

Chapter 17

Mapping Friendship and Friendship Research: The Role of Analogies and Metaphors



Claus Emmeche

Abstract Research in general, and research on friendship in particular, uses metaphors and analogies, and research itself can be seen in analogy with map making. This chapter takes us on a meandering walk along mono- and multidisciplinary inquiries into friendship as seen from many perspectives, like that of history and philosophy of science (that has analogical modelling as a canonical style of reasoning) and semiotics, to reflect on the uses of metaphor and analogy. Semiotics as founded by C. S. Peirce is the science of representations, how representational devices relate to their objects and how the meaning generated depends upon context and interpretation. Metaphor and analogy are such representational tools, at once cognitive and common as we all use them to think with, but also specialized within the sciences and humanities where they can be used in effective and misleading ways. It is shown how the general map analogy can be semiotically analysed as a diagram and how its general form can be applied to the aspects of friendship that concerns the friends' knowledge of Self and Other. We not only think, but also do things with metaphors, such as transforming a friend into some kin, or vice versa.

17.1 Introduction: Investigating Friendship

What is the role of metaphor and analogy in our understanding of friendship, and how can a semiotic understanding of representation give us a clue? Posing such a question is like suggesting to go to Melangell without knowing if the destination would be a church, a shrine, a nature reserve, a saint, a honey angel, or a friend of the wild hares. Polysemy is pervasive, though meanings, like friends, can interrelate in surprising ways, and may even meet.

C. Emmeche (✉)

History and Philosophy of Science Group, Department of Science Education, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark
e-mail: cemmeche@ind.ku.dk

My journey from the metaphors of biology to friendship studies was not planned from the outset. While I studied for my degrees in biology and philosophy of science, I was presented with a distinction between ‘theoretical concepts’ and ‘just metaphors’. It is possible that biology inherited this distinction from physics, an exact and older science. In physics, and especially in philosophy of physics, we are often told that theoretical formulation of laws of nature in a mathematical language is what counts as good science, while discovery, and the processes of coming up with new hypotheses – which may rely on all sorts of thinking, intuition, and the use of analogies and metaphors – is just a cognitive heuristic ladder that can be disposed of, once having arrived at a mathematically well expressed theory. But this doesn’t work quite so well in biology. Biological theories are far from always expressed as a set of coupled differential equations (or any other mathematical language), and the common generalizations and models (not to talk about ‘theories’) are often dependent on intuitions and notions with a partly metaphorical character: Think of the popular notion of “a genetic program” for the development of a zygote into a multicellular organism (which is hardly an algorithmic process like the execution of a digital computer program), or the expression “the genetic code”, again a metaphor, but a better one, due to the evolution of research in molecular genetics and biochemistry that gave that metaphor a much more precise meaning, referring to the biochemical regularities governing protein synthesis in the cell. Genetics and molecular biology are well-grounded experimental sciences that have generated important new knowledge in the form of generalizations that could be tested.

The positive aspect of an analogy is that for which there is concordance or isomorphism between the source of the analogy and its target, like ‘beauty’ in the analogy “my love is like a rose”; the negative aspect is a disanalogy or lack of carry-over from source to target, like ‘photosynthesis’ that a rose but not my love can do. Even though many biological concepts started out as heuristic models and metaphors, the positive and negative aspects of their analogic character could be investigated. Mapping this out experimentally allowed scientists to develop such models from being ‘just’ metaphors to become empirically confirmed theoretical concepts with a precise meaning, which is what happened with ‘the genetic code’ for protein synthesis, but not with ‘the genetic program’ for development.¹

But what about higher levels of biological organization? In ethology and theoretical biology there is an interest among biologists in the social structure of animals living in groups: How to compare the pecking order or social hierarchy among hens, baboons and chimps with the concepts we use in our own understanding of human sociality like class, caste, division of work, culture, etc.? *Homo sapiens* is just one example of a social animal, but maybe we are a unique peculiarity because social organization in our species is dependent upon our use of language (not seen in other species), language-based cognition, and the (again, language-dependent) artefacts of culture, institutions and the social norms that govern them.

¹ Emmeche and Hoffmeyer (1991) explores some informational or semiotic metaphors in biology, cf. also Key (2000) for a historical account. This and the following footnotes are mostly details for nerds, you don’t have to read them all to get the essence of the chapter.

Are those ethologists who claim that baboons can be friends² just projecting their own ideas about human relationships upon the animals, thus anthropomorphising these basically Darwinian agents, making them more human-like than they really are? Or are the qualities of those behaviours we cherish as civil, collaborative, and kind, not a monopoly for human beings to possess, but more wide-spread in the animal world? Can non-human animals be friends? If we for a moment assume that this is indeed so, then what kind of ‘friendship’ is involved? Is it a mere metaphor? A scientific analogy? Or are we using a kind of generalized notion of friendship, on evolutionary grounds (useful for survival), allowing for further differentiation in the taxonomy of friendship in the animal and human world? What is, by the way, friendship?

Obviously, the thing called friendship is a complex phenomenon, at once something *psychological* and *social*, and this being so, it has even *biological* underpinnings, because without brains, without an evolutionary history, we would not be here to think and act in the world the way we do. Thus, we need at least three empirical sciences (biology, psychology and sociology) to grasp its conditions of existence and the relational dynamics of friendship. These are sciences in their own right – it has proven impossible to reduce sociology to psychology, and then in turn psychology to biology. We need even more, as these three empirical aspects cannot exhaust all the dimensions of friendship phenomena, some of which are also moral, involving value judgements, and has been discussed by philosophers since antiquity. These are some of the reasons why we do not find any grand unified theory of friendship, and hardly any attempts to make such one, in contrast to physicists’ standard model of the universe.

But what is this thing about complexity? Are we forced into a kaleidoscopic syncretism of approaches if we want to map out all the things about friendship? Lurking behind this question is a tension in science and philosophy between the simple and the complex, the universal and the specific or peculiar, and between holistic and reductionist approaches. We might, for the sake of our mental economy, prefer one single unified approach to friendship, but the complexity of it (supposing we can talk about it as a single phenomenon) invites – or forces us – to use a plurality of approaches, like the comparative ones, both known in biology and the human sciences, and in any comparative approach, investigating patterns of similarities and differences (especially those differences that ‘makes a difference’) are essential.³ Thus, we shall see some cases of good as well as problematic uses of metaphor and analogy, both in relation to friendship as such (and similar interpersonal relationships) and in relation to the ways we can use science, philosophy, and the humanities to think about it.

² Seyfarth and Cheney 2012; see more below.

³ “Ordering a variety by comparison and taxonomy” is one of Crombie’s six styles (see below). Goyet (2014, p. 159) notes that “[c]omparison or simile has suffered by the recent success of metaphor. It has served as a foil for its brilliant alter ego.”

17.2 Mapping Friendship Through Styles of Reasoning

Friendship as a relationship between Self and Other has been investigated since the days of Aristotle, who offered the simile of “the friend as another self” (more on this later). Friendship research today is dispersed across many academic disciplines spanning from philosophy and history to psychology, sociology and anthropology but also social cognitive neuroscience, neuroethology and behavioural biology.⁴ Friendship research thus applies a broad variety of approaches and “styles of reasoning”, to use the term of A.C. Crombie and Ian Hacking for the six methodological ways of inquiry within the scientific tradition, that cannot be reduced to the use of one single “scientific method” (as the positivists had hoped for).⁵ Crombie’s list of styles reads (a) postulation in the axiomatic mathematical sciences, (b) experimental exploration and measurement of complex detectable relations, (c) hypothetical modelling (using analogies), (d) ordering a variety by comparison and taxonomy, (e) statistical analysis of populations, and (f) historical derivation of genetic development. Perhaps except for (a), the five other styles are used in particular cases of friendship research across many fields of research. Crombie wrote an impressive history of natural science in the Western tradition by organizing his material into these six styles (not implying that this list was complete, Hacking suggested adding the laboratory as a special style of scientific representation and intervention). Hacking philosophized about the general characteristics of such styles, being paradigmatic in the sense of their self-validating character (a style defines the norms governing how to ask, investigate, and answer a question), but in contrast to Kuhnian paradigms, styles typically stay in the game of science and can be combined across disciplines (and paradigms, if they exist in the sense of Kuhn). Now, the technical language of a discipline or science is in general just a refinement of the language and cognition of human beings in everyday life (we recur to everyday language to learn the technical one and when disputing the meaning of new terms), and this applies also for Crombie’s style (c), hypothetical modelling that uses analogy as a cognitive and investigative device, because it forms a controlled and specified version of analogy in everyday cognition, with deep historical roots. “The analysis of natural processes by simulating them with scale, imitative or analogical models was an ancient intellectual approach to nature” (Crombie, 1994, p. 1087), and many will remember from their lessons on the history of science that “[t]he exemplary analogical model both of animal and celestial motion was the clock” (ibid., p. 1090).

⁴ On January 14, 2021, a search in the *Web of Science* database for articles in English from the last 5 years having friendship as an abstract-related keyword gave 1201 hits. Searching the *Social Science Database* for peer reviewed articles from the same period with friendship in the abstract gave 833 hits. The smaller *Humanities Index* (same periods, peer reviewed contributions with “friendship” included in the title) gave 73 hits. The databases need not be strictly disjunct.

⁵ Crombie 1994; Hacking 2002. See also Winther 2012; Rodrigues and Emmeche 2019. On differences in Crombie’s and Hacking’s notion of style, see Rodríguez 2021.

Though this style had a major impact in the development of science – as the “common form of both model and phenomenon offered common explanatory principles based on common assumptions both about nature and about scientific argument” (ibid., p. 1241) – there were debates over the extent to which mechanical models could further progress in fields like physiology or chemistry. More important in our context are two points: (1) Also the social sciences and the humanities proceed by different styles of reasoning, some of them being the same as those Crombie described, but also some additional (a hermeneutical style of critical text interpretation could be one such candidate), though few of these have yet been described by philosophers or historians from the style perspective.⁶ Mapping the extent of the use of hypothetical modelling in friendship research would be a part of a larger project of mapping the methodological styles of the social science and humanities disciplines. (2) Research as such, in spite of its plurality of styles, can also be understood in terms of a more general analogy, that of mapping (Winther, 2020): What Rasmus Winther calls ‘the map analogy’ has several varieties, but its canonical form is this: “theory is to world as map is to territory”, that is, the knowledge produced by science and scholarship about different aspects of the world can be grasped by analogy with maps (note the plural form) of a landscape created by skilled cartographers (Winther, 2020, chapter 2).⁷ So cartography is the source domain of the analogy, and inquiry (research-based knowledge production) is the target domain.

Re-interpreting philosophy of science, Winther, in this interdisciplinary tour de force, claims that map making and ultimately ‘map thinking’ is ubiquitous across literature, cosmology, mathematics, psychology, and biology. Researchers “partition, summarize, organize, and clarify their world via spatialized”⁸ or other forms of representations. Winther shows how such representations may attract us and induce us to special ways of thinking; construct new perspectives and deconstruct others. His treatise critically discuss the potentials and dangers of map thinking. Maps (of which analogies form an important part; Winther develops his own typology of map analogies) “are purpose-driven abstractions, discarding detail to highlight only particular features of a territory. By preserving certain features at the expense of others, they can be used to reinforce a privileged position.” His analysis aims to show how theories, models, and concepts scientists use to represent and intervene in the world function as maps, and he explores the consequences of

⁶ Salmon 1993; Grønvaad and Johansson 2017.

⁷ Note that this form strictly follows the classic definition of analogy in Aristotle’s poetics, where “there are four terms so related that the second (B) is to the first (A), as the fourth (D) is to the third (C)” (*Poetics*, 1457b16–26), quoted from de Libera (2014). More on Aristotle’s theory of analogy, see Bartha (2010). Note also that the map analogy is old, as Allchin (2001, p. 41) comments, scientists “develop a series of maps and indirect maps. They formulate maps of maps in successive layers.” Turnbull (1993, p. 62) develops this point in detail: “If maps are shared examples of practice, perhaps science can be thought of as a compendia of maps, that is, an atlas, as an example of the way in which people have to work to make the whole hang together.”

⁸ Quotations in this paragraph are from a deft summary on the back cover of Winther 2020.

this, both good in the sense of expanding understanding, and bad, such as when we reify abstractions and confuse the map and the territory: The more we understand the world around us in terms of models, the higher risk of taking the models for reality.

In addition to a semiotic understanding of representation (to which we shall return below), these contributions from philosophy of science offer some tools for critically comprehending friendship (and friendship research). Within the scientific and scholarly literature and also in more popular discourse we find references to different ‘models of friendship’⁹ that function as guides for investigating details about the history, cultural evolution, psychology, and particular features of the dynamics of friendship. This opens for assessing the perils and benefits of analogical thinking for investigating it. The multiple ways that “friendship” has been deployed as a concept with analogical extensions both in research and in practice (‘friendship between states’, ‘friendship with benefits’, ‘guest friendship’, ‘civic friendship’, etc.), or used as a method (especially in ethnographic field work), or contextualized as highly culture-specific (disallowing relationship analogies between ‘modern’ and ‘premodern’ friendship), have often been highly disputed.

For instance, we mentioned how researchers in ethology¹⁰ ascribe “friendship” to social bonds between non-kin group members of chimps, baboons or other social animals, but have been met by critical colleagues¹¹ who accused them of anthropomorphism, using a human everyday term as an unfounded analogy to describe some allegedly more ‘political’ ties within the group structure of the great apes. Remember Frans de Waal’s treatise *Chimpanzee Politics*, the title of this work is an effective metaphor for the whole topic of the book that unfolds as an extended analogy between human politics, somewhat cynically understood, and chimpanzee group behaviour.¹² This critique of the notion of non-human friendship is now receding as new evidence of the evolutionary roots of human sociality are appearing, giving higher warrant to the use of such terms for non-human animals.¹³ Already Gordon Burghart tried to mediate between the positions by his notion

⁹ E.g., “Chapter 3 [‘The Other Self as Friend’] presents a model of friendship predicated on difference, rather than similarity” (Lynch, 2005 p. 186, cf. also pp. xiii, 50, 191); “writers in the early Middle Ages tended to identify friendship as a model of behavior toward their contemporaries from a Christian perspective, that is, to pray for the other, to express love for the neighbor in the name of Christ” (Classen, 2010, p. 19, cf. also pp. 47 (n. 106), 79, 95, 136, 155); Montaigne in his famous essay on his friendship with La Boétie (that itself became a romantic model of friendship) wrote “[s]uch a friendship has no model but itself, and can only be compared to itself” (quoted from Grayling, 2013, p. 87; cf. also p. 140 (on a “Homeric pair quoted as a model for friendship”).

¹⁰ Smuts 1985; Dagg 2011; Seyfarth and Cheney 2012.

¹¹ Henzi and Barrett 2007.

¹² de Waal (1998), cf. the book’s back cover: “As we watch the chimpanzees of Arnhem behave in ways we recognize from Machiavelli (and from the nightly news), de Waal reminds us again that the roots of politics are older than humanity.” The same may be true for friendship, and maybe the evolutionary origin of friendship was in this sense political: the formation of alliances helps in survival and increase of power.

¹³ For a popular introduction to this trend, see Denworth (2020). See also Brent et al. (2014).

of ‘critical anthropomorphism’ as an approach that allows for using the sentience of the observer to generate hypotheses about the perceptual and cognitive world (or *Umwelt*) experienced by a species, that subsequently can be tested against ‘harder’ scientific evidence from ecology, neuroscience and evolutionary biology (Burghart, 1985). Friendship in humans demands a minimum amount of cognitive and emotional resources (such as a capacity for empathy), but if it therefore is an unscientific anthropomorphism to call the relation between two collaborating ants for friendship, it may be as just as unscientific and anthropocentric (the opposite error) to assume *a priori* that only humans, and not baboons or chimpanzees, can be friends. The dispute illustrates that the scope of a concept like friendship (implying, among other things, mutual support provided by intention-governed actions), used as analogy in the study of other species, can be disputed, but also investigated and made more precise as we proceed in our knowledge of the representational resources of these species. One day it may be possible to decide whether friendship (and cognition-based friendly sociality in general) in human and non-human animals as a shared feature is what biologists more specifically calls a homology (with a common evolutionary origin), or a mere analogy (that may have evolved independently several times in different species due to similar ecological and other selective pressures).¹⁴

Similarly, the study of friendship in anthropology has created disputes between those who see it as a human universal, and those who doubt that one can find friendship in all cultures, except when used merely as a metaphor. Furthermore, using “friendship as a method” in anthropological fieldwork has sparked debates about consent, research ethics, and the special form of information exchange between an informant and a researcher who may be transformed by “fictive kinship” into a friend; a process that itself involves metaphorical uses of relationship terms. Moreover, interdisciplinary exchanges between classic studies, cultural history, and anthropology, have generated debates on the extent to which friendship in different cultures should be seen primarily as an emotional-intimate relationship, or rather as a more instrumental form of generalized exchange of support and obligations; thus, raising questions about presentism, and ethnocentrism vs. universalism.

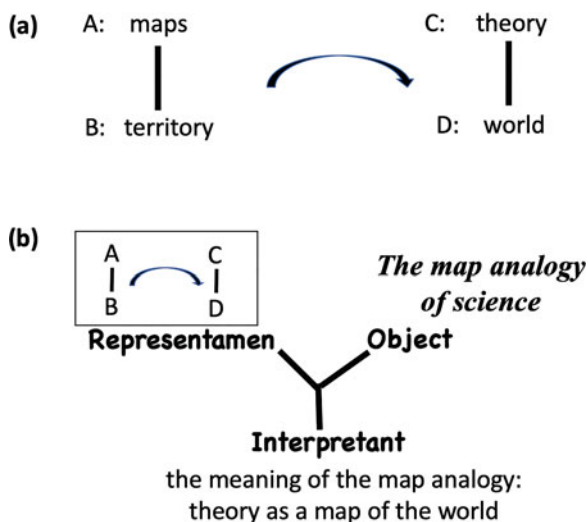
¹⁴ For an introduction see this entry: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homology_\(biology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homology_(biology)). Thinking friendship in evolutionary terms invites us to imagine that there is an evolutionary spectrum of friendship, i.e., degrees of which the full scale phenomenon is realized. We can understand this per analogy with the evolutionary spectrum of vision (i.e., performance of visual distinction, or the degree of complexity of the organs of vision, from light sensitive perceptor neurons in a worm to the full-blown eyes of an eagle). An element in this spectrum of friendship will be the ways and degrees of social or societal regulation of friendship and enmity, e.g., the ways we as a society regulate violence and aggression (see Wramgham, 2018; Henrich, 2020).

17.3 Unpacking Analogies of Inquiry and Friendship by Diagrammatic Reasoning

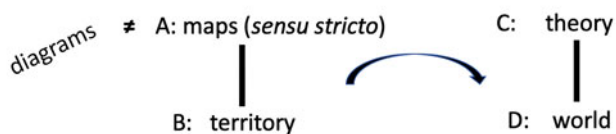
We will return to Winther's map analogy for inquiry ("theory is to the world as map is to territory") and unpack a dilemma he faced regarding the scope of this analogy and the relevance of analysing cartography for understanding 'map thinking'. We can do this via the argument that any analogy is a sign in the sense of Peirce, thus having a basic triadic structure: Any *sign* consists of a triadic relation between the mental or physical vehicle of the sign (called R, *representamen*), the entity or idea or real process that the sign represents (called O, *object*), and the immediate, dynamic or ultimate meaning or significant effects of the sign (called I, *interpretamen*). Signs can be simple or composite or complex, and can be interpreted in iterative chains of semiosis. I suggest to formulate Winther's general map analogy in such a diagram, in that we let the Aristotelian structure⁷ of the map analogy (Fig. 17.1a) be the complex representamen that is triadically related to that analogy's target as object, i.e., the phenomenon of scientific inquiry, and to its meaning, i.e., our ongoing interpretation of this as we discuss and explore the scope of the analogy (Fig. 17.1b).

Now what is Winther's dilemma? Apparently it comes from the fact that some scientific representations are prototypically more 'map-like' than some others. Winther does not only discuss maps of the literal forms made by cartographers, but also highly abstract metric maps like state space diagrams and (also metric) extreme-space maps (like linear genetic maps, or maps of cosmic microwave background radiation). He also discusses diagrams, e.g., related to what he calls causal maps: "A scientific theory or model is a map of causal connections, inferred through statistical analysis or via mechanistic experiments, and often depicted in a topographically accurate diagram." (ibid., p. 39). In such a diagram, the "dimensions

Fig. 17.1 The map analogy, (a) its structure with a source domain to the left and a target domain to the right, (b) as a complex triadic sign



1) maps are unique => elevate analysis of cartography to grasp the analogy



2) maps not unique => cartographic analysis is less relevant



Fig. 17.2 The map analogy dilemma. See text for explanation

are not metrical, but are used to organize the causal factors. However, a causal map may be topologically accurate” (ibid.). Thus, Winther asks us to “consider the difference between maps and diagrams, two kinds of representation deploying space differently. A typical, literal map uses space to represent and explain an external referent or world, often in metric fashion. In diagrams, topological rather than metric relations are often what matter.” (p. 114). We end up in a kind of binary where we “use maps and diagrams for different purposes and in distinct contexts” (p. 115). Now, the dilemma is this:

the present study faces a *dilemma*: the more we distinguish maps from diagrams (or other representational forms), the smaller is the scope and power of the map analogy; but the more we see maps as similar – that is, analogous – to diagrams, the less interesting, important, or indispensable a cartographic analysis seems to become. In short, by arguing for the uniqueness of maps, we elevate cartography; but we also increasingly narrow the source of the map analogy, making the map typology from chapter 2 more rigid and less effective (Winther, 2020, p. 115).

We can schematize this dilemma in another diagram (Fig. 17.2) that also offers a semiotic suggestion: To keep the map analogy broad, but to include maps as well as diagrams into the more general category of representational devices, and to allow for a representation to contain both metric and topological features, or to be both a map and a diagram (in the later’s sense of a simplified schematic drawing showing the appearance, structure, or workings of something).

This is compatible with Peirce’s more general definition of a diagram as a sign representing existing relations “as in a map”.¹⁵ Commenting upon Peirce, Stjernfelt

¹⁵ The full quote is this: “A Diagram, in my sense, is in the first place a Token, or singular Object used as a Sign; for it is essential that it should be capable of being perceived and observed. It is, however, what is called a General sign; that is, it denotes a general Object. It is, indeed, constructed with that intention, and thus represents the Object of that intention. Now the Object of an intention, purpose, or desire is always General. The Diagram represents a definite Form of Relation. This

(2019, p. 315) also makes clear that both maps and algebraic expressions can be seen as instances: “the generality of the diagram sign itself is what makes it possible for diagrams also to perform the symbolic act of referring to general objects. Maps, e.g. may refer to general features of the landscape; algebraic expressions, e.g. may refer to general regularities of arithmetics, empirical or *a priori*.” It may not completely resolve the dilemma, but it turns the attention to the multiplicity of representational forms used in research and expands or transforms the map analogy from a focus on ‘theory’ to a more general focus on research-based knowledge production (inquiry), thus: “research-based inquiry is to the world as representational forms are to territories”.¹⁶

Now, we can use the generality of the (strict or expanded) map analogy, as represented by these diagrams, to shed light upon the before mentioned oft quoted simile offered by Aristotle, that in the best forms of friendship, the friend is like another self. To unpack this (not necessarily in a direction originally intended¹⁷) let us focus on the epistemic (concerning knowledge of self and other) aspect of the simile to make it a more developed analogy.

Take for instance Elena and Lila. Elena knows her own self, but only partly so (the goal to ‘know thyself’ is completed only by sages). She also knows her good friend Lila, and Lila knows Elena very well, even aspects Elena cannot see. The same applies to the relation between Lila’s self-knowledge and Lila’s total self (neither she is a sage). The partly unpacked simile then says that “Elena’s self-knowledge is to her full self as Lila’s knowledge of Elena is to Lila’s full self”; in other words, Lila may know some parts of Elena even better than Elena herself

Relation is usually one which actually exists, as in a map, or is intended to exist, as in a Plan. But this is so far from being essential to the Diagram as such, that if details are added to represent existential or experiential peculiarities, such additions are distinctly of an undiagrammatic nature. The pure Diagram is designed to represent and to render intelligible, the Form of Relation merely. Consequently, Diagrams are restricted to the representation of a certain class of relations; namely, those that are intelligible.” (NEM 4:315-316n1, quoted from Peirce, 1906–07).

¹⁶ Knowing that maps of different forms are used not only in science but also in people’s everyday practice, the map analogy could also be developed in other directions, e.g., related to the graphic techniques by which indigenous people use to imagine and interpret the land, striving to control and to find meaning in landscapes and territories; for this aspect, see Turnbull (1993).

¹⁷ For how Aristotle, in book 8 of *Nicomachean Ethics*, first introduces the simile in relation to the parents’ love of their own children, see Pangle (2003, p. 85 ff), so there, ‘another self’ is a dear one who belongs to the one, and whom one feels affection for. Later, in book 9, he unfolds the idea that the best kind of friendship, involving a love for the friend for his own sake, is an extension of self-love (Pangle, *ibid.*, p. 142 ff). “Friendship is derivative from, because it is somehow a reflection of, each man’s concern with himself, and an extension of that concern to others” (*ibid.*, p. 152). So far this is the case, the interpretation of the simile given here and in Fig. 17.3 is compatible with Aristotle’s own. Let it also be noted that other commentators interpret the ‘another self’ simile differently, e.g., Hintz (2011) who points to the collaboration between friends in common activities: “The comparison between the friends — “as a man is to himself, so he is to his friends” — is put squarely in the context of living together and partnership (*koinônia*). Accordingly, we ought expect that the perception or awareness in question is not only similar or analogous but is rather shared or collaborative awareness connected with shared or collaborative activity.” (p. 15).



Fig. 17.3 Diagram of an epistemic component of the simile ‘a friend is another self’, unpacked as an analogy. The self ‘as known by the friend’ in C is aspects of the total self in B, that may be different from or overlapping with the aspects known in A

knows them, and vice versa – the two friends know each other very well, though incompletely so, but often in complementary ways.¹⁸ The complementary aspect would need more developed diagrams to represent, so while the diagram in Fig. 17.3 may look static (and ‘one way’ due to the arrow as a formal part of the notation used here for an analogy), the object it represents (i.e. the simile ‘a friend is another self’) has a meaning pointing to a developmental dynamics between friends helping each other to increase not only knowledge of aspects of their worlds, but also their self-knowledge, in a mutual and caring way. There is no assumption about a great similarity between the friends implied, nor any ‘fusion’ of selves (like in the idea of two bodies but one merged soul), although the friends may sometimes feel it that way when they ‘think together’ in a dialogue and one can anticipate the thoughts of the other.¹⁹ So, they each know aspects of themselves and of the other, aspects that are partly overlapping (like knowing what each will choose in a given situation, or in life as such), and the more so the closer as friends they become. They can even know these aspects (of themselves, their friend, and the world) as if seen from the other’s perspective, and they are thereby enriched with an additional, yet virtual perspective. This additional perspective is virtual in the sense of being one person’s model of the other person’s perspective (e.g., Lila believes she knows how Elena would think or feel about something, a fallible belief with a hypothetical character before Elena or her actions has confirmed it). Elena will not only share with Lila her knowledge of her; ideally and classically (but maybe not in a modern friendship) she will also admonish her for her bad inclinations as part of improving her knowledge of self and its way to virtue.²⁰ And this works both ways.

The simile should not be taken to indicate that the friend love the other as an extension of an expanded self, this would not be truly altruistic *philia*; good friendship is rather “extending one’s *concerns* and *wishes* to encompass the happiness of the other” (Pangle, 2003, p. 232, note 22).

Instead of the epistemic dimension of friendship, this diagram of the simile could also have focused upon friendship’s moral dimension of what is good (though

¹⁸ On this aspect of separateness and complementarity, see also Grayling (2013, p. 182ff).

¹⁹ Cf. Emmeche (2017), Shenk (2014).

²⁰ It has been disputed whether friendship needs to be conducive to self-knowledge, and need to do so in order to be good, see Carreas (2016).

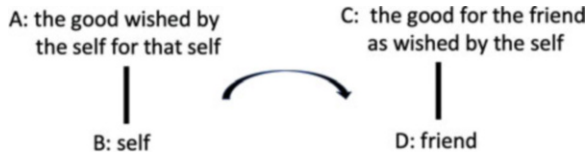


Fig. 17.4 Diagram of a moral component of the simile ‘a friend is another self’, structured as an analogy. The self has the same attitude toward his friend as towards himself

classically, these two dimensions converge). In friendship, both the good for one self, and the good for the friend is aimed at. Aristotle listed five components or criteria for friendship of the best kind – wishing for and doing good things for the friend for his own sake; cherishing and desiring the continued existence of the friend; spending time and activity together; choosing the same things; sharing joys and sorrows – and then suggested that these are the elements of friendship “because the good man is disposed in these ways towards himself, and he has the same attitude toward his friend as towards himself” (Pangle, *ibid.*, p. 152, referring to *Nicomachean Ethics* 1166a31–32). Is this a structurally similar analogy compared to the one in Fig. 17.3?

One way to represent this schematically is to say that (A) the disposition of a person towards (B) himself is analogous with the disposition of that same person towards (D) his friend. There seems to be a more immediate similarity involved than the four-part analogy scheme above. But we could also formulate the analogy like this: (A) Elena in her self-relation is disposed for certain (B) good things for herself because she likes/loves (*philein*) herself, just like (C) Elena in her other-relation is disposed for (D) the same good things for her friend Lila. Here, the formula “B is to A like D is to C” applies. This may look more like a model-fitting exercise than a real analysis of the analogy between Self and Other in friendship, but it is more than that: David Konstan has turned our attention to the fact that in some of Aristotle’s formulations the altruistic character of the simile is more pronounced, so (D) in the analogy would have this form: (D) the good that Elena wishes for her friend is not the good in itself, objectively so, but the good that Lila thinks is good for herself.²¹ Though Aristotle had a focus upon intention, not feeling, this brings his discussion of friendship closer to its modern version of ‘close’ (not necessarily virtuous) friends (Fig. 17.4).

This is just one example that shows how analysis of analogies may help distinguish different aspects of friendship and its characterization. Many other examples

²¹ “Two points are clear from Aristotle’s definition of love. First, it is unequivocally and emphatically altruistic: one wishes and acts to realize good things for the other’s sake, in accord with what the other conceives of as good – reciprocally so in the case of friendship” (Konstan, 2008, p. 209). Konstan’s second point is that love “is described not as a sentiment or feeling but as a settled intention. Here, Aristotle’s conception of *philia* and *to philein* differs in an important respect from modern definitions of “love.” Thus, friendship in modernity, as a form of love, has an emphasis on feeling, together with “a notion of attachment and closeness” (*ibid.*).

could be given. For instance, in Aristotle's well-known tripartition of friendship types into utilitarian, hedonic and virtuous ('character') friendship, depending upon the motivations of utility, pleasure or virtue, there is in the vast commentary a debate about the extent to which these types are analogous, or, in other words, whether the two lesser types (utility and pleasure) are *as genuine* friendships as the best, or virtuous kind. The consensus view, represented by Cooper (1977), thinks that friendship of utility or pleasure are still to be counted as genuine friendships, as they are "analogically related to character friendships", because also they include "wishing the other well for her own sake, at least in some respects" (Mooney & Williams, 2016, p. 69).²²

By contrast, a dissensus view asserts that the fact "that both pleasure- and benefit-*philia* are instrumental makes it clear that they are not friendships" (Nehamas, 2016, p. 24). The implication seems to be that Aristotle's broad notion of friendship (that could also cover members of the family, or of the *polis*, the city state, cf. 'civic friendship') in modernity was culturally translated to a more emphatic notion – as Nehamas emphasizes, we "cannot identify *philia* as a whole with modern friendship" (*ibid.*). Conversely, Nehamas makes his emphatically non-instrumental notion of friendships allow for close friends to be non-virtuous (like deep friendships between thieves, or members of a mafia), and for real friendship to come (like virtue itself) in degrees (*ibid.*, pp. 105, 109, 132, 137, 196), as "so does closeness itself" (p. 197). So, it is time to look upon this spatial metaphor of closeness.

17.4 The Conceptual Metaphor of 'Close Friends'

Social 'closeness', as in the notion of a 'close friend', is a good example of a general kind of metaphor that theorists from linguistics, cognitive science and semiotics

²² See also Fortenbaugh (1975) who notes that according to Aristotle, friendships have a goal (*telos*) or purpose which determines their essential nature, and since there are three kinds of goals, there are three kinds of friendship, those directed toward goodness, those directed toward pleasure and those directed toward utility. Though Aristotle was acutely aware of the ambiguity in the ordinary meaning of 'friendship' (and was prepared to draw a functional distinction between different kinds of friendship), he had respect for ordinary language and did not legislate a verbal distinction, restricting the usage of "friendship" to one favored kind (like Nehamas (2016) did). Fortenbaugh suggests that Aristotle could mitigate the ambiguity of ordinary usage by pointing out that the different kinds of friendship can be related by analogy, and then argue that when things are one by analogy, it is just as if they enjoy a single nature. So when Aristotle says that the pleasant is a good to friends of pleasure, filling out the analogy, we get: As the good is related to friends of goodness, so the pleasant is related to friends of pleasure, and the useful is related to friends of utility: "The Nicomachean account of friendship reveals Aristotle at his best. He offers both an analysis in terms of resemblance and an analysis in terms of function and analogy" (*ibid.* p. 62). So the two lesser forms of friendship resemble virtuous friendship and share with it the elements of goodwill, reciprocal affection, and awareness of one another's affection (see also Pangle, 2003, p. 211 n. 20).

have called a conceptual metaphor. Per this approach, conceptual metaphors are pervasive features of everyday communication and understanding, thus not restricted to research. Without detailing conceptual metaphor theory here, the crux is that we, as humans, are not only talking heads with a supreme capacity to create and use abstractions in a specific language, but embodied beings embedded in specific environments, and we often think with metaphors originally taken from our body and its basic eco-social relations to our environment, and we use such metaphors as cognitive tools to navigate ourselves through our world, at once social, cultural and natural.²³

Regarding closeness, in many situations (at the marketplace, in a street or a square, at big meetings in a firm, a political rally, or at a concert) we may find ourselves among people we don't know, who are neutral strangers, and if possible, we tend to cluster with those who are like ourselves, or whom we actually know as acquaintances, friends, or family. Whether this suggests an explanation of the origin of the notion of 'social closeness' as a conceptual metaphor derived from physical or kin-based closeness or not, many people seem to prefer to be closer (in the concrete physical space) to those who are already similar to them by parameters like gender, age, nationality, class, education, etc., or to those we already know as family, friends, or compatriots. Conceptual metaphor researcher Zoltán Kövecses analysed the conceptualization of friendship in the USA to isolate the metaphor systems that appear to play some role in how this single concept is understood metaphorically. Among other things, he analysed the metaphor FRIENDSHIP IS CLOSENESS (metaphors are capitalised within this tradition) as a special case of a fully conventionalized and very general metaphor INTIMACY IS CLOSENESS, and he thinks that "[t]his in turn seems to derive from the high-level metaphor AN EMOTIONAL RELATIONSHIP IS A DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO ENTITIES (like two people)" (Kövecses, 1995, p. 321). Based on interviews with native speakers of American English, he found that some "[e]xamples of the CLOSENESS metaphor in friendship include: "We were *tight as a glove*," "They were *bosom buddies*," "We are *attached at the hip*," "He was a *sidekick* of mine," "They are *as thick as thieves*," "They are *inseparable*" and "We were *two peas in a pod*" (ibid.).

In his detailed study, Kövecses tried to understand the structure, scope, and inter-relationships of different metaphorical domains of friendship as a single concept. He found the conception of friendship to rely on emotion metaphors for intimacy and affection ("the emotion system") to some extent, but also what he called the "state" metaphor system in which friendship is (1) a possessed object (that can be 'hold', 'carried', or 'kept'), (2) a bond (the source domain here is PHYSICAL LINKS or CONNECTIONS), (3) an exchange similar to economic exchange (an interviewee said "the price paid is the time and energy one has to devote to the friendship").

²³ For an introduction to conceptual metaphor theory, see Kövecses (2005) or https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conceptual_metaphor. Kövecses (2005) has a few remarks on the cultural change of conceptual metaphors for friendship, e.g., "a metaphor that was conventionally associated with male friendship as fire (through love) for the Victorians was dropped and replaced by a metaphorical source domain (warmth) indicating less intensity." (p. 179).

Several additional systems of metaphorical domains for friendship was analysed, and the result can be summarized like this: The friendship metaphors “come from a small number of metaphorical Systems: Communication, Emotion, State, Complex Systems, Event, and Positive/ Negative Evaluation” (p. 337). “Friendship involves intimacy and affection. These are emotions. Emotions are commonly understood” [within this theoretical perspective] “as properties of physical objects (such as distance and temperature, among others). Thus, friendship will be understood as distance and temperature as well. The particular distance that applies to friendship (indeed to intimacy) is closeness, and the particular temperature that applies to friendship (indeed to affection) is warmth.” (p. 338). Furthermore, “friendship as a target concept inherits the source domains of metaphors conventionally associated with other target concepts above it.” “That is, friendship as a target seems to borrow its source domains from target domains that are above it in various conceptual hierarchies”; thus, “these metaphors (the source domains) will not be specific to friendship.” (p. 341).

To better see the point in Kövecses’s analysis, remember that similar characteristics may be found for other concepts about interpersonal relationships, like romantic love, parent- and siblinghood, collegiality, etc. Kövecses general interest was to understand *the scope* of the source domain of metaphors, that is, the range of the application of particular source domains to target domains. He found that there are no metaphors (i.e., source domains) that are used exclusively for friendship; so, the abstract concept of friendship as target appears to derive its source domains from the six large metaphor systems mentioned above. The same may apply to other concepts of interpersonal relationships.

Can friendship closeness as an everyday conceptual metaphor be used in friendship research to map people’s conceptions of their different friendships? That is part of what researchers in the tradition of North American social psychology have attempted; a tradition aiming at being a scientific study of how the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours of individuals are influenced by the other individuals within a tapestry of social norms governing action. This branch of social psychology has put emphasis on developing robust scales that can operationalize more vague theoretical concepts (like friendship) into something quantitatively measurable.²⁴ Arthur and Elaine Aron and co-workers decided to invent a single-item pictorial measure, intended to “tap directly people’s sense of interpersonal interconnectedness” (Aron et al., 1992, p. 597) to overcome some constraints of earlier more elaborate and time-consuming scales for closeness. (Note that a condition for people to have such an immediate sense of social closeness or distance is actually what is being partly explained by the embodied perspective of conceptual metaphor theory, but Aron’s group did not refer to this tradition). With this so-called Inclusion of Other in the Self (IOS) scale (Fig. 17.5), respondents select the picture that best describes their

²⁴ Other traditions, like the German one, has put less emphasis on quantitative approaches; compare the entries ‘Sozialpsychologie’ (at <https://de.wikipedia.org>) and ‘Social psychology’ (at <https://en.wikipedia.org/>)

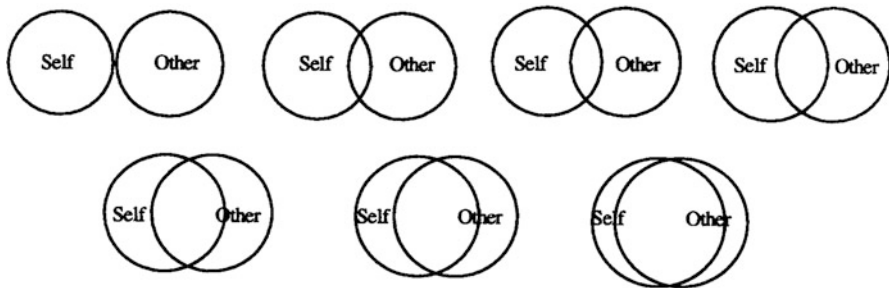


Fig. 17.5 The Inclusion of Other in the Self scale. (Aron et al., 1992, reproduced in Shenk, 2014, p. 51)

relationship with a specific person from seven Venn-like diagrams each representing different degrees of overlap of two circles “designed so that (a) the total area of each figure is constant (thus as the overlap of the circles increases, so does the diameter), and (b) the degree of overlap progresses linearly, creating a seven-step, interval-level scale” (ibid.).

Reviewing previous similar research, Aron and co-workers found that this idea of closeness as overlapping selves “seems consistent with a wide variety of approaches to closeness in the social psychology literature” (ibid.). In their way of reporting both their own and previous research by others, we see metaphors like ‘overlapping’ or ‘incorporation’ play a prominent role, e.g.: “Maslow took it for granted that “beloved people can be incorporated into the self”” (ibid., p. 598), without analysing the metaphorical character of such imaginative expressions. What Aron’s group more precisely imply by the IOS scale is that “in a close relationship the individual acts *as if* some or all aspects of the partner are partially the individual’s own” (ibid., my italics, CE), so that “in close relationships the individual may perceive the self as including resources, perspectives, and characteristics of the other”. They also emphasize that the scale is relatively independent of any specific theory of the Self: “The IOS Scale is hypothesized to tap people’s sense of being interconnected with another. That sense may arise from all sorts of processes, conscious or unconscious, and including the other in the self may or may not be one of these processes. The IOS Scale is intended to capture something in the respondent’s perception of a relationship that is consistent with many theoretical orientations.” (ibid.). We need not discuss in detail the research in which they validated the scale through a series of different studies whereby they found evidence for the psychometric suitability of the scale as a measure of closeness that can be completed rapidly, and is not very susceptible to biases like social desirability response set effects.²⁵

²⁵ Much research has since been done on the perception of dimensions of closeness, e.g., how evaluation of instrumental versus non-instrumental friends are dependent upon goal achievement (Fitzsimons & Fishbach, 2010).

Their 1992 paper had a high impact on the field of social psychology of close relationships and became widely cited. Joshua Shenk, in his 2014 narrative on creative pairs in science, the arts, and innovation, took up their findings and discussed Aron's so-called 'self-expansion theory': "Aron argues that people are motivated, down to their core, by a wish to become more. One achieves this self-expansion most consistently and dramatically by forming a new attachment with another person, whereby 'resources, perspectives, and identities of a close other are experienced, to some extent, as one's own'", a phenomenon Aron refers to as an "inclusion of close others in the self" (Shenk, 2014, p. 50).²⁶ By the way it seems obvious that 'self-expansion' is a good example of a conceptual metaphor, apparently immediately sense-making, but difficult to interpret on a deeper layer, because what is it that is really being expanded? Probably not the 'self' as the single individual. 'Expansion' does not (at least primarily) take place on the level of an individual's own actions and thinking, but in the interactive dialogic interplay between the friends. This is evident from many of the examples of creative pairs Shenk presents.

Shenk relates that when Aron showed their figure (Fig. 17.5 above) to one of Shenk's 'creative pairs', Matthew Swanson and Robbi Behr, they chose the last Venn-like diagram as the one that best expressed their relationship, except that they objected to the visual language of the graphics – the total area of each of the seven figures should not be constant or equal, because for those with big overlaps, the "more we overlap, the larger we become, much larger than we were as two individuals" (Shenk, 2014, p. 51). The same pair explained their relationship by means of a whole set of other conceptual metaphors ('going downhill'/'going south' (becoming depressed), 'balancing', 'throwing a life preserver', functioning as 'a system'/'an organism') thus: "we *never* both succumb to it [depression] at the same time. In fact, as soon as one of us starts to go downhill, the other's resolve is strengthened. It's like we're on scales, and when I go 10 percent below neutral, Robbi rises 10 percent above, and vice versa. . . . the one who remains on the shore is always able to throw a life preserver to whoever goes under water . . . we're functioning not as individuals, but as two parts of a system with self-regulating equilibrium. As individuals, we occasionally tank [fail completely] because we can. But as an organism, we're always balanced. So, tanking is not a risk" (ibid., p. 92f). Their vivid description may not lend itself so much to the 'expanding self' metaphor as to their own implicit analogy of their own balancing with self-regulation or homeostasis (as described, e.g., in physiology and cybernetics).

"Does it mean that, in our mental processes, we think of our intimates as we think of ourselves?" asks Lydia Denworth (2020, p. 276) in relation to the Aron's research, and draws attention to another interesting line of inquiry that points to

²⁶ If we compare this with what we noted, with Pangle, above (the text just after Fig. 17.3), this version of 'friendship', aiming at self-expansion, may be a borderline case between Aristotelian utility-, pleasure- and virtue-friendship, and it may apply not necessarily to all, but mainly to what Henrich (2020) characterize a 'WEIRD' people living in highly individualistic societies.

an affirmative answer to a similar question: Do we ourselves think in a way that is similar to our intimates? This research combines brain science and social network theory. There is, to wit, a sense in which ‘closeness’ in friendship can be generalized to distance in social networks, and thus closeness is no longer – I was about to write ‘just a metaphor’ – not only an everyday conceptual metaphor but an operationalised version of it, for social network research, so that it can be measured and analysed for different groups of people in order to reveal the patterns of different social networks. What the cognitive social neuroscientists Carolyn Parkinson and Thalia Wheatley did was to combine this (collaborating with social network expert Adam M. Kleinbaum) with brain scanning techniques, to see if ‘friends’ (and in general those being closer to one another in a social network) have some similarities at the neural level (Parkinson et al., 2018). Operationalizing friendship to be ‘distance one’ in a social network (as measured by a questionnaire) and using the scanning technique of fMRI on a specific population of university students, the three researchers actually found that “similar neural responses predict friendship”, to quote the trailblazing title of their paper. In other words, the students’ neural responses, when viewing the same set of audiovisual movies (of sport, nature, politics, music, etc.), are much more similar among friends, and that similarity decreases with increasing distance in this little real-world social network of 42 subjects.

Thus, they conclude, we seem to be exceptionally similar to our friends in how we perceive and respond to the world around us. If this is true, it is fascinating (science confirming old proverbs and philosophical metaphors obtains a special charm). If the brains of our friends are wired analogously to our own, it gives new meaning to Aristotle’s idea that the friend is another self.

However, the reason why this is so is not clear: Parkinson and her team ask “[d]o we become friends with people who respond to the environment similarly, or do we come to respond to the world similarly to our friends?” and immediately admit that due to their study’s cross-sectional nature of characterizing the network at a single point in time, they cannot ascertain “whether neural response similarity is a cause or consequence of friendship” (ibid., p. 8).²⁷ A caveat here is that the students were not asked directly about friendship, the survey question was formulated “Consider the people with whom you like to spend your free time. Since you arrived at [institution name], who are the classmates you have been with most often for informal social activities, such as going out to lunch, dinner, drinks, films, visiting one another’s homes, and so on?”, and based on the answers given (with the criterion that two persons each had to nominate the other before it counted as ‘friendship’, i.e., social distance one) a model of their social network was constructed. – Well, “going out to lunch, dinner, drinks, films” as an indirect way of defining friendship may be what Henrich (2020) would say might apply only for what he calls WEIRD people, i.e., people in Western, educated, industrialised, rich and democratic contexts, and it is

²⁷ Denworth (2020, p. 294) reports that a new longitudinal study by Parkinson’s group hopes to shed light on the question of causality.

difficult to guess if friends universally (not only American college students) have higher degrees of ‘neural similarity’ as measured by Parkinson and colleagues.

The researchers’ quantitative measure of the degree of neural response similarity between two persons is an aggregated number based on extensive statistical analysis of the very big data sets obtained from the fMRI scannings of many distinct parts of the brains of the involved student ‘friend’ dyads, and it is not possible to pinpoint very specific areas of the brain is responsible for the differences and similarities: “Brain areas where response similarity was associated with social network proximity included subcortical areas implicated in motivation, learning, affective processing, and integrating information into memory, . . . areas involved in attentional allocation, . . . and regions . . . that have been implicated in bottom-up attentional control, discerning others’ mental states, processing language and the narrative content of stories, and sense-making more generally” (ibid., p. 7). Thus, their seemingly scientific concept of ‘neural homophily’ appear to be a vague analogy to the concept of homophily in sociology (an empirical regularity of human sociality making social ties primarily to be formed between individuals of the same age, gender, ethnicity, or other social markers).

17.5 Moving Borderlines and Transformations

Friendship studies span as wide a horizon of cultures and epochs as humanity itself. If there is a ‘centre’ in the semantic field (or source domain) of friendship (used variously in different analogies), this centre – of prototypical meanings, surrounded by more atypical forms that may still count as friendship – is contingent upon culture and historical time, and we may be puzzled about ‘where to draw the line’ between friendship and completely other kinds of relationships.

Friendship in modernity is thought of as an informal, voluntary association between two persons having affectionate feelings towards each other, not as a ritualized relationship that can be inherited. But in ancient Greece, ‘guest-friendship’ (as we often translate the Greek *xenia*) was a ritualized bond of friendship similar to fictitious kinship, like godparenthood. It was not an ordinary friendship in our sense, and it implied much stronger obligations than the norm of hospitality towards strangers, and it could be inherited from fathers to sons. *Xenoi* were indeed friends, but of a very special kind. Gabriel Herman (1987) showed how, in the Homeric world, during the eights and seven centuries BC, when the city states slowly emerged, there was already an extensive network of *xenia* – personal alliances between men from the elite, linking together households, tribes, communities, that continued to act, unconcealed or secretly, as powerful bonds between citizens of different cities, at the same time as city states gradually began to install other, more general loyalties among their members, sometimes conflicting with the obligations of *xenoi*. But slowly, “the community tamed the hero, and transformed him into a citizen” (ibid., p. 2), and the polis allowed for a kind of generalized ‘civic friendship’ among all its citizens, linking them together by abstract rights and obligations, even

if they had not formed personal ties of affection. We see here a moving borderline between two political forms of friendship. Prior to the city, as expressed by Herman, “in the Homeric world, friendship (*philia* and *xenia*) was, apart from marriage, the only bond to create enduring obligations between peers. In the Classical and Hellenistic worlds, friendship indeed remained the main bond, but there were in addition relationships of subordination and superordination which to some extent were institutionalized.” (ibid., p. 164). The bond of *xenia* was not just a ritual or simply a calculated political alliance, but also one of affection, whether genuine or feigned. Herman brings up examples of weeping heroes mourning over their lost friends, or over being prevented to fulfil their obligations to their *xenos*; indicating that “the sentiments of these people were structured differently from ours” (p. 18). If we moderns tend to think of these guest-friendships as only friendships metaphorically, by word and not by heart, we should beware our tendency to project a modern concept (stripped off obligations of material support) back onto the historical material.²⁸

Analogies and metaphors are not just linguistic-cognitive devices; they are also enacted as practical actions and patterns of behaviour to solve problems or dissolve tensions in everyday life (like resistance to objectivization, attunement of expectations, wishes to flag ‘decency’ of a connection). Anthropologists have described similar patterns of translating what we think of as friend-like relationships into, on the surface, ‘ritualized’ bonds of blood-brotherhood or other forms of ‘fictive kinship’. Some have experienced themselves to be subjected to such a practice before they could have a stable relation to their native informants, especially in cultures where strangers are not someone with whom you readily share too much personal information. But if the stranger/anthropologist seems to be a reliable person, it is better to adopt the stranger as a brother, sister, son or daughter to make her a part of the family, before further interaction and sharing of personal information can continue. A vivid description of this pattern is found in Nita

²⁸ This parallels Hermanson’s study of friendship in the High Middle Ages in Northern Europe, where there were still no static political structures, and the government only exercised little institutional power. Here, lordship was dependent on bilateral personal bonds, “where the political constellations were constantly being reshaped as social relations changed” and “power was created, exercised, maintained, and recreated via horizontal and vertical bonds of friendship” (Hermanson, 2019, p. 242f). He reminds us that Cicero “explains the term *amicitia* as “an accord in all things, human and divine, conjoined with mutual goodwill and affection” he thus views friendship as a phenomenon comprising emotions, social and political relations, and spiritual ideas. The bond is thus, according to Cicero, both spiritual and pragmatic in character. This was also true in the High Middle Ages.” (ibid.). Perhaps one can talk about a slow cultural translation of a classical broader notion of friendship into its more narrow form in modernity, located in the private sphere, with fewer political aspects. No wonder that modern subjects perceive *xenia* as only being friendship metaphorically.

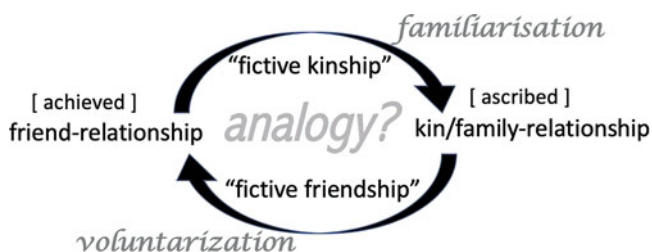


Fig. 17.6 A double dynamic of metaphors for affective relationships: *Above*: Analogic practical translation of friendship into kinship, to make the relation seem familiar and integrate it into a social matrix dominated by kin ties (e.g., Kumar, 2017). *Below*: Analogic practical translation of family bonds into bonds of friendship, to make the relation seem voluntarily chosen and integral to other ‘pure relationships’ in late modernity (e.g., Miller, 2017). A fictive kin is some kin metaphorically, just like a fictive friend is a friend metaphorically; the analogy is between the two processes of cultural translation. The contrast between achieved vs. ascribed status is common in sociology

Kumar’s reflections on her own ethnographic fieldwork in India (Kumar, 2017) and in other works on the anthropology of friendship.²⁹

The source and the target domain of metaphors may in some cases switch, as such domains are not defined by their ontology, but by their pragmatic-cognitive and situation-specific functions. The making a friend into a ‘sister’ by transforming her, or presenting her to the rest of the family as adopted (‘fictive kinship’) makes ‘sister’ a metaphor, with kin as a source domain and her precarious transient status of a ‘friendly stranger’ the target, via a process of familiarisation. The reverse could be to transform a family relationship into a relation foregrounding (modern) friendship, e.g. transforming a child’s grandfather into a ‘friend’ (by an analogous process of ‘fictive friendship’). What could be the driver of this? Daniel Miller (2017) argues that in an era of social media and ‘friending’ contacts via e.g. Facebook, the ideologies of voluntarism and authenticity has come to dominate the way (Western) people see kin relations: “people try to subsume kinship within a much wider trend toward the idealization of informality, authenticity, and liberal choice as designated modern values” (ibid., p. 381). If this is true, we have here two analogous opposite cultural translations (as schematised in Fig. 17.6), taking place in the social psychology of people’s actions, habits, thoughts and feelings, as two distinct

²⁹ Nita Kumar’s experiences (see her 2017 and previous work) of how her informants performed their relationship with her as either ‘friends’ or ‘fictive kin’ (sister, brother, etc.) should of course also be seen on the background of (a) general Indian views of friendship, as she herself hints at. A brief but excellent overview is Parekh (1994) who observe that since “friendship involves bonding of hearts, which is also what characterizes familial and kinship relationships, the Indian thinkers have as a rule conceptualized friendship in familial terms.” (p. 103). Parekh’s description of the classical Indian approach to friendship makes Kumar’s surprising experiences as an anthropologist less exceptional. And (b) local practice, which is variable, but at least some Indian villages have extensive use of fictive kinship terms, cf. Freed (1963). Fictive kinship should be confused with ritual friendship (cf. Desai, 2010).

processes that reflect what Henrich (2020) discerned as some overall differences between, on the one hand, people primarily living in ‘regulated-relational societies’ with dense family networks (and a rich vocabulary of kinship), and on the other hand, people living in societies with nuclear families and a distinct conception of friends as belonging to another category of intimacy being voluntarily chosen.

17.6 Other Metaphors – Instead of a Conclusion

We saw how map thinking and, in general ‘mapping’ as a pervasive metaphor for research, could be decomposed in its analogical components, analysed, and used to shed light on the classical simile of the friend being another self. We went on to consider research in cognitive semantics, based on conceptual metaphor theory, on more everyday notions of friendship, especially on how the metaphor of ‘closeness’ (and more generally ‘degree of distance’ in a social network) is used in interdisciplinary research to learn something about similarities between friends, even at a neural level. Finally, we hinted at a wider taxonomy of friendly relationships in ancient Greece and saw how people today, in different cultures, can swap such categories, translating a friend into kin, and vice versa. Having meandered us through this friendly landscape of small hills of insight we could climb, we also faced valleys of uncertainty and muddy riddles we had to pass over, as we now approach a delta of real vagueness, and a need to conclude (originally meaning to ‘shut up’).

One rich and fuzzy area is friendship used as a metaphor for something that is not an interpersonal relation, like my friendship with novels I return to again and again (am I becoming a friend with Dostoevsky?), or the friendship a person can feel with a great idea, a piece of music, or a beautiful painting. Even some challenging moods like depression can be approached not as enemies of self, but as friends.³⁰ How about ‘friendship between states’? Does that metaphor have a deep historical origin in *xenia*, the Greek guest friendship?

Friendship is a polysemous term. On the market place, it can be used as a manipulative metaphor, when a seller lures you with a “special price for you my friend!”. For comprehending complex semantic fields, we need several perspectives. If we combine them, we may be lucky enough to glimpse wider connections between the meanings of friendship, its practices as well as its idealized models. “Friendship” indeed can lead to unexpected places. We began suggesting that this journey was like going to Melangell without knowing what that is. Friendship is a bit like that, tentative, probing, a search for something more. Though we did not arrive yet, we may guess that the name of Melangell can help us to connect the saint to the church, the church to the shrine, the shrine to the history, especially the legend of a great lady who was a beautiful friend of the hares in that valley. Friendship itself

³⁰ Cf. Wuppuluri (2016).

is like a place you can seek, supported by maps and metaphors, visit and revisit, and within that relational space, it may be possible to connect to some of the better things of life.

Acknowledgements Thanks go to Shyam Wuppuluri for inspiring exchanges, to my friends for constant support, and to the research group in history and philosophy of science at the Department of Science Education, University of Copenhagen. A special thanks to Rasmus G. Winther for ongoing dialogues.

References

- Allchin, D. (2001). Error types. *Perspectives on Science*, 9(1), 38–58.
- Aron, A., Aron, E. N., & Smollan, D. (1992). Inclusion of other in the self scale and the structure of interpersonal closeness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63(4), 596–612.
- Bartha, P. F. A. (2010). *By parallel reasoning: The construction and evaluation of analogical arguments*. Oxford University Press.
- Brent, L. J. N., Chang, S. W. C., Gariépy, J.-F., & Platt, M. L. (2014). The neuroethology of friendship. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1316, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.12315>
- Burghardt, G. M. (1985). Animal awareness: Current and historical perspective. *American Psychologist*, 40, 905–919. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.40.8.905>
- Carreras, A. (2016). Amicably deceived. *Philosophical Papers*, 45(1–2), 1–26.
- Classen, A. (2010). Introduction: Friendship – The quest for a human ideal and value from antiquity to the early modern age. In A. Classen & M. Sandige (Eds.), *Friendship in the middle ages and early modern age* (pp. 1–183). Walther de Gruyter.
- Cooper, J. M. (1977). Aristotle on the forms of friendship. *The Review of Metaphysics*, 30(4), 619–648.
- Crombie, A. C. (1994). *Styles of scientific thinking in the European tradition* (Vol. 1–3). Duckworth.
- Dagg, A. I. (2011). *Animal friendships*. Cambridge University Press.
- de Libera, A. (2014). Analogy. In B. Cassin (Ed.), *Dictionary of untranslatables. A philosophical lexicon* (pp. 31–33). Princeton University Press.
- de Waal, F. (1998). *Chimpanzee politics. Power and sex among apes* (Revised ed.). John Hopkins University Press.
- Denworth, L. (2020). *Friendship: The evolution, biology and extraordinary power of life’s fundamental bond*. Bloomsbury.
- Desai, A. (2010). A matter of affection: Ritual friendship in Central India. In A. Desai & E. Killick (Eds.), *The ways of friendship: Anthropological perspectives* (pp. 114–132). Berghahn.
- Emmeche, C. (2017). Thinking with friends: Embodied cognition and relational attention in friendship. In F. Adams, P. Osvaldo Jr., & E. K. João Jr. (Eds.), *Cognitive science: Recent advances and recurring problems* (pp. 47–58). Vernon Press.
- Emmeche, C., & Hoffmeyer, J. (1991). From language to nature – The semiotic metaphor in biology. *Semiotica*, 84(1/2), 1–42.
- Fitzsimons, G. M., & Fishbach, A. (2010). Shifting closeness: Interpersonal effects of personal goal progress. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 98, 535–549.
- Fortenbaugh, W. W. (1975). Aristotle’s analysis of friendship: Function and analogy, resemblance, and focal meaning. *Phronesis*, 20(1), 51–62.
- Fred, S. A. (1963). Fictive kinship in a north Indian village. *Ethnology*, 2(1), 86–103.
- Goyet, F. (2014). Comparison. In B. Cassin (Ed.), *Dictionary of untranslatables. A philosophical lexicon* (pp. 159–164). Princeton University Press.

- Grayling, A. C. (2013). *Friendship*. Yale University Press.
- Grønqvad, J., & Johansson, L. G. (2017). Research styles and extra-academic engagement of humanities researchers. In C. Emmeche, D. B. Pedersen, & F. Stjernfelt (Eds.), *Mapping frontier research in the humanities* (pp. 17–40). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Hacking, I. (2002). *Historical ontology*. Cambridge University Press.
- Henrich, J. (2020). *The weirdest people in the world*. Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.
- Henzi, P., & Barrett, L. (2007). Coexistence in female-bonded primate groups. *Advances in the Study of Behavior*, 37, 43–81. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-3454\(07\)37002-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-3454(07)37002-2)
- Herman, G. (1987). *Ritualized friendship and the Greek City*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hermanson, L. (2019). *Friendship, love, and brotherhood in Medieval Northern Europe, C. 1000–1200*. Koninklijke Brill NV.
- Hintz, Z. (2011). Aristotle on self-knowledge and friendship. *Philosopher's Imprint*, 11(12), 1–28.
- Kay, L. E. (2000). *Who wrote the book of life? A history of the genetic code*. Stanford University Press.
- Konstan, D. (2008). Aristotle on love and friendship. *ΣΧΟΛΗ [Scholē]*, 2(2), 207–212.
- Kövecses, Z. (1995). American friendship and the scope of metaphor. *Cognitive Linguistics*, 6(4), 315–346.
- Kövecses, Z. (2005). *Metaphor in culture: Universality and variation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kumar, N. (2017). The performance of friendship in contemporary India. In C. Risseuw & M. van Raalte (Eds.), *Conceptualizing friendship in time and place* (pp. 229–249). Brill-Rodopi.
- Lynch, S. (2005). *Philosophy and friendship*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Miller, D. (2017). The ideology of friendship in the era of Facebook. *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 7(1), 377–395.
- Mooney, B. T., & Williams, J. N. (2016). Valuable asymmetrical friendships. *Philosophy*, 92, 51–76.
- Nehamas, A. (2016). *On friendship*. Basic Books.
- Pangle, L. S. (2003). *Aristotle and the philosophy of friendship*. Cambridge University Press.
- Parekh, B. (1994). An Indian view of friendship. In L. S. Rouner (Ed.), *The changing face of friendship* (pp. 95–113). University of Notre Dame Press.
- Parkinson, C., Kleinbaum, A. M., & Wheatley, T. (2018). Similar neural responses predict friendship. *Nature Communications*, 9(1), 332. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-017-02722-7>
- Peirce. (1906–07). Diagram. In Term in M. Bergman & S. Paavola (Eds.), *The Commens dictionary: Peirce's terms in his own words* (New ed.). Retrieved from <http://www.commens.org/dictionary/term/diagram>. 17.01.2021.
- Rodrigues, M. V., & Emmeche, C. (2019). Abduction and styles of scientific thinking. *Synthese*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-019-02127-7>
- Rodríguez, M. L. M. (2021). *Texture in the work of Ian Hacking Michel Foucault as the guiding thread of hacking's thinking* (Synthese Library vol. 435). Springer.
- Salmon, M. (1993). Reasoning in the social sciences. *Synthese*, 97, 249–267.
- Seyfarth, R. M., & Cheney, D. L. (2012). The evolutionary origins of friendship. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 63, 153–177. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-120710-100337>
- Shenk, J. W. (2014). *Powers of two. The essence of innovation in creative pairs*. John Murray.
- Smuts, B. B. (1985). *Sex and friendship in baboons*. Routledge.
- Stjernfelt, F. (2019). Dimensions of Peircean diagrammaticality. *Semiotica*, 228, 301–331. <https://doi.org/10.1515/sem-2018-0119>
- Turnbull, D. (1993). *Maps are territories. Science is an atlas*. University of Chicago Press.
- Winther, R. G. (2012). Interweaving categories: Styles, paradigms, and models. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, 43, 628–639.
- Winther, R. G. (2020). *When maps become the world*. University of Chicago Press.
- Wrangham, R. W. (2018). Two types of aggression in human evolution. *PNAS*, 115(2), 245–253.
- Wuppuluri, S. (2016). *My mysterious friend – de!* <https://medium.com/maitri-for-all/my-mysterious-friend-de-d6f18d66863a>