

**The Human Condition is an Ocean:
Philosophy and the Mediterranean Sea**

Annika Döring (Universidad de Sevilla) and Rasmus Grønfeldt Winther (University of California,
Santa Cruz)

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Shyam Wuppuluri and A.C. Grayling (eds.)

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Abstract

Starting with an oceanic analogy of *the human condition is an ocean*, we here integrate philosophy, ocean-thinking, and geography. We perform an *assumption archaeology* (Winther 2020) of how diverse philosophers, from the pre-Socratics to today, have been fascinated by the oceans and seas as a source for analyses of the human condition in all its complexity—emotions, freedom, sexuality, imagination, memory, cultural conditioning, and so forth. We first address what analogy even is (the oceans are the analogical *source domain* while the human condition is the analogical *target domain*), and sample what the oceans and seas abstractly represent, philosophically and psychologically. We then get concrete and specific—the Mediterranean Sea has had a powerful influence on Western philosophy. We survey various philosophers in this regard: Thales, Heraclitus, Plato, Seneca, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Camus. The Mediterranean has almost taken on a singular, symbolic value in the history of Western philosophy.

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Introduction¹

Starting with an oceanic analogy of *the human condition is an ocean*, we integrate philosophy, ocean-thinking, and geography. The oceans provide an analogical source for many important philosophical reflections and questions, themselves historically situated. That is, the oceans and seas are a cradle or spring for analyses of the human condition in all its complexity—emotions, freedom, sexuality, imagination, memory, political structures, and cultural conditioning. If the ocean is the analogical source, then the analogical target is human experience, phenomenology, and collectivity. The Mediterranean Sea has had a powerful influence on Western philosophy, as an analogical source for knowledge and expression about the human condition. We survey various philosophers in this regard:

¹ We thank Peregrine Horden, Helen Longino, and Lucas McGranahan for their thoughtful comments.

Thales, Heraclitus, Plato, Seneca, Nietzsche², Heidegger³, and Camus. By this choice of philosophers, we have, according to our topographical interest, contoured the Mediterranean and added continental philosophers.

The larger goal of our project is to work towards establishing a philosophy of the oceans. There is important precursor work. For instance, Fernand Braudel's first work on the Mediterranean appealed to various kinds of temporal scale, including environmental and cultural. For him, social and cultural forces as long-term factors were more interesting and explanatory than the immediate context of single historical events. He defended history as an exercise in understanding the *longue durée* rather than the *courte durée*. For him, and despite its intrinsic variety, the Mediterranean was a case study and an analytical unit for such historical investigation.⁴ Moreover, the work of cultural historian Christopher Connery on the oceans is a welcome mix of philosophical analysis, historiography, and cultural studies. Connery explores the "oceanic feeling" of Sigmund Freud and others, and argues that "Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari have all contributed to an oceanic turn in postmodernist philosophy."⁵ As part of our larger project of a philosophy of the oceans, we intend to track the content of the oceanic turn, which, we believe, was always already there, with the very birth of philosophy. In particular, we analyze the oceanic analogy by first exploring what analogy is, before turning our sights to the Mediterranean Sea.

Analogy and Assumption Archaeology

Well-known analogies in science include Charles Darwin's analogy that natural selection shares properties with human, artificial selection, James Clerk Maxwell's analogy between the mathematical laws of electricity and magnetism and the laws of mechanics and gravity, and Alfred Wegener's view of the similarities between icebergs floating on seawater, and continents floating on Earth's mantle.⁶

Analogy involves making a comparison between a process or object in one domain or discipline to a process or object in another domain or discipline. In so doing, the analogy implicitly, if not explicitly, maps or matches properties of the process of objects, one to one. That is, similarities between the *source domain* and the *target domain* are assessed. The presumption is that this will help us understand something new about the process or object in the target domain.

² A contribution on Nietzsche and the Mediterranean is also published in this volume: Döring, Annika; Horden, Peregrine: *Mediterranean Sea-Creature: Maritime Metaphor in the Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche*. We build upon this here.

³ Regarding Heidegger, we build upon: Döring, A.; Horden, P. "Heidegger as a Mediterraneanist". In Elhariry, Y.; Tamalet- Talbayev, E. (Hgg.) *Critically Mediterranean. Temporalities, Aesthetics, and Deployments of a Sea in Crisis*. Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

⁴ Braudel, Fernand. (1949, 1996) *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* Berkeley: University of California Press.

⁵ Connery, Christopher. "The Oceanic Feeling and the Regional Imaginary," *Global/ Local: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginary*. Ed. Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake. Durham: Duke UP, 1996. 284–312; "There Was No More Sea: The Supersession of the Ocean, from the Bible to Cyberspace." *Journal of Historical Geography* 32 (2006): 495–511. Quote on p. 496 of Connery 2006.

⁶ These analogies and many others are detailed in chapter 2 of Winther 2020. Winther, RG. 2020. *When Maps Become the World*. University of Chicago Press.

Of interest to philosophers and psychologists are types of reasoning, both in everyday and scientific contexts. Philosophical investigations of reasoning illuminate where and how new information is gathered, and how claims and hypotheses are justified, or at least strengthened and deepened. In addition to the two standard reasoning types, *deduction* and *induction*, we follow philosophers in adding two more reasoning schemes: *abduction* (Charles Sanders Peirce 1992) and *analogy* (Mary Hesse 1966; Paul Bartha 2010).⁷ Simply put, deduction frees what is already contained in the starting-point or source, for instance the premises and assumptions of an argument. Induction involves collecting information in order to strengthen the standing of, or belief in, a certain conclusion or hypothesis. Abduction is also known as “inference to the best explanation.” Induction, abduction, and analogy are *ampliative* reasoning schemes in that genuinely new information is added or acquired in moving from argument premises to argument conclusion. Unlike deduction, the three types of ampliative reasoning are not certain—the truth of the premises or starting-point does not guarantee the truth of the conclusion or endpoint.⁸

Analogies are not identity. They rely on similarity. After all, they compare different things. Target and source domains should be kept distinct, and neither should be reified as the other. According to Darwin, nature has something like agency, selecting only the best or most fit variants in a highly competitive “economy of nature.” But we should not interpret this analogy literally.

What about *metaphor* and *metaphorical*? How do they relate to analogy? While more detail is required, analogy relies on a potentially precise mapping of features across target and source domains, while metaphorical comparisons are much more subtle, open-ended, and incomplete. Even so, the two are probably ultimately interdependent in that an implicit analogical mapping undergirds many metaphors, and metaphorical ambiguity can extend analogies even further into new territories of understanding and imagination.⁹

When we attribute *a hot temperament*, *a sharp tongue*, or *a warm heart* to someone, we use metaphors to point out how we subjectively perceive this person: we feel burned, hurt, or comfortable. Therefore, metaphors address our sensuality and emotions more than our logical sense and are also used in aesthetical forms of communication like poetry, e. g. *Les Fleurs du Mal* (Charles Baudelaire), *Wasser*

⁷ Peirce, Charles S. 1992. “Deduction, Induction, and Hypothesis.” In Houser and Kloesel, *The Essential Peirce*, volume 1:186–99 (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press); originally published in *Popular Science Monthly* 13 (August 1878), 470–82. Hesse, Mary. 1966. *Models and Analogies in Science*. South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

⁸ Bartha 2010 and Hofstadter and Sander 2013 provide extended archaeologies and defenses of abduction and abductive inference. Winther 2020 presents a simultaneous discussion of the four reasoning types. Bartha, Paul F. A. 2010. *By Parallel Reasoning: The Construction and Evaluation of Analogical Arguments*. New York: Oxford University Press; Hofstadter, Douglas, and Emmanuel Sander. 2013. *Surfaces and Essences: Analogy as the Fuel and Fire of Thinking*. New York: Basic Books.

⁹ Perhaps the difference itself is more a matter of style than of substance. It seems apt to cite Givón (1986): “The *metaphor* term comes from the literary analysis tradition, the *analogy* term comes from the philosophic tradition, most recently via Kant and Peirce” (100). Givón, Talmy. 1986. “Prototypes: Between Plato and Wittgenstein.” In *Noun Classes and Categorization*, edited by Colette G. Craig, 77–102. Amsterdam: John Benjamins B.V.

und Feuer (Paul Celan), *Im Nebel* (Hermann Hesse), *En ti la tierra* (Pablo Neruda), *Le Buffet* (Arthur Rimbaud).

The analogy we wish to explore is the oceanic analogy of *the human condition is an ocean*. It is challenging to summarize the multi-dimensionality of the oceans and seas and why they are such an excellent and rich source domain for philosophical analysis about, and reflection on, our psychology and culture. First off, oceans are immense, and contain multitudes. They have wildly distinct layers of life, light, and pressure, and express an ancient history. The seas dynamically embed binaries and opposites, such as melancholy and delight, conflict and peace, strangeness and connection. Heraclitus built on this. Oceans are also our cradle—life, bodies, sex, and consciousness all started evolving in the oceans. While this may not be explicitly recognized by many philosophers, there are hints of this in the writings of Nietzsche, for instance. The salty waters are deeply familiar to many cultures, and play powerful roles in the mythology and stories, including in metaphors of journeying and navigating. It is hard to overstate the creative power of the oceans on our imagination, and origins.

Essentially, this chapter excavates a philosophical archaeology of the way the oceanic analogy has been deployed by various Western philosophers, often in intertwining ways. For instance, Plato's *Ship of State* metaphor and analogy has remained important in political philosophy. Using a term of art coined by one of us, (RGW) we are here performing an *assumption archaeology* of the oceanic analogy. Winther (2020) implements and executes an assumption archaeology of the map analogy—a *scientific theory is a map of the world*—by systematically exploring the way maps and mapping are metaphors and analogies of scientific theorizing and reasoning. Such an investigation permits us to understand the powerful presumptions acting under or behind or within paradigms or ways of thinking:

„one way of orienting ourselves within a particular unity of representations—a family of representations—and the scaffolding surrounding such a unity is by identifying powerful assumptions: the likes of [for Newtonian theory] space is absolute; space is God-given; gravity is a universal force.”¹⁰

In this chapter, we apply this assumption archaeology methodology to the way philosophers have drawn on the oceanic analogy. Since Western philosophy has its origin along the Mediterranean coastline and has been developed from there, we will, in the following section, focus on the Mediterranean Sea.

¹⁰ Winther 2020, p. 53.

Western Philosophers on the Mediterranean

„ It [the Mediterranean Sea, A.D.; R.G.W.] confronts the Greeks with other cultures, like the Phoenician and the Egyptian. It is the place of existential experience and scientific curiosity for those men, who are considered philosophers, both in their era as well as today.“¹¹

The geographical origin of philosophy is the Mediterranean coastline.¹² Philosophy involves answering puzzling and deep questions based on different logical, conceptual, and phenomenological methodologies, and always takes multiple perspectives into account. Therefore, the Mediterranean environment is not only the place where philosophy originated, but is also crucial for the development of the discipline; the Mediterranean inspired the pre-Socratics, to think about their place in the world and how to live in it; both in practical ways, e. g. by sailing, and, by thinking:¹³ “Just as the world is a *kosmos*, an ordered arrangement, so too, human knowledge of that world must be ordered in a corresponding way.“¹⁴ Although the Greek philosophers write about the Sea instead of the Mediterranean Sea, the latter is intended. The Mediterranean Sea was *the* sea to the Greeks (the Black Sea was of minor importance to them).¹⁵ It was their “world navel.”¹⁶

Many Western philosophers refer to oceans, and to the Mediterranean Sea in particular. This implementation mostly consists of metaphors and symbols. In this section, we provide an overview of the variety of meanings the Mediterranean as a metaphor has been associated with throughout the history of philosophy as exemplified by Thales, Heraclitus, Plato, Seneca, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Camus.

¹¹ Own translation from German: „Es [Das Mittelmeer; A. D.; R. G. W.] konfrontiert die Griechen mit anderen Kulturen wie der phönizischen und ägyptischen. Es ist Ort existentieller Erfahrung und naturwissenschaftlicher Neugier für jene Männer, die ihrer Mit- und Nachwelt als Philosophen gelten.“ Ricklin, Thomas: Philosophie. p. 395-402. In: Dabag, Mihran; Haller, Dieter, Jaspert, Nikolas; Lichtenberger, Achim; (eds.): Handbuch der Mediterranistik. Systematische Mittelmeerforschung und disziplinäre Zugänge. Paderborn. 2015. p. 395.

Nietzsche would agree: „The Greeks gained their practical wisdom from their journeying. They travelled across the Mediterranean Sea, which is thus the source of their wisdom. Furthermore, the sea is life affirming. To Nietzsche, this is a proof of its quality [...]“ Döring, Annika; Horden, Peregrine: *Mediterranean Sea-Creature: Maritime Metaphor in the Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche*. In this volume.

¹² Ricklin, Thomas: Philosophie. p. 395-402. In: Dabag, Mihran; Haller, Dieter, Jaspert, Nikolas; Lichtenberger, Achim; (eds.): Handbuch der Mediterranistik. Systematische Mittelmeerforschung und disziplinäre Zugänge. Paderborn. 2015. p. 395.

¹³ Ibid. p. 395 ff. This is Heraclitus' overall aim: “The aim of Heraclitus' unusual approach is to produce readers who have a proper grasp of the world and their place in it. [...]Such an understanding can result only from an ability to interpret the language of nature. The proper understanding allows one to act in a harmonious way.“ Graham, Daniel W., "Heraclitus", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/heraclitus/>>.

¹⁴ Curd, Patricia, "Presocratic Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/presocratics/>>.

¹⁵ Ricklin, Thomas: Philosophie. p. 395-402. In: Dabag, Mihran; Haller, Dieter, Jaspert, Nikolas; Lichtenberger, Achim; (eds.): Handbuch der Mediterranistik. Systematische Mittelmeerforschung und disziplinäre Zugänge. Paderborn. 2015. p. 396.

¹⁶ Winther 2014, 2019. Winther, RG. 2014. “World Navels,” *Cartouche of the Canadian Cartographic Association* 89: 15-21; Winther, RG. 2019 “Cutting the Cord: A Corrective for World Navels in Cartography and Science,” *The Cartographic Journal* 57:2, 147-159.

Thales of Miletus lived during the sixth century BCE and, as indicated by his name, in the city of Miletus, located on the Mediterranean coastline.¹⁷ When the citizens of Miletus fished a trivet out of the sea, the oracle of Delphi advised them to donate it to the wisest man.¹⁸ This was Thales, who therefore is considered the first philosopher.¹⁹ Thales is the author of a work that teaches sailors to orient themselves by the stars.²⁰ He also discovered a constellation of major importance for this orientation, *Ursa Minor*, or the *Lesser Bear*.²¹ Aristotle, in his *Metaphysics*, refers to Thales as the first philosopher to have mentioned water as the “first cause,” according to Curd (2020), citing Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* 983b27–33.²² We visualize Thales, who is widely taken to be the first person to prove mathematical theorems, thinking of angles, infinity, and reality as he stared at sunsets or sailed across water drawing on ideas of oceanic power and potentiality.

The Mediterranean Sea provides an analogical source for so many important philosophical questions and thoughts about the world, questions and thoughts that are themselves historically situated. Since Thales’ philosophy is closely linked to the Mediterranean – the water that „provided“ him his recognition as the first philosopher and shaped the surrounding he addresses in his writings on sailing,²³ also opens up the horizon for his holistic perspective that makes him a philosopher.²⁴ It is obvious that not only philosophy originated at the Mediterranean coastline,²⁵ but also its task has been analogically outlined by it: As the sailors navigate through unknown and uninhabited territory, not knowing the outcome or value of their trip beforehand, the philosopher dedicates herself to questions that, at first sight, do not seem to be useful in everyday life, and therefore most people are not familiar with solving the issues these questions raise.²⁶ By entering this unknown seascape of thought, the philosopher

¹⁷ Ricklin, Thomas: Philosophie. p. 395-402. In: Dabag, Mihran; Haller, Dieter, Jaspert, Nikolas; Lichtenberger, Achim; (eds.): Handbuch der Mediterranistik. Systematische Mittelmeerforschung und disziplinäre Zugänge. Paderborn. 2015. p. 395.; Curd, Patricia, "Presocratic Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/presocratics/>>.

¹⁸ Ricklin, Thomas: Philosophie. p. 395-402. In: Dabag, Mihran; Haller, Dieter, Jaspert, Nikolas; Lichtenberger, Achim; (eds.): Handbuch der Mediterranistik. Systematische Mittelmeerforschung und disziplinäre Zugänge. Paderborn. 2015. p. 395.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Curd, Patricia, "Presocratic Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/presocratics/>>.

²³ Ricklin, Thomas: Philosophie. p. 395-402. In: Dabag, Mihran; Haller, Dieter, Jaspert, Nikolas; Lichtenberger, Achim; (eds.): Handbuch der Mediterranistik. Systematische Mittelmeerforschung und disziplinäre Zugänge. Paderborn. 2015. p. 395.

²⁴ Nietzsche, Friedrich: *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*. Translated, with an Introduction by Marianne Cowan. Washington. 1998. P. 42 ff.

²⁵ Ricklin, Thomas: Philosophie. p. 395-402. In: Dabag, Mihran; Haller, Dieter, Jaspert, Nikolas; Lichtenberger, Achim; (eds.): Handbuch der Mediterranistik. Systematische Mittelmeerforschung und disziplinäre Zugänge. Paderborn. 2015. p. 395.

²⁶ See also: „The philosopher is not a man of intellect, if by stressing intellect one designates a person who can see to the success of his personal undertakings. Aristotle rightly says that `What Thales and Anaxagoras know will be considered unusual, astonishing, difficult and divine, but never useful, for their concern was not with the good of humanity.`“ Nietzsche, Friedrich: *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*. Translated, with an Introduction by Marianne Cowan. Washington. 1998. P. 43. Regarding philosophers and their behaviour when sailing see also: Ricklin, Thomas: Philosophie. p. 395-402. In: Dabag, Mihran; Haller, Dieter, Jaspert, Nikolas;

transcends himself. The philosopher takes something greater into account, a higher perspective or meta-level symbolized by the stars. This higher perspective then offers orientation that can be utilized for practical tasks, like results from philosophical research.

Anaximander, one of Thales' students, is considered to be the first person to map the Mediterranean coastline.²⁷ Heraclitus lived along the Mediterranean coastline, and refers to water many times, e. g. in fragments like: „We step and we do not step into the same rivers, we are and we are not.“²⁸, „Sea is the purest and most polluted water: for fish drinkable and healthy, for men undrinkable and harmful.“²⁹ In these quotes it is shown that Heraclitus refers to water when writing about transformation and truth. Albeit it is common sense that truth cannot be contradictory, Heraclitus has made a well-taken point by seeing truth in the “the unity of opposites”³⁰ of course taken to great lengths by Hegel. The capaciousness and fluidity of water—and the oceans—serve as an excellent analogy for a dialectical perspective.

Commonly known is Heraclitus' first quoted saying that has become a proverb in everyday life and as such refers to the constant change and dynamism of both of humans and (our) circumstances. To Heraclitus, the sea is a metaphor by which he explains the „the unity of opposites“³¹ by stating that the sea is both pure and polluted.³² Nietzsche sees Heraclitus' main interest in the “coming-into-being”^{33,34}

„I see nothing other than becoming. Be not deceived. It is the fault of your myopia, not of the nature of things, if you believe you see land somewhere in the ocean of coming-to-be and passing away. You use names for things as though they rigidly,

Lichtenberger, Achim; (eds.): Handbuch der Mediterranistik. Systematische Mittelmeerforschung und disziplinäre Zugänge. Paderborn. 2015. S. 396 f.

²⁷ Ricklin, Thomas: Philosophie. p. 395-402. In: Dabag, Mihran; Haller, Dieter, Jaspert, Nikolas; Lichtenberger, Achim; (eds.): Handbuch der Mediterranistik. Systematische Mittelmeerforschung und disziplinäre Zugänge. Paderborn. 2015. S. 395.; Interestingly, Curd writes “a map of the inhabited world“. Curd, Patricia, "Presocratic Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/presocratics/>>.

²⁸ *Early Greek Philosophy, Volume III: Early Ionian Thinkers, Part 2*. Edited and translated by André Laks, Glenn W. Most. Loeb Classical Library 526. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016. p. 169.

²⁹ Graham, Daniel W., "Heraclitus", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/heraclitus/>>.

³⁰ Graham, Daniel W., "Heraclitus", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/heraclitus/>>; Curd, Patricia, "Presocratic Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/presocratics/>>.

³¹ Graham, Daniel W., "Heraclitus", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/heraclitus/>>; Curd, Patricia, "Presocratic Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/presocratics/>>.

³² Graham, Daniel W., "Heraclitus", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/heraclitus/>>.

³³ Nietzsche, Friedrich: *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*. Translated, with an Introduction by Marianne Cowan. Washington. 1998. P. 51.

³⁴ Nietzsche's thought of the eternal recurrence builds on Heraclitus' philosophy. Döring, Annika; Horden, Peregrine: *Mediterranean Sea-Creature: Maritime Metaphor in the Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche*. In this volume.

*persistently endured; yet even the stream into which you step a second time is not the one you stepped into before.*³⁵

Different from other philosophers, who utilize the Mediterranean as a metaphor in more creative writings, Heraclitus' thoughts on the becoming and "the unity of opposites"³⁶ are very much unsentimental, as Nietzsche points out,³⁷ Heraclitus deploys the sea as an analogy, not as a metaphor.

In Plato's *Republic* a ship symbolizes the city and the captain the ruler³⁸. The captain needs to make his decisions according to several circumstances, which requires knowledge, albeit he "will be called a real stargazer, a babbler, and a good-for-nothing [...]"³⁹. Plato develops this analogy to show how the crowd behaves towards the philosophers, who are, according to Plato, competent to govern a state—viz., captains—because they have the necessary wisdom.⁴⁰ Plato makes his famous suggestion; the Philosopher-Kings:⁴¹

*„Until philosophers rule as kings or those who are now called kings and leading men genuinely and adequately philosophize, that is, until political power and philosophy entirely coincide, while the many natures who at present pursue either one exclusively are forcibly prevented from doing so, cities will have no rest from evils, Glaucon, nor I think, will the human race.”*⁴²

Romans, such as Seneca, bear the closest relation to the Mediterranean Sea that they named *Mare Nostrum (Our Sea)*. Seneca compares the individual lifetime to a sea-voyage and states that its value cannot be measured by the quantity of years but by the quality of how well the years are being spent:

³⁵ Nietzsche, Friedrich: *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*. Translated, with an Introduction by Marianne Cowan. Washington. 1998. P. 51 f.

³⁶ Graham, Daniel W., "Heraclitus", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/heraclitus/>>; Curd, Patricia, "Presocratic Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/presocratics/>>.

³⁷ „Honey, says Heraclitus, is at the same time bitter and sweet; the world itself is a mixed drink which must constantly be stirred.“ Nietzsche, Friedrich: *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*. Translated, with an Introduction by Marianne Cowan. Washington. 1998. P. 54 f.

³⁸ Plato: *Republic*. P. 971-1224. In: Plato. *Complete Works*. Translated by Grube, G. M. A.; Reeve, C. D. C. rev. In: Cooper, John M. (Edited, with Introduction and Notes); Hutchinson, D. S. Indianapolis; Cambridge. 1997. P. 1111 f.

³⁹ *Ibid.* 1111.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 1111 f.

⁴¹ Ricklin also writes about the Philosopher-Kings and the ship: Ricklin, Thomas: *Philosophie*. p. 395-402. In: Dabag, Mihran; Haller, Dieter, Jaspert, Nikolas; Lichtenberger, Achim; (eds.): *Handbuch der Mediterranistik. Systematische Mittelmeerforschung und disziplinäre Zugänge*. Paderborn. 2015. P. 396.

⁴² Plato: *Republic*. P. 971-1224. In: Plato. *Complete Works*. Translated by Grube, G. M. A.; Reeve, C. D. C. rev. In: Cooper, John M. (Edited, with Introduction and Notes); Hutchinson, D. S. Indianapolis; Cambridge. 1997. P. 1100.

“And so there is no reason for you to think that any man has lived long because he has grey hairs or wrinkles; he has not lived long—he has existed long. For what if you should think that that man had had a long voyage who had been caught by a fierce storm as soon as he left harbour, and, swept hither and thither by a succession of winds that raged from different quarters, had been driven in a circle around the same course? Not much voyaging did he have, but much tossing about.”⁴³

Therefore, the Mediterranean is crucial for Seneca’s stoic concept as it is the metaphor for any (unavoidable) occurrence that might happen to an individual. Seneca follows, referring to Vergil, the most important task to gain was mental stability, because otherwise even sea-voyages would be senseless.⁴⁴

Hence, the Mediterranean Sea in Seneca’s writings is the metaphor for any negative occurrence, the antithesis to which he develops his stoic thoughts. By this, he finds a rhetoric that suits his personal letters and dialogues by which he communicates his philosophy.

Nietzsche utilizes the Mediterranean Sea as the metaphorical contrast to morality, that has been developed on land, and regards it as a source of liberty and health – being at the Mediterranean helps him to develop his own philosophy and thereby to become not only a philosopher but also a poet.⁴⁵

Camus, when writing about the Sea, often refers to Algeria with its seaside, e. g. in *The Stranger*. He describes it as if it was a sensual being; it makes „kissing-noises“.⁴⁶ Being at the seaside, to him, is a sensual experience: „Sun, kisses and arousing smells“.⁴⁷ He describes the seaside with sensual and erotic terms and metaphors: he compares hugging a woman to feeling the euphoria which the sea receives from heaven.⁴⁸ In contrast, we work in the city, but this is not meaningful to Camus, because to him, being at the seaside is of higher value.⁴⁹

His famous book *The Stranger* is about a man named Meurseault, who lives in Algier. Meursault’s name refers to the sea; the two syllables are similar to mer (sea) and salt (salt). Even when his mother dies, he seems to lack emotions completely; but soon afterwards, when he is at the seaside,

⁴³ Seneca. *Moral Essays, Volume II: De Consolatione ad Marciam. De Vita Beata. De Otio. De Tranquillitate Animi. De Brevitate Vitae. De Consolatione ad Polybium. De Consolatione ad Helviam*. Translated by John W. Basore. Loeb Classical Library 254. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1932. P. 309.

⁴⁴ Seneca, Lucius Annaeus: Achtundzwanzigster Brief: Reisen an sich sind kein geeignetes Mittel, das Gemüt zu entlasten. In: Seneca. Philosophische Schriften. Vollständige Studienausgabe. Übersetzt, mit Einleitungen und Anmerkungen von Otto Appelt. Wiesbaden. 2004. p. 103 f. (Dritter Band: Briefe an Lucilius)

⁴⁵ Döring, Annika; Horden, Peregrine: *Mediterranean Sea-Creature: Maritime Metaphor in the Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche*. In this volume.

⁴⁶ Own translation from: „Kussgeräuschen.“ Camus, Albert: Hochzeit in Tipasa. P. 9-19. In: Camus, Albert: Hochzeit des Lichts. Hochzeit des Lichts. Heimkehr nach Tipasa. Impressionen am Rande der Wüste. Aus dem Französischen von Peter Gan und Monique Lang. Hamburg; Zürich, 2010. P. 10.

⁴⁷ Own translation from: “Sonne, Küsse und erregende Düfte”. Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid. P. 14.

⁴⁹ Camus, Albert: Das Meer. P. 150-163. In: Camus, Albert: Hochzeit des Lichts. Hochzeit des Lichts. Heimkehr nach Tipasa. Impressionen am Rande der Wüste. Aus dem Französischen von Peter Gan und Monique Lang. Hamburg; Zürich, 2010. P. 150.

he at least feels some physical attraction to a woman named Maria.⁵⁰ Clearly, the Mediterranean Sea is the symbol for relaxation and enjoyment. In the novel, the Mediterranean Sea is the setting in which Meursault, who generally seems apathetic, e. g. when his mother dies or later when he is a defendant at court,⁵¹ feels desires: he desires to go for a swim and to be intimate with Maria, and it is the scenery in which he finally makes a decision and takes action by murdering another person.⁵² The Mediterranean Sea not only is the landscape—rather: waterscape—in which Meursault finds himself comfortably relaxed, but also a place in which actions appear to be morally indifferent.⁵³

Camus does not consider himself a philosopher, albeit he is one.⁵⁴ His main interest is how to make sense of living in an absurd world.⁵⁵ Since the world is absurd, the question cannot be answered by rationality:

“He [Camus] ignored or opposed systematic philosophy, had little faith in rationalism, asserted rather than argued many of his main ideas, presented others in metaphors, was preoccupied with immediate and personal experience, and brooded over such questions as the meaning of life in the face of death. ... And his philosophy of the absurd has left us with a striking image of the human fate”⁵⁶

Camus communicates his thoughts in artistic forms like novels, e. g. *The Stranger*, and the Mediterranean Sea as a source of sensuality.⁵⁷ According to Camus, life might be absurd, but still enjoyable at the right place, for the Mediterranean is a positively connotated place to Camus:⁵⁸ “And the essential role that towns like Algiers and Barcelona can play is to serve, in their own small way, that aspect of Mediterranean culture which favors man instead of crushing him.”⁵⁹ Being at the Mediterranean seaside, life makes sense to Camus.⁶⁰ This sense must be sensuality, since “This is what the Mediterranean is – a certain smell or scent that we do not need to express: we all feel it through our skin.”⁶¹

⁵⁰ Camus, Albert: *Der Fremde*. Düsseldorf. 1957. P. 7 ff; 49, 86.

⁵¹ Ibid. P. 7 ff; 90 ff.

⁵² Ibid. P. 48 ff.

⁵³ Ibid. P. 49 ff.

⁵⁴ Aronson, Ronald, "Albert Camus", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2017 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2017/entries/camus/>>.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Camus, Albert: The New Mediterranean Culture. Online: <http://hellenicantidote.blogspot.com/2010/03/albert-camus-new-mediterranean-culture.html>. Last view: 22.07.2020.

⁵⁸ Aronson, Ronald, "Albert Camus", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2017 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2017/entries/camus/>>.

⁵⁹ Camus, Albert: The New Mediterranean Culture. Online: <http://hellenicantidote.blogspot.com/2010/03/albert-camus-new-mediterranean-culture.html>. Last view: 22.07.2020.

⁶⁰ Camus, Albert: Das Meer. P. 150-163. In: Camus, Albert: Hochzeit des Lichts. Hochzeit des Lichts. Heimkehr nach Tipasa. Impressionen am Rande der Wüste. Aus dem Französischen von Peter Gan und Monique Lang. Hamburg; Zürich, 2010. P. 150.

⁶¹ Camus, Albert: The New Mediterranean Culture. Online: <http://hellenicantidote.blogspot.com/2010/03/albert-camus-new-mediterranean-culture.html> Last view: 22.07.2020.

Different from the other philosophers mentioned above, Camus does not use the sea as an analogy or metaphor but refers to the *concrete* Mediterranean. Different from Seneca, who argues that well-being depends on oneself, not on the place,⁶² Camus' happiness depends on the seaside.⁶³

Martin Heidegger considers the Mediterranean Sea to be the link between pre-Socratic Greece – on which Heidegger builds his thoughts on being – and Southern France, the homeland of the painter Paul Cézanne, with whom he identifies his work, by reducing the whole Mediterranean Sea to this interest:⁶⁴

“Heidegger does not describe a uniform pan-Mediterranean culture; rather, his Mediterranean is a convenient expansion of Greece and Provence, a macrocosmic synecdoche. He says little about Italy, nothing about the Islamic Mediterranean. Nor does he betray any awareness of the historical connections (cultural and economic) between Greece and Provence other than those arising from his own intellectual preoccupations. His Provence is the (recent) Provence of Cézanne’s paintings just as his Greece is the (ancient) Greece of the pre-Socratics. There is a chronological disjunction.”⁶⁵

We have seen that a variety of philosophers throughout history have utilized the Mediterranean as an analogy or metaphor. Especially when the sea appears in a metaphorical way, this is the case in more artistic writings; may it be Seneca's personal letters, Camus' novel, Nietzsche's unique style, or Heidegger's writing on art. The sea evokes a broad spectrum of associations these philosophers refer to and therefore seems to be the perfect image for multiple thoughts, assumptions and emotions communicated through metaphors, if not analogies.

Conclusion

In making an analogical inference, information, structure, or relations in the source domain are moved over to the target domain in the hopes of learning something new about the target domain. Second, assumption archaeology helps us identify the beliefs, claims, or feelings that are transferred between the two domains. In this paper we have shown how water and oceans informs the very idea of dialectics, and how navigating the *Ship of State* draws on assumptions about navigating self-sustaining

⁶² Seneca, Lucius Annaeus: Achtundzwanzigster Brief: Reisen an sich sind kein geeignetes Mittel, das Gemüt zu entlasten. In: Seneca. Philosophische Schriften. Vollständige Studienausgabe. Übersetzt, mit Einleitungen und Anmerkungen von Otto Appelt. Wiesbaden. 2004. p. 103 ff. (Dritter Band: Briefe an Lucilius)

⁶³ Camus, Albert: The New Mediterranean Culture. Online: <http://hellenicantidote.blogspot.com/2010/03/albert-camus-new-mediterranean-culture.html>. Last view: 22.07.2020.

⁶⁴ Döring, Annika; Horden, Peregrine: “Heidegger as Mediterraneanist”. P. 25-43. In: Elhariry, Yasser; Tamalet Talbayev, Edwige: *Critically Mediterranean. Temporalities, Aesthetics, and Deployments of a Sea in Crisis*. Cham. Palgrave Macmillan. 2018.

⁶⁵ Ibid. P. 39.

ships on enormous and potentially threatening seas. We conclude by making explicit a variety of assumptions that have been analogized by the philosophers we have only begun to explore in this regard.

To Seneca, the meaning of the sea is very close to the meaning the sea has for Plato – the unpredictable occurrences man has to overcome; however, in contrast to Plato dialoging about different emergent collectives or groups of the entire republic, Seneca addresses the individual.⁶⁶ Within Nietzsche’s philosophy the sea and its animals are metaphors and role-models for a life independent from morals.⁶⁷

To Camus, the place is crucial for one’s own well-being: “I spent two months in central Europe, from Austria to Germany, wondering where that strange discomfort weighing me down, the muffled anxiety I felt in my bones, came from. A little while ago, I understood. These people were always buttoned right up to the neck.”⁶⁸ Heidegger focusses, when referring to the Mediterranean, on the French and Greek coastlines, in terms of his interest in Cézanne’s paintings and pre-Socratic philosophy.⁶⁹

Oceans cradled the origins of life, bodies, sex, and consciousness. Such phenomena so integral to the human condition—and, indeed, to life and ecology as a whole—all evolved in the salty waters. Moreover, the seas play powerful roles in the mythology and stories of many cultures, including Ancient Indian, Middle Eastern, and Chinese civilizations, as well as the Inuit and Vikings. Moving beyond Western Philosophy, the creative and analogical power of the oceans permeates human imagination and thinking, and deserves more explicit attention.

⁶⁶ Seneca The Younger: *De Brevitate Vitae*. Translated by Brasore, John W. In: Loeb Classical Library: Seneca, *Moral Essays*, Volume II: *De Consolatione ad Marciam*. *De Vita Beata*. *De Otio*. *De Tranquillitate Animi*. *De Brevitate Vitae*. *De Consolatione ad Polybium*. *De Consolatione ad Helviam*. Translated by John W. Basore. Cambridge. 1932. P. 309.; Plato: *Republic*. P. 971-1224. In: Plato. *Complete Works*. Translated by Grube, G. M. A.; Reeve, C. D. C. rev. In: Cooper, John M. (Edited, with Introduction and Notes); Hutchinson, D. S. Indianapolis; Cambridge. 1997.

⁶⁷ Döring, Annika; Horden, Peregrine: *Mediterranean Sea-Creature: Maritime Metaphor in the Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche*. In this volume.

⁶⁸ Camus, Albert: *The New Mediterranean Culture*. Online: <http://hellenicantidote.blogspot.com/2010/03/albert-camus-new-mediterranean-culture.html>. Last view: 22.07.2020.

⁶⁹ Döring, Annika; Horden, Peregrine: “Heidegger as Mediterraneanist”. P. 25-43. In: Elhariry, Yasser; Tamalet Talbayev, Edwige: *Critically Mediterranean. Temporalities, Aesthetics, and Deployments of a Sea in Crisis*. Cham. Palgrave Macmillan. 2018.