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## Allusion as Trope

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### ***METAPHOR AND METAPHORIC PRAGMATICS***

Max Black (1962)'s Interaction Theory attempts to explain how metaphors are understood without assuming that all metaphoric comprehension depends on the listener recognizing a list of literal, similar properties. His point is that metaphors work not by a comparison of objects for similar properties, but by the interaction of properties that are commonly held to be true of the objects. A metaphor is thus seen as two schemata of commonplaces that are linked. He describes the process of finding this system of commonplaces or implications as a filtering of the common views of one object through those of another object to produce a new concept or perspective or insight into the subject of the metaphor. This filtering is a thoroughly different activity from comparing objects to pick out resemblances. This filtering makes the metaphor unique so that it cannot be reduced to literal paraphrase.

Riceour (1978) maintains that we cannot make semantic inquiry into how metaphors work if we do not have a psychological theory of how the imagination works with words. The ability of the audience's imagination to enter into the composer's imagination involves some kind of psychological as well as semantic empathy. To complete the semantics of metaphor, Riceour believes we must have recourse to a psychology of imagination. Seeing A as B in a metaphor creates Images that produce sense; these Images are the concrete representation aroused by the verbal elements and controlled by them. These created Images are manifestations of what Riceour(1978) calls the "intuitive grasp of a predicative connection." This blurs the distinction between the verbal and nonverbal, or sense and representation. All this may help explain how a metaphor says what it says. But how do we figure out what a metaphor is about?

Riceour contends that one of the functions of imagination is to give a concrete dimension to the suspension of the ordinary or literal reference. Imagination plays three roles: First, it schematizes the predicative assimilation between terms by its synthetic insight into similarities. Second, it pictures the sense from the display of Images aroused and controlled by the cognitive process; and finally, it contributes concretely to the suspension of ordinary reference and to the projection of new possibilities of

redescribing the world by providing models for reading reality in a new way.

Imagination and feeling are genuine components that help "achieve the semantic bearing of metaphor. Imagination and feeling do not substitute but complete the cognitive content of metaphor. Ricoeur's work on the theory of imagination as a semantic inquiry provides a way for recognizing the metaphorical purpose of a statement, not based on clues of grammatical and semantic deviance but how it affects, relies on, and plays on the imagination by depicting A as B.

One reason a metaphor works is because the audience willingly suspends the literal lexical system at appropriate moments and engages the imagination to think out what the metaphor is about. In encountering a metaphor, the mind has to find the unstated middle term that connects the vehicle and tenor. If A is metaphorically B, then T is the middle term such that A is to T what T is to B. The middle term has to be determined by the reader as this is the locus of the metaphor; it constitutes the representation of A as B. Of course, this can only be done if the reader is familiar with the attributes that are considered common knowledge about A and B.

Because of the suspension of the ordinary reference of the vehicle in the metaphor, Danto (1981, pp. 179-189) refers to the metaphor as being rendered intentional or unsubstutable. Thus, metaphors have an intentional structure. Metaphorical words "include among their truth conditions some reference to a representation." Therefore, in "people in glasshouses shouldn't throw stones", the author is not referring to glasshouses or throwing stones but to a constituent of the way the author happens to be representing the act of throwing stones at a glasshouse. This intentional context is thus quite different from what other expressions using words like glass and houses would be about.

Metaphorical contexts are intentional because we cannot substitute them with words which could be used in those other expressions. "Intentional contexts are such because the sentences in whose formations they enter are about specific sentences ... and not about whatever these sentences or representations would be about were they to occur outside these contexts." The way metaphor works has much in common with other contexts that are also intentional. One example is the rhetorical use of quotations. As Danto points out, one element of the "metaphoric pragmatics" of the quotation is that the audience is expected to recognize the quotation. I suggest this is similar to the reader being expected to identify a metaphor because of its incongruent language. A metaphor is effective because of the interaction of ideas about the tenor and vehicle. This is similar to what Danto points out about the quotation that the reader is expected to recognize the parallels

between the situation it is applied to and the original situation of its source. In a metaphor, A is talked of as if it were B. There may be no real similarity to the thing being represented but the locus of the metaphorical expression is in the representation. Similarly, the parallels between a quotation's original, immediate context may not really be there, but are thought to be there. The metaphorical pragmatic exists even if the quotation is not exact and is in fact an unintentional misquote, as long as the audience accepts it as a quotation.

The context in which the quote occurs is intentional because the sentence in which it appears is a specific representation, and would not have the same effect in some other sentence or context, or if some other words were used. A metaphor is intentional because the literal meaning of the vehicle is not what is referred to. In other words, a quote does not merely represent subjects. Rather, the mode of representation, i.e. the structure of the metaphor and the use of the quote in a particular sentence, is essential to understanding the metaphor. A word becomes a metaphor when it is used to refer a novel intention and purpose to an aspect of experience so as to disclose an unnamed, different experience. This is basically a reorganizing or refocusing of experience. Something of the same kind happens when a quote is used to create a reference from a particular known situation to elicit and reveal certain aspects of the immediate context that the audience may not be aware of.

### ***ALLUSION AS TROPE/METAPHOR IN GOH'S "THE SECOND LONG MARCH" SPEECH***

Danto uses the phrase "metaphoric pragmatic" to refer to how quotations function like metaphors in a discourse. Even when a quotation does not contain a metaphor, it may work in ways similar to a metaphor, to effect certain ends. Allusions too, have metaphoric pragmatics. Like quotations, they are not traditional metaphors. But quotations and allusions act like metaphors. "Allusion" is the oblique but identifiable reference to other words or phrases from some other text. Allusion is not literal as it may diverge from the language and syntax of the source. This speech makes several allusions to the Long March of the Chinese Communists in 1935.

The allusive reference can play a similar role to metaphor. The reference chosen is likely to be familiar to the audience, or at least the speaker would assume it to be so. Just as the conceptual metaphor reveals his thought processes or certain aspects of the social milieu, so too the source of the allusion can reveal something of his rhetorical intent.

The allusion has metaphoric pragmatic if it is seen as establishing some parallel between the situation it is applied to and the situation in the original

source of the allusion. The allusion thus takes on a different role from what it had in its original context. As Danto (1981, p.183) puts it:

Let Q be a quotation [or allusion], and let F be a function from Q onto some proposition P when the speaker means for his audience to recognize that when he utters Q he means P.

Thus, the audience grasps that they are to see Q as P. This is the intentional use of allusion, to see the immediate context in a certain light, from the perspective of a different situation, and not just to communicate what the reference says. Recalling the interaction theory, Q would be the vehicle and F the metaphorical impact, such that aspects of Q would be applied to the tenor, i.e. the current situation P. This is true whether the quotation or allusion is from a separate source or a repetition from another part of the same text.

Alluding to a recognized situation can possess metaphoric pragmatic because the allusions function similarly once the audience realizes that the allusion invites them to recognize the parallels between the original situation and the current situation. If the audience has grasped and accepted the parallels between the allusion and the current situation in which it is used, it is immaterial if the allusion was inaccurate in the first place. The audience and the speaker have come to an understanding of what is meant.

Danto stresses the intentionality of metaphors and quotations. He notes that a speaker's intention when uttering a quotation is for the audience to discern the function F with which to work out the final proposition P. This dependence on the reader's ability to recognize and participate in the full working out of the metaphoric pragmatic is just as true for allusions. Similarly, the audience participates in the functioning of metaphors by allowing the conventions associated with the vehicle to interact with those associated with the tenor, ultimately coming up with a final intended idea or complex of ideas. The audience chooses the relevant associations, depending upon their perception of the context in which the metaphor or allusion is used. The speaker, in his turn, relies on the reasoning response of the reader and does not expect a passive reader.

The audience has a choice, upon encountering an allusion, to complete the rhetorical act in different ways, depending on the context in which it is used. However, just as with metaphors, convention ensures the completion of the rhetorical acts in particular ways. The speaker's knowledge of the social and cultural milieu of the audience determines the choice of the allusion to guide them to the conclusions he might want them to draw. The allusion need not tell one how to respond or feel. The members of the audience in effect persuade themselves. They come to see as the speaker does that the two

situations can be seen as part of the same schematized structure. They may even identify with the attributes of a character in the allusion or identify his situation with that of the allusion.

Metaphors have a referential status. They refer to, or depict a particular reality or situation. Similarly, allusions depict an original situation in terms of its atmosphere and context. Yet, the allusion takes on a unique meaning specific to the new context. Thus, the sentence is about the new context and not about the original context. The new sentence may show agreement with the content of the allusion. This forms the cognitive or explanatory content. So the sentence in the text does not rely only on the authority of the original context to command agreement from the listener. Although this affective element may be present, the content of the allusion is presented as the object of belief or truth value of the new statement. Thus, the allusion, like a metaphor, engages the audience as well as characterizes facts and their interrelations.

The metaphoric pragmatic of the allusion depends on two factors. First, the speaker expects the audience to recognize the original source and context of the allusion; and second, they are also expected to see the parallels between the original context and their own situation.

By calling his speech "The Second Long March", the speaker alludes to the Long March of the Chinese Communists in 1935. He does not assume that the audience knows the details of the Long March, and so provides specifics such as when the March took place, who led it, what the nature of the March was, how many people were involved and how many survived. He is also careful to stress the aspect of the Long March on which he wants the audience to contemplate and capture, specifically "the spirit of determination and toughness of purpose" of the Chinese Communists. Careful not to mislead the audience into thinking that he is espousing the ideology of the Chinese Communists, he reminds them that his choice of metaphor is limited only to its reference of the "real triumph of human endurance and spirit". Thus, the audience is encouraged to emulate the tough vigour and endurance of the Chinese Communists, instead of their ideology.

The speaker identifies the First Long March of Singapore as the era from when the People's Action Party (PAP) Old Guard defeated the Communists. The Second Long March, on the other hand, is just about to begin. He challenges his audience to overcome the peaks and mountain ranges of this march, using interesting developmental metaphors. The reference to "newborn" and "baby" is not coincidental. On the one hand, it jolts the memory to recall a baby's developmental stages. Before the baby can walk, much less march, he must first learn to crawl and toddle. Thus, "baby" and

"long march" belong to the genre of developmental metaphors. On the other hand, the reference to "newborn" and "baby" can be a literal one. As the population is under-producing itself, giving birth obviously refers to "babies". These two uses of "baby" provide lineage and stability for the speech.

## **CONCLUSION**

The allusion to the Long March carries metaphoric pragmatics. Even if "Long March" was not a

metaphor, the task of allusion itself is a metaphorical act, coaxing the audience to see A as B, and to identify properties common in A and B. The common denominator in the Long March in China and Singapore's Second Long March is clear - namely, the tenacity, determination and resilience of the people.

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## **APPENDIX**

"The Second Long March" speech

This speech was delivered at a forum at the Nanyang Technological Institute on 4 August 1986 by Goh Chok Tong.

Source: Information Division, Ministry of Communications and Information, 1986.

The title of my talk today is, 'The Second Long March'. It is inspired by the Long March of the Chinese Communists in 1935. The Long March began in October 1934 at the South-eastern corner of China, and ended one year later, in another corner in the Northwest, a distance of about 10,000 kilometres. The Communists, led by Mao Zedong, trekked over endless expanses of very harsh terrain - raging rivers, snow-capped mountains and treacherous marshes. At one point, where there was no water, they survived by drinking their own urine. Of the 90,000 men and women who set out, only 7,000

survived the march. Most of them died from sickness and exhaustion. Only a few were actually killed in battle. For those who survived, it was a real triumph of human endurance and spirit.

One may disagree with the political ideology of Mao Zedong and his comrades. Yet, one cannot help but marvel at the triumph of their spirit over impossible odds.

I feel that the problems we are facing are so complex and immense that they will require strong qualities like those exhibited by the Long Marchers. These are physical and moral courage, perseverance, discipline, dedication, resolution and teamwork.

But when I tested the title on some of my colleagues, they were not the least enthusiastic. They thought the Long March metaphor suggested that I was an admirer of the Chinese Communists. They also pointed out that the Long March was not an all-conquering march, but was, in fact, a hasty retreat of the Red Army.

I looked for alternative titles, like 'The Tasks Ahead' and 'Certainties and Uncertainties'. In the end I felt 'The Second Long March' was still the most apt. It captures the spirit of determination and toughness of purpose most vividly.

### **Singapore's First Long March**

My Long March metaphor may be inspired by the Chinese Communists but the numerical order is not. I use the word "Second" not after the Long March in China but after a Long March in Singapore. For, in my view, the struggle for survival of Singapore as an independent nation, is also a triumph of the human spirit, a victory of conviction and determination, over impossible odds.

The PAP Old Guard fought the Communists, and defeated them. Our Prime Minister has no doubt that had the Communists won, they would have pulled out his fingernails.

Singapore's survival as an independent nation was also a hard struggle. To begin with, Singapore's birth was not a normal one. It was a painful Caesarian operation, done without anesthesia. Older Singaporeans were convinced that the new-born Singapore was not meant to survive. But, like a Spartan baby left overnight under a cold open sky, it did.

It is now, of course, history how the Prime Minister and the PAP Old Guard rallied the people, struggled and kept new-born Singapore warm and alive. In retrospect, it looks easy. But at that point of time, nothing was certain.

I remember how the Government flattened the hills and filled up the swamps in Jurong to turn it into an instant industrial estate. I was working in the Economic Planning Unit then. Success was far from certain. For years, Jurong sprouted only a few factories and the Jurong Industrial Estate became known as "Goh's Folly" (not this Goh, but Dr. Goh).

### **The Second Long March**

We have grown up. We will be 21 years old in a few day's time. It is an opportune time for us to reassess and reaffirm certain basic facts and premises before we plunge into adulthood. Where are we heading? What is the landscape like before us?

Singapore is unique as a nation - small, no natural resources, a city-state, a country without a countryside, a nation of many different races and religions. Given these basic facts, Singapore will always be vulnerable to internal and external forces.

Take, for example, the vulnerability of our economic prosperity. I was made vividly aware of this when I first started work in 1964. Trade with Indonesia came to a sudden standstill because of Sukarno's Confrontation against Malaysia. Jobs were suddenly lost. The bumboats were all tied up along the Singapore River. The large number of unemployed youth were described as "the army of the unemployed". When Confrontation ended, and with independence, Singapore grew. It grew rapidly until 1985, when we suddenly plunged into recession. Our economy shrank. Workers became unemployed again. A new army of the unemployed? Of mainly officer grades? We have to worry about creating jobs all over again. Creating jobs and economic growth is, therefore, like climbing mountains. The mountains are always there.

### **Mountain Ranges**

Looking ahead, I can see several other peaks we have to scale. You may say that once you have successfully conquered a mountain peak, there is nothing to climbing the next one. But these mountains are permanently covered in snow, and scaling them is always dangerous, even for the most experienced mountaineer.

At this point in time, we may not be able to plan in detail how to climb since we do not have full information of the topography. But at least we are better

equipped than Mao Zedong. What I aim to do in my speech is not to tell you how to climb the mountains, but to outline the obstacles we are likely to encounter. Then I would like to hear your views, after my speech, on how to climb them. After all, the group of Singaporeans who have to participate most actively in the Second Long March will be the young men and women like you.

### **Physical Constraints on Growth**

Our immediate problem is to pull ourselves out of the current economic recession. Our longer-term problem is how to overcome the many constraints on our growth. For example, our land, water and manpower resources are finite, and we are almost reaching their limits. I have spoken on these issues at a similar forum in NUS last year. The Acting Minister for Trade and Industry has also spoken to you on 'Recession and Economic Recovery'. I shall, therefore, not elaborate on this point tonight. But I want to reiterate that we should go easy on wage increases for another year at least, and to advise you to learn to live with slower economic growth, which means lowering your income expectation.

### **Human Problems**

The constraint of physical resources is not as difficult to overcome as the human resource problem. This type of problem requires us to change attitudes and tread on sensitivities. It concerns people directly. When we deal with people, we are basically dealing with emotions, their hopes and fears, their pride and prejudices, their joys and sorrows. The human resource problem cannot, therefore, be tackled in the same efficient, computerized manner as we can the non-human ones. Unless they are properly handled, any attempt to solve them can itself cause further problems.

People is what makes Singapore. They are our most valuable resource. I think the most serious challenge we are going to face is how to cope with the changing demographic profile - its size, composition and age distribution.

I know this is a longer-term problem but if we do not address it now, it can only become more serious.

Our population now stands at 2.6 million. It will grow to three million in the year 2020, and then decline. Our population will decline because the number of babies born each year in the last 10 years falls short of the number required.

Professor Saw Swee Hock, professor of statistics at the National University of Singapore, has calculated that for our population to replace itself, that is, one person for one person, we required 56,000 babies for 1985. But only 42,000 babies were born last year. There was, therefore, a shortfall of 14,000 babies.

You may think producing babies is the most natural thing to do. But apparently the facts seem to indicate otherwise. It seems that the more we educate our girls, the more reluctant they are to have babies. I do not know whether the reluctance is theirs alone, or whether the boys must also share the blame.

This is not a joke. It is a fact. The girls who have only a PSLE education have no problems. They are producing themselves, one for one. For a population to replace itself, on average, each girl must produce another girl. The girls with an 'O' level certificate or above are not doing that. They are underproducing by as much as 40 percent.

So, here we have the nub of the problem.

### **Prosperity**

We have to pay close attention to the trend and pattern of births because of their consequences on our prosperity and security, in fact, on our survival as a nation. You may be puzzled as to why having fewer babies can result in a less prosperous nation.

Let me explain. Economic growth comes from two sources: growth in the size of the workforce and growth in its productivity. Productivity itself depends on the ability of the population. If the workforce does not increase, then productivity must increase to generate economic growth. But there is a limit to productivity growth as the economy becomes more developed. The Japanese are a highly productive people. Yet in the last twenty years, their growth has not exceeded four percent per annum. The Japanese are good. Do you think we can do better? I doubt. It would be extremely difficult to do better than the Japanese people.

### **Not Enough Young Workers**

Economic growth will slacken for another related reason. With fewer babies each year, the proportion of younger people in the population will become increasingly smaller. Put in another way, our workforce will become increasingly older. Today, the average or median age of our workforce is 31, that is, half the workforce is above this age, and half below it. It will go up to 35 years by the year 2000, and then 43 years by the year 2030.

Will our workforce be vigorous and dynamic? Will investors be attracted to a country which does not have enough young workers? Even now, you can see that many companies prefer to employ younger workers. Not only are they cheaper to employ, but they are also more nimble with their hands, and are more up-to-date in their skills and training.

### **Aging Population**

Our changing demographic profile will throw up another grave problem - how to cope with a fast-aging population. At present, there are about 200,000 people aged 60 or above. The number will quickly increase to over 300,000 in 15 years' time. It will balloon to 800,000, 30 years later. You will be amongst those 800,000 people.

How are you going to support yourselves when you are no longer working? You may say that your children can support you, but bear in mind, at the rate we are going, that many Singaporeans will have only one or not even a single child in their life time.

The older population that is without a steady income will need medical care, housing and to move around. These services will have to be paid for, not by the Government, but by those who are working. Singapore has no natural wealth. The only way for the Government to raise the required revenue to take care of the older population is to levy more taxes on those who are working. And they will squeal. The tax burden can be extremely heavy if it has to support some 30 percent of the population who are over 60 years old.

How do we reconcile the interests of the young and the needs of the old? How do we solve the dilemma? I hope you will tell me later.

### **Security**

I now move on to explain the effect of fewer and fewer births on security.

Put simply, there will not be enough young men to defend the country. We have already extended reserve service to 13 years. Do we extend it to 20? Does it really solve our problems even if we do? Do we enlist girls for national service?

Security is a perennial problem. It is another one of those perennially snow-capped mountains.

You cannot assume that once you are born a Singaporean, you will always remain a Singaporean.

Let me illustrate this point by giving you a bit of my personal history.

I have changed nationality many times.

I was born a British subject. Before I could even walk, the Japanese dropped their bombs on Singapore. Soon Singapore fell, and I became, I suppose, a Japanese subject. The Japanese lost the war in 1945. Singapore was returned to the British, and I became a British subject again. In 1959, when I was still in school, I became a Singapore citizen. In 1963, when I was in university, I became a Malaysian when Singapore became part of Malaysia. Two years later, soon after I started work, I reverted to Singapore citizenship. So, all in all, I have changed nationality five times! I hope there will not be a sixth time.

What I am talking about is our ability to defend ourselves in the future. You may not realize it, but it takes 20 years to produce a soldier - 18 years to grow him and two years to train him.

### **What Can Be Done?**

What can be done? What should be done?

Does the solution lie simply in exhorting our people to produce more babies? Who should do the producing? How do we get those who can afford and should have at least two children to have at least two children? Do we change our family planning policy of "Two is Enough" to "Three is Better"? This matter has to be carefully considered, because by trying to check the anticipated population decline, we may overshoot the target. Then we will have the reverse problem of having too many people on too small a piece of land.

### **National Harmony**

The problems I have raised today are not really new. But like the mountain ranges in front of Mao, we have to cross them, again and again. Each crossing is always difficult, always tricky, always perilous. It requires unity of mind and singleness of purpose. It requires us to work in harmony.

National harmony is absolutely crucial for us to conquer our problems. A country at peace with itself can achieve many things. A country at odds with itself will lose everything. I can think of no better example to illustrate this point than Sri Lanka.

I have been to Sri Lanka several times. I have some friends there. It is, therefore, with some concern that I see what is taking place there.

Some years ago, when I was in Colombo, they showed me their proposed economic zone. They were going to model it on the Jurong Industrial Estate. As recently as a year ago, Air Lanka advertised in our press and on SBC: Come to Sri Lanka for "A Taste of Paradise". Today, investors are not going. Neither are the tourists. The violent disharmony between Tamils and Sinhalese is keeping them away.

The Sri Lankans are not an unintelligent people. Our Senior Minister came from Sri Lanka. Their Minister for National Security (Mr. Lallith Athulathmudali) taught law in Singapore. He has also taught my wife. They have a high rate of literacy. They also practise democracy.

It is not that they do not know that national harmony is important. Everybody knows that national harmony is crucial to progress. But it does not follow that just because you know that it is important that there will be national harmony. It depends ultimately on the politics of the country, its government, and its ability to get the people to work together.

### **Our Mission**

The time has come for our generation to work together, to face the future together, to shoulder the responsibilities of State, and to keep Singapore going. We have already begun our Long March. We will face our share of adversaries and our mountains. We have to call on our own skills, resolve and courage to overcome them. The problems are great because besides the basic internal problems I have discussed, there will be external pressures and uncertainties. For one, the world is becoming more protectionist and more competitive. Making a living is going to be tougher. For another, the whole Southeast Asian region is undergoing a political change. And change invariably means uncertainty.

The older generation of Singaporeans have marched together to overcome their problems. Our generation must likewise march together to overcome ours. Only then can we cross our mountains successfully.

I have discussed only some of the problems today, like physical resource limitations, declining number of births, particularly by the better-educated girls, and aging population. There are many more. Besides mountains, there are ravines, gorges, landslides, flash floods, and swamps we have to contend with.

Singapore's problems are unique. We can look at other countries which are facing similar problems and get some ideas on how we can approach or tackle ours. But, finally, because of our unique circumstances, we will still have to find our own unique solutions to our own set of problems.

You will notice I did not attempt to offer any solution. The reason for my not doing so is simple. When you go mountaineering, every climber must play his part. You know it is a risky venture. You have to take precautions, like linking the climbers with a rope tied round their waists, for mutual support in case one slips. If one slips or stumbles, one will be saved by the others. The climbers work as a team. They place their trust in one another. We are going to climb the mountains together, and I want to know how you think we can conquer them.