

**Fragmented Identities and Sexual Repression:
A Conceptual Metaphor Theory Approach to Lorca's "Viaje a la luna"**

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1. Introduction: Lorca's only script and its context

In 1929, during his stay in New York, Federico García Lorca wrote his only script for a silent movie entitled *Viaje a la luna*. Lorca sent it to his friend, the painter and filmmaker Emilio Amero, with the idea of bringing his words, images and imagination to life. However, the script never made it to the screen.¹ The still young and not yet entirely codified model of the new art fits Lorca's purpose of realizing something new and different, of experimenting new strategies of expression in order to convey the same themes—convergence between love and death, loss of innocence, the aggressive forces of nature, critique to the repressive society—which permeated his poetry.

The script is a hybrid genre: on the one hand, it is a literary text; on the other hand, it should not be read merely as a written text but rather the reader is urged to convert those written words into moving images projecting them through his/her imagination. Although Lorca's script guides us in this mental process—the script indicates superimpositions, variations of rhythm such as accelerations and slow motions, obscuring, fade-out, passage from the positive to the negative of an image—, much is still left to the imagination of the reader. This means that each reader will project in his/her mind a slightly different movie from anybody else.

Viaje a la luna is unanimously inserted among those Lorca's works belonging to the surrealist phase. Cinema and surrealism exerted a mutual influence on one another: on the one hand, surrealism influenced the seventh art with its aim of merging the artistic expression and the mechanisms of the human mind in their free manifestation. On the other hand, cinema and its techniques, such as the *collage*, influenced the poetic strategies adopted by surrealist artists.

A peculiar interpretation and use of metaphors represent an interesting link between surrealism and cinema and, for this reason, the study of metaphors in *Viaje a la luna* constitutes a compelling approach to understand Lorca's only script and its relation to the author's *oeuvre*. Indeed, as the other members of the Generation of 27, Lorca interprets metaphors as a magic process through which the author can draw near two distant objects creating a new relation between them, which does not exist in the natural world. In this way, the author creates a new reality. In his conference on the poetic image in Góngora's work, Lorca stated that "La metáfora une dos mundos antagónicos por medio del salto ecuestre que da la imaginación."² Moreover, there is a clear link between surrealist techniques, such as the stream of unconsciousness, and the interpretation of metaphors that supports the main theory I am going to employ in my article, that is to say the Conceptual Metaphor Theory. According to Lakoff and Turner, metaphor is a tool that is so common and ordinary that "we use it unconsciously and automatically" (Lakoff & Turner, XI). They argue that metaphors suffuse our thought since it is "an integral part of our thought and languages" (Lakoff & Turner, XI). For this reason, they conclude that metaphors

¹ In 1998, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Federico García Lorca, Frederic Amat freely adapted the script into a nineteen-minute video, available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1bnKYz5hBo>>

² Available at: <<http://biblioteca.org.ar/libros/155302.pdf>>

allow us “to understand our selves and our world in ways that no other modes of thought can” (Lakoff & Turner, XI).

Therefore, it is very interesting to examine how the metaphors in *Viaje a la luna* construct meanings around love, death and sex. I will focus on the study and interpretation of the metaphors construed in the script and the relationship between these metaphors and other tropes such as symbols. However, before presenting my own analysis of the metaphorical and symbolic universe of Lorca’s script, I will dedicate the next section to explain the theoretical background that informs the article: the Conceptual Metaphor Theory.

2. Theoretical background: Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Lakoff and Johnson fundamentally changed the study of metaphor by claiming that “metaphor is primarily a matter of thought and action and only derivatively a matter of language” (Lakoff & Johnson, 153). In this view, metaphor is no longer considered one of a series of tropes that could enhance or embellish the aesthetic meaning of a poem or the persuasive power of speeches, but one of the essential conceptual tools for human beings to make sense of the world. A logical consequence of accepting Lakoff and Johnson’s Conceptual Metaphor Theory was that researchers should not only investigate verbal expressions of conceptual metaphors but also consider their non-verbal manifestations.

That “the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another” (Lakoff & Johnson, 5) is a convenient characterization of the trope, if only because it does not privilege its verbal variety. Of the two “things”, one is the “target” and the other is the “source.” The target pertains to the phenomenon the metaphor is about, whereas the source pertains to the phenomenon that the target is compared to. For something to be labelled a metaphor, the analyst should always be capable of identifying which target domain is connected to which source domain, which is normally represented in the form “target is source.” If a metaphor in film involves visual images –as it often, but not necessarily, does– the underlying metaphorical “A is B” has to be construed to an even larger degree than in the case of its linguistic manifestations. The reason for this construal is that there is no shorthand visual equivalent for the copula “is.” In this sense, *Viaje a la luna* represents a compelling and ambiguous object of study. On the one hand, it is a written text. However, since the written words are meant to create moving images projected on a screen, the metaphors the script constructs are visual in nature. Therefore, as has already been mentioned in the introduction, the reader must recreate the silent movie through his/her own imagination and analyzing the visual metaphors embedded in the script’s words.

Target and source are both part of “semantic networks” (Forceville, 19): each of them evokes a host of associated elements, emotions, and attitudes. Interpretation of a metaphor boils down to “mapping” one or more features (or a structured set of features) from source domain to target domain. As cognitive research demonstrates, metaphors can act as elementary structures of human thinking and imagination (Lakoff; Johnson; Danesi; Boroditsky; Boroditsky & Ramscar), in this way helping us imagine complex, abstract or invisible ideas, concepts or emotions in terms of embodied schemata and gestalts. As “intermediary structures” in our minds (Danesi), they integrate cultural knowledge with innate meanings, based on gestalt perception and image schemata. Accordingly, Conceptual Metaphor Theory considers metaphors not merely analogies between two words or pictures on the symbolic level. Instead, considering a more basic cognitive dimension, it is argued that metaphors are based on conceptual mappings as a relevant mechanism in the human mind (Lakoff; Johnson; Kövecses). Conceptual mappings project significant

sensorial qualities of a source domain to the sensorial and mental qualities of another concept, belonging to a different experiential domain.

However, Lera Boroditsky poses interesting questions that may help me define more precisely the approaches I need to adopt in order to achieve the aim of this article:

How do we come to represent and reason about abstract domains like time, love, justice, or ideas? There are at least two interesting puzzles here. First, how do we learn about abstract domains despite the dearth and vagueness of sensory information available about them? And second, how are we able to coordinate our mental representations of these domains enough to agree (at least some of the time) on the fairness of a decision, the strength of someone's love, or the worth of an idea? (Boroditsky, 1-2).

These questions can be perfectly applied to another abstract domain, that is to say identity: whether personal or collective, how do we come to represent and reason about identity? How do we interpret and represent, in particular, gender and sexual identity? How do we interpret and represent love and desire? Metaphors allow us to construct and interpret meanings around these abstract domains. According to Lakoff and Turner, far from being a matter of words, metaphors are a matter of thought: "thought about emotions, about society, about human character, about language, and about the nature of life and death" (Lakoff & Turner XI). I will demonstrate in this article that *Viaje a la luna* constructs a network of meanings around gender, sexuality, love and desire through the use of metaphors and symbols.

Lakoff and Johnson consider the human conceptual system to be structured around only a small set of experiential concepts that emerge directly out of experience and are defined in their own terms. These fundamental experiential concepts include a set of basic spatial relations (such as up/down, front/back), a set of physical ontological concepts (such as entity, container), and a set of basic experiences or actions (such as eating, moving). According to this view, all other concepts that do not emerge directly out of physical experience must be metaphoric in nature. Although this assertion has been nuanced by more recent theories, Lakoff and Johnson's assumption that metaphoric or abstract concepts are understood and structured through metaphorical mappings from a small set of fundamental experiential concepts is still a landmark in Metaphor Studies.

Drawing on Lakoff and Johnson's Metaphorical Representation Theory, Lera Boroditsky developed the theory known as Metaphoric Structuring View. Boroditsky argues that metaphors are used for organizing information within abstract domains. Those aspects of abstract domains that are evident from world experience may be represented in their own right. The job of metaphor is to provide relational structure to an abstract domain by importing it from a more concrete domain. In particular, she demonstrates how the abstract domain of time gets its relational structure from the more concrete domain of space. Similarly, according to Kromhout and Forceville, concrete domains pertain to "the phenomena we have knowledge and experience of thanks to sensory perception (touching, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting) and thanks to our movement through physical space" (Kromhout & Forceville, 101).

Given the cognitive character of metaphorical understanding and imagination, it seems obvious that not only language (Lakoff; Johnson; Kövecses) but also visual and multimodal media operate with the metaphoric schemata and mechanisms that are anchored in our minds. Drawing on conceptual metaphors allows creators of film narratives to communicate complex meanings in an embodied gestalt that their public understands in an instinctive manner.

However, whereas Conceptual Metaphor Theory is an established academic approach in linguistics and semiotics, its application to disciplines dealing with visual, multimodal, and audiovisual artifacts –whether Media Studies, Film Studies, Television Studies or Game Studies– is less explored. Over the last decade it has been possible to observe a growing tendency in Cognitive Film Studies to discover the potential of analyzing embodied aesthetics and meanings of moving images by applying insights from Conceptual Metaphor Theory to film narratives. The approaches adopted by Forceville (2008, 2016), Fahlenbrach (2008, 2014), and Coëgnarts and Kravanja (2012, 2014, 2016) and their results have been very useful to my own research on metaphors.

Forceville (2008, 2016) combines research on multimodality in semiotics and Conceptual Metaphor Theory when claiming that image schemata and conceptual metaphors can be manifested in visual and audiovisual media not just by visual and acoustic elements, but also by certain combinations of several elements including language and gestures. His studies on visual and multimodal metaphors in comics, advertising campaigns, and films offer relevant instruments for identifying image schemata, realized in image composition, lighting, and colour use, as well as in editing, in the movement of the camera and the depicted objects.

Fahlenbrach (2008, 2014) proposes an approach that explicitly deals with metaphorical mappings in audiovisual media on the level of embodied gestalts in pictures and sound. Drawing on Kövecses's work, she distinguishes several types of mapping that differ in the conceptual complexity of their source domains and materialize in visual, acoustic, and movement-based composition that are closely related to the narrative discourse of a moving image. She considers key action places and bodies of protagonists as relevant objects of metaphoric representation, portraying narrative meanings in an embodied metaphoric way.

In their case studies, Coëgnarts and Kravanja (2012, 2014, 2016) have found that relevant cinematic conventions in mainstream films are metaphorically conceptualized. For instance, in their article on conceptual metaphors and image metaphors in film (Coëgnarts & Kravanja 2012), analyzing Antonioni's film *Professione: Reporter* (1975), they examine the construction of the metaphor "time is a moving object" (Coëgnarts & Kravanja 2012, 105-106); analyzing Fassbinder's film *Martha* (1974), they examine the construction of the metaphor "mental relationship is a spatial relationship" (Coëgnarts & Kravanja 2012, 106-107); analyzing a scene from Nicolas Roeg's *Bad Timing* (1980), they demonstrate how image metaphors can in turn be the trigger for other structural-conceptual metaphors. In particular, in this scene, the structural-conceptual metaphor "love is death" is triggered by a series of image metaphors, showing a montage of images where the fragmented and copulating bodies of the two protagonists, Alex and Milena, repetitiously confronted with a series of clinical shots of Milena in a coma. According to Coëgnarts and Kravanja, this metaphor helps to construct Alex's and Milena's relationship as a destructive one (Coëgnarts & Kravanja 2012, 108-109). They also take elementary forms of audiovisual composition to be manifestations of embodied image schemata and demonstrate how their metaphoric use has relevantly shaped cinematic poetics.

Furthermore, in Film Studies informed by cognitive theories much has been said recently about the strategies employed in films to address deep emotions in viewers (Tan; Smith 2013). Film Studies have explored how embodied, innate reflexes and attributions are stimulated through a complex mixture of visuals, sounds, movements, etc. that make film viewing an intense and lively experience (Grodal; Anderson & Fisher Anderson 2007).

However, it is important to notice that the Conceptual Metaphor Theory approach presents a limit, which is particularly encumbering considering the topic and the scope of this chapter. According to Fahlenbrach, research into the embodied meanings of moving images tends to neglect the more complex cultural meanings (Fahlenbrach 2016a, 5). During a talk at the Society of the Cognitive Study of the Moving Image conference 2013 in Berlin, its former president Carl Plantinga called for an integrative perspective that he defined as “Cognitive Cultural Studies” (Reinerth, 220). He recognized that cognitive film studies tend to neglect cultural contexts in the development of audiovisual conventions relating to the human mind and emotions. In his opinion, adopting an approach also informed by the field of cultural studies would avoid treating moving images with a one-sided perspective, promoting in this way cognitive approaches that consider the influence of cultural discourses in the creation and reception of moving images. My article aims to be a contribution to this new perspective in metaphor analysis that combines Cultural Studies approaches and an attention to cultural contexts in which artistic works are produced with the examination of metaphors through a cognitive approach.

Therefore, Conceptual Metaphor Theory and more specifically the Metaphoric Structuring View theory elaborated by Lera Boroditsky inform the theoretical background of this article, without ignoring Plantinga’s warning about the importance of cultural contexts in the construction and interpretation of metaphors. This importance is particularly evident when analyzing metaphors in Lorca’s *Viaje a la luna* since it is crucial for the understanding of this work to put it into the context of Lorca’s *oeuvre* and foment a dialogue between the script and Lorca’s poetry.

3. An analysis of metaphors in Lorca’s script *Viaje a la luna*

As we have already seen, *Viaje a la luna* is considered a work belonging to Lorca’s surrealist phase with *Así que pasen cinco años*, *El Público* and *Poeta en Nueva York*. However, the rupturing aspect of this phase is sometimes over emphasized:

Aunque Lorca escribió *Viaje a la luna* cuando rebasó su etapa neopopulista para adentrarse en la surrealista, muchos elementos de aquella persistieron todavía, y su guión ha de conectarse con la sensibilidad mostrada en *El público* y en *Poeta en Nueva York*, pero sin romper con su humus poético original (Gubern 1999, 451).

Indeed, the works belonging to the surrealist phase are still permeated by the symbolic universe constructed in his previous poetry collections such as *Poema del cante jondo* and *Romancero gitano*. As Gustavo Correa (1970) suggests in his study of Lorca’s mythical universe, there is a symbolic substratum that feeds all his *oeuvre* and that allows to establish links between his works through the study of the recurring symbols.

Since it is an expression of surrealism, *Viaje a la luna* does not present a traditional narrative structure. The script is a series of oneiric images that the reader must try to link together in order to construct their meanings. However, as I have already mentioned in the introduction, precisely because surrealism defies a logic connection between images, whether poetic or filmic, it is the reader’s responsibility to use his/her imagination to give a more or less coherent sense to the work he/she is either reading.

I argue that *Viaje a la luna*’s symbolic universe is constructed around the conceptual metaphor “life is a journey” that intertwines with other two conceptual metaphors: “love is death” and “sex is fear.” Indeed, the life’s journey of the script focuses on the themes of love and sexuality. Love and sexual desires in the script are interpreted as frustrated emotions that are impossible to fully express. It is the story of a boy that, after losing his

innocence, wonders desperately in search of an identity, trying to escape from the identity imposed on him by a repressive society. He fails and perpetrates on others the same violence society has exerted on him. All journeys have a destination and the destination of the life's journey represented in the script is already expressed explicitly in the title: "A journey to the moon." Therefore, since in Lorca's *oeuvre* the moon tends to represent death, the meaning of this journey as a life's journey that concludes with death is already clear from the title.

As Coëgnarts and Kravanja argue, unlike an image metaphor that "connects a concrete object with another concrete object" (Gleason, 437), conceptual metaphor such as "life is a journey" are not easily visualized due to their lack of texture (Coëgnarts & Kravanja 2012, 99). Indeed, in order to understand the meanings of the metaphors "life is a journey", "love is death" and "sex is fear", it is indispensable to examine the symbolic universe constructed by the script. I am going to analyze in detail *Viaje a la luna* and how the symbols employed throughout the script allow to construe these metaphors and to understand the meanings constructed around them.

In the first scene, Lorca already presents a series of images, symbols and metaphors that introduces the main themes of the script. Couples constituted by the numbers 13 and 22 dances on a white bed with a grey wall in the background. The numbers 13 and 22 are also present in Lorca's prose "Suicidio en Alejandría" and embody the masculine and the feminine, respectively. Their dance simulates a sexual intercourse. However, the couples of letters turn into ants. The contrast of colours construes a metaphor. Indeed, the conventional metaphor "good is white/bad is black" associates positive meanings to the white and negative meanings to the black. Therefore, the colour of the bed's sheets (white) can symbolize the innocence of the sexual intercourse, lived as a natural and pleasant experience of life, but the presence of the grey wall already forewarns the loss of this innocence and its tragic consequences.

The number two, present in the first scene ("Desde dos empiezan a surgir") and that represents a couple, is also mentioned in "Pequeño poema infinito" (*Poeta en Nueva York*): "Pero el dos no ha sido nunca un número / porque es una angustia y su sombra, / porque es la guitarra donde el amor se desespera, / porque es la demostración de otro infinito que no es suyo / y es las murallas del muerto / y el castigo de la nueva resurrección sin finales. / [...] tendremos que pacer sin descanso las hierbas de los cementerios." This representation of the impossible unity between two elements, their impossibility of becoming one entity, and the unescapable tragic finale ("hierbas de los cementerios") in "Pequeño poema infinito" can help us understand the meanings constructed by the sequence of oneiric images of *Viaje a la luna* around love and desire since the first scene.

In the second scene, an invisible hand tears off the sheet. This hand can be interpreted as the repressive society that exerted its oppression on the free expression of love and sexuality. This interpretation is sustained by the use of the adjective "invisible" that reminds us of the "invisible hand" of the free market theorized by Adam Smith in *Wealth of Nations*. This understanding of the symbol would be coherent with the other works belonging to Lorca's surrealist phase. Indeed, if Lorca's precedent works could be defined as a "poesía a favor" (of life, purity, innocence), his surrealist works are a protest "en contra": consumerism, poverty, exclusion of the marginalized groups, Church, Wall Street are all targets of the poet's rage.³ However, other critics have interpreted the hand tearing off the

³ The manifesto of this poetic phase is perhaps best exemplified by the verses of "New York. Oficina y denuncia" (*Poeta en Nueva York*): "Yo denuncio a toda la gente / que ignora a la otra mitad / [...] No, no; yo denuncio. / Yo denuncio la conjura / de estas desiertas oficinas / que no radian las agonías, / que borran

sheet as the opening of curtains on a theater stage (Dennis, 14). Therefore, this image can construe the metaphor “life is a play” (Lakoff & Turner, 20), in which the opening of the curtains is associated with the beginning of life, i.e. birth. This interpretation is linked to the seventh scene: “Vista de Broadway de noche.” Therefore, the first scene might represent a sexual intercourse that has given birth to a new life. However, the transformation into ants and the threatening presence of the invisible hand already help us foresee the violence and alienation this new life will have to face.

In the third scene we encounter an element that will remain constant throughout the script: the fragmented representation of the body, never seen in its entirety. This choice of representing separated parts of the body can be interpreted as a filmic technique that symbolizes the fragmented and broken identity. The shots of feet, legs, hands, heads, and so forth are the equivalent of metonymy in Lorca’s poetry and convey the same meaning: it is impossible to represent the body in its entirety because a coherent, whole identity is impossible. This representation of body and identity is also present in Lorca’s drawings, where the poet represents himself often without arms in order to express not only his sense of fragmented identity but also his lack of agency and sense of impotence. The same representation of self is to be found in “Paisaje de la multitud que vomita (Anochecer en Coney Island)” (*Poeta en Nueva York*): “¡Ay de mí! ¡Ay de mí! ¡Ay de mí! / Esta mirada mía fue mía, pero ya no es mía, [...]. Me definiendo con esta mirada / que mana de las onzas por donde el alba no se atreve, / yo, poeta sin brazos, perdido / entre la multitud que vomita, / sin caballo efusivo que corte los espesos musgos de mis sienas.” Since in Lorca’s poetry, the horse is a symbol expressing male sexuality, the poem clearly connects Lorca’s sense of being lost (“yo, poeta sin brazos, perdido”) and his rejection (“entre la multitud que vomita”) with his impossibility of expressing freely his emotions and desires. *Viaje a la luna* reprises these symbols to construct a tragic life’s journey characterized by the violent repression of love and sexuality.

First, we see a big foot that runs wearing socks with “rombos blancos y negros.” Again, the contrast of colours and the conventional metaphor “good is white/bad is black” help us understand the contradictory elements constituting identity. Perhaps we can read the presence of black and white as the possibility, still present, of going towards one direction (the happy, fulfilling experience of love) or another (the violent expression of a repressed sexuality). This possibility will soon close, as we will see in the following scenes.

In the fourth scene, a head, whose eyes hold a scared gaze, dissolves into a head made of wirework surrounded by water. Therefore, the human head becomes an inanimate object due to the repressive action of society. The presence of water, often a symbol of sexuality in Lorca’s poetry, again connects the violent dehumanizing image with sexuality (and the impossibility of expressing it). This connection, so far suggested through symbols, is made explicit in the fifth scene, in which the words “Socorro Socorro Socorro” are superposed to the female sexual organ. The up and down movement of the words simulate a sexual intercourse. Lakoff and Johnson’s list of primary metaphors includes “relationship are enclosure.” According to Ortiz and Coëgnarts and Kravanja (2012), the allocation of elements in a shot, their position and the distance among one another can construct metaphorical meanings. Indeed, the presence of several elements in the same shot can construe the metaphor “emotional unity between two entities is spatial convergence of

los programas de la selva” and “Danza de la muerte” (*Poeta en Nueva York*): “El mascarón bailará entre columnas de sangre y de números, / entre huracanes de oro y gemidos de obreros parados / que aullarán, noche oscura, por tu tiempo sin luces, / [...] Que ya la Bolsa será una pirámide de musgo. / Que ya vendrán lianas después de los fusiles / y muy pronto, muy pronto, muy pronto. / ¡Ay, Wall Street!”

two entities.” Therefore, I argue that in this scene the spatial convergence between the female sexual organ and the repeated word “help” construes the metaphor “sex is fear.”

In the ninth and tenth scene we come back to the fragmented representation of the body (legs and hands) that are associated first with a phallic symbol –the long corridor in the sixth scene– and then to a crying baby in the eleventh scene. In the twelfth scene, the crying baby is superposed with an image of a woman who beats him up. This scene dissolves again into a long corridor, thus explicitly linking the violence we have just witnessed with sexual repression. With this quick sequence of oneiric images Lorca seems to suggest that the violence exerted by society on our sexuality begins very early. It is important before continuing with my analysis to dwell on the choice of Lorca to present generic characters –a baby, a boy, a girl– that acquire the status of symbol. Lorca is not evoking a life’s journey but the life’s journey: he is not depicting with this script a story of a specific person, but he is expressing his understanding of human life, love, sexuality and desires and their relation with society.

In the following scenes (14-15-16), the metaphor “sex is fear” is construed again through the association of the fish (symbol of male sexuality) and the words “Socorro, Socorro.” In the seventeenth scene we encounter the representation of absence through the “huellas de pie”: somebody was previously there but the only thing left now is the worms. Indeed, while the fragmented anatomy was previously linked to an inanimate object (“alambre”), the absence of that fragmented body (“huella de pie”) is now linked to another natural element (“gusano”). However, the connotation is still negative and disgusting. Indeed, the surrealist phase in Lorca’s *oeuvre* represents a swerve from his previous work as far as the representation of natural elements. The positive connotations associated with nature in *Poema del cante jondo* and *Romancero gitano* now disappear to make room for the representation of a threatening nature. In order to convey the oppression and repression of industrial society, in *Poeta en Nueva York* Lorca instills the natural elements of a destructive force: the “enjambres furiosos” in “La aurora” represent society that has been able to pervert nature, which has become as a consequence a symbol of destruction that punishes humanity. If we read the natural elements in *Viaje a la luna* on the background of Lorca’s representation of nature in his surrealist phase, it becomes clear that the worms in the seventeenth scene are not so distant from the wirework of the fourth scene.

In the following scenes (18-19) the worms give birth to a dead head that is associated to the moon. Inside the moon, a drawing of a head that vomits appears. Considering the connotations associated with moon and vomit in Lorca’s works (death and sexual rejection and impotence, respectively) we might interpret the scene from 14 to 19 as the construal of two metaphors: “love is death” and “sex is death.” I understand the first nineteen scene of the script as a sort of prologue in which Lorca expresses his intention –the representation of the life’s journey characterized by the violent repression of love and sexuality– and presents the symbolic universe that supports this representation. The metaphor “life is a journey” begins to be clearly construed from the twentieth scene with the arrival of children. The children sing with their eyes closed. I argue that this element construes the metaphor “understanding is seeing” or, to be precise, its contrary “not understanding is not seeing.” The children are not aware of the violence society will exert on them in order to control their body and sexuality.

The singing children of the twenty-first scene reminds us of “Poema doble del Lago Eden”, in which the poet compares his present voice with his past voice: “Era mi voz antigua / ignorante de los densos jugos amargos. / [...] ¡Ay voz antigua de mi amor, / ay

voz de mi verdad, / ay voz de mi abierto costado, / cuando todas las rosas manaban de mi lengua / y el césped no conocía la impasible dentadura del caballo!” In this poem Lorca counterposes the innocence of his child voice, still unaware of the difficulties of life (“los densos jugos amargos”) and his homosexual desires (“la impasible dentadura del caballo!”) to his adult, corrupted voice. However, in *Viaje a la luna* the singing children are already dirty with stains of ink, symbolizing that their innocence has already been corrupted. The loss of innocence is expressed again in the following scene (22) where the stains of ink appears on a white background, construing again the conventional metaphor “good is white/bad is black”: the innocence of childhood (“plano blanco”) has been corrupted with “gotas de tintas.”

The twenty-third scene only comprises one word: “Puerta.” If “life is a journey” it needs points of passages. The door in this scene represents the passage between childhood and adolescence.⁴ Indeed, in the following scene, we encounter a boy who is almost naked. He is only wearing a bathing suit with black and white stains. One of the children of the previous scene has now become a boy, whose innocence has been irremediably corrupted (black stains) but for whom there is still hope (white stains). His nakedness is also a positive symbol of sexuality and desires to counterpose to the repression of society, as it becomes clear in the following scenes.

Indeed, in the twenty-fourth scene there is also a man with a white coat that represents a doctor, symbol of society and its rule. The doctor is not a casual choice. The medical community played a constitutive role in categorizing sexual patterns, their impact on legal processes, and their effect on individual lives. For this reason, Mary McIntosh defined them as “diagnostic agents in the process of social labelling” (McIntosh, 184).

In the twenty-sixth scene the authoritative figure offers to the boy a Harlequin costume but the boy rejects it. At this point, the man becomes violent and imposes the costume to the boy against his will. The costume represents the identity that the society wants to impose to the boy in contrast with the innocence and naturalness of his nakedness. The Harlequin costume is often present in Lorca’s drawing such as “La careta que cae” and represents the false mask of happiness that the poet has to wear to hide his confusion, fears and sadness. The link between this scene and sexual repression is made clear by the symbol of the fish in the twenty-fifth scene. In this sense, the Harlequin costume might be read as the heterosexual identity imposed by society against the natural emotions and desires of the boy.

The twenty-seventh scene is one of the longest of the script and conveys the theme of metamorphosis. In Lorca’s *oeuvre* the metamorphosis is not interpreted as a natural process of life but, according to Menarini, “parece identificarse con la pérdida o renuncia a su propia identidad” (223). The negative connotation associated to the process of metamorphosis is evident in Lorca’s poem “Muerte” (*Poeta en Nueva York*): “¡Qué esfuerzo! / ¡Qué esfuerzo del caballo por ser perro! / ¡Qué esfuerzo del perro por ser golondrina! / ¡Qué esfuerzo de la golondrina por ser abeja! / ¡Qué esfuerzo de la abeja por ser caballo! [...] Pero el arco de yeso, / ¡qué grande, qué invisible, qué diminuto!, / sin esfuerzo.” In the first part of the poem, each natural element (the horse, the dog, the dove, the bee) tries to be something that it is not. This attempt of transformation against its own nature requires an enormous effort. However, after spending their life forcing themselves to be something that they are not, death (“el arco de yeso”) is the only thing that will arrive “sin esfuerzo.” The second stanza makes it clear that this effort of metamorphosis is associated

⁴ In “Poema doble del lago Eden” (*Poeta en Nueva York*) we also find the verses: “Dejarme pasar la puerta / donde Eva come hormigas y Adán fecunda peces deslumbrados.”

with sexuality: “Y los puñales diminutos, / ¡qué luna sin establos, qué desnudos, / piel eterna y rubor, andan buscando!” At the center of the poem, it is the constant, impossible and frustrated attempt to repress natural feelings and desires to be something one is not.

The same rhetoric technique, the *collage*, that we find in the poem “La muerte” is also found in the twenty-seventh scene of *Viaje a la luna*. Snakes dissolve into crabs that dissolve into fishes. An anonymous hand, that represents the repressive power of society, strangles a fish until it dies. The camera moves inside the mouth of the fish where there are other two agonizing fishes. Then, this scene dissolves into a kaleidoscope in which hundreds of fishes are agonizing. Therefore, not only does the scene represent the repressive power of society, but the perpetrating aspect of this violence: the killing of a fish (sexual repression) will generate violence that will kill other fishes, perpetrating the sexual repression and the maintenance of the status quo and the rules of society.

After focusing on the repression of male sexuality (the boy, snakes, fishes), the script focuses in the following scenes on female figures. In the twenty-eight scene we see women dressed in black. In the scene there is a lamp. We must imagine that the light of the lamp creates a play of penumbra on the faces of the women. Then, the camera focuses on the busts and hands cutting the heads off the shot, reprising the same representation of fragmented body we have found at the beginning of the script. Indeed, the wirework also comes back as a symbol of the dehumanizing force of society.

In the thirty-second scene frogs and orchids are female sexual symbols and are associated with the drawing of a woman’s head that vomits. A door is violently closed, followed by other doors, superimposed by the figures of women in black who raise and lower their arms in desperation. The sequence of the closing doors represents the perpetrating aspect of sexual repression and the impossibility of escaping it. Therefore, this scene constructs a parallel path for female sexuality that is almost identical to male sexuality. However, the scene also introduces an element of difference through the words “Elena Helena elhena eLHeNa.” These names may refer to Helen of Troy, symbol of a woman who dared to love and reject the man who was imposed to her to escape with the man she loved and, for this reason, the collective imaginary has dumped on her shoulder the guilt of a war fought for economic interests.

In the following scene, we see images of women dressed in mourning who runs up and down the stairs, a motion that can symbolized sexual intercourse. One woman falls. Her head is covered by a “pañuelo a la manera española”, linking the responsibility of sexual repression and control on women’s body with the oppressive rules of Spanish society. The woman is bleeding from her nose, which can be a symbol of menstruation.

In the forty-first scene we see the naked boy we left in the twenty-sixth scene. He is still naked but he is dragging the Harlequin costume and his body has become an anatomy dummy. His transformation into an inanimate object symbolizes the commoditization of body and sexuality imposed by society. His body is again represented through fragmented shots symbolizing his broken identity.

In the forty-fourth scene another symbol of sexuality –a bird– is strangled until it dies, as the fish before it. This scene is also complex. Three men walk down the road at night. The night can be interpreted through the basic metaphor “lifetime is a day”, in which morning is usually associated with childhood, afternoon with adulthood, the sunset with old age and the night with death. Therefore, starting from this metaphor, one can construe the submetaphor “death is night.” Moreover, we are told that the three men “dan muestras de frío.” This element is important because it construes the metaphor “death is cold” that, together with “death is night”, helps us understand the meaning of the scene. One of the

men looks up and the moon appears on the screen. The second man looks up and the bird is strangled. The third man looks up and the moon dissolves into a sexual organ and the sexual organ dissolves into a shouting mouth. Therefore, in this scene as well, the association of death (moon), sex (sexual organ, the bird) and fear (the shouting mouth) construes the metaphors “love is death” and “sex is fear.” The constant emphasis of the men looking up to the moon also construes the metaphor “losing control is being below.” Indeed, in orientational metaphors basic and distinct mental schemata of spatial experience are mapped onto cognitive and emotional target domains (Fahlenbrach 2016a, 27). We tend to attach a meaning of power to elements put in a higher position and we tend to attach the meaning of powerlessness to elements put in a lower position. Therefore, through this shot and the constant emphasis on the high position of the threatening moon, the scene emphasizes the lack of control of the three men, as to suggest that one cannot escape the main metaphors –“love is death” and “sex is fear”– construed by the scene. As a matter of fact, the three men run away in fear.

The forty-ninth scene is set in a bar. There are several boys dressed with tuxedos. The waiter fills their glasses with wine and they try to drink it but they cannot. The impossibility to drink can be interpreted as a symbol of sexual impotence. The glasses become very heavy and the boys are fighting to try to bring them to their mouth. This image construes the basic metaphor “difficulties are burdens.”⁵ A girl who is almost naked enters the scene. Her nakedness clashes with the women dressed in mourning that we have previously seen. She dances with a boy dressed with an Harlequin costume. Therefore, we meet again the boy who has now accepted the identity imposed by society. Then, we see the anatomy dummy that gesticulates desperately. It seems he is trying to warn the girl of the danger she is about to face. Let’s not forget that the anatomy dummy is now the real identity of the boy, hidden by the Harlequin costume.

The girl now dressed in white runs away with the Harlequin. As with her nakedness before, the white dress of the girl also clashes with the black dresses worn by the women in the previous scenes.

In the fifty-four scene all men in the bar are vomiting. The vomit represents a rejection that, in Lorca’s *oeuvre*, usually has a connotation with sexual frustration.⁶ Moreover, it can be argued that the scene construes the metaphor “circumstances are surroundings.” This metaphor derives from the correlation between the physical environment and our mental state. The representation of the surroundings and the relationship between the environment and a character are often used in film to portray the psychological and the emotional situation of the character. Through this reading we can associate the vomit, that is to say the sexual repression, of the men sitting in the bar with the sexual repression of the anatomy dummy disguised as Harlequin. Therefore, this scene prefigures what is about to happen and the tragic, violent turn of the love story between the girl and the Harlequin.

In the fifty-seventh scene the two passionately kiss. It seems at first that the feelings of the girl are reciprocated. However, in the following scene the Harlequin bites her neck and violently pulls her hair. The image of the guitar in the following scene (59), the strings of

⁵ Through this basic metaphor, we understand difficulties as something that “weight us down.” This metaphor is coherent with the main metaphor construed in *Viaje a la luna*, “life is a journey.” Indeed, if physical burdens always represent difficulties, on a journey they become impediments to travel. In the “life is a journey” metaphor, these burdens correspond to difficulties in life (Lakoff & Turner, 25).

⁶ The poem “Paisaje de la multitud que vomita” associates the loss of identity of the poet with the vomit: “yo, poeta sin brazos, perdido / entre la multitud que vomita [...] Llegaban los rumores de la selva del vómito / con [...] camareros incansables / que sirven platos de sal bajo las arpas de la / saliva. / Sin remedio, hijo mío, ¡vomita!”

which are cut with scissors, symbolizing castration, seems to link the violence committed by the Harlequin with the violence society exerted on him. In the sixtieth scene, the girl tries to defend herself but the Harlequin sinks his fingers into her eyes, which represents sexual violence.⁷

At this point, in the sixty-second scene, it is revealed to the girl, who is screaming, that the Harlequin is actually the anatomy dummy. In the following scene, the girl is now turned into a gypsum bust without any agency and the boy kisses it passionately. The transformation of the girl into an inanimate object also represents the commodification of body imposed by society. She is now defenseless against the violence of the boy, also turned into an inanimate object himself. On the gypsum bust we can now see “huellas de labios y huellas de manos”, which represent the biological remains of the sexual violence. In the sixty-fourth scene, the words “Elena elena elena elena” come back, conveying the tendency of society of blaming women for the violence they suffer. This is made even more explicit by the association of these words with an image of faucets ejecting water, clearly a symbol for ejaculation. The image of faucets dissolves into the image of the dead boy turned into an anatomy dummy.

Both the boy and the girl are dead, destroyed by the repression of society. However, in the sixty-eighth scene a boy wearing a white coat and a girl wearing a black dress appear. They represent the only path available for those who do not want to be crushed by society: they have accepted the rules, the gender roles and the sexual identities imposed by society without questioning them.

In the seventieth scene they kiss but it is a “beso cursi”, thus artificial and fake. Theirs is not a love derived by natural emotions and desires but a conventional relation that follows the hypocrisy of societal rules. And yet, according to Lorca, this is the only form of love permitted by society. Their love is constantly associated with images of death: a skull in the sixty-eighth scene, a cemetery and a grave in the sixty-ninth scene and, in the last scene, the moon that closes the movie. The life’s journey is finally ended and it ends with the only possible destination: death. However, in Lorca’s script death is not only the natural end of life but permeates, as we have seen through the constant presence of the moon, every desperate attempt of love. Therefore, the last scene also construes the metaphors that sustain the entire symbolic universe of the script: “life is a journey” and “love is death.”

4. Conclusions

In my article I analyzed the metaphors and symbols embedded in Federico García Lorca’s script *Viaje a la luna*. I have seen how the three main metaphors construed in the script are “life is a journey”, “love is death” and “sex is fear.” These metaphors constantly intertwine throughout the script and they cannot be read separately. Moreover, the symbolic universe constructed by the script helps us understand the meaning of the metaphors. Indeed, when a metaphor is construed in relation with another trope, such as symbols, it is important to first understand the meaning of such a trope, without which the metaphor cannot be interpreted.

As Utrera argues,

Los símbolos que aparecen, desde el traje de arlequín hasta los peces agónicos, sugieren la crisis de identidad de un muchacho expresada por medio de un clima angustioso en el que predomina la violencia y la sexualidad (Utrera, 64-65).

⁷ This violence had already been announced in the fifty-first scene in which the anatomic dummy strangles a frog, symbol of female sexuality.

The script represents the life's journey of generic characters –the baby, the boy, the girl– that represent allegories for all human kind. In this script Lorca reflects on love, sexuality, gender roles, and societal repression. According to Lorca, society does not allow the natural expression of emotions and desires and always tries to impose its rule on people's bodies and feelings. It is a violent repression that generates even more violence, which perpetrates itself. According to Dennis, the universe created in the script

Es, a la vez, lugar de encuentros (y desencuentros) sexuales y lugar de sueño: un escenario onírico en que se hacen presentes los sueños, miedos y complejos del que se duerme, todos codificados según las normas del subconsciente y la simbología particular del que escribe (Dennis, 142).

As we have seen throughout the chapter, *Viaje a la luna* does not constitute an isolated entity but rather it must be read in constant dialogue with Lorca's *oeuvre*. In this article I focused on other works from the surrealist phase, especially *Poeta en Nueva York*, but the connection among love and death is omnipresent in Lorca's works. Reprising Quevedo's representation of death as a constant aspect of life ("pañales y mortaja" in "¡Ah de la vida!"), Lorca writes in "Gacela de la huida" (*Diván del Tamarit*): "No hay noche que, al dar un beso, / no sienta la sonrisa de la gente sin rostro / ni hay nadie que, al tocar un recién nacido, / olvide las inmóviles calaveras del caballo." The image of death always appears whenever the poet tries to express and live his emotions and desires. In *Sonetos del amor oscuro*, Lorca expresses a love lived as source of both pain and sexual pleasure, with death always in the background.

As Ian Gibson states, "Le prime composizioni di Lorca rivelano già un profondo struggimento sessuale, la sensazione di essere reietto e isolato; né può esservi alcun dubbio che tutta la sua opera verta in genere, in una forma o nell'altra, sul tema della frustrazione"⁸ (quoted in Rendina, 8).

In order to fully understand the meanings constructed in *Viaje a la luna* around love, death, gender roles and sexuality I employed the Conceptual Metaphor Theory. To my knowledge this is the first attempt to analyze Lorca's script through this theoretical background. This theoretical approach is particularly interesting in relation to the analysis of *Viaje a la luna*. According to Lakoff and Turner, "to study metaphor is to be confronted with hidden aspects of one's own mind and one's own culture" (214). Through the masterful use of metaphoric processes on which our conceptual systems are based, artists address the most vital issues in our lives and help us illuminate those issues. According to Conceptual Metaphor Theory, metaphorical understanding is not a matter of mere word play; it is endemically conceptual in nature. It is indispensable in order to comprehend and reason about concepts such as life, death and love. Therefore, examining *Viaje a la luna* adopting the Conceptual Metaphor Theory allows us to unveil and understand that the sequence of apparently disconnected oneiric images of the script constructs a coherent and precise metaphorical universe that Lorca uses to denounce the violence perpetrated by society on our bodies and its repression of our emotions and desires.

Moreover, precisely because they are basic conceptual tools shared by members of a culture through that help comprehend much of reality, general conceptual metaphors are not the creation of an individual artist but are rather part of the way members of a culture have of conceptualizing fundamental experiences. Artists, as members of their culture, makes use of these basic conceptual metaphors to communicate with other members.

⁸ Lorca first poems already reveals a sexual grief, the feeling of being outcast and isolated; there is also no doubt that his entire *oeuvre* revolves around, in a way or another, the theme of frustration.

Lorca also employs these general conceptual metaphors in his script: “life is a journey”, “circumstances are surrounding”, “losing control is being below”, “death is night.” However, Lorca’s genius allows him to deploy them masterfully, combining them in new ways and conveying them through strong and original images. “Death is night” might be a conventional basic metaphor but its representation, its complex combination with other metaphors and symbols and the meanings conveyed through this metaphor are an original and unique expression of Lorca’s extraordinary creativity. On the other hand, Lorca is also able to step outside the ordinary ways we think metaphorically and he offers new modes of metaphorical thought by creating unconventional metaphors such “love is death” and “sex is fear.”

Precisely because these metaphors are not conventional, the reader is asked a special effort in order to identify and interpret them. Therefore, the individuality of each reader becomes crucial: “because what is meaningful is in the mind, not in the words, there is an enormous range of possibilities open for reasonable interpretation” (Lakoff & Turner, 109). As Forceville warns, it is not appropriate to assert that something ‘is’ a metaphor; instead, it would be more suitable to refer to “construing a metaphor” (Forceville, 25). There might be scenes in a movie that evidently construe a metaphor, which is unanimously recognized as such. However, in most cases viewers might interpret a scene differently according to their knowledge and experience; one viewer might identify a metaphor that other viewers do not recognize as such and different viewers can attach to the same metaphor different meanings. Therefore, the process of interpreting a metaphor is dynamic. It might even happen that a viewer identifies a metaphor and interpret it in a different way than that intended by its creator, the artist. I agree with Forceville when he argues that “in my view, however, such liberties for metaphorical construal are among the privileges of art-lovers, and should be cause for joy rather than worry” (Forceville, 26). And yet, we should explicitly recognize the intrusive and certainly not neutral role of the scholar in construing and interpreted metaphors. This is particularly true when examining metaphors in avant-garde works such as *Viaje a luna*, in which Lorca both employs conventional metaphors in new original ways and construes unconventional metaphors that necessarily require the intervention of the reader’s imagination and agency to be interpreted.

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