"Metaphor" and Sidney's *Defence of Poesie*

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As we have come to recognize with increasing clarity, Philip Sidney was a dedicated young aristocrat busily preparing himself for an influential position in the realm. Capitalizing upon his family's connections, especially those of his uncle Leicester, he pursued far-flung ambitions by eager participation in all areas of public life—diplomacy, religion, commerce, learning, and the arts. With an almost millenary zeal, he sought to mobilize his fellow Protestants and to promulgate those values in society which would lead to virtuous action. When Elizabeth steadfastly refused to give him significant employment, he turned to literature to fulfill his societal aims.

Therefore, despite its frequent jocularity and continual sunniness, *The defence of poesie* is a serious document. In it, Sidney argues that poetry has the power of informing and strengthening our erected wit against the debility and depravity of our infected will. Poetry offers a creditable alternative to the platitudes of the philosophers and preachers, which are ineffectual because unspecific; yet its fictions, unlike the particular events recorded by the historians, lend themselves to general application in human affairs. Among the arts of language, Sidney concludes, poetry seems the best hope for achieving a program of Protestant renewal among his countrymen.

While Sidney is radical in many of his views about poetry, he builds upon tradition. With the neoclassicist's aim to restore as well as the reformer's aim to modify, he defines his own position by reference to his literary predecessors. As a result, he keeps continuously in mind the vast and disparate body of extant writings.

Sidney holds up Biblical literature as a constant cynosure, inviolate because of its sacred origin. To maintain his credibility

with the Puritans and to satisfy his own inclinations in that direction, he recognizes the priority of the Holy Scriptures. David's psalms and Christ's parables are cited repeatedly as literature of the highest order, and are offered as touchstones for the lyrics and the fictions of present-day poets. Moreover, as a Protestant, Sidney had faith in the power of the word. The poem, though the product of a mortal mind, shares to some extent in the authenticity of sacred writings because man has been made in God's likeness and is endowed with God-given reason; and these affinities with the divine, though dangerously impaired, have not been wholly obliterated by Adam's fall. While literature of itself does not have the power to gain us entrance into the kingdom of heaven, it may teach us how best to behave in God's kingdom on earth.

As a humanist, furthermore, Sidney honored the high value placed upon letters in the Ciceronian tradition, which ascribed to the *litterae humaniores* the essential function of bringing man out of his barbarous ways and into civilization. Especially the epics of Homer and Vergil serve as encyclopedias of necessary knowledge; but also lesser works, such as Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* and even Heliodorus' *Ethiopica*, provide useful lessons in human conduct. The civic humanism of Renaissance Florence had gone still further. Energized by the philosophical optimism of Plato, the quattrocento Florentines had devised a potent esthetic, inspired by the Muses and conducive to ecstasy, which raises the reader to an immediate experience of the supernal beauty. These humanistic attitudes readily accord with that most persistent of literary principles, concisely formulated by Horace, that poetry must teach as well as please. In this neoclassical tradition, adapted to a Christian culture, the arts of language become a cherished hope for salvation. *Oratio* permits expression of the God-based *ratio* itself, so that literature acquires a doctrinal purpose, offering the seemliest means by which individual and commonwealth alike might rise above the dunghill of mortal existence. Not since Plato's *Republic*, in fact, had anyone taken literature quite so seriously as a central feature of the body politic.

Most novel and most fundamental, however, Sidney identified himself as an Aristotelian. He joined the swelling ranks of those on the Continent who since mid-century had proclaimed with increasing fervor that poetry is an imitation of the actions of men. In the revived Aristotelian analysis of what poetry is and how it achieves

its effects, the production of images which move the reader becomes the focus of the poet's art and of the critic's theory. A self-conscious poet operating within the limits of human reason produces a universe of verbal images which at once reflects the perfection of the providential scheme while it comments upon the actuality of our here-and-now. By plying this middle course between a realm of concepts and a world of facts, Sidney defends poetry by pointing to its ameliorative effects. It leads not only to well-knowing, but to well-doing.

So Sidney, ambitious young politician that he was, thwarted in his efforts to effect his purposes by consequential public office or even to gain a reputation by military service, turned to his pen as a means of implementing his program for society. *The defence of poesie* states his theoretical position, the result of his serious study and thought. With the syncretist's sure sense of breadth, he recognized that the moralist's need for uplifting instruction could be abetted by the neoplatonic poetic which purports to raise the reader to a near-divine furor. With the Protestant's practicality, he recognized that this beneficial effect of poetry could be best achieved by the rhetorician's well-known manipulation of the *ars dicendi*, especially when fortified by the new poetics of Aristotelian mimesis so loudly touted on the Continent. So *The defence of poesie* is an amalgamation of all the literary traditions known to Sidney—Biblical, Ciceronian, Platonic, Horation, Aristotelian—brought not only into juxtaposition, but into mutually supportive conflation. Just as the syncretist sought to confirm his Christianity by the assimilation of other congruent cultures, so Sidney sought a comprehensive poetics that answered to all possible contingencies. And this hard-won poetics aimed, of course, not at some effete estheticism, but at the serious business of furthering a Protestant society.

Sidney's theoretical discussion, then, is both inclusive and intensive, attempting to syncretize the several literary traditions implemented by his contemporaries, yet offering prescriptive advice about exactly how poetry might achieve its restorative result. And in line with this earnest cause, his vocabulary is purposeful, disciplined, and accurate. With learning and skill Sidney applies the terminology of the literary arts. He resorts to a plethora of technical terms—invention, prosopopoeia, similitude, fable, fiction, architectonic, energeia, eikastic and phantastic—so care must be taken to understand these terms as Sidney intended them to be

understood. His argument rests upon their appropriate interpretation. Especially, we must guard against the easy assumption that we know the meaning of a term because it persists in our own critical lexicon, since in almost every instance the term has been generalized or perverted by centuries of use quite extraneous to Sidney.

Although Sidney bent these terms to his own particular purpose, he found them already in circulation among the theorists whom he read. In consequence, one corrective in our understanding of what Sidney meant is to look for them in the terminology of the literary traditions that he so visibly draws upon. Often Sidney indicates in one way or another that he is appropriating a term from a specific authority.

A salient instance of the specificity of Sidney's terminology is the word "imitation" in his famous definition of poetry as an art of imitation. Quite early in the *Defence*, after his praise of poetry through establishing its antiquity and its commonality among even the least cultured nations, and after his examination of what the Romans and the Greeks implied by the titles *vates* and ποιητής, Sidney launches the main body of his treatise with a definition which serves as the base-line for his further discussion:

> *Poesie* therefore, is an Art of *Imitation*: for so *Aristotle* termeth it in the word μίμησις, that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth to speake Metaphorically. A speaking *Picture*, with this end to teach and delight.[1]

It is clear that Sidney uses "imitation" in a special sense; and equally clear, he indicates the reference for defining the term by his citation of Aristotle. He even reproduces Aristotle's word in Greek, μίμησις. Since this word was unfamiliar to his English audience,[2] Sidney helpfully glosses it with a series of gerunds: "a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth to speake Metaphorically." And furthermore, he supplies an explanatory appositive preserved in Plutarch: poetry is not only "an Art of *Imitation*," but also "a speaking *Picture*." Finally, poetry is defined by citing its final cause, "to teach and delight," a phrase which we readily trace to Horace's *Ars poetica*, but which the Renaissance would with equal ease have associated with Aristotle, since the dicta of Horace and Aristotle had been so closely intermeddled in critical theory. To deal with the word "imitation" in a nontechnical way, then, or to ignore the Aristotelian implications of

the term, is to defy the unmistakable signals that Sidney incorporates into his text.

The same may be said for the word "Metaphorically," which also appears in this passage. "Metaphor" is not a common word in Sidney's vocabulary; actually, this is a *hapax legomenon*, appearing nowhere else. And like "imitation," it is a technical term which should be interpreted in an Aristotelian context. It is, in fact, a term whose locus classicus is Aristotle's *Poetics*, where it occurs to designate one of the more important ways by which a poet expresses his μίμησης. So "imitation" and "metaphor" are two terms interrelated by Aristotle and linked in a self-consistent poetics, and not surprisingly nor incidentally does Sidney juxtapose them here.

This passage containing the terms "imitation" and "metaphor" has become a bone of contention among Sidneians, and I have been identified as the first begetter of the controversy.[3] Because this passage contains Sidney's most straightforward and concise definition of poetry, the stakes in the dispute are high and well worth the game. Without wishing to appear eristic, therefore, I think it important to set out the controversy and the evidence that bears upon both sides. Since in my initial comments about the interpretation of the passage I did not have the opportunity of displaying my argument *in extenso*, it is incumbent upon me to do so now.

Essentially, what is at issue depends upon two variant readings of the text occasioned by a difference in punctuation: (1) ". . . figuring forth to speake Metaphorically. A speaking *Picture*, with this end to teach and delight," which is the reading of William Ponsonby's edition of 1595; and (2) ". . . figuring foorth: to speake metaphorically, a speaking picture: with this end, to teach and delight," which is the reading of Henry Olney's edition, printed the same year as Ponsonby's. There are three key phrases involved: "figuring forth," "to speake Metaphorically," and "a speaking *Picture*"; and clearly there is a difference in meaning whether we group the second phrase with the first in a relationship of cause-and-effect, so that the reading becomes "figuring forth in order to speak in a way which results in metaphor," an interpretation in accord with the punctuation of the Ponsonby text, or whether we group the second phrase with the third as an adverbial modifier, so that the reading becomes "to use a figure of speech, a speaking picture," a reading suggested by the punctuation of the Olney text. My concern is to preserve intact the phrasing of the Ponsonby edition, so that we read "figuring forth to speake Metaphorically,"

where "metaphor" is given its full technical meaning. My argument will be based on both textual and interpretative grounds, and therefore I will present in turn the evidence of each sort.

i

During the same year, 1595, two independent editions of our text were published: one quarto entitled *The defence of poesie* printed by Thomas Creede for William Ponsonby (STC 22535), and another quarto entitled *An apologie for poetrie* printed by James Roberts for Henry Olney (STC 22534). In the most recent and by far the most bibliographically sensitive edition of our text, Jan van Dorsten offers a well-reasoned hypothesis about the relationship between the Ponsonby *Defence* and the Olney *Apologie*.[4] In brief, Ponsonby entered *The defence of posey* in the Stationers' Register on 29 November 1594. Olney, perhaps unaware of Ponsonby's prior claim or in the belief that Ponsonby might not exercise his right to print the book, entered *An apologie for poetrie* on 12 April 1595 and actually published his text. Later in 1595, in order to assert his claim, Ponsonby published another text, thereby in effect recalling Olney's. Apparently, Ponsonby also took over Olney's sheets, because some extant copies of the Olney text bear Ponsonby's title page (STC 22534.5). In consequence, there is little reason on the face of it for claiming greater authority for one of these texts over the other by dint of priority. They are virtually simultaneous.

It has been generally noted, though, that Olney's is the more carefully printed volume. As van Dorsten observes, "The text is divided into paragraphs, the punctuation is fairly accurate, mistakes and misprints are rare, and a short *errata* list and some preliminary matter were added" (*Miscellaneous Prose*, pp. 66-67). Because of these amenities, Olney's version is more easily accessible to a modern reader, and most recent editors have based their text on his—notably, Arber,[5] Smith,[6] Hardison,[7] Shepherd,[8] and Robinson.[9] Necessarily, however, they have adopted some readings from the Ponsonby version, so that a composite text results; and given the paucity of textual apparatus in all these editions, a reader is hard put to know exactly what he is looking at.

Moreover, despite the superficial attractiveness of Olney's version, there are good arguments for deferring to the Ponsonby text, and Flügel,[10] Feuillerat, Soens, and van Dorsten in their editions do so. Feuillerat, the only editor besides van Dorsten to supply textual variants in any quantity,[11] adopted Ponsonby's text as more authoritative for obvious reasons: "It contains two

passages not to be found in Olney's quarto; and it was preferred by the Countess of Pembroke when the folio of 1598 was prepared for the press" (p. vi). I might add that Ponsonby had close ties with the Sidney family. Presumably, he acquired from them copy for the 1590 *Arcadia* and the 1593 *Arcadia*, both of which he published. He was also, of course, as Feuillerat notes, the publisher of the "official" folio of Sidney's collected works in 1598, supervised by the Countess of Pembroke and/or Fulke Greville.[12] It is reasonable to assume that in each instance the Sidney family supplied him with the manuscripts to print, or at the very least in 1598 did not disapprove of the copy-texts he had earlier obtained by whatever means.

Van Dorsten in his edition is inclined to agree with Feuillerat and strengthens the case for the authority of Ponsonby's 1595 text by establishing its close relationship to an extant manuscript owned at one time by Robert Sidney, Philip's younger brother (De L'Isle and Dudley Ms. 1226, known commonly as the Penshurst manuscript).[13] Van Dorsten, in fact, claims to base his text on a conflation of the Penshurst manuscript and the Ponsonby quarto, which he calls "the two most authoritative texts." In the explanation of how he arrived at his own text, van Dorsten uses the abbreviation Pe for the Penshurst manuscript, P for the Ponsonby quarto, O for the Olney quarto, and N for a late sixteenth-century manuscript now in the Norfolk County Record Office at Norwich,[14] which has little (if any) textual authority:

> The present edition is based on the two most authoritative texts combined: Pe and P. In some instances where Pe has a unique reading that appears to be authentic, or a minor variant which is manifestly superior, no support from P (or N or O) is sought; otherwise a Pe reading contradicted unanimously by P, N, and O is rejected. Whenever a P variant seems doubtful, a Pe(-N-O) reading is given if available. (p. 69)

From this statement, I conclude that van Dorsten worked primarily from the Ponsonby 1595 version, though he deferred to the Penshurst manuscript where it "has a unique reading that appears to be authentic, or a minor variant which is manifestly superior." Whenever the Ponsonby version seemed doubtful, he adopted a reading from the Penshurst manuscript when available, especially if confirmed by the Olney version and/or the Norwich manuscript.[15]

The authority of the Olney version as well as of the Norwich manuscript is depreciated, however, and rightly so. They are called upon for little more than confirmation of a reading in the Ponsonby version or in the Penshurst manuscript. Given his avowed respect for the Ponsonby quarto and the Penshurst manuscript, which concur in the punctuation of our disputed passage, it seems curious that in this instance, as we shall find, van Dorsten repudiates them in favor of a reading derived from the Olney version.

In order to see the problem as the substantive matter that it is, and not as just a textual quibble, we must now examine with meticulous care the actual wording and punctuation of the various versions that have come down to us. Following the principles for establishing the text suggested by van Dorsten, we begin with the 1595 Ponsonby version:

> *Poesie* therefore, is an Art of *Imitation*: for so *Aristotle* termeth it in the word μίμησις, that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth to speake Metaphorically. A speaking *Picture*, with this end to teach and delight. (C1^{v})[16]

What I wish to emphasize here is the lack of punctuation between "figuring forth" and "to speake Metaphorically," so that the two phrases flow together. The Aristotelian term μίμησις is glossed as a "figuring forth [in order] to speake Metaphorically." This reading implies that a "metaphor" is a way of speaking which effects μίμησις or imitation. The major break in the passage comes with the full stop after "Metaphorically." This punctuation places the phrase "a speaking *Picture*" in the position of an appositive to "an Art of *Imitation*." The two phrases are grammatically and syntactically parallel: "Poesie therefore, is *an Art of Imitation*," and "[Poesie therefore, is] *a speaking Picture*." This parallel construction is obvious and logical.

That portion of the definition of poetry referrable to an Aristotelian context concludes with the full stop after "Metaphorically." The next portion of the passage, beginning with "a speaking *Picture*," indicates a new element in the definition which is equivalent in weight with the Aristotelian portion identified as "an Art of *Imitation*," but the Renaissance reader would have immediately recognized that *pictura loquens* is a Plutarchan tag and therefore would have referred this new element to a Plutarchan context. In Agrippa's *De vanitate et incertitudine artium et scientarium*, an acknowledged authority which Sidney cites in the *Defence*, he

could have found the full, reversible formulation of this cliché in art criticism: "*Paintinge* is nothing els, but a silente *Poesie*, & *Poesie* a speakinge Picture."[17] The comparison of poetry and painting had received unwonted attention in art theory since the mid-sixteenth century, a circumstance that derived from the burgeoning interest in the novel poetics of Aristotelian μίμησις. The likeness between poetry and painting drew support also from Horace (albeit spuriously), and the Horatian tag *ut pictura poesis* was if anything more popular than the Plutarchan tag.[18] Understandably, therefore, having mentioned "a speaking *Picture*," Sidney turns to Horace, and he next repeats another canard traceable to the *Ars poetica* that poetry has "this end to teach and delight."

The passage as Creede printed it for Ponsonby has a compartmentalization of matter and yet a logical consistency that cannot be faulted. This definition of poetry is wide-ranging among classical authorities, yet coherent. Aristotelian *mimesis* may be achieved by speaking metaphorically because a metaphor, as we shall see, is a means of producing images in the poet's medium of language. Moreover, these images liken poetry to painting à la Plutarch, but also à la Horace, so therefore the Horatian dictum that poetry is *utile dulci* comes into force.

The significant details of our reading of this passage in the 1595 Ponsonby text are confirmed by the appearance of the passage in the Penshurst manuscript:

> Poesie therefore is an Arte of Imitation for so *Aristotle* termeth it in the word μίμησις. That is to saie a Representinge, Counterfettinge or figuringe forth to speake Metaphorically, a speakinge picture with this ende to teache and delight.
>
> (fol. 2v)[19]

Again, most importantly, there is no punctuation between "figuringe forth" and "to speake Metaphorically." The sequence "figuringe forth to speake Metaphorically" is left intact. Furthermore, there is separating punctuation, a comma, after "Metaphorically," indicating that "a speakinge picture with this ende to teache and delight" is another autonomous syntactical unit. The punctuation of the Penshurst manuscript, or perhaps the dearth thereof, does not reveal so clearly the compartmentalization of matter. But the basic syntax of the passage, despite the full stop after μίμησις, accords reasonably well with the syntax of the Ponsonby text as we have interpreted it. The phrase "a speakinge picture" begins a new

movement in the definition which is grammatically parallel to "an Arte of Imitation."

Not surprisingly, the punctuation of the 1595 Ponsonby text accords also with the "official" publication of the first edition of Sidney's collected works authorized by his sister Mary and published in folio by Ponsonby in 1598:

> *Poesie* therefore, is an Arte of *Imitation*: for so *Aristotle* tearmeth it in the word μίμησις, that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth to speake metaphorically. A speaking *Picture*, with this end, to teach and delight.[20]

There are no significant variants from the 1595 Ponsonby text in either wording or punctuation. The sequence "figuring forth to speake metaphorically" is retained without break, and the full stop at its end indicates that "A speaking *Picture*" begins a different, Plutarchan element in the definition of poetry. This evidence, of course, proves little more than that the copy-text for the 1598 Ponsonby folio was the 1595 Ponsonby quarto—though it does suggest that to the typesetter in 1598 the earlier text made perfectly good sense and did not require re-pointing, as van Dorsten argues.[21]

Against these three versions which basically agree, we must now set the passage as it appears in the Olney text, the only other version with any claim to textual authority:

> Poesie therefore is an arte of imitation, for so *Aristotle* termeth it in this word *Mimesis*, that is to say, a representing, counterfetting, or figuring foorth: to speake metaphorically, a speaking picture: with this end, to teach and delight.
>
> (C2^{v}; Huntington 61362)

What is most evidently and crucially at variance is the disruption of the sequence "figuring foorth: to speake metaphorically." A colon intrudes between "figuring foorth" and "to speake metaphorically." The intrusion of a colon at this point has led most modern editors to group the phrase "to speake metaphorically" with its succeedent phrase, "a speaking picture." The phrase "to speake metaphorically" then serves as a general adverbial modifier, and the technical and precise meaning of "metaphor" is reduced, if not lost completely. The phrase becomes synonymous with "to speak figuratively" in the modern, casual sense; and the reading becomes little more than "as one might say, a speaking picture."

But recent editors, to my mind, have been too quick in their assumptions about the punctuation marks in Olney's version. While we might think of the colon as a strong piece of punctuation, James Roberts, Olney's printer, did not. Actually, following medieval practice which carried over into the Elizabethan printing shops, the colon is often a light piece of punctuation. It is the punctuation, in fact, which the typesetter of the Olney quarto drops in quite freely. Colons abound in the Olney text, and in my opinion appear largely at the discretion of the typesetter.[22]

In any case, the relative inconsequentiality of the colon as a punctuation mark is evident throughout the Olney text. A salient example occurs here in the passage under discussion. The colon between "a speaking picture" and "with this end" does not indicate a major disruption, or even an attempt to organize the phrasing. Evidently the phrase "with this end" follows closely upon "a speaking picture," and we should read "a speaking picture: with this end" without a significant interruption. As Roberts prints the text, the comma is the punctuation mark which indicates the major disruptions in the passage and therefore organizes the phrasing, while the colon is subsidiary punctuation. Consequently, recognizing the strength of the comma, we should group the phrase "figuring foorth" with "to speake metaphorically," and the phrase "a speaking picture" with "with this end," while minimizing the force of the colons. In sum, just as we read without hindrance "a speaking picture: with this end," so also without significant interruption we should read "figuring foorth: to speake metaphorically." Essentially, such a reading accords with our previous reading of the 1595 Ponsonby quarto, the Penshurst manuscript, and the 1598 Ponsonby folio.

When we turn to the passage as van Dorsten has chosen to print it, we find that he has forsaken both the 1595 Ponsonby text and the Penshurst manuscript, and follows most closely the Olney text:[23]

> Poesy therefore is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in the word μίμησις—that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth—to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture —with this end, to teach and delight. (79.35-80.2)

Wishing to group the two phrases "to speak metaphorically" plus "a speaking picture" as a syntactical unit, van Dorsten has resorted to dashes. He has, in fact, simply replaced Olney's colons with dashes. At first glance, this substitution may seem reasonable. A

dash, however, is a very strong piece of punctuation in modern English, indicating a discontinuity in the train of thought. In my opinion, consequently, the light punctuation of Olney's colons should not be rendered by punctuation so strong as dashes. Dashes are inappropriate here, and have no authority in any of the early texts that have come down to us, either printed or manuscript. Furthermore, inconsistently, van Dorsten uses a dash earlier in the passage to replace a comma as well as a colon; he replaces Olney's comma between μίμησις and "that" with a dash. The result is to redistribute the phrasing in a way that accords with none of the early versions. By reorganizing the phrasing, van Dorsten conditions the possible interpretations of the passage, bringing some into existence while precluding others.

There is no doubt that van Dorsten's changes in punctuation are interpretative decisions, not questions of text alone, because they determine the grouping of phrases in the passage, and therefore the syntax, and finally the meaning. DeNeef is justified, it seems to me, in his complaint that van Dorsten has suppressed a legitimate variant and has supplied instead a hybrid of his own making.[24] The fact that van Dorsten of all editors offends least often does not alleviate the scholar's concern that in any particular passage of this edition what he is reading may indiscriminately be Ponsonby or it may be Olney—or indeed, it may be no one but the editor. The case in hand which I have so laboriously set forth exemplifies the point. At the least, in this instance van Dorsten, careful and responsible editor that he is, should have offered textual paraphernalia that allows the reader to reconstruct the alternate readings that the variant punctuation produces.

To conclude this examination of the textual evidence, I support the passage as punctuated in the 1595 Ponsonby quarto on several grounds: (1) the text published by Ponsonby would seem to deserve a preferential status because of his close ties with Sidney's family; (2) the Ponsonby punctuation is confirmed by the Penshurst manuscript and, less consequentially, by the 1598 Ponsonby folio; (3) the passage in Ponsonby's version is a model of grammatical and logical coherence, whereas Olney's version is not; and (4) if colons are recognized as weak punctuation, and internal evidence indicates that Olney's typesetter took them to be so, the organization of the phrases in the Olney text is basically the same as that in the Ponsonby texts. Finally, contrary to what van Dorsten and others have concluded from the Olney version, the phrase "to speake metaphorically" should not be related to "a speaking picture" as a modifier because "a speaking picture" is not a metaphor in any sense

readily discernible to an Elizabethan. In contrast, however, "figuring forth" is indeed a way "to speake Metaphorically," as I explain in the following section.

ii

The interpretative evidence in favor of the 1595 Ponsonby text is appreciably more interesting, more conclusive, and more significant than the textual evidence. It involves the full range of Sidney's thinking about poetry and deals with the basic principles of his poetics. Nowhere, in fact, does Sidney define the poetic art more precisely. "A figuring forth to speake Metaphorically" is his technical description of poetry in a nutshell. Reference to the term μίμησις allows this conciseness and expertise, and we necessarily turn to Aristotle's *Poetics* to provide the appropriate context for the statement. In that ancient document, enjoying a new importance during Sidney's time, we find also the locus classicus for the term "metaphor."

Aristotle defines the term "metaphor" and identifies its several types in that central portion of the *Poetics* which lays out the six constituent elements of tragedy: plot, character, diction, thought, spectacle, and song (1450a9 ff.).[25] Most attention, of course, is paid to plot, and much is said about character, especially in relation to plot. Diction also, however, is discussed in considerable detail. Given the fact that the study of language *per se* was in its infancy, Aristotle's analysis is all the more notable.

In his discussion of diction (λέξις), Aristotle begins systematically by enumerating its parts, starting with the smallest units, such as "letter" and "syllable" (1456b20). He proceeds to deal with syntactical and grammatical terms, such as "connective," "noun," "verb," "inflection," and "sentence." Aristotle lingers over the analysis of nouns, noting that "every word is either standard, or is a strange word, or is a metaphor, or is ornamental, or is a coined word, or is lengthened, or contracted, or is altered in some way" (1457a31 ff.; p. 37). It is in this list that the term "metaphor" first appears, as a sort of word or noun (ὄνομα). Because of the newness of linguistic science, Aristotle makes a reasonable effort to explain what he means by each of these different sorts of nouns.

It is clearly the "metaphor," though, that most seriously engages his interest and elicits the most elaborate comment. In an extensive passage that stands out because of its amplitude, Aristotle supplies a definition of metaphor and identifies four distinct types. To understand the important technical implications of the term, we must look at Aristotle's statement in full:

"A second element is related to a first as a fourth is to a third"; B is to A as D is to C. Furthermore, in this formulation there is a firm relationship of interchangeability, a correspondence, between B and D; as Aristotle notes, "The poet will then use the fourth in place of the second or the second in place of the fourth." Finally, Aristotle recognizes the firm relationship of correspondence also between A and C, which he points to in his comment that "sometimes poets add the reference to which the transferred term applies"—that is, A, the referent, is kept explicit in the metaphoric description of C. So Aristotle attempts to bolster the certainty of this fourth type of metaphor by recourse to the precise formulation of a mathematical proportion; and in later discussion, metaphor by analogy is often called "proportional metaphor."

From this paradigmatic definition of metaphor by analogy, Aristotle proceeds immediately to give concrete examples, as he did for the first three sorts of metaphor, and in this instance also his examples are wondrously edifying:

> I mean, for example, that a cup is related to Dionysus as a shield is to Ares. The poet will, therefore, speak of the cup as the shield of Dionysus and the shield as the cup of Ares. (1457b20-2)

We can readily reduce this example to the proportional equation that Aristotle has established:

Dionysus : his cup = Ares : his shield

A cup is the distinguishing attribute of Dionysus just as a shield distinguishes Ares—B is to A as D is to C. Therefore a cup (B) may be described as "the shield of Dionysus"; or conversely, a shield (D) may be described as "the cup of Ares." In this metaphor B and D are correspondent, and so are A and C. Acknowledging the subtlety of the matter, Aristotle continues by giving a second example:

> The same situation occurs in regard to the relation of old age to life and evening to day. A poet will say that evening is the old age of day, or however Empedocles expressed it, and that old age is the evening of life or the sunset of life. (1457b22-5)

Again, we can express this example as a mathematical proportion:

old age : life = evening : day

Old age is a quality of life at a certain stage just as evening is a quality of day as it draws to a close—B is to D as A is to C. Consequently, as Aristotle notes, "A poet will say that evening is the old

age of day, . . . and that old age is the evening of life." To this point, the argument is fully perspicuous and practical. Aristotle is even able to supply an appropriate example from a practicing poet, Empedocles.

There are complications, however, and Aristotle acknowledges at least one of them. In some instances, because of the limitations of vocabulary, the proportional metaphor is not reversible:

> In some situations, there is no regular name in use to cover the analogous relation, but nevertheless the related elements will be spoken of by analogy; for example, to scatter seed is to sow, but the scattering of the sun's rays has no name. (1457b25-8)

To begin, we can express this analogy as a proportion:

sowing : seeds = scattering : sun-rays

The farmer sows his seeds just as the sun scatters his rays, and therefore we can speak of the farmer "scattering" his seeds. Our language does not permit us to speak of the sun "sowing" his rays, however, and therefore the metaphor is deficient. The analogy is imperfect. The proportion is operative in only half of its formulation. Nonetheless, Aristotle concludes, the imaginative poet can reformulate the analogy:

> But the act of sowing in regard to grain bears an analogous relation to the sun's dispersing of its rays, and so we have the phrase "sowing the god-created fire." (1457b28-30)

Now the metaphor can be categorized as one of the third type, a transfer between species and species. The act of sowing grain and what the sun does with its rays are both species of the larger genus of activities covered by "dispersing." Thereby we may derive the phrase "sowing the god-created fire," and consequently we have supplemented our vocabulary.

Aristotle notes yet one more permutation of the metaphor. It may be used to point out differences as well as similarities:

> It is also possible to use metaphor in a different way by applying the transferred epithet and then denying some aspect that is proper to it—for example, if one should call the shield not the cup of Ares but the wineless cup. (1457b30-3)

Reverting to his first example of metaphor by analogy, Aristotle shows that although the proportion still holds—a cup to Dionysus

is what a shield is to Ares—yet the metaphor may be sophisticated by introducing a privative modifier. By denying some aspect of the metaphor, a contrast (at least in part) is achieved within the encompassing structure of the comparison. Thereby, the metaphor reveals differences as well as likenesses. For example, by calling Ares' shield "the wineless cup," we activate the proportion between the cup of Dionysus and Ares' shield; but at the same time, we note that Ares' shield, unlike Dionysus cup, will not hold wine.[26]

Although in a later passage Aristotle praises the metaphor for its effectiveness and adaptability (1457b18-59a8), that is all he has to say in the *Poetics* about its mechanism. But that is considerable. Moreover, in the *Rhetoric* Aristotle returns to the topic, adding significant details and many more examples. And from thence, the term "metaphor" and its several types passed into the mainstream of the rhetorical tradition and became a staple of literary theory. As an instrument of the *ars dicendi*, metaphor acquired the ability to create a quasi-visual image, what Aristotle and his followers denoted by the term ἐνέργεια.

When Aristotle resumes the discussion of metaphor in the *Rhetoric*, he refers to his previous treatment of the topic in the *Poetics* and builds upon it. Again, "metaphor" appears as a prominent technical term in the section on λέξις, which most modern translators render as "style," though in the *Poetics* the same word is most usually translated as "diction." However λέξις is translated, in Book III of the *Rhetoric* Aristotle offers an extended investigation of it, where he begins by noting that the choice of language in prose as in poetry must aim above all at clarity and appropriateness (1404b1 ff.).[27] While poetry condones an ornate style and somewhat exotic diction, prose allows fewer occasions for fine language because the subject matter is less often elevated. In any event, both poet and prosewriter must avoid the appearance of artificiality. And this is where metaphors most readily prove their usefulness, because they depend upon an imaginative comparison between two entities while at the same time they seem to be the ordinary and natural terms of common discourse. Metaphor, in fact, is the best means of achieving an enriched style without sacrifice of perspicuity or decorum (1404b34-7). Aristotle then remarks that he has already covered this topic in the *Poetics* (1405a3-5), and he continues by reviewing his theory of metaphors and offering practical advice for their construction, replete with numerous examples.

But in this passage from the *Rhetoric* there soon develops a new function for metaphor which may be implied in the *Poetics* but is not made fully explicit. Metaphor has the ability to produce quasi-visual images—to "figure forth," in Sidney's words.[28] Or, in Aristotle's words, "to create the matter before one's very eyes" (*ποιεῖν τὸ πρᾶγμα πρὸ ὀμμάτων*; 1405b12). Shortly, Aristotle considers the rhetorical device closest to metaphor, the *εἰκών*, which our translator renders as "simile," but whose significance we can see more immediately if we transliterate it as "icon," the word used by the Latin rhetoricians.[29] "The simile," Aristotle says, "also is a metaphor" (*Ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ἡ εἰκὼν μεταφορα*; 1406b20); and he goes on to indicate the negligible difference between the two figures: the simile is a comparison using "like" or "as" (that is, the particle of comparison, *ὡς*), but it is in effect exactly like the metaphor. Many examples follow, which support the conclusion: "All such expressions may be used as similes (*εἰκόνες*) or metaphors (*μεταφοραί*), so that all that are approved as metaphors will obviously also serve as similes" (1407a12-4).[30] Unequivocally, the metaphor is given a visual dimension as an *εἰκών*, by which the orator/poet "creates the matter before our very eyes." This passage ends with a reminder that the metaphor by analogy must be reversible in its formulation: "The metaphor from proportion should be reciprocal and applicable to either of the two things of the same genus; for instance, if the goblet is the shield of Dionysus, then the shield may properly be called the goblet of Ares" (1407a15-8).

Aristotle then ranges among a variety of other rhetorical devices (including metrics) for achieving the clarity and appropriateness which are necessary to *λέξις*. Before long, however, he returns to concentrate upon the metaphor and its variant, the simile. He points to the usefulness of metaphors as an instrument of teaching, and notes that their attractiveness is based in large part upon the pleasure derived from learning something new. Starting from the definition that the metaphor is a comparison between an unknown and a known, and assuming that the metaphor is epistemologically valid, Aristotle exults in the metaphor as the device best adapted to explaining the unknown:

> Easy learning is naturally pleasant to all, and words mean something, so that all words which make us learn something are most pleasant. Now we do not know the meaning of strange words, and proper terms we know already. It is metaphor, therefore, that above all produces this effect; for when Homer

> calls old age stubble, he teaches and informs us through the genus; for both have lost their bloom. The similes of the poets also have the same effect. (1410b10-6)

Λέξις, then, is most effective if it contains metaphor, provided the metaphors are neither "strange" nor "superficial" (1410b39-41). Furthermore, and here Aristotle repeats his earlier phrase, metaphors must "set things 'before the eyes'" (ἔτι εἰ πρὸ ὀμμάτων ποιεῖ; 1410b33-4). The reason for this requirement of immediacy is not far to seek: "for we ought to see what is being done rather than what is going to be done." In other words, the tense of the metaphor is present, not future; it produces, in fact, the illusion of a continuous present. And Aristotle ends this passage by concluding: "We ought therefore to aim at three things—metaphor, antithesis, actuality (ἐνέργεια)." That is, the most effective style will utilize comparisons through likenesses, contrasts through dissimilarities, and a lifelike vividness denoted by the Greek word ἐνέργεια.

Aristotle next turns his attention to this quality denoted by ἐνέργεια, which takes on the preciseness of a technical term. After a string of examples of μεταφοραί καὶ πρὸ ὀμμάτων (1411a1-b21), he proceeds to the theoretical issues they support:

> We must now explain the meaning of "before the eyes," and what must be done to produce this. I mean that things are set before the eyes by words that signify actuality (ἐνέργεια). (1411b23-5)

And Aristotle gives yet another instructive example, which he carefully analyzes: "For instance, to say that a good man is 'four-square' is a metaphor, for both these are complete"—that is, a good man, like a square, is self-consistent and self-sufficient, and therefore perfect. "But the phrase," Aristotle goes on, "does not express actuality"—that is, although the metaphor is valid as an intellectualized concept, it does not submit to visualization. The metaphor works on the conceptual level only; it lacks ἐνέργεια. In contrast, Aristotle offers an example of metaphor which does express actuality: "one having the prime of his life in full bloom." To Aristotle, comparing a vigorous man to spring is a more effective metaphor than comparing a good man to a square because the visualized qualities of blooming plants can be transferred to the vigorous man, while those qualities of the square which can be visualized are not applicable to the appearance of the good man. The "prime of life" is metaphor with the additional and desirable ingredient of ἐνέργεια.

Other examples of energeiac metaphors are adduced, and eventually a premise is arrived at: "In all these examples there is appearance of actuality, since the objects are represented as animate" (1412a3-4). Homer is cited as a poet especially adept at this sort of device. The source of vitality in his poetry, at least in part, lies in his practice of enlivening inanimate things by means of animating metaphors, "for he gives movement and life to all, and actuality (ἐνέργεια) is movement (κίνησις)." So "energeia" bestows life-like vividness on metaphors because it involves "kinesis." Energeia activates the metaphor so that it has the immediacy of palpable experience. The auditor/reader perceives the metaphor as though it were a physical presence with kinetic properties.

This theory of energeiac metaphor is especially valuable to the rhetorician in his efforts to persuade an audience; ἐνέργεια endows his speech with a vivacity that evokes from the audience a quasi-sensual response which eventuates in the modification of behavior. Similarly, it can be readily adapted by the poet who wishes to convey truth by means of describing the actions of men, either in the wholly verbal medium of narrative fiction or in the combined verbal-visual medium of drama. Energeiac metaphor can produce "notable images of virtues, vices, or what else," as Sidney requires of poetry in another of his oft-quoted pronouncements (*Defence*, 81.37), and thereby the poet bestows a paradigm upon the world to serve as a model to be emulated (in the case of virtues) or to be eschewed (in the case of vices). Metaphor is one of the means by which the poet may accomplish his imitation of human actions as set forth in Aristotle's *Poetics*. In both disciplines, though, in poetry as well as oratory, the metaphor is a vehicle of valid information and succeeds in this function through the power of ἐνέργεια.

From Aristotle's *Rhetoric* this theory of metaphor dependent upon ἐνέργεια was canonized as a basic tenet of rhetorical doctrine. Sidney evidently is thinking of poetry in this tradition when he defines it in terms of "figuring forth *to speake* Metaphorically." He is thinking of poetry as one of the arts of discourse, an *ars dicendi*, using the technique of energeiac metaphor and having the aim of persuading an audience. He calls upon the familiar shibboleths of the rhetorician, and the newly popular "speaking *Picture*" is not far behind.

Between Aristotle and Sidney a continuous line of rhetoricians kept alive the theory of energeiac metaphor, reinforcing it even if

unable to add much to Aristotle's analysis. Cicero echoes and abstracts Aristotle in the *De oratore* (III.149-70)[31]—for example, while explaining why metaphors give more pleasure than mere denotative words, he comments, "Every metaphor [*translatio*], provided it be a good one, has a direct appeal to the senses, especially the sense of sight, which is the keenest." And he goes on: "Metaphors drawn from the sense of sight are much more vivid, virtually placing within the range of our mental vision [*in conspectu animi*] objects not actually visible to our sight" (III.160-61). Shortly thereafter, Cicero uses the phrase *mentis oculi* to designate that mental faculty which deals with the visual dimension of the metaphor (III.163), and from that locus classicus "the mind's eye" became a commonplace of literary theory. The mind's eye is the necessary counterpart to energeia in the orator/poet, allowing the auditor/reader to perceive the verbal image. What the orator/poet produces by energeia, the auditor/reader processes in his mind's eye. Because of its utility Cicero, like Aristotle, heaps fulsome praise upon metaphor: "There is no mode of speech more effective in the case of single words, and none that add more brilliance to the style" (III.166).

As the rhetorical tradition developed, metaphor became increasingly a manipulation of words, the clever exchange of one word for another, as it had been from the start in Aristotle. Metaphor was a natural by-product of language itself, the use of words to express meaning. For Cicero, as for Aristotle, the impulse for metaphor derived from deficiencies of vocabulary, from the need to say what denotative language did not already provide for. It was not in its origins a particularly "poetic" mode of expression; certainly, it was not devised to generate ambiguity. Quite the opposite, the orator/poet took recourse to metaphor in his pursuit of clarity. As time went by, therefore, and as the separation between *verba* and *res* became more distinct, metaphor became more exclusively a function of diction (λέξις) rather than of thought (διάνοια). More and more it appeared as an external ornament applied to the basic fabric of subject matter, a detachable part of the *verba* which self-consciously clothed the *res* of the orator/poet. In consequence, the pleasure that metaphors evoke resulted not only in their popularity, but also in their emasculation. As Cicero observes, "For just as clothes were first invented to protect us against cold and afterwards began to be used for the sake of ornament and dignity as well, so the metaphorical employment of words was begun because of poverty, but was brought into common use for the sake of

entertainment" (*De oratore*, III.155). Increasingly, metaphors lost their substance and gravity. For the author of the widely popular *Ad Herennium*, they are little more than decorative words (*exornationes verborum*; IV.xxxi).[32] Even when metaphor is reduced to ornament, however, it retains its strong visual quality. In the *Ad Herennium*, for example, several reasons are given for resorting to metaphors, the first of which is for the sake of placing something before our eyes (*rei ante oculos ponendae causae*; IV. xxxiv).

Of all the Latin treatises on rhetoric, none in the Renaissance had greater influence than Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, and here we find a fully articulated theory of metaphor. With strong echoes of Aristotle and of Cicero, Quintilian introduces the subject in a general discussion of single words: "Words are proper, newly-coined or metaphorical [*translata*]" (VIII.iii.24).[33] Although he deals with proper words and with newly coined words at this point, Quintilian passes by metaphors with no more than a curt nod (VIII. iii.37-38). Rather, he reserves the treatment of metaphor for a later chapter that sets forth the tropes and schemes of rhetoric, which Quintilian places among the "ornaments of oratory" (VIII.v. 35). By this time, the classification of tropes and schemes was a common practice among rhetoricians, but also the source of endless bickering. Therefore Quintilian approaches the subject with some wariness and with the hope of avoiding a debilitating wrangle. He begins briskly by defining his term: "By a *trope* is meant the artistic alteration of a word or phrase from its proper meaning to another" (VIII.vi.1); and he proceeds, neatly sidestepping the altercation, by "noting the fact that some *tropes* are employed to help out our meaning and others to adorn our style, that some arise from words used *properly* [*in propriis*] and others from words used *metaphorically* [*in tralatis*], and that the changes involved concern not merely individual words, but also our thoughts and the structure of our sentences." With these caveats and provisos, Quintilian then turns directly to deal with metaphor: "Let us begin, then, with the commonest and by far the most beautiful of *tropes*, namely, *metaphor*, the Greek term for our *translatio*" (VIII.vi.4). For Quintilian, as for most rhetoricians, metaphor holds a privileged position in the technical lexicon, although it is a trope "to adorn our style" to a greater extent than one "to help out our meaning"—that is, metaphor is more a function of λέξις than of διάνοια.

Nevertheless, there follows what can only be called an encomium of metaphor, where Quintilian triumphantly concludes:

"It adds to the copiousness of language by the interchange of words and by borrowing, and finally succeeds in accomplishing the supremely difficult task of providing a name for everything" (VIII. vi.4-5). A faith in man's ability to use language in the extension and expression of knowledge could not be more fulsomely stated. Next comes an Aristotelian definition of metaphor, but with an expansion of its uses to serve the needs of the rhetorician:

> A noun or a verb is transferred from the place to which it properly belongs to another where there is either no *literal* term or the *transferred* is better than the *literal*. We do this either because it is necessary or to make our meaning clearer or, as I have already said, to produce a decorative effect.

These theoretical statements about metaphor are then adumbrated by a number of specific examples.

Pursuing the doctrine of his art, Quintilian next turns to simile, which he defines, like Aristotle, in relation to metaphor: "On the whole *metaphor* is a shorter form of *simile*" (*similitudo*)—that is, a comparison, but without the particle ὡς ("like" or "as"). Contrary to Aristotle, however, Quintilian draws an important distinction between the two: "In the latter we compare some object to the thing which we wish to describe, whereas in the former this object is actually substituted for the thing" (VIII.vi.8). So the simile results in a comparison wherein each of the two items retains its autonomy, while the metaphor actually submerges the identity of the unknown in that of the known. The simile, "He fought like a lion," Quintilian observes, is a comparison of two distinct entities; the metaphor, "He is a lion," substitutes the object for the thing it purports to explain.

Perhaps most pertinent for us, Quintilian detaches the term ἐνέργεια from the concept of metaphor and gives it a more general application. While discussing various ways of imparting forcefulness to style, he cites ἐνέργεια as a suitable technique, and he notes that it "derives its name from action and finds its peculiar function in securing that nothing that we say is tame" (VIII.iii.89). Quintilian gives even greater exposure to a similar term, ἐνάργεια, which later theorists, and perhaps even Quintilian himself, confused with Aristotle's word ἐνέργεια. As early as Book IV, while talking about the most effective ways of presenting a statement of facts, Quintilian suggests that palpability (*evidentia*) is highly desirable; and as a gloss on his term *evidentia*, he adds, "which the

Greeks call ἐνάργεια" (IV.ii.63). Later in Book VI, while talking about the necessity of stirring the emotions of one's audience, Quintilian points to the efficacy of verbally induced images: "There are certain experiences which the Greeks call φαντασίας, and the Romans *visions* [*visiones*], whereby things absent [*imagines rerum absentium*] are presented to our imagination [*animus*] with such extreme vividness that they seem actually to be before our very eyes" (VI.ii.29). And he adds to enforce his point: "From such impressions arises that ἐνάργεια which Cicero calls *illumination* [*illustratio*] and *actuality* [*evidentia*], which makes us seem not so much to narrate as to exhibit the actual scene, while our emotions will be no less actively stirred than if we were present at the actual occurrence" (VI.ii.32). Finally, in a passage more closely aligned with the usual tropes and schemes of the rhetorician's art, Quintilian offers a summary statement describing the successful style:

> The ornate is something that goes beyond what is merely lucid and acceptable. It consists firstly in forming a clear conception of what we wish to say, secondly in giving this adequate expression, and thirdly in lending it additional brilliance, a process which may correctly be termed embellishment. Consequently we must place among ornaments that ἐνάργεια which I mentioned in the rules which I laid down for the statement of facts,[34] because vivid illustration [*evidentia*] or, as some prefer to call it, representation [*repraesentatio*], is something more than mere clearness, since the latter merely lets itself be seen, whereas the former thrusts itself upon our notice. It is a great gift to be able to set forth the facts on which we are speaking clearly and vividly. For oratory fails of its full effect, and does not assert itself as it should, if its appeal is merely to the hearing, and if the judge merely feels that the facts on which he has to give his decision are being narrated to him, and not displayed in their living truth to the eyes of the mind.
>
> (VIII.iii.61-62)

This seminal passage in Quintilian served later rhetoricians as a license, even a directive, to strive for *evidentia*. And not surprisingly, the palpability of ἐνάργεια merged with the forcefulness of ἐνέργεια, so that the two terms were used almost indiscriminately to denote a verbal image directed to the mind's eye and

striking the auditor/reader with the immediacy of actual experience.

Coming into the Renaissance, we find that Erasmus picks up Quintilian and paraphrases him rather closely:

> The fifth method of enrichment primarily involves ἐνάργεια, which is translated as *evidentia* "vividness." We employ this whenever, for the sake of amplifying or decorating our passage, or giving pleasure to our readers, instead of setting out the subject in bare simplicity, we fill in the colours and set it up like a picture to look at, so that we seem to have painted the scene rather than described it, and the reader seems to have seen rather than read. We shall be able to do this satisfactorily if we first mentally review the whole nature of the subject and everything connected with it, its very appearance in fact. Then we should give it substance with appropriate words and figures of speech, to make it as vivid and clear to the reader as possible.[35]

In addition to the continuity between Quintilian and Erasmus, between classical learning and Renaissance letters, what is most notable here is the adaptation of rhetorical doctrine to literary theory. While Quintilian proposes ἐνάργεια as a legitimate technique whereby an orator sways his auditor, Erasmus condones its use by the poet, who addresses a reader. Erasmus justifies the fictionalizing of the poet by ascribing to it the time-tested virtues of oratory. What is sauce for the spoken language is equally piquant for the written.

Furthermore, accepting literally the palpable effects of ἐνάργεια, Erasmus emphasizes the alignment of poetry with painting as a depictive art. As he says, "The reader seems to have seen rather than read." So Erasmus prepares for the definition of poetry as an image-making activity, as an imitation of the actions of men. Metaphor sloughs off any restriction as a mere manipulation of words, and expands into a full-scale fiction complete with characters, setting, and movement. Erasmus not only bestows respectability upon poetry by allying it with the parent *ars dicendi*, but he also legitimizes the imagination of the poet as it produces word-pictures of the most expansive sort. He proposes a use of language conducive to the neo-Aristotelians soon to arrive on the scene and paves the way for those full-bodied and ebullient poetic images that

we take to be the hallmark of Elizabethan letters—in verse, in narrative fiction, and not least of all, in drama. Sidney's definition of poetry as a "figuring forth to speake Metaphorically" is little more than a restatement of what he had found in Erasmus' *De copia*.

When we turn to the rhetorical handbooks published in England, we find the ancient theory of metaphor intact, if sometimes slightly garbled. The earliest in point of time is Richard Sherry's *Treatise of schemes & tropes* (1550), in which, true to his title, Sherry deals first with schemes. When he comes to tropes, though, he begins with "metaphora" because, as he says, "amonge all vertues of speche, this is the chyefe"—"none perswadeth more effecteouslye, none sheweth the thyng before oure eyes more evidently, none moveth more mightily the affeccions, none maketh the oracion more goodlye, pleasaunt, nor copious" (C4^{v}). Sherry defines metaphor traditionally as "*Translatio*, translacion, that is a worde translated from the thynge that it properlye signifieth, unto another whych may agre with it by a similitude" (C4^{v}). Cicero and Quintilian are present here, with Aristotle in the shadows and Erasmus in the foreground.

Thomas Wilson, perhaps Cicero's closest follower among the Elizabethan rhetoricians, similarly gives preeminence of place to metaphor and sees it as the generic trope. In his *Arte of rhetorique* (1553), he advises his student about ornamentation: "When wee have learned apte woordes and usuall Phrases to sette forthe oure meanynge, and can orderlye place them without offence to the eare, we maye boldelye commende and beautifie oure talke wyth divers goodlye coloures, and delitefull translations" (fol. 89^{v}-90). He goes on to explain how figurative language originated in the metaphoric impulse to supply a word where vocabulary was deficient, and gives several reasons for the use of metaphor:

> Not onely do menne use translation of wordes (called Tropes) for nede sake, when thei can not finde other: but also when they maye have mooste apte wordes at hande, yet wyll they of a purpose use translated wordes. And the reason is this. Menne counte it a poynte of witte to passe over suche woordes as are at hande, and to use suche as are farre fetcht and translated: or elles it is, because the hearer is led by cogitacion upon rehearsall of a Metaphore, & thinketh more by remembraunce of a word translated, then is there expreslye spoken: or elles because the whole matter semeth by a similitude to be opened: or last of al, bicause every

> translation is commenly, & for the most part referred to the senses of the body, & especially to the sense of seing, which is the sharpest and quickest above all other. (fol. 91)

Wilson's last point brings us around to a theory of metaphor as ἐνάργεια, an image presented to the mind's eye. His handling of the subject is eminently responsible and comprehensive.

Later English rhetoricians followed in Wilson's footsteps. Henry Peacham, for example, addressed his *Garden of eloquence* (1577) to John Aylmer, bishop of London, and in the dedicatory epistle, calling upon the rich Ciceronian-Biblical tradition that *oratio* is next to *ratio*, he claims that by language a man "may set forth any matter with a goodly perspecuitie, and paynt out any person, deede, or thing, so cunninglye with these couloures, that it shall seeme rather a lyvely Image paynted in tables, then a reporte expressed with the tongue" (A3). Peacham's display of the rhetorical figures is rigidly methodical, first dividing them into tropes and schemes, and beginning (of course) with "metaphora." He defines the term exactly as we might expect: "When a word is translated from the proper & natural signification, to another not proper, but yet nie and likely" (B2). Peacham's is by far the most expansive treatment of exactly how metaphors are devised, though it is merely the culmination of a long tradition. At the time of Sidney's writing *The defence of poesie*, then, "metaphor" was a prominent term in the critical lexicon with a rich history and wide applicability, and it was not likely to be used in a casual fashion.

It might be worthwhile to conjecture where Sidney may have come upon the theory of metaphor. Of course, he would have been subjected to Cicero and Quintilian from an early age in his education. Similarly, few schoolboys eluded Erasmus' *De copia*. It is likely also that he was familiar with English handbooks of rhetoric, most probably Wilson's *Arte of rhetorique* because of the numerous editions. But I suspect that Sidney's concept of metaphor owes a direct debt to Aristotle as well. The term appears in Sidney's definition of poetry as imitation, glossed by the Aristotelian term μίμησις so prominent in the *Poetics*; and later in the *Defence* when Sidney tosses off the term ἐνέργεια (117.9), again in the Greek, he uses the word as Aristotle used it in the *Rhetoric*. Moreover, from there Sidney proceeds directly to a discussion of "diction," another Aristotelian topos.[36]

Given the fact that "metaphor" is linked with μίμησις in Sidney's definition of poetry as an art of imitation, and therefore

that the term should be read in an Aristotelian context, we may justifiably ask, where did Sidney find this Aristotelian lore? Did he read the Aristotelian texts themselves, the *Poetics* and the *Rhetoric*? If so, in the original Greek? Or in Latin translation? Or perhaps in some vernacular version? Or did he gather his information from commentaries, or paraphrases, or incidental digests and casual references? On the dubious authority of John Hoskins, we hear that Sidney translated into English at least the first two books of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*,[37] but whether he worked from a Greek or Latin text we do not know. And unfortunately, there is no other evidence to suggest an answer to these questions.

What can be said with certainty, though, is that information about Aristotelian mimesis and metaphor was rife in a variety of forms, not the least obvious of which were the numerous volumes centered upon the *Poetics* that began in earnest with Francesco Robortello's *In librum Aristotelis de arte poetica, explicationes* (Florence, 1548). In this authoritative edition, which adopts a format of short passages of the Greek text followed by a Latin translation which is explicated by extensive commentary in Latin, the term μεταφορά of course appears in its proper place in the text under the discussion of λέξις (p. 246). Robortello renders it by the Latin word *translatio*, and he glosses Aristotle's definition of metaphor by quoting the definitions offered by Quintilian and Cicero. His commentary, in fact, consists largely of extracts from those sources, supplemented by Plutarch, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Vergil. Robortello dutifully repeats the four types of metaphor delineated by Aristotle, with appropriate commentary (for the most part, examples from Homer) for each. As to be expected, though, it is the fourth type, metaphor by analogy, that arrests Robortello's attention, and he offers several pages of commentary on it (pp. 248-51), including references to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. From here, Robortello gets into a discussion of the εἰκών or *imago*, as Quintilian treats the matter (V.xi.24) and as Aristotle interrelates metaphor and simile in the *Rhetoric* (1412b34-13a16), and soon he is talking about the *mentis oculi*. The Aristotelian theory of metaphor flared into popularity from Robortello's time forward, and was enthusiastically promulgated by a host of eager theorists.[38]

So the phrase "to speake Metaphorically" carries a heavy freight of meaning drawn from the rhetorical tradition, and we should not dissipate its weightiness by redistributing the phrases in Sidney's definition of poetry. If poetry is an art of imitation as Aristotle

terms it in the word μίμησις, and this is Sidney's major premise in *The defence of poesie*, we must recognize that the requisite imitation is best accomplished by the transference of meaning known since Aristotle as metaphor. Poetry is an imitation of the actions of men using the medium of language, and therefore having available the resources and techniques of the *ars dicendi*. By resorting to the highly touted device of ἐνέργεια / ἐνάργεια, the poet contrives metaphors which translate qualities and attributes so successfully that even inanimate entities are endowed with liveliness—witness the arch-poet, Homer himself. These metaphors literally "figure forth" the subject matter, producing a fiction of figures in a landscape moving through a series of visualized episodes which the reader perceives and processes in his mind's eye. The theory of metaphor provides this mechanism for the production of poetry as well as for its perception. In its most succinct definition, as Sidney formulates it, poetry is a figuring forth to speak metaphorically. Ponsonby's printer had it right.

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NOTES

1 *The defence of poesie* (London: William Ponsonby, 1595), C1^{v}.

2 Before Sidney, Roger Ascham is the only Elizabethan author to show an awareness of Aristotle's *Poetics*, and his understanding of the treatise is woefully misdirected; see Marvin T. Herrick, *The Poetics of Aristotle in England* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1930), pp. 15-18. To my knowledge, the first appearance of any form of the word μίμησις in an English work occurs in Richard Sherry, *A treatise of schemes & tropes* (London, 1550), E3. There the term appears as "mimisis" and identifies a trope, which is one of eight kinds of *prosopopoeia*, defined as "when we fayne person, communicacion, or affecte of a man or of a beaste, to a dumme thynge, or that hath no bodye, or to a dead man: as to the Harpies, furies, devils, slepe, hongar, envie, fame, vertue, justice, and suche lyke." In turn, *prosopopoeia* is one of two kinds of *prosopographia*, defined simply as "the fainyng of a person." *Mimisis* itself is defined as "a folowing eyther of the wordes or manoures whereby we expresse not onlye the wordes of the person, but also the gesture." Note that this context is not Aristotelian; rather *mimisis* here is taken, as Sherry confides, from Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, IX.ii.58. Cf. also Henry Peacham, *The garden of eloquence* (London, 1577), 04.

3 In a recent issue of the *Sidney Newsletter*, Jan van Dorsten challenges A. Leigh DeNeef for his explication of this passage; see "How Not To Open the Sidneian Text," *SNew*, 2, No. 2 (1981), 4-7. DeNeef's views in "Opening and Closing the Sidnejan Text," *SNew*, 2, No. 1 (1981), 3-6, draw upon portions of his longer article, "Rereading Sidney's *Apology*," *JMRS*, 10 (1980), 155-91. Van Dorsten rightly notes that DeNeef bases his argument (in small part) on my "unfortunate suggestions" in *Touches of Sweet Harmony: Pythagorean Cosmology and Renaissance Poetics* (San Marino, Cal.: Huntington Library, 1974), p. 323, n. 45. Andrew D. Weiner also follows my suggestions; see *Sir Philip Sidney and the Poetics of Protestantism: A Study of Contexts* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1978), p. 200, n. 107. For an earlier view on van Dorsten's side, see Geoffrey

Shepherd, ed., *An Apology for Poetry or The Defence of Poesy* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1965), p. 51.

4 *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), pp. 65-67. Cf. Albert Feuillerat, ed., *The Complete Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, 2nd ed., 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1962), III, vi; W. H. Bond, "The Bibliographical Jungle," *TLS*, September 23, 1949, p. 624; and Lewis Soens, ed., *Sir Philip Sidney's Defense of Poesy* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1970), pp. xxxvii-xlii.

5 Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apologie for Poetrie*, ed. Edward Arber (English Reprints, London: A. Murray, 1868).

6 *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, ed. G. Gregory Smith, 2 vols. (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1904), I, 148-207.

7 *English Literary Criticism: The Renaissance*, ed. O. B. Hardison, Jr. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1963), pp. 98-146.

8 Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry or The Defence of Poesy*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (London: Thomas Nelson, 1965).

9 Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. Forrest G. Robinson (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970).

10 Ewald Flügel, ed., *Sir Philip Sidney's Astrophel and Stella und Defence of Poesie* (Halle, 1889).

11 Albert S. Cook prepared a modern-spelling edition based upon Arber's edition of the Olney text and Flügel's edition of the Ponsonby text, but without actually having seen either of the original 1595 texts. He provided minimal variants between the Arber and the Flügel editions: Sidney, *The Defense of Poesy*, ed. Cook (Boston: Ginn, 1890), pp. 134-39.

12 *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* (London: Ponsonby, 1598); STC 22541. Ponsonby was of sufficient interest to the family that when the Edinburgh edition of the *Arcadia* was piratically published in 1599 (STC 22542), Rowland Whyte, the diligent servant of Sir Robert Sidney at court, wrote to him *inter alia*: "The Arcadia is newly printed in Scotland; which will make them cheap, but is hurtful to Pownsonby, who held them at a high rate" (Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord De L'Isle & Dudley Preserved at Penshurst Place*, 6 vols. [London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1934], II, 387).

13 For a description of this ms., see Peter Beal, comp., *Index of English Literary Manuscripts: Volume I, 1450-1625* (London: Mansell, 1980), p. 484, listed under "SiP 175."

14 For a description of this ms., see *ibid.*, listed under "SiP 176."

15 In "How Not To Open the Sidneian Text," perhaps out of a wish to simplify, van Dorsten shifts his ground and claims that "unless the other three texts unanimously contradict it, therefore, the Penshurst MS. must be used as a copy text" (p. 5). The question of how van Dorsten intermingled Pe and P, though, is only incidental to my concerns here.

16 I have used the Noel Douglas replica of the British Library copy prepared in 1928, corroborated by a photostat (in the Huntington Library) of the W. A. White copy.

17 Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa, *Of the vanitie and uncertaintie of artes and sciences*, tr. James Sanford (London, 1569), p. 35.

18 Sidney found both the Horatian and the Plutarchan phrases juxtaposed in Henri Estienne's preface to *Poetae graeci principes heroici carmines, & alii nonnulli* (Geneva, 1566), p. 10. But they were to be found everywhere.

19 I have not examined the original manuscript, but have relied upon a very clear photostat prepared by the Public Record Office and kindly lent me by William A. Ringler, Jr. I must note (without explanation) that my transcription of this passage differs in several details from that made by van Dorsten and reproduced in "How Not To Open the Sidneian Text," p. 5.

20 *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* (London: Ponsonby, 1598), p. 495; Huntington 69477. Later editions of this folio text are derivative and have no textual authority. For the sake of thoroughness, however, I list the successive variants. In the second London edition of Sidney's collected works, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* (London: for Matthew Lownes, 1605; Huntington 69476), the Ponsonby punctuation is preserved: ". . . or figuring forth to speake metaphorically. A speaking *Picture*, with this end, to teach and delight" (p. 495). In the London edition of 1613, however, the punctuation becomes equivocal: ". . . or figuring forth, to speake metaphorically, A speaking *Picture*, with this end, to teach and delight" (*The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* [London: Henry Lownes for Matthew Lownes, 1613], p. 495; Huntington 69479). The London edition of 1623 continues the equivocation and introduces a colon after *figuring forth*: ". . . or figuring forth: to speake metaphorically, A speaking *Picture*, with this end, to teach and delight" (*The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia* [London: Henry Lownes for Matthew Lownes, 1623], p. 507; Huntington 22493). Later editions, beginning in 1627, follow the punctuation of that in 1623.

21 "How Not To Open the Sidneian Text," p. 6.

22 On the page where our passage occurs, there are 4 colons. On the preceding page, there are 8 colons; and on the succeeding page, 8, making a total of 20 for the three pages. In the same portion of the 1595 Ponsonby quarto, there are only 13 colons. In the same portion of the Penshurst manuscript, there are only 5 colons.

23 For his reasoning, see "How Not To Open the Sidneian Text," pp. 5-6.

24 "Opening and Closing the Sidneian Text," pp. 4-5.

25 Line references are made to Aristotle, *Poetics*, ed. D. W. Lucas (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968). Quotations from Aristotle's *Poetics* appear in English translation taken from *Aristotle's Poetics: A Translation and Commentary for Students of Literature*, tr. Leon Golden and comm. O. B. Hardison, Jr. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968).

26 For analysis of another example of a proportional metaphor employing negation, see Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1408a6-9.

27 Line references are made to Aristotle, *The "Art" of Rhetoric*, tr. John H. Freese (London: Heinemann, 1947). Quotations from Aristotle's *Rhetoric* appear in English translation taken from this volume.

28 Sidney regularly thinks of poetry as a "figuring forth." In addition to the passage under discussion, see *Defence*, 86.7-8, and 104.16. In 103.12, "figuratively written" also should be read in this sense—"written so as to figure forth."

29 For the early history of ἐικών as a term in literary theory, see Marsh H. McCall, Jr., *Ancient Rhetorical Theories of Simile and Comparison* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1969), pp. 8-53. By Aristotle's time, the term ἐικών was well established, while the term μεταφορά was a novelty. What Aristotle does here is to substantiate his innovative discussion of *metaphor* by linking it with the familiar *icon*.

30 For the same point, see *Rhetoric*, 1412b34-13a16.

31 Book and section references are made to Cicero, *De oratore*, tr. E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham, 2 vols. (London: Heinemann, 1948). Quotations from Cicero's *De oratore* appear in English translation taken from this volume.

32 Book and section references are made to [Cicero], *Ad C. Herennium: De oratore dicendi*, tr. Harry Caplan (London: Heinemann, 1954).

33 Book, chapter, and section references are made to *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*, tr. H. E. Butler, 4 vols. (London: Heinemann, 1920). Quotations from Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* appear in English translation taken from this volume.

34 I.e., IV.ii.63, quoted above.

35 *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style*, tr. Betty I. Knott, in *Collected Works of Erasmus*, ed. Craig R. Thompson, 24 vols. (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1978), XXIV, 577.

36 The Aristotelian context no doubt explains another curious word in this passage and endows it with more precise meaning. After complaining that the effete sonneteers in their feigned passion lack "that same forcibleness or *energeia* (as the Greeks call it) of the writer," Sidney concludes: "But let this be a sufficient though short note, that we miss the right use of the material point of poesy" (117.9-11). It is the word "material" that calls for explication, and I suggest that it be read literally as "composed of matter." The term "matter" (ὕλη) is prominent in Aristotle's vocabulary, and Julius Caesar Scaliger picks it up to provide the title for his second book in the *Poetice*: "Hyle," which he glosses with a subtitle, *materia poeseos (Poetices libri septem* [Lyons, 1561], p. 55). So Sidney's "material point of poesy" is the physical presence produced by the poet's *energeia*.

37 John Hoskins, *Directions for Speech and Style* (c.1599), ed. Hoyt H. Hudson (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1935), p. 41.

38 For a few prominent examples, see Vincenzo Maggi and Bartolomeo Lombardi, *In Aristotelis librum de poetica communes explanationes* (Venice, 1550), pp. 226 ff.; Pietro Vettori, *Commentarii, in primum librum Aristotelis de arte poetarum* (Florence, 1560), pp. 209 ff.; Scaliger, *Poetice*, pp. 116, 127-28; and Giovanni Antonio Viperano, *De poetica libri tres* (Antwerp, 1579), pp. 57-58. See also Galvano delle Volpe, *Poetica del Cinquecento* (Bari: Laterza, 1954), esp. pp. 128-40.