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CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE POEM “DEFEAT” BY KAHLIL GIBRAN

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on metaphors, their types, how they are used in our daily lives, and the power and the importance of metaphors in poetry by analyzing poem “Defeat” written by Kahlil Gibran.

Key words: *metaphor, practical, verbal portrait, comparison, cognitive structure, conceptual metaphors, orientational metaphors, ontological metaphors.*

The spread of metaphor in numerous genres of literature, every day and scientific speech has attracted many scientists and thinkers. The growth of interest in metaphor has been stimulated by the increase in its use in everyday life. Nina Davidova Arutyunova, who is Soviet and Russian linguist, doctor of philology, laureate of the State Prize of the Russian Federation, examines the position of metaphor in practical (every day and business), scientific and artistic speech, its place among semiotic concepts and system of tropes. Metaphor is extremely practical. It can be used everywhere, in every field: in conversations, in literature, in psychotherapeutic conversations, in education and etc.

Besides, the metaphor also had some negative consequences. But according to the scientist, the use of metaphor in some styles is inappropriate and unacceptable. As

an example, the author mentions business discourse (in laws, military orders, etc.) in instructions and medical recommendations - in short, in everything that must be strictly observed, implemented and controlled, and therefore subject to precise and unambiguous understanding. However, as soon as the center of gravity shifts to the emotional impact, the ban on metaphor is lifted. The sphere of expression of emotions and emotional pressure introduces an element of artistry into everyday speech, and with it a metaphor. "A metaphor often contains an accurate and vivid description of a person. This is a verdict, but not a judicial one. The metaphor does not penetrate either the dossier or the questionnaire. In the column about Sobakevich's special features, "bear" cannot be placed - the metaphorical "container" of his special features. But for the actor playing the role of Sobakevich, this metaphor is important: instructions for creating an artistic image can be figurative. Metaphor is also effective in a verbal portrait of the wanted person. After all, recognition is made not only by moles and tattoos, but also by the image stored in memory. This is art. A metaphor, if it is successful, helps to reproduce an image that is not given in experience." [Arutyunova 1990: 8]

Having examined metaphorical provisions in scientific discourse, many English rationalist philosophers were negative about the use of metaphor in conveying information, since it is unclear and vague. T. Hobbes wrote "The light of the human mind is intelligible words, previously cleared of all ambiguity by precise definitions. Reasoning is a step, the growth of knowledge is the path, and the well-being of the human race is the goal. Metaphors and ambiguous words, on the contrary, are something like *ignes fatui* (will-o'-the-wisps), and to reason with their help is to wander among countless absurdities, the result to which they lead is disagreement and indignation or contempt" [T. Hobbes 1936:62]. Based on this, we can understand that there are two ways to convey thoughts: using words in their literal and precise sense and a metaphorical way. Arutyunova writes that, the use of metaphors in scientific writings was equal to committing a crime. (this is not her own opinion but she relies on the opinions of other scholars). [Arutyunova 1990: 11].

But, on the other hand, scientists and romantic thinkers perceived metaphor as something that could not be avoided; as N.D. Arutyunova puts it “fatal inevitability” [ibid.] And in this sense, metaphor is perceived not only as the only way of expressing thoughts, but also as a way of thinking. Nietzsche wrote: “The “thing in itself” (that would be pure, consequential truth) is completely unattainable... The stimulation of a nerve becomes an image! First metaphor. Image becomes sound! Second metaphor. And each time a complete leap into a completely different and alien area... We think we know something about the things themselves when we talk about trees, paints, snow and flowers; in fact, we have only metaphors of things that do not at all correspond to their original essences” [Nietzsche 1912: 396]

Metaphor not only forms an idea of an object, it also predetermines the way and style of thinking about it. “In the same way, in practical speech, having given impetus to the semantic process, the metaphor is gradually erased and ultimately loses the image, which is replaced by the concept (the meaning of the word). [Arutyunova 1990: 15] In art, on the contrary, artistic thought strives for metaphor, starting from the image. In this sense, metaphor is a tool and at the same time the fruit of the poetic process.

“Metaphor denies the belonging of an object to the class to which it actually belongs, and asserts its inclusion in a category to which it cannot be assigned on a rational basis. The source of the metaphor is a conscious error in the taxonomy of objects.” [Arutyunova 1990: 17] Since the time of Aristotle, metaphor has been expressed as a brief or hidden comparison, but N.D. Arutyunova refutes this established definition. According to N.D. Arutyunova’s metaphor is a shortened opposition. [Arutyunova 1990: 17]. A striking example is an excerpt from the work of L. Tolstoy - “You used to ride in front of a squadron; There’s a devil under you, not a horse.”

“The juxtaposition of the distant (creating similarities) is one of the important principles of constructing artistic speech and another reason for the kinship of metaphor with poetry.” [Arutyunova 1990: 20]. The inclusion of a concept from one class into another unrelated class is a metaphor. Metaphor, therefore, is characterized by the

establishment of distant connections. To what extent are these distant relationships accidental? To this question N.D. Arutyunova gives the answer: “They are random in the sense that they are directly determined by the individual experience and subjective consciousness of the author.” [ibid.]

“Metaphor is related to poetic discourse by the following features: 1) the merging of image and meaning in it, 2) contrast with the trivial taxonomy of objects, 3) categorical shift, 4) actualization of “random connections”, 5) irreducibility to a literal paraphrase, 6) syntheticity, diffuseness of meaning, 7) allowing for different interpretations, 8) absence or optionality of motivation, 9) appeal to imagination rather than knowledge, 10) choosing the shortest path to the essence of the object.” [Arutyunova 1990:20]

The connection of metaphor with poetic imagination, with fantasy, as well as its imagery, opened the way for the use of metaphor in modern painting, theater and cinema, etc. “Metaphor has a different, more serious task. It is designed to create an image of an object that would reveal its latent essence. A metaphor deepens the understanding of reality, a symbol takes us beyond its limits.” [Arutyunova 1990: 25]

The description of the relationship between metaphor and poetic speech would not be complete if we did not touch upon the question of the place of metaphor among other tropes with which it is in direct systemic relationships. These include comparison, metamorphosis and metonymy.

“The metaphor is laconic. She easily fits into the tightness of the poetic series. It avoids modifiers, explanations and justifications. Metaphor shortens speech, comparison expands it.” [Arutyunova 1990:27]

The essence of comparison is to liken one object to another object, and the essence of metaphor is to reveal a constant feature of an object with the help of another object or concept. [Arutyunova 1990: 27] If the comparison depends on time, that is, at that moment he looked like a bird, the metaphor is not delimited by time; you are now a tiger. “A dispute about similarity is a dispute about impressions. A dispute about

the choice of metaphor is a dispute about the true essence of the subject" [Arutyunova 1990:28]

If earlier a metaphor was defined as an abbreviated comparison, but now Arutyunova proves that, along with the sign of comparison, the metaphor also abandons the basis of comparison, for example: Sobakevich is clumsy, ponderous and clubfooted like a bear, here Sobakevich is compared to a bear, because he repeats with his clubfoot and clumsiness bear quality. If you use a metaphor instead of a comparison, it will sound like this: Sobakevich is a bear. "The metaphor is figurative, the metaphor is "a court verdict without trial." The verdict is without motivation, without explanation." [Arutyunova 1990:28] Although this is not a judicial (literally) sentence, this is how it is perceived.

"Finally, we can realize the laconicism of the metaphor, its "abbreviation." By reducing the "sign of comparison" (comparative connective), the metaphor along with it discards the basis of comparison. If in the classical case the comparison is three-term (A is similar to B in attribute C), then the metaphor is normally two-term (A is B)." [ibid.]

Metaphorization is based on the interaction of two knowledge structures - the cognitive structure of the "source" (source domain) and the cognitive structure of the "target domain". In the process of metaphorization, some areas of the goal are structured according to the model of the source, in other words, "metaphorical mapping" or "cognitive mapping" occurs. The assumption that the structure of the source is partially reproduced in the structure of the target is called the "invariance hypothesis". Traces of metaphorical projection are found at the level of semantics of the sentence and text in the form of metaphorical consequences. For example, the metaphor PEOPLE/SOCIETY [goal] IS A HERD [source] in expressions like we are again just a dumb herd for the destructive games of the "tops" draws the addressee's attention to the idea of "lack of independence, passivity", which is part of the cognitive structure (frame) "herds": knowledge of the world tells us that a herd of animals (for example, cows - as a prototype for European culture) is controlled by a shepherd.

[Lakoff 1990:9]. Currently, the cognitive metaphor does not provide a specific answer about how the process itself occurs as a whole. The reason for this is that a knowledge representation metalanguage for language descriptions has not yet been developed. We emphasize that the main problem here is not even how to describe the structure of the frame and the content of the corresponding transformations, but how to represent semantic information in the components of the frame structure (respectively, the script or plan). [ibid].

The source area and the target area are unequal not only in the sense of the direction of metaphorization. The source area is specific knowledge and is substantiated with the help of a person's life experience with a specific reality. We can call this "knowledge by acquaintance," and the scope of the goal, less abstract, to briefly explain, is "knowledge by definition." As J. Lakoff writes, "metaphor allows us to understand rather abstract or inherently unstructured entities in terms of more concrete or at least more structured entities" [Lakoff 1990: 12].

Stable correspondences between the source area and the target area, fixed in the linguistic and cultural tradition of a given society, are called "conceptual metaphors." [Lakoff1990:13]. The conceptual metaphors of European culture include, for example, the metaphorical projections TIME IS MONEY, DISPUTE IS WAR, LIFE IS A JOURNEY, etc. [ibid.]. Naturally, time is money. Time, of course, is a lot like money. It can be spent wisely or in vain, like money, it can be lost, it can run out, time can be calculated, or you can invest your time in something, in general it is a valuable and finite resource. But, in some ways, time is not at all like money, there is no global bank of time, it is impossible to borrow from someone and then return it with interest. That is, part of the concept of time corresponds to the concept of money, but part of it does not, does not correspond. But our linguistic picture focuses precisely on the similarity between time and money, and we unconsciously ignore the differences.

So far, we have been exploring what can be called structural metaphors, that is, cases in which one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another. But there is another kind of metaphorical concepts that do not structure one concept in terms of

another, but organize an entire system of concepts in relation to another system. We will call such concepts orientational metaphors, since they are associated with orientation. [Lakoff1990:37]. For example: “top-bottom”, “inside-outside”, “front side-back side”, “on the surface - from the surface”, “deep-shallow”, “central-peripheral”. These metaphors arose in space because a person is located in space. He stands and moves vertically, he looks forward, and he has the concept of up and down because we have gravity on the planet. Everything good that happens to a person is most often described through the metaphor of the top, and now, someone is at the top of bliss and feels on the rise. And what bad things can happen to us is described through metaphors from below. And now the mood has dropped, or someone has come down with a cold and slipped from A’s to C’s. With the help of orientation metaphors, we try to comprehend the space in which we find ourselves.

To understand actions, events or activities and states, there is another group of metaphors, ontological ones. Just as the experience of human spatial orientation gives rise to orientational metaphors, the experience of handling material objects (especially our own body) creates the basis for an exceptionally wide variety of ontological metaphors, that is, ways of perceiving events, activities, emotions, ideas, etc. , as material entities and substances. [Lakoff1990:51].

Ontological metaphors serve different purposes, and different kinds of metaphors reflect different purposes. [ibid]. The MACHINE metaphor creates an idea of the mind as a device that is characterized by on-off phases, efficiency, production capacity, which has an internal mechanism, an energy source, which is characterized by certain operating conditions. The FRAGILE OBJECT metaphor is not so rich. It allows us to talk only about the psychological strength of a person. Nevertheless, some part of the experience associated with the inner world of a person can be understood in terms of both metaphors. [Lakoff1990:55].

Don’t broke down. It’s broken’ (THE SHOWER IS A MACHINE).

Not cracked up. Yun moved (literally, cracked)’ (THE MIND IS A FRAGILE OBJECT).

But these two metaphors do not highlight the same thing in experience. When a car breaks down, it simply stops working. When a fragile object breaks, parts fly apart, possibly with dangerous consequences. Thus, when someone goes crazy and becomes violent or violent, the appropriate expression is Not cracked up. On the other hand, when someone becomes lethargic and unable to act for psychological reasons, we are more likely to say Not broke down. [ibid].

Such metaphors are so accurate and natural, even we perceive them as direct descriptions, as descriptions that are used not in a figurative sense, but in a literal one. We believe that such expressions as Not cracked under pressure ‘Under the pressure of circumstances, he moved (lit., cracked)* can be directly tested for truth or falsity. This expression was actually used by various journalists to explain why Dan White took his gun to the San Francisco city magistrate’s office and shot and killed Mayor George Moscone. Such explanations seem quite natural to most of us. The reason for this is that metaphors such as MIND/SOUL IS A FRAGILE OBJECT are an integral part of our culture’s model of the inner world; most people think and act in the language of this model. [Lakoff1990:56].

Poet Kahlil Gibran in his poem “Defeat”, portray how someone who experiences failures can accept defeat as a step towards self-awaking. Here, the poet characterize defeat as something that can affect person positively. He highlights how defeat can help to find the meaning of life. He invites readers to understand that actually defeat is not the end of the journey or despair in life, and also defeat is part of the process of improving spiritually and emotionally facing many obstacles in life and to overcome them without being failed. Kahlil Gibran’s poem “Defeat” expresses the importance of embracing the process of defeat because it helps to a person to be strong, to face challenge or an obstacle, it teaches to be in the process of understanding oneself.

Life is full of ups and downs, crucial and tricky points that challenge a person’s resolve and test our patience, strength to face defeat. “Defeat, my Defeat, my solitude and my aloofness”; [line1]. In this line the poet expresses defeat as a profound experience that holds unique significance in the person’s life. It describes a person

who is underestimating himself because of the actions he did which caused the feeling of failure. “You are dearer to me than a thousand triumphs”; [line2]. This line is highlighting the changes on the person to rise and face the failure. Metaphor: Defeat is a best friend. Poet portray defeat as the best friend, because it helps to face failures and overcome difficulties. “And sweeter to my heart than all world-glory”; [line3]. Metaphor: Defeat is a warm and comfort feeling. By this way Gibran trying to recontextualizes the significance of triumphs and world of glory by grabbing defeat as more profoundly resonant. “Defeat, my Defeat, my self-knowledge and my defiance”. Metaphor: Defeat is a self-awareness, understanding oneself and standing up against challenges. “Through you I know that I am yet young and swift of foot” [line5]. This means that a person, no matter how old is he, will be still young and through failures he is becoming knowledgeable. So, defeat can be seen as a normal thing that person experiences in order to practice steadfastness in life. “And not to be trapped by withering laurels”; “And in you I have found aloneness”; describes defeat is a something in which you can find aloneness, “And the joy of being shunned and scorned”; in these lines capturing the person conscious to stand out because the person knows that the journey is long way to go and that we should not have easily to give up due to circumstances. People always delay things, works because they worry and think about the failure, and they think, that moment is the hardest part of their life and feel that the world destroys them. But Gibran says not to give up and accept all circumstances as a blessing because with the help of obstacles we become stronger. “Defeat, my Defeat, my shining sword and shield”; [line9]. Metaphor: Defeat is a protector. To live in successful and happy life we should hardly protect ourselves when we face obstacles. The next following lines “In your eyes I have read”; “That to be enthroned is to be enslaved”, Gibran says that to achieve something better we should try to do our best and even sacrifice time, our comfort zone in order to be ready for facing failures and overcome them without facing failure. “And to be understood is to be leveled down”; after becoming successful, we shouldn’t become arrogant, we should put ourselves in the same position as before but in different circumstances. “And

to be grasped is but to reach one's fullness"; "And like a ripe fruit to fall and be consumed"; learning from the situations we have experienced to take a step in appreciating defeat and enjoying it as a fallen ripe fruit. With the next following lines Gibran says that the only person who understand ourselves is ourselves. Nobody can't feel the difficulties that we have felt before like ourselves. That's why we know what we feel and we know what we will do. Through defeat, the poet can understand the process that must be gone through and know how to overcome hardships. "And none but you shall speak to me of the beating of wings"; [line17]. The author describes defeat as the flapping of wings with the intention that in this defeat the author will give new enthusiasm and new motivation in navigating the world, that with the flapping of his wings he believes he will be able to fly even higher. With our own defeat that we can take strength to overcome our weaknesses even better than before. "Defeat, my Defeat, my deathless courage". Metaphor: Defeat is a fearlessness, the poet succeeded in going in his journey with defeat. Finally, in last lines of his poem, Gibran says "You and I shall laugh together with the storm"; "And together we shall dig graves for all that die in us"; "And we shall stand in the sun with a will"; "And we shall be dangerous". Metaphor: Defeat is a brave friend, who stands together in every condition next to his friend and supports him, which means that the person can get through his dark times and succeed in mixing success with the new strength by accepting his defeat.

To conclude, by using different metaphors Kahlil Gibran in his poem defeat, which is published in 1918, teaches that defeat is not a weakness, but rather a way for us to learn to appreciate defeat and overcome it. Only with defeat we gain a lot of life experience, knowledge and understanding that defeat can make us as someone who is wiser and tougher. Defeat is the biggest shield within us that we must appreciate and become a big motivation to grow together to achieve satisfaction in life.

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