

literatur für leser

17

1

40. Jahrgang

Inhaltsverzeichnis

Thomas Bell · Lewitscharoff's Blumenberg – the Metaphorical Lion as an Image of Transcendent Possibility

Hoda Issa · Metaphysik der Metamorphose im Werk von Barbara Frischmuth

Dieter Liewerscheidt · Die vergewaltigte Marquise von O.... Skandal, Satire und abgründige Komik in Kleists Novelle

Torsten Voß · Phantasien von Herrenreitern und Principes – oder Soldatischer Habitus als Kompensationstrategie gegenüber den Erfahrungshorizonten der Moderne?

Rudolf G. Binding und Gabriele D'Annunzio

Bernhard Winkler · Der kontaminierte Käfer. Eine „ausnehmend ekelhafte“ Annäherung an Franz Kafkas Verwandlung



PETER LANG

Inhaltsverzeichnis

Thomas Bell

Lewitscharoff's Blumenberg – the Metaphorical Lion as an Image
of Transcendent Possibility _____ 1

Hoda Issa

Metaphysik der Metamorphose im Werk von Barbara Frischmuth _____ 15

Dieter Liewerscheidt

Die vergewaltigte Marquise von O.... Skandal, Satire und abgründige Komik
in Kleists Novelle _____ 39

Torsten Voß

Phantasien von Herrenreitern und Principes – oder Soldatischer Habitus
als Kompensationstrategie gegenüber den Erfahrungshorizonten der Moderne?
Rudolf G. Binding und Gabriele D'Annunzio _____ 53

Bernhard Winkler

Der kontaminierte Käfer.
Eine „ausnehmend ekelhafte“ Annäherung an Franz Kafkas Verwandlung _____ 73

literatur für lesler

herausgegeben von: Keith Bullivant, Ingo Cornils, Carsten Jakobi, Bernhard Spies, Sabine Wilke
Peer Review: literatur für lesler ist peer reviewed. Alle bei der Redaktion eingehenden Beiträge werden anonymisiert an alle Herausgeber weitergegeben und von allen begutachtet. Jeder Herausgeber hat ein Vetorecht.

Verlag und Anzeigenverwaltung: Peter Lang GmbH, Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, Schlüterstrasse 42, 10707 Berlin,
Telefon: +49 (0) 30 232 567 900, Telefax +49 (0) 30 232 567 902

Redaktion der englischsprachigen Beiträge: Dr. Sabine Wilke, Professor of German, Dept. of Germanics, Box 353130, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195, USA
wilke@u.washington.edu

Redaktion der deutschsprachigen Beiträge: Dr. Carsten Jakobi, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, FB 05, Deutsches Institut, D-55099 Mainz
cjakobi@uni-mainz.de

Erscheinungsweise: 3mal jährlich
(März/Juli/November)

Bezugsbedingungen: Jahresabonnement EUR 54,95; Jahresabonnement für Studenten EUR 32,95; Einzelheft EUR 26,95. Alle Preise verstehen sich zuzüglich Porto und Verpackung. Abonnements können mit einer Frist von 8 Wochen zum Jahresende gekündigt werden. Alle Beiträge sind urheberrechtlich geschützt. Übersetzung, Nachdruck, Vervielfältigung auf photomechanischem oder ähnlichem Wege, Vortrag, Funk- und Fernsehsendung sowie Speicherung in Datenverarbeitungsanlagen – auch auszugsweise – bleiben vorbehalten.

Lewitscharoff's *Blumenberg* – the Metaphorical Lion as an Image of Transcendent Possibility

Introduction

In *Blumenberg* (2011), Sibylle Lewitscharoff – winner, in 2013, of the Georg-Büchner-Preis – presents a philosophy professor who regularly perceives a lion's presence. For example, while delivering one of his lectures, "als er von seinen Karten hochblickte, sah er ihn [the lion]".¹ This arresting statement raises many questions. What exactly does the professor see? Do his students, likewise, observe this unanimous animal sitting awkwardly in the lecture hall? No, they do not. Where then is this animal; what is its origin? This puzzles us, the readers, as much as it does the rationally minded philosopher. As we read the text, we, along with the professor, ask ourselves why we are taking this seriously; we are reading about an "absurd" occurrence in a fictional text. What does this have to do with reality? Lewitscharoff's novel, I would suggest, uniquely complicates reality. Her text plays with the sentiment that twenty-first century readers and thinkers are still mystified about the irrational and the religious within the real. This persistent interest in understanding the presence (or absence) of the illogical – the unexplainable – in the modern world receives form in and through the picture Lewitscharoff's novel projects. Lying between fiction and reality, the lion – the dominant picture textually engendered – demands, therefore, interpretation. This lion, I assert, is a linguistically constructed image stemming from the mind of the fictional Blumenberg who lives and teaches philosophy in the provincial German city of Münster. Lewitscharoff bases the fictional Blumenberg off the historical Hans Blumenberg, in whom she showed initial interest in her fictional autobiography *Apostoloff* (2009), where she referred to him as a "Löwenphilosoph."² This philosopher, fascinated with lions, propagated, in one of his seminal works, various paradigms for understanding metaphors, *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie* (1997).³ Employing this philosopher, whose inquiries concerned investigations into the nature of a metaphor, Lewitscharoff's narrator explores how her protagonist creates an image that actualizes one of Hans Blumenberg's unique paradigms, namely an "absolute metaphor," indicative, in this novel, of transcendent possibility. To provide clarity at the outset of this article, I will use "Hans Blumenberg" when referring to the historical philosopher, who lived from 1920 to 1996, and "Blumenberg" when discussing the fictional character.

Presenting an ambivalent metaphor, the text, at first glance, appears to slide into the absurd. The story is seemingly utterly detached from reality. An intelligent intellectual has become, perhaps, "verrückt" (146), as he has confronted, and taken seriously a

1 Sibylle Lewitscharoff: *Blumenberg*. Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Verlag. Berlin 2011, 23.

2 Sibylle Lewitscharoff: *Apostoloff*. Suhrkamp Verlag. Frankfurt am Main 2009, 147.

3 Hans Blumenberg: *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie*. Suhrkamp Verlag. Frankfurt am Main 2013.

lion not existing in real space. If the figure were truly present in the material realm, then Blumenberg's students would also see the animal accompanying him at his lectures, and that is not the case: "Wie unerkant der Löwe blieb, zeigte sich unzweifelhaft. Die Hörer in den Bänken sahen ihn nicht" (23). The lion is not real; "Sie alle [his students] sahen durch den Löwen hindurch" (25). Early in the novel, the narrator pointedly establishes the lion's imaginary status by juxtaposing the tangible with the intangible. On a day when the lion does not appear to Blumenberg only the Kantian phenomena are present. The lion is not one of the "berühbare" entities in real space; the narrator writes: "Kein Löwe, nirgends [...] denn es herrschte ja heller Tag [...] an dem alles leuchtete wie neu geschaffen und nur berühbare Dinge ans Licht traten" (21). Categorized as "nicht berühbar" – intangible – the lion is not real and does not materialize. Yet, for Blumenberg, the lion exists; "Der Löwe war da" (15).

With this being the case, the narrator poses a logical follow-up question, inquiring as to whether this lion is not merely a projection of the religiously inclined: "Oder war der Löwe [...] doch nur ein Hirngespinnst, geschaffen von ihm, Blumenberg selbst?" (39) Increasingly alienated from reality, Blumenberg generates a chimera, a fantasy representative of an inner desire for solidity. The resulting image becomes the reflection of what he wants. In this sense, he acts in accordance with Ludwig Feuerbach's assertions. He promulgated the theory that God, constructed through humanity's imaginative capacities, is merely a projection of humanity's interests: "Wie der Mensch denkt, wie er gesinnt ist, so ist sein Gott [...] Das Bewußtsein Gottes ist das Selbstbewußtsein des Menschen, die Erkenntnis Gottes die Selbsterkenntnis des Menschen."⁴ Interpreted in this framework, the lion is an expression of a desired form engendered in a mind wishing to comprehend the incomprehensible by projecting what he knows about himself onto an object or a concept that is, in and of itself, absolutely unknown. Viewed in this manner, the text provides a scathing critique of religion, of those religious statements espousing God's autonomy and objective independence. God is always only in the minds of those involved in inventing it. This may be the narration's "message."

Alternatively, the text may demonstrate how the lion's figuration – its form as a linguistic manipulation – derives from mental processes performed by an individual, who, while participating in language games, attempts to understand, form, and shape an alternative reality based more on intuition than on perception. In this paper, I will assess how the protagonist produces an image indicative of transcendence. To understand how this lion is linguistically constructed, how it functions within a language game as a picture representing what is possible, I will look at how the novel integrates Ludwig Wittgenstein's ideas regarding "pictures" and "language games," as they are delineated, respectively, in his two major works, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* (1921) and *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (1953). I critically employ Wittgenstein's notions, because his philosophical ideas frame and undergird the text. He is explicitly cited (37, 128, 129, 197) and implicitly inferred on page 19 and, to a lesser extent, on 215. Informed by Wittgenstein's philosophical ideas, Lewitscharoff's protagonist, while participating in "language games," creates the "picture" of an "absolute metaphor."

4 Ludwig Feuerbach: *Das Wesen des Christentums: Kritische Ausgabe*. Verlag von Philipp Reclam. Leipzig 1904, 68.

The Lion as an Absolute Metaphor

What is a metaphor? According to Jonathan Culler, “A metaphor treats something as something else (calling George a donkey or my love a red, red rose). Metaphor is thus a version of a basic way of knowing: we know something by seeing it as something.”⁵ Applying this definition to Lewitscharoff’s novel, the “lion” is “something else” standing for “something.” The professor sees the “something else.” The “something” behind the seen is an abstract concept – an intuition – originating in the protagonist’s mind. The lion, the seen, represents the unseen intuition of transcendence, which is indicative of the persistence of exteriority within an individual ensconced in immanence. Because the lion, as “something else,” points to “something” that is non-empirical and neither universally accessible nor acknowledged, the lion is a unique metaphor, an “absolute metaphor.”

As a metaphor, the lion represents that which resists containment and circumscription; he eludes reduction to one particular truth-value. In that he cannot be limited to communicable terms, he is absolute. At one point, Blumenberg directly associates the lion with the absolute: “Der Einbruch des Absoluten war nicht mitteilbar” (146). Communication about the absolute cannot occur. For Hans Blumenberg, as well, the “absolute metaphor” remains enigmatic; it has no definition. In this vein, Campe writes: “[Hans] Blumenberg refrains from giving his own, actual definition of metaphor in *Paradigmen* as much as he does elsewhere.”⁶ Ironically, in his seminal work on metaphors – *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie* (1960) – Hans Blumenberg does not provide a concise definition of a metaphor, or an “absolute metaphor.” Nevertheless, he does outline its characteristics. While an absolute metaphor cannot be logically located in the tangible world, it still depicts a concept, expressing a thought latent in human consciousness; Hans Blumenberg writes:

Dann aber können Metaphern [...] auch Grundbestände der philosophischen Sprache sein, ‘Übertragungen’, die sich nicht ins Eigentliche, in die Logizität zurückholen lassen. Wenn sich zeigen läßt, daß es solche Übertragungen gibt, die man ‘absolute Metaphern’ nennen müßte, dann wäre die Feststellung und Analyse ihrer begrifflich nicht ablösbaren Aussagefunktion ein essentielles Stück der Begriffsgeschichte. (14)

A metaphor reflects a transference between two realms, the imaginary and the actual. When such a transmission does not evince its logical determinants – i.e. when an individual cannot logically explain a transmission – the metaphor is absolute. Intimating at a concept unable to be logically conveyed, an absolute metaphor expresses that which is incapable of receiving adequate expression. Yet, such a metaphor still has an “Aussagefunktion,” in that it communicates a concept associated with human thought. Pointing to that which is seemingly illogical within the world, an absolute metaphor presents a “picture” of possibility latent within the human imagination.

⁵ Jonathan Culler: *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press. Oxford 1997, 71.

⁶ Ruediger Campe, Jocelyn Holland and Paul Reitter: “From the Theory of Technology to the Technique of Metaphor: Blumenberg’s Opening Move.” In: *Qui Parle*. Vol. 12.1 (2000), 105-126.

The Lion as a Picture of Possibility

The lion, “groß, gelb, atmend” (9), appears in front of Blumenberg, the contemplative philosopher. The two of them make eye contact. Subsequent to this confrontation, the protagonist, throughout the course of the narration, attempts to understand what he sees. Early in the novel, he defines the lion as a picture: “An den Nerv eines Bildes, an den Nerv eines Problems kommt man nur heran, wenn man das einzelne Bild, das einzelne Problem geruhsam sich vorlegt und prüft. Wer war der Löwe?” (12) His goal is to analyze the picture – the “Bild” – he observes. In accordance with the dictates of science, he tests what is in front of him. He attempts to categorize the lion, by locating his origin in a preexisting image: “Agaues falscher Löwer [...] der Löwe des Psalmisten [...] Maria Aegyptiaca und ihr Begleitlöwe [...] Wer war der Löwe?” (12). As an empiricist who is convinced that reality can be explained – that a certain effect has a specific cause – Blumenberg endeavors to understand if there is any sort of correspondence between the image of the lion and the world of the phenomena. Is there any way to perceive that this pictured lion belongs to tangible space? To understand how a picture functions and what it elicits it is helpful to turn to Wittgenstein’s ideas as presented in the *Tractatus*. To read a picture in Wittgenstein’s terms is to perceive it as a model of some sort of reality; he writes, “Das Bild ist ein Modell der Wirklichkeit.”⁷ Operating in accord with this definition, the pictured lion is a model of reality. Where then is this reality? It remains unseen, and yet, apparently, it is still articulated. Investigating this reality requires looking inside the individual, a realm, that is, beyond empirical rendition. Modeling a reality, the pictured lion expresses an intuited concept existing in a human subject, namely Blumenberg. Consistently, the text speaks of “seinen [Blumenberg’s] Löwen” (159, 205). This concept, inhering in the protagonist, consists of the possibility or impossibility of a certain circumstance.

Blumenberg’s lion, positioned as a picture derived from an individual in immanent space, is a paradigm of possibility within a logical sphere that admits as real only that which is empirically verifiable. In 2.19 of the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein writes, “Das Bild bildet die Wirklichkeit ab, indem es eine Möglichkeit des Bestehens und Nichtbestehens von Sachverhalten darstellt” (16). A picture depicts how a specific circumstance may or may not exist. Approaching the lion, Blumenberg confronts an image that includes the possibilities of both existence and non-existence. The lion is either absent and entirely fictitious or present and real in a certain form. The narration demonstrates how Blumenberg considers both possibilities; the narrator writes:

Hatte er es mit einem Fabellöwen zu tun bekommen, dem *abwesenden Löwen*, der nicht zu dem gehörte, was der Fall ist, also nie und nimmer zur Welt? Aber [...] dieser ganz andere weltabweisende Löwe kommt doch *in etwas* vor und ist damit auf eine neue und andere Art *der Fall*. Die Sprachspiele der Weltbenenner holen den Löwen ins Dasein und Leben zurück, murmelte er leise vor sich hin. (19)

Here, Blumenberg reflects on two ways of interpreting this lion. Either, the lion belongs to the category of lions existing only in fables and therefore not existing in the real world, at least the real world as defined by Wittgenstein in his opening statement of the *Tractatus*: “Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist” (11). For Wittgenstein, the “case”

7 Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Tractatus logico-philosophicus. Tagebücher 1914-1916. Philosophische Untersuchungen*. Suhrkamp Verlag. Frankfurt am Main 1984, 15.

is what people see and experience; the real, physical world (the Kantian phenomena) is the case. Lions in fables do not belong to this case and hence to this world. Alternatively, this lion, seemingly aloof from the world, not actively engaged in it, is actually present (or, becomes present) in a specific form, and is therefore representative of another type of case, an alternative world within the real, Wittgensteinian world. This lion, existing outside the world, is brought back “ins Leben” linguistically. In language, the lion becomes another “case,” a world representative of what is possible beyond logic, dependent as it is on language production that consists of sentences expressive of possibility. The lion’s status as a picture of possibility – a picture indicating a circumstance that includes both its existence and non-existence – depends on the subjective linguistic constructions of those engaged in a language game, a “Sprachspiel,” an activity we see played out in the novel.

According to the narrator (in the previously cited quote), Blumenberg perceives the lion as appearing “in etwas,” that is, within the realm of phenomena. The lion inhabits the empirical sphere, as the lion is pulled into it through what is linguistically performed. Written into the world, the lion represents “auf eine neue und andere Art *der Fall*.” Blumenberg’s ideas regarding Wittgenstein’s case – and what belongs to it – are similar to those expressed by Hans Blumenberg in his text, *Löwen* (2001). The intertextual parallels between Lewitscharoff’s *Blumenberg* and Hans Blumenberg’s *Löwen* are readily recognizable. Considering whether sentences about a lion in a fable make sense and have, therefore, meaning in the world, as defined in the *Tractatus*, Hans Blumenberg writes: “Denn zweifellos ist der Fabellöwe ein abwesender Löwe, nichts von dem allen, was *der Fall* ist und damit zur Welt gehört, die eben dadurch im ersten Satz jenes ‘Tractatus’ definiert war. Der Löwe der Fabel ist nicht die Gattung *felis leo*, auch nicht ein Individuum namens *Leo*.”⁸ Here, Hans Blumenberg resolutely asserts that a lion in a fable is an absent lion, without correspondence to anything physically verifiable. Such a lion is not part of the case; therefore, he does not belong to the world, as defined by Wittgenstein. However, further developing his argument, Hans Blumenberg contends:

Ein ‘rechter Satz’, das hört sich eher Lessingisch an als logisch unter den Bedingungen der Tractatus-Weltlichkeit; und es erfordert daher, daß dieser weltabwesende Löwe doch ‘in etwas’ vorkommt, eine neue und andere Art von ‘Fall’ ist: *Das heißt, aber, ich sage: es gibt auch ein Sprachspiel mit diesem Satz. Nicht in der Welt, doch in einem Sprachspiel der Weltbenenner vorzukommen, holt den abwesenden Löwen in Dasein und Leben zurück. (Löwen 65)*

The parallels between this quote and Lewitscharoff’s text are conspicuous. A proper sentence about an animal in a fable is not logical according to Wittgenstein’s system, and therefore a non-empirical lion cannot come forth in a “logical” sentence indicating facts in logical space. Yet, there is still something about the sentence, not its logical capabilities, but its functionality within a game, that allows the lion to become manifest in a different type of form. Divorced from the case, at odds with the logical, real world, the lion becomes a new case, not one within the formal, ‘real’ world, but instead in a world constructed through language games played by those involved in naming. What is absent becomes present in language.

⁸ Hans Blumenberg: *Löwen*. Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 2001, 64.

The Lion as a Move within a Language Game

While Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* explores how language relates to pictures that depict what is logical (or illogical) in the real world, his *Philosophische Untersuchungen* reflects on how language becomes meaningful depending on how it is used within a certain context. In using language individuals involve themselves in naming; they ascribe terms to reflect the reality they perceive. Because perceptions incessantly change, terms – constructed in language – remain open, flexible, and dependent on their use in specific instances. To create terms that correspond to perceptions is to name, and this naming is an activity performed as a game, in that those naming set the rules and criteria for how to use terms. Those who name are those who play, and Blumenberg is involved in this naming and playing. Indicating his role in the story, he reflects on the term “Weltbenenner” – “One who names the world” – and applies it to himself: “Die Sprachspiele der Weltbenenner holen den Löwen ins Dasein und Leben zurück, murmelte er leise vor sich hin. Zufrieden mit dem Wort *Weltbenenner*, welches er umstandlos auf sich münzte, ging Blumenberg zu Bett” (19). Acknowledging that he is one of those who names the world, Blumenberg admits that he is participating in a game, a “Sprachspiel,” that will involve various linguistic moves that bring the lion into being and life.

Language games, as Wittgenstein presents them in *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, ensue as participants build sentences with different uses and functions. The meaning a sentence acquires depends on how it is used and how the signs contained within the sentence come together to produce a particular effect. Flexible in nature, ways of use are not fixed; he writes in paragraph 23:

Wieviele Arten der Sätze gibt es aber? Etwa Behauptung, Frage und Befehl? – Es gibt unzählige solcher Arten: unzählige verschiedene Arten der Verwendung alles dessen, was wir ‘Zeichen’, ‘Worte’, ‘Sätze’, nennen. Und diese Mannigfaltigkeit ist nichts Festes, ein für allemal Gegebenes; sondern neue Typen der Sprache, neue Sprachspiele, wie wir sagen können, entstehen und andre veralten und werden vergessen. Das Wort ‘Sprachspiel’ soll hier hervorheben, daß das Sprechen der Sprache ein Teil ist einer Tätigkeit, oder einer Lebensform. (250)

The ways in which signs, words, and sentences may be connected, and therefore used, are endless. Because textual associations are unbounded, the diversity of sentence types prevents the reduction to fixed and established singular sentences capable of rendering unequivocal conceptions. Instead, speaking a language is an activity, a form of existence, in which one engages when testing out how sentences function and what they do to engender new forms of understanding. Blumenberg, involved in this “Lebensform,” takes this “Sprachspiel” enterprise seriously; the narrator writes:

Nur nicht die Fassung verlieren, gerade in diesem *Falle* [my italics] nicht, sagte sich Blumenberg, vielleicht geriet der Satz weniger korrekt, obwohl Blumenberg auch beim Finden von Sätzen im Kopf eine eiserne Disziplin zu wahren pflegte, weil er sich daran gewöhnt hatte, geordnet und nicht etwa überstürzt sich Sätze zurechtzulegen, und zwar fast so geordnet, wie er gemeinhin sprach, ob er nun eine empfangsbereites Aufnahmegerät vor sich hatte oder die Ohren eines Kindes. (9)

Aware of the lion's influence on his emotional state, Blumenberg wishes to maintain composure, particularly as he focuses on linguistically negotiating the case he has confronted. He is keenly aware that this case depends on the sentences forming in his mind. Inventing sentences that must appropriately correspond to what he perceives requires acute attention to detail. The desire for precision reflects his cognizance that

every move in this game counts. The words he uses will dictate the direction of the game and determine how he forms a new picture of the transcendence he senses.

Viewed in this context – as a move within a language game – the lion is an extension of Blumenberg's naming activity, which transpires through the sentences he produces. The lion comes to life in and through the professor's sentences: "Den lustigen Löwen stellte sich Blumenberg für einen Moment als Papierjäger, Papierschnapper vor, brach *die Sätze* [my italics], die sich in ihm dazu formen wollten, aber gleich wieder ab, weil er sich nicht im Albernem verlieren wollte" (18). The lion begins to receive linguistic form through predicates – he becomes named – until Blumenberg, in a moment of rational reflection, abruptly ceases to write. However, in other instances, Blumenberg, unconcerned about his meanderings into the irrational, writes this lion into existence. What the lion is, therefore, depends on the language moves Blumenberg makes as he investigates the irrational (the "Alberne," the "ridiculous"), bringing the intangible and unfounded into the tangible marks produced in the activity of writing. As "ein Sprachmagier" (51), Blumenberg linguistically draws forth, *ex nihilo*, the lion's existence: "Er *nannte* [my italics] den Löwen einen Meister des unscheinbaren Ausdrucks [...] einen Possenreißer schläfriger Ewigkeiten" (199). Identified as an expression of what is not apparent, the lion is a master of the invisible, the transcendent, that becomes visible in and through the linguistic moves performed by the philosopher.

In naming the world by creating sentences, Blumenberg participates in the Enlightenment activity of attempting to control and contain in order to arrive at increased knowledge. He wants to narrate the unknown into existence – "das Unvertraute[s] ins Vertraute zu ziehen" (26) – in order to categorize and establish the unnamed, to erase ambiguity and to thereby cope with an absolute reality, which is absolute in that it absolutely preserves the sense that reality is never fully known. In this vein, he is modeled after Hans Blumenberg, who, in his chapter "Einbrechen des Namens in das Chaos des Unbenannten" in *Arbeit am Mythos* (1979), describes the activity of giving names to entities within the world: "Die Welt mit Namen zu belegen, heißt, das Unterteilte aufzuteilen und einzuteilen, das Ungriffige greifbar, obwohl noch nicht begreifbar zu machen. Auch Setzungen der Orientierung arbeiten elementaren Formen der Verwirrung, zumindest der Verlegenheit, im Grenzfall der Panik, entgegen."⁹ Naming involves providing a form, attaching a sign, to objects and concepts not yet divided (i.e. categorized) and grasped (i.e. comprehended). Through naming, affixing a predicate to an unknown, undetermined entity, individuals can handle the perplexity inherent in the confusion of indeterminacy. Blumenberg performs this; naming the lion, he renders him "griffig" (graspable), comprehensible. The lion, initially unknown (undivided and ungrasped), becomes comprehensible and acts, thereby, as a stabilizing, orienting instance. This is evident in the way the lion provides Blumenberg with confidence as he approaches language: "Ob über ihm als Nachtwächter eine andere Nacht Wache hielt, mit durchdringender Intelligenz begabt, die ihm den Löwen zu Ermunterungszwecken geschickt hatte, vielleicht aber auch, damit endlich klarer, rücksichtsloser, entschiedener geschrieben wurde, damit er Risiken einging und sein Äußerstes zu Papier brachte?" (123-124). Engaging in his intellectual pursuits, Blumenberg has no need to panic. He has a lion, sent from a source with penetrating intelligence.

⁹ Hans Blumenberg: *Arbeit am Mythos*. Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 2006, 49.

Instead of living in confusion, he can write clearly and decisively; he can take risks. While the exact origin of this lion is unknown, the lion's effect on Blumenberg is poignant. Formed in the language Blumenberg employs, the lion has become a stabilizing force in the philosopher's immanent domain. Sensing the orienting capabilities of the sentences he produces, those stemming from his intuition of transcendent presence, Blumenberg becomes increasingly dependent on the game he perpetuates.

While Blumenberg actively engages in language games, the other characters in the novel do not. They do not have access to that "Lebensform" involving "das Sprechen der Sprache" (*Philosophische* 250). Instead, they witness him performing these games and experience the effects of the games, while remaining estranged from the games themselves. Blumenberg participates in language games because of his interest in exploring new ways to use language that would result in novel models and pictures of realities that are not instantaneously accessible. He is obsessed with investigating what is not real in order to arrive at improved representations of what is real. He encourages his students to do the same; he wants his students to see what is different. However, all too often, his students, instead of merely picturing and probing what is different and not real, find themselves caught up in the unreal, absorbed in existential anxiety and unable to find their way back to reality. Richard, for example, assumes that he failed to finish his dissertation, because he did not heed the professor's words and arrive at novel language uses that would render the unveiling of what is different: "Was aber Blumenberg seinen Studenten von Vorlesung zu Vorlesung lässig vorgeführt hatte, genau das war Richard versagt geblieben: auf etwas anderes hinzublicken" (165). Unable to see what is different, unable to complete his dissertation, Richard ventures to South America. While spending time on the Amazon River, he reads Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* and becomes vividly aware of his own existential anxiety: "Richard lieb das Buch auf seinen Bauch sinken – unzweifelhaft, etwas kam hinter ihm her, etwas zutiefst Angsterregendes kam hinter ihm her" (185). Spatially disconnected from reality, he realizes that he had become "befangen" (187), trapped within the fears of what it means to exist "In-der-Welt."¹⁰ His inability to escape his existential predicament – to flee from his anxiety – is pictured in his violent demise; an attractive woman leads him into an ambush that results in his brutal stabbing. Just as Richard dies a tragic death, so too do Blumenberg's three other students. His teachings hold them captive and arrest them.

Drawn into his philosophical system, Blumenberg's students are unable to escape it. Isa, "ein Gefangener" (79), for example, wants to go to Paris to be analyzed by Lacan, in order to free herself from Blumenberg's influence: "Sie wollte zu Lacan nach Paris [...] Lacan war der einzige, der [...] sie von Blumenberg befreien konnte" (109). Enamored with his ideas about "new models" ("andere Modelle") of thinking and the actual potentiality of the "unreal" ("Irrealis"), Isa was entrapped in those language games vividly played during his lectures. One of his lectures demonstrates well how such a game ensues. In this specific one, he shows how employing a specific grammar rule enables one to arrive at new paradigms of possibility:

Gerhard verstand nur die ersten Sätze Blumenbergs. Sie handelten vom Konjunktiv als einem Meisterlichen Instrument, verschiedene Zeiten im Irrealis an das Denken heranzuführen, um die mit Hilfe

10 Martin Heidegger: *Sein und Zeit*. Max Niemeyer Verlag. Tübingen 1984, 188.

von Meßinstrumenten captivierte Zeit und das, was sich in den Erinnerungen als abgelaufene Zeit und darin scheinbar gesicherter Bestand abgelagert hatte, zu durchkreuzen und in andere Modelle zu überführen. (134)

As a linguistic tool, the subjunctive introduces unreal time to the mind, so that the mind can think about what could emerge out of the confines of actual, measured time. The unreal inherent in the subjunctive allows for new, other models of perception. One must seriously consider the "Irreal" to arrive at the "andere." How this sentence is "used," the linguistic maneuvering present, becomes quite lucid. Gerhard, another one of Blumenberg's students, experiences how Blumenberg plays out this language game. As the professor writes "das Wort *Irrealis*" on the "Wandtafel" (135), the young student cannot help but think of Isa, who "wieder und wieder im weißen Kleid an ihm vorbeiradelte" (135); this is an inference to Isa and Gerhard's last encounter before her dreadful suicide. Blumenberg's play with the word "Irreal" causes Gerhard to think of that individual who had slipped into the "Irreal:" "Der Fall Isa scheint zunächst klar. Wir haben es mit einer Verliebten zu tun, die sich im Irrealis verfangen hat" (82). She had indeed become so infatuated with Blumenberg and his philosophical worldview that she ultimately jumped into "another Model" ("andere Modelle") as she became more thoroughly absorbed in the "unreal" ("irreal"). Detached from reality, she was ensconced in that "Irreal" realm that Blumenberg linguistically investigated in his language game.

Keenly aware of the implications of language use, Blumenberg remains unaware of his students' imprisonment within his language games. While included in the games, they are unable to participate in them, because open communication based upon acknowledgment und mutual recognition does not transpire. The "Weltbennener," the one known for naming, does not even know the names of his students. Consequently, he is clueless about his role in Isa's suicide: "Was geschehen war, erfuhr Blumenberg am übernächsten Tag aus der Zeitung, blieb aber ahnungslos, welche Rolle er in dem Drama gespielt hatte [...] weil er [...] nicht einmal ihren Namen kannte" (120). Communicatively disconnected from his students, he is oblivious to what his students actually think and feel. He is utterly unacquainted with their fears, what affects them, their depths, "die Tiefe." Taking a cue from Wittgenstein, he even cautions himself against engaging in such activity, believing, as an instructor, he has a certain responsibility with others' fears:

Er hatte sich bemüht, keinen Menschen mit der Angst zu belästigen [...] *Spiele nicht mit den Tiefen des Anderen*, an diese Aufforderung Wittgensteins hatte er sich intuitiv zu halten versucht, auch wenn ihm das nicht immer gelungen war. Man mußte den Anderen vor der eigenen Angst verschonen und durfte die Angst des Anderen nicht mutwillig hervorlocken. (128)

With the desire to shield his own existential fears, his own fear of the unknown that is evident in his attempts to contain it through his activity of naming and writing, Blumenberg is highly cognizant of his responsibility to avoid raising unnecessary insecurities within his students. Nevertheless, while playing with language to control his fear, he simultaneously includes his students in language games in which they cannot participate because of the communicative disconnect between Blumenberg and his students. As he remains detached from his students – "er [hatte] aber nie direkten Kontakt zu seiner Studentin" (120) – they slowly slip into the "Irreal," as he plays with words that, unbeknownst to him, deeply affect his students. Paradoxically, while he

remains communicatively disengaged from his students, he maintains close communicative contact with the lion, whom he understands and with whom he relates. He needs the picture of the lion, his own linguistically constructed figure, to remind him of his ability to communicate and continually engage in language games.

In his *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, Wittgenstein explores how communicative understanding can transpire between two subjects. He concludes that only a shared context, a common "Life Form," can bridge together those inhabiting distinctly different discourses and modes of thinking. To participate in a language game involving two partners, the subjects must be able to relate through mutual experiences. Because there is a "radical incommensurability between humans and animals",¹¹ Wittgenstein believes that humans cannot understand lions; he writes, "Wenn ein Löwe sprechen könnte, wir könnten ihn nicht verstehen" (*Untersuchungen* 568). Speaking alone does not guarantee arrival at understanding. Words, according to Wittgenstein, take on meaning through their experience-based use. Humans would have to have the same experiences as lions, in order to understand them if they were to speak. Without shared experiences, there is no understanding. Blumenberg, however, in Lewitscharoff's narration, can understand his lion. For him, "Der Löwe funktionierte anders, als Wittgenstein geglaubt hatte. Wenn ein Löwe sprechen könnte, könnten wir ihn nicht verstehen, hatte er behauptet. Blumenberg verstand ihn sehr wohl. Der Löwe fungierte als Zuversichtsgenerator, der die Härchen des Protests, die sich in Blumenbergs *Denken* [my italics] immer wieder aufstellten, ein wenig glattbürstete" (129). In keeping with Wittgenstein's argument, Blumenberg understands the lion because they have some sort of shared life form. The similarities existing between the subject and the subject's projected image have generated a set of common experiences. This image has, to some degree, transformed into a type of subject with parallel structures, reflecting thereby its anthropomorphic construction: "Der Löwe vernahm alles, überprüfte alles und achtete mit hoheitsvollen Ohren, die selbst im Keim verworfene *Gedanken* [my italics] hören konnten" (129). This projected figure takes on a life reflective of human status in and through the novel's textual strategy. This product of human invention, endowed with characteristics that derive from the human experience – for example, it becomes "schläfrig" – is of equal status as the protagonist Blumenberg. In this sense, the text thoroughly nullifies any claim of divine status. Blumenberg understands the lion because he is a human construction. He knows the lion, and the lion correspondingly consoles (152) him, protects him from "Todesfurcht" (126), gives him the strength to speak "beseelt" (26), and enables him to sense and think well. The empathetic lion comforts and supports Blumenberg: "Der Löwe war gekommen, ihn in seinem Wesen zu hegen, wie dies kein Mensch je für ihn getan hatte oder je würde für ihn tun können" (35). He can empathize and feel pain; he can console and inspire, because he derives these features from a human who has ascribed these qualities to him.

While Blumenberg understands the lion and the lion conversely consoles him, Blumenberg does not understand his students, and he does not console them in his eloquent philosophical disquisitions. They cannot access that consoling picture – that image of transcendent possibility – their professor forms in his language games.

11 John Churchill: "If a Lion Could Talk ...". In: *Philosophical Investigations*. Vol. 12.4 (1989), 308-324.

Instead, he traps them within language games in which he excludes them from playing, in that he fails to acknowledge them as players in those games – he excludes them from a dynamic form of life. His students, for example, have the sense that their professor does not even know who they are; Richard feels that Blumenberg never knew “daß es ihn [Richard] überhaupt gab” (172). Blumenberg is utterly indifferent towards his students: “Aber nach und nach war ihm das Interesse an den Studenten [...] abhanden gekommen” (28-29). Directly after his lectures he avoids speaking with them; “Wie immer hatte er den Besuchern keine Gelegenheit geboten, anschließend mit ihm ins Gespräch zu kommen” (27); “Der Professor war immer zu schnell fortgeeilt, nach Hause, in sein eigenes Reich” (161). Preventing his students from participating in the language games, he leaves them enveloped in pain, unable to be consoled. Demmerling discusses the repercussions of being unable to access language:

Innere Vorgänge wie Schmerzen [...] stellen [...] natürliche und primitive Reaktionen dar, die in der Interaktion eines Organismus mit seiner Umwelt entstehen [...] Erst durch seine Verbindung mit Sprachspielen erhält das Innere seine charakteristische Kontur und Schärfe. Die Sprache verleiht dem Inneren Gehalt und Substanz, indem Bedeutsamkeitsbezüge hergestellt und aufgespannt werden.¹²

With language, an individual can express pains and deeply embedded emotions, “das Tiefe.” Language enables the disclosure of an unseen, inner realm that is, on its own, expressionless; language gives content and substance to this inner realm and allows it to be meaningfully expressed. Unable to engage with their professor, the students cannot give voice to their own inner intuitions; they remain trapped in the unreal.

While imprisoned in Blumenberg’s thinking, his students do not, nevertheless, remain existentially entrapped in a case utterly void of consolation. After they have all died – including Blumenberg (202) – they gather a final time, in the interior of a cave, a purgatory of sorts, where they philosophize and converse. Interestingly, within this cave, Blumenberg recognizes his students (205) and even converses with them; it is as if they have been allowed to enter into a language game and been granted access to pictures, the “wandelbarer Wall, an dem die Bilder auflaufen” (204). The pictures of possibility they see are reflected and reinforced in the space they occupy. This constricted realm, the cave, is open, permitting access to an uncontained sphere: “Beckett hatte einen zylindrischen Behälter vor Augen. Oben zu. Kein Entkommen [...] Im Kopf des Lesers muß jetzt ein davon verschiedener Behälter entstehen [...] groß, der Raum, wandelbar groß und größer, kein Raum der Einsperrung [...] Licht” (203). Spatially, they exist in a domain of possibility, one in which they could access Platonic forms (211) – if they would only turn away from looking at mere shadows, the pictures projected onto the wall. When Blumenberg leaves the cave, they receive the picture that they too could access the “Licht,” the content informing the pictures of possibility they observe.

In this permeable purgatory, Blumenberg’s students receive a new picture of him, as he struggles to maneuver his way linguistically through this reality. Here in the cave, Blumenberg’s lifelong ability to manipulate language to arrive at new ways of perceiving

12 Christoph Demmerling: “Kein Etwas, aber auch nicht ein Nichts: Nachdenken über Empfindungen und Gefühle im Anschluss an Wittgenstein.” In: *In Sprachspiele verstrickt – oder: Wie man der Fliege den Ausweg zeigt*. Ed. by Stefan Tolksdorf and Holm Tetens. Walter de Gruyter GmbH 2010, 239-256.

and naming the world unravels. This becomes clear as his capability to grasp words, to recall names, and to integrate these into useful sentences begins to falter:

Bilder, Halbsätze drifteten in Schwallen an ihm vorbei, und darin entschwammen einzelne Wörter [...] er merkte, daß er sich nicht mehr an seinen Namen erinnern konnte, auch an die Namen der anderen nicht [...] Wie durchziehende Vogelschwärme kreuzten Wörter in ihm, sanken, erhoben sich, pfeilten vorüber, er tastete an den Wortleibern herum, die er kurz zu fassen bekam, probierte Silbenkombinationen aus, ohne Erfolg. Wie hieß noch? (215)

This master of language, this “Sprachmagier” and “Weltbenenner,” who, throughout the novel, carefully crafted words, molding them into sentences with an affective strength that produced the lion that inspired him, now finds himself enduring some sort of separation from the game in which he had played. As words fall out of his grasp, his ability to name diminishes and his identity as Weltbenenner slips away. Losing the ability to engage in language games, he ironically slips into the state of being unable to speak, unable to name – “Wie hieß noch?” Intimations at the loss of language occur simultaneously with his transferal from one reality – “case” – to another “case:” “Da hieb ihm der Löwe die Pranke vor die Brust und riß ihn in eine andere Welt” (216). This move into another world involves the transfer into another case. After exiting the physical world (first case) upon their deaths, Blumenberg and his students find themselves in a cave (second case), and Blumenberg alone is transferred into another world (third case). This gradual movement away from physical reality coincides with the increased inability to hold on to linguistic materiality. His incapability of embracing and grasping his material existence is demonstrated through his inability to name the world, the “case,” which has become increasingly elusive. Leaving the world, the case appearing to be the location of genuine experience, Blumenberg approaches and experiences that which is absent in material space and in language, namely the “Platonic” forms, the genuine concept of transcendence that he had intuited all along. With greater access to this concept, he has a decreased need for language, and, as he moves into another case, he offers his students a vivid picture of either the possibility or impossibility that they could experience the same. While not necessarily consoling, this picture does demonstrate that the world, the actual case, just may indeed not be everything that is the case.

Conclusion

“Wer war der Löwe?” This question occupies Blumenberg throughout the novel. Endeavoring to arrive at an answer, Blumenberg explores a picture that he sees through the language he uses to create it. The picture that emerges eludes categorization; as such, it is an absolute metaphor, unable to be limited and restricted. Unbound and free to explore the new, this metaphoric picture represents a distinct case, endowed with both the possibility and impossibility of the circumstance of its real existence beyond the known, experienced, empirical world – Wittgenstein’s “case.” To consider and create this case, Blumenberg engages in a language game, looking for new possibilities through sentences that generate a transcendent image corresponding to his intuition. The lion that comes forth in language is the same lion that exceeds language, unable to be contained within it. When Blumenberg loses his ability to play with language – to speak – he demonstrates his inability to contain that about

which he cannot speak, confirming Wittgenstein's famous adage: "Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muß man schweigen" (*Tractatus* 85). Silenced, Blumenberg becomes like his students, unable to take part in a "Lebensform," "das Sprechen einer Sprache." Excluded from the language game, he cannot create his stabilizing instance. Without solidity, he is helplessly ripped out of one case and transferred into another one. This is the picture Blumenberg leaves his students, and in this picture resides the possibility of the existence or nonexistence of a circumstance consisting of the persistent activity of the transcendent. Involved in the formation of this picture, Lewitscharoff's narrator has left the reader with a new way of conceiving a concept which individuals and religious traditions throughout the historical record have been unable to directly access, a concept that will always only ever be a picture, an absolute metaphor of transcendent possibility.

