

touch things at the size they are, and contiguity, like touch, implies an exact, concave–convex fit between cause and trace. We may, however, *see* the same thing *as* the same thing over a wide range of actual sizes, just as we are able to recognize someone close at hand or at a distance. To put the matter in the most general terms, *all images are sight-like in being abstracted from actual size*, and this abstraction, this ‘drawing from’, is always the movement as an image into one or another space of human use. And, as we shall see, the abstraction of images provides the basis for the characterization of sight itself, as well as imagination and thought, as ‘places’ for images.

4.5 REAL METAPHOR

Our word ‘metaphor’ is from the Greek *metapherein*, to transfer, to carry over or across. When we use language metaphorically we put one word ‘in place of another’ on the basis of some similarity between the things the words signify. Metaphors are not simply equivalent to what they replace, however, and the basis for comparison must be established by some embracing context. If I refer to ‘the lion Alexander’, or say ‘Alexander is a lion’, I might be taken to mean that there is a lion named ‘Alexander’. If I say ‘Alexander of Macedon is a lion’, then it becomes clear that I am comparing a person, a ruler, to something he is not, namely a lion. Since Alexander is *not* a lion, I must mean that he is like a lion in some way; but then I might mean that Alexander is brave and strong like a lion, or that he is lazy or rapacious, or that he has any number of other qualities that lions might be observed to have. If I say ‘Alexander of Macedon is a lion in battle’, then it becomes clearer that I mean he is brave and strong. Contexts are not simply verbal, of course. If I had lived in the ancient Near East, I might know that the lion is a royal animal, that rulers had always compared themselves to lions, and that to call Alexander a lion was to call him kingly and to place him in the company of kings.

In language, metaphor usually consists of the interchange of two substantives, which makes metaphor rich to the point of paradox and beyond; it provides the basis for any number of comparisons not specified by context at the same time that these comparisons are implicit in the metaphor itself. There is an inherent inequality between the possible characteristics of things and the characteristics specified by context, and some poetry is distinguished by the high degree of elaboration and resonance among the characteristics of metaphors.

In this section, I will focus on what might be called the metaphor underlying metaphor, corresponding to the first exchange of substantives. When substantives – person, lion – are exchanged in speech, it is as if, before we are aware of the limits imposed by context, we actually put a lion in the place of a person. When we make what I shall call a *real metaphor* we actually *do* put something at hand in place of something else, something else which is absent, or not actually or practically present, that is, not present in a way that allows it to be treated or addressed. Real metaphor thus makes the absent present by the transfer of what is already at hand. A stone, to take a simple hypothetical example, ‘takes the place’, or is ‘put in the place’, of a dead chieftain. *Real metaphor is the most basic means by which substitution is effected*, issuing directly from the most basic conditions of human spatiality, both presence and absence. The same people or