

Metaphors of a Body Meant To Die*

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In this paper I focus on body metaphors from two perspectives. First, I examine metaphors in which the body figures as the target of conceptualization, yielding metaphorical expression of the type the body is *x*. Second, I suggest that the body also serves as source of conceptualization for other entities—indeed, as a classificatory system—yielding expressions of the type *x* is a body. At the same time, the issue of decay and death of physical and non-physical bodies is taken up in each case. I conclude by suggesting that linguistic practice allows for a view of metaphor as a cognitive phenomenon put to social use. Thus, metaphor may also be seen as a manifestation of linguistic variation despite the frequent dissociation of cognitive from social factors in linguistics.

Introduction

This paper concentrates on body metaphors—indeed a body of metaphors for a body that is in a state of processual decay until it reaches its own demise: the endpoint that is death. Thus, it makes sense to look at body metaphors as an integral part of any work on death metaphors. I propose an investigation of conceptions of the body based on the theory of conceptual metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson; Lakoff, “Contemporary,” *Women*).

Thinking of (life and) death involves a *trajector* (=a body) moving along a path thus forming a *trajectory* (=a life-span) in time *t*, between two points or

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landmarks: birth and death. In such an image-schema,¹ the body emerges neatly as the moving entity or trajector; however, unlike in other schemas, we have little choice but to posit two landmarks. And while Lm₁ (birth) is clearly demarcated, Lm₂ (death) is a virtual landmark, in that it shall come to pass, it will be posited as an actual Lm₂ when the body eventually ceases to function. Thus, the schema described here is only a step in the representation of a process which could be seen better through a series of image-schematic transformations (Lakoff, "Contemporary"). Within this theoretical framework, I shall investigate conceptions of the body under the following headings, which do not necessarily exhaust the ways in which the body is conceptualized:

- I) THE BODY IS A CONTAINER
- II) THE BODY IS A CONDUCTOR
- III) THE BODY IS A CONDUIT
- IV) THE BODY IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY
- V) THE BODY IS A WILLFUL AGENT
- VI) THE BODY IS A MACHINE
- VII) THE BODY IS A MOVING ENTITY²

All these are conceptual metaphors that play with bodily physicality and give rise to language-specific metaphorical expressions (i.e., realizations or instantiations of metaphors; metaphors being in themselves conceptual and schematic rather than primarily linguistic):

1. The body is the temple/home/bearer/prison of the soul
2. His/her body emanates warmth/a certain chill
3. My body/heart/stomach has a mind of its own
4. Το σώμα είναι ναός/δοχείο της ψυχής
5. [...] και καλά, πες ότι εγώ το πουλάω το σώμα μου, το ζήτημα είναι ποιος το θέλει.
6. Το ανθρώπινο σώμα είναι απείρως εκτατό (referring to obesity)

Last, I will show that we employ metaphors (and attendant metaphorical expressions) with the body as the target (A BODY IS X) but also with the body as

1. According to Lakoff ("Contemporary" 113), "*Image-schematic* models specify schematic images, such as trajectories or long, thin shapes or containers. Our knowledge about baseball pitches includes a trajectory schema. Our knowledge about candles includes a long, thin object schema" (original emphasis). Cf. also entry in *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics*: "Used informally by G. P. Lakoff and others of a general concept that structures our perception of the world: e.g. the concept of 'a container', or of 'movement up and down', or of a 'long thin object'. Patterns of metaphor can be seen as transformations relating one image schema to another."

2. This arises if we consider the complex metaphor DYING IS A JOURNEY, which may be further analyzed into several secondary metaphors (cf. section 2).

the source (X IS A BODY) of the conceptualization. The former are typically geared towards making sense of the bodies of animate beings, whereas the latter help us conceive other entities, notably texts with *headings* and *headers*, (main) *bodies*, and *footnotes* and *footers* and text *corpora*; but also wide-bodied aircraft (such as Airbuses and Boeing 747s), and full-bodied coffee varieties (such as Kenya and Sumatra) or delicate-bodied ones (such as Blue Mountain). Moreover, these entities we conceptualize in terms of the body also undergo decay. Thus “death” becomes relevant in this case, too. Implicit in the latter category is an anthropocentrism with anthropomorphism as its main strategy – and it is at this juncture where cognitive – and sociolinguistic concerns meet: for while some metaphors might even be universal, the metaphorical expressions they generate across languages, and even within language communities, clearly are not.

1. The Body as Target: THE BODY IS X

According to Turner (*The Body* 37), “[t]here is an obvious prominent fact about human beings: they have bodies and they are bodies. More lucidly, human beings are embodied, just as they are enserved.”³ It is thus not surprising that the body typically functions as a metonymy for the self, where a physical, tangible entity is used for the conceptualization of the anything-but-tangible “self.” Indeed, according to the theory of conceptual metaphor, it is the common state of affairs for a concrete domain to structure a less concrete or abstract domain (Lakoff & Johnson; Lakoff, “Contemporary Theory,” *Women*; Ungerer & Schmid; Marmaridou; Özçalışkan). Moreover, it is safe to assume that the body is our most salient example of a concrete physical object. However, there is a fair number of metaphors in which the body itself becomes the target of the conceptualization, showing that body metaphors have to be understood as bi-directional. The commonest among these metaphors is THE BODY IS A CONTAINER, exemplified below:

THE BODY IS A CONTAINER

1. *The body is the temple/home/bearer/prison of the soul.*
2. *Το σώμα είναι οίκος/ναός/δοχείο της ψυχής.*
3. *Το ανθρώπινο σώμα είναι απείρως εκτατό.* (referring to obesity)
4. *Η Μαρία απλώθηκε/χύθηκε σαν τον δύσμο – σούρωσε – μπήκε – μάζεψε – σουλονπώθηκε.*
5. *He's filled up with beer/anger.*
6. *Don't let it get inside you!*

3. In a way one can also dare say that human beings are “enlanguaged.”

7. *Take it out of your head.*
8. *Δεν έχεις φιλότιμο μέσα σου;*
9. *She's beautiful inside. [cf. Lei è bella dentro]*

Indeed, the body is a container for the emotions (5-7) as well as for the self (8-9). But it may be also represented as a more flexible, malleable or expandable container (3-4), as clearly manifested in the discourse on the consuming and dieting body (Turner, "Discourse of Diet").⁴ Primarily, however, the body is a container for the soul and the mind, the "corporeal territory of the ego" (Berthelot 393), as seen in (1-2), reflecting the Cartesian division between body and mind/soul which has prevailed in Western thought and has inadvertently informed scientific and scholarly work (cf. Turner, *The Body and Science* 3, Featherstone, Özçalışkan). This shows that in Turkish the body is the container of the *can*, the core of life. Supporting evidence for this conceptualization of the body comes from Vigarello who mentions that bodily hygiene in sixteenth-century Europe started changing as regards attitudes towards baths and hot springs. The body was considered a container with permeable exterior, the skin, through which water but also sickness may enter and weaken it. Thus, there appeared a preference for dry rituals of cleanliness, such as changing linen and underwear, wiping oneself with a clean towel or even using powder and perfume instead of taking a bath. This is just one case in which we see the interdependence of linguistic and social practice, as reflecting and maybe even enhancing or legitimizing one another.

I will now briefly turn to two related metaphors, that is THE BODY IS A CONDUCTOR and THE BODY IS A CONDUIT. The first has to do mostly with body temperature being transferred, i.e., with sensations, and the latter conceptualizes the body as a means or vehicle for good and, especially, evil while both relate to the expression of sexuality.

THE BODY IS A CONDUCTOR

1. *His/her body emanates warmth/a certain chill.*
2. *Με πάγωσες με τα πόδια σου.*
3. *Antonio Banderas has an electrifying body.*

THE BODY IS A CONDUIT

1. *The (female) body is a conduit for evil. (cf. Douglas, Purity 162, 175) on the perils of contact with a menstruating woman)*
2. *The body is the vehicle of sin/pleasure.*

4. I do not claim that examples (3-4) are on a par with the rest, but rather that they can be seen as extension from the container metaphor. In the same way, an inflatable (such as a balloon) can be a container (of a special kind).

3. *The body as the channel or carrier of [these new] emotional intensities.*
(cf. Turner, *The Body and Science* 3)

It seems to me that the conduit metaphor (cf. Reddy) for the body is more important and could arguably subsume the conductor metaphor. For the conduit metaphor, in this case, relates again to the Cartesian distinction but it highlights not the containment as much as the incommunication between humans as well as between human exterior and interior with respect to abstract notions such as pleasure and sin. Thus, the unruly body becomes the vehicle through which the person sins, the channel through which the self encounters sin. In this context it is useful to consider a set of correspondences established in the social sciences for the characterization of human duality; a set of links mediated by the body (cf. Turner, "Recent Developments" 5):

The <u>Body/flesh</u>	is to the <u>Soul/mind</u> as
Nature	Culture
Disorder	Order/discipline
Risk	Safety/regulation/purity?
Dionysus	Apollo

Language typically exploits these correspondences in both conventional and novel metaphors. Specifically, the understanding of the body as natural and disorderly seems to be indirectly connected to THE BODY IS A WILLFUL AGENT metaphor.

THE BODY IS A WILLFUL AGENT

1. *My body has a mind of its own.*
2. *My heart/stomach/genitals/hand has a mind of its own.* (cf. criminals)
3. *My body is not obeying me anymore.*
4. *Άλλού πατάω κι άλλού πηγαίνω/βρίσκομαι.*
5. *Δεν ελέγχω καλά το σώμα μου.*

Note that in all of these examples⁵ there lies dormant an implicit idea: i.e., the notion of control over and regulation of the body, typically through a regiment of diet and exercise but also other forms of social coercion, notably corrective facilities, should one's body become unacceptably willful (cf. Foucault).

5. One could argue that examples (3-5) differ from (1-2) in that they illustrate the Cartesian distinction with the body being governed by the mind. This would only be a problem if the Cartesian distinction were to be taken as literal (non-metaphorical). I suggest that it is not (at least not in the relevant literature).

But why should we regulate or discipline the body? Well, THE BODY IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY metaphor provides a good answer to this question and so does THE BODY IS A MACHINE. Bodies are not only useful and desirable but they also produce tangible, measurable work. Consider the following examples:

THE BODY IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY

1. [...] και καλά, πες ότι εγώ το πουλάω το σώμα μου, το ζήτημα είναι ποιος το θέλει.
2. Έχει ένα σώμα – όλα τα λεφτά!
3. Η επιδερμίδα σας είναι πολύτιμη – προστατέψτε την!
4. S/he looks like a million bucks!
5. Angie Dickinson's legs are insured for X amount of money.
6. Bodies that matter.

Here the body is conceptualized as a commodity in economic terms, with a focus on the demand end of the economy, which corresponds to a desirable body or a part of it. Thus, (degree of) demand is (degree of) desire and the amount a body is deemed worth of is an index of its appreciation as a commodity, which then contributes to an understanding of the terrain for sexual partners as the “meat market.”

However, utility in societies where economy is the pillar of the social structure could not possibly be exhausted in questions of pleasure and desirability. Apparently, a much older and durable metaphor has been the one conceptualizing the body as a machine – whether focusing on the steam-engine, the thermodynamic or the hydraulic model; whether one speaks of efficient industrial production based on man-power as a humanized form of productivity, medical treatment or physical education and the sporting body (Gleyse; Berthelot; Papagaroufali). Obviously, this metaphor related to the higher order metaphor THE BODY IS AN ARTIFACT⁶ (in that it entails it):

THE BODY IS A MACHINE

1. She has a bad leg/hand/tooth/heart.
2. My legs don't work anymore; they fail me.
3. I've burned 500 calories on the step-machine today.
4. What's your calorie/vitamin C/fiber/iron/sugar/protein/carbohydrate intake per day?
5. How many miles do you run in an hour?
6. I took a lot of mileage out of my students this semester.
7. Σκούριασα πια! – I am rusty!

6. Cf. Σώμα μου φτιαγμένο από πηλό, *We are made of flesh and bones*, etc. THE BODY IS A TEXT is another metaphor deriving from the conceptualization of the body as an artifact (cf. *Practices inscribed on the body; I read it in her eyes*, etc.).

According to Johnson (130) the conceptualization of the body as a machine, rather than being a mere belief, has “a massive experiential structuring that involves values, interests, goals, practices, and theorizing.” Moreover, he suggests that such a metaphorical structuring of experience has systematically related entailments, which then form the basis for various language-specific metaphorical expressions (cf. also Lakoff, “Contemporary Theory”). He provides a characteristic selection of such entailments that relate to the metaphor and can be paired with my examples of metaphorical expressions above:

THE BODY IS A MACHINE

- The body consists of distinct, though interconnected parts.
- It is a functional unity or assembly serving various purposes.
- It requires an energy source or force to get it operating.
- Breakdown consists in the malfunctioning of parts.
- Breakdowns occur at specific points or junctures in the mechanism.
- Diagnosis requires that we locate these malfunctioning units.
- Treatment directs itself to specific faulty units or connections.
- Repair (treatment) may involve replacement, mending, alteration of parts, and so forth.
- Since parts causally interact, we must be alert for failures in causal connections.
- The parts of the functioning unity are not themselves self-adapting. (130)

It is along these lines that we can consider the conceptualization of the body as a weapon—indeed a harmful or deadly weapon. For if the body is a machine, then it is a tool (which may serve one well or not) and by extension it becomes a weapon as most tools may:

1. Κορμί θανατηφόρο, θανατηφόρα ματιά/βλέμμα, θανατηφόρο χτύπημα/γροθιά
2. Deadly look(s), deadly punch.
3. Stop using sex (= a form of bodily activity) as a weapon.

That risk or death in turn becomes a metaphor for desire as well as for distress is an issue I will not take up here.

Last, I will concentrate on a dynamic aspect of the body, on THE BODY IS A MOVING ENTITY metaphor. Whereas all other mappings concentrate on stative aspects of the (dying) body, this one incorporates the idea that dying is an encounter and as such may be profiled in one of two ways: one either meets death or is met by it. In other words, directionality has to do with the entity or notion primarily focused upon. In examples such as (2) below, one can argue that the name of the entity stands for the body as it is the physical body that dies.

THE BODY IS A MOVING ENTITY

1. S/he met his/her maker.
2. Τα πουλιά τα βρίσκει ο χάρος στο φτερό.

To conclude this section, let me turn to the body as flesh and the question of whether “flesh” is a literal or a metaphorical way of conceptualizing the body and talking about it. Papagaroufali (222-30), in a recent study on posthumous body and body-part donors in Greece, mentions two conflicting tendencies, at least in anthropology. On the one hand, the body-as-flesh and its presence or absence, rather than the soul, play a central role in mourning practices. On the other hand, although in recent years anthropologists treat the body as a “natural symbol” or a culturally constructed “text,” it is still being used as a universal physical given (223). However, Papagaroufali cautions the reader that her subjects use flesh both literally and metaphorically—as a way of referring to their bodies but also to experiences which are both subjectively real and intersubjectively “imagined” (226-27). Indeed, the body-as-flesh is not a universal, pre-cultural experience but rather a historically specific and culturally informed picture that we are quick to take as given because we are addicted to it (229). I believe these comments offer food for thought as regards the identification of the body-as-flesh with objective materiality, which can be seen as yet another consequence of Cartesian dualism and the discourse articulated around it.

2. The Body Meant to Die: The Dying Body

The human body is, from its inception, meant to die and, indeed, undergoes constant decay, culminating, if one is lucky, in so-called natural death. In this section, I will attempt to enhance the picture I have drawn of body metaphors by focusing on death metaphors, in so far as they involve the body. Özçalışkan, in a paper on life and death metaphors in Turkish, has nicely summarized metaphorical mappings for death that are relevant in both English and Greek as well.

DEATH IS DEPARTURE

S/he left us — s/he's gone

Μας άφησε χρόνους

DEATH IS CROSSING A BOUNDARY

Crossing to the underworld/heaven/hell

Το πέρασμα στον άλλο κόσμο

DYING IS A JOURNEY

S/he set off for the eternal journey

Έφυγε για το μεγάλο ταξίδι

DEATH IS FALLING

S/he took sick — took to bed

Έπεσε να πεθάνει — έπεσε και πέθανε από στεναχώρια — πήρε την κάτω βόλτα

DEATH IS A FINAL DESTINATION

She went to meet her maker
Έφυγε για το τελευταίο ταξίδι

DEATH IS SEPARATION

Tous χώρισε ο θάνατος
Till death do us part

DEATH IS LOSS

We lost him/her
Τον/την χάσαμε

DEATH IS REST/RELIEF/DELIVERANCE

S/he rest(s) in peace – delivered the spirit
Ξεκουράστηκε – ανακουφίστηκε – παρέδωσε το πνεύμα

DEATH IS SLEEP

The eternal sleep
Ο αιώνιος/ατέλειωτος ύπνος

DEATH IS SILENCE

Deadly silence – the silence of death – his death plunged us in silence
Η σιωπή του θανάτου – θανατερή σιωπή

DEATH IS A PERSON

The grim reaper (+ PEOPLE ARE PLANTS)
Τον πήρε ο χάρος/ο μαύρος καβαλάρης
Σαν λουλούδι κάποιο χέρι θα μας κόψει μιαν αυγή (+ PEOPLE ARE PLANTS)

DEATH IS A MOVING ENTITY (THE BODY IS A LOCATION) – CF. “DUALITY”

Death is approaching – death met him
Ο θάνατος πλησιάζει – τον συνάντησε – τον βρήκε
Τα πουλιά τα βρίσκει ο χάρος στο φτερό

In all of these mappings it is the body that departs, sets off for a journey, falls, reaches a final destination, is separated from loved ones or lost, put to rest, relieved or delivered, surrendering or giving up the soul; it is the body that sleeps and is therefore silent; it is the body of personified death that snatches the dying body; last, it is the body that death approaches or moves towards. Thus, we see that body metaphors are compatible with death metaphors, for the latter depend on the former and the two interact. If the body is a container, then death is its demise for it leaves it an empty shell, an exterior with no content. If the body is a valuable commodity, then death signals its devaluation, its turning into dust. If

the body is a willful agent, then death annuls both will and agentivity. Finally, if the body is a machine, death is irreparable damage and undoing.

Note that the metaphorical mappings above are for the most part based on the complex event structure metaphor and its submappings (Lakoff “Contemporary Theory”; Özçalışkan), notably the submapping STATES ARE LOCATIONS. Complex metaphors can be further decomposed into primary metaphors such as the ones presented here. As I mentioned in the introduction, the body plays the role of trajectory or moving entity in the trajectory or journey that is life. Thus, it is at the core of death metaphors. Moreover, as with most central concepts in our experience, body metaphors are characterized by duality (Lakoff “Contemporary Theory” 993), i.e., they participate in mappings forming pairs that seem to contradict one another. A good example of this is THE BODY IS A MOVING ENTITY and the BODY IS A LOCATION⁷ with respect to death. For death may *find* someone and one may just as well *meet his maker*. This pair of metaphors may be considered in two different ways. First, as a way of highlighting different aspects of the same process; there is no contradiction, really, but rather a shift in perspective or a figure-ground reversal (Özçalışkan). For if Mohamed and the mountain are meant to meet and Mohamed does not go to the mountain, then the mountain will come to Mohamed. Second, one may adopt the view that we have two basic metaphors with these perspectives: a) an “ego-moving” metaphor responsible for expressions in which the individual moves towards death, and b) a “time-moving” metaphor in which death moves towards the individual (cf. Clark).

3. The Body as Source and as a Classificatory System: X IS A BODY

I now turn to the kinds of entities that are conceptualized in terms of the body. My aim in this section is to briefly present supporting data for the body and its topological structure as the source domain of metaphorical mappings, drawing both from everyday language and the discourse articulated in the social sciences, where the body is seen simultaneously as constraint and potential (Turner, “Recent Developments” 4) and used as a classificatory system. Indeed, the work of Mary Douglas (*Purity, Natural*) has brought forward the human body as the historically principal medium of classification and as a natural symbol (Turner, “Recent Development” 5).⁸ This explains the richness of existing mappings (Ungerer &

7. Cf. *It's like coming home* (said in a situation where old lovers embrace and one recognizing the familiar scent of the other's after shave).

8. “[T]he main theme of her whole work is the human response to disorder in which may be included risk, uncertainty and contradiction. The principal response to disorder is systematic classification: the creation of ordered categories which both explain and restore order. The principal medium of classification has been historically the human body itself.” (Turner, “Recent Developments” 5)

Schmid 117) with the body and its parts as source, which is one of the most salient manifestations of anthropomorphism. Bakalaki (in preparation) argues that anthropomorphism is not only characteristic of the mode of thought of people we are quick to call “primitive” or “traditional” but affects us “moderns” as well. In fact, we attribute multiple symbolic meanings to location/place and we do the same as regards the body; and then we conceptualize the place as a body but also the body as a place. These conceptualizations, she suggests, also constitute the values on which ethical and political positions and practices are founded.

At this point I will focus on what emerge as major metaphorical mappings with the body as source. The richest data pertain to the conceptualization of physical objects and artifacts as bodies since the metaphorical expressions exploit a large number of body parts. Consider the following (mostly adapted from Ungerer & Schmid 117):

A PHYSICAL OBJECT/ARTIFACT IS A BODY

Body	<i>full/delicate-bodied coffee, wide-bodied aircraft, main body of a text, linguistic corpus/corpora</i>
Head	<i>of a page, a table, of a queue, of a flower, of a beer, of stairs, of a bed, of a tape recorder, a page header</i>
Face	<i>of a mountain, of a building, of a watch</i>
Eye	<i>of a potato, of a needle, of a butterfly, in a flower, hooks and eyes</i>
Mouth	<i>of a hole, of a bottle, of a tunnel, of a cave, of a river</i>
lips	<i>of a cup, of a jug, of a crater, of a plate</i>
Nose	<i>of an aircraft, of a tool, of a gun</i>
Neck	<i>of land, of the woods, of a shirt, bottle-neck</i>
Shoulder	<i>of a hill or mountain, of a bottle, of a road, of a shirt/jacket</i>
Arm	<i>of a chair, of the sea, of a tree, of a coat/shirt/jacket, of a record player</i>
Hands	<i>of a watch, of an altimeter/speedometer</i>
Leg	<i>of a chair/table/stool</i>
Foot	<i>of a hill (foothill), a page footer, footnotes on a page</i>

A STRUCTURE/EDIFICE/BUILDING IS A BODY

The face/back/side of the building

A LOCATION IS A BODY (cf. Bakalaki)

The foot of the mountain – foothills

Παρθένα μέρη

Βιασμός τοπίων

Μητέρα πατρίδα, μητέρα γη, γενέτειρες πόλεις

Πνεύμονες της πόλης

Οδικές αρτηρίες

Γαλουχισμός των παιδιών με τοπικά ιδεώδη
 Με τους συντοπίτες μας συνδέει το ίδιο αίμα
 Ζωντανοί και πεθαμένοι/νεκροί τόποι
 Τόποι που αιμορραγούν υφίστανται αφαίμαξη
 Ο ξένος σε ένα τόπο ως ξένο σώμα

According to Turner, “the idea that the body is the central metaphor of political and social order is in fact a very general theme in sociology and history” (“Recent Developments” 5). Thus, it is not surprising that abstract complex systems are conceptualized in terms of the body and its topology. This is a complex metaphor subsuming many submappings as we see considering the examples below:

AN ABSTRACT COMPLEX SYSTEM IS THE HUMAN BODY (cf. Kövecses)

SOCIETY IS A BODY

The backbone/bowels of society
The head of society/state
Our society is making great strides
The body politic – the social body – the body of society

AN ECONOMIC/POLITICAL SYSTEM IS A BODY

Living in the heart of capitalism/communism
The spine/backbone of capitalism/free market economy

THE MIND IS A BODY

His mind is strong and supple
I can see you with my mind's eye
The idea slipped through my fingers

A CORPORATION/ORGANIZATION IS A BODY

The head of the department
The members of the board of trustees

A CAREER IS A BODY

Her career is advancing in great strides/fits and starts
His career could use a shot in the arm

A THEORY IS A BODY

The main body/heart of the theory
The head of a grammatical construction

4. Death in Non-Physical Bodies: The Decay of Entities Conceptualized as Bodies

An artifact, political system or corporation does not die the physical death of a person, yet it undergoes decay, which may culminate in its demise in terms of

losing its utility, effectiveness or functionality. Abstract systems die when they are abandoned, deserted or disposed of. Artifacts have expiration dates rather than funerals and yet *expiration* as such clearly bears witness to their conceptualization as bodies. Note that according to Lakoff, metaphors obey the invariance principle, which stipulates that “metaphorical mappings preserve the cognitive topology (that is, the image-schema structure) of the source domain, in a way consistent with the inherent structure of the target domain” (“Contemporary Theory” 215). In other words, any aspect of the structure of the source domain which violates the inherent structure of the target domain cannot be mapped onto it. Thus, “inherent target domain structure limits the possibility for mappings automatically” (216). Just as when someone *gives* you a kick you do not *have* it afterwards, we talk of *full-bodied* coffee but not of *fat*, *slim* or *left-handed coffee*, for, apparently, the part-whole schema does not apply to coffee exactly as it does to human bodies. And yet, both human bodies and coffee beans are conceptualized as *trajectors* in the trajectory, which is a life-span, for this is consistent with the inherent structure of the target domain in each case. These may be thought of as partial mappings due to target domain overrides. Thus, while both bodies and coffee can be *decaying* and coffee can *go bad* or *rot*, only bodies can be *injured*.

Still, it is interesting to see the extent to which bodily health, illness, and especially decay and death, are mapped onto the entities featured in *X IS A BODY* mappings. One’s computer may be *broken* but also *dead* (indeed, as a result of a *stroke* as I recently heard a friend put it); a building or edifice may be *falling apart* or *to pieces* before it *falls down* or before a decision is made to *kill* it; a location such as an ecosystem can have its equilibrium (=health) *damaged*, it may be *in the throes of death* or declared *dead* after massive and irreversible ecological destruction. Abstract complex systems are also conceptualized as healthy, ill or dead. Thus, we talk of *healthy* social systems, the repair of social *ills*, *paralysis* and *madness*, social *recovery* and social *death*; a politico-economic system, a career, the mind, a corporation and a theory may be in *good* or *poor shape*. Indeed, we talk of the *deterioration* and the *slow*, *peaceful* or *violent death* or *demise* of all abstract complex systems, especially when *a shot in the arm* has not done them any good. After they have been effectively dead, we might even *mourn* for them.

5. Conclusions: Metaphor and the Interplay of Cognitive and Social Factors

In this work, I have focused on metaphors featuring the body as both target and source of conceptualizations. Moreover, I have examined metaphors of death and decay in each case as an integral part of any discourse on the body. Obviously, a much more complete picture would have been drawn had one also

included time and illness in this investigation. Yet, even this rather incomplete account allows for some comments on the interplay of cognitive and social factors in linguistic practices.

If we adopt a view of language as socially positioned practice, we can see that the very language used in everyday talk about the body also becomes the means of scholarly theorizing on the body, legitimizing certain ways of thinking about it while neglecting others and shaping the beliefs and attitudes of an era accordingly. Language can be seen then as a *habitus*, “a set of durable and transposable dispositions” (Bourdieu) mediating between society and the individual, and metaphor may be understood as a linguistic *ethos* or *hexis*.⁹ Metaphor is a cognitive phenomenon put to social use; there is an interdependence of these two aspects of linguistic practice rather than a clear directionality from cognition to social practice or vice versa. Indeed, the notion of *habitus* is useful here for it describes a situation in which language, and metaphor in particular, is neither completely determined by society nor by the individual (i.e., by cognition). Rather, it is the product of the experience of particular agents (Scheuer 171).

Metaphor may, therefore, be seen not only as a way of conceptualizing *x* in terms of *y* but also as a linguistic *hexis* prevalent in our attempt to make sense of

9. The *Dictionary of Sociology* defines *habitus* as follows:

A set of acquired patterns of thought, behaviour, and taste, which is said by Pierre Bourdieu to constitute the link between social structures and social practice (or social action). The concept offers a possible basis for a cultural approach to structural inequality and permits a focus on agency. According to some critics it is also notoriously elusive. The best exploitation can be found in Peter Jenkins's *Pierre Bourdieu* (Marshall).

See also the entry in *Dictionary of the Social Sciences*:

The capacity to generate new social actions without explicitly thinking them through, based partly on the internalization of objective social structures through experience (including the success or failure of previous actions). *Habitus* is a central concept in Pierre Bourdieu's influential sociological theory, where it represents an attempt to theorize the space in which individual agency meets larger social determinants (norms, rules, and/or structures). Describing neither complete determination by social factors nor individual autonomy, the *habitus* is a set of “durable and transposable dispositions” (*Outline of a Theory of Practice*) that mediates between “objective” structures of social relations and the individual “subjective” behavior of actors. In different terms, it is the sum of determining structures (such as class, family, and education) that nonetheless provide the practical skills and dispositions that define “improvisation” within a given field or set of fields—sports, professional life, art, and so on. At the same time, the *habitus* is constantly remade by these improvisations. The concept has proved highly portable to a range of projects in contemporary anthropology and especially sociology (Calhoun).

our world and establish the necessary links among the entities that constitute it. Metaphors become socially sanctioned paths through which we may arrive at the same destination. This point is, in turn, linked to the cornerstone of socio-linguistic theorizing: variation.¹⁰ I propose that metaphor be seen, among other things, as a manifestation of variation both intra- and interlinguistically. According to Kövecses,

[i]t is to be expected that, in addition to universality, there will also be cultural variation in metaphor and metonymy. [...] Given a particular abstract target domain, what kind of variation do we expect in the metaphorical conceptualization of that domain? I suggest that the following are likely possibilities for **cultural variation**:

- 1) variation in the *range* of conceptual metaphors and metonymies for a given target;
- 2) variation in the particular *elaborations* of conceptual metaphors and metonymies for a given target;
- 3) variation in the *emphasis* on metaphor versus metonymy associated with a given target, or the other way around. [original emphasis]

In general we can distinguish between two types of cultural variation: (a) *cross-cultural (intercultural)* and (b) *within-culture (intracultural)*. As a limiting case of within-culture variation, there will also be individual variation. (183)

Quinn argues against the position that metaphor constitutes everyday understanding, while suggesting that this understanding is culturally given. She claims that cultural models are the missing link in our understanding of how abstract concepts (such as marriage) are understood. Bakalaki notes the tendency to imagine a place or “*topos*” as a picture of our own bodily topology or “*topoi*.” This is part and parcel of human anthropocentrism expressed in terms of anthropomorphism and personification in the languages of the world. However, conceptualizations of the body may well be culture-specific. Becker, for instance, investigating the body, self, and society in Fiji, concludes that “Fijian embodied experience is inclusive of community processes and transcendent of the body’s physical boundaries” (133); the body is not a metonymy for the self and the self is not identified with the body but rather with the collective. It is safe to assume that Fijian shares some body metaphors with

10. According to Bernárdez, “We do not have to explain why variation exists. We have to explain why something—if anything—does not show interlinguistic variation” (“Intimate Enemies”).

English or Greek and it is also safe to assume that it possesses metaphors reflecting this different view of the body in Fijian society. I believe we have something to learn about the body from these culture-specific and socially positioned metaphors.¹¹

Metaphor theory can benefit greatly from the co-evaluation of socio-cultural factors despite the original apparent dissociation of cognitive and social factors within cognitive linguistics and sociolinguistics.¹² If so, then cognitive linguistics will have moved from the reduction of social phenomena to an embodied but largely individualistic—if not asocial—cognition back to society: the organic whole in which cognition becomes relevant; society in which the body is meant to die.

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11. Also note the vivid interest in metaphor as a component of social practice from within the social sciences (cf. Papagaroufali; Quinn; Alverson; Fernandez).

12. Bernárdez suggests that "[i]nstead of seeing language and culture as purely individual phenomena at the level of (embedded or non-embedded) cognition," we may investigate "the notions of *collective cognition* and *cognition-for-action*" ("Social Cognition," original emphasis).

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