

Aristotle's Taxonomy of Metaphor in the *Poetics*: Synecdoche, Synonymy, and Analogy, with References to Greek Literature

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Abstract

This paper is an analysis of the taxonomy of Aristotle's notion of metaphor as given in the *Poetics* 1457^b1-1458^a7. Aristotle's notion forms the foundation of subsequent discussions and developments in the theory of metaphor, certainly from a Western intellectual perspective. However, much of our understanding of Aristotle's notion stems from translations and secondary sources which can be problematic. This study attempts to gain a better understanding of Aristotle's original ideas by referring to Aristotle's Greek text and also trace the original sources in Greek literature that he uses to illustrate his notions of metaphor. This analysis will highlight some of the nuances in Greek which are lost in English translations and how they affect our understanding of Aristotle's definition of metaphor.

Keywords: Aristotle, metaphor, synecdoche, synonymy, analogy, Greek literature

要旨

本論文は、アリストテレスの「詩学」1457b1-1458a7に示されている比喩概念の分析である。アリストテレスの概念は、西洋の知的視点から、その後のメタファー理論における議論と発展の基礎を形成している。しかし、アリストテレスの概念に対する私たちの理解は、翻訳や二次資料から得られることが多いため、解釈の相違が生じる可能性がある。この研究では、アリストテレスのギリシャ語文献を参照することで、アリストテレスの本来の考えをより深く理解することを試み、さらに彼が比喩の概念を説明するために使用したとされるギリシャ文学の情報源を追跡する。この研究により、英語翻訳では失われているギリシャ語のニュアンスと、それがアリストテレスの比喩の定義に対する私たちの理解にどのような影響を与えるかを明らかにする。

1 Introduction

Metaphor is one of the major linguistic tropes. Aristotle's definition and analysis of metaphor is the earliest that has survived in the Western intellectual tradition and has been the basis for subsequent discussions and development. With a proliferation of analyses and theories on metaphor, for example comparative (Ortony, 1993; Fogelin, 2011), interaction (Black, 1954-1955, 1993), metaphorical twist (Beardsley, 1962), pragmatic (Grice, 1989), relevance (Sperber & Wilson, 1995; Wilson & Sperber, 2012; Clark, 2013; Scott et al., 2019), conceptual (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2010, 2020), and blending (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), Aristotle's original thoughts have been sidelined, forgotten, or only accessed through translations and secondary sources. The aim of this paper is to return to the origin of this

intellectual path and rediscover Aristotle's notion of metaphor, especially the definition and examples from Greek literature given in the *Poetics* 1457^b1-1458^a7 (1909, 1932, 1951, 1966, 1984), by referring to the original Greek text and parsing it on occasions in order to directly connect the Greek language with English. It is hoped that such an analysis will highlight some of the nuances in Greek which are lost in English translations and will thus bring about a better understanding of Aristotle's notion of metaphor and how his examples illustrate the various ways in which he understands how metaphors are formed.

The investigation is structured as follows. First, there will be a brief discussion on when Aristotle introduced the notion of metaphor in his works. The next section will focus on nouns, the word class that Aristotle introduces metaphor, and distinguish metaphor from the other types of nouns. Afterwards, there will be a discussion on the first part of Aristotle's definition of metaphor and the problem of tautology. Following this, each of the four types of metaphor that Aristotle identifies will be discussed.

2 Aristotle's Discussion of Metaphor in his Works

Aristotle discusses the notion of metaphor in two of his works, the *Poetics* and the *Rhetoric*. The standard Bekker referencing system of the Greek texts of Aristotle's work places the *Rhetoric* (1354^a-1420^b) before the *Poetics* (1447^a-1462^b). However, in this essay it is assumed that Aristotle introduces metaphor first in the *Poetics* and later in the *Rhetoric*. This sequence of discussion is not determined by any known dating of the texts, but from the references in the *Rhetoric* referring to what was written in the *Poetics* about metaphor and not vice versa (See *Rhetoric*, 1984, Book III, Chapter 1, 1404^a39, p. 2239; Chapter 2, 1404^b6-8, p. 2239, 1404^b27-29, p. 2240, and 1405^a4-6, p. 2240). Further, it is in the *Poetics* (1457^b6-9, 1984, p. 2332) and not the *Rhetoric* that we find Aristotle's definition of metaphor. However, this is not to say that the *Poetics* was completely written before the *Rhetoric* because in the *Poetics* (1456^a34-35, 1984, p. 2330), Aristotle, in discussing the *thought* (δianoία, dianoiás) of the characters in a drama, refers to what was written in the *Rhetoric*. What can be surmised here is that both the *Poetics* and the *Rhetoric* were revised by Aristotle over a period of time and the surviving texts reflect various revisions. As McCall (1969) notes with his questioning of the absence of simile (εἰκὼν, eikón) in the *Poetics*, but which is discussed in the *Rhetoric*, "Neither work can be proved to precede the other; almost certainly both were revised and supplemented from time to time" (p. 51). Given the asymmetry of references to metaphor in the *Poetics* and the *Rhetoric*, the following discussion will focus on Aristotle's definition and taxonomy of metaphor given in the *Poetics* and trace, as far as possible, the sources in Greek literature that Aristotle uses to illustrate his taxonomy.

3 Aristotle's Introduction of Metaphor as a Noun

Metaphor is first discussed by Aristotle in what has become referred to as Chapter 21 of the *Poetics* (1457^a31 – 1458^a17) where it is included within a discussion of ὀνομα (ónomá), which has been translated as nouns:

Whatever its structure, a noun must always be either the ordinary word for the thing, or a strange word, or a metaphor, or an ornamental word, or a coined word, or a word lengthened out, or curtailed, or altered in form. (1457^b1-3, 1984, p. 2332)

Aristotle gives eight different types of nouns and indicates how some of them are formed. Metaphor is included as one of these types of nouns and Aristotle gives the following examples (1457^b3-1458^a7, 1984, pp. 2332-2333). By an *ordinary* word (κῶριον, kūrion) Aristotle meant the regular word used generally and understood by people in a given country and a *strange* word (γλῶττα, glóttá) as a foreign word used by people in a different country. Aristotle (1457^b6, 1984, p. 2332) gives the example of σίγνον (sígunon), which Butcher (1951, p. 77) in his translation of the *Poetics* translates as *lance*, and Fyfe (1932, 1457^b, Footnote 2) as *spear*, as an example of a word which was used by the people of Cyprus, but not by the Greeks. The next mentioned type of word, *metaphor* (μεταφορά, metaphora), will be discussed more fully later. Unfortunately, there is no explanation of what Aristotle meant by an *ornamental* word (κόσμος, kósmos) as Kassel marks a lacuna at this point, 1457^b33, indicating missing Greek text (Aristotle, 1966; 1984, p. 2333). This is regrettable because *metaphor*, being considered as an application of a word different from its literal meaning, might be thought of as something poetic and decorative, and to know what Aristotle thought about the distinction between *metaphor* and *ornamental* words would be highly

valuable. A *coined* word (πεποιημένον, pepoiēménon) is a newly created word that is quite unknown to people and is thought up by a poet. A word can be *lengthened* (ἐπεκτεταμένον, epektetaménon) when a short vowel is elongated or an extra syllable is inserted, and a word can be *curtailed* or contracted (ὕφρημένον, ūphērēménon) when it has lost a part. For Aristotle, a word can be *altered* (ἐξηλλαγμένον, exēllagménon) when part of the word is left unchanged and part has been created by a poet.

The point to be made here is that Aristotle considered metaphor to be one of eight different types of nouns and is thus to be differentiated from the other seven. Metaphor is not an ordinary word used in its everyday sense. Neither is it a foreign word that has been incorporated within a given language or a colloquial word used by people in different regions that share the same language for a thing or idea. Metaphor is not an ornamental word or a coined word, and metaphor is not a word that has been merely lengthened, curtailed or altered in form. Metaphor stands by itself as one of the eight different categories of nouns identified by Aristotle.

It should be noted that although Aristotle introduces the notion of metaphor within a discussion of nouns, it would be wrong to conclude that Aristotle thought only nouns convey metaphor and that other word forms such as verbs and determiners were unable to perform this function. This is clearly evidenced by Aristotle's examples illustrating his four notions of how metaphors are realised. One should not therefore read Aristotle too literally and limit the notion of metaphor to nouns only, but to recognise in his writings that he uses other word types. These points will be made clear below in the discussion of the taxonomy of Aristotle's notion of metaphor.

4 Defining Metaphor

Aristotle in the *Poetics* gives a definition of metaphor and states four ways in which it is realised:

Metaphor consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else; the transference being either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on grounds of analogy. (1457^b6-9, 1984, p. 2332)

This is the cornerstone statement of metaphor in Western intellectual thought (Derrida, 1974, pp. 30-31; Eco, 1983, p. 221). Because of its importance, it is worth analysing Aristotle's original statement. The discussion will first focus on Aristotle's notion of metaphor as transference and the possible problem of tautology. Afterwards, the discussion will focus on the four different ways given in the *Poetics* in which metaphor can be realised.

The first part of the definition in Greek (Aristotle, 1966, 1457^b6-7) and parsed in English is:

μεταφορὰ δέ ἐστιν ὀνόματος ἀλλοτρίου ἐπιφορὰ
metaphora / de / estin / onomatos / allotriou / epiphora
metaphor / conjunctive particle / to be / name / belonging to another / carried over

Aristotle's concise definition of metaphor can be interpreted as a word, having its standard meaning and application, being non-standardly transferred to a novel application. It should be noted that in such a novel application the meaning of the word does not change, only its application to something which it would not normally be associated with is changed. According to the Oxford English Dictionary (1989) the etymology of metaphor is μετα (meta) + φέρειν (pherein) (Vol. IX, p. 676) and that of epiphora is ἐπι (epi) + φέρειν (pherein) (Vol. V, p. 334). The Greek word φέρειν (pherein) has its roots in φέρ- (pher-) and φορ- (phor-) which mean to bear, carry, or bring. Kirby (1997, p. 532) notes that Aristotle's definition risks being a tautology because both μεταφορὰ (metaphora) and ἐπιφορὰ (epiphora) stem from these same roots and are only distinguished by their prefixes, μετα (meta) and ἐπι (epi). According to the Oxford English Dictionary (1989) the prefix *meta-* has the notions of "sharing, action in common; pursuit or quest; and, especially, change (of place, order, condition, or nature), corresponding to L. *trans-*" (Vol. IX, p. 662). In Aristotle's definition, *meta-* can be understood to mean some kind of sharing something in common, and also change, with this being a transference or application of a name and a set of its associated meanings from one thing to a different thing. This matches the definition of metaphor given in the Oxford English Dictionary (1989), "The figure of speech in which a name or descriptive term is transferred to some object different from, but analogous to, that to which it is properly applicable; an instance of this, a metaphorical expression" (Vol. IX, p. 676). In contrast, according to the Oxford English Dictionary (1989) the prefix

epi- has the senses of “upon, at, or close upon (a point of space or time), on the ground or occasion of, in addition” (Vol. V, p. 324). The definition of *epiphora* given in the Oxford English Dictionary (1989) states that it means “a bringing to or upon” (Vol. V, p. 334). Bywater (1984) translates ἐπιφορὰ (epiphora) as *giving*, “Metaphor consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else” (p. 2332), and Butcher (1951) as *application*, “Metaphor is the application of an alien name” (p. 77), as does Fyfe (1932), “Metaphor is the application of a strange term.” Kirby (1997) suggests that we understand ἐπιφορὰ (epiphora) in terms of addition and piling up: “the new or additional designation of a(n) (unusual or unaccustomed) name to something that already has a(n) (ordinary) name” (p. 532). However, despite Kirby’s insightful understanding, it should be noted that Aristotle also thought that metaphors can be applied to ideas for which there is no currently available name (*Poetics*, 1457^b25-30, 1984, p. 2333). This point will be discussed later.

Has Aristotle escaped tautology by utilising the different prefixes μετα (meta-) and ἐπι (epi-) attached to the stem φορὰ (phora)? All definitions are in essence tautologies: the definiendum being defined by the definiens. To say that a ‘ball is a ball’ is an outright tautology that merely repeats what is to be defined in terms of itself and therefore conveys no extra understanding. Conversely, to define a bachelor as an unmarried man is acceptable because the definiendum, bachelor, is not used in the definiens, an unmarried man. Aristotle’s problem is that he is defining μεταφορὰ (metaphora) utilising ἐπιφορὰ (epiphora) which both share the same root of φορὰ (phora) meaning to bear, carry, or bring. Aristotle is therefore at risk of saying:

definiendum | definiens
meta-carry = epi-carry

Aristotle avoids outright tautology with the use of the prefixes μετα (meta-) and ἐπι (epi-) but does not escape tautology entirely. It should be noted that Aristotle is not alone with this predicament. Eco (1983, pp. 219-221) notes that modern dictionaries suffer from this problem in defining metaphor. To define metaphor in terms of analogy, when analogy is one of Aristotle’s notions of metaphor, is circular. The Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines metaphor as, “1. a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them (as in drowning in money)” (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/metaphor>) (accessed 2023.12.03) and the Oxford English Dictionary (1989) as given above, “The figure of speech in which a name or descriptive term is transferred to some object different from, but analogous to, that to which it is properly applicable; an instance of this, a metaphorical expression” (Vol. IX, p. 676). We are thus caught in a web of words in which it is sometimes difficult to clearly separate the definiendum and the definiens in order to avoid outright tautology.

Despite this difficulty, what can be understood about Aristotle’s account so far is that the formation of a metaphor involves a dynamic process in which there is a cognitive act of newly applying a word with a given set of meanings to something which it is not normally associated. The transfer of the given set of meanings is, no doubt, selective and thus partial, but is applicable. In the following sections, Aristotle’s account in the *Poetics* of the four ways in which metaphors can be realised will be discussed.

5 Aristotle’s Four Notions of Metaphor in the *Poetics*

Having defined metaphor as an application of a word with its set of meanings to something it would not normally be associated, Aristotle then proceeds, in the second part of the definition given above, to give four ways in which this transfer is possible: genus for species, species for genus, species for species, and analogy. These four notions of metaphor are given in Figure 1 below.

What can be seen here is that in the *Poetics* Aristotle used the word μεταφορὰ (metaphora) as a general term for four different types of figurative language in which the essential feature was *transference*. The first three notions of metaphor are expressed in terms of their genus (γένος, génos) and species (εἶδος, éidos) relationships. The first two, genus for species and species for genus, are examples of synecdoche, which are marked GS and SG respectively. Here the relationship is not one of comparison or contiguity, but one of a logically given, or at least a linguistically understood, or assumed, systematic hierarchy of that which encompasses (genus) and that which is subsumed (species). The third type, species for species,

is a recognition that within any given genus two or more species of that genus can be synonymous, albeit with nuances, and thus transferable. To complete the logical mapping of metaphor one would have thought that Aristotle would have specified the fourth type as genus for genus, but instead he uses a different term and calls it analogy (*ἀνάλογον*, *análogon*). There thus appears to be an inconsistency in Aristotle's principle of classification of metaphor with the first three being couched in terms of genus and species and the fourth in terms of analogy. Why Aristotle made this distinction for the fourth term is uncertain, but what will be explained below is that this is a *proportionate* analogy and not a simple comparison between two genera.

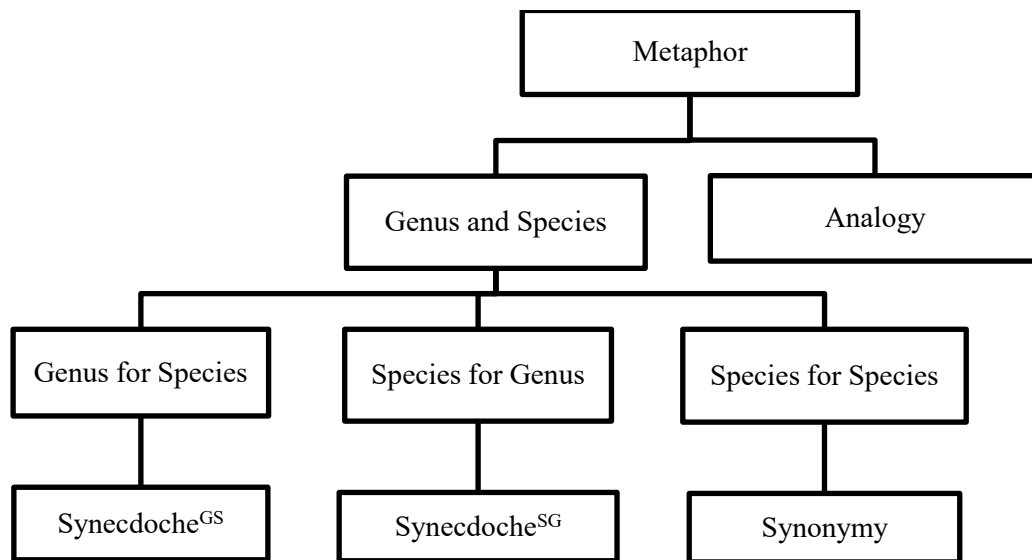


Figure 1 Aristotle's Taxonomy of Metaphor Given in the *Poetics* (1457^b6-9)

Aristotle's taxonomy of metaphor is both *intra-transferral* and *inter-transferral*. It is *intra-transferral* with respect to the nesting and transferences within a given genus (genus for species, species for genus, and species for species), and it is *inter-transferral* with respect to analogy where similarities are recognised between different genera. Aristotle does not discuss analogy between species belonging to different genera, but no doubt this is also a metaphorical possibility. Each of the four types of metaphor that Aristotle identifies in the *Poetics* will next be analysed in the following sections.

6 Synecdoche: Genus for Species

Aristotle's first type of metaphor is a synecdochic genus for species transfer and gives an example from Homer's *Odyssey*, I. 185 (Howes, 1895, p. 220; Homer, 1919; Homer, 2006, p. 83, line 214). The example is, νηὺς δέ μοι ἦδ' ἔστηκεν (*nēūs dé moi ēd' éstēken*) (Aristotle, 1966, 1457^b10), which has been translated as, "Here stands my ship" (Aristotle, 1984, p. 2332). Aristotle then explains that this is a metaphor because, τὸ γὰρ ὀρμεῖν ἐστὶν ἐστάναι τι (*tó gár ormeín estin estánai ti*) (1966, 1457^b10-11), which Bywater translates as, "for lying at anchor is a sort of standing" (Aristotle, 1984, p. 2332). Here it can be seen that in the example sentence, the genus ἔστηκεν (*éstēken*) *stands* is substituting the species ὀρμεῖν (*orméin*) *lies at anchor* or *is moored*. Thus, the notion of the set substitutes a member of the set. This is one example where Aristotle uses verbs to illustrate a type of metaphor, *stands* and *lies*, rather than nouns in which he originally introduces the notion of metaphor within the context of language in poetry and drama.

7 Synecdoche: Species for Genus

The second type of metaphor is a synecdochic species for genus transfer where a member of a set substitutes the set. Aristotle's example is from Homer's *Iliad*, II. 272 (Howes, 1895, p. 210; Homer, 1920; Homer, 1990, p. 108, line 319). Aristotle (1966, 1457^b11-12) quotes this as, ἧ δὴ μυρί' Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐσθλά ἐοργεν (*ē dē murí' Odusseūs esthlá éorgen*). Bywater's translation is, "Truly ten thousand good deeds has

Ulysses wrought” (Aristotle, 1984, p. 2332). Aristotle (1966, 1457^b12-13) explains this is a metaphor because, τὸ γὰρ μυρίον πολὺ ἐστίν, ὃ νῦν ἀντὶ τοῦ πολλοῦ κέχρηται (τό γάρ μυρίον πολὺ ἐστίν, ὁ νῦν ἀντὶ τοῦ πολλοῦ κέχρηται), which Bywater translates as, “...where ‘ten thousand’ [μυρίον, muríon, (μυρί’, murí’)], which is a particular large number [att. πολὺ, polú], is put in place of the generic ‘a large number’ [gen. πολλοῦ, polloū] (Aristotle, 1984, p. 2332). Eco (1983, p. 223) takes issue with Aristotle’s example here, noting that ten thousand is only a large number within a certain scale of quantity. Given a different scale, such as astronomic sizes, ten thousand can be insignificantly small. However, it should be noted that for the ancient Greeks the word μύριοι (múrioi) was the largest unit of measure expressed by a single word (Liddell & Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*, 1889, μύριος¹, II.). It was thus appropriate for Aristotle to give this as an example of the metaphoric transfer of the species, *ten thousand*, substituting the genus, *a large number*. What can again be seen here is that Aristotle uses other word types, namely determiners, *ten thousand* and *many*, rather than nouns, to illustrate one of his types of metaphor.

8 Species for Species

Aristotle’s third type of metaphor, species for species, is a recognition that words belonging to a given genus share synonymity and can be transferred or assigned to usage other than that they are normally applied. This is not a relationship of comparison, but a semantic commonality, albeit with nuances of meaning, between the differing synonyms grouped within a given genus. Aristotle states the following:

That from species to species in ‘Drawing the life with the bronze,’ and in ‘Severing with the enduring bronze’; where the poet uses ‘draw’ in the sense of ‘sever’ and ‘sever’ in that of ‘draw’, both words meaning to ‘take away’ something. (1457^b13-16, 1984, p. 2332)

Aristotle’s two examples are enigmatic. It can be understood that there is a bronze object that draws or severs something, but what exactly is the thing that is made from bronze and what is it drawing or severing? In the first example the object of the verb is life, but in the second example there is no mention of what is being severed. According to the translator, F. C. T. Moore, of Derrida’s essay *White Mythology* (1974, p. 42, Footnote 37), “...Aristotle is here quoting from lines of poetry otherwise unknown to us, apart from a passing reference to the second quotation (the work of Empedocles) by Theon of Smyrna...” However, from further investigating this matter, two possible references were found to both of Aristotle’s examples in Fragment 138 and Fragment 143 of the works of Empedocles (1908).

Aristotle’s first example, χαλκῷ ἀπὸ ψυχῆν ἀρύσας (chalkó apó psūchēn arúsas) (1966, 1457^b13-14), can be parsed as, *copper or bronze / from or by which / breath, life, spirit, or soul / to draw water or liquor, or to drain*, which has been translated as, “Drawing the life with the bronze” (1984, p. 2332). This seems to be a very slight misquotation or misspelling of Empedocles, found in Fragment 138, χαλκῷ ἀπὸ ψυχῆν ἀρύσας (chalkói apó psūchēn arúsas), which Leonard translates as, “Drawing the soul as water with the bronze” (Empedocles, 1908, p. 62). The accompanying note, with reference to Diels’ *Poetarum Philosophorum Fragmenta* (PPF) (1901), for this fragment states:

“As our philosopher placed life and soul in the blood [cf. fr. 105], it was not unnatural for him to speak of ‘drawing the soul.’” Diels, PPF. The passage seems to refer either to the draining or scooping up into a bronze vessel of the blood of slaughtered animals, or to cutting their throats with a sacrificial knife of bronze. (Empedocles, 1908, p. 91)

Derrida (1974, p. 42) and Kirby (1997, p. 533) hold an understanding closer to the second of these interpretations where the bronze is referencing a *sword* (Derrida) and a *weapon* (Kirby) that kills and takes away life.

According to Kassel’s (1966) Greek edition, the second example that Aristotle gives is, τεμὼν ταναήκει χαλκῷ (temón tanaēkeī chalkó) (1457^b14), which can be parsed as, *to cut or sever / long point or edge / copper or bronze*. However, this is different from the Greek text found in Bywater’s (1909) edition, τεμὼν ἀτειρεί χαλκῷ (temón áteiréi chalkó) (p. 62) and also Butcher’s (1951) edition, ταμὼν ἀτειρεὶ χαλκῷ (tamón áteirei chalkó) (p. 78). In both of these the Greek word ἀτειρεί (áteiréi), meaning not to be worn away, indestructible, or unyielding, is given instead of ταναήκει (tanaēkeī). Bywater in his edition of the *Poetics* (1984) translates this as “Severing with the enduring bronze” (p. 2332), and Butcher (1951) as “Cleft the water with the vessel of unyielding bronze” (p. 79). Although Kassel’s Greek edition does not include the notion of endurance, Bywater’s and Butcher’s editions and translations may give a hint to the literary source that Aristotle is referring to. This is possibly to Empedocles, Fragment 143, κρηνάων ἄπο

πέντε ταμόντ' [έν] ἀτειρεί χαλκῶι (krēnāon ápo pénte tamónt' [en] ateiréi chalkói), which Leonard translates as “Scooping from fountains five with lasting bronze” (Empedocles, 1908, p. 63). Leonard translates ταμόντ' (tamónt'), meaning to cut or sever, as scooping, and notes that bronze vessels were regularly used to collect water for ceremonial rites of lustration (Empedocles, 1908, p. 92). Derrida (1974, p. 42) and Kirby (1997, p. 533) hold a similar interpretation of Aristotle's second example and suggest that the *cutting* (τεμῶν, temón) is drawing water and that the bronze object is a cup or bowl. Fyfe in his translation of the *Poetics* notes, “Probably ‘the bronze’ is in the first case a knife and in the second a cupping-bowl. This would make the metaphor intelligible” (1932, 1457^b, Footnote 3).

Understanding what Aristotle meant by χαλκῶ (chalkó), the bronze object, in both examples helps us understand the context and the metaphoric relationship of ἀρύσας (arúsas), *draw*, and τεμῶν (temón), *sever*, both of which are species of the genus ἀφελεῖν (apheleîn), *to take away*. Aristotle's examples are of different domains. The first example of this type of metaphor is related to the domain of taking away life, which is done with a (bronze) knife or sword, and the second example is related to the domain of taking away or scooping water, which is done with a (bronze) cupping-bowl. According to Aristotle's two examples it can be assumed that the verb *draw* (ἀρύσας, arúsas), which presumably was more commonly used with the second domain of taking away water, is being metaphorically applied to the domain of taking away life, and that the verb *sever* (τεμῶν, temón), which presumably was more commonly applied to taking away life, is being metaphorically applied to the domain of taking away water. Thus, both *drawing* and *severing* are synonyms of the species *to take away*, but the *severing* in the domain of the *removal of life* is different from the *drawing* in the domain of the *removal or cutting (scooping) of water*. Yet, being synonyms of *taking away*, each can be interchanged allowing for the possibility of “Drawing the life with the bronze” and “Severing with the enduring bronze”. Here, once again, we see Aristotle using verbs to illustrate the notion of metaphor, despite his initial introduction of this notion through the use of nouns.

It is interesting to note that Aristotle gives two examples in order to illustrate the species for species type of metaphor. With the previous two types of metaphor, genus for species and species for genus, Aristotle only gives one example for each. This might be due to the unidirectional nature of the substitution in each case, of that which encompasses for that which is encompassed and also the substitution of that which is encompassed for that which encompasses. However, with the species for species notion of metaphor the relationship is open to reciprocity in terms of equality because both species belong to the same genus. Aristotle may therefore have thought it necessary to give two examples to show how two species, normally applied to different domains, can be interchanged. Aristotle's two examples plainly show that such an interchangeability is possible. However, it should be noted that a species for species transfer does not necessarily have to accord to such reciprocity. Legitimate species to species transfers can be asymmetrical. All that is required is that one species of a given genus is, or can be, substituted for another species of the same genus for a given application.

The two example sentences given by Aristotle to illustrate his notion of a species for species type of metaphor are instructive in another way as they both utilise a form of figurative language known as metonymy. Here the metonymy is the reference to the material that the given objects are composed being used to represent these objects: the bronze (χαλκῶ, chalkó) in the first example sentence stands for a sword or some other kind of cutting implement and in the second as a bowl. That the compositional material of an object can be used metaphorically, more accurately metonymically, to represent an object was not discussed, and maybe not recognised by Aristotle, yet his examples plainly show that he used it.

9 Analogy

Aristotle's previous three types of metaphor were construed in terms of genus and species. These, as have been shown above, are logically bound together, at least in terms of the hierarchy of semantic classification, through the synecdochic relationships of genus/species (that which encompasses for that which is encompassed), species/genus (that which is encompassed for that which encompasses), and species/species (the relationship of synonymy between two or more species of a given genus). These first three categories of metaphor given by Aristotle are *intra-genus* and thus relate to the internal relations of a single genus. To complete the logical classification of metaphor one would have expected Aristotle giving the fourth type to be genus for genus, where the relationship would be an *inter-genus* relationship between two genera. Instead, Aristotle (1966) introduces the term ἀνάλογον (análogon) meaning

proportionate or *analogy* which is a four-term relationship:

That from analogy is possible whenever there are four terms so related that the second is to the first, as the fourth to the third; for one may then put the fourth in place of the second, and the second in place of the fourth. (1457^b16-19, 1984, p. 2332)

Kirby (1997) notes that this can be represented as, $A : B :: C : D$ (p. 533). For Aristotle metaphor as analogy is when the relationship between A and B and the relationship between C and D is such that it is possible for B and D to be interchanged. This reciprocal possibility of transfers allows for the two metaphorical relations of A and D, and C and B, which can be stated separately, but each requiring an understanding of the four-term relationship. Although these A/D and C/B metaphorical statements can be stated as they are without reference to the four-term relationship, the speaker can make explicit this four-term relationship: "...they qualify the metaphor by adding on to it that to which the word it supplants is relative" (1457^b19-20, 1984, pp. 2332-2333).

Aristotle gives two examples of such analogy. The first is, λέγω δὲ οἷον ὁμοίως ἔχει φιάλη πρὸς Διόνυσον καὶ ἀσπίς πρὸς Ἄρη: ἐρεῖ τοίνυν τὴν φιάλην ἀσπίδα Διονύσου καὶ τὴν ἀσπίδα φιάλην Ἄρεως (légo dé oíon omoíois échei phiálē prós Diónuson kaí aspís prós Árē: ereí toínun tēn phiálēn aspída Dionúsou kaí tēn aspída phiálēn Áreos) (1966, 1457^b20-22) which has been translated as, "Thus a cup is in relation to Dionysus what a shield is to Ares. The cup accordingly will be described as the 'shield of Dionysus' and the shield as the 'cup of Ares'" (1984, p. 2333). This is a metonymic relationship of association in which the object represents the person or the system to which they belong. For example, a crown can metonymically refer to the current monarch or to the system of monarchy because of the tradition in some cultures that a monarch wears a crown. Likewise, a wine cup [A] is intimately related (metonymically) with the god of wine, Dionysus [B], as a shield [C] is intimately related (metonymically) to the god of war, Ares [D]. Therefore, it is possible to substitute Dionysus for Ares and vice versa to say that the shield is "The wine cup [A] of Ares [D]" and the wine cup is "The shield [C] of Dionysus [B]".

Aristotle's example, no doubt, stems from Homer's *Iliad*, but no direct quotation was found. However, Athenaeus (1927) in his *The Deipnosophists* or *The Dinner Sophists* (Δειπνοσοφισταί, Deipnosophistai) (433b, 433c) notes a metaphorical connection between the drinking cup of Nestor and the shield of Ares, both of which Homer (1920) describes in the *Iliad*, Book 11, lines 628-637 and Book 18, lines 468-617 (See Homer, 1990, p. 317, lines 740-753, and pp. 482-487 lines 540-720 respectively). Athenaeus gives a reference to a quotation given in the *Καινέα* (Kainéa), *Caeneus*, written by Antiphanes, mentioning Timotheus relating a goblet to a shield: εἶτ' ἦδη δὸς φιάλην Ἄρεως, κατὰ Τιμόθεον, ξυστόν τε βέλος (eít' ēdē dós phiálēn Areos, katá Timótheon, xustón te bélos) (Athenaeus, 1927, 433c), which has been translated as, "Then give me, pray, what Timotheus calls the goblet of Ares and a polished javelin" (Edmonds, 1927, p. 329, Fragment 25). It is speculative whether Aristotle based his first example of analogy on the work of Antiphanes or to the earlier direct saying of Timotheus, but Aristotle certainly knew of Timotheus from what he wrote in the *Metaphysics*, "It is true that if there had been no Timotheus we should have been without much of our lyric poetry; but if there had been no Phrynis there would have been no Timotheus" (993^b14-16, 1984, p. 1570). It is also possible that Aristotle created his own example from his knowledge of Homer's *Iliad* without taking it from Antiphanes or Timotheus.

There are three interesting points to note about this example, each with respect to similarity and difference. First, Aristotle's example is of two Greek gods, but the chosen gods are contrasts: Dionysus, the god of wine and festivities, and Ares, the god of war. Second, Aristotle's example of analogy is a metonymic relationship between each of the gods and their particular object: the cup or wine vessel (φιάλη, phiálē) represents Dionysus and the shield (ἀσπίς, aspís) represents Ares. Third, there are nuanced notions of a cup and a shield which lead to differing understandings of the closeness and connection of the objects in the metaphorical expressions. In their translations of the *Poetics*, Bywater (1909, 1984), Fyfe (1932), and Butcher (1951), translate these as *cup* and *shield* respectively. The image of a cup, when we connect it with Nestor, one of the great drinkers of the heroes, or Dionysus, the god of wine, might be that of a deep wine chalice or another similar vessel for drinking wine. Homer (1920) in the *Iliad* refers to Nestor's large cup as δέπας (dépas) (Book 11, line, 632) which means a beaker, goblet, or chalice, according to the Liddell & Scott *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (1889). However, Athenaeus (1927) in *The Dinner Sophists*, 433c, uses a different word for a wine cup, ποτήριον (potērion), when not directly referring to Ares' wine cup, and φιάλην (phiálēn) when referring to Ares' wine cup with regards to the

remarks of Timotheus. φιάλη (phiálē) and φιάλην (phiálēn) are the words used by Aristotle (1966, *Poetics*, 1457^b20-22). According to the Liddell & Scott *A Greek-English Lexicon* (LSJ) (1940), entry A. 2. for φιάλη (phiálē), the meaning is a “broad, flat bowl or saucer for drinking or pouring libations.” This definition of φιάλη (phiálē) brings the analogy of a drinking vessel and shield closer. The shallow, round, concave surface of the drinking vessel is the same as the shallow, round, convex surface of the Greek shield when reversed and vice versa. This of course does not invalidate the metaphorical understanding of a cup and a shield when the cup is conceived to be a deep chalice because both are metonymically associated with their gods, but with such a conception the metaphor is less tightly associated than when the cup is understood to be a shallow, concave object. Thus, there is similarity in that there are two Greek gods and their metonymically associated objects, and there is difference due to the reciprocally inverted relationships: the god of wine and festivities contrasted with the god of war, and the round, shallow, concave cup contrasted with the round, shallow, convex shield (See Eco, 1983, p.228).

The second example that Aristotle (1966) gives of analogy is, ἡ ὁ γῆρας πρὸς βίον, καὶ ἑσπέρα πρὸς ἡμέραν: ἐρεῖ τοίνυν τὴν ἑσπέραν γῆρας ἡμέρας ἢ ὡσπερ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς, καὶ τὸ γῆρας ἑσπέραν βίου ἢ δυσμάς βίου (ἔ ὁ gēras prós bión, kaí espéra prós ēméran: ereí toínūn tēn espéran gēras ēméras ē ósper Empedoklēs, kaí tó gēras espéran bíou ē dūsmás bíou) (1457^b 22-25), which Bywater translates, “As old age is to life, so is evening to day. One will accordingly describe evening as the ‘old age of the day’ – or by the Empedoclean equivalent; and old age as the ‘evening’ or ‘sunset of life’” (1984, p. 2333). The source of Aristotle’s example is found in the very short Fragment 152 of Empedocles’ works (1908, p. 65), γῆρας ἡμέρας (gēras ēméras). γῆρας (gēras) can be translated as “to grow old, or old age” and ἡμέρας (ēméras) as “of the day.” Leonard, as editor of these works, translates this as, “Evening, the day’s old age.”

Aristotle’s second example again illustrates the four-way relationship (A : B :: C : D) of his notion of metaphor as analogy in the following way. Both life (B) and day (D) are terms for temporal periods with a finite duration which have a beginning and an end. Old age (A) is the end of life (B) and evening (C) is the end of the day (D). Thus, because old age (A) is to life (B) as evening (C) is to day (D), it is possible to metaphorically transfer B and D to state that “old age (A) is the end of the day (D)” and that “evening (C) is the end of life (B).”

Aristotle extends his discussion on analogy by noting that it does not necessarily depend on there being a word in a given language in order for analogy to be possible:

It may be that some of the terms thus related have no special name of their own, but for all that they will be described in just the same way. Thus to cast forth seed-corn is called ‘sowing’; but to cast forth its flame, as said of the sun, has no special name. This nameless act, however, stands in just the same relation to its object, sunlight, as sowing to the seed-corn. Hence the expression in the poet, ‘sowing around a god-created flame’. (1457^b25-30, 1984, p. 2333)

No literary source for the quotation, ‘sowing around a god-created flame’ (σπεύρων θεοκτίστην φλόγα, speíron theoktístēn phlóga) was found. Given Aristotle’s account of analogy, A : B :: C : D, it can be seen that ideas which do not have a word in a language can still be expressed. A farmer’s action of scattering seed (A) is called sowing (B) and this has the same relationship as the Sun casting forth its flame (C) which is a nameless act (D). In this example of metaphorical transfer, “the Sun casting forth its flame (C) is sowing (B),” where the nameless act (D) is expressed in terms of “sowing” (B). Thus, it is possible to metaphorically transfer corresponding elements in each relationship in order to express a notion that currently has no name, for example, A : B :: C : X or A : B :: X : D or X : B :: C : D or A : X :: C : D. This is a powerful tool in attempting to articulate novel ideas.

Aristotle continues by noting that there is the possibility of what might be called an *inverted metaphor* in which a metaphor (given-aspect) is then negated with regards to one or more of its attributes (opposite-aspect) and vice versa:

There is also another form of qualified metaphor. Having given the thing the alien name, one may by a negative addition deny of it one of the attributes naturally associated with its new name. An instance of this would be to call the shield not the ‘cup of Ares’, as in the former case, but a ‘cup that holds no wine’...[Kassel (1966) marks a lacuna here indicating missing text.] (1457^b30-33, 1984, p. 2333)

Thus, if one can metaphorically call the shield, “The wine cup of Ares” (given-aspect) and also as “A cup that holds no wine” (opposite-aspect), then one can metaphorically call the wine cup, “The shield of

Dionysus” (given-aspect) and also “A shield that does not protect” (opposite-aspect).

Derrida (1974) stated, “Analogy is metaphor par excellence” (p. 42) and Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* (1411^a1, 1984, p. 2251) thought it to be the best of the four kinds. Whereas the three other kinds of metaphor that Aristotle identified, genus for species, species for genus, and species for species, are intra-relational and therefore already closely connected, the strength of analogy lies in the making of inter-relational connections between seemingly disparate genera. This is especially important for cases in which relationships need to be made with novel ideas for which there are no currently available words.

10 Conclusion

This analysis of Aristotle’s definition of metaphor given in the *Poetics* with reference to the original Greek text and researching the original sources in Greek literature that Aristotle uses to illustrate his four types of metaphor has given a better understanding and appreciation of Aristotle’s notion which is sometimes lost in translation and in reading secondary sources. By referring to the Greek text it was found that Aristotle’s definition of metaphor faces the difficulty of escaping tautology, which he only partially achieves by utilising the prefixes μετα (meta) and ἐπι (epi). For Aristotle, metaphor is a generic term for four different types of linguistic transfer and not a name of a particular type of figurative language. Aristotle’s taxonomy is inconsistent with the first three being couched in terms of genus and species, but the fourth as analogy, a four-way relationship, when one would have expected a genus for genus two-way relationship. Regarding the illustrations of his four types of metaphor it can be seen that Aristotle used authentic language found in literature rather than fabricating his own examples. Through checking the original Greek texts of these literary sources a number of points were confirmed or clarified giving a better assurance and understanding of Aristotle’s examples, such as confirming that the genus ἔστηκεν (éstēken) *stands* is substituting the species ὀρμεῖν (ormeín) *lies at anchor* or *is moored* regarding the genus for species type of metaphor; understanding that μύριοι (múrioi) was the largest unit of measure expressed by a single word in Greek regarding the species for genus type of metaphor; understanding the metonymic meanings of χαλκῶ (chalkó), bronze, and how this aids our understanding of the two examples of the species for species type of metaphor; and that φιάλην (phiálēn), a shallow drinking cup, makes Aristotle’s example of analogy stronger with respect to a shield. Of the four types of metaphor that Aristotle identifies it can be seen that analogy is the most powerful by making connections between different genera. Seeing similarities in differences and differences in similarities develops understanding. Aristotle’s definitions and discussions of metaphor are the basis for the subsequent developments of this notion, certainly within the Western intellectual tradition, and to have a better understanding of Aristotle’s original text and notion is therefore important.

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