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## POSITIVITY OF PAIN – COGNITIVE CONSIDERATIONS ON ITS VERBAL AND VISUAL MANIFESTATIONS

The title of the paper harks back to Schopenhauerian ‘der Positivität des Schmerzens’, a formulation which, stripped of its broader philosophical context, reads to most of us paradoxical if not overtly contradictory. The folk (non-medical) perception of pain may be evaluatively negative, but there are also pain conceptualizations which reveal that humans infrequently think about this phenomenon along more positive lines. Thus, being predominantly construed as an ‘evil-doer’, pain does not preclude more positive construals, both in medical and non-medical fields. ‘Positivity of pain’, then, is often explored within literary, anthropological, psychological, theological, social, therapeutic and utilitarian realms, and, as Sussex puts it, “in its interdisciplinary span, pain language is a prototypical example of a problem of applied linguistics” (2009: 4). With this in mind, I take a closer look at some verbal as well as verbo-pictorial manifestations of pain. The focus of the present study is specifically on the overarching metaphor +PAIN as ‘GOOD-DOER’+ (naturally contrasted with the previously hinted +PAIN as ‘EVIL-DOER’+), further broken into more specific sub-metaphors. An attempt at capturing and describing some of these apparently counter-intuitive pain metaphorizations reveals their ‘positive potential’, a potential of tools with which to obtain control over pain and, in many cases, re-forge it into something ‘better’, something evaluatively positive.

Keywords: *Pain metaphors, positivity, evaluation, ‘good-doer’, interdisciplinarity*

### 1. Introductory comments

That PAIN is “an agent ... invested with a destructive will” (Biro 2010: 97), and that it gets metaphorized with the use of axiologically negative source domains (the terms ‘source domain’ and ‘target domain’ are elaborated on in Section 2 of this paper), is almost stating the obvious. The +‘EVIL-DOER’+ pain metaphors are extensively exemplified in many sources, scientific and

non-scientific alike (for ‘evil’ pain metaphorisations in medical discourse see, for instance, De Louw and Palka 2016). It seems that the most pervasive and numerous ‘evil’ pain metaphors are +(WILD) ANIMAL+ metaphors and the +WEAPONRY/POINTED OBJECT+ metaphors (to be found, for instance, in the McGill Pain Questionnaire (MPQ) developed in Canada in 1975 by Ronald Melzack). Still, it appears that along with the most predictable ‘evil’ construal of pain, there are also some less obvious ways of structuring it, something manifested in other sub-types of pain metaphors.

## 2. Theoretical and methodological underpinnings

Before I proceed to discuss apparently less obvious ‘positively charged’ pain construals, it is necessary to present a few theoretical and methodological concepts upon which this work hinges.

The most basic methodological preliminary here is the theory formulated in Lakoff and Johnson’s seminal book *Metaphors We Live By* (1980/2003), which deals with the cognitive metaphor analysis. The researchers come up with the so-called Conceptual Metaphor Theory, the main tenet of which is that metaphor is not merely a stylistic flourish embellishing the language, but, ostensibly first and foremost, a vital ‘ingredient’ of thought itself. This, in turn, implies that thought is predominantly metaphorical. Two important theoretical constructs functioning within Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) are ‘source domain’ and ‘target domain’ (hereafter abbreviated as SD and TD respectively). SD is the one

which provides structure by virtue of metaphor, ... [whereas TD] is the domain being structured by virtue of metaphor. This is achieved due to cross-domain mappings projecting structure from the source domain onto the target domain thus establishing a conventional link at the conceptual level. (Evans 2007: 201-202, 210)

‘Pain language’, which I analyse here, is mostly (if not entirely) figurative. For this reason I shall adopt a broad definition of metaphor as it is employed by Bourke in her book *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers*. Thus, as shorthand, I will employ the term ‘metaphor’ to refer to “rhetorical figures of speech that employ association, comparison, or resemblance, as in analogies between two things (‘pain gnawed at his stomach’), similes (‘the pain felt like a rat, gnawing his stomach’), and metonyms (‘the gnawing continued’)” (Bourke 2014: 54).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I specify what I perceive as metaphor to pre-empt potential criticism of certain fragments of the present paper. For instance, while mentioning Deborah Ann’s verbo-pictorial artistic work (in Section 5), I do not concentrate on its metonymic character as I intend to stress its general *metaphoric* character, especially in the context of negative-pain conceptualizations being re-forged

Another theoretical concept that needs clarifying is the one of multimodal metaphor. Charles Forceville, who is a leading researcher in multimodal metaphoricality, defines multimodal metaphors “as [the ones] in which target, source, and/or mappable features are represented or suggested by at least two different sign systems (one of which may be language) or modes of perception” (2008: 463 in Semino 2010: 17-18). It can be then stated that what is achieved within such a metaphor is the type of interaction between the text and the picture/image. Forceville also enumerates a few characteristic features of this metaphoric type (which, in my view, are also meant to be advantages), one of them being that “pictorial and multimodal source domains probably have a stronger *emotional appeal* than verbal ones.” (Forceville 2008: 463; italics mine). This feature seems to be particularly relevant in the context of pain description, as pain is difficult to capture in language itself, so maybe a visual image can come to rescue when it comes to expressing pain more emotionally and vividly, which in fact translates into conveying it more authentically and precisely.<sup>2</sup>

In Section 5 I also argue that certain ‘positive value’ pain metaphors can be classified as synesthetic ones. I come along with Forceville’s general claim that

[c]learly, if metaphors are essential to thinking (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 1999, 2003), it makes sense that they should occur not only in language, but also in static and moving pictures, *sounds*, music, gestures, even in *touch* and *smell*—and in their *various permutations*. (2008: 463; italics mine).

This conviction appears to be a good starting point to go one step further and state that pain metaphors can be not only *multi-modal*, that is to be found in certain (artistic) genres favouring specific modalities (like language, sound, touch, or smell), but they are often *inter-modal*, in that they combine various modalities that become (basis for) their SDs and TDs, and these “perceptually based metaphorical expressions (e.g., “cold silence”) are grounded in the structure of *perceptual experiences* and the human *sensory system*.” (Cacciari in Gibbs 2008: 11; italics mine). Unlike similes, zeugmas, and ‘non-synesthetic’ metaphors

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into something functionally positive (therapeutic, purifying, and the like). Still, I concur with the argument concerning a metonymic motivation for conceptual metaphors (Barcelona 2003), at the same time being aware of numerous controversies arising when one wants to differentiate between metaphor and metonymy. To account for dynamic and interactive relations between these two tropes, Goossens (1990) coins the term ‘metaphonymy’, whereas Barcelona twenty years later admits that establishing the distinction between metaphor and metonymy is problematic because “[c]ognitive domains often have fuzzy boundaries ...[and] [m]etaphor and metonymy very often interact in intricate patterns, a fact which complicates their distinction” (2010: 36).

<sup>2</sup> I make mention of such ‘pain examples’ combining verbal and pictorial expression (see Section 5), arguing that they have the potential to not only be more expressive, but also to uncover pain’s positivity (which is the focus of my paper).

which involve concrete-to-abstract mapping, synaesthetics (e.g., *a sweet silence*) entail the mapping of two concrete terms, belonging to two different sensory domains. Synaesthetic metaphors are expressions in which one sensory modality is described in the terms of another. Accordingly, a voice (hearing modality) can be described as sweet (taste modality) or a musical note (again hearing modality) as sharp (taste modality). Similarly, colors (sight modality) are often defined as cold or hot (touch modality ...). (Shen 2008: 302; italics original)

Against the backdrop of the above assertion, I contend that, under certain circumstances, pain may infrequently be viewed as a special sub-modality of touch. Such a contention is corroborated by the so-called pattern theory of pain which

stated that any somaesthetic sensation occurred by a specific and particular pattern of neural firing and that the spatial and temporal profile of firing of the peripheral nerves encoded the stimulus type and intensity ... . Lele et al. (1954) championed this theory and added that *cutaneous sensory nerve fibers*, with the exception of those innervating hair cells, *are the same*. (Moayedid and Davis 2013: 9; italics mine)

The adjective ‘cutaneous’ strongly implies tactile sensations (sense of touch), and Bourke encapsulates the above idea quite neatly and simply, clarifying that by virtue of the pattern theory of pain “the *receptors for pain* are shared with other senses, such as *touch*” (2014: 10; italics mine).

In sum, I argue that not only is it plausible to treat pain as a special type of touch modality, but also that pain can be structured at the metaphoric level within synesthetic patterns, in which cases ‘painful touch’ is combined, for instance, with the olfactory (smell) modality (see example (7) in Section 5), the gustatory (taste) modality (see examples (8), (9), (10), (11) and (12) in Section 5), and with the mix of the gustatory and visual/color modalities (see example (10) in Section 5). Thus, my assertion concerning the characteristics of synesthetic metaphors of pain to some extent constitutes the theoretical and methodological basis of the present paper (as it stems from and is supported by the previous research and theories), but it may also be ‘read’ as one of the conclusions ‘emboldening’ my thesis, namely that there exist various evaluatively positive metaphoric construals of pain. The above thesis cannot be addressed without making recourse to the axiological considerations by Tomasz Krzeszowski (1997). I elaborate on his ideas in the subsequent section.

Last but not least, at this point it is necessary to justify and defend the choice of the examples that I employ to illustrate my thesis, namely that pain is often rendered as a positive construct. Pain as ‘something’ multidimensional is expressed via language and image in both medical, popular, and literary contexts. This is quite unsurprising to me as both medical professionals, ordinary people, and men of letters attempt to capture and describe pain to the best of their abilities. This in turn implies the presence of a mixed corpus, based on medical, popular and literary sources. Alongside, I also use at least two types of corpora (verbal and pictorial), with the examples being accessed also from the

Google search and glimpsed in numerous medical articles. Such a procedure is warranted, since, as Kilgarriff and Grefenstette state, “[t]he Web, teeming as it is with language data, of all manner of varieties and languages, in vast quantity and freely available, is a fabulous linguists’ playground” (2003: 333). One may still have the impression that the examples are randomly selected and meant to support a priori ideas. This is not the case since the instances that follow are taken from the extensive corpus that I created for the purposes of a broader study of pain (which is also a mixture of medical, popular and literary sources), where *I have already traced* both negative, neutral, and positive manifestations of this construct (see Palka 2013, unpublished phd thesis, University of Silesia). Thus, the results of my previous research (Ibid.) reveal negative, mixed, and positive construals of pain, but, for obvious reasons, in this paper I only concentrate on manifestations of one specific aspect of pain, which is its purported positivity (I briefly describe these three construals of pain based on Palka 2013 in the subsequent section).

### 3. Axiological sub-types of pain metaphorisation

‘The language of pain’ reveals a number of examples that indicate the presence of two other sub-types of evaluative pain metaphors, which can be dubbed the +NEUTRAL DOER+ and the +‘GOOD-DOER’+ metaphors. Especially the last metaphor can be reformulated more generically<sup>3</sup> as +PAIN IS GOOD+, a formulation that for many may sound not only as a debatable axiological reversal, but also as a blatant contradiction in terms. The +EVIL PAIN+ metaphors and the +NEUTRAL/GOOD PAIN+ metaphors are also different in diagnostic terms. It appears that the +‘EVIL-DOER’+ are easier to pinpoint because the elements of their SDs are axiologically precise – when more ‘tangible’ adversary, animal or weaponry are mapped onto pain (treated as a TD), the latter is bound to be construed as something negative, as the most salient negative elements of the SDs in question are easily retrieved and highlighted. Conversely, when it comes to diagnosing the +‘NEUTRAL/GOOD-DOER’+ metaphors, we more often must make recourse to contextual clues and other levels of description. At this point it is apt to quote Johansson Falck who argues, along with Cornelia Müller (2008) that “[m]etaphors do not operate on the level of a linguistic system, but *on the level of use*. Accordingly, *metaphoricity* is not

<sup>3</sup> What I understand as ‘generic metaphor’ in this context is some higher-level metaphor that can be broken into specific lower-level metaphors. As I argue, in this case the higher-level +PAIN IS GOOD+ metaphor is manifested in its lower-level instantiations, such as +ALLY+, +HEALER/PURIFIER+, +WELCOME COMPANION+, +FRIEND+, +ALARM BELL+, +PROTECTIVE MECHANISM+, +GUARDIAN+, +AROMA/PLEASANT TASTE+, +VALUABLE ENTITY+, and +TEACHER+ (they are all discussed in more detail in Sections 5 and 6 herein; see also Palka 2013).

a static property of a word, but a *dynamic part of a cognitive activation process in an individual person at a given moment in time*" (2010: 114; italics mine). This dynamic and individual character of metaphorization nicely dovetails with the multifaceted nature of pain itself, where dynamicity and individuality are also stressed:

[A]s has been suggested by Lewis (1962), pain is a human experience which involves a complex interaction of *physical, mental* and *spiritual* processes, then the articulation of such experience entails self-description, which in turn, reveals *attitude, belief* and *worldview* (Polanyi 1958). However far the scientific understanding of pain advances, its *lived experience and individual interpretation* will continue to raise questions of meaning which cannot have a "definitive" scientific answer (Tu 1980). (quoted in Madjar 1998: 2; italics mine)

It should be noted, however, that there will be a group of the positive 'value-laden' pain metaphors whose SDs will be axiologically distinctive and self-explanatory. It is so, in my view, due to the fact that they have been deeply entrenched both in language and collective consciousness of the occidental culture. What I have in mind is PAIN construed as a warning system/signal/bell or a defensive/protective mechanism, notions that are all inherently positive, and their positiveness is taken for granted. A pain metaphor that many of us will instantaneously recognize is the Cartesian +WARNING BELL+ metaphor, debatable nowadays in strictly scientific terms since we already know that the brain is not 'told' by pain about some injury but rather the brain *actively processes* pain, which means that pain is *perceived*, and many factors may be involved (genetic, neuroanatomical, emotive, psychological or even socio-cultural). Medically still, it can be a value in itself, as is illustrated by the quotation below (Example 1), which additionally highlights a related +ADAPTIVE MECHANISM+ metaphor:

- (1) Paradoxically, disease and *pain* can be *positive values* for a person. After all, it is *pain* that is an *adaptive mechanism* alerting a person as to a somatic problem and it alerts the person to present danger that may lead to further pain and damage. (Marcum 2008: 203; italics mine)

I have sporadically glimpsed the metaphoric construal of pain as +A 'GOOD-DOER'+ while analyzing English literary corpora<sup>4</sup>, where I found *gentle pains and gentle pleasures* (from the translation of Plato's *Laws*), and *a respite from my gentle pain* (from P.B. Shelley's poem *Letter to Maria Gisborne*). They signal the metaphor +PAIN IS AN ENTITY OF SPECIFIED SURFACE/TEXTURE or IN CONTACT with another entity+, and pain's gentleness can be considered as something

<sup>4</sup> My English literary corpus, employed for analyzing pain construals, is based on University of Adelaide Library's collection of classic works of Literature, Philosophy, Science, and History – eBooks@Adelaide. (2007), to be accessed at <http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/#search>

non-prototypical, a kind of experiential contradiction. The afore-mentioned apparent clash can be highlighted even more in juxtapositions of the +‘GOOD-DOER’+ pattern with the +WEAPONRY/POINTED OBJECT+ metaphors for pain, where the latter most often bear an axiologically negative message, obviously opposite to the message conveyed by the former pattern. The examples of such a seemingly contradictory metaphoric mixture can be found in contexts ranging from scientific through philosophico-theological and poetic to every-day ones.

Norris (2009) indicates all the above-mentioned apparent incongruities at the level of the title of her article, which is *The paradox of healing pain*, and defends the thesis (corroborated by extensive research) that, from the perspective of many religions, we can “[furnish] suffering as such with a ‘plus’ sign, which was originally foreign to it” (Gerth and Mills 1958: 274 in Norris 2009: 24). On the basis of Norris’s considerations it is possible, to my way of thinking, to come up with a tripartite division of pain metaphors in terms of their axiology:

Type 1: *Non-medicalized metaphors for pain* – they are descriptive, indicate the presence of ‘valueless’ pain (–); they employ such SDs as an *enemy*, *wild animal*, *weaponry*, *pointed object*, and the like. They are mainly preferred by non-professionals and patients.

Type 2: *Medicalized metaphors for pain* – they are descriptive-diagnostic, indicate the presence of ‘valued’ pain (+/–), but only in the instrumental sense; they make use of such SDs as a *signal*, *alarm bell*, *guardian*, *protective/warning mechanism*, and the like. They are mainly favored by (medical) professionals.

Type 3: *Spiritualized metaphors for pain* – they are descriptive-explicatory/moralizing, and in most cases indicate the presence of strongly ‘valued’ pain (+), which has redemptive and/or transformative potential; the most generic metaphor here resorts to SD of a *healer/purifier*, but also an *ally*, *companion*, *friend*, *pleasurable sensation*, and the like. They are predominantly employed by philosophers and theologians, but also by some lay people or, for instance, writers. (Palka 2013: 346; underscoring and italics original)

Thus, Type 1 and 3 represent axiological poles – minus and plus respectively, whereas Type 2 represents more complex multi-level mixed axiology, minus merged with plus. Of course, the above classification is a simplification of a kind, and most probably it is possible to trace more subtle hybrids of these three axiological types in certain contexts. In this paper I shall concentrate solely on the ‘plus’ Type 3. Also, the so-called pedagogic and artistic metaphoric conceptualizations discussed in Section 6 can be subsumed under Type 3, since they are, in my view, instantiations of the +PAIN IS A ‘GOOD-DOER’ + metaphor.

At this point I feel it apt to pick up once again the thread of an apparently unexpected and contradictory axiological reversal emergent from the +PAIN IS GOOD+ metaphor (see the beginning of this section). Interestingly, in the context of Christianity, co-existence of pain’s ‘badness’ and ‘goodness’ appears to be nothing new and can be reasonably justified, though it may at first sight be surprising. As Krzeszowski puts it,



[o]ne of the most *baffling* aspects of Christian axiology is a *positive value assigned to suffering*, which culminates in the utmost positive value as assigned to Christ's suffering, metonymically expressed in the idea of the Cross, ... [and] the idea of suffering on the Cross allows one ... to resolve the *paradoxical* reversal of polarities. (1997: 272; italics mine)

This apparent axiological paradox is accounted for by the axiological hierarchy with higher positive values (moral or spiritual) overriding lower negative values (sensory) (Ibid.).<sup>5</sup> Thus, pain may be considered and evaluated simultaneously at these two levels within the same consistently structured context. As a result, in the (Christian) religious discourse describing pain, the higher spiritual level is foregrounded and rendered as more important, whereas the lower sensory level, though often present, is given less priority or even backgrounded. This tendency is also exemplified by Bourke (2014), who provides us with an abundance of accounts (from various periods of history) featuring positively valued pain, mainly within the Anglo-American context (which may be in fact viewed as the Christianity-oriented ambience).<sup>6</sup> The examples that I present in Sections 4, 5 and 6 drive the point home, but many of them go beyond this religious framework and in fact may be dubbed as purely secular (belonging to the literary, popular, or commercial realms). Thus, the reader should bear in mind that I qualify the meaning of the term 'spiritualized' (applied to Type-3 metaphors) in that it embraces metaphorizations originating from both religious and non-religious contexts, but, to resort to Krzeszowski's terminology, what is stressed in them is the higher spiritual level of positive values, "in a way analogous to an ill-tasting medicine as a bearer of negative values at the sensory level and of positive values at the vital level" (1997: 272).

#### 4. Verbal 'spiritualised' metaphors for pain

The meaning of the adjective 'spiritualized' as it functions in the context of the present article has already been explained above at the end of the previous section. Below the reader will find the discussion on generic instantiations of the Type 3 pain metaphors in language.

The generic metaphor +PAIN IS A HEALER+ can be said to undergird Norris's thesis and is implied throughout the whole article. In the last words, she states that

<sup>5</sup> I am grateful to anonymous reviewers for drawing my attention to this intriguing axiological problem as well as for their other critical comments which helped in improving the quality of the paper.

<sup>6</sup> In the chapter *Religion* Bourke elaborates mostly on the positive function of pain within religious contexts and the ways it is manifested via language and/or image. It seems that at least up to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century pain was associated with many positive aspects, such as spiritual guidance, personal improvement, salvation, instructing and teaching people how to live, or even socializing Christian children (see Bourke 2014: 87-130).

- (2) in the context of a [medicalized material body] ‘*healing pain*’ means *getting rid of pain*. But where there is a schema that provides deeper meaning, ‘*healing pain*’ means *pain that brings healing*. Pain still entails suffering, but that suffering is understood within a framework that gives it value. (2000: 33; italics mine)

It is also worthwhile to note that Norris intentionally emphasises syntactic ambiguity residing in the English phrase *healing pain* because it serves her purposes when it comes to marking the difference between the Western biomedical way of treating pain and the more holistic and spiritual approach to pain. Thus, in the former case ‘valueless’ pain (Type 1) should be healed and eliminated, whereas in the latter it is a healer itself (endowed with value, provided it is embedded in a specific meaningful religious/spiritual framework). The ‘auxiliary’ metaphor which is axiologically opposite to the one of a +HEALER+ is +PAIN IS AN UNWANTED OBJECT+ (*getting rid of pain*). Analogously, in Dawne Moon’s sociological paper we can trace a related generic-level metaphor apparently endowed with ‘plus axiology’, namely +PAIN IS A PURIFIER+. Again, what we need is a specific socio-cultural and religious framework:

- (3) To Missionary’s Pete Vogel as well as to the pro-gay Nancy Cook of City Church, a *language of gay pain* made gay men and lesbians unthreatening; their *suffering* rhetorically *purified* them. ... Conservatives agreed with liberals that the church should be a place of welcome and healing for everyone; thus, both saw the *pain frame* as a legitimate rationale for the church to welcome gay men and lesbians. (2005: 343-344; italics mine)

Similarly to the previous context, the +PURIFIER+ metaphor is not only clarificatory, but, in a way, theory-constitutive—the author uses it as a vehicle to illustrate and validate her research and conclusions.

A novel merging of the +HEALER+, +PURIFIER+ and +WEAPONRY/ POINTED OBJECT+ metaphors functioning within the religious discourse is offered by Maureen Conroy in *Living Prayer*, where the author considers pain to be one of the ‘agents’ that may help people to create the so-called ‘inner space’:

- (4) Pain is another way to create inner space. None of us likes suffering, but it is a part of our lives. *Pain bores* a hole deep inside us and *enables us to be more open to God*. If we can face our pain and not avoid it, feel it in its depth, let it *empty us*, let *the sword pierce* our hearts, then we will *become freer to receive God*. (Maureen Conroy, *Living Prayer*, July-August 1990; <http://bintana.tripod.com/ref/innerspace.htm>; italics mine)

In the excerpt above, there are two easily identifiable specific +WEAPONRY+ sub-metaphors for pain, namely +A DRILL+ and +A SWORD+. At face value, they should refer to axiologically negative reality (hence *pain bores a hole deep inside* and *the [pain-]sword pierce[s] our hearts*), but the counterbalancing fragments signaling the +HEALER/PURIFIER+ metaphor, color them—contrary to preliminary assumptions—as axiologically positive (hence *pain ... enables us to be more open/empties us/[makes us] become freer...*). The agentive character of pain as +WEAPONRY/POINTED OBJECT+ causes the religious/spiritual ‘emptying’ of a person, which in turn implies purification and healing. It should also be noted that the above image exploits the pervasive conceptual metaphor of +A PERSON IS A CONTAINER+; however, whereas in medical contexts pain enters and/or leaves a highly conventionalized +BODY CONTAINER+, in the theological account above it actually ‘holes’ the inner surface of a less conventionalized +SPIRITUAL CONTAINER+. It appears, then, that the generic +HUMAN CONTAINER+ metaphor is ‘refreshed’ in that it employs a less entrenched image (at least in non-religious discourse), and +A SPIRITUAL CONTAINER+ can be recast in more specific terms as +A PERSON IS AN OPEN/ACCESSIBLE VESSEL+ (a metaphor certainly not alien to theological discourse). Also, the +DRILL+ and +SWORD+ metaphors are revitalized—in the light of Müller’s theory of dynamic metaphoricity (2008), these metaphors are sleeping in the medical discourse (in traditional terms they are ‘dead’), but they are waking in the religious discourse (they are ‘alive and creative’).<sup>7</sup>

In a similar fashion to Conroy, Sandy Boucher tries to make the best of pain and turn it into a therapeutic entity by recalling a specific type of discourse employed by her meditation instructor (who wanted to decrease her physical pain):

<sup>7</sup> The highlighting of the (conventionally negative) ‘perforative’ abilities of these two ‘instrumental’ metaphors in the context discussed is absolutely crucial; without this the Christian significance of pain would not be conveyed and explained. In this respect the ‘new’ metaphors are ‘semi-literal’ and partly divested of their metaphoricity. It looks, though, that the creative character of conceptual metaphors rests not only upon their ability to fall back on their unused parts (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 53), but also upon the ability to come back to the ‘literal’. Keeping to strict cognitive lines, however, we may call such a claim an outright fallacy as metaphor is fundamentally conceptual, not linguistic, in nature. Rejecting the traditional theories of the metaphor, Lakoff speaks of “the old literal-figurative distinction [which may mislead one into thinking] that one ‘arrives at’ a metaphorical interpretation by ‘starting’ with the literal meaning and applying some algorithmic process to it” (1993: 205). One way or the other, it can be spotted that in strictly medical instrumental metaphors the primary function of a drill or a sword is not strongly foregrounded, and the description of the effect produced by an apparent ‘boring’ or ‘piercing’ movement of a pain-producer seems to be more metaphorized than the one we observe in (4), where it seems to be more ‘literalized’. I should also add that the traditional meaning of literalness is slightly tampered with in this paper. What I have in mind is some form of ‘literalization-in-metaphorization’, an idea that an inherent prototypical and most salient function of a certain entity constituting a given SD is not smothered by automatized conventional use. It appears that the SD meaning remains active in metaphor. Thus, the more of such literalization within a given metaphor, the better chance it stands to become a nucleus of something creative and novel.

- (5) What if you were to surrender to [pain], to *welcome* it like a *friend*? You are very interested in your friend, you give all your attention to her. Can you *give your attention to the pain*? What are the sensations in your back? What is their nature, their intensity, their *texture*? Do they stay the same or do they change? Your pain is *not so simple*: it is a *worthy object* for your meditative inquiry. ... Then I sent my consciousness to my lower back ... I stayed there, *watching this pain* that seemed *solid, being with it* even though I felt the urge to escape. No, stay here. Be the *observer*. (2000: 621 in Norris 2009: 31; italics mine)

There is a number of metaphors that can be identified in example (5), but the one that seems to constitute a framework for them all is +PAIN IS A COMPANION+, or even +PAIN IS A FRIEND+. One can find a parallel between these metaphors and the ones I identified both in English medical<sup>8</sup> and literary corpora, namely +PAIN IS A(N) (UNWELCOME) COMPANION+. However, the instantiations of the +COMPANION+ metaphor presented in my corpora have a high degree of entrenchment – they are in most part automatized ‘sleeping’ metaphors. Conversely, the +WELCOME COMPANION/FRIEND+ pain metaphor emerging from (5) is in a way surprising and novel in that it again rests upon pain’s unprototypicality in terms of axiology – in this case pain is not a conventionally and ‘biomedically’ positive +ALARM BELL+, +PROTECTIVE MECHANISM+, or a +GUARDIAN+, but unconventionally and apparently ‘therapeutically’ positive +FRIEND+. As noted above, one can discern some other ‘auxiliary’ metaphors featuring in the text, which are also accounted for in my ‘pain corpora’: +PAIN IS A VALUABLE ENTITY+ (*a worthy object*), +PAIN IS AN ENTITY OF SPECIFIED SURFACE/TEXTURE+, +PAIN IS AN ENTITY GENERALLY OBSERVABLE BY THE SENSE OF SIGHT+ (*watching this pain, be the observer*), +PAIN IS A SOLID SUBSTANCE+, and even +PAIN IS A COMPLEX ENTITY/RIDDLE+ (*not so simple*). Again, the discourse in which they are embedded renders them far less conventional than their equivalents presented in English medical and literary corpora.

An interesting example of the +COMPANION+ metaphor synchronized with +PAIN IS AN ANIMAL+ can be found in Edward Hoagland’s essay “The Threshold and the Jolt of Pain” (*The Village Voice*, April 17, 1969):

- (6) Pain is a *watchdog* medically, telling us when to consult a doctor, and then it’s the *true-blue dog at the bedside* who rivals the relatives for *fidelity*. (in Sommer and Weiss 2001: 316; italics mine)

What we have here is a subtle interplay of positive and negative evaluation, with the former apparently prevailing. The ‘plus axiology’ is in fact overtly indicated by the two animalistic metaphors: +PAIN IS A WATCHDOG+ and +PAIN IS

<sup>8</sup> My medical corpus, created for the purposes of pain metaphor analyses, consists of contexts accessed via Google search and the ones glimpsed in numerous medical articles (Palka 2013).

A LOYAL DOG+ (the *true-blue dog at the bedside, fidelity*). The former belongs to Type 2 described above since it is a highly conventionalized medicalized metaphor convergent with the +SIGNAL, ALARM BELL, GUARDIAN, PROTECTIVE/WARNING MECHANISM+ metaphors. The latter is a highly context-sensitive novel metaphor belonging to Type 3; it is spiritualized in the sense that it conveys a message of existential nature. It can also be argued that this metaphor is of ‘mixed axiology’ due to the fact that it implicitly points to the presence of yet another metaphor, which is axiologically ‘minus’ +PAIN IS AN UNWELCOME COMPANION+.

## 5. Pictorial, verbo-pictorial, and synesthetic ‘spiritualised’ metaphors for pain

A variation on the +HEALER/PURIFIER+ and the +UNWELCOME COMPANION+ metaphors can be glimpsed in the verbo-pictorial portrayal of pain, offered by the online educational project *the PAIN Exhibit*, which presents visual art produced by artists with chronic pain. With their art, they express some facet of the pain experience, and through these images they aim at educating healthcare providers and the public about chronic pain. Thus, on this website ([www.painexhibit.org](http://www.painexhibit.org)) you can see tens of pain images accompanied by verbal exegesis, images that depict overtly negative pain. Still, these artists and patients in one, by giving creative vent to their agonies also plunge into a kind of self-therapeutic purifying endeavor, and in this way they desire to eliminate the pain that constantly accompanies them. In short, the result is the pain therapy where image and language are interwoven (for examples of artistically visualized pain see <http://painexhibit.org/en/galleries/pain-visualized/>).

The last distinctive sub-group of Type 3 metaphors to be discussed are the +PLEASURABLE SENSATION+ metaphors, which can be classified as a special type of synesthetic metaphors, since they seem to blend elements belonging to various senses. These metaphors can be generically encapsulated in +PAIN IS AN ENTITY PERCEIVABLE BY HUMAN SENSES+.<sup>9</sup> Most of them are quite novel and may be characterized by a low level of conventionalization. In the corpora I analyzed, the synesthetic metaphors that seem to be merged with the +PLEASURABLE SENSATION+ are the +GUSTATORY effect+ and the +OLFACTORY effect+ pain metaphors. Still, as to these two variants of the

<sup>9</sup> This formulation, meant to capture a specific metaphor, could also be seen as a part of the folk cognitive model of pain. Thus, it is, in my view, a metaphor since the way it is couched in words stems from the research on synesthetic metaphoricity (see, for instance, Cacciari or Shen in Gibbs 2008), and in this wording we can also glimpse the components of the folk model of pain which, somehow paradoxically, is reinforced by the scientifically grounded pattern theory of pain, according to which nerve fibers responsible for ‘materializing’ pain and the ones producing other sensations are the same (see Moayed and Davis 2013: 9, and Bourke 2014: 10).

+SENSES+ pain metaphors, there is a very small number of examples to be found in my corpora, unlike the +TACTILE effect+ metaphors (which feature abundantly in both medical and literary corpora).

Interestingly, the +GUSTATORY+ and the +OLFACTORY+ pain metaphors may be sometimes harnessed to transmit and explicate conceptually rich experiences in elaborate ways, something that will be characteristic mostly of literary texts. Excerpts (7) and (8) discussed below, though diverse in terms of content, genre and chronology, illustrate the point.

*The Essay on Man* is a philosophical poem written by Alexander Pope and published between 1732 and 1734. In one of the stanzas the author elaborates on properly proportioned human senses and provides a number of counterfactual examples—what would happen if that were not the case. For instance, if our sense of smell were far more sensitive, then the rose’s fragrance would be able to kill us, so we would

(7) [d]ie of a rose in *aromatic pain*. (italics mine)

Thus, what Pope employs in this fragment is the intermodal (synesthetic) metaphor +PAIN IS AN ENTITY PERCEIVED/PERCEIVABLE BY THE SENSE OF SMELL+, or more specifically, +PAIN IS AN AROMA+. The word *aroma* prototypically refers to a pleasant smell, so the value of its referent is axiologically positive (etymologically, English *aroma* derives from Latin *aroma*, meaning ‘sweet odor’, and Greek *aroma* denoting ‘any spice or sweet herb’; accessed from <https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=aroma>). In turn, the axiology of the referent of English *pain* is prototypically, or even inherently, considered to be negative. Quite predictably, the final (literary) effect is the presence of the oxymoron, a thing characteristic of the Augustan poetry (also represented by Pope). In evaluative terms, this particular poetico-philosophical context points to the overarching axiologically negative counterfactuality—after all, an excess of pleasurable fragrance would result in unpleasurable, or even threatening, pain. The presence of the pleasant aroma ‘won’t help’ and will not lead to the general ‘plus’ axiology. Also Doody clarifies the above point on literary grounds:

Pope’s phrase “aromatic pain” is connected in Pope’s paragraph ultimately with a moral point, but is in itself a “free irony,” exhibiting a conflict of ideas and senses and even languages in itself; within the phrase neither “aromatic” nor “pain” is wrong or stupid or calls for demotion in favour of the other. (1985: 226)

In linguistic terms, then, the +AROMA+ pain metaphor featuring in the Pope’s poem does not guarantee the overlap with the overt +PAIN as ‘GOOD-DOER’+ metaphor; instead, what we see there is a lexicalization of the quasi +‘GOOD-DOER’+ metaphor, whose function is to add to the effect of originality – to make the text oxymoronic, satirical, ‘double-tongued’.

The presence of such a ‘fake’ +‘GOOD-DOER’+ pain metaphor can be registered in another literary excerpt taken from Lance Armstrong’s description of pains experienced during cycling:

- (8) *I hate time trialing*. You’d have to be pretty perverse to like it much. Nothing to encourage you but the clock, and the pain just grows throughout the race until it becomes all-but-unbearable. Tomorrow is another flat stage, though there will be a lot of wind which may shake things up a little. Then a rest day (one of only two in three weeks of cycling), a mountain stage in the Alps, and after that a monstrous uphill *time trial* up the legendary climb of L’Alpe d’Huez, that imposes the *sourest* of all *flavors of pain*. (<http://www.windsofchange.net/archives/005215.php>, 30 August 2006; italics mine).

Probably one of the most lexicalized gustatory adjectival compounds is English *bitter-sweet* (which also has its equally entrenched equivalent in other languages). Indeed, in numerous languages this combination of flavors signals the entrance into a psychic sphere where we have to deal with two contradictory emotions. One of the commentators, in connection with the description presented in (8) relates that, additionally, for Armstrong climbing was associated with ‘sweet pain’. Thus, the cyclist rather unconventionally juxtaposes *sweet* with *sour*, an apposition that most of us would traditionally (and conventionally) associate with the Chinese cuisine (hence *sweet and sour sauce*). In sum, Armstrong asserts that climbing and time trialing result in two different ‘flavors’ of pain, the former being described as a *sweet pain* and the latter as a *sour pain*. In this way he not only conjures up a lexicalized metaphor +PAIN IS AN ENTITY PERCEIVED/PERCEIVABLE BY THE SENSE OF TASTE+, but he also ‘rehashes’ it in a novel way, so that it assumes the conceptual form of innovative +PAIN IS (TASTY) FOOD+. The same conceptual metaphor can be, for instance, discerned in Tony Morrison’s *Jazz*:

- (9) “*Pain*. I seem to have an affection, a kind of *sweet tooth for it*” (in Sommer and Weiss 2001: 317; italics mine).

Apparently, in this case we can even speak of a more specific-level sub-metaphor +PAIN IS SWEET FOOD/CONFECTIONERY+. Coming back to (8), we can see that the innovative character of this metaphoric coupling lies mainly in stressing the axiological difference between one type of positive, rewarding pain accompanying climbing and negative, frustrating pain involved in time trialing. This +FOOD+ metaphor for pain can also be spotted in another fragment about cycling, this time concerning Armstrong’s arch-rival Jan Ullrich:

- (10) The big gear felt good for a moment. Ullrich felt his muscles working against it, pressing down in that familiar heartbeat rhythm. *Pain* comes in

*different flavors*, and this was *what he wanted: white, fresh pain*. “Awakening the muscles” his coach Rudy Pevenage called it, and Ullrich’s muscles weren’t the sort to be awakened by a kindly jostle. They needed a big alarm bell, and when they woke up, they would take to this big gear like they were made for it. (in Coyle 2005: 257; italics mine)

Additionally, there are two other sensory parameters activated within the SD of food, which are color perception (whiteness) and freshness. This perceptual mixture encapsulated in the two adjectives modifying *pain* may also result in a somewhat oxymoronic effect similar to the one achieved in Pope’s *aromatic pain*. But while in the latter case the overall evaluation is negative (threatening pain), in *white, fresh pain* it appears to be quite the reverse—what we have here is awakening, revitalizing pain.

It can be argued, then, that the +GUSTATORY/OLFACTORY+ pain metaphors<sup>10</sup> often trigger equivocal evaluation of the TD in question. This blurredness seems to be also present at the conceptual level. At this point it is worthwhile to anecdotally mention Polish examples (11) and (12), yielded by the Google search, pointing to both conceptual and evaluative complexity of pain:

- (11) Gdy czekam na Ciebie to czuję *słodki ból* tęsknoty, a może jest to *gorzki ból* rozstania? [while waiting for you, I feel a *sweet pain* of nostalgia, or maybe it is a *bitter pain* of parting?]
- (12) Po kręgosłupie spływa do lędźwi *słodki ból* podobny do bólu zęba. [a *sweet pain* is flowing down the spine to the loins, one similar to a pain of tooth]

(11) signals ‘mixed’ axiology, with an unteasable *mélange* of bitter/negative and sweet/positive emotional pain. As to (12), in all probability we deal with a typical physical pain (since it is similar to a toothache) with the underlying conceptual metaphor +PAIN IS A SWEET LIQUID+, the outcome of fusing +PAIN IS TASTY FOOD+ and +PAIN IS A LIQUID+. Prototypically, we will evaluate this kind of pain as negative, but one may ask whether this is the only value ascribed to it. Could it not be, after all, also some positive pain, suggesting a kind of perverse masochistic or even orgasmic sensation?

At this point it is worthwhile to once again pick up the thread of the verbo-pictorial representation of pain. Excerpt (13) below is an apt illustration of the fusion of the synesthetic metaphor +(EXPERIENCING) PAIN IS (TASTING) FOOD+ and the evaluative +‘GOOD-DOER’+ pain metaphor. This metaphoric account is quite self-explanatory, but also often expanded into conceits and full of eye-catching slogans, elements necessary in a successful advertisement.

<sup>10</sup> I intentionally mention the senses of smell and taste in the same breath and, in a way, merge them, since in reality we often experience the co-mingling of these two senses, or the former is activated before the latter.



Employing such linguistic devices may help encourage food connoisseurs to buy extremely spicy sauces. Since pain and taste weave inextricably in the fragment (probably just like on the palates of the gourmets eating the sauces), it may be hard to decide which of the concepts – PAIN or TASTE – is SD and which is TD of the metaphor. I would even suggest that in the case of (13) it is rather taste which functions as TD whereas pain is SD; thus we have +(TASTING) FOOD IS (EXPERIENCING) PAIN+.

- (13) ~ PAIN IS GOOD RANGE ~ The next time I blow the candles out on my birthday cake I'm going to wish for two things. Firstly, the lungs of a much younger man and secondly, the rights to the name *Pain Is Good*. In my opinion, the best name ever for a *hot sauce*. Of course, there's more to a hot sauce than a good name and I can absolutely guarantee that Pain Is Good delivers big time! You can actually *see the flavour* before you even open the bottle and once tasted you'll be blown away by the amazing quality of every single sauce in the Pain Is Good range. / Pain 100% The label says: 100% Natural. Rated 100%. There are several levels of pain. The pain levels are marked with the % of pain you experience. / The higher the % *the more pain and less flavor*. Although there are chileheads that will argue that *the more the pain the better the flavor*. We will let you decide. *Taste the pain.* / Pain Is Good #37 Garlic Style The label says: There is a point where *pleasure and pain intersect*. A doorway to a new dimension of *sensual euphoria*. Where *fire* both burns and soothes. Where *heat* engulfs every neuron within you. Once the line is crossed, once the bottle is opened, once it touches your lips, there is no going back. / Pain Is Good. PSYCHO JUICE 70% Red Savina The label says: SUPERIOR XX HOT SAUCE. HALLOWED BE THY PAIN. Dr. Burnorium recommends daily doses of Psycho Juice. Apply liberally to all food. You may experience pain. This is normal and facilitates the release of endorphins from within your brain. If *pain symptoms persist do not lower your dosage*. Just stop your whining and take your medicine. (<http://www.hotsauceemporium.co.uk/listBrand.php?brandID=4>; italics mine)



Figure 1. A selection of labels on the *Pain is Good* range products

Similarly to many other linguistic images of pain, the one emerging from the interaction of verbal (13) and Figure 1 makes recourse to more than one metaphoric representation. Apart from the +GUSTATORY+ metaphor, one may also trace such conceptualisations as +PAIN IS AN ENTITY OF SPECIFIED TEMPERATURE+ and related +PAIN IS FIRE+, two mutually exclusive quantifying metaphors for proportion/measure, which are +INTENSIFIED PAIN IS DISINTENSIFIED TASTE+ (*the more pain the less flavour*) and +INTENSIFIED PAIN IS INTENSIFIED/IMPROVED TASTE+ (*the more the pain the better the flavour*). Additionally, the sentence ‘You can actually *see the flavour* before you even open the bottle’ (from Example 13) not only signals the synesthetic/intermodal metaphor +TASTING IS SEEING+, but in fact refers to the accompanying ‘auxiliary’ visual image on the bottle itself, with human faces on which pain (merged with taste) is ‘written all over’ (Figure 1). Thus, in this case we can also speak of the indexicality of PAIN and its verbo-pictorial metaphor (also identified and featuring at the PAIN exhibit website mentioned earlier). Finally, as it was pointed out by the astute reviewer, the advertisement at hand (in Figure 1) is about the spicy sauce being the cause (or stimulus) of the sensation of TASTE, which is metaphorized as PAIN. In the light of this reservation, it seems then that the metaphor +TASTE IS PAIN+, or, in my wording, +(TASTING) FOOD IS (EXPERIENCING) PAIN+, is based on the common metonymy RESULT FOR CAUSE. It is indeed hard to disagree with this argument, additionally strengthened by Barcelona’s cogent research and the claim that conceptual metaphors are metonymically motivated (see Barcelona 2003). Lastly, we may also observe the use of paradox in the travestied fragment ‘If pain symptoms persist do not lower your dosage’ (based on conventional ‘if pain symptoms persist, contact a doctor’). On balance, the overall value ascribed to the content of the text is unequivocally and explicitly positive, hence the very name of the product range–‘pain is good’. This shows that +PAIN IS A ‘GOOD-DOER’+ is the default evaluative metaphor here.

The examples discussed in this section illustrate how word, image, and synesthesia are harnessed to highlight the (paradoxical) positive dimension of pain. Still, it appears that one may even go a step further and stress another not-so-obvious function of pain, which is its pedagogic potential.

## 6. Pedagogic and artistic ‘goodness’ of pain (metaphors)

Another aspect of pain’s ‘goodness’ is explicitly conveyed and substantiated in one more fragment co-written by Lance Armstrong:

- (14) The experience of *suffering* is like the experience of *exploring*, of finding something *unexpected* and *revelatory*. When you find the *outermost thresholds of pain*, or fear, or uncertainty, what you experience afterward

is an *expansive* feeling, a *widening* of your capabilities. *Pain is good* because it *teaches* your *body* and your *soul to improve*. (Armstrong and Jenkins 2003: 133; italics mine)

It may be observed that the lexemes *suffering* and *pain* are used interchangeably and they both seem to enjoy the status of hyperonyms in relation to other ‘pain-full’ experiences, denoted by lexemes like *fear* or *uncertainty*.<sup>11</sup> More importantly, though, we can discern the distinct +TEACHER+ metaphor revealed by the words ‘*pain ... teaches ... to improve*’, together with *exploring*, *unexpected*, and *revelatory*, which further strengthen the validity of the +‘GOOD-DOER’+ pain metaphor here. Further still, we can also register the presence of the conventionalized metaphor +PAIN IS A BUILDING+ (*thresholds of pain*), especially popular in medical discourse. In this case there is only one element of the SD of building which is highlighted as salient, namely the idea of threshold, in turn serving as a symbolic/metaphoric ‘activator’ of pain’s value. However, this threshold as a metaphoric borderline is endowed with ‘plus’ axiology only in the context of it being crossed and transcended, hence the words emphasizing this aspect – *outermost*, *expansive* and *widening*. (by the same token, within the SD of pointed/object/weaponry, the ‘perforative’ abilities are made salient and trigger off pain’s positive value in example (4) discussed earlier). Thus, the salient element of the +BUILDING+ metaphor, which is threshold, clearly adds to the positive construal of pain here

In the similar vein, we can recount Aristotelian “We cannot *learn* without pain” or “... most of life’s greatest *lessons* are *learned* through pain” (Alicia Taylor, health consultant). Also, part II of the book *Staging Pain 1580–1800: Violence and Trauma in British Theater* (edited by James Robert Allard and Mathew R. Martin, published in 2009) is headed by the telling title ‘Pedagogies of Pain’, the thesis of the authors/editors being that

(15) [f]rom infancy on, pain *schools* the individual body in everything from the functioning of organs and coordination of limbs to the socially accepted uses of language. (Martin and Allard 2009: 47; italics mine)

<sup>11</sup> Relating pain and suffering to fear and uncertainty through hyponymy may appear to some at best bizarre if not speculative. It should come as no surprise, given that stereotypically, at least in the Western culture, people tend to perceive pain as a physical sensation, something additionally strengthened by deeply rooted Cartesian body-mind dualism. However, just like fear and uncertainty can be tenably regarded as emotional states, so can pain be perceived as a special kind of emotion. As historian Joanna Bourke shows, such an emotive interpretation of pain is in fact nothing recent. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century people were considering various models of pain, asking: “[I]s it more correct to say, as *The New and Complete American Encyclopædia* (1810) would have us believe, that pain is an ‘emotion of the soul occasioned by those organs [of sense]’? Perhaps pain more closely resembles a ‘species of emotion’, as *Chambers’s Encyclopædia* decreed sixty years later” (Bourke 2014: 10; italics original).

It seems, then, that pain has also a kind of bizarre pedagogic positivity to it when we consider the interface of art (literature and drama) and philosophy. As Plato puts it, “[t]ragedy and epic turn pain into pleasure” (in Martin and Allard 2009: 1), and, again, Aristotle follows the former when he states that “[o]bjects which in themselves we view with pain, we delight to contemplate when reproduced with minute fidelity, such as the forms of the most ignoble animals and of dead bodies” (Ibid.: 2). According to Aristotle, pain has a morally positive function to it in the form of tragic drama presenting scenes of suffering. In a way, pain teaches ethics via its aesthetics, through art in general and theatre in particular.

Pain can also be discerned as a potential or even real +GOOD-DOER+ in the work of Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud. Martin and Allard (2009) quote the fragment in which Nietzsche asserts that the proud achievements of Western civilization – memory, conscience, ethics, law—are the achievements of a long history of pain. Similarly, for Marx the laboring body, synonymous with the body in pain, and labor in turn creates use-values. Finally, for Freud pain helps the ego to gain knowledge about itself, and—as Martin and Allard (2009: 5) further assert, for him it is also the beginning of sublimity. Later on, a romantic philosopher Schopenhauer pushes this thread even further by maintaining that pain is the primary human sensation, its positivity being contrasted with the negativity of well-being and happiness; the latter are for him “the mere abolition of desire and the extinction of pain” (Ibid.). In short, Schopenhauer argues that art is born out of this sensation and art must transcend it.

The examples discussed above suggest that, philosophically and ‘artistically’ speaking, pain is not only a teacher but also an agent that galvanizes mankind into action and makes people produce “human artifacts such as the products of labor, memory, the self, and indeed civilization itself” (Ibid.). In my view, what we witness here is the reversal of stereotypical perceptions of pain and well-being—the inverted mental constructs that emerge are –PAIN IS POSITIVE– and –WELL-BEING IS NEGATIVE–.

Finally, the pedagogic and the artistic can also be mingled in poetry about pain. B.J. Olvera’s poem entitled ‘The Positivity of Pain’ is to convey a clear and specific message—pain as something (stereo)typically perceived as negative can and should be ‘handled’ in such a way that it becomes something positive, however paradoxical it may sound:

- (16) *Turn* pain into “positivity”. *Use* pain to your advantage. *Take* pain and gain new strength. *Turn* pain into an *ally* of length. Pain’s *catalyst* manufactures new vigor to grow. *Use* pain to gain relief. *Use* pain to learn patience, kindness, endurance. Pain *brings* a certain dignity in knowing. Pain can *laugh* at life and keep on going. Pain *makes assurances* not to be bound by any foe. *Turn* pain into “positivity”. *Use* pain to fight for right, while cushioning the fall. *Take* pain to tear down anger’s bulwarks. *Turn* pain *outward* for times of endurance. Pain *bolsters* anger’s guide worn too much to know. *Use* pain as a *catalyst* to grow. *Use* pain to drive you on for

knowledge. Pain is on occasion like a *long-lost friend*. Pain *moves away* but soon *comes* again. Pain *has* a purposeful time, there no exception to show.

(<http://www.authorsden.com/visit/viewpoetry.asp?AuthorID=7465&id=109850>; italics mine)

Thus, Example (16), the poem by Olvera (2004) that I quote in its entirety, emerges as a moralizing and therapeutic tale teeming with pain metaphors, with a changeable degree of their conventionality and originality. We can, then, discern +PAIN IS AN OBJECT+ (*use/take* pain), +PAIN IS A PERSON+ (pain *bolsters/brings/has...time/laughs/makes assurances/manufactures*; pain is a(n) *ally/catalyst/friend*), +PAIN IS A MALLEABLE OBJECT/SUBSTANCE+ (*turn pain into/outward*), and +PAIN IS A MOVING ENTITY+ (pain *comes/moves away*).

It seems, then, that a plethora of pain metaphors are employed to interact in verbal, verbo-visual and visual contexts in order to justify pain's presence and even render it as positive in certain areas of human activity.

## 7. Concluding remarks

In sum, it can be argued that there is a considerable number of the entrenched +'EVIL-DOER'+ pain metaphors (Type 1) employed in medical(-related) discourses, but these discourses also abound in equally conventionalized +'GOOD-DOER'+ pain metaphors (Type 2). While both Type 1 and Type 2 metaphors perform descriptive and explanatory functions, Type 2 metaphors are, or were, infrequently theory-constitutive. Finally, Type 3 pain metaphorizations (which I call 'spiritualized') are in most part the least entrenched +'GOOD-DOER'+ pain metaphors, also precisely due to the fact that they reverse PAIN's axiology completely, and PAIN is not only a 'moderate' +GOOD-DOER'+ in the light of Type 2, but becomes an overt +GOOD-DOER+ endowed with transformative-ameliorative ((8), (10), (14)), sensorily/aesthetically pleasing ((7), (8), (9), (10), (13)), and purifying/ennobling abilities, as well as it is characterized by certain amiability ((6), (16)), and even by healing, therapeutic, and pedagogic potential ((2), (5), (14) and (16)).

The innovative (at least to some extent) +'GOOD-DOER' metaphor is activated with the help of other metaphors, whose SDs are often conventional and predictable, but employed in novel and unexpected ways. Depending on the context, the +'GOOD-DOER+ metaphor can be more explicitly verbalized, or it can be an implied submerged metaphor (emergent on the basis of certain contextual clues). Evaluative pain metaphors (especially the 'positive' ones) emerge, then, as manipulative tools harnessed both at the conceptual and linguistic level, ones that have the potential to change our attitude towards PAIN

and help to eliminate its negative effects. The metaphorical language of PAIN not only reflects such changes, but often provokes unprototypical re-evaluation of the PAIN concept. As David Biro admits,

[p]eople experience pain differently, and the same person may experience pain differently on different occasions. ... We also know that people of different cultures ascribe different meaning to pain, and that in some instances *pain can actually be viewed in a positive light*. (2010: 15; italics mine).

To the book entitled *Happiness, healing, enhancement: Your casebook collection for applying positive psychology in therapy* (2010), George W. Burns contributed a section headed with yet another questioning title—‘Can you be happy in pain?’ In the light of my earlier considerations, I feel justified to tinker with this statement a little bit in terms of replacing the original preposition—*Can you be happy with pain?*

Biro, a doctor and writer in one package, seems to provide a weighed answer to the previously raised question. In his work *The Language of Pain: Finding Words, Compassion, and Relief* (2010), he provides the reader with an intriguing commendation of pain both in medical and literary texts, in a section tellingly entitled ‘Good Pain’ (ibid.: 155-157). It is, then, common for us humans to make the best of our pain, to turn it into a kind of ‘good’ pain, and we often start by verbalizing it in such ways (mostly metaphoric), so that we can convince ourselves and believe that pain is not ‘all evil’. Still, we remember, in the majority of cases, what the referent behind the English lexeme *pain* (or its equivalent lexemes in other languages) entails. This is why sufferers may treat and talk about their pain in the manner Biro describes it:

(17) Rachel has lived with migraines for as long as she can remember. In a strange way, the *pain is* like an *old friend*. ... But as *familiar* as she is *with her old friend*, their *encounters never get any easier*. (2010: 66-67; italics mine)

Example (17) nicely corresponds with Slavoj Žižek’s rephrasing of Descartes’ *cogito ergo sum*—“I suffer, therefore I am” (in Martin and Allard 2009: 6). And the very fact of meaningful existence, even though undergirded by pain, is positive. Martin and Allard argue that

(18) Marxist, Nietzschean, and Freudian thought all attribute a crucial role to pain because it seems to mark the *interface* between mind and body, or more broadly, mind and world [and] is used to *bridge* modernity’s Cartesian Grand Canyon, [while Freud specifically] theorizes pain as the *avenue* by which the ego undertakes the Socratic project of self-knowledge. (2009: 4; italics mine)

Thus, as Example (18) illustrates, to a pretty sizeable array of positive pain metaphors we can add three more, namely the ones of +INTERFACE+, +AVENUE+, and +BRIDGE+, metaphors that aspire to existential significance and may be even perceived as theory-constitutive. It seems, then, that it is our human condition to live with pain, or on its border, at least from time to time, and in order to do so we need to befriend it, to employ it and view it as various types of borderlines, avenues and bridges, as an entity uncovering layers of vitality and galvanising us into action, irrespective of its traditionally infamous reputation. After all, ‘I suffer, therefore I am’.

Many clothing companies offer t-shirts with inspirational and motivational inscriptions, and the concept of PAIN is often a crucial element. Thus, you can read the inscription on one of the t-shirts:

- (19) [s]ometimes you must hurt in order to know, fall in order to grow, lose in order to gain – because life’s greatest *lessons* are *learned through pain*. (www.sunfrog.com; italics mine)

A significant aspect of pain conceptualisations explored in this paper is that whoever produces them (either verbally, verbo-pictorially, or pictorially) does not keep them to themselves or under wraps, but communicates them to others—they are shared and circulated among people in diverse environments and situations. This interactiveness and ‘sociability’ of pain manifested predominantly via language is stressed by Bourke, contending that

communicative acts of pain are not necessarily destructive. The same people who declare their suffering to be ‘unspeakable’ or ‘absolutely evanescent’ may then go on to tell their story of pain in exquisite detail. As a result, *pain-narratives* can be *productive*: they have the capacity to *unite people in exhilarating, creative ways*. ... [O]ne of the defining aspects of pain is the extent to which it *brings people together in bonds of community*. (2014: 28, 52; italics mine)

Finally, it seems that the most powerful pain-related (metaphorically conveyed) message of existential import is present in Example (20)—pain is not only a ‘provider’ of suffering, a friend and an ally, but, most importantly, it is a guarantor and indicator of being alive. This, to my way of thinking, is the most apt encapsulation of pain’s positivity.

- (20) Pain is your *friend*. Pain is your *ally*. Pain *tells* you when you have been wounded badly, but you know what the best thing about pain is? It *tells* you *you are not dead yet*. (www.sunfrog.com; italics mine)

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