

The Breeze

Metaphor Analysis



Introduction - The Metaphor

He is standing on a wall, approx 10 ft high, there is a wind/breeze ("fresh air") blowing from the left side, he is looking down on himself sat in a chair in a small "safe space" room, the sun is further in front, bright, but not too hot.

To the right is a dog (an alsation, not aggressive, friendly, but capable of aggression if required), behind are a lot of people all on a raised platform.

Above is an ornate roof ("like a church roof, but not a church roof")

Analysis

This metaphor has a number of interesting features which I will outline in no specific order of importance.

- **Boundary Violation of Associated Identity**

In eliciting the metaphor, the client initially just spoke of “seeing himself” in a safe space room and upon further investigation quickly added in the additional details of the wall, the people on a raised platform etc.

Something I have observed a lot over the years is just how commonly parents do not know who their children are. What I mean is that when you ask the parent to describe their child, the description does not match what I observe in their child, and often, the child (usually an adult at this point) is mystified by the description as well.

As a result, the identity the child holds of themselves does not match the identity that others, i.e. their parents, hold of them. This can lead to a terrible crisis of identity where no one really understands what is going on.

Problems can arise when we try to closely identify with a picture of ourselves that does not in any way reflect who we actually are. You might want to think about that quite a lot.

But then there is a problem. It might be that the picture I prefer to have of my self (sic) is also very wrong. It might even be delusional and grandiose. It might lead to behaviours where other people think to themselves, “Who does he think he is?” Or it might even lead to parents thinking, “Why is he behaving like a spoilt 5 year old?”

- **Elevations and Support**

A primary consideration with this metaphor is that of the status of the client, those behind him and the relative support that they have. The client is standing on a high wall, the people are standing on a raised platform.

The high wall

A classic obstruction metaphor, therefore a rule, a primary negative injunctive (“do, or do not, or else!”) - a rule with consequences. This is what supports him in this elevated status position. He is supported by this rule.

If he were to move forwards from this position, not only would this be a let down, a big step to take, a come down, he’d be letting himself down, but this support/rule would change its function. It would now serve to separate him further from those in the background, those people who have his back, etc. There would be no going back (*consequence*) once he steps down from his elevated position. He would not see them anymore, they would not see him anymore. This is a rule that would divide people from each other.

The following quote from Luke 12 summarises the entire metaphor and gives a hint about the wall:

49 “I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! 50 But I have a baptism to undergo, and what constraint I am under until it is completed! 51 Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. 52 From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. 53 They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

54 He said to the crowd: “When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, ‘It’s going to rain,’ and it does. 55 And when the south wind blows, you say, ‘It’s going to be hot,’ and it is. 56 Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don’t know how to interpret this present time?”

It is an issue of having to make a choice, which ever is chosen carries a consequence. To remain where he is means he can maintain his position, but he cannot further himself, or progress. To progress means to change his position, let himself down and be subjected to the rules rather than supported by them.

The raised platform

The raised platform is of course a stage, and being in the background, the client has not only moved on from that stage but he has also risen above it. He has moved on and taken the moral high ground. Whilst he may have turned his back on those people he still remains known to them. They *under stand* (sic) him and remain in the background.

As You Like It, Act II, Scene VII - William Shakespeare

Jaques to Duke Senior

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first, the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
Then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,

In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side;
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank, and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

Dissociated self in the safe space

The self in the safe space is of course not him, but is merely an avatar with which he closely identifies. He doesn't see himself standing up for himself, nor does he see himself going anywhere. This is his "comfort zone" which, of course, he gets to tell himself that he has risen above. He looks down on both his *self* and the comfort zone in which this *self* resides.

An additional piece of information emerged from the client at this point in that the chair on which he is sat is wooden and not very comfortable. This safe space is not his comfort zone. He is uncomfortable with the support with which he has been provided within the safe space. And yet this *self* remains there regardless.

No wonder, then, he looks down on himself.

It should be noted that no one else gets to see this "self"; there are rules in place (*the wall and the walls of the safe space room*) that prevent this.

The less-than-comfortable safe space is of course a container (*family, inherited status*) which suggests that our client has always seen himself in this way. It was inevitable and not of his

own making. This is how he sees his role within the family.

He puts this self first, he puts the container first, but in truth, he looks down on them both. He is probably deceptive with regards to his true nature when it comes to his family and keeps this true nature separate and in the background of his family. By taking the higher moral ground this will help justify the deception.

To move forward from his elevated position, he may well end up grounded, and down to earth, but of course he may then be seen by his family for who he really is. His parents will have two sons and he may, or may not, get on with himself. In the safe space he would potentially be alone with his *self*, and his *self* may not feel at all comfortable in that situation anyway.

- Does he even know his self?
- What does he think of his self?
- What does he say to his self?
- What would he say to his self?
- What could he say to his self?
- What would *you* (in role of therapist) say to this self?

With regards to why his self is sat in an uncomfortable chair - *this is his place within the family.*

As a complete aside, it is worth mentioning at this point something that has emerged from the new trends in social politics, that of gender pronouns and identity. Something that they all seem to have missed is the gender of self.

We refer to self as having gender: *himself, herself*. But we don't say, his-self and she-self. So we end up with an interesting situation linguistically where "I" may be born male, but I identify my *self* as female. But this of course may not be what *I* express. My *self expression* may be adapted to fit in with the social norms, or adapted to contradict and conflict intentionally with the social norms. Now, with the emergence of the new radical left youth-movements, the narrative to fit this self expression has been created. This narrative may not be correct, but at least it is more empowering.

The emergence of the Social Justice Warrior (SJW) / non-binary / gender fluid may be little more than youth rebellion channeled into a never-seen before phenomena. Much like skinhead, punk, goth, Mod and Rave. All had a music, a style, a modification to political, physical and sexual expression. The main difference is that today, commercial music broadcast is increasingly selected by the appearance (scales of sexual attractiveness) of the performer and not on attitude, quality, political or lyrical content of the music. This appearance is largely synthetic, temporary and highly changeable, much like the gender qualities espoused by the SJW.

Meanwhile, for those outside of this youth movement, a more common situation may be that the way I express my *true self* conflicts with the expectations and projections of my family/parents. Therefore my *self expression* is limited, or controlled, or suppressed in order to meet with social and parental approval. I may end up living a lie and so can only safely express myself in private or subcultures and sub-communities. This is the basis of the “double life” which may manifest in the something like the double life of the stiff conservative who spends weekend dressed in drag at cabaret, or something so simple as “I hate my job” yet continuing to pursue the career in that line of work because it is what expected of them.

- **The sun**

The sun is located “in front” but we do not know its elevation. It is bright, but not hot. So here we have another son/sun, one that is further forward, further along, and is a lot brighter than the others. I would predict that client’s position on the wall matches the elevation of this sun.

This sun/son provides a direction, shining the way for everyone. Well, maybe not the people in the background who may be hidden behind the wall.

This sun as illumination completes the key ingredients for the stage metaphor of the platform on which the people in the background stand, but also implies a stage function for the wall on which the client stands, He has turned his back on the audience and instead performs for his self.

This implication of stage metaphors tells us this is primarily a religious issue

Question and discussion point: Whose sun/son is it?

- **The dog**

As an anthropomorphic entity, the alsation is right when it comes to the rules. Intelligent, easily trained, friendly, capable of being fierce, possessing a bite. This is the stereotype of the type of person whom the client considers to be right and also supported by the same rule/s.

These people are on his side, they share a similar perspective of the world. They are high status, looked up to and supported by the rules. They are not to be messed with unless one wishes to get bit.

A Four Legged Friend - Song by Bob Hope.

A four legged friend, a four legged friend
He'll never let you down
He's honest and faithful right up to the end
That wonderful one-two-three-four legged friend

A woman's like cactus and cactus can hurt
'Cause she's just a tight-waisted winky-eyed flirt
She'll soon have your land and your pride and your gold
And bury you deep long before you grow old

A four legged friend, a four legged friend
He'll never let you down
He's honest and faithful right up to the end
That wonderful one-two-three-four legged friend

A two legged hombre is worthless as sand
He'll smile like a saint with a gun in his hand
He'll promise to stick by your side like a pal
But he'll also promise the same to your gal

A four legged friend, a four legged friend
He'll never let you down
He's honest and faithful right up to the end
That wonderful one-two-three-four legged friend

Who carries your burden, who carries your load
On tumbleweed land or a long dusty road
Who asks you no questions, who tells you no lies
That four legged friend with the two honest eyes

Questions and discussion point: what is the relationship between the dog and the sun?
I suggest a thorough study of ATU XVIII (The Moon) and Atu XIX (The Sun)

- **The roof**

What is most interesting is what the roof is described as not being. It is ornate, but it is not a church roof. What is also unclear, because it is not mentioned, is what supports this roof and how much coverage it provides. Note, it does not obscure or block the sun.

The client denies a religious connotation, a connotation that was requested by no one. For me, this confirms the stage metaphor and that this is an issue of religion. It is also an issue of denial as there are evidently many more features within this experience that the client fails to mention.

There is so much that is assumed, "*we are all under the same roof / we are all under one roof*", but there is also the inverse of this, such as, "*I cannot live under the same*

roof as that man."

The sun (son) is not under this roof.

The elevation provided by the wall of course raises him up above everyone else, places him closer to the roof, closer to the sun, closer to what is *definitely not* anything religious even if it looks like it. He is too upstanding for the need of that.

Questions and discussion point: What if the sun *was* under this roof? What would this do to what we know about the metaphor?

- **The wind/breeze, "fresh air."**

Blowing from the left is a breath of fresh air. This is therefore the East. This tells us that he is facing South, which matches the location of the sun (fire/heat/light - even though the sun is "not hot", heat is mentioned specifically by the denial of its presence, even though no one else mentioned it or implied it should be there).

The dog is West. I asked the client if the person/s (I cannot give the specifics of the person/s referenced by the client) were heavy drinkers.

The people in the background are to the North.

As per the philosophy in the Historia for a successful metaphor, the client is facing the wrong way and ought to be facing north. If he were to turn himself around, turn his life around the *right* way, he would have to face those people who have been on his side all this time. Despite being dogs, they have been on his side...as he faces the wrong way. Facing them may be to cross them, *to question their loyalty*, and he may find out if their righteous bark is the same as their righteous bite or not.

If he turns the other way, temporarily turning his back on what was right in order to temporarily face what is left, he may take some inspiration from the East by which

he can then turn to those in the background that have had his back and may be looking up to him all this time.

The North is “down to earth” (grounded, etc) even if these people are not down to earth themselves and continue to put on a performance, but he can now come down from on high in stages and come down to earth.

As a result, the alsatian and the people represented by this anthropomorphisation all be left, and soon be left behind, there will be a clearly defined boundary (the wall) between him and his family, and the inspiration will remain right behind him.

Additional questions and discussion points

- What is the relationship between the people on the platform and the Sun that is further in front?
- What is the relationship between the roof and the dog?
- Apply the 4 seasons to the 4 cardinal directions in the metaphor, what do you notice?