On Hinges and Doors

(And the Workings of Metonymy)

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Abstract

This essay seeks to offer evidence to support the claim that metonymy is a master trope: that it is both the basis of most metaphors and the figure which, in bringing to mind the causal and consequential contingencies with which it is linked (as the dynamic operator or agent within its particular domain), binds all these associated parts into chains of presupposition and entailment (it is also the motor of most verbal coinages, but that would be another essay). The writer analyses a number of idioms, as well as passages taken from the works of several writers, most notably Shakespeare and Larkin, and he argues, as well, that we shall not be able to read texts with proper understanding if we are not able to interpret the metonymies (which refer us to larger semantic fields), omnipresent in all texts, and that this will entail that we first recognise them as signs in a code that operates in a specifially defined cultural and linguistic *con*text.

Key words: metonymy, metaphor, implication

Introduction

For Aristotle and the rhetoricians (both classical and renaissance) who

came after him, tropes such as metaphor and metonymy (classified under the subdivision, Elocutio) and the logical figures of implication (classified under the sub-division Inventio), were members of two of the five parts of Rhetoric; but once the sixteenth century French logician Peter Ramus extracted Invention and Disposition from the classical organisation of Rhetoric and called them Logic, metonymy and metaphor were quite quickly disposed of as merely decorative extras, while Logic, which was supposed to deal with 'the truth', was judged, by those committed to realism and objective fact, to offer a more transparent linguistic medium and was thus considered to be more worthy of intellectual respect and attention.

I believe, along with most contemporary semioticians (and Aristotle), that this is an unreal dichotomy, and I see metonymy as the central actor in a three-way partnership, working both to underpin metaphorical transformations and to alert the reader (or listener) to the presuppositions and entailments that its presence in a text implies. I have explored this theme in a number of papers[1], but not so far with particular or exclusive reference to the uses that Shakespeare makes of them, although to do so has been my ambition for a long time: that remains a project for the future, to which this piece may act as a preamble.

In the meantime, I attempt here to demonstrate metaphor's dependence upon metonymy on the one hand, while, on the other, attending to metonymy's deep involvement in the setting up of signposts that both show us where we have come from and which paths we shall expect to follow on the journeys we undertake (or the destinations we may expect to reach) when we set out to trace the tracks of presupposition and entailment.

I also believe that readers must share with the writer both common knowledge of contexts and customs and the common ground of proximate humanity, if, as readers, we hope to be able to read with proper attention to,

and the widest appreciation of, a text's presuppositions and entailments: as readers, we need to understand, in Jakobson's terms, both the cultural context and the linguistic code. This is why it is so difficult (if not at times almost imposssible) to understand in their full complexity texts that derive from a culture very different from our own: if, for instance, we are young Japanese students reading a text written by an Englishman (or Englishwoman) writing in the early twentieth century (to go no further back than that).

Some Preliminaries: On Hinges and Doors

A hinge is the small but vital pin which connects a door and a doorway, and is the joint that thus holds together the frame and everything associated with it and whatever is framed by it. If I treat this as a metaphor it can mean the "the cardinal or critical point upon which everything turns or relies" (the NSOED), and it is regularly used in this way: from a metaphorical hinge may hang, or from it may depend, a whole edifice of contingent and associated features, some of which may be presupposed, some of which may be entailed. The same, obviously, can be said of a door, coupled, as it is, with the doorway and the threshold, since doors and doorways themselves are parts of larger structures without whose existence the doors would have no meaning, but to whose successful working they are instrumental, indeed vital when we consider the part they play in giving access to the structure of which they are a part, while often indicating its nature and function. In less figurative terms, we can say that the metonyms we choose to employ as metaphors function as the representative, signifying part of the whole range of associated parts because in each of the domains in which they find a place their role is *pivotal*, and thus give the metaphor its energy

and effect.

When I refer to "my next door neighbour", I am speaking of the neighbour who lives in the house (or apartment) adjacent to mine: the presence of his door signifies the presence of his dwelling, his home (and all that that may entail): it is a signifying part of the whole. It is more than that, however: his door gives him a way in and way out, it protects him (should he bar or lock his door) from intruders, but should he invite someone in, it becomes an entrance for his guests as well: it is therefore not just any, arbitrarily chosen part of the whole, it is the crucial, signifying part in that it connects inner and outer, just as it may also separate insider from outsider: open, it represents acceptance and welcome, closed it represent withdrawal from the world or banishment for those who are driven from its portals[2].

Although, at other times and in other places, my example might have been called a synecdoche, since some older rhetoricians did indeed regard synecdoche as performing the role that I have just ascribed to metonymy, modern rhetoricians (whose example I am following) seem to have reversed the application of the terms and give this role of door opener (or curtain raiser) to metonymy, which they portray as much the more important trope, as, indeed, the fundamental trope.

I shall come back to this perennially vexed topic in the next section, but for the moment shall simply assert that both tropes are parts standing for wholes (or vice versa), and that, today, synecdoche is simply understood as referring to relationships in hierarchical order: doors are parts of houses and houses contain doors: synecdoches, that is, are static. Metonymies, on the other hand, are dynamic: doors can be open or closed, through whose doorways, should the doors be open, we can enter and leave whatever building they may be part of, and we can take these metonymic and

consequential features of doors, which are dynamic and implicative, and turn them into metaphors, which is really how all metaphors are generated.

When, this spring, I had a *ningen-dock*, my medical history ran to two sides of A4, and in my comment about the nephritis which nearly killed me when I was eight, I wrote that for two weeks I had been "at death's door". This is a metaphor, but, like all metaphors, it depends upon a metonymy. A closed door indicates, is a pointer to, the presence, when the door is open, of a space through which one can pass between one room and another room, between the outside and the inside of a building; it marks, as well, the presence of a 'threshold' (which can also be used as a metaphor), over which you pass from one place to another place, often with the sense of entering into a new state.

That is, both 'door' and 'threshold' signify, as metonymies, places of and occasions for significant passage, for a door, even if closed, is, metonymically, the index of a doorway: a frame for the events of passage that the doorway frames. An open doorway makes it possible for us to do something and it stands for that possibility; an unbarricaded or undefended threshold is the ground over which you must pass from one place to another, and like an open door, it is an enabler. So, in this sense, both 'door' and 'threshold', even if closed or barred, can, as "signs for the thing signified", represent or stand for entrances and exits, for significant crossing places, as we move from one state to a different state, movements that, by the nature of doors and thresholds, they enable and make possible.

When we go further and use the words 'door' or 'threshold' as metaphors, as in the phrase "at death's door", the term will, by simple synecdoche, call to mind the whole of which it is a part: in this case, we may suppose, the House of Death: and this is the metaphorical domain. Yet, in this instance, 'door' is much more than just any part for the whole: it is the

significant part that calls all the other and contingent parts to mind and, predominantly, it will remind us, indirectly, that doors, when open, permit us to enter or leave, while to take the full force of the metaphor we shall need to appreciate that Death will have to open the door if he wishes to invite us in: in 1939, I got as far as the door, but, fortunately for me, the door remained closed.

When, in Act 3, Scene 2, of *Troilus and Cressida*, Pandarus asks Troilus "Have you seen my cousin?" (Cressida), Troilus replies , "No, Pandarus; I stalk about her door Like a strange soul upon the Stygian bank Waiting for waftage". This is a remarkable utterance, and we could spend much time discussing, with profit, both its verbal intricacy and its surprising central reference (to Hades). Here, I am more interested in the door to Cressida's house (of which it is a part), since, for the time being, it is closed, and so Troilus is denied entry to her house, and thus to her presence, and thus to her bed, and thus to her body: these I take to be derived entailments, since the door is the crucial hinge (the metonym) upon which these entailments depend.

"Sapporo University opened its doors in 1965." The verb phrase is an idiom, used metaphorically, to signify the commencement of the activities of (in this instance) a university: it is based on a metonymy, which presupposes that until that moment the doors had been closed and that the building of which they are a significant part had only just been built or that it was being used for that specific purpose for the first time; it is metonymic, too, in that it entails the passage into the building by those who have been granted the right to use that passage: the students. At the same time, the opening of the door implies (presupposes) welcome and hospitality, and is an invitation to students to enter the building both literally and metaphorically (on commencing their lives as university students). Sometimes, when the

phrase is used as a pure metaphor, it can carry the meaning of "to make way for, to permit, to allow", as in the following sentence taken from *The Japan Times* (21st Oct, 2001): "The US Congress opens the door for state and local governments to tax e-commerce and Internet access".

More on Metonymy and Synecdoche

As I have just said, synecdoches, as synecdoches, are not these days of much account, although George Puttenham[3], writing during Shakespeare's liftetime, thought that they were: he thought that they "drive the hearer to conceive more, or less, or beyond, or otherwise than the letter expresseth", which the Latins called "*sub intellectio* or understanding": Puttenham called it "the figure of quick conceit". Yet this is exactly what writers like *le group* $^{\mu}$ of Geneva, Roman Jakobson, Gérard Genette and Umberto Eco believe to be the property of metonymies: their power, that is, to call to mind all the features with which they are contingently associated, and to start the reader or listener off on the chain of reasoning that they invite us to follow. It would appear, therefore, that what Puttenham thought of as the property a synecdoche, we think of as belonging to metonymy.

Genette, for his part, has written (in *Figures of Literary Discourse*, Blackwell, 1982, page 109) that "Every metonymy can be converted into a synecdoche by an appeal to a higher totality, and every metonymy into a synecdoche by recourse to the relations between constituent parts". Each "figure-event" can be analysed in two ways, but we must not confuse the one with the other, although "one can see how in fact this kind of double membership might cause confusion". Puttenham, on the other hand, saw metonymy as operating within a much smaller compass, and simply calls it "the misnamer", when, in his examples, we speak of Venus and mean fleshly

lust, Ceres and mean bread, as well as the container for the thing contained, the author for the thing created, the cause for the consequence, or vice versa (all of which examples would still be thought of as metonymies).

Until I read Genette and *le group* ", I had never been sure which had priority: metonymy or synecdoche. Since reading them, however, I have followed their lead and given it to metonymy, although recognising that synecdoche is the larger figure: all metonymies are synecdoches, but not all synecdoches are metonymies. The recently published guide *Reading Shakespeare's Dramatic Language* (The Arden Shakespeare, 2001), however, describes the synecdoche as "a particular kind of metonymy", which changes the balance of the relationship yet again, and, says a review of the book in *Around the Globe* (the house magazine of the Globe Theatre, London), settles the matter once and for all. I wonder what the editors' evidence is for this, although, in a recent book, Genette himself seems not so bothered about preserving the distinction as he was in 1982: he now says "I am not certain that the categories used to classify tropes are as stable and as impermeable as classical rhetoric assumed, and I am even less certain that the distinctions among them matter much, especially here" (*The Aesthetic Relation*, Cornell, 1999, page 46).

Metonymy and inference

I am arguing, further, that metonymies (or what, in my guise as an amateur semiotician, I am calling metonymies), while often traces of (signs left by) preceding acts (which they presuppose), also function as sign-posts, indexes, which imply (or indicate), contigencies and associations whose unseen but signified presence we have to infer or deduce if we hope to find our way to the end of the journey, to the real point of the argument. In

contradistinction to the claims of Peter Ramus and those who have followed his lead, I believe (along with Sherlock Holmes and Umberto Eco) that the ability to recognise and interpret metonymic signs is an integral factor in the workings of deductive reasoning, that it is, indeed, the essential step in the process which makes the operation possible.

I am particularly interested, that is, in the way in which metonymic signs stand as causes for consequences, or consequences for causes, contingencies that remain unspecified but that need to be inferred. When, in Beatrix Potter's *Tale of Peter Rabbit*, Mrs Rabbit warns her children not to go into Mr McGregor's garden because their father "had an accident there: he was put in a pie by Mrs McGregor", the 'being put in a pie' is the signifying part in a chain of (re)actions: it presupposes that Mr Rabbit had been caught, killed, skinned, cut up into little pieces, floured and fried, and it entails that he will have subsequently been cooked and that finally Mr and Mrs McGregor will have eaten him. All this is Mr Rabbit's 'accident'.

The stories of Sherlock Holmes employ the same devices, but in the realm of phenomena rather than in the web of words: the searching for traces or clues of past actions, the building (guided by imagination) upon them of hypotheses, the testing of our hypotheses by experiment, and the establishment of their truth by proofs. Sherlock Holmes always works from very small pieces of evidence, the crucial clues from which he builds his hypothesis. These clues, I would claim, are the metonymic parts that indicate unseen and unspoken wholes.

Metonymy and Metaphor

One of Wordsworth's Lucy poems opens with the lines "*She dwelt among th'untrodden ways, Beside the springs of Dove*", and that I have

chosen to use the verb 'opens' rather than 'begins' is, in the circumstances of this argument, meant to be revealing. 'Untrodden', of course, implies (quite conventionally) that no one walks that way; similarly, 'springs' implies 'source', and thus entails that 'Dove' is the name of a river; since the springs of rivers are often in high places, we may, from this evidence, infer that this female person's dwelling is remote, unpeopled.

I begin my Literature Class with this poem, and my main reason for choosing it (apart from the fact that it was the first poem that I myself, aged eight, ever learned by heart) is to consider the metaphor at its core: "*A violet by a mossy stone Half-hidden from the eye*". It is obvious that 'a violet' stands in apposition to the 'she' and 'a maid' already mentioned, and is a further co-reference to the ultimately named 'Lucy', and that in order to interpret the metaphor we have to consider what it is that Lucy shares with violets to make a comparison between them seem appropriate, revealing, and (since this is a poem) beautiful.

Lucy and violets belong to quite different domains (which is characteristic of the two 'places' of a metaphor), and if we think of the domains overlapping as in a Venn diagram, we shall notice that certain characteristics of violets may be characteristics of Lucy, too, such attributes as sweet-smelling, small, pretty; but Wordsworth signals the property that they have most significantly in common: they are both 'half-hidden from the eye'. Thus 'violet' and 'Lucy' may both stand (perhaps hierarchically) as the whole for a part (which they share), but more importantly the terms act metonymically since they suggest other contingent characteristics as well, such as small and pretty. Dr Edmond Wright, a Cambridge philosopher, has pointed out to me that they also share the same location and are thus related continguously in that they may actually be 'growing' side by side.

Metonymies are Signs

"The bar-parlour of the Angler's Rest was fuller than usual" is not a sentence that is likely to hold up many native-speaking readers of English, but before a Japanese reader can make much sense of it, (s)he will have to know that the 'Angler's Rest' is both a name and a sign, a name that signifies a public house which we infer, from the sign, is likely to be frequented by fishermen, that fishermen (and women, these days, of course) are called anglers by metonymy (rather than synecdoche), for while the hook at the end of the fishing line is part of the fishing rod, it is the essential part of the whole activity of angling and stands for it — the part without which nothing could happen (unless you were a bear or an Ainu harpoonist): it presupposes the bait on the hook, the line, the rod, the person holding the rod, the basket, the water and the fish, the paraphernalia[4] and purpose of fishing, and it entails that if a fish is caught (if, that is, it has taken the bait at the end of the hook, another common metaphor), it is likely to be carried home by the angler, cooked and eaten.

We can also use the verb 'to angle' metaphorically: to seek, by a trick, to find out information that is hidden from us and that the possesser might not want to share with us: if our trick works, we can say that our interlocutor has "taken the bait". A bar is called a bar because it is the only room that has a bar at the base of the counter for you to rest your foot on, the defining feature of a room which serves alcoholic drinks to the public, where public bars were places where drinkers usually stood.

My Japanese students do not have the knowledge to work out much of this for themselves, since both the code (the English language) and the context (an English village pub some time in the 1920s) are unfamiliar to

them, yet only when we have worked them out shall we understand that what the bar-parlour is fuller of is *people*, whose purpose in being there is to drink alcohol. If you ask, why, since such texts as these presents such problems, I read them with my students, I answer that almost any text we might choose would be as difficult, and that this one is far more interesting than most if we wish to study how metonymies, which are unbiquitous, work. I do so, that is, to help them to appreciate just how arduous is the task they are engaged in, and at the same time to give them the rhetorical and linguistic tools (if I am able to) that will enable them to tackle that task and to complete it, if possible: to learn how to recognise metonymies and how to read behind and between the lines that the metonymies inscribe for us.

A native speaker might probably infer as well that this particular pub is near a river, while if it is fuller of customers than usual there must be a reason. The reason is in fact supplied by the next sentence: "Our local race meeting had been held during the afternoon, and that always means a rush of custom". We have, of course, to see that the second sentence is the cause of the first, which is its consequence. A colon between the sentences might have made it easier to see the link at a glance.

'This' stands for 'the holding of our race meetings' (rather than this meeting in particular) while 'during', not a word that any of my students seem ever to have been taught at school, implies that the afternoon is over. In the final phrase the writer translates the particular customers (parts) into the generalised business that they bring with them (the whole), a difficult trick to explain, as it may have been to bring off. The writer of these lines is P. G. Wodehouse and this is the opening of his story 'Gala Night', from the collection of stories, *Mulliner's Nights*, and he is wonderfully clever at this sort of thing: indeed, in the whole of English literature, Wodehouse is

perhaps the most brilliant inventor of metonyms employed quite deliberately as jokes meant to give pleasure to the reader who can recognise them.

"In addition to the habitués, that faithful little band of listeners which sits nightly at the feet of Mr Mulliner, there were present some half a dozen strangers". There was a time when children sat at the feet of storytellers, which is how the idiom came into being, and a well-known Victorian painting 'The Boyhood of Raleigh' illustrates it. Like most idioms, it is, fundamentally, a metonymy, since it stands these days simply for a relationship: a relationship between listeners and a story-teller, between students and a teacher, since none of those listening to Mr Mulliner would actually have been sitting at his feet (or on the floor).

After the first sentence, the sentences that follow hook on to their predecessors, by natural progression (something that does not happen so explicitly in Japanese) — 'Our local race meeting', 'In addition', 'One of these' — while the sequence of phrases that come at the end of the first three sentences — 'fuller than usual', 'a rush of custom', 'half a dozen strangers' — are related in a coherent logical progression which proceeds, almost by co-reference, with increasing amplitude and more precise information. The fourth sentence is an example of Wodehouse's fondness for the metonymic turn: "One of these, a fair-haired young Stout and Mild, wore the unmistakable air of one who has not been fortunate in his selections," in which a man is identified by what he is drinking, and is not difficult to interpret, although only if you know that stout (such as Guinness) and Mild (a variety of beer) are two kinds of alcoholic beverage.

To appreciate what Wodehouse's means by the term 'selections', however, we have to establish the context in which the selections are being made. In this instance, the context has already been given: our local race meeting: if we had not been given this information, we should have no way

of knowing what it was that the young man had selected (unless it had been his drink, which would presumably have been his 'selection'). 'Selections', which I regard as a metonym, needs to be placed in the common ground it shares with fellow and contingent members of the same field of reference and only when readers share common knowledge with those who inhabit that ground (or domain, as modern rhetoricians term it) will they be able to identify and interpret the signs, tokens in a code that requires not only knowledge of that code but also the context in which it is applied.

If the story had been set in a 'library' or a 'flower shop', the man would, in each case, have been making a very different kind of choice. If I make a choice (of books, flowers, horses, drinks) that will presuppose that I have a reason for my choice: that I shall find the chosen book interesting and enjoyable, that I shall think the flowers beautiful, that I shall enjoy the drink, that I fancy the chances of a particular horse. These reasons in turn presuppose earlier links in an inter-connected chain of reasoning: that I am interested in the topic of the book, that should the flowers be meant as a present they will please the recipient, that I am in need of alcohol, that I wish to win money by backing horses to win races. We can go further back still: that I have to write an essay or want a book to read while sitting in a summer garden, that I love the intended recipient of the flowers and hope that the flowers will give pleasure, that I know a certain kind of drink induces the right effect, that I know that I may, by backing successful horses, win money. All this presupposes that I have evidence from previous reading of what might be a suitable book for my particular purposes, I have evidence that the recipient of my gift likes certain flowers, I have evidence that certain drinks suit me better than others, I have evidence from previous results or parentage that a certain horse stands a good chance.

And so on backwards and ad infinitum. The point that I wish to

emphasise here, however, is that without the common knowledge that comes from sharing common ground it is extrememly hard for a reader or listener to presuppose any of this, or, rather, to take the presuppostions as read without ever having to consider them consciously: native speakers understand them almost without thought. Just as we understand that if we have not been fortunate in our selections, we shall have found the book unsatisfactory, the recipents will not appreciate the flowers and the drinker will not much care for the drink. In this case, since the context is so precise, we can be much more certain about what is entailed by the remark: we understand from it that every horse that the man backed will have lost its race, and that he, as a result, will have lost all his money, which would therefore entail that his 'air' was one of deep gloom and misery.

More on Horses (and Holmes)

Any text that is interesting enough to be worth studying is likely to be too arcane for most of my Japanese students. Since the Granada *Silver Blaze* (Brett, Hardwick and Barkworth) is a model demonstration of Sherlock Holmes's method and a good introduction to semiotics, I have tried it several times, but the students read the subtitles and do not try to listen. Nevertheless, I have persisted (perhaps mistakenly), and when we look at the text, of which I have made a transcription, we must spend much time explicating, among other things, the many metonymies. A very good one is 'The Turf' (the definite article and the capital letter signify that the reference is unique).

Since horses in a horse race run over a course composed of turf (thick grass in a solid soil base), 'turf' becomes the crucial, signifying feature of the whole world of horse-racing: the breeding, rearing, racing of horses, the

betting upon them, the trainers, the jockeys, the touts, the bookmakers. Although many races in Japan are held over dirt, this is a nice example nonetheless: 'turf' is the contingent element that, by metonymy, binds all these disparate features together.

More on Horses (and Shakespeare)

The opening Chorus of Shakespeare's *Henry V* is a bold rejection of the realism that an audience might think appropriate to the majesty of the dramatic theme (regal power and military triumph), preferring instead to challenge the audience into providing its own imaginative resources to match the poet's rhetorical inventiveness. "Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them, Printing their proud hoofs i 'th' receiving earth."

The 'proud hoofs' are clearly metonyms since they are just one part of a horse, but it is the dynamic, energising part which conjures up the whole of that horse (as it would have done for Holmes if he had seen the print of the horse shoes in the soft earth, as he did in *Silver Blaze*); but before members of the audience (and, subsequently, readers of the printed text) can envision the whole clearly, they must have some idea of what a warhorse was like, how much physical power the uplifted, plunging hoof represents, and how deep the impression that it would make in different types of ground: without this knowledge, we cannot fill in the details of the rest of the picture of which this detail is the chosen part. Shakespeare, here as elsewhere, trusts his audience to use their own thoughts to deck his kings.

In his novel *The Sword in the Stone*, T. H. White gives us a vivid idea of what a warhorse was like (and of how very different it was from a modern racehorse); we have a powerful sense of it, too, in Olivier's film of *Henry V* as the French lords are hauled mechanically on to their mighty

steeds, required to carry so much weight, weight that would leave a very deep imprint.

What knowledge did Shakespeare himself draw on? Was it personal? Or was it, for him as it is for us, conveyed almost entirely through through images printed not in the ground but on the page? In 1436, Paolo Uccello painted, as the model for an equestrian monument of the English condottiere Sir John Hawkwood, a mural that can still to be seen — although now transferred to canvas — in *Santa Maria del Fiore*, the *Duomo*, Firenze. The horse lifts its right foot as if in disdain of the earth it is forever about to impress, part of what Franco and Stefano Borsi speak of as mimesis reduced almost to geometric abstraction, "an anatomy of war"[5]. It has always been a famous image. One supposes that drawings of it were made.

Shakespeare (and Housman) and Blood

When Shakespeare sends off King Henry the Fifth, incognito, to visit his soldiers on the night before the battle of Agincourt, he pits him in verbal conflict with a private soldier, who may be thought to win the argument between them (I would think so). Williams, the private soldier, makes the point that few die well that die in a battle, and since there will be no time for you to be absolved of the sin of killing before being killed yourself, then whoever has led you to this action (in this case the king), must be to blame for your dying in sin (should his cause not be good), for, in the words of Hamlet's father's Ghost, you will die 'unhousled, disappointed, unannealed': that is to say, no priest has confessed you, and you will therefore be unforgiven[6].

"I am afeard there are few die well that die in a battle", says Williams, "for how can they charitably dispose of anything when blood is their

argument." In 'On Wenlock Edge', when Housman writes of "the blood that warms an English yeoman", it is blood which he shares with a Roman soldier who had stood in the same spot nearly two thousand years earlier, and 'blood' is clearly a metonym for 'life', specifically the life of human beings, and, by implication, all the attributes of living humanity that would seem to be entailed when blood runs coursing through your arteries and veins, in particular the desires and passions that 'warm' a human being. On the other hand, when Williams says of soldiers that "blood is their argument", this is clearly meant to stand for "the spilling or shedding of blood" (rather than the sharing of it), since this is the soldier's 'trade' (as soldiers, according to Swift, are "Yahoos trained to kill"), so that 'blood' in this instance is just as obviously a metonym for 'death'. That we interpret the word as life in one instance and death in the other depends on our appreciation of the context in which the word, as part of a code, is being used: nothing comes to us unmediated[7].

Shakespeare and a Soldier's Life

When, after the Crispin Day speech, Mountjoy comes to make his final request that Hal submit himself to ransom, Hal tells him that his army's disfigurement has been brought about *With rainy marching in the painful field*. Why did Shakespeare transpose the epithets, since it was the marching that was painful and the fields that were sodden? The answer, I suppose, is that he would have been perfectly well aware that 'ran' and 'mar' balance each other through partial chiasmus while 'fiel' echoes 'ful', which makes the line easier for an actor to remember as well as making it more memorable should you hear it or read if for yourself. It also conflates rain, march, terrain and pain into one holistic event for those who have suffered

it, no part of the experience divisible from any of the others, so that each is contingently related to its partner, each a metonym for the other and for all the unmentioned but inferred details of the march, although we shall only be able to infer these more general, all embracing characteristics if we know something of the conditions experienced by soldiers who, in more wars than one, have fought in Flanders Fields or plucked the Roses of Picardy; of course, if we have seen Kenneth Branagh's film of *Henry V*, that will help, too.

Shakespeare and the Senses

In *Shakespeare's Language* (Allen Lane, 2000), Sir Frank Kermode observes how often in *Coriolanus* the actors speak of 'voices', and how, when Coriolanus speaks repeatedly of the people's voices, he means their votes. 'Voices', says Kermode, means 'votes', and, because one's voice is a part of one's body, he treats this as a synecdoche, which it is, yet it is, I believe, far more significantly, a metonymy: the voice articulates whatever the vote registers, for a yea or a nay, for the voter's approval or disapproval, the consequence of what the voter has decided after weighing up the pros and the cons of the proposal to be voted on. Although Kermode quotes Coriolanus's "if it may stand with the tune of your voices that I may be consul", he has nothing to say about the 'tune', which is odd, since it establishes the metonymic gamut of the voices. The 'tune' is the song which the voice sings, and the 'tone' of the 'tune' will, to the ear that hears it, be pleasing if it says 'yes', or displeasing if it says 'no'.

The voice in this case is the organ by means of which we express our opinions, and it represents, contingently, the results of our cogitations; these are likely to be the result of what the ear hears or the eye perceives, both

of which will then become the matter for inner debate and decision, as when Claudius says to Laertes "You told us of some suit. What is't, Laertes? You cannot speak of reason to the Dane, And lose you voice". By "the Dane" he means himself (as Antony refers to Cleopatra as 'Egpyt': "I am dying, Egypt, dying"), a classic type of metonymy, and by 'voice' in this instance Claudius means 'request', which will be the vocal expression of Laertes's inner desire. At the end of Webster's *The White Devil*, the dying Flamineo announces "I have caught An everlasting cold; I have lost my voice Most irrecoverably", which is to lose your voice in a very different sense: a sense which the context supplies; 'everlasting' and 'irrecoverably' tells us how to interpret these words: like Mercutio, he is a grave man, a man destined within a very short time for his eternal home.

Perhaps it was Shakespeare who taught us to use the words 'eye' and the 'ear' in a similar fashion. When Antony, in *Julius Caesar*, asks his countrymen to lend him their ears, he not only means "listen to me" but also "mark, learn, and inwardly digest" my words; this may, in turn, seem to entail "and act upon what you infer that my words imply". Ears are functionaries that represent not only their purely physiological function but all the many mental (and physical) consequences that may follow upon our hearing something: not only the ability to hear but also the conclusions that we may reach thereby after ruminating upon — by absorbing and digesting — what our ears have taken in, and the actions that we may subsequently take as a consequence of what we have as a result concluded.

The Ghost of Hamlet's father has a tale of the afterlife that he is not allowed to tell "to ears of flesh and blood" for it would "harrow up" the souls of those who hear it, which is a metaphor that depends upon our understanding both what a harrow does in breaking up the soil (metonymically), and what Jesus did when he harrowed Hell (metaphori-

cally). The Ghost is, however, permitted to speak of his death (an object lesson): "'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard, A serpent stung me: so the whole ear of Denmark Is by a forgéd process of my death Rankly abused". 'Denmark' here is a metonym for the people of Denmark (as well as for their monarch), a container for the things contained, and its 'whole ear' metonymically encapsulates a sequence of implied entailments that have depended on the ear and its functions: we (pre) suppose that a public proclamation must have been made, that all the people heard it, that the people took in what they heard, that they must have believed what they heard, which became their understanding of the event, an understanding which, as it happened, was false. The truth is that Claudius poured "a leperous distilment" into "the porches of my ears", a metaphor that depends on our understanding that porches like doors are gateways, that they are places of egress, and in the ears' case, of entry. So, the orifice of the ear has twice been sluiced. Old Hamlet (Denmark himself) has been poisoned, literally, by Claudius's draught: Claudius's words have poisoned, analogically, the minds of the people (of Denmark) who heard them.

Since he is speaking to more than one person, Mark Antony can give the word its plural form, while signifying, more importantly, its metonymic significance, for the 'ear' is both "a container for the thing contained" and a "functionary for a function", two of the most fundamental, and related, types of classical metonymy. When Antony says "lend me your ears", he is asking for the capability (or function) of the ear (both functionary and the container), which is its power of hearing .(that which it contains), the capability by which those of us who hear are enabled to take in what is given out to us, our ability to receive what is broadcast for us to hear: the 'ear' stands for 'the power of hearing', which would entail, if we are hearing properly, the power of understanding the significance of what we hear.

Similarly, the word 'eye' can also function as the intermediary between our perception of outward events and our inward perception of what these events may signify, how we interpret subjectively what we see objectively. When we say of a cricketer that "he has a good eye", we imply not only coordination of the eye and the brain, but the brain's ability to send messages to the hand; the phrase "a good eye" can therefore, by metonymic transference from eye to brain (both parts of the same domain and contingently connected) and finally to hand (part of the larger domain) imply good judgement and good performance. (The same is true of a musician who has "a good ear".) Aristotle thought that the sense of sight was our prime means of receiving information, and the number of verbs we have to discriminate between various ways of looking bears this out.

Hamlet, the play, like Hamlet its protagonist, is obsessed with seeing and looking, and seeing beyond the superficial 'seems' to the essential 'is', and while 'eyes' naturally refer to the physical eyes, we take for granted, as necessary and contingent entailments, their function as organs or agents which inform the mind and lead to understanding. The eyes are functionaries which observe causes, and stand as metonymic signs for understanding, the consequences of their successful functioning: they are the essential intermediaries between what is seen (the sign) and what is consequently understood (its significance), so that when, just before The Play Scene, Hamlet asks Horatio to watch Claudius — "I prithee when thou seest that act afoot, Even with the very comment of thy soul Observe my uncle", we understand at once that while 'eyes' are not actually mentioned, their function as intermediary informants is presupposed.

Thus, instead of the normal "the eyes inform the soul", we have "the soul directs the eyes to observe", thereby turning the normal metonymy into an unusual metaphor, since I take 'comment' to mean, as pun (in Rhetoric,

paronomasia), 'the ability to perceive as well as to comment about', and 'soul' to mean powers of peception and judgement that Hamlet (a proto Descartes, perhaps?) seems to suggest are distinct from the workings of the brain. Hamlet's injunction thus reverses the direction of the more normal metonymic transfer, which follows soon after: "For I mine eyes will rivet to his face, And after we will both our judgements join In censure of his seeming", where what we see will entail and provoke judgement, and where the metonymic entailments underly the metaphor that is carried by the word "rivet", a term from a very different domain, catachrestic, maybe, but none the worse for that.

Shakespeare and Peirce

In *The History of Shakespeare on Screen*, published two years ago by Cambridge University Press, the author, Kenneth S. Rothwell, writes that in Orson Welles' film *Chimes at Midnight*, Welles as Falstaff, delivers a line which Rothwell describes as "haunting", "We have heard the chimes at midnight, Master Robert Shallow". I have no idea if this is what Welles says in the film, but it is not (if the text is to be trusted) what Shakespeare wrote, nor is it likely to be, since it is rhythmically inept. Falstaff's words, in all the texts that I have read, are "We have heard the chimes at midnight, Master Shallow". Take away the unstressed syllable at either end of this line — a single utterance in a prose dialogue — and we have an iambic pentameter; leave the syllables, and the sentence has a melodic shape of ideal completeness; and it is indeed haunting; add the egregious 'Robert', however, and the back of the melody is broken, the cadence stumbles, and the actor is denied a dying fall. Of course, it may be that my ear is so attuned to the pentameter (even if my own verse has often failed to mark

it), that I am unable to appreciate a melody, in this version with its six beats, that others might be moved by.

In a class, I might use the phrase "chimes at midnight" to illustrate the triadic sign system first described by C. S. Peirce and then taken over by most semioticians: *icon, index, symbol.* The phrase could be thought of as an icon since the sounds may, for those who hear them, act as an aural image, an echo in the mind's ear of the sounds to which they refer. It is an index since it points to the time of night at which Falstaff and his old acquaintances were engaged in whatever it was they were up to: this is a metonymic as well as a hypothetico-deductive (Holmesian) operation, since we deduce the whole from the parts that we are shown, and our inferences are made on the basis of knowledge of what the general context is likely to be: again, metonymic replacements and the traces of implicature work hand in hand. It is a symbol, for, depending on the range of the hearer's experience, it can act as a sign for heedless youth, the burden of memory, the poignancy of old men reminiscing, or whatever feeling or emotion seems appropriate to the hearer, or that awakens in him memories of his own similar experiences which enable Falstaff's words to reverberate with meaning for the hearer, whether that be Shallow himself or a member of the audience.

(As Dr Edmond Wright has recently pointed out[8], human memory is the ultimate provider (of references), the activator (of attention) and the communicator (of meaning), for without our individual memories of contexts and codes to draw upon (not to mention what is personal and unique to us) no kind of understanding between people would be possible.)

Shakespeare and the Untuning of Strings

I am currently reading *Troilus and Cressida* with my graduate Shakespeare seminar, and Ulysses's long speech on degree is packed tight with metaphors, all of which depend upon metonyms. Degree is first of all called a ladder: a metaphor based upon one's knowledge that ladders entail that should we hope to accomplish "high designs" we first have to climb the rungs of the ladder, or (in the world of Ulysses' polity) be already placed on the highest of the rungs. Yet ladders, that can be climbed, function as enablers for rising in the world, physically and metaphorically (which Shakespeare knew). Later, degree is called a string, which, should you untune it, will lead to discord, not only in the music, but, analogically, in the state.

We are able to recognise that this is a metaphor since we recognise that 'string' is a metonym, one string standing for everything that is in tune with it, including the players and the listeners: thus it is that degree, sounding like a well-tuned string, is the provider of harmony in the state. The feudal conception that lies at the heart of Ulysses'opinion (what Eustace Tillyard called 'the Elizabethan World Picture') would be rejected by most people today, but certain lines from the speech which have been running through my mind have seemed, in the present state of world society, apposite: untune the string of degree, says Ulysses, and "hark, what discord follows".

Strength should be lord of imbecility,
And the rude son should strike his father dead.

From the perspective of wholes and parts, both lines might be examples of synecdoche: the first the whole (a state of affairs where the powerful control the stupid) for its parts (individual examples which we must supply

for ourselves); the second a part (one particular action) for the whole (a state of affairs in which such an act would be typical); but I prefer to think of them as metonyms since they require us to work out (to infer) the parts or the wholes for which they stand, representatively: we can then all supply our own representative examples. Puttenham, too, thought of personifications as metonyms since they work as signs (such as Venus for 'fleshly lust'), and we must supply, by inference based upon knowledge, the range of characteristics possessed by the personages who are called to mind by the trope.

If anarchy prevails, which is what Ulysses fears, strength will be an attribute of those "that have power to hurt" (*Sonnet 94*) and no compunction about using that power in a hurtful manner, who exercise their power ruthlessly and unilaterally, like football thugs, and whose pleasure lies in terrorising the law-abiding. The second line selects the rude son to signify anyone who seeks to overthrow whatever has fostered his own growth, which will be established order of some kind, the particular paternalistic society of school or unit in which he grew up.

The other lines that have been running in my head seem no less apt. When heavenly bodies (which in their behaviour prefigure acts upon earth) "to disorder wander", natural disasters

Divert and crack, rend and deracinate
The unity and calm of married states.

We may no longer share Ulysses' (or Shakespeare's) view of the correspondence between heaven and earth, yet that does not take from the lines their power to shock, which is partly a result of Shakespeare's rhetorical mastery and partly the sense which the images give us of the horrors of destruction, especially the destruction of what we love and of what has made sense of our lives. Of course, some traditional values may come over

time to seem irrational, cruel, inhumane (since they in fact are), but people need to be wooed from them, not to have them torn up by the roots; revolutionaries pay little attention to the values that most people live by and, if bereft of, are lost.

The first line is a model of Shakespearean practice: two Old English monosyllables in the middle balance longer Latinate words at either end: the short Old English word 'rend' is married with the polysyllabic Latin word 'deracinate', while 'crack', too, is Old English, and 'divert' comes from divertere, Latin, 'to turn aside' ('verse' comes from the same stem). Shakespeare will also, obviously, have chosen these words because the play of sounds, vowels as well as consonants, is particularly abrupt: di-, de-; -ert, rend, rack, - rac, -nate; the play of 'k' and 'r' in the middle of the line is a vocal fracture. It is natural to speak this line harshly. The terms of course are metaphors, which depend on their force for what they conjure up metonymically.

Its partner, though, is a much more placid line: the 't' of 'unity' is echoed by the 'ts' of 'states', the 'm' of 'married' echoes the 'm' of 'calm', and both require lingering over, since the vowels too are long, as they are of 'un-', '-ty', and 'states'. The rhythm puts most weight on 'calm '. The argument is a further metaphor, which rests on the metonymic implication that marriage is a peaceful and harmonious state of affairs, a surprising view from a man (whether Shakespeare or Ulysses) who spent most of his married life far from the connubial bed.

A Shakespearean Flood

When Nestor speaks of Hector's "youth in flood", he offers the rhetorician the chance to locate the metonymic basis of metaphor, since it is so

commonplace an example that it would normally go unremarked. A river in flood is the vehicle of the metaphor (I. A. Richards), the discontinuous term (J. David Sapir)[9]; Hector is the tenor, the continuous term. Hector is one domain, a river in flood is a domain superimposed upon it. Yet in order to make sense of the metaphor, we have to have a sense of what rivers in flood are like and of what they do, and which of them within that domain of water in flood might apply to Hector — what do rivers in flood and Hector have in common?

Rivers in flood are often full of mud, they may have swept up animals on their way, they may overflow land on either bank, not characteristics that are likely to be exactly applicable to Hector, perhaps; but they are also impetuous, headlong, irresistible, which are terms that we might well apply to the martial energy of a vigorous young man, and seem likely to be adjectives that would have first come from the human domain, anyway, and then been applied to the natural one catachrestically. Of course, you might argue that since flood is the whole standing for those parts which we do not have to think about too specifically, it is a simple synecdoche, but if we link Hector and floods in a Venn diagram, we have to decide which of the characteristics of both will fall within the parts of the two domains which overlap, and so, if we are to interpret the metaphor, we need at least to have a sense, even if it is not exactly spelt out, of those parts which are essential to the comparison, the operative, active parts.

The Shakespearen Forge as Womb

In Act 1 Scene 3 (line 312) of *Troilus and Cressida*, Ulysses speaks of a "young conception" in his brain, and implies that when it reaches its time Nestor will be its midwife; later Nestor develops the analogy of the brain

as a womb (if a sexual interpretation of his lines is apt). In *Richard II*, Richard speaks of the brain as female to his soul, out of which he would hammer his thoughts, appearing to see the mind as both womb and forge, neither image an isolated one in the plays. In *Love's Labour's Lost*, Holofernes' gift of language is "a foolish extravagant spirit, full of forms, figures, shapes, objects, ideas, apprehension, motions, revolutions, nourished in the womb of *pia mater*, and delivered upon the mellowing of occasion". Holofernes may be a figure of fun, but Shakespeare's school master at Stratford-upon-Avon Grammar School provided his pupil with material for many of his brief excursions into the world of speculation about his art, as, for instance, in the Choruses of *Henry V*.

Shakespeare and Time

In *Sonnet 55*, Shakespeare believed that his 'rime' would outlive the memorials of "unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time", an exemplary line: consonants are threaded like beads: sw, st, sm, sl; pt, st, tish, ti; sets of vowels partly reflect each other, u(n), -o(ne), -u(t); (b)e-, (m)e-: they weave their patterns together in a web of harmony. "Stone" stands in as a metonym for the monuments that are made from that material, some of the stone being marble, while "unswept" stands for a negation of whatever actions you might take to keep a monument clean.

Implications have to be worked out, inferences made: failure to clean the monument would presuppose that I was neglecting it, which would presuppose that I no longer felt much grief or even respect for the person it memorialised. The monument would no longer be 'cared for' in either sense of the verb, which may be why the senses have become conflated: to be 'fond of' something or someone may entail 'to look after' that something

or person. This would, in turn, entail that whatever name the monument memorialised would soon be forgotten.

Such forgetfulness is the work of Time and Time is (metaphorically) a slut. Sluts are not very good at keeping things clean, at washing and polishing besmeared glass, or sweeping a room (for whoever's laws it might be), while Time, as Ulysses tells Achilles, wears a wallet at his back, in which he keeps alms for oblivion. Time, which will do nothing to keep our honour bright if we do nothing about it ourselves, will soon obliterate our names. Only poetry (as long as men who breathe have eyes to read) will keep our names alive, or if not our names, then at least that you were the person whom I loved, that for you I felt love, even perhaps that I was capable of loving (thanks to you) — the ambiguous claim of Shakespeare's brazenly presumptuous hope "That in black ink my love may still shine bright".

Memory is crucial. In Cressida's great aria (Act 3, Scene 1) which begins "When Time is old and hath forgot itself", even then, she says, "Let memory...upbraid my falsehood". Since memory cannot exist apart from minds that remember, and as minds belong to creatures, the creatures may be spoken of as 'they': the possessors of an attribute they possess, which speaks for them. Cressida implies the connection without making it explicit. "When they have said...", she goes on. "Yea, let them say As false as Cressid". The unspoken but entailed link between 'memory', 'they' and 'them' is, in my terms, metonymic.

Philip Larkin and Proper Habits

Roman Jakobson argued (quite wrongly, in my view)[10] that metaphor is the property of verse, metonymy of prose. Philip Larkin is a master of metonymy, but that does not make him any less a poet, since poets are makers (as Jakobson knew quite well), and they make poems with words that combine together rhythmically, harmoniously, and with propriety.

My reference here is the first verse of Philip Larkin's 'An Arundel Tomb':

Side by side, their faces blurred,
The earl and countess lie in stone,
Their proper habits vaguely shown
As jointed armour, stiffened pleat,
And that faint hint of the absurd —
The little dogs under their feet.

As I have already suggested, I believe that metonymies depend on presuppositions which are founded upon entailments, although I use those terms in their everyday meanings rather than in the strictly logical way that contemporary philosophers and linguists use them: "jointed armour" presupposes the medieval knight who wore it, since his role as a knight would entail that he wore armour; a stiffened pleat stands for the dress of which it is a part and presupposes a woman of high enough status for her to be wearing a dress of such intricacy, which, being a great lady she would be expected to wear (it would be entailed).

In 'At Grass', Larkin writes of racehorses and races, almost entirely through metonyms. When he writes of "silks at the start", "the start" signifies the start of a race, and "silks" (the common metonym for jockeys'

shirts and caps, which are made of silk) presupposes the presence of the jockeys who wear them, since being a jockey (having that role) would entail one's wearing the particular type of shirt and cap known metonymically as "silks".

On Blazons

In the subway one morning, an old lady who took the seat beside me (on the bench reserved for the elderly and the infirm) was wearing a blouson in soft grey cloth with a neat little blazon in cursive style: *A good idea flashed into my mind.* I am greatly interested in blazons: heraldic bearings, with mottoes, that may be found, among other places, sewn on to the top pockets of blazers, so called, by metonymy, because they carry blazons.

In Old English, 'a blaze' was a torch, hence, in Middle English, 'to blaze' came, by the usual sort of transference, to mean 'to burn brightly', indeed, I suppose, 'to flash'. Other associated meanings, derived by metonymy through contiguous association, would be 'a blazing temper', 'to blaze a trail'. The name of one's regiment, worn on one's shoulder, was known as 'a flash'. Another verb, 'blasen', which is found in High German, meant 'to puff out' or 'to blow on a trumpet' (and so, to 'blast' and 'blow'), a word which seems to have become linked, in the way these things happen, with a word derived from Portuguese that meant a shield, and since a shield carries an heraldic device, its bearer accompanied maybe by a trumpeter, so the device itself became a blazon. I do not know if these terms, one germanic the other romance, came from an original source, but they now seem to have become intriguingly, and multifariously, fused.

The blazon of Sapporo University bears the motto '*Vitalitas, Perspicuitas, Fidelitas*'. Most of my students, even those in their third and

fourth years, have never noticed these words, although they are blazoned in letters a foot high in the main lobby of the main building, straight ahead of you as you enter the front door, albiet at a height somewhat above eye level. The qualities of perspicuity, however, are not those that Japanese students are much encouraged to develop. Interestingly, the three terms belong to three different domains: those of life, brain and feeling, the three parts, perhaps, of a complete human being.

A Larkin Metonym

Philip Larkin's poem 'Myxomatosis' would be a nearly indecipherable poem if we took away the title, or did not know that it is the name of a disease endemic to rabbits. Yet once this is understood, we know that the 'you' —

"Caught in the centre of a soundless field
While hot inexplicable hours go by"

— is a dying rabbit.

Of course, the field is soundless because the rabbit is deaf; the hours are hot because the rabbit is suffering from a fever — two of the symptoms of myxomatosis. Metonymy, I contend, is a figure of implication (as among those listed by Aristotle)[11]: it implies the active and necessary presence of contigent properties and operations which the reader (or listener) must supply: Larkin does not need to detail the chain of cause and effect, of presuppositions and entailments, as, in a classroom with Japanese students, I am obliged to:

What trap is this, where were its teeth concealed?
You seem to ask.
I make a sharp reply,

Then clean my stick. I'm glad I can't explain
Just in what jaws you were to suppurate,
You may have thought things would come right again
If you could only sit quite still and wait.

This is one of Larkin's briefest poems, yet one of his bleakest: he faced the irreversible ills of life, human as well as animal, without the false comfort of the religious or the evolutionary explanations of the neo-Darwinians (which is what I believe lines 7/8 imply), in words that one does not forget: and when Larkin writes "Then clean my stick", this is a metonymic sign, which presupposes that his stick is dirty and that what, in this context, will have made it dirty is the blood and pus of the rabbit that he has killed with his "sharp reply".

The Shifts of Metonymy

In the Abstract, I refer in a parenthesis to metonymy as the source of word shifts and the creation of new meanings. This is well demonstrated by *The Geometry of Love*, Margaret Visser's story of *Sant' Agnese Fuori le Mura*, a well-known Roman church (Viking, 2000). Many of the derivations I knew, some I didn't (since I have had no occasion to track their traces).

The eight-sided canopy over the tabernacle, which is held up on pillars of rare and beautiful stone that form a perfect cube, is called a **ciberium**, a word derived from **kiborion**, the upper half of the seed container of a water lily; the lower half is the **calyx**, a **chalice**, both metaphors based on similarity of appearance, a class of metaphor which Umberto Eco distinguishes from another class based on similarity of function. 'Canopy', however, comes from the word **konopos**, the Greek word for mosquito, thence the net hung like a roof over the bed to protect you from the horrid creatures,

which strikes me as a metonymic shift: the name of a creature transferred to the object designed to protect you from that creature, an inversion, as it were, of a container for the thing contained: an excluder for the thing excluded, maybe, an unusual variation, certainly, but well-qualified to be included in the category which George Puttenham calls the 'misnamer'. Similarly, a **fornix** was an arch of a kind used on the exterior facade of a brothel, for which it became a sign, and went on to generate a word like 'fornication'.

For Visser, a church, of which *Sant' Agnese* is an exemplum, is a bounded space, in which all its particular features — its columns, arches, floors, subdivisions into nave, aisles (from a word meaning 'wings'), apse (from a word meaning 'to grab'), chancel, windows, domes, its materials (of stone and mosaic and paint) and their treatment by masons and sculptors — have a special meaning within this space, this domain, and are laden with the memory of all who have helped to make the church, from its beginnings to its present state, as well as to those who have worshipped within that space. She walks us round the church and is a wonderful cicerone, pausing, where the spot needs historical underpinning, to give us the relevant story of the early church, the involvement of the interested popes, the provenance of the various bits of the building that have come from other places, the lives and significant deaths of the memorialised saints. She provides us with a memory and thereby gives us the knowledge which will enable us to read the signs.

A Final Word

This is perhaps an odd place to end, but any place would be a cutting off, because I am merely launched on the topic that would take me till the

edge of Doom, which, of course, we may arrive at sooner than most of us have bargained for.

Routledge have just republished Jonathan Culler's *The Pursuit of Signs* (first published in 1981), and the final chapter, 'The Turns of Metaphor', must have influenced me more than I had realised — or remembered. Culler quotes a sizeable chunk of Umberto Eco (from *The Role of the Reader*), which might act as a coda to what I have written since it might well have acted as a spur. I hope that my own writing is not quite so abstruse, but Eco has the authority which I lack, and I take him as my mentor:

A metaphor can be invented because language, in its process of unlimited semiosis, constitutes a multidimensional network of metonymies, each of which is explained by a cultural convention rather than by an original resemblance. The imagination would be incapable of inventing or recognizing a metaphor if culture, under the form of a possible structure of the Global Semantic System, did not provide it with the subjacent network of arbitrarily stipulated contiguities.

Notes

1. This is the latest in a series of essays that I have written on this topic, the first as long ago as 1984: 'Identifying Metonymies' (*The Northern Review*, No. 12, 1984). Each of the essays has attempted to build on its predecessors in order to make a more complete case for the argument I am conducting.
2. Outraged Victorian fathers are supposed to have dismissed errant daughters (unmarried but with a child) with the words "Never darken my

doorstep again".

3. George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, 1589, a work that Shakespeare is certain to have known. My copy of this work is dated 1869; extracts from it appear in Brian Vickers, *English Renaissance Literary Criticism* (Oxford, 1999).

4. A catachresis (a metaphor that has become a standard term because no other exists): '-phernalia', a bride's dowry, all the things she took with her when she married. A similar word is 'trappings', which originally meant a horse's harness.

5. *Paolo Uccello*, Franco and Stefano Borsi (translated by Elfreda Powell), Thames and Hudson, 1994.

6. Although, according to a new book about the battle of Agincourt (*Agincourt, 1415*, ed. Anne Curry, Tempus, 2000), a number of priests were in attendance and the night before the battle were kept very busy hearing confessions.

7. I have written about this: 'The Figure in the Idiom', *The Journal of the Faculty of Humanities*, Hokkai Gakuen, No 6, 1996.

8. In a talk he gave at The Faculty of Letters, Hokkaido University, in September, 2001.

9. I. A. Richards's terms (tenor and vehicle) are well-known; in many ways those invented by J. David Sapir (continuous and discontinuous), which he discusses in 'The Anatomy of Metaphor' (in Sapir and Crocker, *The Social Uses of Metaphor*, University of Pennsylvania, 1977) are more helpful. I discuss these descriptions in 'Identifying Metonymies', *The Northern Review*, No. 12., 1984.

10. As I argue in my essay 'Roman Jakobson on Metaphor and Metonymy' in *The Northern Review*, No 17, 1989.

11. I list all these and those categorised by Quintillian and Puttenham in my

essays "Shakespeare the Rhetorician", parts II and III, published in the Journal of The Faculty of Letters, Hokkaido University, 1980, 1981.