

CHAPTER 14

Cognitive Pragmatics and Multi-layered Communication:

Allegory in Christian Religious Discourse

Christoph Unger

Allegory is a figure of speech employed frequently in Christian religious discourse throughout history. It has its place not only in the Christian Scriptures, but also in theological and homiletic literature. However, allegory and especially allegorical readings of scripture have also met with resistance in some schools of Christian thought. This raises the question what it is about the nature of allegory that explains the undeniable attraction that it holds for use in Christian religious discourse, as well as the limitations that are often commented on. In this paper I want to explore whether an explanation might be found in the cognitive nature of allegory: is there perhaps anything in the way allegory is processed in the mind that may shed some light on the attractiveness and the limitations of allegory? Addressing this question is hampered by the fact that allegory has not yet been widely studied in its own right in cognitive-pragmatic approaches. Perhaps one reason for this is that there is a widespread intuition that allegory is closely related to, and perhaps even reduces to, extended metaphor. However, there are reasons to doubt this, and in this paper I will follow Unger (2012), where I propose a cognitive-pragmatic account based on the claim that allegory is not processed by the application of metaphorical processes. Rather, the comprehension of allegories involves our ability to detect multiple simultaneous layers of communication, all of which contribute individually and jointly to overall expectations of relevance in the sense of Sperber and Wilson (1995). I will argue that this account sheds light on the unique utility and limitations of allegory: because of its layered nature, allegory may be a useful tool to address a heterogeneous audience. Moreover, the layered nature of allegory makes it also a useful tool for persuasive or argumentative discourse. At the same time, the efforts involved in processing the communication layers involved in metaphor increase risks particularly of audience's over-interpreting the communication event. Thus, there are indeed cognitive causes for the attraction that allegory holds for practitioners of religious discourse and also for the caution against this figure of speech.

1 Allegory in Christian religious language: a survey

Christian religious language liberally makes use of allegory, a figure of speech classically described by Quintilian as a figure which ‘... presents one thing in

words and another in sense, or sometimes a sense quite contrary to the words.’ Allegories in this sense are found in the Bible and in extra-biblical texts. The most famous examples are perhaps the following: in the Old Testament, the prophet Nathan’s parable for King David (2 Sam 12:1-4), the Song of the Vineyard in Isaiah 5:1-7; in the New Testament, the parable of the sower (Matthew 13:3-9; Mark 4:3-9; Luke 8:5-8); other Christian writings employing allegory include John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* (Bunyan 1953) and C. S. Lewis’ *The Chronicles of Narnia* (Lewis 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956).

Allegories need not be larger discourses such as these examples. In fact, Quintilian uses sentence-length examples. Such shorter allegories are found in the Bible as well:

- (1) Jesus replied, ‘No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.’ (Lk 9:62)

However, what is common to allegories in this sense is that the author intended the text to be understood allegorically in the first place. Allegory as a figure of speech requires allegorical reading to make sense of the text.

Distinct from the rhetorical figure allegory is *allegoresis* (*Allegorese* in the German hermeneutical literature), a method of interpretation that reads texts as allegories in search of a deeper, more profound meaning.¹ This method of interpretation has been highly controversial in the Christian church throughout history. Traces of this interpretation method can be found in the New Testament, for example in the apostle Paul’s interpretation of the story of Hagar and Sarah resembling Christian believers and Jews respectively (Gal 4:21-31), and Paul’s application of the law about muzzling oxen to the right of Christian teachers to financial support (1 Cor 9:9-12; 1 Tim 5:18)

However, allegoresis came to be widely used only in the patristic period (around 150-400 AD) by church fathers of the Alexandrian school. In this school it was taught that every textual unit in Scripture has three levels of meaning, the literal meaning, a moral meaning and a spiritual meaning. Allegoresis was the prime method of arriving at the moral and spiritual meanings. As an example, consider Origen’s interpretation (around 244) of the sexual relations between Lot and his daughters (Gen. 19:30-38), discussed by Klein, Blomberg and Hubbard (1993, pp.34–35). The Biblical text reads as follows: :

Lot and his two daughters left Zoar and settled in the mountains, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar. He and his two daughters lived in a cave. One day the older daughter said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is no man around here to give us children—as is the custom all over the earth. Let’s get our father to drink wine and then sleep with him and preserve our family line through our father.” That night they got their father to drink wine, and the older

¹See for example Zhang (2005) for an intensive cross-cultural discussion of allegoresis as an interpretation method.

daughter went in and slept with him. He was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up. The next day the older daughter said to the younger, "Last night I slept with my father. Let's get him to drink wine again tonight, and you go in and sleep with him so we can preserve our family line through our father." So they got their father to drink wine that night also, and the younger daughter went in and slept with him. Again he was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up. So both of Lot's daughters became pregnant by their father. The older daughter had a son, and she named him Moab ; he is the father of the Moabites of today. The younger daughter also had a son, and she named him Ben-Ammi ; he is the father of the Ammonites of today. (Gen. 19:30-38, New International Version)

According to Origen (1982, pp. 112-20), the passage has a literal sense (it actually happened). But its moral meaning is that Lot represents the rational human mind, this wife the flesh inclined to pleasures, and the daughters vainglory and pride. Applying these three to people yields the spiritual (or doctrinal) meaning: Lot represents the (Old Testament) law, the daughters represent Jerusalem and Samaria, and the wife represents the Israelites who rebelled in the wilderness. Other church fathers in Antioch in Syria reacted strongly against this allegorical interpretation method. Among them were Theodore of Mopsuestia (ca 350-428 AD), Theodoret (ca. 393-460) and John Chrysostom (ca. 347-407). In the Reformation period, Martin Luther and John Calvin added their voice to reject allegoresis in the interpretation of Scripture.

This controversy led some interpreters to not only reject allegoresis, i.e. allegorical reading as a method of interpretation, but to be wary of allegory as an overt figure of speech as well. Thus, Ethelbert Bullinger, who developed a highly elaborate taxonomy of figures of speech in biblical literature (Bullinger 1968), acknowledges the existence of allegory in the Bible but gives this warning: 'No figure requires more careful discrimination than *Allegory*. And it would be safer to say that there are no allegories in Scripture than to follow one's own judgment as to what is allegory, and what is not.' (Bullinger 1968. p.749).

Adolf Jülicher (1899) came to an even more radical conclusion with respect to the parables of Jesus. After reviewing many different and divergent allegorical interpretations of Jesus' parables, he concluded that these parables are not allegories at all and should be treated to advance only one point of teaching about spiritual truths, rather than establishing various allegorical resemblances between elements of the parable and its intended meaning. Meanwhile, many interpreters have moved away from this extreme position (among them Dodd (1935) and Jeremias (1947)), and Klein et al. (1993, p.337) observe that '[a] growing minority of interpreters once again regards as appropriate a limited amount of allegorical interpretation. . . At the same time, few have been willing to abandon the quest for one central truth per passage'.

This short and no doubt selective review of the role of allegory in Christian

religious language highlights a paradox: on the one hand, allegory occurs extensively in Christian religious discourse, both in the Scriptures and in other forms of religious discourse. On the other hand, allegory is met (at least in certain traditions) with a lot of suspicion, bordering on the denial of its existence. This raises the question whether there is something in the essence of allegory as a figure of speech that explains both the enormous utility of allegory in religious discourse, and also its limitations? In this paper I want to address this question from a cognitive pragmatic point of view: do the cognitive processes involved in interpreting allegory shed light on both the utility and the limitation of allegory?

2 Allegory and metaphor

Since both allegory and metaphor appear to involve relating two domains of meaning, we need to clarify the relation between them. Consider the following definitions of allegory:

Allegory, which is translated in Latin by *inversio*, either presents one thing in words and another in meaning, or else something absolutely opposed to the meaning of the words.²

(Quintilian, translated Butler 1922, chapter 6, section 44,)

Allegory ... is metaphor ... continued as a trope of thought ... and consists in the exchange of the intended thought with another thought which is in a similarity relation ... to the intended thought.³

(Lausberg 1984 §423, p. 139)

Few figures have been the subject of greater controversy than *Allegory*; or, have been more variously defined. One class of Rhetoricians declare that it is a continued metaphor: and another class declare that it is not. But, as is often the case under such circumstances, neither is quite correct, because both have a part of the truth and put it for the whole. Neither of the contending parties takes into consideration the existence of *Hypocatastasis*. And this fact accounts for the confusion, not only with regard to *Allegory*, but also with regard to *Metaphor*.

²Allegoria, quam inversionem interpretantur, aut aliud verbis aliud sensu ostendit aut etiam interim contrarium.

³Die allegoria ... ist die als Gedanken-Tropus ... fortgesetzte Metapher ... und besteht im Ersatz des gemeinten Gedankens durch einen anderen Gedanken, der zum gemeinten Gedanken in einem Ähnlichkeits-Verhältnis ... steht.

All three figures are based on *comparison*. *Simile* is comparison by *resemblance*; *Metaphor* is comparison by *representation*; *Hypocatastasis* is comparison by *implication*.

In the first the comparison is *stated*; in the second it is *substituted*; in the third it is *implied*.

Thus *Allegory* is a continuation of the latter two, *Metaphor* or *Hypocatastasis*; while the *Parable* (*q.v.*) is a continuation of the *Simile*.

(Bullinger 1968:748)

What these definitions have in common is that they define allegory in relation to metaphor, and that they presuppose the substitution theory of metaphor, which claims that metaphor is the result of the substitution of one word with another one. However, there is a progression: while the classic definition of allegory given by Quintilian clearly distinguishes allegory from metaphor and is designed to cover instances of allegory ‘unmixed with metaphor’ (Butler 1922), the other two definitions bring into focus the idea that allegory is some sort of continuation from metaphor. In Lausberg’s case it is not entirely clear what kind of continuation he has in mind, as he still distinguishes clearly between metaphor as ‘word substitution trope’ and allegory as ‘thought substitution trope’. However, Bullinger’s definition borders on claiming outright that allegory is essentially extended metaphor and what he calls extended hypocatastasis (where the distinction between hypocatastasis and metaphor remains unclear).

This comparison reveals a central theme in the discussion of allegory: how does this figure of speech relate to metaphor? This question remains current even for modern pragmatic theory approaches to allegory that have long ago parted from the substitution theory of metaphor. Prominent among modern pragmaticists working on allegory is Peter Crisp (Crisp 2001; Crisp 2005; Crisp 2008). Other valuable contributions have been made by Harris & Tolmie (2011; Gibbs 2011; Thagard 2011; Kastenan and Gruenler 2011; Oakley and Crisp 2011). These researchers are working in the framework of cognitive linguistics, according to which metaphor is a basic principle of human cognition, a figure of thought, not of speech. This idea was introduced by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), who made two important observations on metaphor, as already noted by a number of contributors to the present volume: first, metaphor is ubiquitous in everyday speech. Thus, it is not credible to claim that metaphor is an artistic device for rhetoric embellishment of speech, or a deviation from a norm. Second, the metaphors used in everyday speech appear to center around certain types of mappings between abstract conceptual domains and concrete domains based on our experience of persons and things moving through a three dimensional space. An example for such domain mappings is one that can be called LOVE IS A JOURNEY. Lakoff (1993) cites many examples in English where a love relationship can be talked about and reasoned about in terms of comparing it to a journey:

- (2) Look how far we've come. It's been a long, bumpy road. We can't turn back now. We're at a crossroads. We may have to go our separate ways. The relationship isn't going anywhere. We're spinning our wheels. Our relationship is off the track. The marriage is on the rocks. We may have to bail out of this relationship. (Lakoff 1993, p.206)

Lakoff takes this as evidence that domain mappings such as LOVE IS A JOURNEY are instantiated in cognitive structure, and these cognitive domain mappings underlie our ability to comprehend metaphors.

Crisp (2001; Crisp 2005; Crisp 2008) and Gibbs (2011) claim that the interpretation of metaphor and allegory makes use of the same cognitive principles of metaphorical mapping and which involve creating a blended conceptual space from concepts belonging to the source and target domain of the figurative utterance. This does not mean that there is no distinction between allegory and metaphor: Gibbs claims that allegory comprehension involves applying the processes of metaphor comprehension to utterances that do not obviously involve metaphorical language (Gibbs 2011:122). Crisp (2008:293-294) argues that in allegory, the metaphorical mappings are applied in a more radical way: not only are the mappings more extensive than in metaphor, but separate more clearly the literal source domain and the figurative target domain. Allegory, unlike metaphor, does not mix language relating to these domains but relates directly only to the source domain. Moreover, allegory describes fictional situations by way of referring directly to possible situations, whereas metaphor (and extended metaphor) creates new blends between unrelated concepts of the source and target domains and uses this blended conceptual space to refer directly to an entity within this space.

Another influential approach to metaphor in modern pragmatic theory is the relevance theory account of Sperber and Wilson (1995; Sperber and Wilson 1990; Sperber and Wilson 2008; Wilson and Carston 2007; Sperber and Wilson 1998; Wilson and Sperber 2002; Carston 2002). Sperber and Wilson agree with Lakoff and Johnson (1980) that metaphor is ubiquitous in everyday speech and cannot be regarded as a special device, a departure from a norm. But unlike Lakoff and Johnson, Sperber and Wilson do not claim that it is necessary to postulate the existence of metaphor-specific cognitive principles or processes in order to account for metaphor comprehension. An empirical motivation for this claim is that there seems to be a continuum between literal uses, approximation uses (loose uses), hyperbole and metaphor. The following examples illustrate this:

- (3) Would you please take the kettle off the fire, the water is boiling.
- (4) Ouch, I burned my tongue, this coffee is boiling.
- (5) I had to wait for half an hour before I could take my bath, the water was boiling.
- (6) John was boiling with anger.
- (7) Peter: What did you think of Angela Merkel's reaction to the news that

the NSA listened to her mobile phone? - Mary: Oh, she was boiling with anger.

In (3), the word *boiling* is used literally. In (4), *boiling* is used in an approximate sense: the coffee poured out for the speaker to drink was definitely not literally boiling, but hot enough to burn her tongue. (5) is a case of hyperbole. The bath water was not even approximately boiling, but hotter than comfortable for the speaker. (6) is a typical metaphorical use of the word *boiling*. There is no sense in which *boiling* in this example can be said to involve a temperature at all. Rather, it conveys the idea that John was showing his anger in an agitated manner, and this agitation is of a sort that reminds one of the agitation of boiling water. With respect to (7) it is necessary to know that German Chancellor Angela Merkel normally does not show much emotion in her public speech. However, in a statement she made after the revelation that the United States intelligence service listened to her mobile phone, she used a slightly more emotional wording and manner for her style. Thus, when Mary answers Peter as in (7), she is engaging in a hyperbolic metaphor.

Sperber and Wilson claim that the linguistic meaning of utterances falls far short of conveying the speaker's meaning. Rather, the linguistic meaning of utterances merely provides clues for the audience inferring the speaker's meaning. For inferring the speaker's meaning, audiences follow a heuristic procedure that can be paraphrased as follows:

- (8) Accept the first hypothesis about explicit meaning, implicit import and contextual assumptions that is most easily accessible. Check if the utterance, on this interpretation, is at least relevant enough to be worth the audience's attention. If so, the audience is entitled to accept this interpretation as the one the speaker intended. If not, follow a path of least effort in accessing interpretations and checking them for relevance, stopping at the first interpretation that satisfies the audience's expectations of relevance, or abandon the process if processing effort becomes too high.⁴

Relevance is a technical notion. It is a property of inputs to cognitive processes (for example, utterances) and is defined in terms of positive cognitive effects and cognitive processing effort. Positive cognitive effects are true improvements in the individual's representation of the world. Such improvements may be achieved by strengthening previously held assumptions, by eliminating assumptions that turn out to be false, or by acquiring information that leads to further true implications. The more cognitive effects an input to cognitive processes yields, the more *relevant* it is. On the other hand, the more processing effort is needed for getting these effects, the less relevant the input is.

In (3), the easiest accessible assumption about the explicit meaning of the utterance includes the assumption that the word *boiling* communicates the

⁴See Sperber and Wilson (2004) for an authoritative statement of this comprehension procedure on page 613, and a fully worked out example of an application of this procedure on pages 615-617.

concept BOILING which is standardly encoded by the word. This is because the first part of the utterance conveys the request made of the audience to move a kettle full of water off the fire. This raises the question of which relation the second part bears to the first. A highly accessible context is that the fact that the water in a water kettle is boiling is a good reason for taking the water kettle off the fire. On this interpretation the utterance achieves relevance because it provides a good reason for the request being made in the first part of the utterance. But this presupposes that the word *boiling* is understood as conveying the concept BOILING.

In (6), *boiling* is predicated of a person, but the concept BOILING cannot be predicated of people. The phrase *with anger* indicates that *boiling* is more narrowly predicated of a person in a specific emotional state, namely that of anger. This means that a relevant interpretation of the utterance can only be found if the word *boiling* can be understood as conveying a context specific concept BOILING* that can be predicated of a person in the emotional state of anger, but that nevertheless is best conveyed by using the word *boiling*. An easily available contextual assumption is that people in anger typically show an agitated behaviour. Also, boiling water is moving in an agitated way. Thus, it is easy to construct a context specific concept BOILING* that differs from the concept BOILING in that it does not refer to a temperature of substances at all, but that does refer to agitated states of persons and gives an idea what this kind of agitation may helpfully be compared to.

Thus, whether a word is used in a metaphorical, literal, approximation or hyperbolic sense can be comprehended simply by following the relevance-theoretic comprehension heuristic in (8). The intended interpretation must be the most easily accessible combination of hypotheses about explicit meaning, implicit import and contextual assumptions. On this account, metaphor as such has no special theoretical significance, nor does it require special interpretive mechanisms. It is, in Sperber and Wilson's words, a 'deflationary' account of metaphor (Sperber and Wilson 2008).

However, Wilson (2012) points out that it is unclear how this account of metaphor could account for utterances such as the following ones, which are often identified as typical instances of allegories:

- (9) O ship, new waves will bear thee back to sea.
What dost thou? Make the haven, come what may.⁵ (Horace, quoted by Quintilian in Butler (1922, chapter 6 section 44))
- (10) You can't put the toothpaste back in the tube. (Wilson 2012)
- (11) When you walk through a storm, hold your head up high. (Wilson 2012)

The relevance theory account of metaphor argues that metaphors communicate ad-hoc concepts, concepts that are not encoded in the word that is used. But in allegories such as (9), it appears that the concept ordinarily encoded by the word

⁵O navis, referent id mare te novi fluctus; o quid agis? fortiter occupa portum.

(e.g. SHIP encoded by ship) is still communicated along with the contextually adjusted concept (e.g. SHIP* referring to the institution of the state).

A similar point has been made by Carston (2010) and Carston and Wearing (2011). These authors point to examples such as the following where the literal meaning appears to remain transparent to the audience along with the figurative meaning:

- (12) Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.
(Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, V. v. 24–30, quoted from Carston (2010, p.306))
- (13) Depression, in Karla's experience, was a dull, inert thing—a toad that squatted wetly on your head until it finally gathered the energy to slither off. The unhappiness she had been living with for the last ten days was a quite different creature. It was frantic and aggressive. It had fists and fangs and hobnailed boots. It didn't sit, it assailed. It hurt her. In the mornings, it slapped her so hard in the face that she reeled as she walked to the bathroom. (Zoë Heller, *The Believers*, (2008, p.263), quoted from Carston (2010, p.307))
- (14) Love is the lighthouse and the rescued mariners. (Oskar Davico, 'Hana', (1979), quoted from Carston (2010, p.295))
- (15) My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun—
In Corners— (Emily Dickinson 1863, in Franklin (2005), quoted from Carston (2010, p.309))

Note that this transparency of the literal meaning appears not only in cases of extended metaphor (12)-(13) but also in some instances of creative metaphors with a strong image-like feel to them (14)-(15). Carston and Wearing argue that these examples motivate the postulation of a second path to metaphor comprehension in addition to the one described in the standard relevance theory account of metaphor, a path that leads to a more conscious and effortful interpretation process that is induced in instances where the more general, intuitive process of metaphor comprehension doesn't return satisfactory results without incurring unreasonable processing effort. However, Carston and Wearing do not provide an explicit account of what this second path based on conscious inference processes consists of.

These observations about the limitations of the standard relevance-theoretic account of metaphor comprehension with respect to allegory (and arguably, other types of extended and basic metaphors as well) converge with observations made by literary theorists. Kurz (1997) points to a long tradition among literary theorists who point out that the one characteristic feature of allegory is the transparency of the literal meaning alongside the allegorical meaning. In fact,

Kurz points out the literal descriptive meaning of allegory and the allegorical meaning stand side by side, as it were: they are coherent in themselves, and are interconnected. This is different from metaphor: even though in some metaphors the literal meaning may be transparent, metaphor identifies the topic with the source domain of the metaphor. For example, in the metaphorical use of ‘boiling’ in (6), the communicator conveys the idea that John’s emotional state has some properties that can also be attributed to boiling water. Unger (2012) picks up this observation that the transparency of the literal meaning in allegory is most fundamental for understanding the essence of allegory and develops an account of allegory within relevance theory that breaks with the longstanding tradition of seeking to understand allegory in terms of (extended) metaphor. In the following section I will review this account in more detail and outline reasons for preferring this one over others.

Breaking with the tradition that characterises allegory in terms of metaphor has important consequences for understanding the utility of allegory for religious discourse, and Christian religious discourse in particular. For example, it might be claimed that metaphor is a particularly useful device for talking about mysterious concepts such as occur frequently in religious thought. If the essence of allegory is not rooted in metaphorical processes at all, then none of these considerations would apply to the discussion of the utility of allegory for religious discourse. The utility of allegory for (Christian) religious discourse will have to be sought along other lines of thought. In section (5) I will discuss this issue in somewhat more detail.

3 A relevance theory account of allegory

Unger (2012) argues that allegory comprehension does not involve any cognitive processes that are not independently necessary to account for comprehension in general, and which are not already explained in relevance theory. In particular, the following insights are crucial to account for allegory comprehension:

- Verbal communication may involve several simultaneous layers of communicative acts. Each of these layers may achieve relevance individually within its layer, and the layers contribute jointly to the overall relevance of the total communication act.
- The meaning conveyed at these various layers of communication are related by *interpretive resemblance*.

The first of these insights—that ostensive communication (i.e. overtly intentional communication that provides only partial evidence of the speaker’s meaning) may be layered—was first pointed out by Sperber and Wilson (1987), and commented on by Wilson (2012). Sperber and Wilson discuss the question of how texts of fiction can be relevant, when relevance is defined in terms of positive cognitive effects, that is, true (for-the individual) thoughts about the world. They propose

that in works of fiction, there are (at least) two layers of communication: in the first layer, the narrator or implied author, describes situations in a fictive world, and this is relevant for the implied audience in terms of the cognitive effects achieved relative to this fictive world. At the same time, the interpretation of the first layer of communication is capable of inducing positive cognitive effects in the audience in the real world, for example by spotting similarities between life experiences the reader has made and experiences that the characters in the fiction are described as going through. Wilson (2012) calls the kind of relevance achieved in the first layer *internal relevance* and the relevance achieved at the second layer *external relevance*. Internal and external relevance combine to satisfy the overall relevance expectations created by works of fiction, and since external relevance is due to positive cognitive effects in the real world, works of fiction can be accounted for in relevance theory.

It is obvious that this notion of communication layering may be helpful to account for the observation that in allegory, the descriptive (literal) meaning is transparent and coherent in itself. Indeed, Wilson (2012) suggests that accounting for allegory along these lines is more promising than attempting to widen the ad-hoc-concept account of metaphor. However, the question remains how to account for the intuition that the descriptive meaning of allegories is intended to provide an example for the implied point (the allegorical meaning). Wilson (2012) points out that we do this spontaneously in everyday speech of the kind exemplified in (10) and (11), but it is not obvious how to explain this ability. Are there perhaps dedicated cognitive mechanisms? Unger (2012) argues that in order to interpret the relation between the descriptive meaning of allegories and their intended point the mind must evaluate interpretive resemblance relations between propositions conveyed in the descriptive meaning of allegories and assumptions implicitly conveyed in the allegorical meaning.

According to Sperber and Wilson (1995), two mental representations interpretively resemble each other to the extent that they share logical properties. In particular, mental representations that yield overlapping implications in the same context share logical properties. For example, given the context IF SUNSHINE INCREASES THEN THE WEATHER WILL GET WARMER, both THE CLOUDS CLEAR and THE SUN COMES OUT OF THE CLOUDS MORE AND MORE yield the logical implication THE WEATHER WILL GET WARMER. Therefore, the representations THE CLOUDS CLEAR and THE SUN COMES OUT OF THE CLOUDS MORE AND MORE interpretively resemble each other.

The ability to process and exploit interpretive resemblances underlies our capacity to engage what Sperber and Wilson (1995) call *interpretive use* and Wilson (2000) refers to as *metarepresentational use* of utterances: when communicators use utterances not to describe states of affairs in the world but to represent other public or private representations (i.e. utterances or thoughts). Wilson (2000) surveys a wide range of varieties of metarepresentational or interpretive use of utterances and shows that this type of utterance use is ubiquitous in

verbal communication. Reported speech, interrogatives and irony are only some examples. A crucial factor in the metarepresentational use of utterances is that the representations represented by the utterance interpretively resemble the propositions conveyed by the utterance. Thus, the ability to recognise interpretive resemblance relations is an important component of our ability to comprehend utterances.

Unger (2012) does not claim that allegory is an instance of metarepresentative use of utterances. The claim is merely that the recognition of interpretive resemblance relations is crucially involved in comprehending allegories. To see how interpretive resemblance enters into allegory interpretation, consider a paradigm case of allegory in the Bible: the parable of the sower.

⁵ A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. ⁶ Some fell on rock, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown.”

When he said this, he called out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear. (Lk 8:5-8 New International Version)

The parable describes a scene which presumably was very familiar to the audience: a farmer sowing seed, and the seed falling on different ground. It is a coherent story and may be relevant to the audience in terms of accurately recalling some of their life experience. However, the fact that Jesus is telling this story sets higher expectations than this: the people expect him to say something about God and their relationship to God. These relevance expectations are blatantly not met. It is mutually manifest⁶ that the story falls short of meeting these expectations. Hence the audience continues to interpret this text to find out how it could be understood as having relevance for spiritual matters. This is not necessarily a straight forward matter and involves some effort. A little later Jesus is reported as helping his disciples to understand the intended interpretation:

¹¹ This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God.

¹² Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³ Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away.

¹⁴ The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but

⁶A piece of information is *manifest* to an individual to the extent that he is capable to represent it mentally and accept it as true or probably true. When it is manifest to communicator and audience that a certain piece of information is manifest to them both, this piece of information is *mutually manifest* to communicator and audience. See Sperber and Wilson (1995:38-46) for a detailed exposition, and Sperber and Wilson (2015) for discussion.

as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. ¹⁵ But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop. (Lk 8:11-15 New International Version)

This explanation builds bridges to help the audience understand how the story of the sower can exemplify spiritual realities. But notice that these bridges do not provide a full interpretation of the parable. It does say that the various types of ground the seed falls onto resemble types of audiences that differ in the way they listen to the word of God (which is represented by the seed). But in order to understand the spiritual truths that this parable intends to convey, more inference is necessary.

Let us consider the kind of inferences necessary for comprehension by focusing on the first type of soil (Lk 8:5, c.f. also Lk 8:12). Simplifying somewhat, the descriptive meaning conveys the propositions in (16), and the canonical interpretation given in Lk 8:12 conveys the propositions in (17):

(16) A sower threw seed. Some fell along the path. The birds ate it.

(17) Someone came to tell God's word. Some listeners hear and Satan makes them not believe it.

Notice that the propositions in (16) and those in (17) are both entailments of a proposition such as the following:

(18) The success of even beneficial and desirable activities does not depend on the agent alone.

Thus, (16) and (17) share logical properties and interpretively resemble each other to some degree. In the process of recognising this interpretive resemblance relation, the mental mechanism responsible for processing interpretive resemblance relations raises the activation level of (18), so that this mental representation becomes accessible as part of the context for interpreting the text. When it is accessed as a contextual assumption for interpreting this text, it raises an implicit question: On what factors does the success of the activities of the agent depend on each layer of meaning? In other words, the addition of this assumption to the context for interpretation raises a specific expectation of relevance: the story is relevant to the extent that the audience can identify such factors for success of the respective agent's activity. (On the relation between implicitly raised questions and relevance expectations, see Unger 2006:143-155) Indeed, it is easy to see how the various steps of the story converge to give rise to a conclusion such as (19), and the corresponding application (allegorical) layer related by interpretive resemblance to the descriptive layer jointly produce the conclusion in (20):

(19) The success of a sower depends on the soil

(20) The success of a preacher depends on how people listen to God's word.

Thus, arriving at the conclusion (19) is a cognitive effect that contributes to the internal relevance of the descriptive layer of the allegorical story, and arriving at the conclusion in (20) is one that contributes to the external relevance of the allegorical story on the second layer, what could be called the application layer of the story. But notice that (20) does not only satisfy some relevance expectations, it also creates others. It may raise the question in the audience: if the benefit of eternal life depends on how I listen to God's word and believe, then what can I do to ensure I listen well enough? One aspect of answering this question would be to make sure to listen to a reliable source for God's word. And indeed, an answer suggests itself once the audience is willing to entertain yet another bridge for interpretation: to assume that Jesus is the one who is conveying the word of God, and it is Jesus whom the sower in the story represents. Once the audience is willing to entertain this interpretation, there is a further layer of application available, which, if processed in the context of (20), yields cognitive effects such as:

- (21) The success of Jesus' conveying the word of God to me, an individual member of the audience, depends on how well I listen to him.

The claim expressed in (21) was (and is) a controversial claim to make. It is highly relevant for members of the audience who are skeptical about the truth of this claim: it contradicts many of their previously held assumptions and raises the question whether there is sufficient reason to revise their beliefs or to reject this claim. It is also relevant for those members of the audience who are inclined to accept this claim: it will confirm their intuition that what Jesus says has lots of personal relevance for them. Thus, the audience that is willing to entertain this third layer of allegorical application will receive much larger cognitive reward, and this may well be worth taking the risk of going even beyond the level of allegorical interpretation explicitly sanctioned in Luke 8:11-15.

Recall the pattern underlying this interpretation: the allegorical utterance or text raises expectations of relevance which are blatantly only partially fulfilled. In other words, it is mutually manifest that a first intuitive interpretation is only partially relevant. This overt withholding of relevance in turn functions as a salient property of the communicative act that calls for comprehension. Thus, the relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure is entered again, this time seeking to understand why relevance was deliberately withheld in the first run. This leads to the recovery of a second layer of interpretation, an allegorical interpretation. The recovery of this interpretation is conditioned by the search for interpretive resemblances between propositions conveyed on this second layer and those conveyed on the first. This cycle is entered again until relevance expectations are satisfied. Unger (2012) argues that his pattern of interpretation underlies the comprehension of allegories in general and supports this claim by applying it to both very complex allegories such as the Song of the Vineyard in Isaiah 5:1-7 and simple, everyday allegories such as (10) above.

This interpretation pattern for allegory claims that the relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure is passed through at least twice, if not several times. As

Mercier and Sperber (2009) point out, such recursive applications of intuitive inference heuristics to their own output can shed light on the distinction between spontaneous, unconscious inference processes and reflexive, conscious ones. With respect to argumentation processes, Mercier and Sperber argue that all argumentative inferences are executed by intuitive, subconscious cognitive processes. However, the same processes may be applied to the output of earlier applications of the same process, thus leaving intermediate steps of which the reasoner may become conscious. Mercier and Sperber claim that the more intermediate are the results a reasoning process produces, the more we feel that the overall process was a reflective, conscious one. My claim is that cases of layered communication such as are found in allegory (and fiction) produce a similar effect: the more layers of communication are recovered in the interpretation process, the more we feel that the comprehension process was of a reflective, non-spontaneous or conscious nature. But this does not mean that comprehension makes use of different processes. On the contrary, the same relevance-theoretic comprehension heuristic is applied in all cases; only when this process is called up again and applied to its own output do we become conscious of the existence of intermediate comprehension results, and the more intermediate interpretation results there are, the more we feel that the comprehension process was of a reflective nature. In this way we can account not only for the transparency of the literal meaning in allegories, but also for the intuition that allegory interpretation is a more conscious process than what is required for non-allegorical speech.

Before moving on to consider the role of allegory in discourse in the next section, a few remarks are in order on the role of interpretive resemblances in allegory comprehension. The proposed pattern of allegory interpretation states that the allegorical layer(s) of interpretation are related to the descriptive meaning by interpretive resemblance relations. This distinguishes allegory from general cases of fiction. As a quick illustration, consider another of Jesus' parables, the parable of the Good Samaritan:

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

²⁶ "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

²⁷ He answered: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

²⁸ "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

³⁰ In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ A

priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

³⁶ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

³⁷ The expert in the law replied, ‘The one who had mercy on him.’

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.’

(Lk 10:25-37, New International Version)

This parable is told as an answer to the question ‘Who is my neighbour?’ The answer is given in the form of a fictive story that overtly does not provide an answer. Thus, the audience is induced to process the story further to see if it gives rise to cognitive effects that provide an answer. However, in this case interpretive resemblance relations between the descriptive meaning of the story and the intended implicit meaning do not play a role. Rather, the story as a whole can be interpreted to support implicatures such as the following:

- (22) My neighbour is any human being who is in need of my acting compassionately to him or her.

This provides a relevant answer to the question the parable is designed to answer.

4 The virtues and vices of allegory

The relevance theory account of allegory reviewed in the previous section claims that allegory is a relatively costly use of language. It requires several applications of the comprehension heuristic to interpret several layers of communication. Furthermore, it requires the ability to process interpretive resemblance relations. This ability matures hand in hand with that of metarepresentation processing, and Wilson (2012) reviews evidence that this ability fully matures only at about 4-6 years of age, after basic communicative competence has been acquired. Because it is a relatively costly use of language to process, allegory differs noticeably from metaphor, which according to the standard relevance theory account is a natural by-product of the relevance-theoretic comprehension heuristic. In virtue

of this, it seems surprising at first that allegory should be as widespread as it is. Obviously, the use of allegory must provide benefits for communication.

One of these benefits can be seen from the nature of the complexity found in allegory comprehension: the audience has to comprehend various layers of communication involved in the utterance. Certain relevance expectations are met on each of these layers. This means that even audiences who expect fairly low levels of relevance from the communicative act may be sufficiently rewarded, even though they miss the full range of meaning in the allegory. Moreover, audiences who are not capable of gaining sufficient relevance on all these layers may still get enough relevance on lower levels of communication that they are willing to engage again with the text at a later time, knowing that they are not yet able to understand the full meaning of the text. Thus, allegory appears to be a good communicative tool to address a heterogeneous audience.

Another benefit is that allegory may be a good tool for persuading audiences to accept a controversial claim. Recall that in the analysis of the parable of the sower in the previous section it was shown that on a higher layer of communication, the parable can be understood to make a controversial claim (the claim that it is Jesus to whom people need to carefully listen to and believe his words so that they may get eternal life). Notice two points here: first, the audience must arrive at this claim completely by means of their own inferencing. Thus, the audience carries a lot of responsibility for attributing this claim to the communicator. Second, the audience can infer this controversial claim only after already having inferred motivations for accepting this controversial claim. In the parable of the sower, this motivating factor is the idea that the one who listens to God's word and believes it will reap a great benefit (eternal life), just as the seed that falls on the fertile ground grows to produce much grain. Given these two factors, it appears that allegory may be a useful tool in argumentative or persuasive discourse.

But allegories can easily misfire. Notice that the guiding factor for the audience to engage in re-application of the comprehension heuristic in order to interpret higher layers of communication is the relevance expectations of the audience. If an audience has unjustifiably higher expectations of relevance than the communicator has envisaged, then this audience will be tempted to over-allegorise the utterance or text. Moreover, since allegory interpretation requires at least the comprehension of two layers of communication, it involves a certain degree of reflexivity or consciousness in the interpretation. The more conscious the interpretation is, the easier it is for an audience to assume that they have not yet exhausted the intended meaning, and the less resistance there is to put in more effort in seeking more relevance on additional layers of communication. Thus, allegory may be doubly prone to over-interpretation especially by audiences who are frequently re-reading a text.

Thus the relevance theory account of allegory reviewed here provides a cognitive explanation for the observation recalled in section 1: that allegory has a firm place in Christian religious language, even though allegory and allegoresis are

treated with suspicion. Moreover, this account allows a more general prediction to be made for the use of allegory in religious discourse in general: since allegory is a useful tool in argumentative discourse, and appears to be used frequently in persuasive discourse, it should be expected that allegory occurs primarily in the religious discourse of religions where truth-claims are prevalent (such as in Christianity, Judaism or Islam) and markedly less so in religions that focus more on mysticism and are of a more integrative if not syncretistic nature (such as, arguably, Hinduism or Yezidism). Future research must show whether this prediction is true.

5. Conclusion

In this paper I have discussed the question of what light, if any, the relevance-theoretic account of allegory of Unger (2012) sheds on the use of allegory in Christian religious discourse. This account of allegory breaks with a long standing tradition of seeing the nature of allegory as intricately linked to the nature of metaphor. Rather, allegory is seen as related to fiction: a multi-layered communication event, where relevance is optimised jointly over these various layers. Moreover, the communication layers are related by interpretive resemblance relations between the propositions conveyed at the various layers. Thus, allegory comprehension utilises fairly sophisticated cognitive abilities such as the ability to process interpretive resemblance relations and the ability to process multi-layered communication events necessitating the re-application of the relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure on its own output. This explains the intuition that allegory comprehension is often a reflexive, conscious process, where the descriptive meaning of the allegory is transparent throughout the comprehension process. The multi-layeredness of communication events employing allegories provides interesting insights into the usefulness and the limitations of allegory. For one thing, since some relevance relations are satisfied on each communication layer, even at the lowest one, the descriptive meaning, an audience that has rather low levels of relevance expectations may still be cognitively rewarded, enough to pay attention. Moreover, an audience that does not get all their relevance expectations fulfilled may get sufficient cognitive reward to be willing to attend to the text later on and hold out for an eventual deeper understanding, instead of breaking off the comprehension effort completely. Thus, allegory may be a good way to address a heterogeneous audience.

The same multi-layeredness of allegory also suggests that it can be a good tool to indirectly communicate controversial claims to cautious or unsympathetic audiences. This is because the controversial claim is conveyed by means of implicatures that are recoverable only in processing higher layers of communication that become accessible as a result of processing the basic layers of

the communication event. Moreover, before the audience can process the level where the controversial claim is made, the audience is induced to process lower levels of communication which typically carry thoughts that would motivate the acceptance of that controversial claim. In fact, many if not most of the allegories in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures appear in argumentative contexts. Thus, it appears that allegory is a device closely linked to argumentative discourse. If this is true, then one might expect allegory in religious language to be used primarily when (religious) truth claims are discussed. This prediction then leads to another one: that allegory in religious discourse is primarily used in religions that place a high value on truth claims, and less frequent in religions that are more centred on mystic experiences.

The cognitive processes involved in processing multi-layered communication make allegory comprehension a mostly reflective, conscious inference process. As such, there is little that prevents audiences from trying to find more layers of meaning than the communicator envisaged. Thus, the use of allegory comes with an inherent risk of communication failure. In this way, the relevance-theoretic account of allegory given in Unger (2012) simultaneously sheds light on the advantages and limitations of allegory as a communicative device.

Acknowledgments

I warmly thank Robyn Carston for stimulating discussions of allegory and extended metaphor. I am also indebted to Paul Chilton for helpful comments.

Abbreviations of references to books in the Bible

1. Cor Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians

1. Tim Paul's first epistle to Timothy

Gal Paul's epistle to the Galatians

Gen Genesis

Lk The gospel of Luke

References

- Bullinger, Ethelbert W. (1968). *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*. 13th printing 1988. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.
- Bunyan, John (1953 [1684]). *The Pilgrims Progress*. London: Collins.
- Butler, Harold Edgeworth (1922). *Quintilian. Institutio Oratoria, Book 8. With an English Translation*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. Electronic Text URI: <http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:latinLit:phi1002.phi0018.perseus-lat1>
- Carston, Robyn(2002). *Thoughts and Utterances*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- 2010. Metaphor: Ad hoc concepts, literal meaning and mental images. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* CX(3), pp 295–321. Carston, Robyn & Catherine Wearing. 2011. Metaphor, hyperbole and simile: a pragmatic approach. *Language and Cognition* 3(2). 283–312.
- Crisp, Peter. 2001. Allegory: conceptual metaphor in history. *Language and Literature* 10(1). 5–19. <http://lal.sagepub.com/content/10/1/5> (29 January, 2013).—2005. Allegory and symbol-a fundamental opposition? *Language and Literature* 14(4), pp. 323–338. <http://lal.sagepub.com/content/14/4/323.short> (21 June, 2012).
- 2008. Between extended metaphor and allegory: is blending enough? *Language and Literature* 17(4). 291–308. <http://lal.sagepub.com/content/17/4/291.short> (21 June, 2012).
- Davico, Oskar. 1979. Hana. In *Pesme: Hana*. Belgrade: Prosveta.
- Dodd, Charles Harold (1935). *The Parables of the Kkingdom*. Vol. 44. London: Nisbet:
- Franklin, R. W. (ed.) (2005). *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Reading edition. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Gibbs, Raymond W. 2011. The Allegorical Impulse. *Metaphor and Symbol* 26(2). 121–130. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10508406.2011.556498> (21 June, 2012).

Harris, Randy Allen and Sarah Tolmie. 2011. *Cognitive Allegory*. (Metaphor & Symbol). Taylor; Francis.

Heller, Zoe. 2008. *The Believers*. Penguin UK.

Jeremias, Joachim. 1947. *Die Gleichnisse Jesu*. Zürich: Zwingli-Verlag.

Jülicher, Adolf. 1899. *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu in Allgemeinen*. 2., neu bearb. Vol. 1. JCB Mohr (P. Siebeck).

Jeremias

Jülicher

Kasten, Madeleine & Curtis Gruenler. 2011. The Point of the Plow: Conceptual Integration in the Allegory of Langland and Voltaire. *Metaphor and Symbol* 26(2). 143–151. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10508406.2011.556502> (29 January, 2013).

Klein, William W., Craig C. Blomberg and Robert L. Hubbard (1993). *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Dallas: Word Publishing.

Kurz, Gerhard. 1997. *Metapher, Allegorie, Symbol*. 4th ed. (Kleine Vandenhoeck-Reihe 1486). Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht.

Lakoff, George. 1993. The contemporary theory of metaphor. In A. Ortony (ed.), *Metaphor and Thought*, 202–251. 2nd edn. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lakoff, George & Michael Johnson. 1980. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Lausberg, Heinrich. 1984. *Elemente der literarischen Rhetorik*. 8th edition [1st edition 1963]. München: Max Hueber Verlag.

Lewis, C.S. (1950). *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. London: Geoffrey Bles.

Lewis, C.S. (1951). *Prince Caspian: The Return to Narnia*. London: Geoffrey Bles.

Lewis, C.S. (1952). *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. London: Geoffrey Bles.

Lewis, C.S. (1953). *The Silver Chair*. London: Geoffrey Bles.

Lewis, C.S. (1954). *The Horse and His Boy*. London: Geoffrey Bles.

Lewis, C.S. (1955). *The Magician's Nephew*. London: The Bodley Head.

Lewis, C.S. (1956). *The Last Battle*. London: The Bodley Head.

- Mercier, Hugo & Dan Sperber. 2009. Intuitive and reflective inferences. In J. St. B. T. Evans & K. Frankish (eds.), *In Two Minds: Dual Processes and Beyond*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Oakley, Todd and Peter Crisp. 2011. Honeymoons and Pilgrimages: Conceptual Integration and Allegory in Old and New Media. *Metaphor and Symbol* 26(2). 152–159. doi:10.1080/10508406.2011.556507. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10508406.2011.556507> (29 January, 2013).
- Origen (1982 [after 244]). *Genesis Homily V*. In *Origen: Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, In volume 71 of *The Fathers of the Church*, pp. 112–120. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press.
- Sperber, Dan & Deirdre Wilson. 1987. Presumptions of relevance. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 10(04). 736–754. Sperber, Dan & Deirdre Wilson. 1990. Rhetoric and relevance. In David Wellbery & John Bender (eds.), *The Ends of Rhetoric: History, Theory, Practice*, 140–156. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Sperber, Dan & Deirdre Wilson. 1995. *Relevance*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Sperber, Dan & Deirdre Wilson. 1998. The mapping between the mental and the public lexicon. In Peter Carruthers & Jill Boucher (eds.), *Language and Thought*, 184–200. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sperber, Dan & Deirdre Wilson. 2008. A deflationary account of metaphor. In Raymond W. Gibbs (ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*, vol. 18, 84–105. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Thagard, Paul. 2011. The Brain is Wider than the Sky: Analogy, Emotion, and Allegory. *Metaphor and Symbol* 26(2). 131–142. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10926488.2011.556509> (21 June, 2012).
- Unger, Christoph. 2006. *Genre, Relevance and Global Coherence: The Pragmatics of Discourse Type*. (Palgrave Studies in Pragmatics, Language & Cognition). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Unger, Christoph. 2012. Towards a relevance theory account of allegory. In *Selected Papers from the Interpreting for Relevance Conference Warzaw 2012*, to appear. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Wilson, Deirdre. 2000. Metarepresentation in linguistic communication. In Dan Sperber (ed.), *Metarepresentation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wilson, Deirdre. 2012. Relevance and the interpretation of literary works. Paper presented at the 5th Symposium on Intercultural, Cognitive and Social Pragmatics (EPICS V), Sevilla, Spain, March 14–16 2012. Wilson, Deirdre & Robyn Carston. 2007. A unitary approach to lexical pragmatics: relevance, inference and ad hoc concepts. In Noel Burton-Roberts (ed.), *Pragmatics*, 230–259. (Palgrave Advances in Linguistics). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wilson, Deirdre & Dan Sperber. 2002. Truthfulness and relevance. *Mind* 111. 583–632.

Zhang, Longxi (2005). *Allegoresis: Reading Canonical Literature East and West*. Cornell University Press.