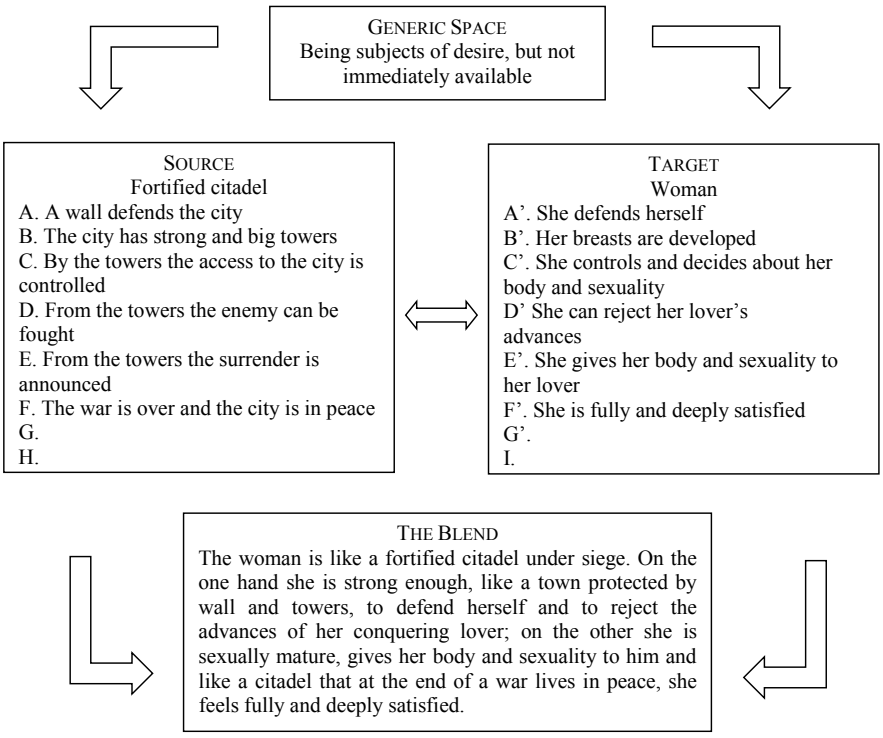
53 D.A. Garrett – P.R. House, *Song of Songs. Lamentations* (WBC 23b; Nashville, TN: Nelson 2004) 263. The *emphasis* is mine.

54 Assis, *Flashes*, 248.

55 See also my criticism to current interpretations of the root *dgl*, "army/banner" (Song 2:4; 5:10; 6:4.10) in "War-Games in the Song of Songs", *SJOT* [forthcoming].

56 The particle in question occurs in the Hebrew Bible with a temporal/logic meaning: Ch. van der Merwe – J.A. Naudé – J.H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1999) § 40.4; 31.2/1; B.K. Waltke – M.P. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns 1990) § 39.3.4f.

Blending Theory, described above, the metaphor in question can be represented as follows:



The mention of walls, towers and peace evoke the representation of the relationship between the Song's lovers in terms of a war in which the woman (target) takes on the traits of a fortified city (source), which implies the image of an assailant warrior/army, i.e. her beloved. The generic element that "fortified city" and "woman" have in common (the generic space or *tertium comparationis*) and that activates the metaphorical process between the two domains, is the fact that both the former and the latter are subjects of desire/conquest, but also the fact that none of them are immediately available. There is no need to seduce a woman if it is obvious that she is available, there is no need to besiege a citadel if it is already conquered. As a result, on the one hand as a warrior wants to conquer a city, so he wants his beloved; but on the other as a city is equipped with architectural constructions that allow it to fend off enemies, so she holds off his desire, making clear that nothing must be taken for granted.

As explained above, according to CMT and BT, in order to understand a metaphor it is crucial to identify which conceptual elements of source and

target domains are cross-mapped. It is important to note that according to BT these domains are "packets of conceptual knowledge, which may contain much more information than what is explicitly put into words in the metaphor",[57] so that an encyclopaedic knowledge of the domains in question is required.[58] In light of the research that has been conducted on ancient Israel's warfare,[59] we know that the fortifications of ancient Jewish towns mainly consisted of double encircling walls with strong towers. The word חוֹמָה, "wall", used by the woman in Song 8:10, refers to the inner wall of the fortification, as testified by Isa 26:1: "We have a strong city, he sets up inner walls (חוֹמָה) and outer walls (חֵל) to protect us". The חוֹמָה was considered the strongest wall and the most resistant part in the fortification, meant to be the last defence to collapse in the event of military attack. In order to protect the walls, other installations were built, such as ramparts, moats, and towers. Towers were built as part of the city wall at regular intervals, in a square or semi-circular shape, and equipped with balconies from where the defenders could throw burning weapons and stones. They were also built on either side of the gates in order to control and protect the entrances, which were the weakest point in a citadel. Moreover, towers represented the place from where the besieged citadels declared their surroundings to enemies.[60]

Going back to the metaphor of 8:10 with this domain in mind, we can assume that the conceptual element "a wall defends the city" of the source "fortified city", corresponds to "She defends herself" of the target "woman"; "the city has strong and big towers" to "her breasts are developed"; "by the towers the access to the city is controlled" is cross-mapped with "she controls and decides about her body and sexuality"; "from the towers the enemy can be fought" with "She can reject her lover's advances"; "from the towers the surrender is announced" corresponds to "she gives her body and sexuality to her lover"; finally, "the war is over and the city is in peace", corresponds

57 P. Van Hecke, "Conceptual Blending: A Recent Approach to Metaphor. Illustrated with the Pastoral Metaphor in Hos 4:16", *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. P. Van Hecke) (BETL 187; Leuven: Leuven University Press 2005) 220.

58 For the distinction in Linguistics between dictionary and encyclopedia and recent developments: D. Geeraerts, "Lexicography", *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics* (eds. D. Geeraerts – H. Cuyckens) (New York, NY: Oxford University Press 2010) 1160-1173.

59 The reference point for Israel's warfare is Y. Yadin, *The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands in the Light of Archaeological Discovery* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1963). See also: P.J. King – L.E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press 2001) 223-258; B.E. Kelle – F. Ritchel Ames (eds.), *Writing and Reading War: Rhetoric, Gender, and Ethics in Biblical and Modern Contexts* (SBL Symposium 42; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature 2008).

60 See the drawings Assyrian sieges reported by King and Lawrence, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 238, and by Yadin, *The Art of Warfare*, 420-425.

to "she feels fully and deeply satisfied". Moreover, in the table, G and G' indicate all the possible cross-mappings activated by the metaphor, while H and I refer to those conceptual elements that belong to the structure of the singular domains, without being activated in the process of mapping and blending. Finally, the blending of the conceptual elements can be paraphrased as follows: the woman is like a fortified citadel under siege. On the one hand she is strong enough, like a town protected by a wall and towers, to defend herself and to reject the advances of her conquering lover; on the other she is sexually mature, gives her body and sexuality to him and, like a citadel that at the end of a war lives in peace, she feels fully and deeply satisfied.

According to the proposed reading, the concepts of chastity and sexual seduction, suggested by several scholars, do not play a significant role in Song 8:10. On the contrary, the concepts of autonomy from her brothers and sexual maturity, recognized by other exegetes, are certainly present. On the one hand she is definitively emancipating from her over-controlling brothers, which in 8:8-9 (and already in 1:6) expressed their negative, frustrating attitude toward her sexual life. While in 8:8-9 they devalued the woman's femininity and sexual maturity, by considering her like a child, unable to guard herself, ("We have a little sister, she has no breasts"), in 8:10 she reacts with remarkable firmness and pride by asserting that, she is not little at all, but rather she is a woman, with a mature (and demanding) sexuality. However, the dominant, more emphasized concept in 8:10a is that she *can* reject her lover: she is a fortified city! The proof of her sexual maturity and the sign of her emancipation is not that she has an overwhelming and uncontrolled desire, but rather that she *can* refuse the man's sexual advances (8:10a). She is mature, strong, and in full possession of her sexuality and body to such an extent that she is even able to reject the beloved (if only she would like to!). In other words, the dominant concept in Song 8:10a is that she *can* say "no" to her beloved.

The second part of the verse clarifies that *since* she is not at the mercy of her beloved (אֲנִי חוֹמָה וְשָׁדַי כַּמִּגְדָּלוֹת), *thus* (אָז) she had in the sexual relationship with him a real experience of full satisfaction (הָיִיתִי בְעֵינָיו כְּמוֹצְאַת שָׁלוֹם). The fact that she is mature, able even to refuse him, has been what allowed her to freely give herself and deeply enjoy the sexual union. It is particularly interesting that between her statement of being a fortified citadel in 10a and the declaration of surrender in 10b (in the table, between D-D' and E-E') there is no explicit reference to a decisive attack of her beloved. How and why did the city surrender? The answer cannot but be that the city *decided* to surrender. The fortified city, that is able to reject the assailant enemy, surrendered not because the enemy was particularly strong, or because the

city was not able to defend itself, but because it *let* the conquering army/warrior enter and take possession of the fortress.

In sum, i) the metaphor of the fortified city refers to the woman's sexual maturity and autonomy from her brother, but primarily to her capacity to reject the man; ii) the particle אָז, "thus", creates a logical transition from 10a to 10b, clarifying that her sexual maturity, which also includes being able to refuse his courtship, allowed her to give herself entirely to the Beloved, fully enjoying the experience of their mutual love.

Conclusion

The present article attempts to make a contribution to the ongoing research on biblical metaphors by providing current scholarship with a broad hermeneutical framework on the cognitive dimension of metaphorical phenomena. It demonstrates that the cognitive dimension of metaphor was already grasped by Aristotle (§ 1). Furthermore, if the cognitive aspect of metaphor has been clouded by Classical Rhetoric (§ 2), several authors in the modern age have highlighted that *to metaphorize is*, so to speak, *to conceptualize* reality (§ 3). As a result, CL might be considered the peak of a long tradition that started with Aristotle. I presented its theoretical framework, which over the last decades has resulted in being particularly beneficial for studies on metaphor, biblical metaphors included (§ 4). Finally, I offered a sample reading of a biblical metaphor in light of CL, namely Song 8:10 (§ 5), that has clarified the conceptualization of the woman in terms of a fortified citadel and the logical transition from 10a to 10b through the particle אָז.

Despite the fact that the main purpose of CL is not to interpret ancient, literary metaphors, but to explain the complex conceptual mechanisms which are at the root of metaphorical phenomena, a cognitive linguistic analysis can clarify the conceptualizations conveyed by metaphors and offer better explanations of specific metaphorical expressions. While it must be recognized that the elusive dimension of (literary) metaphor can make any interpretation problematic and inconsistent, if the interpreter is guided more by personal insights than by a clear methodological framework, the risk of misleading, contradictory and vague readings increases considerably. Herein lies the advantage of drawing on Cognitive Linguistics, which on the one hand offers a method of analysis which is respectful of the text, but on the other does not neglect the importance of the interpreter's creativity.

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