

05.

'Theòs metaphérōn'.

Literal Metaphors,
Paradigms, and the
Dialectical Turn of
Metaphysics in Plato

It has rarely been observed that Plato, despite his excessive use of comparisons, similes, metaphors, allegories, myths, and even *ad hoc* invented stories, never uses the word ‘metaphor’ as a technical term for *transference* of words and thoughts, in the sense of *figure of speech*, although it was used by Greek authors before and after him, like Isocrates and Aristotle.¹ Several—very few, indeed— occurrences of this word stem in Plato’s work contain only different verbal forms of μεταφέρω and μετατίθημι (both in the meaning of *transfero* in Latin) to designate the *action of displacement* from one place to another or from one medium to another. They all have the *literal* meaning of *moving, shifting, displacing* and *transposing things*, physical or abstract, even when the space, the direction or the goal of displacement is not physical, like the world, but a virtual entity such as language.² This includes rare cases of the descriptive, and apparently technical, use of the phrase ‘transposed names’, indicating linguistic transference in general.³ Of all the terms for *figures* of speech and thought, which are known from later classical Greek authors, Plato uses mainly the noun εἰκῶν (*picture*) or, in more technical contexts, the adjective ὅμοιον (*similar*), as well as the noun παράδειγμα (*example*), in order to express *comparison* or *illustration* of one item by another, no matter how distant they are from one another.⁴ What is interesting here is that, while the expression

1 For a standard philological study on this topic see P. Louis (1945).

2 See the phrases like πάντ’ ἄνω κάτω μεταφέρεται πρὸς τοὺς ἑαυτῶν τόπους (*Timaios* 58b); εἰς τὴν φωνὴν μ. (*Critia* 113a); εἰς τὴν ποιήσιν μ. (*Protagoras* 339a). Even the comparison of the Creating God with a blacksmith, putting and drowning things in fire and water, is literal: θεὸς μεταφέρων πολλάκις εἰς ἑκάτερον [sc. εἰς πῦρ τε εἰς ὕδωρ] (*Timaios* 73e), where μεταφέρειν is introduced through ἐντίθημι and βάπτειν. See Ast (1838), *Lexicon Platonicum*, Vol. II, 322–323.

3 Significantly, it is found in the *Cratylus* 384d: ὥσπερ τοῖς οἰκέταις ἡμεῖς μετατιθέμεθα [οὐδὲν ἦττον τοῦτ’ εἶναι ὀρθόν τὸ μετατεθὲν τοῦ πρότερον κειμένου] descriptively in the Seventh Letter (Ep. VII, 343b1–4.) and confirmed in this very same use in the Seventh Letter (Ep. VII, 343b1–4). The *Lexicon Platonicum* indexes only the one occurrence in the *Cratylus* (vol. II, 323).

4 The famous Cave dystopia in the *Republic* (514a–519d) is addressed several times in the text. First introduced as a “strange picture” (ἄτοπος εἰκῶν), at the end it is said that “the whole picture should be tied to what was previously discussed (517a8–b1: τὴν εἰκόνα προσαπτέον ἅπασαν). Similarly, although the value of writing down philosophy was denied in the *Phaedrus* by a comparison of letters to apparently vivid but immovable and tacit paintings (275d), the argument that a “serious” philosophical

metaphéreïn is used to literally designate *real procedures* in the physical world, including transferences between different media (things to words) and translations between languages, it is only the term *parádeigma* that, in Plato's later dialogues, takes over the role of a *figure* of speech and thought expressing *transference* in the usual technical sense of this term. It stands for the traffic of, and with, virtual content (meanings, concepts and mental pictures) not only between different species within a genus but also between (and among) extant genera or classes: *parádeigma* encompasses what we call example, sample, pattern and model, including their rhetorical and semiotic subtypes (picture, simile, metaphor, allegory, parable).

Based on this background, it is possible, contrary to the common metaphysical interpretations of Plato's *notion of paradigm*, mostly understood as *ideas* (εἶδη)⁵, to ascribe a more substantial relevance to a seemingly not very relevant difference between the philosophical use of the term (as pattern, standard) and its everyday use (as example). The precondition for this is only that one doesn't rule out, in Plato's dialogues, the everyday language use of the term *paradigm* as non-substantial to philosophy. The French philologist Victor Goldschmidt was, to my knowledge, the first to provide the earliest systematic argumentation of the close relationship between *paradigm* in the sense of "mere example" and Plato's mature dialectical theory of genera and species in the late period dialogues. After decades of poor interest in the topic, discussions have been revived from the late 1990s onwards due to a new interest in Plato's dialogue *Statesman* and the obvious methodological relationship of this dialogue to the *Sophist*.⁶ In the face of recent developments it seems that a fuller appreciation of the difference between the two meanings of the term *paradigm* (*example* vs. *pattern*) permits to recognize a systematically more relevant transformation of Plato's theory of ideas. It is marked by a shift from a strict ontological account of ideas as eternal

work is only possible with the "living logos" is introduced by a very "zoographic" comparison of philosophy with the work of a wise peasant (276b-277a).

- 5 For comprehensive historical surveys and conceptual discussions see e.g. Bluck (1957) and Rentsch (1989) to which I shall refer sporadically.
- 6 See e.g. Gill (2005 [2015]) and Gill (2006), Sayre (2006), Ionescu (2016), Smith (2018). See also the collection of papers on Plato's *Statesman* in Sallis ed. (2017), esp. the papers by D. Risser, G. Figal, and E. Sanday, with further references to the study of paradigm.

and immutable entities, serving as heavenly patterns of world things, that was characteristic of Plato's earlier middle period dialogues, to a rather conceptual and methodological account in his later dialogues.⁷

Strange Metaphors and the Iconicity of Ideas

It has been commonly assumed that Plato generally, and especially in his middle period dialogues such as the *Phaedo*, the *Meno* and the *Republic*—the latter considered in many respects to be Plato's central dialogue, although not his ultimate word in philosophy—operates with the classical conception of ideas as ontologically separate entities and ideal patterns of real things.⁸ But in what is presumably the latest dialogue of the middle period and a threshold to the late period, the *Theaetetus*, the very term *idea* (εἶδος) is scarcely mentioned and always referring to *class* or *kind* of things (synonymously with γένος).⁹ This has caused many controversies among the interpreters of the dialogue and of Plato's theory of ideas in general.¹⁰ What we encounter of the typically "Platonist" theory of ideas in the *Theaetetus* is, instead, just one class of the most general (universal) categories (*being-nonbeing, identity-otherness, similarity-difference, oneness-plurality* etc.) called *the commons* (κοινά) and coinciding to a great extent with the "highest genera" (μέγιστα γένη) in the dialogue *Sophist* that explicitly refers to the conversation in the *Theaetetus*. This class of highest genera, besides being purely noetic (νοήματα) and 'common', is also in the *Theaetetus* called 'names' (ὀνόματα) and is predicated of particular qualities. It is by this "nominal"

7 As for the perplexing issue of the ordering of Plato's dialogues, I apply the tripartite division with relative chronology established by Charles Kahn who advocates a more content-based than chronological ordering due to the assumption of a *systematic* orientation of mature dialogues to the *Republic*, with which the 'middle period' starts. See Kahn (1996), 42–48 (48).

8 See *Politeia* 500e, 592b for the conception of ideas as 'celestial' and 'divine' *paradeigmata* as opposed to worldly things as *eikones*.

9 *Theaetetus* 148d8: ἐνὶ εἶδει περιέλαβες; 178a6: εἰ περὶ παντός τις τοῦ εἶδους ἐρωτῶν ἐν ᾧ καὶ τὸ ὠφέλιμον τυγχάνει ὄν; 204 ἐν τι εἶδος ἕτερον τῶν πάντων μερῶν; 155b8: τὸ αἰσθητὸν γένος; 203e: τῶν συλλαβῶν γένος.

10 For a recent discussion on the *Theaetetus* see Chappell (2019): "There are no explicit mentions of the Forms at all in the *Theaetetus* (...) The main argument of the dialogue seems to get along without even implicit appeal to the theory of Forms. In the *Theaetetus*, Revisionism seems to be on its strongest ground of all."

unification of a multiplicity of qualities through the ‘power of tongue’ (τῆς γλώσσης δύναμις)—declared to be the ‘common organ’ (κοινὸν ὄργανον)—that things are given unity and become individual objects.¹¹

In the late period dialogues following *Theaetetus*, such as the *Sophist*, the *Parmenides*, the *Statesman* and the *Philebus*, Plato seems to have revised, if not abandoned, his earlier middle period metaphysical conception of separate and heavenly ideas as well as the doctrine of ‘participation’ (μέθεξις) of ideas in the world by being imitated by particular worldly things that are reminiscent of ideas.¹² Contrary to the earlier middle period, we find now, from *Theaetetus* on, a more common use of *parádeigma*, meaning *example*, *sample*, as well as explicit *methodical* explanations of why examples are used for topics currently under discussion. The most frequent and apparently prototypical example of such exemplifications is the use of letters, syllables, and words, serving as illustration for the ability of genera to “commingle with one another” according to ‘reason’ (λόγος).¹³ Thus, it is not the ideal pre-existence of a paradigm ‘in heaven’ that attracts worldly things to “participate” in celestial ideas and to become imitating pictures (εἰκῶνες), simulacra. Rather conversely, the highest categories are organizing and intrinsic constituents of different classes of things, abstract in themselves; they relate not only

- 11 *Theaetetus* 185c-d. — For a discussion of the ‘commons’ see A. Silverman (1990) who completely bypasses the ‘lingual’ aspect of the κοινὰ νοήματα and reduces the role of language in Plato’s theory of knowledge to semantics by cutting it off from any semiotic aspects.
- 12 The supposed revision seems to be the effect of Plato’s attempt to answer the problem of regression to infinity (or the so-called Third Man Argument), addressed by him in the *Parmenides* (131e-132b) and of criticisms by Speusippus and, later, Aristotle. Aristotle himself addresses (*Met.* M4. 1078b9–12) the “original opinion” about ideas, “as conceived by the first ones who said that ideas existed”, and “not connecting it with the nature of numbers”, i.e. with ‘unwritten doctrines’. For the controversy over the relationship between the dialogical doctrines and the unwritten theory of principles see Findlay (1983) who joins the so-called Tübingen School of Platonic studies (Krämer 1990). See also recent discussions of the Third Man controversy in Pepple (1997) and Meinwald (2006). For a systematic monograph of Aristotle’s criticism of Plato’s “doxa on ideas” in the lost treatise ‘On ideas’, under exclusion of the ‘unwritten doctrines’, see Fine (2004).
- 13 See *Theaetetus* 201c-206b, *The Statesman* 277e-290b, *Sophist* 253a-c (self-reference at 261d). See also the complete list of loci for *parádeigma* in Ast (1838), *Lexicon Platonicum*, Vol. III, p. 32–33.

downwards to particular things but also upwards and diagonally, in mutual and multiple cross-relations, without necessarily being ontological instances of *the same sort* as things they relate to but differing from them by being abstract 'kinds'. This twofold aspect of relation—species or genera to things and species or genera to one another—is described by Plato as “standing *like* paradeigmata within nature” and the ‘participation’ itself as “nothing other than being likened” to instances.¹⁴ Although things themselves are called ‘similar’ (ὁμοιώματα) of a paradigm, Plato leaves no doubt that the *similarity relation* holds *vice versa*, i.e. from similar towards paradigm. This means that not only things are “likened” to ideas but ideas too must be said to be ‘alike’; they too are ‘likened’ to their instances just as examples in the world are similar to things they exemplify, and no tricky mind can change this.¹⁵

This description seems to corroborate, on the one hand, the usual interpretation that ideas are conceived of as *really existing abstract objects* incorporating the abstract essential features of respective classes of things and, thus, forming the perfect ideal instance of the class, and serving—much like examples of things in nature—as exemplary examples to other instances of the kind by virtue of similarity. But, on the other hand, this account of ideas implies that they *function like paradigms* in the real world. Which suggests that the status of ideas and the theory of ideas itself are *analogical* in character. Ideas are *like* real paradigms, meaning that ideas consist in *their paradigmatic function of mutual likening* with instances. Hence, the real issue must be whether ‘instantiation’ necessarily means that ideas, being virtual paradigms different from—but similar to—examples in the natural world, ever exist as identical to any individual entity, even the most abstract and ideal ones. This appears to be problematic exactly because every instance of a class, even the first and perfect one—necessarily falls short of ever being *the one ideal* instance in which the class attains its self-identity and from which other, less perfect, instances are derived.¹⁶ In this respect, ideas must be thought of as something different than being perfect *instances* of themselves.

14 Parm. 132d2–4: τὰ εἶδη ταῦτα ὡςπερ παραδείγματα ἡσάναι ἐν τῇ φύσει (...) καὶ ἡ μέθεξις αὐτῆ τοῖς ἄλλοις γίνεσθαι τῶν εἰδῶν οὐκ ἄλλη τις ἢ εἰκασθῆναι αὐτοῖς.

15 Parm. 132d5–7.

16 See also Soph. 252d; 260d–e; 256e.

Rather, they seem to point beyond themselves, so to speak. In this sense, Plato's formulation that ideas 'stand like paradigms in nature' challenges our usual reading of Plato's conception according to which only things in the world "are likened" to ideas. Ideas too are likened to instances.

This has doubtlessly been one of the major controversies with regard to Plato, in which Aristotle's criticism of Plato's ontological account of ideas has played a central role and shaped philosophical scholarship for centuries to come. However, notwithstanding Aristotle's authority as our first-hand and main historical witness regarding Plato's written and unwritten doctrines, he refuses to acknowledge Plato's later *dialectical* version of the participation theory as Plato's self-criticism. Aristotle accepts, instead, the Third Man Argument against the theory of separate existence of ideas as valid and grounds his critique on the earlier *imitation* theory of the middle period dialogues.¹⁷ As for a general orientation in the controversy over continuity or revision of the theory of ideas in the light of unwritten doctrines, a statement by John Findlay may serve as guide:

"Some modern interpreters have criticized Platonism for, as they hold, predicating the Eide of the Eide, regarding them as perfect instances of themselves, and so merely adding a world of perfect exemplars to our world of imperfect ones, which fail to explain anything in our imperfect world. Aristotle's criticism of Platonism in the *Metaphysics* and elsewhere made similar objections. But Plato, arguably, never saw the Eide as exemplary instances, but as something better than the most exemplary exemplar, being the pure essences which, while communicating themselves to their instances in varying

17 For a chronology of Aristotle's criticism in his 'On ideas' and on Plato's answers see Fine (2004), esp. Ch. 3. 7–8 and Ch. 16. From the argument, raised by Pepple (1999), that Aristotle does not declare anywhere that Plato ever made any revisions in this theory, one can only conclude that Plato did not *abandon* the theory of ideas, as a consequence of not having found a satisfying answer to the Third Man Argument in the *Parmenides*. But nothing that follows from this denies the possibility that Plato might have *revised* his conception of ideas *indirectly*, through a revision of 'participation' (by substituting sharing-in of ideas in the particulars for the earlier imitation of ideas by particulars) and his own method of analysis (by substituting conceptual divisions for earlier elenchus). Such an operation might have indirectly affected the nature of ideas from being separate ideal entities to becoming the *commons* capable of interacting and more like numbers.

degrees, were a radically different sort of thing from them. And the immense gulf between Eide and instances did not mean that Eide were cut off from the cases which 'shared' in them or were 'modelled' upon them, but merely that they had a different role, and belonged to a different ontological type, being what can be shared in or approached by the character of its instances, without itself being an instance of any sort at all. The very terms 'participation' and 'imitation' were arguably meant by Plato to indicate a very real and essential relation which demands, and does not violate, a gulf of type."¹⁸

On this background, Plato's description of ideas as 'standing like paradigms in nature' and 'being likened' to similars in a *mutual* similarity relationship, requires more cautious scrutiny.

Plato, Wittgenstein, and the Real 'Third Man'

One instance of "regarding ideas as perfect instances of themselves" is to be found in the assumption that particulars, in Plato's theory, derive their identity from one idea as their respective standard form (Bluck, 1957). The real issue is, however, what the 'derivation' of identity refers to? Relying on Wittgenstein's discussion on Standards and Patterns of things, Bluck offers a tentative solution: what is *derived* is the "right" of the particulars, by virtue of similarity, to be called, homonymously, after their respective Forms. Once this is accepted, what is then, Bluck asks, the similarity between Forms and their particulars that justifies calling particulars by the names of Forms? What is the very nature of the similarity? Although his question about similarity appears ontological and epistemological it eventually turns out to be linguistic as is also the answer:

"In what way can a Form and its instances have a common predicate? The Form, we may say, is X because that is how we have chosen to baptize it, while its instances derive their right to be called X from the fact that they remind us of the Form."¹⁹

Bluck does not explain this solution any further, but it seems sufficiently clear that it is not our being 'reminded' of the Forms by similarity that *really* establishes the class-unity of a Form and

¹⁸ Findlay (1983), 5. Fine (2004), viii, 34 considers the late dialogues and the so-called unwritten doctrines generally irrelevant for Aristotle's criticism of Plato's theory of ideas.

¹⁹ Bluck (1957), 122.

its respective instances. It is rather the linguistic act of ‘baptising’ them. Although this observation by Bluck is reminiscent of Wittgenstein’s reasoning about the self-predication of paradigm, such as calling the Standard Meter in Paris a ‘meter’ (which is for Wittgenstein the case of ‘infallible paradigm’²⁰), Bluck’s solution of the similarity-problem in late Plato’s theory of participation contains, nonetheless, only a unilateral view of how particulars share in the name of the idea: they are ‘baptised’ by the name of the respective idea to which they belong by similarity.²¹ Bluck combines Plato’s and Wittgenstein’s solutions to arrive at his own, which is ultimately a reductive one.

This account holds only ideally, vertically and metaphysically, and it completely ignores symbolic cross-references among genera and things, which are as explicitly posited by Plato as by Wittgenstein. What we get with this idea of “derivation of the right of things to be homonymously named after their standards” by virtue of similarity, as Bluck puts it, is that the ‘symbolic’ constitution of paradigm appears as *substituted* for ‘baptising’ of ready-made standards. Therefore, naming, as a linguistic practice, is a necessary but only a *secondary* representation of standards as if they can be ‘standards’ at all without *previously* being “baptised”. By such an equation of Wittgensteinian ‘standards’ and Platonic Forms with entities still searching for their names, the symbolic

- 20 Wittgenstein (2009), PHI [50], p. 29 and PHI [215], p. 90. For the self-predication of ideas in Plato see Meinwald (2006), who shows that Plato’s commitment to self-predication “figures in dialogues of all three periods” (e.g. the *Protagoras*, the *Phaedon*, the *Sophist*), and can be considered as “the foundation of Platonism”. But strangely, Meinwald refers only to an indirect reference to ‘Russell’s Paradox’ by G. Vlastos (p. 392, n. 2), intended critically against Plato, and not to Wittgenstein’s account of self-applications of standards, despite the obvious proximity of the latter to what Meinwald affirms as Plato’s theoretical innovation, in the second part of the *Parmenides*. The innovation consists in introducing the notion ‘in-relation-to’ (*prós ti*) that grounds two kinds of predication (the uses of ‘is’), namely ‘in relation to itself’ and ‘in relation to others’. See Meinwald (2006), 378.
- 21 Bluck (1957), 122 (n. 4): “I would suggest that the Standard Pound may be called a pound because that is how we have chosen to baptize it.” For a different solution based not on similarity between instances and their respective Form but on the ‘in-relation-to’ category see Meinwald (2006), 386: “The *prós*-relation allows us to see that a predication such as ‘The Large is large’ does not claim that the Large itself is large in the same way that the original groups of large things is. It therefore does not force on us a new group of large things whose display of a common feature requires us to crank up our machinery again and produce a new Form.”

function of paradigms, which *constitute* them, is reduced to some sort of pre-conceptual essences, which might be perceived by a pure soul but not grasped by a knowing subject. Even the most general abstract categories in the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist*, the so-called 'highest genera' (μέγιστα γένη), of whose *origin* we get to know nothing in these dialogues, *already* have *names* such as 'being', 'identity', 'difference', etc. If we assume that standards pre-exist their being 'baptised', they only become symbolically represented once again instead of *being* by themselves *symbolic representants*.²² Being, or non-being, is what we predicate; this holds also of other most general 'commons' as well, such as unity and plurality, similarity and difference, identity and otherness. Hence, it is hard to see how this secondary baptism of purportedly pre-existing 'measures' could be consistent not only with Wittgenstein's symbolic conception of paradigms but also with Plato's idea of particulars as established by cross-references of entire communities of genera. Seen on this background, Bluck's idea that particulars derive their "right to identity" through their being baptised by the names of ideas on the ground of similarity with ideas, presupposes that ideas precede even their own baptism. This hardly seems to make sense not only with respect to Wittgenstein's conception of paradigm but also to Plato's.

Namely, for a particular of different levels of abstraction, such as 'man', as 'Greek' or as 'Socrates', to be identified, it must be determined as 'this', 'that' or 'such', and this is possible only with language.²³ To build such determinations, many and multiple Forms are needed. Therefore, *methexis* can no more be understood unilaterally as the way real things are 'partaken in' by ideas, either by things being ever-approximate-copies of ideas or by deriving their names from ideas.²⁴ It is, conversely, ideas that both

22 Wittgenstein is explicit in his determination of paradigms as "marking only their peculiar role in the game of measuring"; and *not* as "being ascribed any remarkable property" (PhI [50]). Furthermore, as he states in his *Philosophical Grammar*: "(...) in an ostensive definition I do not state anything about the paradigm (sample); I only use it to make a statement. It belongs to the symbolism and is not one of the objects to which I apply the symbolism." (PhG, 346)

23 Wittgenstein (1977), PhG, p. 150: "And what is our paradigm of such containing? Isn't it our language? Where are we to find what makes the wish *this* wish, even though it's only a wish? Nowhere but in the expressed wish."

24 This is a precondition only for the exact knowledge of things. In order to be analysed or imitated (like persons) they must be known. See *Sophist* 267b.

belong to a ‘community’ (ἐπικοινωνία) of abstracts and refer to a particular, the result of which is that a particular always happens to be a *concrete complex* of multiple genera belonging to it. It is not only, as we usually ascribe to Plato, that one idea partakes in multiple particulars, which secondarily incorporate, exemplify, and instantiate the standard features of the whole class, represented by one idea or paradigm. It is rather that multiple ideas ‘share in’ communities *both* with one another and with particulars. A particular, such as a man, Greek, or Socrates, is *built up* by a multiplicity of interrelating ideas. They form a particular *only* by *mutually* sharing in *one another*, i.e. by building *communities* of genera and species *within* particulars.

This is, as a matter of fact, a conception of paradigms similar to Wittgenstein’s “symbolic” conception. Although Platonic ideas themselves, unlike the Standard Meter in Paris, never become a sensible item in the world, except by *approximate* instantiation, it is, nevertheless—through their being *paradeigmata* of things “in nature”—that ideas *function* in the literal, everyday use of the Greek language as names revealing *what* things are (be they general or particular).²⁵ This use of the terms *paradigm* and *participation* preserves the literal meaning of the respective verbal expressions παραδείκνυμι (*exhibit, bring forward*) and μετέχω (*partake of, share in, participate in, be part of*). It is an everyday linguistic meaning of the word and not a metaphysically substantiated entity called the ‘standard’. It allows for recognizing that the word *parádeigma* expresses not only equivocal representations of isogenous instances through language but also transferential and equivocal cross-references throughout extant heterogenous parts and wholes. A paradigm, by its very position as *denominator* of its own class, not ever becoming identical with any instance except

25 As for proper names, Plato excludes personal proper names, such as ‘Theophilos’ (‘beloved by God’) in the *Cratylus* (397a-b), from considerations under any theory of “correctness of names” for species and genera. This is parallel to Aristotle’s contention in the *Poetics* that names of persons, such as ‘Theodor’ (‘God-given’), have not the meaning they purport to have. See the respective discussion on the distinction of ordinary proper names and logically proper names of species and genera in Plato in Kretzman (1971), 131–132; for Aristotle, see Ryan (1981), 44–45, referring to Aristotle’s discussion on ‘idion onoma’ in *Met. (Z)*, 1035b1–3. However, as I argue in chapter 7, there seem to be more in Aristotle’s withdrawal of meaning from compound proper names; it might be seen as a hidden analytic pattern in both his accounts of meaning production, metaphoric and literal.

with itself, is always-already *shifted* and, insofar, *dis-placed* in the literal sense of the term (*trans-ferred, metaphorized*). This is why it calls forth such linguistic actions as referring by “baptism”. Thus, paradigm itself appears to be an instance of the ‘language-game’. *Participation* then—as partaking-in or in-sharing—is not a vague metaphor for *imitation* of heavenly ideas by things from afar, but a term designating a complex and, above all, *dynamic* way of paradigms’ being-in-common (κοινωνεῖν) with one another and with things.²⁶ This proceeds through a network of cross-references occurring by virtue of relations such as resemblance (sameness, similarity, unity etc.) and non-resemblance (difference, otherness, multiplicity etc.). Plato’s later conception of the relationship between ideas and particulars, labelled as ‘paradigmatic’, seems everything but a *harmonia praestabilita* of two parallel worlds, one of heavenly ideas and one of earthly particulars, of which the latter reflects (emulates) the former, thus becoming its copy. It is, instead, one whole world with ever moving cross-relations—vertical, horizontal and diagonal—among genera. It is this double—dialectical and dynamic—character of generic interrelations that build up concrete things by using the power of ‘tongue’—by naming, predicating, and asserting—as Plato puts it in the *Theaetetus*.

Aristotle has sharply criticised Plato’s early use of paradigms and the related conception of *participation of ideas* in the world calling it “void talk” (κενολογεῖν) and “prattle” (τερετίσματα) that brings nothing in the way of scientific proof and “can be said farewell to”.²⁷ This kind of talk is especially unsustainable in such a central part of philosophical discourse as the theory of principles in the ‘first philosophy’ where straight and clear speech is needed.²⁸ This is, for Aristotle, the scientific limit of otherwise normal paradigmatic speech in different areas of knowing and acting.²⁹ Paradigms belong to the realm of rhetoric since they represent schemes of incomplete and, thereby, uncertain *reasoning* akin

26 Soph. 257a: ἔχει κοινωνίαν ἀλλήλοις ἢ τῶν γενῶν φύσις. See also the discussion about the advantages of ‘weaver’ over ‘shepherd’ as paradigms for a good statesman, the latter being “outside the flock” while the former is “within”, in the *Statesman* 281a-289d.

27 See Met. A 9, 991a20-21 and An. Post. 22. 83a32-33: τὰ γὰρ εἶδη χαίρετω· τερετίσματά τε γὰρ ἐστὶ, καὶ εἰ ἔστιν, οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν λόγον ἐστίν.

28 Met. Δ 2. 1013a27; Physics B 38.194b26. See also An. Post. II. 97b25sq.

29 See Aristotle’s general term παραδειγματικῶς λέγειν, Met. a3. 995a7.

to enthymemes. What Aristotle calls ‘*parádeigma*’ are figures of *approximate inference* on the ground of the resemblance between the minor concept and the object inferred. Hence, paradigms are posited *between* the inductive (dialectic and peirastic) inference, on the one hand, and the apodictic syllogism, on the other.³⁰ If put in modern terms, paradigms in Aristotle’s conception serve either for analogical (reason-based) or paralogical (symptom-based) thinking.³¹ Namely, what they lack, is the feature of completeness or *perfect fitting* between the structure of inference and facts in the world.

Nothing has been said, however, by this *logical* analysis of paradigms as based on *inductive inference* about the *epistemological* value of ‘induction’ (ἐπαγωγή) and *parádeigma* in Aristotle’s accounts of cognition. *Epagogé* is, in Aristotle, not merely a logical term meaning *incomplete* inference but the name of the *most basic, natural cognitive process* by which universals (τὰ καθόλου) are *produced* out of an incomplete amount of empirical data.³² They are partial and incomplete in nature, but they are, nonetheless, the pillars of our most general utterances about our world experience (λόγοι ἐπακτικοί). If they are considered true by all, or highly probable by some knowledgeable people, they may serve as ‘axioms’, the first principles for deductive knowledge to proceed. Hence, paradigms are not only constituted similarly to inductions, they *are* ‘rhetorical inductions’.³³ They are provided by our natural and everyday processes of cognition and reasoning (διάνοια) as well as our general linguistic capacity (γλώσση) and speech (διάλεκτος).

This induction-based origin of the principles of different areas of our thinking and life is the reason why, for Aristotle too,

30 See two definitions of paradigm as argumentative procedures, a logical and a rhetorical one. An. Pr. B 24. 68b38: τὸ παράδειγμα ἐστὶν ὅταν τῷ μέσῳ τὸ ἄκρον ὑπάρχον δείχθῃ διὰ τοῦ ὁμοίου τῷ τρίτῳ. Ret. A 2.1857b25-30. τὸ παράδειγμα ἐστὶν ὡς μέρος πρὸς μέρος, ὁμοιον πρὸς ὁμοιον.

31 See Rhet. B 20. 1393a27. For recent discussions of ‘paradigm case argument’ see Lynch (s.a.).

32 Cf. An. Pr. B 23. 68b15-37, esp. b35; An. Po. B 19. 100b4: δῆλον δὲ ὅτι ἡμῖν τὰ πρῶτα ἐπαγωγῇ γινώριζεν ἀναγκαῖον· καὶ γὰρ ἡ αἴσθησις οὔτω τὸ καθόλου ἐμποιεῖ. See also EN VI. 3. 1139b28.

33 Rhet. B 20. 1393a26: ὁμοιον ἐπαγωγῇ τὸ παράδειγμα, παράδειγμα ἐπαγωγῇ ῥητορικῇ.

notwithstanding his resistance to Plato's overall holism, every concept in human knowledge is *paradigmatically* constituted. Paradigm is a form of syllogism, although not demonstrative but dialectical. This constitution of our cognition is for Aristotle—in a clear opposition to early Plato's theory of ideas but not necessarily contradictory to Plato's later account of how genera jointly constitute the particulars—a result of the *natural* genesis of abstracts out of the mind's capability of *establishing similarities* in perceived particulars, and not a *reflection* of separately pre-existing ideas. Our cognition of things in the world is not backed up by and founded in a different and ontologically higher order of separate virtual items. It is, rather, a product of natural cognition processes encompassing at once perceptions, memorized pictures and determined 'experiences'. But, moreover, this process is supplemented by our active filling out of ever-incomplete classes of objects with supposed members of the class. This filling out of ontological gaps is the way in which things *per se* become concepts *for us*. But insofar as they are natural objects, they never become ontologically complete. Aristotle's allegedly radical turn against Platonic organicist holism of method and ontology seems to depend on his refutation of the earlier Platonic belief that paradigms are *separate* ideals of classes of things but never fall into being *actual parts* of classes, and that particulars are only copies of paradigms ever falling short of paradigmatic ideality. Aristotle's assumption of a strong ontological commitment in Plato's conception of paradigm as original-copy-relation seems worthy of further examination. Especially because Plato himself submitted it to dialectical critique in the *Parmenides* using the term 'paradigm' in a rather methodological and non-metaphysical sense. Ideas as paradigms seem to have another function than "merely adding a world of perfect exemplars to our world of imperfect ones, which fail to explain anything in our imperfect world", as John Findlay put it.

Trans-Generic Communities. Metaphoricity Radicalized

In the late period dialogues such as the *Sophist* and the *Philebus*, a class is not defined only by strict identity but *also* by non-identity, not only by similarity but also by difference, due to shared elements of ideas in different classes (genera):

"But being, in turn, participates in the other and is therefore other than the rest of the classes, and since it is other than

all of them, it is not each one of them or all the rest, but only itself; there is therefore no doubt that there are thousands and thousands of things which being is not, and just so all other things, both individually and collectively, in many relations are, and in many are not.”³⁴

Thus, for the late Plato—even more so than for the late Wittgenstein—it is not only the *worldly position* of paradigms that makes cognition, truth-sentences, and scientific practice possible but their use for the *symbolic* representation through naming and predication. By being the means of representation of things not only *within* a class, but *also without* one class, they build up a network of cross-relations among distinct and defined classes of things, homogeneous and heterogeneous, and thus enable the formation of knowledge *across* classes. Paradigms organise knowledge not only of one field, by being the standard, isogenous representant of all instances, but beyond the class’s constraints, by becoming a *heterogeneous* representant. Thus they connect even very distant fields:

“Now since we have agreed that the classes or genera also commingle with one another, or do not commingle, in the same way, must not he possess some science and proceed by the processes of reason who is to show correctly which of the classes harmonize with which, and which reject one another, and also if he is to show whether *there are some elements extending through all and holding them together* so that they can mingle, and again, when they separate, whether there are other universal causes of separation?”³⁵

Therefore, *parádeigma* is a normal-language expression of the properly symbolic function, including the ‘metaphorical’ mode of transference in the strict linguistic sense of the term, occurring between distant and heterogenous relata. Paradigm is metaphor literally and metaphorically, so to speak. It is used to refer to

34 *Soph.* 259b (Engl. translation by H.N. Fowler). These formulations clearly confirm, as Ionescu (2013), 42 rightly insists, that the method of divisions in the *Sophist* is not a method of demonstrations but “a dialectical method of *discovery* that proceeds *tentatively*, while it ultimately aims to ground its discoveries in the communion of the very great kinds (...) by challenging distinctions drawn earlier and advances towards antecedent conditions in the hope that this method will *eventually* reveal its ultimate foundations in the way forms combine.” (Italics are mine.)

35 *Soph.* 253b-c (trans. by Fowler). (Italics are mine.)

things or items in speech, thought and behavior, having not only the ontological but also “purely” linguistic, formal discursive (logical) and methodological senses. As the central means of the fundamental procedure in philosophical thinking (“proceeding by the processes of reason”³⁶), paradigm is not contingent but inseparable from the very notion of dialectics.³⁷ It is, itself, a “paradigmatic” representant of dialectics. As a dialectical-discursive item, it entails the same and the different, just as the ‘letters’ in speech serve, like in the *Statesman*, to paradigmatically exemplify the use of examples in inquiry.³⁸

In light of this, Aristotle’s criticism of Plato’s notion of paradigms as separate ideas necessarily fades, although there seem to be some good points in Aristotle’s reluctance towards Plato’s all-pervasive holism of cross-generic relations. Obviously, this holism is what leaves room for *logically illegitimate* transferences between genera and, hence, cannot be advisable for philosophical investigations pursuing the scientific goal of truth. For Aristotle, it is hard to see such absolute congruency across the classes and isomorphism between representation (paradigm) and the represented (particular). In such an all-togetherness of commingling genera, classes, and particulars everything is a family of relatives.³⁹ Consequently, in such a universal family of things

36 Plato’s phrase is much more plastic: διὰ τῶν λόγων πορεύεσθαι (“travelling through concepts and arguments”).

37 As Risser (2017), 173, remarks, this is the third sense of *parádeigma* uniting two other ones: example from within a class and model from outside a class. Being “inseparable from dialectics (...), it is something of both: it is a model that introduces a norm that effectively prescribes the ordering of unity while at the same time being itself an example of the ordering of unity”. This ambiguity is why, for Risser (180, n. 4), ‘*paradeigma*’ is not well translated by ‘model’, as Gill (2006) proposes. For Smith (2018), 134 the notion of paradigm “clarifies the nature of dialectical inquiry” and “offers insight into the constitutive ratios that govern the structuring of kinds necessary for dialectical inquiry” and allows for non-bifurcatory divisions beyond bifurcatory ones.

38 Smith (2018), 140 summarizes: “By considering paradigms, we see that inquiry always presupposes partial and obscured insight in the subjectively rooted ways that the thing being inquired into has already revealed itself. This partial insight is the paradigm of the inquiry, which acts as the means by which inquiry itself is even possible. This paradigm can prove to be false, as in the cases of nurture and the shepherd, and hence requires constant testing.”

39 In the *Republic* V, this issue is presented as a *real political* problem, due to the need for strict regulations of sexual behaviour among sexes, ages and

there can hardly be any “transference” of any alien thing to another except a “mere” linguistic one, producing synonyms and homonyms alike. A paradigm, both isogenous with a class, like a standard instance, and also heterogeneous to a class, like a model, is never really different from what it represents, but intrinsically ‘commingled’, never external. This is what not only allows for analogies, comparisons, illustrations, similes, allegories and the like, but calls them forth over and over again in ever-new discursive practices (dialogues). Moreover, it ensures that analogies etc. will be—at least in principle, if not in every case—understood, adopted, and, by this, justified, independently of their artistic quality. The philosopher or the explorer of things, “travelling through concepts and arguments”, is the one who sees the interdependence of classes.

For Aristotle, as suggested above, paradigms are only a means of *approximate* inferring, and, in this very respect, they can be only a transference-based, analogically *diferred* mode of representing things, acts, and structures within our epistemic discourses about the world. Aristotle is quite clear about this issue: paradigms are ‘metaphorical’ in the *general* and *literal* sense of transference, relating to something which differs from themselves either in species or in genus.⁴⁰ Conversely, particular linguistic metaphors are samples (paradigms) of *diferred*, sometimes very *unusually* ‘estranged’ use of concept-names. Furthermore, this use is, according to Aristotle, primarily, but not exclusively, typical of poetic discourse as well as of rhetoric and politics. Moreover, it is also widespread in the most abstract types of philosophical discourse but for special reasons of discourse and theory building it is not advisable to use metaphors in definitions.⁴¹ The same applies to the strictly *apophantic* language of science or any theory that aims

relatives, under eugenic criteria. The allusive sexual language of ‘communion’ and ‘commingling’ among species and genera in the late dialogues is not only reminiscent of the ‘erotic ontology’ in the earlier *Symposion*. It is rather already entailed as the natural organic representation of logical relations in the 5th book of the *Republic* where Plato discusses the political constitution of sexual relations, participation of women in governmental bodies as well as management not only of the procreative but also free sexuality.

⁴⁰ See *Poetics*, Ch. 21. For detailed analyses of Aristotle’s account of metaphor, its linguistic background and modern reception see chapters 6 and 7.

⁴¹ An. Post. B 3. 97b 25sq.

at truth and objective descriptions, be it of natural things, body, soul, and reason, or to virtual entities such as kinds of discourse (poetics, rhetoric, ethics, politics etc.).

This is, however, exactly what we find in Plato's *literary practice* of philosophy as "paradigmatic discourse" although we find in Plato no *theory* of metaphor as a peculiarly linguistic phenomenon. Instead of such a metalinguistic theory, Plato produces time and again, in the object language of his philosophy, a huge amount of metaphorical figures of speech and thought, all based on the assumption that "some elements of some genera extend through all and hold them together so that they can mingle". Among the most notorious and popular ones in this sea of metaphorical love affairs among ideas and philosophers—such as the Cave, the Sun and the Line metaphor of the *Republic* or the midwife comparison of Socrates in the *Theaetetus*—one should not ignore the spectacular metaphor of 'writing in water' in the final part of the *Phaedrus*, expressing Plato's criticism of the use of writing in philosophy, including Plato's own dialogues.⁴² The water metaphor itself is contained in a seemingly symmetrical analogy between a prudent peasant and a serious philosopher, both having much fun in the serious use of their respective 'letters' (seeds and concepts). Moreover, the peasant-philosopher analogy is also 'interwoven' into a broader framework with the introductory "Egyptian myth" of Theuth, the godly inventor of letters, and the myth itself is called, by the young Phaedrus, "easily coined" by Socrates as an sample of logos, not myth.⁴³ Reason enough for us to take this whole meta-philosophically important piece of "paradigmatic discourse" as a veritable 'communion' or 'con-text' of logoi, mythoi, analogíai, paradeígmata, eikones etc., as a 'hidden chain' or 'entire family of truths' in the field of explanatory figures of speech.⁴⁴

42 See *Phaedrus* 274b-278e. The proverbial and syntactically ambiguous phrase at 276c6-8 γράψαι ἐν ὕδατι μέλανι, meaning "to waste effort", is translated differently in English: 'write in ink' (H. Fowler), 'write in water, with pen and ink' (B. Jowett), 'write in water with ink' (H. Yunis). See the commentary ad loc. in Yunis (2011), 233.

43 Cf. *Phaedrus* 275b. ὦ Σώκρατες, ῥαδίως σὺ Αἰγυπτίου καὶ ὀποδαποῦς ἀν ἐθέλης λόγους ποιεῖς. ["Socrates, you easily make up stories of Egypt or any country you please" (tr. Fowler).]

44 See my detailed discussion of the writing-in-water metaphor as the hidden link between Plato's dialogues and the so-called unwritten doctrine in chapter 4.

However, regardless of how strictly and literally we take Plato's presumed "prohibition of writing" or Aristotle's presumed "prohibition of metaphors", neither Plato's, nor Aristotle's, nor any other philosopher's practice of language is constrained by such a rigid theory of philosophical language, which would successfully prevent any literary style in writing or metaphors in philosophical discourse. Quite to the contrary, Aristotle too—less extensively than Plato, although not in principle—admits and practices metaphoric speech both in the *exploratory* and *explanatory* discourses even of his 'first philosophy', which means, in the strict theoretical science of *being qua being*. Moreover, Aristotle too uses the so-called *strong poetic metaphors* in his logical-theoretical treatises such as *Posterior Analytics*.⁴⁵ In his *Physics* he also acknowledges that metaphors are present in the very conceptual apparatus of philosophy (like Anaximander's *ápeiron*), and appreciates them as discursively efficient, conceptually justified, and rhetorically persuasive; moreover, they are signs of intellectual originality and poetic ingenuity.

What is even more striking about Aristotle's concession to metaphors is that his critical contention, raised against Plato's holism, that there is no continual passage either between genera or, in consequence, between paradigms and world objects *represented* by paradigms, has one exception in one essential respect. It does not concern the issue of *representation* of one class of things by another (or by one of its elements) but touches upon the very *constitution* of every general and universal notion, including those which serve as *paradeigmata*. All universals of natural kinds are *produced* by *epagogé*, the natural way of acquiring knowledge about *principles* of things, and are basically marked by incompleteness of their genesis. Our knowledge, based on such general notions, is as incomplete (imperfect) as our concepts of things. Things appear ever anew and they don't always fit our previously formed concepts, or vice versa. Therefore, it is not metaphors that are so fundamentally problematic for Aristotle, it is rather the irreducibly inductive (incomplete) character of our natural

⁴⁵ See his much disputed scene of 'hasty retrieval' in a battle as metaphorical explanation of how a universal comes about out of singular sense data and of the building process of our cognition. The universal, as principle, comes about when the whole is stabilized. Cf. *An. Po.* B 19. 100a10-15: ἐνός στάντος, ἕτερος ἔσται, εἴθ' ἕτερος ἕως ἐπὶ ἀρχὴν ἤλθην...στάντος ἐνός τῶν ἀδιαφόρων πρῶτον μὲν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ καθόλου (...) ἀρχὴ ἐκ παντός ἡρεμήσαντος τοῦ καθόλου.

knowledge and, hence, the necessarily *speculative* constitution of all our 'universals'.

Hence, paradigms in the narrow sense as standards, patterns and measures, cannot bring about exploration and explanation of new relations, except when they are allowed to be metaphors. In order for paradigms to become metaphors and bring about new paths in research, they have to cease to be standards and, instead, be at odds with the known world, show themselves as *different* from 'things' already classified by reason. They can perform this "estrangement" only by assuming a symbolic character by relating to something other than themselves and, thus, forming a community of ideas, particulars and subjects. There must be both a categorial and an ontological "gulf" between paradigms and other things. As Wittgenstein argues, counter-examples of self-identical representations, both real ones, such as the Standard Pound, and hypothetical ones, such as a "standard colour" or a "standard emotion", which could be "hermetically sealed" in a museum, do not contradict the assumption of ontological difference. Even such 'infallible paradigms' are paradigms, due to their ability of symbolic self-application or self-naming. It is only these examples that show that a paradigm consists in its *representational*—i.e. *metaphorical or transferential*—function and not in its *immediate being* an ontological instance of the same class of things. Self-representation of an 'infallible paradigm' is the function of the same mode of symbolic reference, relating to itself *as other* of itself. Only language makes it concrete and also social. This is why Plato's term 'community' does not stand just for the plurality of genera representing classes of things but also relates to a network of kinship bonds among researchers tied together by 'the love of logos'.⁴⁶

46 See *Theaetetus* 146a6-8: "Why are you silent? I hope, Theodorus, I am not rude, through my love for logos /*philologia*/ and my eagerness to make us converse and show ourselves friends and ready to talk to one another?" (Translation by H. N. Fowler, altered). This motive is often repeated, especially in the early dialogues, such as *Charmides* 165b, 166c7-d6, *Laches* 190b, 196c, 200e *Protagoras* 361d, *Meno* 80c and more extensively in *Gorgias* 457d-459b and 470c. For a recent discussion on Plato's general tendency to "joint search dialectic", as illustrated by the *Laches*, see Thesleff (2012): "He [sc. the dialectician] takes into account the viewpoints of his interlocutors, not merely for (maieutical) correction or refutation, but as constructive contributions by friends" (155).

The issue is, however, can we, in a world of modern scientific communities, which share their specific normative paradigms and compete with one another, still imagine a ‘community of love’ made up of *researchers*, and also, what would its paradigm consist in? Does Socrates’ plea for friendship among researchers in the *Theaetetus*, a meta-epistemological investigation on how to define knowledge, lead to ideas such as ‘social constructivism of truth’ or ‘pluriperspectivism’ of method? Instead of pursuing a social perspective in the research of paradigm, I will stick to purely epistemological aspects of paradigms and try to briefly clarify the confusion of paradigms and models in contemporary discussions, as well as outline a possible approach to Plato’s “ultimate” question.

Is There an Ultimate Paradigm? A Wittgensteinian Suggestion

Models require to be differentiated from paradigms due to their not being parts of the class of things they represent.⁴⁷ They remain—to use Plato’s image from the *Statesman*—“without a flock”, like a shepherd, by preserving their heterogeneity in relation to the piece of the world they stand for.⁴⁸ Admittedly, a small model of a ship, which can fully function as a ship-toy, belongs to the general class ‘ship’ due to its form, ability to move on water, and so on. Nevertheless, we can discern its different features, such as being either a toy purporting to be a ship or a *representant* of a real ship, which was made as *model* according to the real one. Or, to name another and more abstract example, although mathematical models in economics make up a part of economic theory and not of mathematics, and, hence, are not so clearly heterogeneous to economy, they are construed by a particular science for specific scientific purposes (explorations, explanations, and discourse building). They can incorporate issues and problems of the economic science, but always remain just tools of this particular science and never become objects of

⁴⁷ See my review of research in the epistemology of metaphor in Mikulić (1999).

⁴⁸ This is why translating *parádeigma* with ‘model’, as proposed by Gill (2006), is too reductive, making *paradigm* only an *epistemological* notion and applicable only to hetero-generic relations. The term *paradigm* should be maintained, as Risser (2017) also suggests. It implies the meaning of the term ‘model’, but not vice versa, due to covering a wider word-field.

investigation of the same kind as objects represented by them. Standing *for* other objects than themselves, and not instantiating them as a sample of the class, models are configured like signs and behave like signs (of the iconic type, as Charles Peirce would have probably called them). As such, they are radically transferential in character and belong together with figures of speech and thoughts that we call metaphors in general. Whereas paradigms, insofar as they belong to genera and classes they represent, are metonymic and belong together with figures that we call metonymies in general.

With this distinction in the background, we might see that the ultimate difference between Wittgenstein and Plato, based on the widespread assumption of a strong ontological commitment in Plato's conception of the self-application of paradigm, begins to collapse. The difference seems enforced through Wittgenstein's symbolic treatment of paradigms as a means of representation without themselves being objectified by statements about their properties. This includes the 'language-game' as the most general model. Contrary to this, it seems possible, with regard to Plato's notorious metaphysical idea of the Supreme Good in the *Republic*, to see an ultimate grounding-game through statements about the Good itself. It consists in the construction of rules of mutual partaking-in, relating-to and grounding-of, made up of logical relations between the categories One and Dyad. Together, they form the ultimate dialectical figure consisting of two highest and mutually opposing elements of the Good itself.⁴⁹ They apply not only to categories and abstract terms (genera, species, particulars, individuals) that refer to lower entities beneath the Absolute Good but also to the Good itself as the *ultimate instance* (paradigm) of *relatedness* that symbolizes the whole of relations. One partakes in the Dyad just as the Undetermined Dyad (*aóristos dyás*) instantiates relations of identity and otherness which constitute the One and its relation to its categorial opposites.

⁴⁹ Assuming a continuous influence of Plato's 'Unwritten Doctrine' on his dialogues from the *Republic* to the *Parmenides*, Findlay (1983), 17–18 summarizes: "The Absolutely Good is there identified with a Unity which is in one perspective beyond all definite numerical and other determinations, while in another perspective permitting the derivation of all such determinations from itself, and which is opposed by a principle of the Indefinite which, if we try to isolate it, has just such an ever elusive shiftingness of content as we take the Great and Small to have." For the discussion on 'The One over Many Argument' from a non-esoteric perspective see Gail (2004), esp. Ch. 8.

This applies not only to literal language but also—by virtue of similarity and differences, identity and otherness—to *metaphorical* language, as exemplified by the Line, the Sun, the Cave and other metaphors in the *Republic*. In the natural everyday language, to which philosophy naturally inclines despite its declared need for mathematization of ultimate theorems or the massive use of symbolic logic, it is only paradigms—examples, comparisons, analogies, similes, metaphors—that allow for making statements about the Good as the most supreme *máthema* about relatedness of things as the fundamental feature of reality. Without evasive representations it cannot be re-represented in the same language, except by negative terms and tautological statements or by a theory in another, different key than the written one.

To put it, finally, in Wittgenstein's words, the only way to mark the properties of a paradigm, including the most general one, is to use other paradigms as its symbols. This is why the idea of the Highest or Ultimate Good can be read as “only” a final paradigm, which is able to relate to itself precisely because it lacks a ground, or, simply, because it is ungrounded (ἀρχὴ ἀνυπόθετος). The only foundation it can provide lies in its *function of representation* both of other relations and of self-relation. This is what makes it ontologically real. This is also the reason why the difference between the late Plato and the late Wittgenstein, presupposed to consist in the metaphysically grounding function of Plato's supreme paradigm abiding in the heavens, does not entail an irreducible opposition but is capable of being translated into Wittgenstein's terms. This is possible because the ultimate language-game itself is conceptualised in Wittgenstein according to the model of ‘infallible paradigm’. A paradigm can be identical with itself only insofar as it applies itself *as a symbol* for something other (‘the Standard Meter is a meter long’), thus allowing not only for statements about all other sub-games but also for metaphorical expressions about itself (e.g. ‘a godly Meter’). Which means, the difference between paradigms as genera and paradigms as symbols turns into convergence as soon as we realise that—as Thomas Kuhn put it—objects of reference need different acts of ostension in order to be established as objects. ●