



DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE, HISTORY OF IDEAS AND RELIGION

Metaphor as Microcosm

Metaphor in and through Maximus the Confessor's *Mystagogy*

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Abstract

In this thesis, I aim to cross-fertilize a composite theory of metaphor with the theology of Maximus the Confessor. The theory is primarily based on Conceptual Metaphor Theory, complemented by the perspectives of Paul Ricoeur and Hans Blumenberg. In the first part of the analysis, I apply the theory to Maximus' *Mystagogy*, with the goal of elucidating what is at play in the symbols of the text. I argue that the theory reveals a coherent metaphorical structure behind the symbols, anchored in bodily reality while also offering theological relevance. In the second part, I reevaluate the theory both in light of the results of the first part, as well as through Maximus theology more broadly. I argue that Maximus' Christology both aligns with and redefines an *embodied realism*; that metaphor is realistic because it refers to movement; that symbolic structures are fractal by nature; and that metaphorical relations are reciprocal through being embedded in the Logos.

Keywords: Metaphor; Maximus the Confessor; Mystagogy; Symbolism; Apophatic Theology; Conceptual Metaphor Theory; Ricoeur; Blumenberg; Logos

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1. Introduction

*To hear men talk
of metonomies, metaphors, and allegories, [...] would not one think they signified some rare and exotic form of speaking? And yet they are phrases that come near to the babble of my chambermaid.¹*

Michel de Montaigne

Most people master metaphor, regardless of whether they know what it is. Figurative language is an indispensable part of everyday language – of humanity’s interacting conceptually with the world. It works excellently as a pedagogical tool – if I ask ChatGPT to explain something like I am five years old, images and metaphor is a recurring simplification – but resorting to the figurative is not only a makeshift: we can barely grapple with basic concepts such as love, life and time in a meaningful way, without using metaphors. Love is sweet or leaves scars, life is a journey with milestones and dead ends, and time flies, moves slowly, or stands still.

Metaphorical language has, likewise, an incontestable role in Christian theology. In Scripture, the ineffable God is considered a Father, Jesus of Nazareth speaks in parables, and dreamlike visions and imagery replete with metaphors are found in both the Old and New Testaments. And through the history of the church, one finds everything from Alexandrian allegorical Bible interpretation to Aquinas’ *via analogia*, and closer to modern times the idea that belief in God is itself metaphorical.

But while the question regarding *what* is to be considered metaphorical, and *what* it means, generally belongs to common knowledge, questions regarding the *why* and *how* of metaphor are more often left in the dark – in everyday life, as well as in academia. *Why* is God a Father (and *why*, or *why* not, a mother)? *How* can Jesus be both the vine and the gardener? And before answering *what* is meant by the “great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads”² of Revelation, one needs to address *why* one should even suppose that it signifies something else than the literal, and also explain *how* one then attains a

¹ Michel de Montaigne, *Essays of Michel de Montaigne – Complete*, (Project Gutenberg, 2004), Book 1 Chapter 51 (<https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/3600/pg3600-images.html>).

² Revelation 12:3. All bible-quotes in this thesis are from NRSV.

symbolical meaning from such a fantastical image. What is at play behind, or inside of, symbols, images, similes, parables, and metaphors?

The tradition of the Church arguably treats these matters with more delicacy than is often the case in modern times. One important voice is Maximus the Confessor (580-662). Often considered the most important theologian from the 7th century,³ Maximus can be seen both as a figure in-between East and West— “Maximus combined the speculative genius of the East with the soteriological genius of the West”⁴ – and as the main advocate for what would be decided regarding the two wills of Christ at the sixth ecumenical council (680-681). His thinking is influenced by figures like Origen, the Cappadocians, and Pseudo-Dionysius, whom he recapitulates, but most notably also amends through the lens of Chalcedonian Christology.⁵ He is often regarded as a dense writer, with Lars Thunberg comparing his texts to ‘Chinese puzzle boxes’⁶ and Michael Bakker writing that “Maximus is like a microcosm compared to the macrocosm of patristic theology.”⁷ This is in part due to the precision with which he interprets and interacts with theological metaphors and symbols. Combining an often-lauded philosophical sharpness with the sensibility of a poet, Maximus handles the figurative aspect of life, Scripture, and Tradition deftly, and sometimes in a creative manner that may seem alien to the 21st-century reader. To avoid a rash dismissal of this as pre-enlightened fantasies based on ‘free associations,’ one could attempt an elucidation not only of the *what* of these symbols, but also of the *how* and *why*, which is what this essay is about.

³ Jaroslav Pelikan’s ‘Introduction’ in: Maximus the Confessor, *Maximus Confessor – Selected writings* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1985), 2.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy – The Universe According to Maximus the Confessor* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2003), 29ff.

⁶ Lars Thunberg, *Människan och Kosmos* (Skellefteå: Artos, 1999), 29; Michel Bakker, “Personal and Communal Mystagogy in St Maximus the Confessor” in *Seeing Through the Eyes of Faith – New Approaches to the Mystagogy of the Church Fathers*, ed. Paul van Geest (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 400.

⁷ Bakker, “Personal and Communal Mystagogy”, 400.

2. Purpose and Questions at Issue

In this thesis, I take as a starting point the conviction that there is still much to uncover about how metaphorical language functions, and what role it plays in human life, as well as in Christian theology. This will be done through an analysis of Maximus the Confessor's *The Church's Mystagogy* in light of a composite theory of metaphor. The purpose is to see in what ways such a theory can explicate what is at work in Maximus' symbolical thinking and investigate the theological implications of such an analysis. Additionally, the perspective will be reversed with the purpose of cross-fertilization: in what ways can Maximus' implicit ideas about symbolical/metaphorical language challenge and/or add to the theory of metaphor I present?

Two main questions are thus at issue:

1. In what ways can a theory of metaphor elucidate symbols in Maximus the Confessor's *Mystagogy*, and contribute to an understanding of their theological meaning?
2. In what ways can Maximus' theology challenge, and/or add to the proposed theory of metaphor?

3. Disposition

First, I will present my methodological approach along with questions concerning the delimitations of this essay, after which follows an introduction to the study material and some notes on previous research. There follows a rather lengthy part of Theory, divided into three parts: a short introduction to the concept of metaphor and metaphor theory, a considerably longer part concerning the main theory I use – Conceptual Metaphor Theory –, and finally a part treating two additional theoreticians on metaphor, who are in somewhat closer relation to theology/religion – Paul Ricoeur and Hans Blumenberg. The purpose of this is both to present my composite theory of metaphor and to set the stage for the Analysis in light of the established theoretical framework.

The Analysis which then follows is divided into two parts. Part 1 treats the first question at issue – how a metaphor theory can unfold the symbols of the *Mystagogy*, that is, in what way my composite theory of metaphor can contribute to theology. Part 2 treats the second question at issue – in what ways Maximus’ theology can contribute to theorizing metaphor as such? After Analysis, I give Conclusions and Summary.

4. Method and Delimitations

The two parts of the analysis have some methodological differences. In Part 1, the approach will at large follow from the tools and perspectives offered in Theory, mainly from part 7.2. Using this theoretical toolbox, I will analyze one chapter at a time from *The Church's Mystagogy*. Every chapter is rather short and consists of the explanation of a single symbol, but in some cases, additional metaphors/images are given as analogous, which are also included in the analysis. Some delimitations regarding the number of chapters are required. I have chosen to treat only the first part – Chapters 1-7 – (more on the structure and content of the text in Material) and will treat all of these, except Chapter 5.⁸ Although several interesting, and important, perspectives would be added through a treating also of the second part, this selection constitutes, in my estimation, a study material sufficiently representative of the *Mystagogy*, and is thus adequate for the purpose of this thesis.

In part 2 of the Analysis, I will engage with metaphor together with Maximus' theology at large, while still using the perspectives and results from part 1, delimiting the discussion. In this, I lean on the works of Hans Urs von Balthasar, Paul M. Blowers, Lars Thunberg, and Hans Boersma. When I refer to 'Maximus theology' or as something being 'Maximian', this is heavily influenced by my reading of these four interpreters.

⁸ This is the longest chapter of the seven, treating the faculties of the soul. It would not at all be irrelevant to our thesis but has been omitted due to space limitations.

5. Material: Maximus the Confessor's *Mystagogy*

The study material in question, the *Church's Mystagogy*, or plainly *Mystagogy*, is a rather short work consisting of two main parts: Chapters 1-7, which is an explication of the church's place in the cosmos symbolically, and Chapters 8-21 which is an insertion of liturgical praxis into this framework. However, it should not be regarded as solely an ecclesiological or liturgical text. Andrew Louth writes that the *Mystagogy* has not “attracted a lot of attention, and what attention it has attracted has largely been for reasons tangential to Maximus' intention”⁹, and this intention, he suggests, is to “help one to understand how to participate in the liturgy [through opening] up a symbolic space [...] in which the spatiotemporal event of the liturgy unfolds, so as to enable his readers to benefit more completely from participation in the Liturgy.”¹⁰ It is thus by definition a mystagogical work, an initiation into the cosmic mystery, through the liturgy of the church.¹¹ As Blowers writes: “Maximus' ecclesiology is less a straightforward account of the Church's institutional and sacramental features than a nuanced contemplation (θεωρία) of the Church's role in the cosmic drama of the transfiguration of all things in Jesus Christ.”¹²

The way in which this is done is primarily through symbols and images/representation. Every chapter is introduced with a statement, as in Chapter 1: “*How and in What Mode the Holy Church Is the Image and Representation of God.*”¹³ These symbols are then explained and motivated by Maximus, in what is a systematization – on its own terms – of the cosmic dimension of humanity, church, and liturgy.¹⁴ Boersma writes that Maximus not only posits these symbols, but seeks to elaborate on what is their interior structure(s): “when discussing the church, Maximus does not just ask how it symbolizes God, the universe, and man, but he also discusses the relationship *within* the church between sanctuary and nave” (emphasis in

⁹ Andrew Louth, “Mystagogy in Saint Maximus” in *Seeing Through the Eyes of Faith – New Approaches to the Mystagogy of the Church Fathers*, ed. Paul van Geest (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 375.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Meaning to lead one into the mysteries, as for example Paul van Geest exemplifies: “In [Cyril of Jerusalem's] [...] mystagogical catecheses he tries to clarify to the recently baptised the spiritual meaning of the sacraments (*mysteria*)” (Paul van Geest, “Studying the Mystagogy of the Fathers: an Introduction” in *Seeing Through the Eyes of Faith – New Approaches to the Mystagogy of the Church Fathers*, ed. Paul van Geest (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 6.

¹² Paul M. Blowers, *Maximus the Confessor: Jesus Christ and the Transfiguration of the World*, (Oxford: Oxford Academic, 2016) 166.

¹³ Maximus the Confessor, *On the Ecclesiastical Mystagogy*, Kindle ed. (New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press 2019), Chapter 1, loc. 749).

¹⁴ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 317.

original).¹⁵ Boersma, thus, through his purely theological reading, comes to the conclusion that Maximus invites one to analyze the *how* and *why* of his symbols.¹⁶ I will return to this in 7.2.2 to argue why it is adequate to use a theory of metaphor on a theologian who do not speak explicitly about metaphors.

Maximus humbly attributes everything said in the *Mystagogy* to an anonymous spiritual father, who is perhaps implying his real teacher Sophronius,¹⁷ or just holds as a fictional character.¹⁸ He also acknowledges the similarities to “the most holy and truly divine interpreter Dionysius the Areopagite”¹⁹ whom he admiringly elevates, but simultaneously, as Balthasar states, critiques through transferring the mystical teaching of Pseudo-Dionysius more explicitly into the physical church: “The visible structure, of which Pseudo-Dionysius take no account at all, stands powerfully before Maximus’ imagination; within it, he sees the crucial articulation between clergy and people, the space where the liturgy is performed and the space where the faithful attend it.”²⁰

One aspect often noted regarding the *Mystagogy* is the silence on the eucharistic pinnacle – “the anaphora, or ritual prayer combining elements of thanksgiving, offering, remembrance, invocation, and consecration”²¹ – which does not get a chapter of its own. Blowers understands this as intentional since “silence can be the most profound language of praise.”²² The very deliberate dramatical build-up of the *Mystagogy* as a whole makes the mystical core of the church’s liturgy shine through its absence.²³ Additionally, as we will see, silence is in the *Mystagogy* also related to the church’s altar. This gives the reader a general trajectory for how to read the *Mystagogy*: it is unmistakably sacramental, and simultaneously reveres the mystery.

And this mystery, which the *Mystagogy* seeks to initiate the reader into, is the total otherness of God, who, Maximus says, “is by nature in the same class as absolutely nothing of the things that are, and for this reason, he allows us to say rather that he is not, because it is

¹⁵ Hans Boersma, “God as Embodied – Christology and Participation in Saint Maximus the Confessor”, *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 67, no. 1-2 (2023): 155.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Blowers, *Maximus the Confessor*, 171.

¹⁸ Maximus the Confessor, *Selected Writings*, 183; Louth, “Mystagogy in Saint Maximus”, 375.

¹⁹ Maximus the Confessor, *Selected Writings*, 184.

²⁰ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 316f.

²¹ Blowers, *Maximus the Confessor*, 189.

²² Blowers, *Maximus the Confessor*, 190.

²³ Blowers, *Maximus the Confessor*, 192.

more properly said of him that he transcends being.”²⁴ Mystagogy, thus, has to do with apophatic theology: the paradox of knowing the unknowable. We will ask: in what way can an understanding of metaphor, contribute to this mystagogical and apophatic theology?

²⁴ Maximus the Confessor, *Ecclesiastical Mystagogy*, loc. 736.

6. Previous Research

Both Maximus and CMT, as will be shown, have been widely researched and still are. But as far as I can tell, they have never been used together. CMT has, however, in some instances been used with other church fathers²⁵, but most often together with scriptural hermeneutics.²⁶

Some attempts to not only use CMT in theology but engage with it constructively, have also been made. In a recent article, Kerilyn Harkaway-Krieger seeks to merge CMT with Ricoeur (as I also will do).²⁷ She sees that “the role that metaphor plays in theology has received minimal attention”²⁸ and some of her conclusions are similar to what I will propose:

Taken together, the Ricoeurian and cognitive linguistic approach reveal that metaphors for spiritual realities have a unique form of meaning-making that encapsulates the core of Christian belief—a ‘doctrine of God’ that avers divine transcendence while nevertheless remaining fully integrated in our material world and in human history.²⁹

Harkaway-Krieger, in turn, draws on the work of Robert Masson, who engages with CMT in an interesting way, making use of the part of CMT called ‘Blending Theory’ to discuss the metaphorical theological language in figures like Aquinas and Karl Rahner.³⁰ John Sanders, too, has engaged with CMT in trying to map the landscape of theology and cognitive linguistics.³¹ Both Masson’s and Sander’s work are extensive engagements with cognitive linguistics. However, since these aspects are not central to our application of CMT, I have chosen not to engage with them.

With this, I say that while there are several examples of how to fruitfully engage with CMT in theology, the ‘minimal attention’ given to metaphor in general concerns also its engagement with CMT. This thesis is thus an attempt to bring something to the table in the

²⁵ See for example: Isabella Sandwell, “Gregory of Nyssa’s Engagement with Conceptual Metaphors” in *Religion and Theology* 26, 1-2 (2019).

²⁶ See for example: Johan de Joode, *Metaphorical Landscapes and the Theology of the Book of Job*, (Leyden: Brill, 2018).

²⁷ Kerilyn Harkaway-Krieger, “Theology and Theories of Metaphor: How We Talk When We Talk about God” in *Heythrop Journal* 65, 4 (2024): 344f.

²⁸ Harkaway-Krieger, “Theology and Theories of Metaphor”, 343.

²⁹ Harkaway-Krieger, “Theology and Theories of Metaphor”, 346.

³⁰ Robert Masson, “Interpreting Rahner’s Metaphoric Logic” in *Theological Studies* 71 (2010); Robert Masson, “Are Aquinas and Whitehead Metaphorical and Analogical All the Way Down?” in *Open Theology* 1 (2015).

³¹ John Sanders *Theology in the Flesh: How Embodiment and Culture Shape the Way We Think about Truth, Morality, and God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016).

general discussion on metaphor in theology, and is also, as far as I can tell, the first to use a theory based on CMT together with Maximus the Confessor.

7. Theory

*But the greatest thing by far is to have a command of metaphor. This alone cannot be imparted by another; it is the mark of genius, for to make good metaphors implies an eye for resemblances.*³²

Aristotle

7.1 Theorizing Metaphor

In the Introduction, I stated that the *what* of metaphor is generally common knowledge – what is then this *what*? Through Wikipedia we can see an example of a common definition: metaphor “directly refers to one thing by mentioning another.”³³ This tells us that there are two things, and wherever there are two things, there is also a between. Thus, metaphor is about relation, and consequently also about some kind of movement. This is coherent with the word’s etymology: μεταφέρω from μετά (*meta*: behind, along with, across, indicating change) and φέρω (*pherō*: to bear, to carry). This definition of a carrying across, from one side/thing to another, shows that the word metaphor is itself a metaphor – it signifies the physical action of carrying something from one place to another. This is also in line with how Aristotle – who is most often deemed the father of metaphor theory – understands it. In *Poetics* he writes that metaphor “is the application of an alien name by transference either from genus to species, or from species to genus or from species to species, or by analogy, that is, proportion.”³⁴ And to be able to grapple with metaphor is something good, since metaphor, when done well, has a pedagogical value of ‘bringing-before-the-eyes’³⁵ which gives it a unique role in language and speech: “Metaphor especially has clarity and sweetness and strangeness, and its use cannot be learned from someone else.”³⁶

But although Aristotle himself is positive to metaphor, his concept of transference, or movement, has trickled down through history as implying a substitutionary movement, where the ‘alien’ risks being understood as imperfect,³⁷ and where the metaphor can always be translated to logical/literal language.³⁸ Partly due to this, later thinkers such as Locke and Hobbes, have dismissed metaphor as a worthless language that simply calls things by the wrong

³² Aristotle, *The Poetics* (Mumbai: Sanage Publishing House LLP, 2020), 43.

³³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphor>.

³⁴ Aristotle, *Poetics*, 38.

³⁵ Aristotle, *On Rhetoric – A Theory of Civic Discourse* (Oxford: Oxford Press, 2007), 218ff.

³⁶ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 200.

³⁷ Harkaway-Krieger, “Theology and Theories of Metaphor”, 348.

³⁸ Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 24ff.

names – a view that is not without significance in a general Western understanding.³⁹ However, voices to the contrary can also be found. Nietzsche speaks of language as a graveyard of worn-out, dead metaphors shaping our thoughts without our knowing it, and, as Janet Soskice writes, “Nietzsche’s theme is picked up by Jacques Derrida in ‘The White Mythology’ where [...] Derrida argues that there is a sensible figure behind each metaphysical use.”⁴⁰ Language consists of metaphor in hiding through an entropy of language, Derrida argues, and says that “[t]he metaphor is no longer noticed, and it is taken for the proper meaning.”⁴¹ And while Derrida, like Aristotle, acknowledges metaphors’ vital function in language, it is coupled with a notion of language as generally unstable.

During the 20th century, however, several voices have directed attention not only to metaphors’ function in language and philosophy – its *what* – but to metaphor itself: its *how* and *why*. Three prominent names are I.A. Richards (1893-1979), Monroe Beardsley (1915-1985), and Max Black (1909-1988), who all sought to create terminologies to unpack that which constitutes a metaphorical expression. Such categorizations enabled more systematic analysis of metaphor; a methodological approach picked up by the theory we will now move on to: Conceptual Metaphor Theory.⁴²

7.2 Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Entering this part of Theory, we will let one of the metaphors/symbols from the *Mystagogy* accompany us as a recurring exemplification, namely Maximus’ insistence that GOD is (like) the SUN.⁴³

7.2.1 What is Conceptual Metaphor Theory?

Starting in 1980 with George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s *Metaphors We Live By*, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) has become a wide-spanning inter-disciplinary theory of metaphor, working in and through literary science, psycholinguistics, cognitive science, and more.

A basic tenet of the theory is that metaphor is not fundamentally about language, but about “thought and action”.⁴⁴ Metaphorical expressions are not merely esthetical luxuries for

³⁹ Soskice, *Metaphor*, 12f.

⁴⁰ Soskice, *Metaphor*, 80.

⁴¹ Jacques Derrida, “White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy” in *New Literary History* 6 no.1 (1974): 9.

⁴² See for example Soskice’s chapter on this: Soskice, *Metaphor*, 24ff.

⁴³ Maximus the Confessor, *Ecclesiastical Mystagogy*, Chapter 1, loc. 766.

⁴⁴ George Lakoff & Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, (Chicago: Chicago Press, 2003), 153.

poets and rhetoricians, but the very way in which humans conceptualize reality: "we have found that most of our ordinary conceptual system is metaphorical in nature".⁴⁵ Thus, metaphorical expressions make use of structures based on experiences of living. This calls for what Lakoff & Johnson name *embodied realism*,⁴⁶ which is an epistemology that wants to distance itself from both objectivist and relativist extremes:

If conceptual metaphors are real, then all literalist and objectivist views of meaning and knowledge are false [...] At the same time, what we have discovered is fundamentally at odds with certain key tenets of postmodernist thought, especially those that claim that meaning is ungrounded and simply an arbitrary cultural construction.⁴⁷

This middle-way, based on the pervasiveness of metaphor, opens up a realism grounded by humanity's being in the world – even enabling an extent of universality – while also acknowledging variation of particularities, thus never forcing any kind of definition of truth as monolithic.⁴⁸

7.2.2 Basic Vocabulary and Definitions

With CMT, a metaphorical expression consists of two *domains*, meaning the two parts of the metaphor.⁴⁹ The *source domain* is the metaphor (usually the more concrete thing), while the *target domain* is (usually the more abstract concept⁵⁰) what the metaphor seeks to explain, e.g.: GOD (*target*) is the SUN (*source*), or: TIME (*target*) FLIES (*source*) (when discussed in text, *domains* are written in capital letters). The concept of the SUN is experienced in some way by most people, and intuitively makes one understand certain aspects of the abstract concept of GOD; the concept of spatial motion is experienced in some way by most people, and intuitively makes one understand the abstract concept of TIME as a PHYSICAL OBJECT (it FLIES, MOVES SLOWLY, or STANDS STILL). Through this relation, it becomes clear that CMT does not understand metaphors as secondary, supplementary expressions, subordinate to a literal understanding, but that the *source* draws from the experiential plethora, so to speak, from

⁴⁵ Lakoff & Johnson, *Metaphors*, 4.

⁴⁶ George Lakoff & Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh – the Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 89ff.

⁴⁷ Lakoff & Johnson, *Metaphors*, 273.

⁴⁸ Lakoff & Johnson, *Philosophy*, 118ff; Zoltán Kövecses, *Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 11.

⁴⁹ George Lakoff & Mark Turner, *More than Cool Reason – A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: Chicago Press, 1989), 63ff.

⁵⁰ Kövecses, *Extended CMT*, 5.

where metaphorical understandings of more abstract concepts emerge – metaphor starts with the *source* and aims at the *target*, it starts in the concrete and aims at the abstract.

The undertaking, then, of saying *how* we can understand *target* through *source*, is called *mapping*. In a metaphor, there are properties in the *source* that correspond to properties in the *target* and consequently can be *mapped* onto them. And these properties come from the human being’s knowledge and experience of the thing. For example: the advent of the sun after days of rain makes immediate its phenomenological properties of ‘warmth’ and ‘light’. These two properties can also be understood as resembling GOD – that is, properties in the *target*. One may for instance claim that God can be experienced as a pleasant feeling of ‘warmth’ in the soul – similar, but not identical, to that of the ‘warmth’ of the SUN. Analyzing a metaphor is thus, with CMT, an identifying of what properties in the *source* can be *mapped* onto the *target*.

This shows, furthermore, that a strong metaphor is created not only due to one point of likeness between *source* and *target* but multiple “cross-domain correlations”.⁵¹ CMT understands this as the *structural* nature of metaphor: *source* and *target* resemble each other in many different ways. And in line with the idea of an *embodied realism*, *mappings* are generally based on rather basic everyday notions such as sensorial experiences, properties of physical objects, beings, events, and the like.⁵²

One aspect that often plays a significant role in the metaphor, is the *orientational* factor.⁵³ Spatial relations constitute meaning since all physical objects and beings exist in the room, thus making many abstract things likewise, since they are conceptualized through the concrete. Established cultural conceptions exemplify this, as in the ideas that FORWARD is GOOD and BACKWARDS is BAD, and that UP is MORE and DOWN is LESS. These ideas are such established conceptualizations (to Western thought) that one usually does not perceive them as metaphorical at all – ‘I am feeling DOWN’ is understood directly as ‘I am sad’. With this, we can add one *mapping* to GOD (*target*) is the SUN (*source*), namely its abode in heaven – it being UP there, being a positive thing.

Another idea, less concerned with the *how* and more with the *why* of metaphorical construal, is that of metaphors’ *ontological* function.⁵⁴ This idea stems from the observation

⁵¹ Lakoff & Johnson, *Metaphors*, 245.

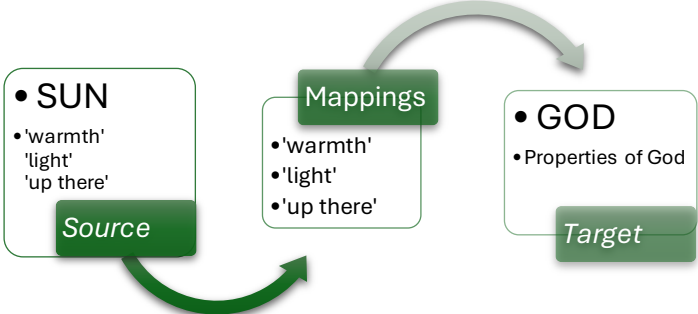
⁵² Lakoff & Johnson, *Metaphors*, 7ff.

⁵³ Lakoff & Johnson, *Metaphors*, 14ff.

⁵⁴ Lakoff & Johnson, *Metaphors*, 25ff.

that humanity continually creates metaphors from *source material* to enable speaking of abstract things as though they were physical objects because they conceptually behave in a similar way. We, simply put, seem to need metaphor to interact with a simultaneously concrete and abstract reality. An example could be the aforementioned idea of TIME as an OBJECT IN MOTION, or the related TIME as PHYSICAL PROPERTY – you have got a lot of TIME. Time is not a physical object, but it makes sense to speak of it as thus. An example of a whole category of *ontological* metaphors is the concept of *personification*, where abstract things are treated as living agents: “His *religion* tells him that he cannot drink fine French wines” (emphasis in original).⁵⁵ Another example is the idea of *container metaphors*, where we treat PHYSICAL AREAS as CONTAINERS. Me saying that I live IN Sweden is a metaphor, because in truth I live *on* ground that is associated with the whole country of Sweden, and belong to the country through a rather complex and abstract citizenship which is taken for granted in the preposition IN. All in all, the notion of *ontological* metaphors in some sense unites the complex *structurality* of GOD (*target*) is the SUN (*source*) under the interactive panoply of the metaphor, where a believer may very well interact with God on the basis of this metaphorical idea.

Fig. 1: source-target relation in the SUN is GOD-metaphor.



This constitutes a systematic and tangible working model when studying metaphors and will function as our main way of initiating the analysis of the symbols from the *Mystagogy*. In Part 1 of the analysis, I will start the treatment of every chapter by identifying *source* and *target* and then look at how Maximus himself motivates the symbol: what he suggests are the *mappings* between the *source* and *target domains*.

⁵⁵ Lakoff & Johnson, *Metaphors*, 33.

These terms also offer a way of defining what is, and what is not a metaphor. Lakoff & Johnson writes that “metaphors allow us to understand one domain of experience in terms of another”⁵⁶, and while this on a surface level is similar to a popular understanding, we have now seen how it reaches a deeper level than such an understanding generally entails. This definition also gives an understanding of what is not a metaphor: that which does not *map* properties from one *domain* onto another.⁵⁷ To say ‘I eat’ would be a literal expression, not because it exhausts the phenomenon as a *ding an sich*, but because it does not borrow its structure of meaning from somewhere else.

This will also help us to find a helpful way to relate to different kinds of figurative expressions: metaphor, symbol, image, simile, and so on. Soskice writes: “Anyone who has grappled with the problem of defining metaphor will appreciate the pragmatism of those who proceed to discuss it without giving any definition of it at all [...] a definition of metaphor useful to one discipline often proves unsatisfactory to another.”⁵⁸ With the framework of CMT, such a pragmatism is underpinned because metaphor is not seen as a clear-cut linguistic category, but a way of understanding one thing through another in a broad sense. In the *Mystagogy*, Maximus speaks of concepts like symbol and image, but not metaphor – however, this is not necessarily a problem through the lens of CMT. Whether something is named metaphor, simile, symbol, image, or representation – if it can be shown that it uses *cross-domain mappings*, the metaphoric element is attested to. As we saw through Boersma earlier, Maximus’ text invites one to analyze the interior of his symbolic expressions, and as will be shown, how he speaks about ‘X being Y because of Z’ resembles how ‘*source* being *target* because of *mapping*’. Therefore, when Maximus speaks of symbols, images, and representations, I will treat them as metaphorical in the here-defined sense. This does not mean that the distinctions are superfluous – they have clear theological significance which I in no way wish to efface. And furthermore, we will for example recurringly note the etymological significance of the word ‘symbol’, stemming from *συμβάλλω*, denoting the act of a bringing or throwing together. But by equating these terms – for the scope of this thesis – the metaphorical *structure* behind the figurative expressions in the *Mystagogy* can be made visible, that is: it can be shown that the

⁵⁶ Lakoff & Johnson, *Metaphors*, 117.

⁵⁷ Lakoff & Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 57.

⁵⁸ Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 15.

mechanism of *mappings* can be a proper way of understanding the meaning-making of symbols and images in Maximus.

Having presented the argument from CMT that metaphor is more fundamental to thought, and thus also to language, than one might think, while also offering some basic vocabulary to unpack and explicate the grounding for metaphorical concepts based on an *embodied realism*, we will now move on to acquire additional tools.

7.2.3 Image Schema and Primary Metaphors

Metaphors, thus, often consist of *mapping* of inherent phenomenological properties, but a central part of the metaphorical imagination is the very shape of physical objects or events. CMT speaks about *image-schemas*, a concept that holds forth not only *orientational* relations but spatial properties and behaviors in general⁵⁹:

In physical domains, image-schemas have two roles. First, they provide structure for rich mental images. It is by virtue of such structure that one rich mental image can be mapped onto another: for instance, the stream of fluid coming from the cup can map onto the lane to the land of the dead because they share the image-schema structure of a path emanating from a bounded space. Second, image-schemas have an internal logic that permits spatial reasoning. For example, if an item X is in a bounded space A, and A is in a bounded space B, then X is in B.⁶⁰

This idea incorporates the concepts of *container metaphors* and the *orientational* aspect of metaphors which was mentioned before with the *image-schema*-idea. Furthermore, in a strong metaphor, *image-schema* and other *mappings* can converge. SNAKE and RIVER have similar shapes, but also move in ways which is reminiscent, appearing as slippery and untameable. In what way can this add to the metaphor GOD is the SUN? Beyond their common *orientational* property of being ‘up there’, one also notes the general idea of the CIRCLE as a PERFECT SHAPE and the fact that their respective CENTRE is essential to what they are, but that these CENTRES are totally unapproachable for humanity. However, they still affect Earth and humanity in a significant way through what they emanate. Thus, the *mental image* of the sun, combined with other properties, is analogous to a common Christian conception of God.

The directness of mental images as something being handed to us by being in the world leads to another idea, essential to the careful universality in the *embodied realism*, namely the

⁵⁹ Lakoff & Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 97ff.

⁶⁰ Lakoff & Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, p. 99.

concept of *primary metaphors*.⁶¹ *Primary metaphors* are metaphors seen as a constitutive part of a general human experience. Many are formed at a very early age, and then ‘stay in place’, giving rise to additional metaphorical expressions as extensions stemming from the *primary*. One *primary metaphor* would be AFFECTION is WARMTH: “for an infant, the subjective experience of affection is typically correlated with the sensory experience of warmth, the warmth of being held.”⁶² This is the reason for the claim for universality – as a claim for shared and considerably similar human experiences: “Universal early experiences lead to universal connotations, which then develop into universal (or widespread) conventional conceptual metaphors.”⁶³ This presence of *primary metaphor* is a main tenet of the idea of the *embodied realism*:

At the heart of embodied realism is our physical engagement with an environment in an ongoing series of interactions. There is a level of physical interaction in the world at which we have evolved to function very successfully, and an important part of our conceptual system is attuned to such functioning.⁶⁴

Applying this to the GOD is the SUN metaphor, we use the already noted relevance of the ‘warmth’-*mapping*, which is now also anchored in the concept of *primary metaphors*, as being a relatable human experience.

7.2.4 Part and Whole, and Generic-Level Metaphors

Moving on, we will discuss how metaphor by nature is interwoven into relations between *part* and *whole*. Lakoff & Turner argue for this when analyzing metaphors in a poetic work, seeing that they correlate with the overall image of the poem.⁶⁵ But it is also the case with metaphorical expressions in language and culture because conventional metaphors are subordinated to *generic-level metaphors*.⁶⁶ These are, in the same way as *image-schemas* can be, working as constricting the more *specific-level metaphor* from above. This is analogue to the

difference between a genus and a species in biology. In a biological taxonomy, each species must have all the characteristics of the genus. Because a genus is defined by a small number of properties at a very high level, it leaves unspecified a great many properties that define a species. [...] We will refer to metaphors like EVENTS ARE ACTIONS as ‘generic-level metaphors’ since they lack specificity⁶⁷

⁶¹ Lakoff & Johnson, *Philosophy*, 45ff.

⁶² Lakoff & Johnson, *Philosophy*, 46.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Lakoff & Johnson, *Philosophy*, p. 90.

⁶⁵ Lakoff & Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 140ff.

⁶⁶ Lakoff & Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 80ff.

⁶⁷ Lakoff & Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 81.

And all *specific metaphors* have *generic metaphors* constraining them from a higher level:

Each specific-level schema has such generic-level structure, as well as structure at the lower, specific level. Specific-level detail is, therefore, of two types: first, there is the detail that comes from specifying the generic-level parameters; second, there is lower-level detail.⁶⁸

Lakoff & Johnson use the metaphor ‘LOVE is a JOURNEY’ as an example. This metaphor holds in itself many *specific-level metaphors*: “The Lovers Are Travelers / Their Common Life Goals Are Destinations / The Love Relationship Is A Vehicle / Difficulties Are Impediments To Motion”.⁶⁹ One can live inside of this metaphor, so to speak, through it being extendable to a multitude of aspects of life. In the same way, LOVE is a JOURNEY can latch onto an even higher metaphor, that LIFE is a JOURNEY, through, and in which, also other metaphors such as CAREER is a JOURNEY or RAISING A CHILD is a JOURNEY are created since love, career, and parenthood are all parts of the over-arching concept of LIFE. *Generic metaphors* carry *specific metaphors* inside of themselves.

This notion of part and whole and different degrees of metaphor motivates, too, a term that I have not seen in any CMT literature but will become useful in our analysis – we will call it *sub-mappings*, which are lower-level parts constituting the given, or identified, *mapping*.⁷⁰ Due to the inner hierarchies of metaphor, *sub-mappings* are often *mappings* because they are metaphors in their own right, which makes also the term *sub-metaphors* useful. When applying this to the ‘GOD is the SUN’-metaphor, we will remember the two original *mappings*: ‘warmth’ and ‘light’. In the *source domain* (SUN), these are both parts of another possible *mapping*, namely ‘giving life’, which fits with GOD. ‘Warmth’ and ‘light’ are properties of SUN in their own respect, but also parts of another *mapping*, which they consequently are subordinate to. When reflecting further on what is included in this ‘giving life’ of the actual sun, we would also note that its ‘position’ in relation to Earth is decisive to its ‘warmth’ and ‘light’ being life-giving rather than life-hindering. This, too, conflates to a degree with it being ‘up’. Furthermore, the way in which ‘light’ and ‘warmth’ phenomenologically affect human beings is relevant, and for this example, we might say that SUN ‘embraces’ Earth, as one could also say regarding GOD,

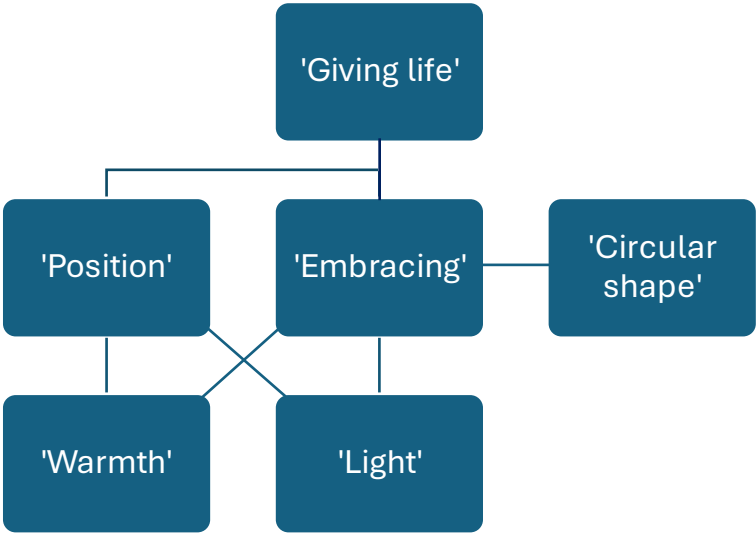
⁶⁸ Lakoff & Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 82.

⁶⁹ Lakoff & Johnson, *Philosophy*, 65.

⁷⁰ Although the term of *sub-mapping*, as far as I can tell, is my own, it is based on an interesting idea that I have not had space for in this thesis, namely Kövecses *multilevel view*. Kövecses sees not only that the metaphor itself has its position in a totality, but that it itself is based on several layers (specific-generic) of metaphorical relation: *mappings* holds inner hierarchies. Future studies could very well make much use of this idea. I would therefore say that my term of *sub-mapping* is a simplified version of what is inferred in a *multilevel view* but is nonetheless adequate for this thesis. (Kövecses, *Extended CMT*, 50ff).

which, I suggest, overlaps with its circular shape and emanation. Both of these are properties that hold both ‘warmth’ and ‘light’ in themselves and regulate the way in which these properties affect living creatures on Earth, and we would therefore not put them adjacent to neither ‘warmth’ and ‘light’, nor to ‘giving life’, but between.

Fig. 2: an outlining of the structure of one single mapping, consisting of sub-mappings on multiple levels, in the SUN (source) is GOD (target)-metaphor.⁷¹



7.2.5 The Great Chain of Being

When now moving on, we will, however, remain on the topic of order and part and whole, through another kind of hierarchy: the *Great Chain of Being*. Lakoff & Turner speak about how all living things are ordered in a hierarchy, where humanity stands highest, with animals, plants, and inanimate objects (in that order) below. This order is constituted by attributes inherent in things and creatures such as consciousness, rational thought, instinct, lack of motion, and so on. Plants are below animals because they cannot act in the same way, but above inanimate objects due to having life. The different levels in the *Chain* have, furthermore, an inner ordering, where for example SUN is considered to be above GRAVEL among inanimate objects.⁷²

But how does this concern metaphor? Lakoff & Turner argue that *source* and *target* often (but not exclusively) reside on different levels – often with *source* below *target* – and that this is important for the way in which the meaning of *mappings* is understood/intuited. To

⁷¹ When I discuss inner hierarchies, like in this figure and coming ones (fig. 5 and 9), I want to emphasize that these figures are not exhaustive. The inner network of metaphors and *mappings* are vibrant and complex, and these orderings of inner hierarchies are intended as a showcasing rather than to pin down the metaphor. The figure is not incorrect but unavoidably incomplete.

⁷² Inanimate objects include also man-made objects (Lakoff & Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 167).

exemplify this, we will first use another metaphor than GOD is the SUN. When claiming that ACHILLES (*target*) is a LION (*source*), one of the properties of the *source mapped* onto the *target* is ‘courage’. But the manner in which a LION is deemed courageous is not the same as the way in which ACHILLES is. A LION’s (perceived) ‘courage’ lies in its animal instincts, while ACHILLES ‘courage’ is deemed a virtue, an honorable part of his humanity.⁷³ If ACHILLES were to copy the LION’s courage, he would be regarded as a savage. Thus, metaphors traversing levels in the *Great Chain of Being* is an integral part of its meaning-making. Metaphor simultaneously overbridges, and respects – or makes salient! – the fundamental difference between *source* and *target*, and importantly within the *mapping* itself. ACHILLES and the LION are truly connected through the conceptual metaphor, but that which connects them makes visible their being different. Therefore, a vital part of the metaphor is its suggestive and evocative power, the paradoxical merging of similarity and difference between *source* and *target*. Thus, after having argued that metaphor is not merely decoration, we can here still reclaim the relevance of aesthetics: its ontological potential is inseparable from the poetical value.

A part of this argument, however, is that there is no bidirectionality in the *mappings* between *source* and *target*.⁷⁴ Due to this dynamic based on the traversing of levels, that which simultaneously unites and differentiates *source* and *target* does not work reciprocally, since that would eradicate the difference; we would understand the ‘courage’ of the LION first in human terms, and then *mapping* it back onto ACHILLES. This says nothing else than that ACHILLES is courageous, making the metaphor superfluous. We can still reverse the relation, saying that a LION (*target*) is ACHILLES (*source*), but this would be something wholly else than ACHILLES (*target*) is a LION (*source*). Even when it makes sense, it is another metaphor – a matter of *cross-domain mappings* working independently. For CMT, therefore, the *source-domain* is always active, and the *target-domain* passive, denoting a ‘down-up movement’. This discussion and what is inferred by it is central to the whole thesis, and we will return to it several times, and conclude it, drawing on the whole Analysis, in 8.2.4.

An interesting aspect of this ‘down-up movement’, however, is that it allows the *Great Chain of Being* to grow upwards, incorporating an *ontological* understanding of abstract over-arching concepts like economy, states, and communities, but also that which resides on the

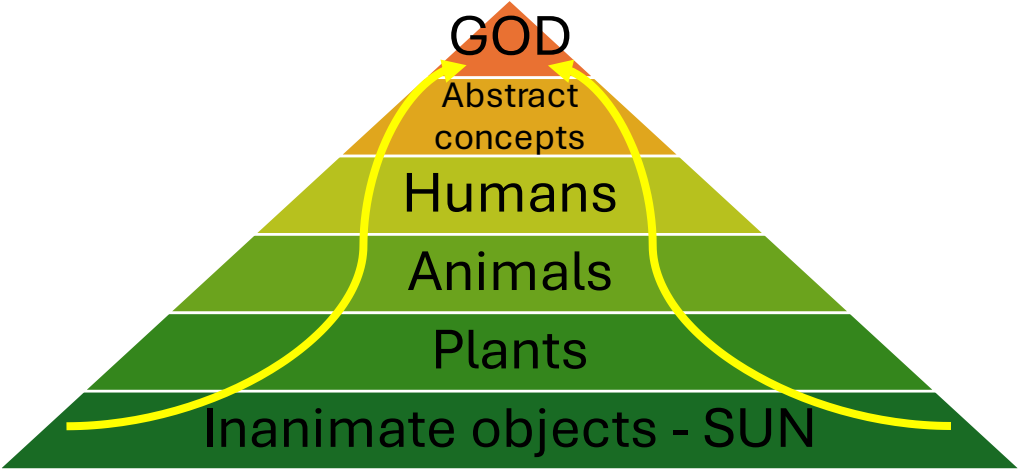
⁷³ Lakoff & Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 195ff.

⁷⁴ Lakoff & Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 131ff.

highest level of the hierarchy of the cosmos: the One, God.⁷⁵ This is, however, as a consequence of the aforementioned non-bidirectionality, a Feuerbachian God emerging from the metaphorical imagination of humanity through history: *source* creating *target*. The *target* is precisely a target, a more or less distant and passive point at which the buzzing of *source material* aims. Thus, Lakoff & Turner’s version is, I mean, purely psychological, and does not really serve as a theological input in and of itself. Nonetheless, the *Great Chain of Being* and its way of integrating creation with human conceptualisation of a god-idea, through metaphor, still functions as a fruitful template for this thesis, which we will see in 8.2.3.

Before moving on, we will again consider what can be added to the metaphor GOD (*target*) is the SUN (*source*). The SUN, being an inanimate object – however primordial, majestic, and brilliant – would be at the lowest level of the *Great Chain of Being*, while GOD is alone at the top. One could then say that the similarities and differences of the *mappings* as we have understood them – ‘light’, ‘warmth’, and so on – penetrate the whole hierarchy. The point is that the *mappings* unite that which is regarded as lowest to what is regarded as highest.

Fig. 3: the SUN is GOD-metaphor inserted into the Great Chain of Being



7.2.6 Criticism

As with any theory, CMT has since *Metaphors We Live By* and onward been met with both acclaim and critique.⁷⁶ I will here present some objections: both ones which have either been sufficiently defended against or accepted and adapted according to and some which I find helpful and am inclined to agree with.

⁷⁵ Lakoff & Turner, *More than Cool Reason*, 204ff.
⁷⁶ Kövecses, *Extended CMT*, 1.

Zoltán Kövecses gives in his *Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory* a good overview of the most apparent points of critique. A common and rather strong point is aimed at methodology. Early CMT used (as I have given examples of) hand-picked metaphors to validate the claims, which soon raised the issue of more empirical research: “how to identify metaphors in discourse, how the study of metaphor should be based on real data (rather than just lexical or intuitive data).”⁷⁷ The short defence against this claim is that it is valid, but is also something worked on today by many researchers. Furthermore, Kövecses argues that:

CMT should [not] be thought of as a view of metaphor whose only job is to collect metaphorical expressions, set up conceptual metaphors based on the expressions, lay out the mappings that constitute those conceptual metaphors, and see how the particular conceptual metaphors form larger systematic groups. A large further part of the mission of CMT is to describe the particular syntactic, discursive, social, pragmatic, rhetorical, aesthetic, etc., behavior and function of the metaphors in real data.⁷⁸

CMT should be, and is, I suggest, a theory working on several fronts, to treat the questions of the *what*, *how*, and *why* of metaphor in everything between ancient poetry and contemporary folk jargon.

Another common criticism, especially against early CMT, was that of circular reasoning, as Kövecses writes: “One cannot justify the existence on conceptual metaphors on linguistic metaphors and at the same time explain the presence of linguistic metaphors on the basis of conceptual metaphors.”⁷⁹ This closed circle of linguistic and assumed conceptual metaphors has however been opened through experiments confirming the relation from without, perhaps most palpably in the interaction with cognitive and neurological research.⁸⁰

Regarding the points of criticism with which I am more inclined to agree, the question regarding the nature of the *target* is one that will be relevant to this thesis. John Vervaeke & John Kennedy speak about the risk of the *embodied realism* becoming an embodied reductionism – a straitjacket for thought.⁸¹ While being at base level affirmative of the

⁷⁷ Kövecses, *Extended CMT*, 18.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Kövecses, *Extended CMT*, 17.

⁸⁰ I am unable to discuss this more here but refer the reader to: George Lakoff, “The Neural Theory of Metaphor” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*, ed. Raymond W. Gibbs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), and Raymond W. Gibbs, *Embodiment and Cognitive Science* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

⁸¹ John Vervaeke & John Kennedy, “Conceptual Metaphor and Abstract Thought” in *Metaphor & Symbol* 19 no. 3 (2004): 215.

significance of metaphor, they ask whether there must not be a way for the abstract *target* to respond, so to speak, to the propositions of the *source*:

We have no quarrel with the idea that one can and often will understand some implications of a metaphor [the way in which the *source* shapes the understanding of *target*]. For example, with the metaphor “Dick is a pig,” we take it that some properties of a pig are projected onto the target Dick, and we then draw conclusions about his naughty behavior. However, we also argue that in this mapping and implication process the targets are active, not passive in the sense that our knowledge of what Dick might do constrains which animal we choose as a source and which properties from that source are mapped onto Dick. This must also be the case for conceptual metaphor generally. For a metaphor to influence our thought, the target domain must have considerable premetaphoric structure to constrain the metaphoric selection of features [...] and to attract the metaphor in the first place.⁸²

The same is true for more abstract concepts than a person, with the example given of Henri Bergson criticizing the TIME is SPACE-metaphor as inadequate. How can one make such a critique, if one cannot conceptualize outside of the *embodied realism* at all, Vervaeke and Kennedy ask.⁸³

Another researcher who also finds some merit in CMT but wants to weaken it considerably is Peer F. Bundgaard, who claims that empirical data argues against the claim that *cross-domain mappings* would always be active neurologically in abstract conceptualizations in everyday life: CMT seems not to hold up when it comes to actual online usage.⁸⁴ Using the now familiar metaphor of LOVE Bundgaard argues that the conceptualizations of LOVE are only seldom based on conceptual metaphors, but rather work inside an ‘ecology of emotion’, and “[t]his ecology is evidently not something extraneous, that is, something recruited to the original conceptual domain ‘Love’ [...] it is, on the contrary, its immediate *Umwelt*” (emphasis in original).⁸⁵ This Bundgaard underpins through referring to studies showing that people are more likely to refer to their own experiences rather than to an embodied *source*. Conventional metaphors may persist but are diluted by subjective memories and the like: “Cross-domain mappings seem to be one expression among others of the brain’s general disposition analogically combine, mesh, and blend information in memory, online experience and meaning construction at large.”⁸⁶ However, he still gives credit to the theory in acknowledging that:

⁸² Vervaeke & Kennedy, “Conceptual Metaphor”, 217.

⁸³ Vervaeke & Kennedy, “Conceptual Metaphor”, 220f.

⁸⁴ Peer F. Bundgaard, “The structure of our concepts: A critical assessment of Conceptual Metaphor” in *Cognitive Semiotics* 12 no.1 (2019): 3ff.

⁸⁵ Bundgaard, “Structure of our concepts”, 5.

⁸⁶ Bundgaard, “Structure of our concepts”, 9.

[C]ross-domain mappings do indeed seem to be the essential process thanks to which our concepts are constructed over time. [...] In other words, CMT not only captures an essential property of our mind — it is (among other things) a mapping machine — but also the logic driving the genesis or construction of concepts (and therefore also the genesis of concepts to come), and it does so in a way consistent with a general theoretical framework of embodied and situated cognition.⁸⁷

Although Bundgaard's claims would leave conceptual metaphors as active parts of human cognition weakened, their diachronic significance is held intact. Thus, Bundgaard gives valuable perspectives for the view of metaphor all in all. In light of this, regarding the question of the extent of conceptual metaphors generally, I see Raymond W. Gibbs as giving a balanced way of how to relate to a school like CMT: “[U]nlike virtually every other theory of metaphor, CMT provides important insights into the interaction of embodiment, language, thought, and culture that points to a fuller integration of metaphor studies within cognitive science.”⁸⁸ Therefore, CMT is not at all razed by the criticism but remains an original and useful theoretical basis.

7.2.7 Conclusion on CMT

With this, we have presented the toolbox with which we will analyze the *Mystagogy*. Starting with identifying the *domains* of *source* and *target*, we will then see what Maximus offers which helps us find different *mappings*. After this, the other technical terms will aid in the further analysis. Through the notions of *image schema* and *primary metaphors*, we have a way of dealing with the way objects and events present themselves to human beings; with the part-whole discussion we have attained important perspectives on the metaphor's outer and inner relations; through the *Great Chain of Being* we have initiated a discussion on the simultaneous affirmative and negative nature of *mappings* as well as gotten an entry-point to theological discussion.

I will also recapitulate how we have used the metaphor of GOD (*target*, because it is more abstract) is the SUN (*source*, because it is more concrete) as an example. Basic notions like ‘light’ and ‘warmth’ were identified as *mappings*, meaning that which creates the metaphorical relation. These *mappings* were then shown to be parts of another overarching *mapping* – ‘giving life’, which is partly based on ‘light’ and ‘warmth’ – showing that there is an inner relation in the *mappings* constituting the metaphor. The physical shape of SUN was

⁸⁷ Bundgaard, ”Structure of our concepts”, 8.

⁸⁸ Raymond W. Gibbs, “Evaluating Conceptual Metaphor Theory” in *Discourse Processes* 48 no.8 (2008): 28.

also identified as a *mapping*, through the idea of *image-schemas*, since it fits with how GOD is conceptualized – as having an unreachable centre but rays that reach Earth and its creatures. All of this is based on the epistemology of *embodied realism*, which in turn is based on humanity’s interpreting and conceptualizing of its surroundings and consequently shapes how it conceptualizes more abstract *domains*. With this, we move on to acquire some additional perspectives that will both challenge and merge with, our CMT toolbox.

7.3 Additional Perspectives on Metaphor

7.3.1 Ricoeur: the ‘Is Within the Is Not’

In several areas, CMT overlaps with the thoughts of Paul Ricoeur, but in other areas they diverge, thus making him a useful dialogue partner. In *The Rule of Metaphor*⁸⁹ he too argues that metaphor is inevitable for language and thinking,⁹⁰ and acknowledges its *structural* nature⁹¹ which often includes factors such as bodily associations and properties of physical objects.⁹² Furthermore, he sees that the metaphor does not happen solely in and through the word – an idea he sees in Aristotle and subsequent theoreticians⁹³ – but on the level of the sentence, statement, or the whole of discourse.⁹⁴ A sentence is not “a mosaic, but an organism.”⁹⁵ Words, which are by nature polysemous⁹⁶, do not work in isolation but together, by “trespass[ing] on one another.”⁹⁷ Metaphor is thus about thought, action, and language interactionally at work.⁹⁸

For Ricoeur the discussion on similarity as paired with difference in the metaphor is crucial.⁹⁹ In refuting traditional ideas packaged under the label of ‘substitution’ and/or ‘similarity theory’, Ricoeur’s own proposal is that of interaction and *tension*. The aspect of *tension* in the transference thus comes from the *mapping* (to speak with CMT) being based on *resemblance* which in itself, holds both similitude and dissimilitude: “The interplay between distance and close kinship [...] contributes to this air of the ‘unusual’, which finds itself set

⁸⁹ Original French title: *La Métaphore Vive*. A possible, and perhaps more adequate, translation would be ‘the Living Metaphor’ (Harkaway-Krieger, “Theology and Theories of Metaphor”, 350ff).

⁹⁰ Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2003), 96, 338ff.

⁹¹ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 278, 290.

⁹² Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 140.

⁹³ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 14ff, 49, 53, 118, 188.

⁹⁴ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 57, 74.

⁹⁵ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, p. 91.

⁹⁶ This, Ricoeur continuously argues: “[A] word is that which has several meanings and can acquire more” (Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 136).

⁹⁷ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 133.

⁹⁸ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 92, 112.

⁹⁹ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 247.

against the demand for clarity. It also gives rise to the enigmatic character of good metaphor.”¹⁰⁰ Of course ACHILLES is not a LION, as we have seen, but one still understands why we say he is: the metaphor is “strange but evident, surprising but satisfying.”¹⁰¹ This eventually leads to what is a rather enlightening paradox, on the *tension* at the centre of metaphor: that “it was and it was not”.¹⁰² Or perhaps even more accurately: the metaphor is created by “the ‘is not’ within the ‘is’”.¹⁰³ In this *tension* – made possible through *resemblance* rather than plain similarity – is contained “all that can be said about metaphorical truth.”¹⁰⁴ Through this we have attained proper terminology for the nature of *mapping* – that of *resemblance* and *tension*.

The concept of *tension* has, moreover, a multi-faceted use. Beyond being applied to the *mapping* itself, it also applies to the relation between literal and figurative meaning generally. Metaphor, Ricoeur argues, by nature discloses itself to us through a semantic impossibility and impertinence, a “self-destruction of the [literal] meaning.”¹⁰⁵ It is totally impossible that ACHILLES is a LION – because he is a human! But from the grave, so to speak, of this obliteration rises the demand for, and thus interpretation of, new meaning.

Furthermore, from this self-destruction and obliged re-interpretation, things not only appear, but are in fact created. In stating that ACHILLES is a LION, one has created a new way of understanding, for example, ‘courage’ – one which is not derivable from neither *source* nor *target* in and of themselves. The *resemblance* is therefore not latent in language as if readily obtainable in a predictable and calculable manner. Rather, it is the “metaphor [that] creates the similarity”.¹⁰⁶ This does not, however, mean that the *resemblance* unveiled does not still spring forth from its parts (language, context, the things themselves, and so on), but rather that the way in which it creates metaphorical meaning cannot be predicted, because of the endlessly complex character of a statement in discourse: “A resemblance suddenly becomes visible between two things that previously one had never dreamed of juxtaposing and comparing.”¹⁰⁷ Does this infer that meaning rising from *tension* wanders aimlessly out into dead space? Not necessarily:

Does not the fittingness, the appropriateness of certain verbal and non-verbal predicates, indicate that language not only has organized reality in a different way, but also made manifest a way of being of

¹⁰⁰ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 37.

¹⁰¹ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, p. 280.

¹⁰² Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, p. 265.

¹⁰³ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 294.

¹⁰⁴ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, p. 265.

¹⁰⁵ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 271.

¹⁰⁶ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 100.

¹⁰⁷ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 226.

things, which is brought to language thanks to semantic innovation? It would seem that the enigma of metaphorical discourse is that it ‘invents’ in both senses of the words: what it creates, it discovers: and what it finds, it invents.¹⁰⁸

Novel meaning through metaphor is inherent in language and things, but impossible to distil without the *tensional* clash of metaphor. One creates, because without the metaphor what comes forth could never have been imagined, but one also discovers because what one creates emerges from the clash between *source* and *target*. Through this, one can speak of the conceptualization of the *target domain* as residing in the *source* (in line with CMT), while at the same time being discoverable as an entity of its own, being active and, to an extent, autonomous (not in line with CMT). This, however, easily takes shape of some version of a simplistic ‘as above, so below’ – a too kataphatic conceptualization – which Ricoeur is well aware of: “The dialectic outlined here considers self-evident the need to abandon the naïve thesis that the semantics of metaphorical utterance contains ready-made an immediate ontology, which philosophy would then have only to elicit and formulate.”¹⁰⁹ Instead, Ricoeur speaks of it in a way that simultaneously evades such a simplification and allows theological openings, through terms of an “energy capable of achieving this uprooting”¹¹⁰, or even a “gravitational pull”.¹¹¹ To avoid such naïvete, a speaking about a *gravitational pull* should by no means be attributed directly to the *target* as if the experienced aptness of the metaphor of ‘GOD (*target*) is the SUN (*source*)’ would mean that God is the sun in the same way as the sun is the sun, or vice versa. Rather the ‘is not within the is’ of GOD is the SUN makes present and interactable the reality in which the concept of God is and is not the sun, where the *gravitational pull* affects not only the *source* (as were it a simple two-way communication) but the whole metaphorical statement – both *source* and *target*. But this nonetheless has consequences for the *target* because it validates (but, once again, through the opacity of ‘is and is not’) the way in which the *source* relates to the *target*, giving it exterior affirmation by being part of creating the *tension* which is simultaneously *creating* and *discovering*.

7.3.2 Blumenberg: *Halbzeug Metaphor*

Moving on, we will look at some thoughts of Hans Blumenberg, who argues for the idea of the *absolute metaphor* (not a categorization, but a description). The idea is based on a rejection of

¹⁰⁸ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 283.

¹⁰⁹ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 349.

¹¹⁰ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 354.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

the Cartesian idea that all figurative propositions could, with sufficient knowledge, be translated into a logical language. With this being impossible, Blumenberg argues, the idea is instead that metaphor has the capacity to stand in for occasions of “logical ‘perplexity’”.¹¹² Metaphor can:

[B]e *foundational elements* of philosophical language, ‘translations’ that resist being converted back into authenticity and logicity. If it could be shown that such translations, which would have to be called ‘absolute metaphors’, exist, then one of the essential tasks of conceptual history [...] would be to ascertain and analyze their conceptually irredeemable expressive function.¹¹³

Metaphor functions in a different realm and manner from logical language and must be treated thus. And, furthermore, *absolute metaphors* are not only obtainable through ingenious imagination, but they present themselves to us in liaison with a concept of truth – they come to us, untranslatable and *Halbzeug*, that is: half-baked. The English translator Robert Savage summarizes it as follows:

Absolute metaphors compensate human beings for their lack of fit with a world in which they must act in order to stay alive, but in which they can only act at all purposefully if their actions are informed by a foreknowledge of what that world is and how they stand in relation to it.¹¹⁴

Metaphorical knowledge is fundamentally heuristic, but in a way where this is not regarded as second best, but as a necessary part of living in a world in which exhaustive knowledge is not possible.

This heuristic – the *Halbzeug* – nature of metaphor can be made clearer through Blumenberg’s discussion on the etymology of the word *verisimilitude* (lat: veri similis, eng: truth like). Blumenberg accounts for a change in meaning where the word previously was in accord with the above definition of metaphor, as something which presents itself and is *like the truth*, and in the same instant also has reached its limit, its untranslatability. This stands in stark contrast to the more modern understanding of ‘verisimilitude’ as meaning probability which infers an inclination for further investigation, where it eventually becomes veri-fied. In the end, *absolute metaphor* is truth-like – *veri similis* – since:

The work of art’s ‘verisimilitude’ is likewise an immanent quality manifested solely in its persuasive force, consigning to irrelevance the question of whether what is presented as a real occurrence in a fable, for example, bears any resemblance to what actually happened.¹¹⁵

¹¹² Hans Blumenberg, *Paradigms for a Metaphorology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 3.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Blumenberg, *Paradigms*, 144.

¹¹⁵ Blumenberg, *Paradigms*, 98.

Thus, metaphor comes close to truth – on its own terms –, which is all that is possible. The fate imposed on metaphor by Descartes, that it should in the end always be translated into logical language, is rejected.

To exemplify this idea of the *Halbzeug absolute metaphor* and its relation to the “mightiness of truth”¹¹⁶, Blumenberg gives a historical account of the metaphor of LIGHT. He sees how the metaphor is recurring in the history of philosophy, where thinkers have had experiences of (what can be called) TRUTH not only in a way that seems believable but through truth making itself known almost obtrusively – in the same way as bright light does.¹¹⁷ TRUTH and LIGHT behave in the same way – this ‘eagerness of wanting to become known’ becomes a *mapping*, to speak with CMT, between *source* and *target*. And this metaphor of light also takes different shapes in different circumstances, highlighting different aspects (or *mappings*, such as ‘making visible’ and ‘force’).¹¹⁸ In the end, Blumenberg argues, light constitutes “[t]he metaphor of the self-activating power of truth”.¹¹⁹ The way in which TRUTH thus is understood is analogous to how LIGHT functions. This cleverly two-folded argument – arguing that truth is understood metaphorically through a metaphor of truth – strengthens the hypothesis regarding metaphors’ pervasiveness, as well as presenting an experiential argument for metaphor and truth: both present themselves and are ineffable.

7.3.3 Conclusion on Ricoeur and Blumenberg

With Ricoeur and Blumenberg, we have gained useful complementary perspectives to CMT. Through Ricoeur, we add to CMT a framework where *tension* – the simultaneous ‘is and is not’ – is emphasized, which has consequences for how we understand the nature of *mappings*. That which unites the two *domains* of the metaphor (*source* and *target*) is based on both similarity and difference. Furthermore, we saw that doing metaphor is a *creating* something wholly new, but at the same time also *discovering* something which is already there. Through this, we get resources to eventually redefine the properties of the *target-domain*, and can, with Ricoeur, conclude that it is affected by a *gravitational pull*.

Through Blumenberg’s idea of *absolute metaphors* we have attained a language to speak about how metaphors present themselves to humanity, which is a useful complement to

¹¹⁶ Blumenberg, *Paradigms*, 18.

¹¹⁷ Blumenberg, *Paradigms*, 6ff.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Blumenberg, *Paradigms*, 11.

Ricoeur's idea of *creating* and *discovering*; with Blumenberg, we also emphasize the limits of the elucidating of metaphor due to its *Halbzeug* nature – due to the nature of truth altogether, as understood through the discussion on *veri similis*. This last notion holds as a general attitude of mine in the Analysis: with CMT, I hold that metaphors are grounded in a coherent way and can be elucidated, unpacked so as to make their components visible, and at the same time, with Blumenberg, I hold that their fullness is insurmountable and untranslatable.

With this, the additional perspectives on metaphor for this theory are now presented. These contribute with important notions to be able to discuss metaphors' status epistemologically, ontologically and theologically. While both Ricoeur and Blumenberg will appear in 8.1, it is primarily in 8.2 that we will use these perspectives. With this, we are ready to move on to Analysis.

8. Analysis

*For the whole intelligible realm,
which is impressed mystically in symbolic forms
in the whole sensible realm,
appears for those who are able to see.¹²⁰*

Maximus the Confessor

8.1 Analysis of the *Mystagogy*

In this first part of the Analysis, I use our composite theory of metaphor to elucidate the *Mystagogy*. What this in the end will amount to is showing that Maximus creates/discovered a grand symbolical structure – or reality! – based on the different symbols. We will see how he unites HUMAN-SCRIPTURE-UNIVERSE-CHURCH-GOD, with each other, and how this symbolical cluster consists of two lower parts. One is more concrete and will in the end be called the ‘VISIBLE’, and the other is more abstract and will be called ‘INVISIBLE’. Additionally, the SUN is GOD metaphor will provide a crimson thread in the Analysis, due to its explicit occurrence in Chapter 1, and then, as I will argue, fittingness in most of the other Chapters.

At the beginning of every part, I will give the symbol of the chapter in both English and Greek as a headline. When I refer to Jonathan Armstrong's translation (the one I primarily use) of the *Mystagogy* I will refer to the chapter and location in parentheses in the text.¹²¹

8.1. Chapter 1: CHURCH is GOD

How and in What Mode the Holy Church Is the Image and Representation of God (Chapter 1, loc. 749)

Πῶς τε καὶ ποίῳ τρόπῳ εἰκὼν ἐστὶ καὶ τύπος Θεοῦ ἡ ἁγία Ἐκκλησία (Κεφαλ Α, loc. 1970)

This first image (*εἰκὼν*), or representation (*τύπος*), of Maximus gives us the metaphoric expression that CHURCH (*Ἐκκλησία*) is GOD (*Θεός*). In a CMT analysis, the first thing to do is answer the question: which *domain* is the *source* (the more concrete), and which *domain* is the *target* (the more abstract)? However, Maximus immediately makes matters complicated. Saying that CHURCH is the image of GOD implies that while CHURCH is what is experienced by humans, it is from the properties of GOD it gets its meaning. And Maximus moreover refers

¹²⁰ Maximus the Confessor, *Ecclesiastical Mystagogy*, Chapter 2, loc. 828).

¹²¹ Maximus the Confessor, *Ecclesiastical Mystagogy*.

to GOD’s attributes as that which creates the symbolical relation: “the holy Church of God works the same things and in the same way as God does around us, as an image relates to its archetype” (Chapter 1, loc. 776). The properties in the *domain* GOD are *mapped* onto the *domain* CHURCH. Following this explanation of Maximus’, I suggest that we must see GOD as *source*, and CHURCH as *target* – contrary to the general rule of an *embodied realism* as it was presented in Theory. We will face the same quandary in Chapter 2, but with Chapter 3 we will get some useful input which shapes the discussion onward, and which will make clear that the *embodied realism* will still be a relevant epistemological idea. Therefore, we will postpone a fuller discussion of this until then.

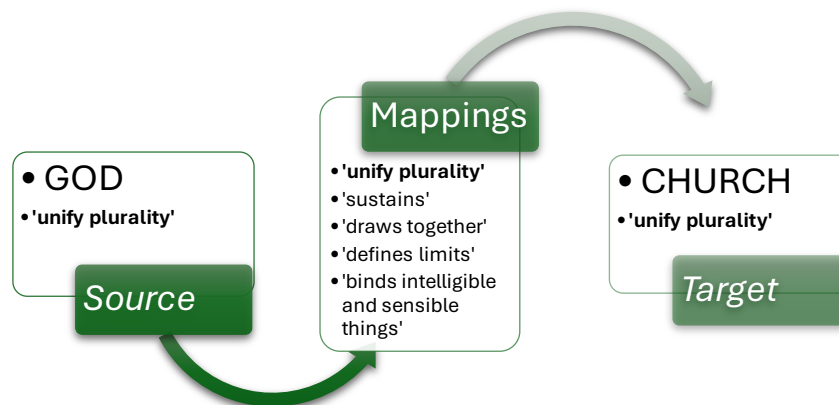
Having thus stated that GOD is *source* and CHURCH *target*, we will look more closely at the *mappings*. One of these is explained by Maximus through a notion of the relation between ‘the One and the many’, a philosophical and theological idea which is at the core of Maximus’ thought at large:

For as God made all things by his infinite power and brought them into existence, so now he sustains them and draws them together and defines their limits, and he providentially binds the intelligible and the sensible things to one another and to himself. And, because he possesses full command of everything around him as their cause, beginning, and end, he makes the things that have been set apart from one another by nature to be the things that have converged with one another by the one power of their relationship with him as their beginning (Chapter 1, loc. 752)

God is the cause (αἰτία), beginning (ἀρχήν), and end (τέλος) of all (πάντα) that is – the Creator creating *ex nihilo* as well as the final rest for all that is. The people of the CHURCH, consisting of “men, women, and children, nearly boundless in number” (Chapter 1, loc. 777), are consequently held together by the beginning and end of their existence. This is a clear *mapping*: both *source* and *target* ‘unify plurality’. And, although this overarching idea is, as I see it, the only explicit *mapping* given by Maximus for this first chapter, it is one which in itself carries a multitude of *sub-mappings*. We see from the block quote above that GOD ‘sustains’ (συνέχει), ‘draws together’ (συνάγει), ‘defines limits’ (περιγράφει) and ‘binds the intelligible and the sensible things to one another and to himself’ (καὶ ἀλλήλοις καὶ ἑαυτῷ προνοητικῶς ἐνδιασφίγγει τὰ τε νοητὰ καὶ τὰ αἰσθητά). These *sub-mappings* are properties easily distinguishable from each other since they signify aspects of both diversification and unification – that is: wholly different aspects of the *mapping* of ‘unifying plurality’ *creating* the metaphorical relation between GOD (*source*) and CHURCH (*target*). Therefore, they showcase the *structural* interior of the metaphor/image at question. Thus, we have a satisfactory CMT-

analysis of the metaphorical relation in the statement: ‘CHURCH (*target*) is GOD (*source*)’ is a metaphor because they both ‘sustain’, ‘draw together’, ‘define limits’, and ‘bind intelligible and sensible things’.

Fig. 4: mappings of the GOD (*source*) is CHURCH (*target*)-metaphor, where the mapping ‘unify plurality’ holds several sub-mappings within itself.



Although no more explicit *mappings* are given, Maximus interweaves the CHURCH is GOD-image with two complementary analogies which I argue are coherent with the main image, and which may therefore add to the understanding. The first is the one we have looked at in Theory: GOD is (like the) SUN (ἥλιος). We have already showcased how this is a strong metaphor, but several additional perspectives will be raised by the *Mystagogy*. Along with GOD being the SUN, Maximus also speaks of PEOPLE(BEINGS) as STARS (ἀστέρων). This gives the following scenario:

[j]ust as the sun is more brilliant than the stars in nature [φύσιν] and power [δύναμιν], so also its appearance covers them as a cause does its effects. For just as by nature the parts are from the totality, so also the effects are properly and are made known from the cause, and the cause holds the particularities of the effects at rest, and when the effects are comprehended by their reference to the cause, they are given quality wholly according to the one power of their relationship to the cause (Chapter 1, loc. 766).

God, being understood as the cause, is visualized as the sun that, when it rises, outshines the many stars. The experience of a sunrise, together with the discussion on the ‘One and the many’, adds dimensions to the GOD is SUN metaphor, where the sun's interaction with its surroundings is in line with a metaphorical understanding. The light (something both SUN and STARS beam) of GOD swallows that of PEOPLE, without making them cease to be. The naturally occurring event creating this readily extendable *image-schema* fits well with how Maximus interprets the

relation between God and created beings. This is also in line with the *mappings* we identified in Theory – the GOD-SUN gives ‘light’ and ‘warmth’ which in turn ‘give life’, which correlates with Maximus analogy: the way in which the SUN outshines the STARS is as it being its life-giving cause. This would, in turn, also infer that the way in which GOD unifies multiplicity is not through brute force, but through a presence that enables enlightenment and life when one chooses to be affected by its influence— although the sun is inevitably present for earth-dwellers, there are in many cases ways to avoid it.

Remaining at the SUN is GOD-metaphor, we will use some external input as help to identify further *mappings*. First of all, it should be mentioned that in both various Christian traditions¹²², and in other religions, SUN is a common way of speaking about GOD and revelation. But the compelling power of the SUN metaphor also reaches outside the realm of theist imagination, with Ricoeur writing:

One might think that the Sun is simply an illustrative example. Precisely. It is ‘the most illustrious, that which illustrates before all else, the most natural lustre that may be’ [...] For Derrida, this is the symptom of a certain decisive characteristic: by its persistence, ‘the movement which turns the sun into metaphor’ proves to be that which ‘turns philosophical metaphor towards the sun’ [...] Why indeed is the heliotropic metaphor unique? Because it speaks of the ‘paradigm of what is sensible *and* of what is metaphorical: it regularly turns (itself) and hides (itself)’ [...] It follows that the orbit of the sun is the trajectory of metaphor’ [...] We can see the fantastic extrapolation involved here: ‘With every metaphor, there is no doubt somewhere a sun; but each time that there is the sun, metaphor has begun’ [...] Metaphor has begun, for with the sun comes the metaphors of light, of looking or glancing [...] light aims metaphorically at what is signified in philosophy¹²³

Ricoeur sees the *resemblance* between the orbit of the sun, as it is experienced by humanity, and metaphor’s ability to simultaneously clarify and obfuscate, the ceaseless play of peekaboo maintained both by Earth’s primary source of light (and life) and the way in which reality is conceptualized. SUN is a metaphor for METAPHOR. It not only captures the experience of metaphor as something being sometimes illuminating and sometimes opaque but also the inner nature of a metaphor as Ricoeur understood it: as the ‘is within the is not’. It represents the rapid interchangeability between the clear light of day (an epistemological ‘is’) and the darkness of night (the ‘is not’), or plain paradoxical simultaneity of knowing and not-knowing. And this

¹²² In scripture, for example, through God being sun and shield in Psalm 42, with Malachi speaking about the sun of righteousness (Mal: 4:2), and with the face of Jesus transfigured shining like the sun (Mt 17:2, see also Rev 1:16). And the same is the case with PEOPLE and STARS, most obviously through God’s promise to Abraham (Gen 15:5).

¹²³ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 341.

is true not only to the orbit of the SUN and the phenomenology of METAPHOR, but also to GOD: of the relation between kataphatic and apophatic theology. The SUN is, thus, a metaphor also for METAPHOR, and the GOD-SUN relationship incorporates several of these aspects – God too, according to experience, hides and shows – is silent, and speaks. Thus, ‘resembling metaphor’ becomes a *mapping* between SUN and GOD.

Moving on, it is not only Ricoeur who holds forth the significance of light. Blumenberg, as we have already seen, holds this as an indispensable metaphor for human knowledge altogether: TRUTH (*target*) is LIGHT (*source*). He writes that: “The metaphors of light cannot be translated back into concepts”¹²⁴, and that it is “self-activating”¹²⁵ and autonomous. It is so pervasive a metaphor, that it “ceased to be a metaphor; it has been ‘taken at its word’, naturalized, and become indistinguishable from a physical proposition.”¹²⁶ This aligns with the general argument of CMT, who also affirms the general significance of the ‘SEEING is KNOWLEDGE’.¹²⁷ All of this is coherent, I argue, with the image of SUN and STARS envisioned by Maximus. The SUN is GOD-metaphor as we have explicated it is still coherent with the original *mapping* of ‘unifying plurality’, but as an *absolute metaphor* also constitutes the phenomenological framework for the act of understanding and conceptualizing anything at all. The SUN – as GOD in the CHURCH (*target*) is GOD (*source*)-metaphor – both ‘sustain’ (gives life) and ‘defines limits’ (of the day and night cycle through its orbit). Our conceptualization of time, space, and our subjective experiences of life are fundamentally shaped by the behavior of the sun. Thus, the abstract philosophical idea of the ‘One and the many’ has now been supplemented by a metaphor based on common human experience, which has proven to be pervasive.

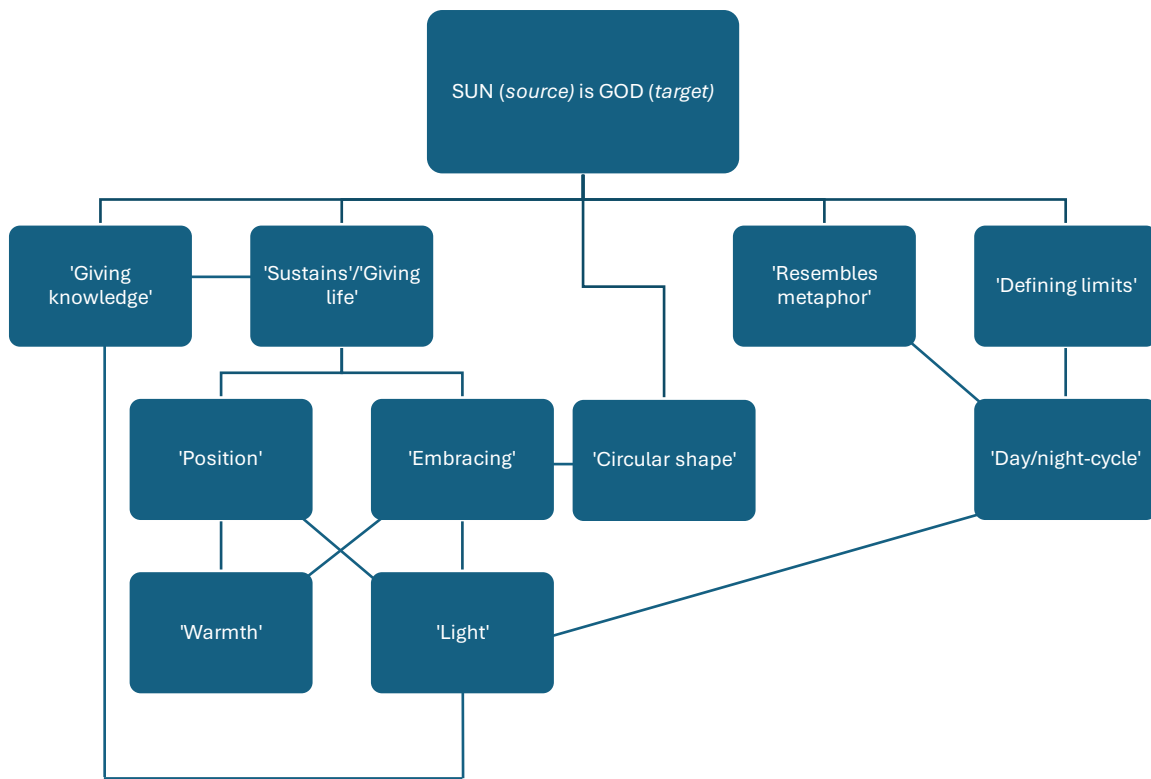
¹²⁴ Blumenberg, *Paradigms*, 7.

¹²⁵ Blumenberg, *Paradigms*, 11.

¹²⁶ Blumenberg, *Paradigms* 12.

¹²⁷ Lakoff & Johnson, *Philosophy*, 53f.

Fig. 5: overview of the mappings and their relations to each other inside of the SUN is GOD-metaphor.¹²⁸



Through the SUN's wide-spanning potential as *source*, we have an example of what I in 8.2.3 will argue for as the *fractal* potential of metaphors. The way in which the different properties of this particular *source* are extendable, with its *mappings* evoking further significance as in the triad of SUN-GOD-METAPHOR I have argued for, calls to mind other objects and/or metaphors in the same way as parts repeat themselves in a whole as in a *fractal* pattern.

In the second analogy, Maximus gives an image of straight lines (εὐθειῶν) going forth from a centre (κέντρον), as an image of creation shooting forth from its creator. The similarity to the sun and rays of light is palpable, but Maximus does not make anything explicit out of it, because they signify CREATED BEINGS, and not God or God's effects, and they are, contrary to the rays of the sun, returning to God, who "circumscribes their extension in a circle and brings back to himself the distinctive elements of beings which he himself brought into

¹²⁸ See footnote 72.

existence.”¹²⁹ These lines do, thus, not carry on into endless periphery but find their way back to God. This gives us two metaphors: GOD is CENTER, and CREATED BEINGS are LINES. This is an *image-schema* we touched on in Theory, and it also bears clear correspondence to Maximus’ idea about the *logoi* and *Logos*.¹³⁰ This *exitus-reditus*-like model consists of rather simple spatial notions: movement away from a centre, an instance of turning around, and movement back to the centre. This captures much of what Maximus, in the *Logos-logoi* idea means is the place of humanity in existence: created out of principles pre-existing in God, being a portion of God, seeking to return to him and come to rest in the CENTRE – and this, too, is an important part of his general theology about union and multiplicity. The return signifies the final homecoming in God. And as with the SUN, this very movement is held forth by Ricoeur as a primordial metaphoric idea: “To this same network of dominant metaphors belong the metaphor [...] of the home-return, [a metaphor] *par excellence* of reappropriation” (emphasis in original).¹³¹ This is based on his idea that metaphors call for an obliteration of literal meaning which spurs a reinterpretation – a *creating* and *discovering* its meaning anew – which, figuratively, gives it a new home. The *exitus-reditus* movement of the LINES (PEOPLE/BEINGS) in relation to the CENTRE (GOD) is analogous to the moving away from established meaning so as to discover it anew through the homecoming of reappropriation in the novel interpretation of the metaphor. Thus, both analogies given by Maximus to nuance the original image, are also raised by Ricoeur as particularly pervasive, both in general and as metaphors for METAPHOR. That the CHURCH is GOD-image holds in itself a language for metaphor as such, is a notion we will look further at in Chapter 2.

We have now seen that the image ‘CHURCH (*target*) is GOD (*source*)’ has a metaphorical *structure* where the *sub-mappings* are multiple, and that the two analogies offer coherent extensions of the original symbol, which also in a striking way aligns with notions outside of the text: that ‘CHURCH (*target*) is GOD (*source*)’ has vast implications, carrying in itself meta-perspectives on metaphor, and Maximus central teaching on the very place of

¹²⁹ This quote is from George C. Bertholds translation (Maximus the Confessor, *Selected Writings*, 187).

¹³⁰ This idea originates in Maximus revising of Origen’s idea of the pre-existence of souls in God. According to Maximus, such an idea is prone to instability because even when a soul is reunited with God after having ‘slipped down’, there is nothing to prevent it from slipping again and again in infinity. What Maximus arrive at is that it is, principles or ideas – *logoi* –, rather than souls, which pre-exist in God and together constitute the *Logos*. Thus, every being have an adhering *logoi*: “For all created things are defined, in their essence and in their way of developing, by their own *logoi*” (Maximus the Confessor, *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ* (New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2003) 57). And as Christ being the *Logos* – the singular unity of *ideanness*, *principleness*: the Word – all *logoi*, being the plural of the *Logos*, finds its fulfilment in the Word of God.

¹³¹ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 341.

created being in relation to God. And although the main image was not analyzed through the *embodied realism* (a matter we will return to with Chapter 3, as has been said), the two analogies proved to be concrete and bodily relatable. I have thus showcased the possibility and pregnancy of a metaphor-theoretical analysis of the *Mystagogy*, and with this we move on to the next metaphor/image.

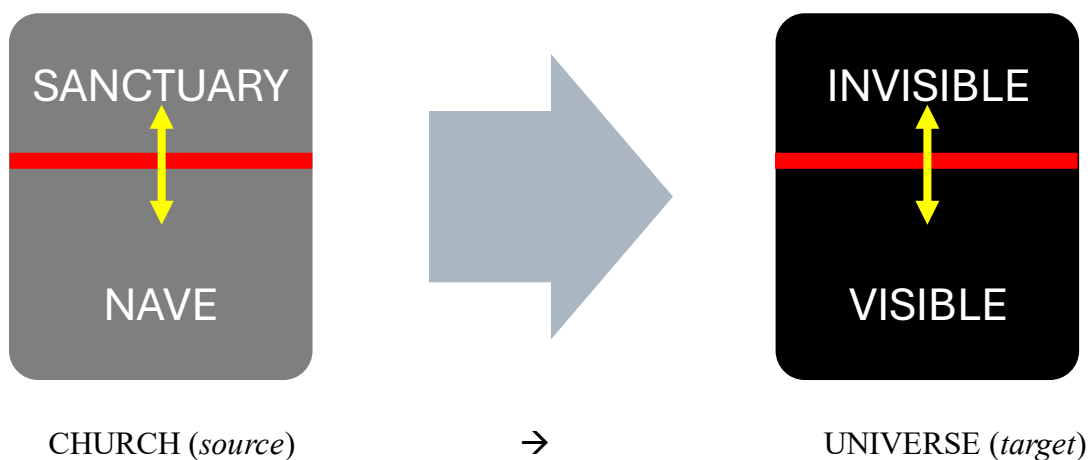
8.1. Chapter 2: CHURCH is UNIVERSE

How and in What Mode the Holy Church is the Image of the Universe, which Subsists in Visible and Invisible Realities (Chapter 2, loc. 804)

Περὶ τοῦ πῶς καὶ τίνα τρόπον εἰκῶν ἐστὶ τοῦ ἐξ ὀρατῶν καὶ ἀοράτων οὐσιῶν ὑφειστώτου κόσμου ἡ ἀγία τοῦ Θεοῦ Ἐκκλησία (Κεφαλ Β, loc. 2037)

Our next image is ‘CHURCH is UNIVERSE (κόσμος)’. To motivate this image, Maximus explains that both *domains* ‘subsist in visible and invisible realities.’ The two parts of the church-building – the SANCTUARY (ιερατεῖον), and the NAVE (ναός) – correspond to INVISIBLE (ἀοράτων) and VISIBLE (ὀρατῶν) respectively. and this is related to UNIVERSE since it is “divided [διαιρούμενος, from διαίρεσις] into the intelligible [νοητὸν] realm, which is comprised of intellectual and bodiless substance, and the realm that is sensible [αἰσθητὸν] and bodily [σωματικὸν] and which has been ingeniously interwoven” (Chapter 2, loc. 818). Thus, Maximus once again gives clear *mapping*: the two *domains* are connected through them consisting of two parts that correspond.

Fig. 6: the CHURCH is UNIVERSE-metaphor.



An important part of Maximus' discussion in this chapter is, furthermore, how the differentiation of the two parts in CHURCH and in UNIVERSE do not infer any dualism – on the contrary:

The Church is not divided [διαρουμένη, from διαίρεσις] by her parts on account of the difference [διαφοράν, from διαφορά] of the parts themselves to one another, but rather she dissolves the differences [διαφοράν, from διαφορά] in name of the parts [τῶν μερῶν] themselves by her reference to the unity [τὸ ἓν] (Chapter 2, loc. 811).

And Maximus explains this union in διαφορά (difference) as SANCTUARY being identical to NAVE: “[t]he nave is identical to the sanctuary according to power [δύναμιν] because it is consecrated by the anaphora [ἀναφορᾶ] at the consummation of the mystagogy [μυσταγωγίας] and, conversely, the sanctuary is identical to the nave according to activity [ἐνέργειαν] because it is the place where the never-ending mystagogy [μυσταγωγίας] begins” (Chapter 2, loc. 814). Here, the liturgical language offers a concrete unifying act: it is the anaphora, the pinnacle of the liturgy of the Eucharist, which creates the union between SANCTUARY and NAVE, and thus also between INVISIBLE and VISIBLE, being the start of the ‘never-ending mystagogy’. The way in which Christ liturgically treads into CHURCH, Jesus Christ in flesh stepped into UNIVERSE, to unite INVISIBLE and VISIBLE. Christ is not the *mapping*, but the reason behind it.

With this, I suggest, Maximus uses the *domain* of CHURCH as *source*, to explain UNIVERSE as *target*, with the *mapping* that they consist of two different parts which however are inseparable. CHURCH, additionally, holds this property originally because she “contains the same oneness and diversity as God” (Chapter 2, loc. 807), and through being like GOD, CHURCH (*source*) can *map* its properties onto UNIVERSE (*target*). Once again one could insist that UNIVERSE would be the more phenomenologically primary for the *embodied realism* to depart from in the shaping of the metaphor, but as we have said, we will postpone that discussion for one more chapter.

Having identified only one *mapping* explicitly given by Maximus, we will want to find more, if it is to be regarded as a fitting image. To do this, we can note that the *mapping* of the previous metaphor (‘unifying plurality’) is carried over to this one, due to CHURCH carrying that attribute in itself through its likeness to GOD. CHURCH is the *source* for UNIVERSE (*target*) because it itself is the *target* of GOD (*source*). CHURCH through its likeness to GOD ‘unifies plurality’ and passes this property on to UNIVERSE. Because of the anaphora making the two parts of both CHURCH and UNIVERSE one, it would be inferred that UNIVERSE, in

this unity, also ‘unify plurality’ – which is not a very bold ontological claim. Therefore, ‘unifying plurality’ is a second *mapping* for CHURCH (*source*) is UNIVERSE (*target*), once again showcasing the structural nature of the metaphor.

At this point, we should note how both this and the image from Chapter 1 work on a *generic level*, both consisting of broad and theologically initiated *mappings*. But we will remember that *generic* in this context does not necessitate a bodily inapplicability, only the lack of lower-level *specificity*. Because of this, both CHURCH is GOD and CHURCH is UNIVERSE function as metaphorical frameworks. Although the *mapping* of the union between SANCTUARY-INVISIBLE and NAVE-VISIBLE is working on a high, unspecific, level, it is thoroughly embodied through the physicality of the church-building. This would imply that one could find more contextual *specific-level metaphors* which would fit into this framework, which we however will not divest into here. This will be a pattern for coming chapters as well.

However, a more tangible, analogous image is given in this chapter too, to speak about the relation between INVISIBLE and VISIBLE, namely the ‘wheel within a wheel’ from Ezekiel (10:9ff), which speaks, according to Maximus, of “the two realms” (Chapter 2, loc. 833). Analysing such a mystical image, it is important, I claim, to remember that it still consists of concrete and basic components and shapes. Therefore, spatial factors through *image-schema* and the *orientational* factors could clarify. The wheel, in being a circular shape, as we have noted with the SUN, is commonly considered a perfect shape, and the turning signifies motion and change generally. Their relation to each other speaks about an outer and an inner, which we should in this case arguably not understand as UP is GOOD and DOWN is BAD, but as INNER is HIDDEN, and OUTER is EXPOSED. At the same time, they are crossing each other, implying that while the one is inside of the other – undeniably connoting a relation – they are different kinds of movement. In these ways, the relation is rather clear to the INVISIBLE and VISIBLE relation as Maximus explains it.

With this, we have analysed Chapter 2 sufficiently, but before moving on we will note that what has now been said about the CHURCH is UNIVERSE-image, and the relation between INVISIBLE and VISIBLE, in turn explicitly concerns symbol as such (and we will say also metaphor) on a meta-level. Maximus writes that: “[f]or the whole intelligible realm, which is impressed mystically in symbolic forms in the whole sensible realm, appears for those who are able to see, and the whole sensible realm, which is intellectually simplified into its principles according to the mind, exists in the whole intelligible realm” (Chapter 2, loc. 828).

The union between sensible and intelligible, INVISIBLE and VISIBLE, is symbol – the abstract present in, and visible through, the concrete. And the analogous relation in CHURCH is that between SANCTUARY and NAVE. Thus, CHURCH by inference is the place where the symbol – the union of INVISIBLE and VISIBLE – happens and is projected onto UNIVERSE. Following this line of thought, Maximus, it seems to me, means that CHURCH is that place where adequate – or true – metaphors/symbols emerge since the inner union of the CHURCH as *source* becomes the archetype for the union of INVISIBLE and VISIBLE in UNIVERSE (*target*). Symbol, as such, has its ontological grounding in the union of SANCTUARY/INVISIBLE and NAVE/VISIBLE.

8.1. Chapter 3: CHURCH is WORLD

That The Holy Church of God Is The Image of The Sensible Realm Alone (Chapter 3, loc. 840)

Ὅτι καὶ μόνου τοῦ αἰσθητοῦ κόσμου ἐστὶν εἰκὼν ἡ ἀγία τοῦ Θεοῦ Ἐκκλησία (Κεφαλ Γ, loc. 2087)

The third chapter is short but becomes notably potent in light of the previous chapters, showcasing the impetus of symbolical meaning in context. Here, Maximus narrows the previous idea to be about the CHURCH and the “sensible realm [αἰσθητοῦ κόσμου] alone” (Chapter 3, loc. 842). This has to do with sensible HEAVEN (οὐρανὸν) and EARTH (γῆν), which in George C. Berthold’s translation is translated as ‘world’, which we will use to distinguish it from UNIVERSE. Thus, CHURCH (*source*) is WORLD (*target*). As in Chapter 2, the *mappings* consist of *sub-metaphors*: the SANCTUARY is HEAVEN and the NAVE is EARTH. Again, consequently, the *mapping* between the two *domains* are them consisting of two parts which correspond. This is motivated by referring to the divineness of HEAVEN and SANCTUARY and the beauty (εὐπρέπειαν) of EARTH.

In this chapter, we can, finally, deal with the discussion on a *source/target* application starting in the concrete and aiming towards the abstract (although both *domains* here are rather concrete), which we have postponed. After having explained how CHURCH (*source*) is WORLD (*target*) as we saw above, Maximus also explains in what way WORLD (*source*) is CHURCH (*target*): “In the same way, he said that the sensible realm is a Church and possesses heaven, which is analogous to the sanctuary, and the orderly arrangement of the earth, which is analogous to the nave” (Chapter 3, loc. 844). Thus, we have the metaphor: CHURCH

(*source/target*) is WORLD (*source/target*).¹³² The ‘beautiful order’ and ‘orderly arrangement’ of EARTH we take as denoting the same aspect, and although the ‘divinity’ of HEAVEN is only referred to in the first occasion, we draw the same conclusion there, implying that the *mappings* are mutual. This clearly diverges from the way CMT understands the one-way relation of *source* to *target*, and could consequently jeopardize the poetical value, the crucial *tension*, of the metaphor due to simply juxtaposing *source* and *target*. But, as has been said, this discussion will follow us throughout the analysis and be concluded in 8.2.4, where I will argue that Maximus enables a framework where *mappings* work reciprocally without eradicating its *tension*. Already here, however, we will look at how the very *generic* nature of these proposedly reciprocal *mappings* can be extended. In what way does CHURCH (*source/target*) is WORLD (*source/target*) make sense in an embodied context?

We start with an ordinary *orientational* metaphor: UP is GOOD. Sensible HEAVEN is UP, thus GOOD. Furthermore, the physicality of the church-building actualizes the *ontological container metaphors*, where WORLD through CHURCH is envisioned as a *container*: in the same way as the church is a physical room, the universe is a physical room and can be treated thus. With this, the *orientational* factors of the CHURCH are also important. Generally, FORWARD is also GOOD, and for church-attenders in the NAVE, the SANCTUARY is in front of them. Thus, the GOOD of UP in HEAVEN aligns with the GOOD of FORWARD in SANCTUARY. But we have also seen already how SANCTUARY and NAVE are one through the anaphora, and thus we do not need to automatically contrast the UP is GOOD with a DOWN (EARTH) is BAD (this relation will get more attention when discussing the general nature of Maximian embodiment in 8.2.1). Because of this, the sensible WORLD is, through CHURCH, a GOOD *container*. With this, through the frame of the unity between SANCTUARY and NAVE, to be on EARTH, is not cut off from being in HEAVEN. The reciprocity would infer that one could enter this *container* from two directions: through getting to know WORLD, and then CHURCH, or vice versa. But the *domains* will always interweave through the active engagement with both CHURCH and WORLD in everyday life. Interpreting CHURCH (*target*) through WORLD (*source*) and vice versa would be seen as a life-long hermeneutics. The *metaphor* seems to enable this degree of reciprocity because the depth of the *mappings* is

¹³² We note, in passing, that this reciprocity could very well be applied to, or at least discussed in relation to, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 as well. We have however waited for the cue of Maximus himself to allow this bidirectionality, and we will also deal with this question onward from here, making a treating of it in light of 1:1 and 1:2 less urgent.

interwoven with the life of the human subject – contextually and personally, while still being constrained from above in the *generic-specific* hierarchy shaping human conceptualisation.

We can also, with HEAVEN being a clear cue, remember the GOD is SUN metaphor, since HEAVEN is the abode of the SUN phenomenologically. Therefore, the SUN also shines in the SANCTUARY of the CHURCH, with all the different attributes it carries: ‘light-truth’, ‘warmth’, ‘giving life’, but also by its orbit continuously dis- and reappearing. With this, it becomes significant too that the sun is being placed on the lowest level in the *Great Chain of Being*. Its overflowing positive properties of ‘light’ and ‘warmth’ become, I say, a model for the Incarnation: the divine shining forth from the (most) concrete and unliving – a clear eucharistic idea. But simultaneously, SUN is the ruler of the physical HEAVEN: its position, presence and absence, decide everything else. This is analogous to GOD’s place both in the SANCTUARY, understood as acting through the liturgy, and in the INVISIBLE realm. The short analogical relation referred to in Chapter 1 still proves to be coherent with the overall symbolism.

8.1. Chapter 4: *HUMAN is CHURCH*

How and in What Mode the Holy Church of God Symbolically Images a Human Being and, as a Human Being, is Imaged by a Human Being (Chapter 4, loc. 845)

Πῶς τε καὶ ποίῳ τρόπῳ συμβολικῶς εἰκονίζει τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἡ ἅγια τοῦ Θεοῦ Ἐκκλησία, καὶ αὐτὴ ὡς ἄνθρωπος ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ εἰκονίζεται (Κεφαλ Δ, loc. 2093)

From Chapter 4 onward, all images/symbols treat the *domain* of HUMAN. The first symbol is also explicitly reciprocal in its *mappings*, or *sub-metaphors*: HUMAN (*ἄνθρωπον*) (*source/target*) is CHURCH (*source/target*). CHURCH (*target*) is a HUMAN (*source*) because it “has the sanctuary as its soul [*ψυχὴν*], the divine [*θεῖον*] altar [*θυσιαστήριον*] as its mind [*νοῦν*], and the nave as its body [*σῶμα*]” (Chapter 4, loc. 848). And HUMAN (*target*) is a CHURCH (*source*) through the same *sub-metaphors*:

[T]hrough the body as through the nave, man virtuously cleanses the practical part of the soul by the outworking [*ἐνεργείαις*] of the commandments [*ἐντολῶν*] according to moral [*ἠθικὴν*] discipline [*φιλοσοφίαν*]. Through the soul as through the sanctuary, man brings to God through reason [*διὰ λόγου*] the principles [*λόγους*] according to sense perception [*αἴσθησιν*] that have been circumcised of matter purely and by the Spirit according to natural contemplation [*φυσικὴν θεωρίαν*]. And through the mind as through the altar, man summons by means of another kind silence [*sic*] [*σιγὴν*]—one that is composed of many syllables and notes—the often-sung ‘silence in the inner sanctuaries’ of the unseen and unknowable majestic voice of divinity. And, in as far as it is possible for man, he becomes acquainted with the silence according to mystical theology [*μυστικὴν θεολογίαν*] and becomes such as

one who has been made worthy of the visitation of God ought to be and is imprinted with his radiant splendor (Chapter 4, loc. 854).

From this, we see that the whole HUMAN is CHURCH symbol has to do with the human being's spiritual life: 'BODY is NAVE' is associated with MORAL DISCIPLINE, 'SANCTUARY is SOUL' is associated with NATURAL CONTEMPLATION, and 'MIND is ALTAR' is associated with MYSTICAL SILENCE. Thus, a whole idea of the way of living is interwoven with this metaphor, and we once again note its *generic* nature, but will not give more space to its *specific* implications here. I will, however, emphasize the speaking of SOUL and NATURAL CONTEMPLATION since we will return to it in part 8.2.1.

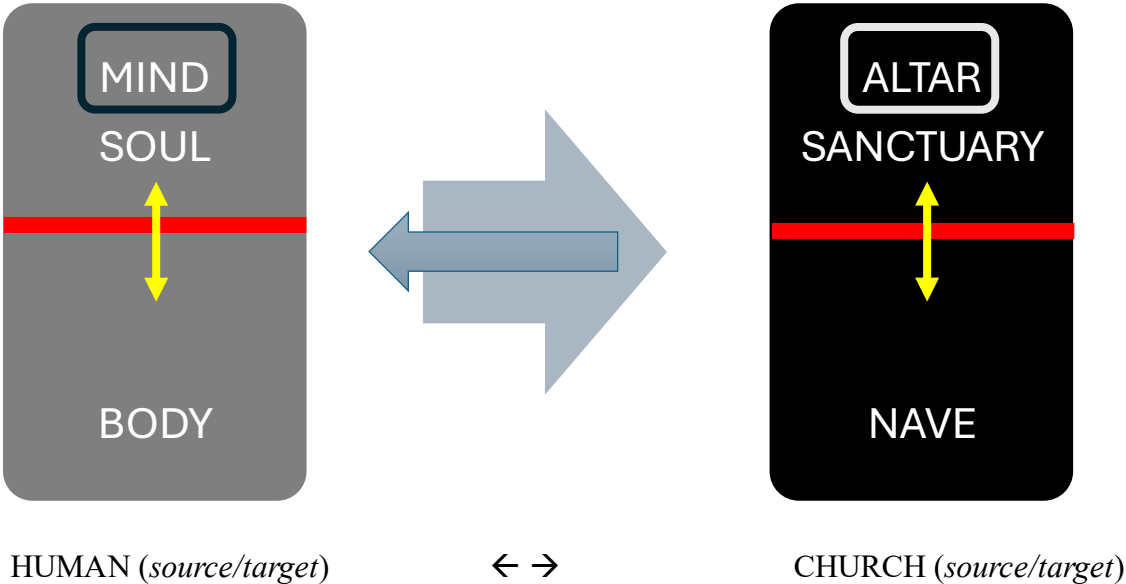
The pattern of the *mappings* of these images/symbols is now familiar: once again Maximus explains that it is due to their consisting of two, or three, parts which correspond. But as with the previous images/symbols, we can draw some inferential parallels. First of all, I want to argue that due to the union of SANCTUARY and NAVE, we draw the conclusion that also BODY and SOUL (and MIND) are united, and therefore also their counterparts regarding the spiritual life. MORAL DISCIPLINE, NATURAL CONTEMPLATION and MYSTICAL SILENCE are different but not divided from each other.

Furthermore, the relationship between SANCTUARY and the newly introduced ALTAR (and consequently SOUL and MIND) deserves recognition, since the latter is inside of the former in the physical sanctuary in the church building. The *primary orientational metaphor/image schema* that CENTRE is IMPORTANT plays a part here, with the ALTAR (MIND) being at the centre of the SANCTUARY (HEAVEN-INVISIBLE-SOUL). The ALTAR has, of course, to do with GOD, the CENTRE (as we saw in Chapter 1), who is in the middle of HEAVEN, and the INVISIBLE, and to whom the MIND of the HUMAN thus is connected, therefore Maximus sees SILENCE as concerning the divine. It is also at the ALTAR the anaphora – whose importance we have made clear – is carried out, and the elevation, at least in some Western traditions, has the *image-schema* of a sunrise, due to the light colouring and circular shape of the host. We therefore have an explanation derived from symbol of why Maximus is silent on the anaphora in the later liturgical chapters. And this MYSTICAL SILENCE, along with the MIND, is by inference related to that which holds the parts of UNIVERSE, WORLD, HUMAN and CHURCH, together. This is fully in line with both the GOD is SUN, and the CENTRE and LINES. The unreachable SUN in the middle of HEAVEN is that which gives everything life and therefore holds the living UNIVERSE together, and the CENTRE is the immutable origin from where LINES shoot forth and to which they return. In

the same way the anaphora signifies the locus of created reality, which is what holds everything together.

This analysis, once again, showcases the *fractal* nature of symbol, through their interplay with each other in the coherent grand symbol. The several *domains* relate to each other not only in and of themselves, but also the *mappings* between two *domains* call to the fore relevant aspects of other *domains*. The different *domains* in the *Mystagogy* are interconnected: the parts of the composite symbol live in and through each other.

Fig. 7: the HUMAN is CHURCH metaphor.



We can even let the GOD is SUN metaphor show this once again. That the SUN is in HEAVEN, now also means that it is in the SOUL of HUMAN (through the SANCTUARY-HEAVEN-SOUL-connection), calling to the fore a passage of scripture such as 2 Pet 1:19: “So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.” We can understand this as the SUN¹³³ rising in the SOUL – and thus also MIND – as a natural

¹³³ By inference from the day dawning, not the morning star, which is usually understood as the planet Venus (but figuratively as Christ, creating an overlap).

inference of the metaphorical structure, an extension which still keeps much of the SUN is GOD-symbolism intact. The analogy Maximus gives in the first chapter, which in our part of Theory and also later proved to be a very strong metaphor, thus proves to live on through the *Mystagogy*, which also aligns well with scriptural instances, part of the tradition in which Maximus stands.

8.1. Chapter 6: HUMAN is SCRIPTURE

How and in What Mode the Holy Scripture also Is Said to Be a Human Being (Chapter 6, loc. 1016)

Πῶς καὶ ποίῳ τρόπῳ ἄνθρωπος λέγεται καὶ ἡ ἅγια Γραφή (Κεφαλ S, loc. 2314)

The idea of the next metaphorical relationship is SCRIPTURE (*Γραφή*) (*source/target*) is a HUMAN (*source/target*). To explain the relation of SCRIPTURE (*target*) is a HUMAN (*source*), Maximus returns the BODY-SOUL-distinction from before (and here also explicitly refers to other, previously explicated relationships, warranting the kind of reading of the whole as interconnected) and explains that:

The Old Testament [Παλαιὰν Διαθήκην] possesses a body, and the New [Καινήν] possesses a soul and spirit and mind. And, again, the historical letter [ἱστορίαν γράμμα] of all holy Scripture (I am speaking of the Old and the New Testaments) is the body. And the mind of the Scripture and the aim [σκοπὸν] towards which it refers is the soul (Chapter 6, loc. 1017).

Once again, we have *mappings* which are *sub-metaphors*: OLD TESTAMENT (OT) is BODY, and NEW TESTAMENT (NT) is SOUL, SPIRIT and MIND. This overlaps with the relation between HISTORICAL LETTER as BODY and the AIM OF THE LETTER as SOUL.

The *mapping* of the reverse relation – a HUMAN (*target*) is (like) SCRIPTURE (*source*), invokes the topic of the ascetic life:

For, as ‘the human being in our nature’ is mortal [θνητὸς] in that which is seen [κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον] but immortal [ἀθάνατος] in that which is not seen [κατὰ δὲ τὸ μὴ φαινόμενον], so also the holy Scripture—which possesses a letter that passes away in that which is seen and a spirit that never ceases to exist in that which is hidden in the letter—establishes the true word [ἀληθῆ τὸν λόγον] of contemplation [θεωρίας]. And as this “man in our nature” by controlling the urges and impulses of the passions [ἐμπαθοῦς] through philosophy [φιλοσοφία] lets the flesh [σάρκα] wither away, so also the holy Scripture, when perceived spiritually, circumcises its letter (Chapter 6, loc. 1024).

Through the *sub-metaphors* of MORTAL is VISIBLE, as well as IMMORTAL and INVISIBLE, Maximus sees that dying away from the flesh is something which should be done both in regard

to the self, and scripture. And continuing, Maximus speaks of this as fundamental to what it is to be a human, being created in the likeness of God:

For the great apostle says: To the extent that ‘our outer nature is wasting away,’ so ‘our inner nature is being renewed every day.’ Let this be perceived and said concerning the holy Scripture, when it is perceived figuratively to be a human being. For to the extent that its ‘letter withdraws’ so ‘the spirit advances’ and to the extent that ‘the shadows’ of temporal worship ‘flee away,’ so the all-shining, all-radiant, and shadowless ‘truth’ of the faith ‘streams in.’ [...] According to and on account of the soul, the human being is the ‘image’ and ‘likeness of God’ who made him, and he is separated from the rest of the animals by nature because he possesses the reflection of the relational power in a completely different way than they do (Chapter 6, loc. 1029).

All of this will be relevant in our coming discussion in 8.2.1, but it also exemplifies the depth of the relation between BODY-HISTORICAL MEANING and SOUL-AIM OF THE LETTER. The letter, through asceticism, makes way for the spirit. As we saw in both Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, Maximus' explication of the symbol once again offers a model of metaphorical language. The pattern of the ‘concrete/bodily aiming towards the abstract/spiritual’ regarding SCRIPTURE, is analogue to the general idea of *source* and *target* (the words aim (σκοπός, *skopos*), and *target* are metonymies, which will be central in our concluding discussion in 8.2.4). Allegorical, or spiritual, interpretation is analogue to the interior of a metaphorical expression, in a part-whole relationship. I argue that the ‘relational power’ referred to in the block quote includes the relation between *source* and *target*. And Holy Scripture does this in a unique way, Maximus argues since it ‘establishes the true word [ἀληθῆ τὸν λόγον] of contemplation [θεωρίας]’, or as Berthold translates the same passage: “[Scripture] organize the true meaning of contemplation.”¹³⁴ Scripture, then, would consist of, in itself practice, and give guidance to, metaphorical language. And this also captures the relation between BODY and SOUL. I conclude this by stating that the *mappings* for HUMAN is SCRIPTURE are made visible through this whole intricate web of meaning, constituting a *generic* metaphor for METAPHOR, based on the relation between humanity and God, mediated by Holy Scripture.

Can the HUMAN is SCRIPTURE metaphor be extended even further, through this intricate web of meaning – in relation to previous symbols? Through BODY, OT would also be linked with the NAVE. We have already spoken about the lay people’s posture in the liturgy, as standing or sitting in the NAVE, looking forward to the SANCTUARY. This can now be spoken of as reading OT/HISTORICAL LETTER, while looking into NT/AIM OF THE LETTER,

¹³⁴ Maximus the Confessor *Selected Writings*, 196.

which is analogous to living in a BODY and having a SOUL, living on EARTH and looking at HEAVEN, living through the VISIBLE and the INVISIBLE, – but all are still one through the anaphora uniting SANCTUARY and NAVE. To exist is to participate in Scripture. And if we want to insert the SUN into this, I suggest that we can simply state that the way in which we have understood the meaning of the SUN makes it coherent – through a Christian understanding – to put it figuratively in NT/AIM OF THE LETTER, with the ‘face shining like the sun’ (Mt 17:2) of the transfigured Christ embossing all of SCRIPTURE/UNIVERSE.

8.1. Chapter 7: HUMAN is UNIVERSE

How the Universe is Called a Human Being and in What Mode a Human Being is Called the Universe (Chapter 7, loc. 1040)

Πῶς ὁ κόσμος ἄνθρωπος λέγεται· καὶ ποίῳ τρόπῳ καὶ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, κόσμος (Κεφαλ Ζ, loc. 2343)

In this final and seventh chapter the reciprocity of *domains* is now even stated in the headline. What is said here, by Maximus, could very well have been inferred from the previous chapters (particularly 2 and 4 together). The, for Maximus characteristic, idea of *microcosm* and *macrocosm* is stated mutually: HUMAN (*source/target*) is a UNIVERSE (*source/target*). The mutual *mappings* are once again *sub-metaphors*: BODY is SENSIBLE THINGS and vice versa, and SOUL is INTELLIGIBLE THINGS and vice versa. And once again, these are one in unity: “He [the old man] said that the one universe is composed of both realms [intelligible and sensible], just as one man is composed of soul and body” (Chapter 7, loc. 1048). This is the *mapping* of the *generic-level metaphor*, as we have seen before: both *domains* consist of a VISIBLE/SENSIBLE and an INVISIBLE/INTELLIGIBLE realm, whose unity is constitutive of what they are.

We have already dealt with much of what is inferred by the HUMAN is UNIVERSE metaphor, and what is said explicitly in the chapter has the character of a conclusion, rather than providing new information. I will therefore use that in our Recapitulation of these six chapters, which we now move on to.

8.1. Recapitulation

With this recapitulation I will argue that this first part of Analysis has been successful in what it set out to do. *Mappings* have been found for every symbol/metaphor, and though they may seem repetitive at surface-level – being that both *domains* consist of two parts which correlate with each other – I have shown that they to a great extent are coherent with and within the

symbolic structure as a whole. This recurring *mapping*, furthermore, is discussed by Maximus himself, all in all, as adhering to the visible and invisible realm:

The intelligible things are the soul of the sensible things, and the sensible things are the body of the intelligible things. And as the soul dwells in the body, so that which is intelligible exists in the sensible realm; and that which is sensible exists in the intelligible, as the body is held together by the soul (Chapter 7, loc. 1046).

And:

It is according to this affinity that the universal and singular mode of the invisible and unknowable presence of the cause that holds all things together in both realms subsists in everything variously, and it unites all things in themselves and to one another, and they become unmixed and undivided. And it renders them as belonging to one another rather than to themselves according to the uniting relationship (Chapter 7, loc. 1054).

And this in turn leads on to the general ascetical trajectory of Maximus, namely, to move from the fleshly towards the spiritual, a movement which has to do with bodily resurrection:

The universe, as a man, will then have perished in that which can be seen, and it will be raised again – new from that which has grown old – at the resurrection that we presently await. ‘The human being in his human nature,’ as a part of the whole and a portion of the totality, will then be raised together with the universe, and he will recover the power no longer to be able to be corrupted. The body will resemble the soul and the sensible things the intelligible things in dignity and glory, when the one divine power will be revealed in everything by its manifest and effective presence commensurately revealed in each one, and it is this very power that will preserve the indestructible bond of oneness forever and ever (Chapter 7, loc. 1059).

And the one who does this, will “find that God himself has been inscribed on the ‘tablets of the heart’ through grace in the Spirit, and he will ‘behold the glory’ of God ‘with unveiled face’ by the ‘removal of the veil’ of the letter” (Chapter 7, loc. 1080). The abstract comes from the concrete, and when distilled from it, it does not destroy it but resurrects it. With this, I would say that the two unions – of ‘unifying plurality’ and of visible and invisible, are the general pattern of these chapters from the *Mystagogy*. We will recapitulate this also with reference to the results of the study.

The way in which the different metaphorical *domains* live, coherently, in and through each other, could be visualised as a grid where the two axes combine the different *domains* with each other. This is a helpful image, if one remembers that it is stated in a weak sense. The point is, importantly, not to force everything onto everything by collapsing the demarcating borders of the *domains*. This should be evident due to the emphasis in Maximus’ metaphysics of union

and multiplicity, and also through the simultaneous affirmation and negation – ‘is and is not’ – of metaphor from our Theory (more on this in 8.2.2 and 8.2.3). The point is rather to see that there is a strong inner grammar of such a symbolism. I argue that the symbols are not arbitrarily crafted by Maximus, and do not, by themselves, stand isolated from each other, but are a part of a vast, living structure, continuously infused by humanity’s lived experiences. While some combinations in such a grid are not explicitly given – GOD is only CHURCH, and not HUMAN, UNIVERSE nor SCRIPTURE, and CHURCH is not SCRIPTURE, neither are HUMAN (sensible) WORLD. But they are still arguably included by inference. I have already given examples of in what way it would be coherent to see SCRIPTURE as analogue to CHURCH (in Chapter 6), and I have also used the SUN so as to link together HEAVEN, ALTAR and MIND symbolically. And while HUMAN is (an image of) GOD is not given its own chapter, this is a basic Christian idea Maximus clearly presupposes¹³⁵, and refers to in for example Chapter 4 and Chapter 6.

Furthermore, it has been shown that the *mappings* themselves have the potential to activate/evoke attributes in neighbouring *domains* in an almost dizzying manner. In stating this, I however gainsay the objection that this has to do with ‘free association’, which the general vagueness of the *generic* nature of the metaphors risks implying. But although it is true that the *Mystagogy* is sparse in *specific-level metaphors*, the GOD is SUN-metaphor has functioned as a recurring concretization and has been aptly applied to symbols where it is not mentioned by Maximus – and this application has not been forced, I argue, but have had significant leeway in which to operate. It has recurrently been coherently aligned with the symbol at hand and has been able to deepen the understanding.

This, as I have referred to in both Chapter 1 and Chapter 4, creates a somewhat *fractal* totality: *mappings* between *domains*, when analysed in depth, lead onward to other metaphorical relations which it latches onto and activates in itself, making them visible in itself, and consequently makes it a part of what constitutes its own meaning in the deep structure of the symbolical relationship. The cosmos realizes itself symbolically in active relationship with its parts (Chapter 2 and Chapter 7), and God the creator, being outside of the created cosmos, does the same with what he has created (Chapter 1). CHURCH, through GOD (*source*) carries

¹³⁵ As Thunberg writes: “the concept of *imago Dei* [...] is basic to such an extent, that its general content and consequences are simply taken for granted [...] There are thus only few references to it in his writings”. (Lars Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator – the Theological Anthropology of Maximus the Confessor* (Lund: Gleerups, 1965), 120).

in itself an understanding of UNIVERSE and WORLD which, when interacted with, makes itself present as parts of the whole. In the same way HUMAN carries in itself an understanding of CHURCH, SCRIPTURE, and UNIVERSE and through interaction with these, and in just being a human being, calling these properties to the fore. The GOD is SUN-metaphor penetrates not only the Chain of Being but also all of the chapters we have treated from the *Mystagogy*, being an example of how this strong metaphor, this ‘illustrious example’, embosses it all.

All in all, this would imply different levels of metaphoric relation in the *Mystagogy*. The primary structural symbol unites HUMAN-SCRIPTURE-UNIVERSE-CHURCH-GOD and holds in itself the lower level, or layer, consisting of two parts. The first would be: NAVE-VISIBLE-EARTH-BODY-MORAL DISCIPLINE-OLD TESTAMENT-HISTORICAL LETTER-MORTAL, and the other: SANCTUARY-(ALTAR)-INVISIBLE-HEAVEN-SOUL(-MIND)-NATURAL CONTEMPLATION(-MYSTICAL SILENCE)-NEW TESTAMENT-AIM OF THE LETTER-IMMORTAL (see *fig. 8*). And as we have seen, these are different but not separate – different (διαφορά) but not divided (διαίρεσις) (as we saw in Chapter 2 –more on this in 8.2.1). And we have, successfully I argue, seen how these rather general and abstract symbols/metaphors can also give rise to more concrete notions since they function as *generic*, over-arching models, symbolical frameworks which themselves are metaphorically coherent, and precisely therefore, can trickle down, so to speak, and make sense of contextual lower-level metaphors, as we have exemplified on several occasions through the SUN. When we now move on to the second part of the Analysis, I will refer to these two symbol clusters by ‘VISIBLE’ and ‘INVISIBLE’, since that encapsulates their general attributes in regard to our coming discussion, and also due to us having already seen how Maximus, in Chapter 2, sees this as the basis for symbol as such.

Fig. 8: overview of the totality of the Mystagogy.

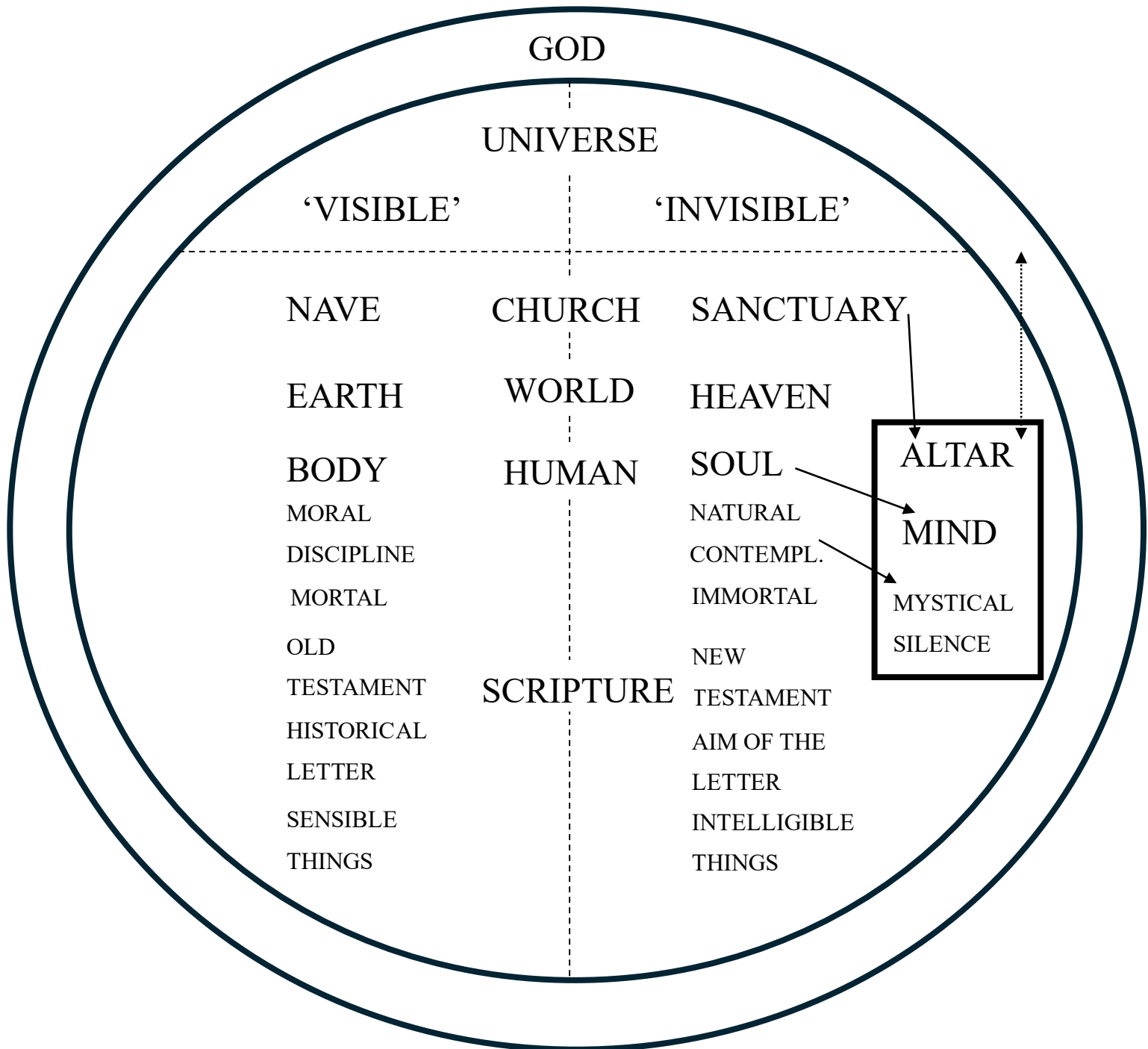
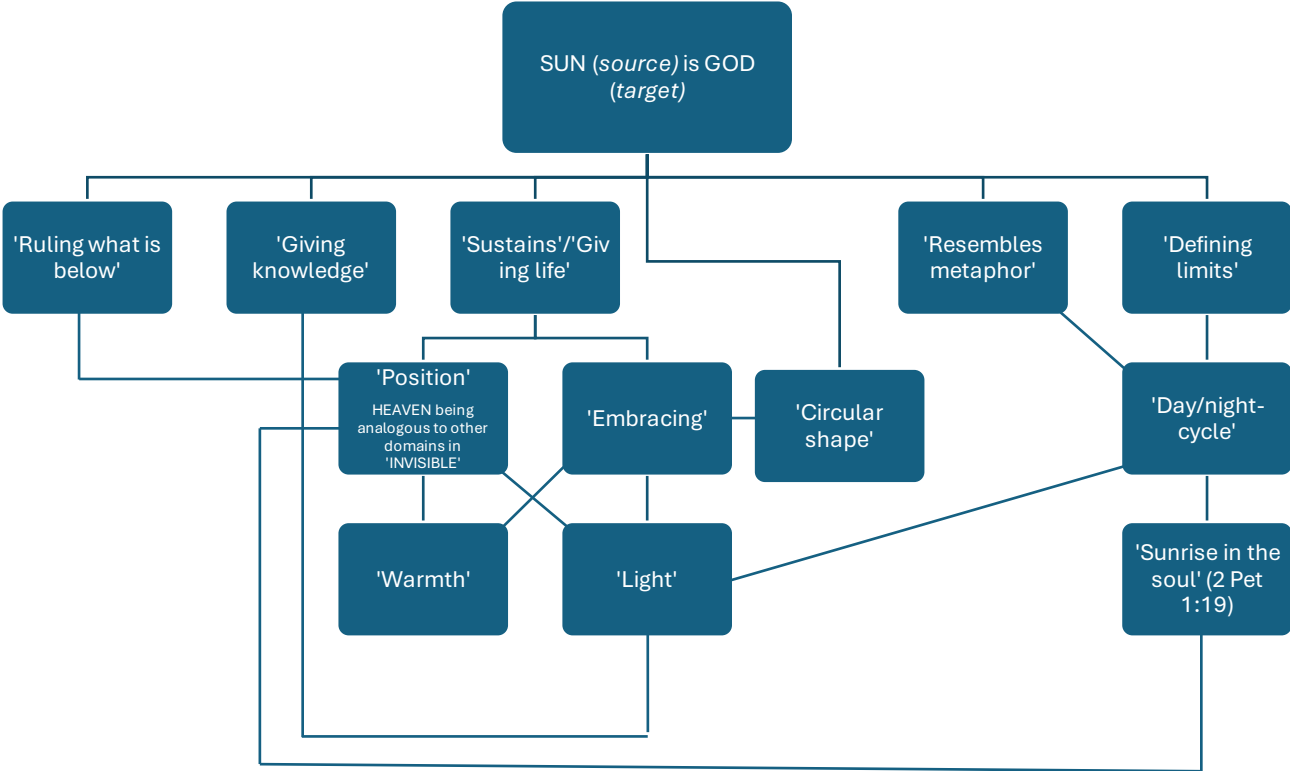


Fig. 9: final overview of the mappings and their relations to each other inside of the SUN is the GOD-metaphor.¹³⁶



¹³⁶ See footnote 72.

8.2 Maximus' contribution to a theory of metaphor

In this second part of the Analysis, we use the results from part 1 to see how this, along with some further perspectives from Maximus theology, affects our theory of metaphor. This is done in four parts: first, we will flesh out some Christological aspects and discuss this in relation to *embodied realism*; secondly, we will look at how motion is central to Maximus' ontology and epistemology and what consequences this has for metaphor; thirdly we will return to CMT's idea of the *Great Chain of Being* together with the concept of the *fractal*; fourth and finally, I will propose a Maximian version of the dynamic between *source* and *target*, a theological framework for metaphor which in turn will deal with the discussion on the reciprocity of *mappings*.

All in all, the argument will be that the Logos is working inside of metaphor, and that metaphor is embedded in the Logos. The terms of the metaphor theory as well as key theological terms from Maximus will in different ways underpin this general notion.

8.2.1 Embodied Realism through Christ

In the *Mystagogy*, Christology is – as we have seen mainly through the anaphora – central to the union of 'VISIBLE' and 'INVISIBLE'. In Chapter 2, Maximus uses the terms *διαφορά* (difference) and *διάρρησις* (division) to speak about the way in which SANCTUARY and NAVE are different but still held together. These terms are central to Maximus' cosmology in general, as Thunberg shows, with the latter being the “negative equivalent”¹³⁷ of the former. They are furthermore used in Christology to speak about how there is difference but no division between Christ's human and divine nature.¹³⁸ The union between 'INVISIBLE' and 'VISIBLE' – which for Maximus means symbol (Chapter 2) – has Christology as its basis, as Balthasar writes: “[E]veryone recognizes that his [Maximus'] ontology and cosmology are extensions of his Christology, in that the synthesis of Christ's concrete person is not only God's final thought for the world but also his original plan.”¹³⁹ The god-man is the archetype – or the *Ursakrament*¹⁴⁰ as Boersma writes – giving the whole cosmos its sacramental character, which makes Christology navigate between naïve anthropomorphic theology and pantheism.¹⁴¹ Therefore,

¹³⁷ Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator* 58.

¹³⁸ Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator* 54ff.

¹³⁹ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 207.

¹⁴⁰ Boersma, “God as Embodied”, 164.

¹⁴¹ Boersma, “God as Embodied”, 174.

with the *Mystagogy*, ‘VISIBLE’ and ‘INVISIBLE’ exist together Christologically. The Logos incarnate is the prerequisite for the putting/throwing together of ‘symbol’ (συμβάλλω).

In light of this, the transfiguration has a significant meaning. Blowers write that:

He [Christ] is a symbol of himself because his transfiguration is a gestured, embodied, theophanic demonstration of his fiat, his prerogative as Word and Wisdom of God to work through any means he so wills to reveal and to share his glory. Effectively Maximus redeems Origen’s depiction of the symbolic dimension of the transfiguration by privileging even more profoundly the incarnational sacramentality of the symbol itself.¹⁴²

Through Christ being, and thus revealing, the Logos, symbolism is in some sense annulled – that which it would refer to is already present. But this does not annul creation’s symbolic potential: “The point is that the deep structure of creation already expresses the kenosis of the Word, the disclosure of the Creator’s self-sacrificial grace as the true meaning of the world and the promise for its future transfiguration.”¹⁴³ The cosmos transfigured becomes the *telos* for symbol, an idea which we will return to in 8.2.4, as we will also with the idea of the *kenosis* of the ‘deep structure’ of creation (8.2.3). What can be said already, however, about the metaphor, is the equivalence of the Logos and a *gravitational pull* of the metaphor, to use Ricoeur’s expression. Being the wisdom of the world, the Logos affects all *domains*.

This Christology significantly affects anthropology, which in turn affects the *embodied realism*. In Chapter 4 we saw how BODY and SOUL (and MIND) are united through NAVE and SANCTUARY (and ALTAR), exemplifying the general “analogy between the unity of body and soul in man and the unity of divine and human nature in Christ”¹⁴⁴ (italics in original), as Thunberg writes. With Maximus we can see that it is in the human *it* happens, to put it colloquially – in being a microcosm, the human being is, as Balthasar writes, “the occasion and the place of God’s Incarnation, as it continues to be realized in mystery through the course of time.”¹⁴⁵ The *Logos* incarnate not only permeates creation in general but recapitulates humanity in particular, and not only historically but cosmologically in every individual at every moment.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Blowers, *Maximus the Confessor*, 140.

¹⁴³ Blowers, *Maximus the Confessor*, 233.

¹⁴⁴ Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator*, 106.

¹⁴⁵ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 278.

¹⁴⁶ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 301.

This dependency on Christ as constituting humanity's identity has, furthermore, consequences on an existential level, such as participation in the death and resurrection of Jesus. In Chapter 6, we saw the movement from 'VISIBLE' to 'INVISIBLE' through the relation between OT/HISTORICAL LETTER and NT/AIM OF THE LETTER, a movement one attains through the ascetical endeavor of dying away from sense perception. And in the vein of the *Mystagogy*, Balthasar argues that this does not fall prey to some dualism but has as its goal a purification of sensible creation – in the same way as Christ does not vanquish, but fulfills the Law.¹⁴⁷ And this movement from sensible to intelligible is the NATURAL CONTEMPLATION of the SOUL from Chapter 4:

The elements of symbolic appearance that remain in the New Covenant are due, in their view, to the twofold nature of man as both sensory and intelligent and stand within a constant process of dynamic transition from sense to intelligence. Liturgical symbols are less the permanent place of the realization of salvation than its starting point, which must constantly be left behind. The New Covenant *is* 'spirit'; its visible, hierarchical order, the enduring presence of the positive law of the Old Covenant, is only the 'springboard' for the New, from which it leaps into our view; it is the means by which the old age dies away, in whose constant disappearance the new age appears to us. We have already met this process of transition, however, as the proper place of *theoria physikē* – the contemplation of nature.¹⁴⁸

And this contemplation of nature – the *theoria physikē* – “finds its starting point in man's complete immersion in the natural world that surrounds him. He is nourished by that world in two ways: bodily by what it produces, intellectually by the seeds of truth that the Creator has planted in all things”.¹⁴⁹ The *theoria physikē* presupposes the *embodied realism* but has as its *skopos* (aim, see Chapter 6) spiritual meaning through death and resurrection of the sensual. In this, Balthasar uses the suggestive simile of the human as an “intellectual predator, who feeds on sensible reality by ‘digesting’ it into something intelligible”¹⁵⁰, or as a notion of ‘spiritual gold’ being extracted from ‘the mud of sensible reality’, which in turn is nothing savage but an offering to Christ, as Maximus himself also writes: “By giving to the Lord the intellectual meanings of things, we offer him gifts [...] not as if he needed them, but in order to honor him, as if we were making good our debts, as far as we can, from his own creatures.”¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 277ff.

¹⁴⁸ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 302.

¹⁴⁹ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 303.

¹⁵⁰ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 304.

¹⁵¹ Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua* PG 91 1280C quoted in Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 306.

We will now make a halt, to recapitulate all of this in regard to our theory of metaphor. I have already proposed that the Logos functions as the *gravitational pull* of metaphorical meaning. Through the above discussion on the dying away from the sensible, we are also reminded of Ricoeur's idea about the 'self-destruction of literal meaning' (which we touched on in Chapter 1, discussing the CENTRE and LINES image). Although sense impressions and literal understanding are not identical, both are attempts to contemplate a thing as it is. The 'intellectual predator' of *theoria physikē* digests sensible reality, in the same way as the literal impossibility of a metaphor calls for novel interpretation. Doing metaphor is a part of *theoria physikē*, I consequently argue. And in doing this, one does not shoot off into a dead space of meaning but is affected by the *gravitational pull* – leans on to, the 'seeds of truth that the Creator has planted in all things'. Although it does demand an activity of one's own – an interpretation and creating – this is also a discovery of what is already there (making use of a third idea of Ricoeur's). Without wanting to overdo the comparison in a one-to-one manner, I still argue that metaphorical language is analogous to the surprise of the resurrection of Christ – the rise of a new spiritual body from the grave of EARTH-'VISIBLE'. It starts through *theoria physikē*, requiring an *embodied realism*, and is carried out through the obliteration of immanent and literal meaning creating new, spiritual meaning, which in turn, however, revivifies it – the 'INVISIBLE' continuously reignites the 'VISIBLE'.

With all of this, I argue that there is indeed a degree to which Maximus and the *embodied realism* align, not least through the usage of metaphor as making sense of corporeal existence. They differ, however, in the two notions that sensible reality is simultaneously something to engage with and die away from, and in that embodiment, with Maximus, is not a 'straitjacket', as we saw Vervaeke & Kennedy say against CMT, but something that is to be united with the *theoria physikē* of the soul in the 'extracting of spiritual gold'. Sensible reality becomes truly real when it dies and is resurrected – created-discovered – in the human being, through Christ.

8.2.2 Metaphor as a Medium of Movement

To underpin and develop this, we will look closer at some ideas concerning epistemology and ontology, to argue that the above discussion does not just amount to a forcing of Christological lustre onto metaphorical language. We will ask: in what way does metaphor actually make sense of reality in a Maximian framework? And if the Logos/*gravitational pull* does not affect the *target* as such (as we saw with Ricoeur, 7.3.1), what does metaphor, then, refer to ontologically?

An important starting point is that, for Maximus, “[e]verything, absolutely everything is in motion”.¹⁵² Existing things are not defined as being primarily in stasis, nor in isolation, but through their motion. The metaphysical basis for this movement is the property of created beings as created, and that the Creator – God – is both the beginning (*genesis*) and end (*telos*) of creation.¹⁵³ Creation exists in *the* in-between of these transcendent poles: as the LINES shooting forth from the CENTER (as *genesis*) to then return to the same CENTER (now as *telos*) (Chapter 1). And since God is beyond being, which in some sense is non-being, “all of creation can be understood as a single, identical, and undifferentiated idea: namely, that it has nonbeing as the basis of its being”¹⁵⁴ (this would consequently constitute a universal *mapping*, uniting all possible *domains* in all possible metaphors). This general idea of movement and motion is applicable in many ways: to spatiality and temporality¹⁵⁵ – with both space and time being finite in relation to infinity and eternity –, to universal and particular¹⁵⁶ (as we dealt with in Chapter 1 and will return to in 8.2.3), and to the poles of existence and essence.¹⁵⁷ The cosmos is a unit circumscribed by the Infinite, and in this unit, the mode of existing is to be in movement, understood first and foremost as the LINES in relation to the CENTRE. This is the basis for ontology, as Balthasar writes: “[T]he ontology of created being is a study of motion”¹⁵⁸, and then continues, saying that motion is what gives a created being its “self-delimitation, its way of distinguishing itself from every other nature”¹⁵⁹, constituting its particularity in relation to the whole. Movement is that which holds things together without blurring out contours: “It brings about both ‘mixture [σύγχρσις] and separation [διάχρσις]’, so that ‘no being has the unique idea of its nature simply overruled.’ So we are again confronted with the mysterious dialectics of unity”.¹⁶⁰ Or, as Blowers writes: “Nature is the theatre of the actualization of movement.”¹⁶¹

This ontology is transferred also to epistemology. If everything is in motion, knowledge about things must take movement into account. But the act of thinking *qua* thinking is, too,

¹⁵² Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua* PG 91, 117AB quoted in Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 145.

¹⁵³ I have chosen *genesis* rather than *arché* (which we saw in Chapter 1) due to Balthasar’s usage: “The ‘being’ that serves as origin is, first of all, pure ‘becoming’ (γένεσις)” (Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 143).

¹⁵⁴ Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua* PG 91, 1312AB quoted in Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 151.

¹⁵⁵ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 141.

¹⁵⁶ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 159.

¹⁵⁷ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 165.

¹⁵⁸ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 154.

¹⁵⁹ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 155.

¹⁶⁰ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 155f.

¹⁶¹ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 129.

inescapably a movement. For Maximus, the emergence of a thought requires four things, as Balthasar summarizes:

[T]he thinking subject (νοῦς), the object thought about (νοούμενον), the process of thinking (νόησις), and the result of thinking or the thought (νόημα). The last of these is the natural conclusion (τέλος) of the intellectual movement (κίνησις) of thought, which is itself an activation (ἐνέργεια) of the intellectual capacity (δύναμις) of the soul.¹⁶²

This process has as its basis “an ontological relatedness that Maximus calls σχέσις [*schésis*] and which is a fundamental expression of created existence.”¹⁶³ For Maximus, all such movement is characteristic of existence, with *schésis* being originally based on spatiality but encompassing too the distance between “[a]ctivity and passivity, being a subject and being an object”¹⁶⁴, and so on. Thinking is bridging the gap with the object thought of, which requires intellectual movement – *kinesis*.

With the God behind the *creatio ex nihilo* being understood apophatically, as we saw above, there is always remaining the core, or trace, of non-being in every movement. Reality is inexhaustive, or *Halbzeug*, with Blumenberg’s terminology. For Maximus, thinking itself is a kind of “‘supposition’ or ‘belief’”¹⁶⁵ but simultaneously also “a kind of grasp that is sure and strong beyond all objective knowledge.”¹⁶⁶ Thinking and knowing is at base-level heuristic, it is based on *verisimilitude* – being like the truth. Bridging the gap between subject and object is based on ‘belief’, but since all of creation has non-being, or beyond-being, as its basis of being, realism itself must be *veri similis*. To know a thing exhaustively would be to not know it at all, because it would violate its constitutive part of non-being. In speaking about this, Balthasar comes close to describing how I would connect these notions to our theory of metaphor:

Sense knowledge, in Maximus’ system, has already been described as the synthetic identity of the sensing faculty with the sensible object; but the result, which the imaginative process [φαντασία] produces – the sensible image [φαντάσμα] – points, as we saw, beyond itself toward a higher form of knowing. In all infinite knowledge there is always a ‘remainder’, which comes from the nonidentity of the subjective and objective poles and which remains, despite the identity of those two within the process of forming the sensible image [φαντάσμα] or thought [νόημα].¹⁶⁷

¹⁶² Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 166.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 166f.

¹⁶⁵ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 167.

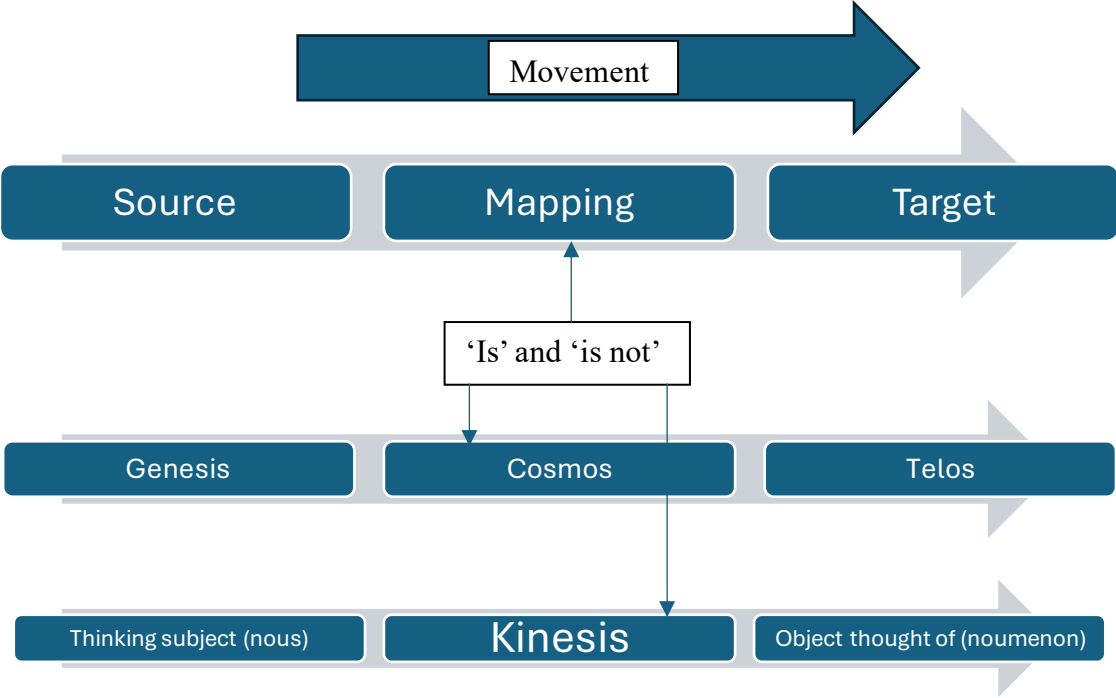
¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

And for Balthasar, all of this is connected to the aforementioned notion of *theoria physikē*, seeing the human being as an ‘intellectual predator’: “Such an ‘eating’ of the intelligible content (logos) of things means inescapably, however, both a ‘sacrificing’ of objectivity as such [...] and also an assimilation of the object as food for the subject.”¹⁶⁸

We will now recapitulate this with our theory of metaphor. *Schésis* as ‘ontological relatedness’ emphasizes the relational aspect of being, which is analogous to the relational movement of metaphor: one *domain* understood in relation to another. The *mappings* are based on *resemblance*, which consists of *tension*, and all *tension* requires movement. And *tension* is also based on the ‘is and is not’, which correlates with the element of knowledge as *verisimilitude* as described above. And the ‘is and is not’ at the core of metaphor, is also, as we now have seen, at the core of a creation in flux, which invites an *embodied realism*, yet has non-being as the *genesis* and *telos* of its being: the cosmos is in the movement in-between. This is analogous to the intellectual movement – *kinesis* – between subject/nous (νοῦς) and object (νοούμενον) in the act of thinking, an act which requires belief because it consists of ‘is and is not’. Metaphor, the act of thinking, and creation itself are embossed by this ‘is and is not’ and are all inevitably in motion, as illustrated in Fig. 10.

Fig. 10: the resembling patterns of metaphor, creation, and the act of thinking.



¹⁶⁸ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 168f.

For example, the ‘light’ of GOD and the ‘light’ of the SUN are part of what holds them together metaphorically-conceptually, but they are at the same time fundamentally different kinds of light. This is true also when both *domains* are created, as we remember with our ACHILLES is a LION-example from 7.2.5, where their respective ‘courage’ unites them while making salient their difference. Consequently, I argue that the concept and nature of *mapping* is analogous both to the act of thinking, and created being itself, as it is understood through a Maximian framework. Therefore, it is in and through *tension*, that adequate referentiality is possible. To define an object in isolation is a violation of its mode of being, depriving it of all the kinds of *schésis* that define its being in the world. Metaphor does the contrary, it defines a thing through relation and keeps the ‘is and is not’ necessary for union and multiplicity intact. Metaphor is a proper medium of movement since it refers to the relation itself through the *mappings* – metaphor refers to a being’s *schésis* in an existence that is in motion.

With this, we can understand in what way *absolute metaphor* presents itself to us, as Blumenberg would say. It is *Halbzeug* (half-baked), due to the inescapable non-being at its core, but affirming this ontology it becomes *veri similis*, truth-like, rather than uncertain. This in no way erases the possibilities of an *embodied realism* and its universal potential: the pervasive metaphor does not make language and experience arbitrary, because it addresses things as they exist in the world – in motion. And Balthasar seems to agree: “This dynamic, actualizing aspect of being is only something ‘irrational’ in the eyes of a narrow rationalism; for those who grasp it more deeply – as Aristotle, Thomas, and Hegel were able to do – it is that which makes being itself real.”¹⁶⁹ Metaphor presents itself to us in an *absolute* manner because it, as an epistemological medium, follows the pattern of how the world behaves, and of how we come to know it. This would be the way in which the Logos functions as a *gravitational pull*.

Having now given a Christological version of the *embodied realism* in 8.2.1, and a general ontology of movement that fits well with our metaphor theory in 8.2:2, another set of terms from Maximus become relevant, namely that of the *expansion* and *contraction* of the Logos. But before introducing these, we will set a proper frame by revisiting CMT’s Chain of Being through the idea of the *fractal*.

¹⁶⁹ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 263.

8.2.3 A Fractal Chain of Being

Already in Theory, I stated that the Chain of Being itself spurs religious inquiry, but I will now argue that the Christology as understood in 8.2.1 redefines such an idea. Although it is still useful through uniting the *embodied realism* with conceptualizations of God, we have seen how the Logos is present not as a distant godhead, but simultaneously in the cosmos – thus in the Chain of Being (on its top, but also in the parts) – and apophatically outside of it. The Chain, following Maximus, would not be psychologically pointing up towards a GOD-concept, but be ontologically stabilized by the “dialectics between transcendence and immanence”.¹⁷⁰ Only then, and through this, can GOD be conceptualized as being on top of such a Chain of Being – through the simultaneous being inside and outside it, beneath it and beyond it.

What this transcendent impenetration does with the *Great Chain of Being* as a whole, I argue, is making it *fractal*, as I have stated in part 8.1 (Chapters 1 and 4 and Recapitulation). A *fractal* (functioning as both noun and adjective) is a geometrical shape/pattern in which parts repeat or reminisce either a larger or a smaller part, thus making the shape repeat itself continuously on different levels. An initial example would be a square that infinitely holds squares inside of itself, but this implies a mechanic predictability which is far from the truth. Better examples, then, are naturally occurring *fractals*, as the Merriam-Webster dictionary has it: “Fractals can be seen in snowflakes, in which the microscopic crystals that make up a flake look much like the flake itself. They can also be seen in tree bark and in broccoli buds.”¹⁷¹ Or, as Iain McGilchrist notes: “Fractals [...] generate *difference that is also a kind of sameness*” (emphasis in original).¹⁷² Understood in this way, the similarity with a micro-/macrocosm idea is palpable.

We will break down what this means when transferred to our metaphor theory and the discussion on the *Great Chain of Being*. First of all, the *domains* of a metaphor have their place ontologically in the *Great Chain of Being*. Second, metaphors make use of this hierarchy for their meaning-making through the *mappings* traversing levels, and this movement is an essential part of what makes them evocative (see 7.2.5 and 8.2.2). Third, the *mappings*, consisting of the *tension* of the ‘is within the is not’ make salient attributes between *source* and

¹⁷⁰ Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 82.

¹⁷¹ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fractal>

¹⁷² Iain McGilchrist, *The Matter with Things – Our Brains, Our Delusions and the Unmaking of the World* (vol. 2) (London: Perspectiva Press, 2021), 1000.

target which also invokes other *domains* with the same attributes in the coherent metaphorical network. This third and final point is the one I will argue for in the following.

Our metaphor of GOD is SUN will work as an example and argument. In Figures 2, 5, and 9, the inner relation not only of *source* and *target*, but of the *mappings* constituting the metaphor, is shown. The *mapping* ‘light’ works both in and of itself, through our personal experiences of light, and together with other *mappings*: being part of the ‘giving life’-mapping, but also playing a function in how the SUN can be a metaphor for METAPHOR through its revealing and hiding in the day-night cycle which mirrors the ‘is and the is not’ (Chapter 1). This means that the *structural* nature of metaphor is not only that GOD and SUN have a number of *mappings* working independently (as if ‘light’, ‘warmth’, ‘circular shape’, ‘resembles metaphor’ and so on had absolutely nothing to do with each other), but that every metaphor has an inner life. Perhaps, this would even be a better word than *structural*, as CMT has it: the *inner life* of metaphor. The *mappings* lend their own attributes to each other, in the *inner life* of the metaphor.

A natural consequence – which is what creates the *fractality* – of this is the possibility of *extension*. ‘Light’, as a *mapping*, not only creates meaning with other *mappings* in a metaphor but is readily extendable as a *domain* in and of itself. This has always been known by CMT. LIGHT as a *domain* has already been given ample space in this thesis: LIGHT is TRUTH is a historically pervasive metaphor, as Blumenberg argues. And when one has traced the relation between the first metaphor (SUN is GOD) and the neighboring metaphor (LIGHT is TRUTH), the process can start over again. When identifying *mappings*, one sees their inner relations and recognizes other metaphors from them; some are self-evident and immediate, others require inspired hermeneutic engagement – but many of them also work in the unconscious, since they make use of embodied experiences which we ‘digest’. When one learns the LIGHT is TRUTH-metaphor, many implications of this make itself present also when the SUN is used as a *domain*, for example in the idea that the SUN is METAPHOR, where the orbit of the sun through its giving and taking away LIGHT becomes analogue to the experience of the ‘is and is not’ of METAPHOR. In the same way as a broccoli or a tree repeats itself through its branches resembling the whole, metaphor, although in an unexhaustive way, repeats itself along with embodied experiences. The living network of metaphorical language is based on the human being’s living in the world as a hermeneutical creature, and this constant interpretation of existence creates the *fractal* nature of metaphor.

The same is the case with the *generic-level* clusters of ‘INVISIBLE’ and ‘VISIBLE’. All of part 8.1 functions as an argument for this, as shown in ‘Recapitulation’. The whole project of the *Mystagogy* is to order the cosmos through the symbolism of the liturgy, making sense of the WORLD-UNIVERSE-HUMAN-SCRIPTURE-CHURCH in GOD, as parts of a whole which live in and through each other. The constant reciprocity – *schésis* – of these different symbolical relationships makes symbols present in their neighbors, so to speak. Due to the *generic* nature of the *Mystagogy’s* symbols, I choose to not explicate this further but argue that what has been said in 8.1 is enough to make the argument that this reciprocity, too, makes visible its *fractal* nature.

Through this, I say that in the same way that a human is a microcosm, metaphor is a microcosm. Based on the experiential plethora, the metaphor makes immediately present a multitude of relations that order the two *domains* in relation to each other and the world. It actualizes aspects of the *schésis* of beings, their way of relating to another part of the totality of the cosmos, which builds on the ‘is and is not’ of *mappings*, which in turn is analogous to an epistemology and ontology of motion (8.2.2), resembling the way in which creation exists inside of God and how humanity has knowledge of it. The *fractal* nature of metaphor makes the whole cosmos present inside the single statement, making metaphor a microcosm.

This is strengthened, I argue, by the concepts of *expansion* and *contraction* I referred to earlier, which brings the ideas of 8.2.1 and 8.2.2 more clearly into the discussion and gives a theological language for this idea of a *knitting*, as we will call it, together of the *Fractal Chain of Being*. Maximus writes:

[The essence of all things] has always been in motion and moves in the manner of expansion (*diastolē*) and contraction (*systolē*). For it moves from the most general genus, through less general genera, to the species, through which and in which it finds itself divided, and it presses on down to the most specific kinds of being, where its expansion comes against a limit, which circumscribes its being on the ‘downward’ side; then once again, it moves from the most specific kinds of being through the more and more general categories, until it is included in the most generic genus of all, and there its contraction meets its end, limiting its being on the ‘upward’ side.¹⁷³

This ascent-descent through the ladder of *generic* and *specific* is, of course, not a movement along the Chain of Being – which is precisely why it is *knitting* it together. The *generic-specific* hierarchy and the Chain of Being denote two different dimensions of the same ontology. The

¹⁷³ Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua* PG 91, 1177Bf quoted in Balthasar, *Cosmic Liturgy*, 158.

SUN stands both in the Chain of Being as an inanimate object in contrast to that of GOD, and with other inanimate objects as a part of the whole of inanimate objects, as well as with all that is as a part of the whole cosmos (together with plants, animals and rational creatures). The *expansion* and *contraction* are the activity of the Logos ‘sustaining’, ‘drawing together’, and ‘defining limits’ (Chapter 1) in the *Fractal Chain of Being* – the cosmos. The *Fractal Chain of Being* makes visible the world existing in and through itself as a whole in flux.

Blowers also gives considerable space to this, discussing how the Logos is active in creation, he writes that:

[f]or Maximus, all creatures, by their very materiality, maintain a measure of ‘chaos’ or instability (τὸ ἄτακτον) needing constantly to be reordered by the Creator. Salvation, then, comes as an unceasing work of divine Wisdom stabilizing this chaos and using it as the raw material of an ever new creation. Maximus’ cosmology as a whole is a sustained demonstration of the embodiments of this Wisdom—a Wisdom that is transcendent, immanent, but most importantly free, active, resilient, resourceful.¹⁷⁴

We recognize this stabilizing from the overall union of the Chain of Being – of ‘VISIBLE’ and ‘INVISIBLE’ – but here it has the attribute of active agency:

[a]t the core of this cosmic drama of embodied life, however, is the Logos-Christ himself ‘playing,’ maneuvering, piloting his creatures through the vagaries of corporeality in virtue of his own assumption of the flesh and appropriation (οικείωσις) of creaturely finitude.¹⁷⁵

And this playfulness of the Logos in creation is accompanied by the

Logos’s incarnational kenosis [since] [a]ll of the Logos’s embodiments, or penetrations of the material world, are strategies—either in anticipation of, or in light of, his own experience of incarnation—to quicken and advance his creatures in their quest for deification.¹⁷⁶

The Logos as the *gravitational pull* is lovingly playing so as to stabilize the flux of materiality. The *expanding* and *contracting* is the inner pulsating of the Logos working in and through bodily reality, a pulsating which, I consequently argue, metaphorical language captures and reveals. Metaphor, as a microcosm, captures the whole drama of divine *kenosis* in itself. As the Logos *expands* and *contracts* itself, objects, through being *domains* in metaphors, extend, through *mappings*, to other *domains* revealing their *resemblance* with the rest of the cosmos. I do not argue that this *expansion* and *contraction* is exhaustively metaphor, but I do argue that

¹⁷⁴ Blowers, *Maximus the Confessor*, 109.

¹⁷⁵ Blowers, *Maximus the Confessor*, 118.

¹⁷⁶ Blowers, *Maximus the Confessor*, 119.

metaphor participates in the *expansion* and *contraction* – not least as a medium of movement as explicated in 8.2.2 – of the Logos in creation.

This *Fractal Chain of Being* I have argued for and exemplified, which is due to the *expansion* and *contraction* of the Logos, is in line with how the One and the many was understood in Chapter 1. Metaphor is a way of the Logos working as a *gravitational pull*, simultaneously ‘sustaining’, ‘drawing together’, and ‘defining limits’. And it is with this framework we can envision a reality that is *fractal*, without falling prey to the practice of ‘free association’. Metaphor is not finding similarities where there are none, and it is not letting borders collapse by saying that everything is everything, or that language is arbitrary and capricious. Instead, the ‘is and the is not’ of metaphor is what enables a *Fractal Chain of Being* where every part is connected, but nonetheless itself.

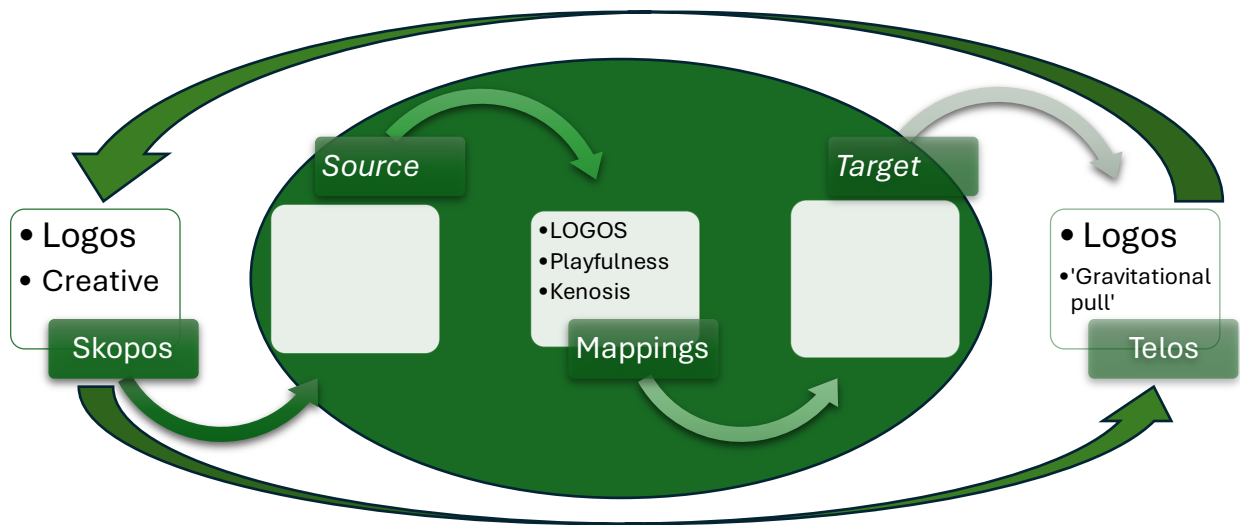
8.2.4 The Skopos Before the Source, and Telos Beyond the Target

Moving on to the final part of this second part of our Analysis, we state that in several aspects, parts 8.2.1, 8.2.2, and 8.2.3 overlap with each other, and we will attempt to recapitulate these insights through a theological reevaluation of the very basic dynamic in the metaphorical statement, as originally envisioned by CMT: the *source-target* relation.

In 8.2.1 we spoke of a *theoria physikē* which sought to digest sensible reality into ‘spiritual gold’. We understand this, too, as the ‘INVISIBLE’ springing forth from the ‘VISIBLE’, without destroying it – or rather: through destroying and reviving it, which has clear implications on an *embodied realism*. We have, furthermore, equated the *gravitational pull* of Ricoeur with the Logos property of a ‘throwing together’ of symbol (συμβάλλω). And this *gravitational pull*, the locus of created being, in no way takes the position of the *target* in a simple down-up movement but affects the whole metaphorical statement. In the same way that God is the *telos* of all creation, spurring on general movement, the Logos therefore becomes the *telos* not in, but beyond the *target*. This, in turn, reveals the *skopos* – the aim, or divine purpose¹⁷⁷ – (see Chapters 6 and 8.2.1) of the *source*. The *skopos*, the trajectory, of the *source* is not towards the *target*, but towards the *telos* – both of which are the Logos – and although it is made visible in the *source* – through corporeal reality – it is a ‘seed of truth’ with its roots in the Logos. Thus: the *skopos* is before and (!) within the *source*, and the *telos*, gravitationally directing the trajectory of the aim, towards but also further on beyond the *target*.

¹⁷⁷ Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator*, 69.

Fig. 11: a Maximian version of the dynamic of *source* and *target*.



With this vocabulary, we do not merely repeat what was said about the redefined *target* in 8.2.1 but make it analogous to what is said in 8.2.2. The pre-existence of the *Logos* through being the *genesis* of created reality, is reflected in the *creative* act of doing metaphor. In the *theoria physikē* the human being ‘digests’ sensible reality into ‘spiritual gold’ (8.2.1), that is: receives (*discovers*) what is given to him and manages it in a way so as to follow the trajectory of the original creation (*ex nihilo*) through *creating* something of his own, as an offering to Christ. Doing metaphor is, in light of this, to engage with a reality that is *fractal* due to the transcendent impenetration of the *Logos* (8.2.3), affirming its *Halbzeug* nature of being as it presents itself to us as *absolute metaphors*, but still interacting with – or, delving into – it, so as to get glimpses of the *kenosis* of the *Logos* at play. Existing has its beginning (*genesis*) and end (*telos*) in God; metaphor has its *genesis* and *telos* in the *Logos*.

With this language, part of the *skopos* of the physical sun would be to give light and warmth to Earth in a day-night cycle – and the *skopos* of the SUN would be, inter alia, to carry out its compelling metaphorical significance in human minds. And these two aspects are intimately interwoven – different but not divided, we would say following the general pattern of the *Mystagogy* uniting ‘VISIBLE’ and ‘INVISIBLE’, through the archetypal hypostatic union in Christ. And our discussion on symbol and transfiguration in 8.2.1, and of the *knitting* ability of the *Logos* in 8.2.3, would infer that the *skopos-telos* of symbol, and consequently metaphor, is the transfiguration of the cosmos.

Having placed God/*Logos* outside of the metaphorical statement, however, we do not disqualify GOD as a possible metaphorical *domain*. But as with *The Chain of Being*, we

emphasize that in a metaphor including GOD, he is both a *domain*, and the agent working before the *source* and after the *target* – apophatically encompassing the whole metaphor.

With this, we have finally reached the point where we can deal with CMT's resistance against reciprocity of *mappings* – a rule which we have wilfully violated. Indeed, with CMT I retain the idea that, for example, the two metaphors of CHURCH (*source*) is WORLD (*target*) and WORLD (*source*) is CHURCH (*target*) are not one and the same metaphor, with *mappings* flowing both ways identically (that CHURCH is WORLD in exactly the same way as WORLD is CHURCH). But based on the previous discussions, I also reject that they would be two wholly different metaphors. I argue that the existing degree of reciprocity between the *domains* is due to the grand web of metaphorical structures always active: they are interwoven in a communication that is ongoing through the life of the hermeneutical subject in the world, in the dynamic of *expansion* and *contraction* (8.2.3) which lies as a foundation of human conceptualization. This is because they are ontologically related to each other and God through being part of the whole and conceptually related to each other and God through the centrality and priority of movement ontologically and epistemologically. From this point of view, the way in which Maximus links *domains* bidirectionally is entirely coherent, I argue, with his overall metaphysics, ontology and consequently with his cosmical-liturgical symbolism: the Logos as the *gravitational pull* impenetrates through *kenosis* all of sensible reality – affects and encompasses metaphor as its *genesis* and *telos*, which is made visible in metaphor, functioning as a microcosm.

9. Conclusions and Summary

This thesis set out to answer two questions. In 8.1, we sought to elucidate the symbolism in Maximus *Mystagogy* through our theory of metaphor. While these symbols proved to be working on a high, *generic*, level, the analysis, I argue, was still successful. *Mappings* motivating the symbols were found, both through Maximus' explanations, and through further discussions. Furthermore, The GOD is the SUN metaphor proved to be a useful example, which was readily applicable in different circumstances, showcasing metaphors' pervasive potential.

In 8.2, the purpose was to reevaluate our theory of metaphor in light of Maximus theology. In 8.2.1, we put the theory into a Christological framework, which simultaneously kept and redefined an *embodied realism* through the *theoria physikē*. In 8.2.2, I argued that metaphor, through a Maximian ontology and epistemology, is a proper reference of reality, due to it addressing movement and relation – *schēsis* – as well as maintaining the crucial 'is and is not'. In 8.2.3, I argued that reality understood through metaphor is *fractal*, which gives metaphor the status of a microcosm, and this was underpinned theologically through the concepts of *expansion* and *contraction* of the Logos, which upholds the balance of the One and the many. In 8.2.4, I proposed a revised definition of *source* and *target*, adding a purpose/aim – *skopos* – to, or before, the *source* and a *telos* beyond the target. I also argued that *mappings* are reciprocal, however not in the manner CMT envisions but in being interwoven in the *Fractal Chain of Being* – through the human as a hermeneutical creature continuously living in a world where the Logos is lovingly playing. Thus, I mean that our theory of metaphor has been made considerably richer by its cross-fertilization with Maximus the Confessor's theology.

A natural next step from this thesis would be, in my estimation, to use these theoretical terms together with a similar study material that, however, offers more *specific-level* metaphors, so as to be able to argue further for the coherence of symbolic structures on different levels. The second part of the *Mystagogy*, which we omitted, could very well be such a material.

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