

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

اللغة التصويرية

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Shih-Wei Hsu

Bildliche Ausdrücke

Langage figuré

Figurative language makes use of comparative expressions to describe senses whose meaning is not directly expressed and to make an abstract idea concrete. Figurative phrases or terms can build imageries to strengthen an audience's understanding. Both the terms "figure of thought" and "figure of speech" are applied commonly today in our everyday language. Figurative language was also used abundantly in Egyptian, appearing in almost all text genres with minor differences in quantity. Diverse research approaches to figurative language have been developed during the last couple of decades in Egyptology, notably from linguistic and textual perspectives.

تتكون اللغة التصويرية من تعبيرات تجعل الفكرة المجردة ملموسة. يمكن للغة التصويرية أن تخلق صورًا لتعزيز إدراك وفهم القارئ. يتم تطبيق كل من مصطلحي «شكل الفكر» و «شكل الكلام» بشكل شائع اليوم في لغتنا اليومية. كما تم استخدام اللغة التصويرية بكثرة في اللغة المصرية القديمة، حيث ظهرت في جميع أنواع النصوص تقريبًا مع اختلافات طفيفة في الكمية. تم تطوير مناهج بحثية متنوعة للغة التصويرية خلال العقدين الماضيين في علم المصريات، ولا سيما من المنظورات اللغوية والنصية.

Figurative language is a traditional rhetorical style referring to a group of diverse tropes and uses of words describing pictorial or graphic objects in a non-literal way (Dancygier and Sweetser 2014; Colston 2015). Figurative language acts in contrast to non-figurative language, just as a metaphorical word acts contrastively when used together with non-metaphorical words (Ricœur 2003: 161-162). Genette (1966: 205-221) reports that the contrast between figurative and non-figurative language is that of a real language to a virtual one, and that the content depends wholly on the speaker's and listener's own perceptions. In general, when necessary, all kinds of languages can be used in a figurative sense—unsurprisingly, thus could Egyptian.

Researching Figurative Language in General

Already in the Classical Period, sophists such as Gorgias of Leontinoi (483 – 375 BCE) and Protagoras of Abdera (490 – 420 BCE), philosophers such as Plato (c. 428 – 348 BCE) and Aristotle (384 – 322 BCE) (Schirren 2008), and the rhetorician Quintilian (35 – 100 CE) (Andersen 2008: 44-49) debated the art of rhetoric, which encompasses all kinds of stylistic techniques of dialectic and persuasion for speakers, be they politicians, debaters, or orators. Quintilian thus offered a detailed investigation of rhetoric in his *Institutes of Oratory* (translated by Butler 1959). In Books VIII and IX, he treated diverse tropes such as metaphor, metonymy, antonomasia, metalepsis, synecdoche, catachresis, allegory, hyperbole, and comparison. He also explained that “figures and tropes are often combined in the expression of the same thought, since

figures are introduced just as much by the metaphorical as by the literal use of words” (Book IX, I.9; translated by Butler 1959: 353). The modern-day classes of figurative language are figurative thought or tropes; on the other hand, figures of speech are represented by “rhetorical figures” or “schemes” (Abrams and Harpham 2012: 130). The distinction between these is not obvious, because they often overlap and are easily confused. It is simplistic to say that figurative thought pertains to ideas, its words displaying their exact meaning, while figures of speech relate to verbal expression, their meaning conveyed not by the primary definition of their words but by their order or syntactical pattern (e.g., metaphor and simile). The aim of using figurative language is mainly to compare two dissimilar objects or ideas in order to improve the understanding of both. Additionally, figurative language can describe an abstract idea and reveal or elicit an emotion. In the course of speech, its use can easily influence the audience and help them create a visual image of the content. Figurative language has multiple forms, such as simile, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, personification, onomatopoeia, oxymoron, hyperbole, litotes, idiom, alliteration, allusion, and paradox. Aristotle described in his *Rhetoric* (Book III, 4; translated by Roberts 2008: 182) that “the simile also is a metaphor; the difference is but slight. When the poet says of Achilles that he ‘leapt on the foe as a lion,’ this is a simile; when he says of him ‘the lion leapt,’ it is a metaphor—here, since both are courageous, he has transferred to Achilles the name of ‘lion.’” Quintilian (Book VIII, VI.8; translated by Butler 1959: 305) explained that “*In totum autem metaphora brevior est similitudo*” (“on the whole metaphor is a shorter form of simile”)—that is, the metaphor is regarded as an elliptical simile, because simile is “the canonical form of which metaphor would be the abbreviation” (Ricœur 2003: 293). “To be like/as” functions as a metaphorical mode of the copula itself. This metaphor is also called a be-form metaphor, “A is/are B,” and is also viewed as a nominal or copula metaphor in the literature (Barnden 2012: 266).

In general, a metaphor could be paraphrased as a simile, although the two are not treated as

equivalent assertions, even if, at first sight, a metaphor and its corresponding simile have the same meaning (Glucksberg and Haught 2006: 361). Furthermore, metaphors tend to express the object more vividly, i.e., “more metaphorically,” while similes tend to bring forth two things in an equal degree (ibid.: 364). Therefore, instead of “elliptical simile,” Glucksberg applies the term “implicit simile,” which can be treated as “any ordinary comparison statement” (Glucksberg 2001: 29). According to Barnden (2012: 275) “the metaphor-as-elliptical-simile shorthand is a long way from being an innocent abbreviation.”

Researching Figurative Language in Egyptology

Grapow (1920, 1924) was the first scholar to comprehensively research figurative language in Egyptian texts. Figurative language can be either a simile or a metaphor; it mainly explains and clarifies unclear things, and makes unknown relationships known. According to Grapow (1924: 8), the origin of figurative language lies in the similarity of an object—such as its appearance, color, feature, or function—to another object. Additionally, Grapow provided a general overview of Egyptian simile, allegory, and parable, as well as a detailed catalog of so-called *tertium comparationis* (lit. “the third part of the comparison,” discussed further below), whose contents derive from originally different categories such as nature, landscape, animals, plants, the human body, the gods, etc. (Grapow 1924: 11-14). In the *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* (1975: columns 805-806), Brunner gave a definition of figurative language as follows (present author’s translation): “Language often does not use words for their original meaning but for comparing to something, whether it is a concrete or an abstract noun, whether it refers to a characteristic or an occurrence. We could call these inappropriately used words ‘figurative language.’” Brunner (1975: column 807) also indicated that figurative language often consists of only a single word, either a noun or a verb, and seldom an adjective. Other scholars have discussed further topics related to figurative language, such as “allegory, i.e., parable” by Osing (1977), and “stylistics” and

“simile” by Guglielmi (1986 a and b; 1996). Di Biase-Dyson (2017) provides an update of metaphor studies in Egyptology.

With interest in figurative language steadily increasing, research has been conducted on the topic from a variety of perspectives, such as iconography and semiotics by Goldwasser (1992, 2002, 2006, 2009), rhetorical stylistics by Hintze (1950 – 1952) and Fecht (1963, 1964, 1965, 1970), and its usages in the various texts by Grapow (1952), Firchow (1953), Lepper (2008), Parkinson (1992, 2006), Mathieu (1996), and Landgráfová (2008). A current detailed study of figurative language is found in Hsu (2017b), surveying figurative language in diverse text genres, particularly its use, purpose, and function in royal inscriptions.

Opening new perspectives, Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) “conceptual metaphor theory” considered metaphor to be pervasive in our everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. This idea was also adopted by Egyptology. Nyord (2012, 2015) gave an overview of cognitive linguistics as applied to Egyptian and discussed its role in written “classifiers,” lexical semantics, grammar, and conceptual patterns. Approaches to concepts, methods, structures, and results of conceptual metaphor theory in general have concerned: the heart as emotional metaphor (Toro Rueda 2003); the conceptual structure of the heart (Nyord 2009a); body parts as metonyms (Werning 2014); conceptualizations of the body (Nyord 2009b); conceptualizations of diverse emotions (Köhler 2011, 2012, 2016; Eicke 2021); conceptualized temperature (Nyord 2017; Di Biase-Dyson 2018); lexeme of weariness and sleep (Gerhards 2021); the perception verb *dp* (Steinbach 2015); spatio-temporal expressions (Di Biase-Dyson 2012; Hsu 2017a); metaphors of domination (Moers 2004; David 2011); and the ancient Egyptian idea of “death” (Hsu 2014a, 2021b; Apostel 2020 – 2021; Vernus 2020).

Researching Simile and Metaphor in Egyptology

In Egyptology, Grapow (1924: 3) also focused mostly on the rhetorical forms of simile and metaphor, two main components of figurative language. A simile (*similitudo*, *comparatio*) is, as

outlined above, a comparison of two things, indicated by a “comparison marker,” such as “like,” “as,” “as if,” “as though,” and “more...than,” or by a verb indicating their similarity, such as “A is like B,” “A is more than B,” or “A resembles B.” In Middle Egyptian, the preposition *mj* is used for the comparative, and *r* for the superlative, e.g., *jst hm=f hr hr=sn mj mj* “then his majesty is angry with them like a lion” (Great Libyan War Inscription of Merenptah; Kitchen 1982: 4:4); *jw dšbw jm=f hn^c jšrrt wr n=f jrp r mw* “figs (were) in it (the good land) and grapes, and more wine than water” (Sinuhe: Papyrus Berlin P 3022 B 81-82; Koch 1990: 41; Simpson ed. 2003: 58). A metaphor (Greek *μεταφορά*: *metaphorá*; Latin: *translatio*) is a figure of speech. It contains a word whose intended meaning differs from that of its original definition. In *mšj knđ swšh hps.wj* “the angry lion who extends both strong arms” (First Libyan War Inscription of Ramesses III; Kitchen 1983: 15:9-10), the lion here no longer represents the true animal, but is, rather, a synonym for the king.

Grapow (1924: 6-7) used the example *sw mj kš hr^c hr bšwj jrt=f hr ‘b.wj=f grg hr r thm ph-s(w) m dp=f* “he is like a bull, who stands on the battle field, his eyes on his horns, ready and prepared to penetrate his attackers with his head” (First Libyan War Inscription of Ramesses III; Kitchen 1983: 25:13) to explain the differences between simile and metaphorical identification. The simile in this example is simply *sw mj kš* “he is like a bull”; the metaphorical identification is “the king = the bull,” i.e., it expresses that the king has bull-like strength. The bare metaphor is shown by the example *kš knj nht-^c hn s(w) hr ‘b.wj=f nhnh dww m-sš tkk sw* “the brave bull, with strong arms, who relies upon his horns, attacks the mountains in pursuit of him who assails him” (Second Libyan War Inscription of Ramesses III; Kitchen 1983: 49:4-5); here, the bull totally replaces the king. Guglielmi (1986a: 29-30; 1996: 484) divides metaphors into “near metaphor” (*mdw jšw* “staff of the elder” and *jt nmhw* “father of the orphan”) and “far metaphor” (*hn bnj n mrwt* “a sweet, lovely plant” and *ht šps* “a splendid wood [made by a god]”). These metaphors exist in

morphosyntactic forms, for instance in nominal (*kꜣ nḥt nb tꜣ.wj* “strong bull, Lord of the Two Lands” [First Libyan War Inscription of Ramesses III; Kitchen 1983: 15:9]), or in verbal syntax (*tꜣ tꜣ.wj* “the one who ties the Two Lands” [Stela of Ahmose; Sethe ed. 1927: 14:6]), or built with the predicative *m* (*jw=k m ꜣpdw dꜣdꜣ* “You are [as] the copulating birds” [pTurin A verso 1,10; Tacke 2001: 121]). Additionally, Guglielmi (1986a: 29) holds that simile, allegory, and parable are synonyms in some regard, constructed by a verb, adverb, or preposition, but that only the parable is a detailed implemented simile.

In addition, both simile and metaphor need “tenor” and “vehicle” to build a metaphorical mode. These terms were introduced by Richards (1965: 96): tenor indicates the subject, and vehicle, the metaphorical term. Their relation can be simply explained as: “the original idea” and “the borrowed one”; “what is really being said or thought of” and “what it is compared to”; “the underlying idea” and “the imagined nature”; and “the principal subject” and “what it resembles.” In the simile “the king is like a bull,” or in the metaphor “the king is a bull,” the king is the “tenor” and the bull, the “vehicle.” However, in a metaphor the tenor can sometimes be omitted: for example, “bull” may totally replace the term “king.” Significantly, the *tertium comparationis*, as Grapow (1924: 10-14) offered, is the third part of a comparison (*Vergleichsmittel*), “with reference to which two things that are compared agree with each other” (Zhu 2017: 44). This “third thing” often indicates the features or quality of a compared object. A simile without an explicative *tertium comparationis* is described as “non-motivated,” e.g., “my love is like a flame,” because its motif is not clear; in contrast, “my love burns like a flame” has a clear motif of “heat” (Genette 1996: 239). However, even though the tenor and the vehicle are distinct entities, sharing no obvious resemblance, the features of “flame” can still be assumed. After all, the *tertium comparationis* connects tenor and vehicle, the vehicle constituting an object depending on the purpose required. For instance, if we want to describe a color, we could compare “black” to “crow,” “white” to “swan,” “red” to “blood,”

“blue” to “sky,” etc. We can also create descriptions by employing the quality of an animal, e.g., “cunning” for “wolf,” “dangerous” for “crocodile,” “strong and wild” for “lion,” “dirty” for “pig,” etc. In the example “the king is a bull,” the *tertium comparationis* could represent something strong, powerful, irritable, combative, dangerous, and frightening. Thus Grapow (1924) compiled all kinds of images into diverse categories (nature, plants, animals, parts of the human body, etc.) and gave corresponding examples. In general, figurative language could be employed as an embellishment of speech, exaggeration, proverbial rhetoric, or euphemism (Grapow 1924: 25). The exact purpose of figurative language depended on the text genre and content.

The Use of Figurative Language in Egyptian Texts

Figurative language pervades Egyptian texts but its presence varies according to period and text type. In the Old Kingdom, figurative language mostly appears in the Pyramid Texts and in *Reden und Rufe*, i.e., workers’ dialogues, and less often in the biographies. Egyptians expressed figuratively all the symbols, notions, ideas, and images of religious ritual: “that which in everyday and common life context would form a metaphor in the religious text or even more in the religious realities is a fact” (Popielska-Grzybowska 2009: 160). The lively dialogues of workers (Motte 2017) often contain insults and curses, with many words metaphorized from the scatological and the sexual spheres in order to offend, e.g., *ꜣt* “asshole” (*WB I*: 209:4), *ḥꜣ* “excrement” (*WB III*: 164:4-10), and *nkꜣ* “fornicator” (*WB II*: 345:11). The topic of “charity” in the biographies (Jansen-Winkel 2004: 67) spans all Egyptian periods. The phrase *rd.n-j t n ḥqr mw n jb ḥbs n ḥꜣy mrḥt n ḥꜣꜣ* “I gave bread to the hungry one, water to the thirsty one, clothes to the naked one, and unguent to the unanointed one” (Kloth 2002: 77-78) is itself metaphorical, indicating “I am the sustenance of/provider for the needy” (Grapow 1924: 142-143, present author’s translation).

The First Intermediate Period Autobiography of Ankhtifi (Vandier 1950; Schenkel 1965: 45-57; Breyer 2005) includes numerous rhetorical devices to demonstrate Ankhtifi's prestige and greatness, such as *jw jr.n(=j) ḏw n Ḥf3.t šw.t qb.t n Ḥr-Mrj* "(I) acted as a mountain for Mo'alla and as a cool shade for Her-mer" (IV 25-26), and *jnk nht nt snḏw mnnw n bh3w w3j* "I am the refuge of those who have fear and the fortress for fugitives who are far away" (VI.β.1), among others.

Accompanied by sophisticated Middle Egyptian rhetoric, stylistic devices such as amphiboly, antithesis, alliteration, ellipsis, and *parallelismus membrorum* (Fecht 1970: 37-51) increasingly enriched Middle Egyptian literary texts consisting of instructions, narratives, dialogues, tales, laments, etc. These *belles lettres* (*mdt nfrt*) employ a multitude of similes and metaphors to make the texts vivid. Thus, figurative language is used to emphasize the importance of oratory in wisdom literature: the king is advised to practice his speech, because *qn mdwt r ḥ3 nb* "words are stronger than any battle" (Instruction for Merikara; pPetersburg 1116A 32; Quack 1992: 24-25). In the Instruction of Ptahhotep (Žába 1956; Junge 2003), with its broad variety of topics, figurative language is notably evident in special themes such as "good speech" and "disassociation from married women," making these maxims easily comprehensible. Negative figurative expressions are largely used to illustrate a range of professions in the Satire of the Trades/Teaching of Kheti (Jäger 2004), while in comparison the advantages of the profession of "the scribe" are placed in a positive light. Both the Loyalist Instruction (Posener 1976; Vernus 2001: 205-216) and the Story of Sinuhe (Koch 1990; Simpson 2003: 54-66) contain varied metaphors for praising the king. Moreover, some terms have a special metaphorical meaning in their respective contexts, such as *ḥmw* "steering oar," *mḥ3t* "balance," *jb/ḥ3tj* "heart," *ns* "tongue" (Hermann 1954: 106-115), *mw* "water" (Moers 2001: 192-201), and *m3ḥ* "crocodile" (ibid.: 202-211). In accordance with his experiences, the protagonist uses special images to impress the readership with his story: in the Shipwrecked Sailor, the sailor embraced his *šwt*

"shadow" while sleeping (pPetersburg 1115 44; Blackman 1972: 42; Simpson 2004: 48) and took his *jb* "heart" as a companion because he was alone (pPetersburg 1115 42; Blackman 1972: 42; Simpson ed. 2003: 48); Sinuhe has learned of the *dpt mwt* "taste of death" from the dryness of his throat (pBerlin P 3022 23; Koch 1990: 20; Simpson ed. 2003: 56), but he could also be ready to fight like a *k3* "bull" (pBerlin P 3022 118; Koch 1990: 48; Simpson ed. 2003: 59). The justice and virtue of the Chief Steward Rensi, the son of Meru, are metaphorically illustrated in the petitions of the Tale of the Eloquent Peasant (pBerlin 3023 [B1] 273-278; Parkinson 1991: 34; 2012: 220-223). Additionally, the pessimistic texts use numerous images for describing the decline of kingship, the weakness of the central government, crop failures and famine, the modification of social structure, cruelty, and chaos throughout the land (Hsu 2021a: 59-67). In these and other texts, the syntactic pattern *sonst-jetzt* (Schenkel 1984) expresses the contrast between an idealized, normative past and an observed, problematic present, often with rich figurative language.

Other Middle Kingdom text types, such as hymns and biographies, similarly feature the increased use of figurative language. Personal names often allude to the names of deities, animals, plants, and inanimate objects (Ranke 1935, 1952, 1977; Vittmann 2013), perhaps due to the name-holder's desire either to receive the protection of a god or to adopt the quality of an animal, plant, or object.

In the New Kingdom, the development of rhetoric stylistics reached its peak. Literary texts such as instructions, love poetry, the Late-Egyptian miscellanies, and the satirical letter on Papyrus Anastasi I abound in figurative language. In the instructions, a speech may be dangerous like *ḏ* "storm" (Teaching of Amenemope: pBM EA 10474 3,15; Laisney 2007: 46) and *t3w* "wind" (Teaching of Amenemope: pBM EA 10474 12,1-2; Laisney 2007: 119-120). The theme of life is often metaphorized with river traffic in the instructions: ship = person and steering = life path (Hermann 1954: 106). The conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A PATH has recently been the

subject of innovative discussion (Di Biase-Dyson 2016). Metaphors in love poetry have double meanings in order to euphemize desire and sexual intercourse, as well as to describe the five senses, beauty, emotions, and the relationship between lovers (Mathieu 1996; Landgráfová 2008; Hsu 2014b). In the Late-Egyptian miscellanies, the student is represented as a variety of animals—“donkey” (pSaillier I recto 3,9; 7,11; Caminos 1954: 304, 320), *smn* “Nile goose” (pLansing recto 3.5; Tacke 2001: 90), or *šsʒw* “bubalis antelope” (pAnastasi IV recto 2,5; Tacke 2001: 54) if he is unwilling to learn, or flees from lessons. In contrast, the teacher is marvelously metaphorized in a praise (pLansing verso 13a,8-15,5; Tacke 2001: 116-120). Similarly, in the Satire of the Trades/Teaching of Kheti, many professions are illustrated with negative imagery, while it is stressed that “to be a scribe” is the best career. Furthermore, the satirical letter on Papyrus Anastasi I is virtually a form of personal propaganda displaying the scribe Hori’s great knowledge by associating him with numerous positive images; thus, he is a *hbs* “light” or a *dnjt* “dam,” and he can write faster than a *šsr* “arrow” (pAnastasi I 1, 3-6; Fischer-Elfert 1986: 17). Instances of figurative language in medical texts are numerous in order that the illnesses or symptoms be clearly described to aid in their recognition: e.g., illness of the heart employs the likeness of the weather, the heart being described as *kk* “dark” (pEbers 102,10; von Deines, Grapow, and Westendorf 1958: 3), *gp* “clouded” (pEbers 102,2; von Deines, Grapow, and Westendorf 1958: 3), and *hbs* “covered” (pEbers 102,3; von Deines, Grapow, and Westendorf 1958: 3). Names of plants, animals, and body parts are used for specialized medical terms.

Of all these text genres, royal inscriptions, particularly those of the Ramesside Period, are the most adorned with figurative language (Hsu 2017b). As the most important person in ancient Egypt, the king was the subject of an enormous number of similes and metaphors primarily portraying his characteristics of strength, power, might, courage, and bravery, and his ability to fight and protect his people and country. The Beth-Shan Stela of Ramesses II offers a very good example:

hy n hʒrt
nd.tj hr nḥmw
wšb [pw] n ngʒw
mnjw qnj m sʹnh tmww
sbtj pw mnḥ n Kmt
jkm n ḥḥ mkj ʹšʒ
nḥm.n=f Kmt ḥwtf.tj wʒj r ʹʒmw r dr=s
dj=f wnn tʒw nbw hr rd.wj=f
nswt-bjt Wsr-mʒʹt-Rʹ stp.n-Rʹ zʒ Rʹ
Rʹ-msj-sw Mrj-Jmn
tʒj pd.t=f hr htr
ḥfʹ=f šsr=f jw=f mj sbʒ ššd m hr-jb ʹšʒt m nḥt
ʹwn sqry nw pḥw tʒ
shr.n=f wrw=sn ḥnʹ mšʹ=w
jw ḥm=f m-sʒ=sn
mj kʒ Nbwtj mj hjk m ht pt n ʒpdw
mj mʒj hʒʒ m jhjj n ʹwt
mj ht mh.n=s m qmʒw nḥʒw
dʹ khʒ m-sʒ=sn hr spd nbj
jw=w mj šwt ʒpdw r-hʒt tʒw

*A husband for the widow,
a protector for the orphan,
a defender for the needy,
valiant herdsman in sustaining mankind.
An effective rampart is he for Egypt,
a shield for millions and protector of multitudes.
He rescued Egypt when (it was) plundered,
moving against the Asiatics to subdue them;
he sets all lands beneath his feet,
the King of Southern and Northern Egypt, Usimara
Setepenra, Son of Ra, Ramesses II Meriamun,
who takes up his bow on the chariot,
and seizes his arrow, being like a shooting star amidst
the multitude in victory, and who plunders the defeated
to (of) the ends of the earth.
He has overthrown their chiefs, along with their troops,
His Majesty is after them
like the bull of the Ombite,
like a falcon in a flock of birds,
like a fierce lion in a pen of goats,
like fire when it has seized on reed thickets.
A whirlwind raging after them and raising flames,
while they are like mere bird-feathers before the wind
(translation by Kitchen 1979: 151: 6-12; 1997:
29; transliteration by present author).*

Tertia comparationis applied in diverse categories—e.g., the world of deities, animals, nature, plants, human relationships, and inanimate objects—are highly persuasive and impressive and render magnificent images of

the king. Figurative language is also used in royal inscriptions for the following themes: the king's names and titularies, origin, descriptions of his enemies, and his relationship with the gods (Hsu 2013). The average number of similes and metaphors is approximately equal; their occurrence simply depends on the theme. Figurative language thus seeks to explore the core meanings of kingship and its ideology, and these written images function as embellishments in the presentation of kingship.

Figurative language becomes less prominent in the Late Period in comparison to earlier periods. Similes appear more often in Demotic instructions than in other texts; for instance, the Instruction of Chaschaeschonqi (Hoffmann and Quack 2007: 273-299) predominantly uses simile, and the Instruction of Papyrus Insinger (*ibid.*: 239-273) and the Instruction of Papyrus Brooklyn 47.218.135 (*ibid.*: 230-239) also feature some uses. At the same time, personal titles in biographies are replaced by bodily metaphors that become a standard designation: *jrtj swt Jpt-Swt šsr bjt n t3* “eyes of the king of Upper Egypt in Karnak, tongue of the king of Lower Egypt for the land” (Jansen-Winkel 1985: 11 §A1/CG 559; and others). In the narratives, a special term *ym* “sea” is used for expressing the emotion “anger” (pSpiegelberg III,16; Tait 2009: 79), while *šbj* “panther” describes the king's anger (Köhler 2016: 221-227). As for the royal inscriptions, although they still adopt the style and form of those of the New Kingdom, the rhetorical and stylistic elements become less frequent. The Triumphal Stela of Pi(ankh)y, for instance, bears a resemblance to the Gebel Barkal stela of Thutmose III, yet many traditional images of the king are lacking, and

there was apparently no need of other rhetorical devices, possibly due to the loss of actual value of the kingship of the foreign powers (El Hawary 2010: 362); moreover, through the form of “Egyptianization” the Kushite kings could already claim their own kingship as the Egyptian kings once did (Hsu 2020: 89-90). Meanwhile, because of various political changes, the presence of unstable states, and imposed foreign rule in concatenation, kingship became weak and fractured, and metaphors for the defeated enemies of the king were on the decrease as well.

Concluding Remarks

As a rhetorical stylistic device, figurative language plays an important role in Egyptian texts. Among the multiple forms used, the overwhelming majority are similes and metaphors. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, figurative language has garnered increasing attention from Egyptologists who have regarded it mostly from the classic perspective, taking into account when and how it becomes visible in the different texts. However, as a result of the new trend of applying modern linguistics to ancient Egyptian texts, the number of investigations has increased notably, particularly from the perspective of conceptual metaphor theory and related points of view. The present brief overview has aimed to be a starting point for more specialized research that will shed more light on the way the ancient Egyptians thought and acted.

Bibliographic Notes

Among general introductions, Dancygier and Sweetser (2014) provide an overview of figurative language from various points of view, although they mainly discuss the topics of metaphor and metonymy. Colston (2015) presents multidisciplinary studies of figurative language, focusing on metaphors, verbal irony, idioms, and proverbs, among other forms. Abrams and Harpham (2012: 130-

133) offer a brief contribution on the term “figurative language.” In Egyptology, Grapow (1920, 1924) made the first general study of figurative language. Several articles published in the *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* (Brunner 1975; Osing 1977; and Guglielmi 1986 a and b) deal with the subject. For the use of figurative language in love poetry, see Landgráfová (2008); in literary texts, see Bürgle (2000) and Steynor (2011); in the instructions, see Di Biase-Dyson (2016); and in royal inscriptions, see Hsu (2017b). For a general discussion of cognitive linguistics, see Nyord (2015). Di Biase-Dyson (2017) provides a specific focus on identifying metaphor while including broader conceptual issues.

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