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To Carry Across: Metaphor Invents Us

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“Our daily speech continually fluctuates between
the ideals of mathematical and imaginative harmony.”
Lev Vygotsky (1962)

“The real discovery is the one that will let philosophy
resume thinking metaphorically when it needs to.”
Jan Zwicky (2003)

“...philosophy either recognizes or invents the different categories of being in the world
while metaphors feed on the violations of such categorical distinctions.”
Graver & Lee (1994)

semantic

anomaly

(this way ideas	take form
November light	inside:
on the Japanese maple	congeals
falling in	I gave you
	the shape of
child	hands
leaves	hold onto
black earth.	
(this way	
a cognitive	
and the earth	synergy:
such deep	sighs out of
	red
(in-sight	
an offering	
century	in a literal
its a-priori	already tired of
wooden	truths.
soldiers.	
tug-of-war	plastic guns.
	questions.
even poppies	do not seem to fit
this sorrow.	
(leaving me	
words—	lumps in the throat
turning in the pit	of the stomach
and still surfacing	as pure beams
	of light
(prayers	
curled up	
	inside little fists.

“We feel *like* what we see *like*.”
Ricoeur (1978)

“Feeling is not contrary to thought. It is thought made ours.”
Ricoeur (1978)

“The unity of a poem is the unity of a mood.”
Northrop Frye (Ricoeur, 1978)

feeling is believing

Ricoeur tells us:

<i>feeling is thought</i>	<i>made ours</i>
the sublimating effect of a body of words	inhabiting where
we share icons textures	verbal of thought
that could be muddled by	an afternoon rain
or the way into itself.	a wing gathers

Frye believes:

<i>the unity of a poem is</i>	<i>the unity of a mood</i>
already the mention in water	of an egret is a way of touching
what cannot be a way of carrying	named across

what resonates

with the compelling voice of

the image

its clarity.

“Bachelard will ask not what is imagination?
What is an image? He would ask, however,
what is our comprehension of images?”
Bachelard (1988)

“Bachelard invites us to experience
the essential mobility of concepts.”
Bachelard (1988)

“To know is to use a metaphor.”
M. Friquegnon

a possible explanation (or of knowing

the front part of a crow comes into
the picture: a gradual emergence

there are no trees here among
an iteration of meta pieces

the snowflake is. (unspoken.
this place could be as dry as sawdust

or as full as a savannah rain

to know is to use a metaphor.

weave a cocoon of (a possible explanation.
to escape the fire of the half blade.

here
half a woman will serve you half
a bread on half a scarf

the other half exists in a place

of (seeing as

where blades are another way of imagining
ourselves bowing in a wind of steel.

in the slow fluidity of redefining
only the numbers here are (whole

and when you turn your head

after the crow (you may see it
leaving (with your one eye.

“Laughter is the sound of sudden knowledge.”

“We get our authority from authenticity.”

“The story itself pulls us because
we are fascinated by the way time can unfold itself
the end finally revealed as present in the beginning.”

Weinberger (2002)

small metaphors loosely joined

laughter is the sound of (sudden knowledge)
a proximity
(an intimacy)
where walls are just
(rain) we walk through
and are absorbed
in the poetic of language.

the reader is grounded in
what is built out of another's words.

we get our authority from authenticity

placed just so that we are (closer
to the sound of our own knowing

to our— selves
(words mere vehicles) resonating

the story itself pulls us

through it's narrow streets cracked
windows creaking stairways

because we are fascinated by the way

the buildings look with their green copper roofs

time can unfold itself

in front of the bakery the old sign

the end finally revealed as Present

in the Beginning

the smell of the brick oven waking me up
in my grandmother's house.

"The way we see fire tells more about ourselves than the external world"
Bachelard (1988)

"...nothing can be seen of the soul but it sees everything"
Levchev (2006)

"Fire is more likely to smolder beneath the soul than beneath ashes."
Bachelard (1988)

saying is (seeing as

the way
upside down
incomplete.

the eye sees
something

the way

it is not
in the picture
will be complete

present
but no picture

without it.

the way we see
to believe.
begins

what we have learned
and the way (everything

from a point in the distance.
the soul is the eye

*nothing can be seen
but it sees*

*of the soul
everything*

the way sometimes green

is blue. the way we believe
what we have learned to see.

the way the eye (the soul)
casts its fire on what it sees

weightless without dimension
that initial

point

.

in the distance

where convergence is a (seeing as

saying is)

"In Nietzsche metaphor builds the bridge between morality and immorality."
Parker (1982)

"Each new poetic world is not a pure invention, it is a possibility in nature."
Bachelard (1988)

bridging distances (or of metaphor

the fear of falling (is)	distances
lack of bridges	(over) old spaces
that yawn (the need)	to be occupied.
crumbling brick	(marks on
the peeled façade)	of warehoused ruin
words	(the witness of decay)
the river sweeps away	distances
(under bridges.)	

the fear of falling	is turning us
into rain	
	and rain re-turns
memory	to water.
this twilight curled up	
inside words	where

(suddenly)

distances become	bridges over old spaces
and clouds	shift-shape our destinies
to purposes	we do not remember
dreaming of.	
(the fear of falling)	is turning us
into	something else.

“The kinds of phenomena and experience we address in our disparate fields are intrinsically
extradisciplinary — they require diverse perspectives, a broad range of illuminating discourse.”
Nabhan (2004)

cross pollination in translation

indigenous poetic
knowledge and ecological

scientific knowledge

in between

words

Confusing

(Butterflies with moths
Ponds with nectar pods)
Trash with washed organic detritus
Peacocks (with macaws.)

To translate night
moths as butterflies

is to obscure

the meaning

of the song.

when things are held together
by words

like that an imprecision
is a break in

the woven web.

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About the Author

Daniela Bouneva Elza is a Ph. D. student in the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University. Having lived on three continents and crossed numerous geographic and cultural borders, Daniela is a semantic anomaly herself, a rogue scholar at heart. Her research interests are in creativity, imagination, bridging the theory-practice divide, alternative methods of inquiry, and more specifically in metaphor and how metaphor shapes our knowing. Currently she is working on two collections of poems. She can be reached at daniela@livingcode.org.