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A Decompositional Approach to Metaphorical Compound Analysis: The Case of a TV Commercial

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This article applies a decompositional approach to analyzing the metaphorical structure of a China Central Television (CCTV) Olympics commercial as a multimodal discourse from the perspective of cognitive semantics. The Beijing 2008 Olympics' motto was "One World, One Dream," which highlights the notion of the world as a "global village." The commercial converges on this motto with a metaphorical imagery of a bird's nest being built by birds from all over the world. While "bird's nest" is commonly mapped metaphorically onto some target concepts, such as "unity" and "harmony," the metaphorical imagery is also motivated by the fact that the Beijing National Stadium looks like a bird's nest, and is therefore nicknamed "the Bird's Nest." It is argued that the commercial is structured by one central metaphor, a metaphorical compound, manifested multimodally through the multimodal discourse: "*PEOPLES OF THE WORLD MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BEIJING OLYMPICS ARE BIRDS FLYING FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES TO BEIJING WITH TWIGS TO BUILD A BIRD'S NEST.*" The study applies a decompositional approach to metaphorical compound analysis (DAMCA) based on the distinction between primary and complex metaphors. The analysis shows that the highly specific and complex metaphorical compound is actually built upon a general cognitive foundation comprising the Great Chain and Event Structure Metaphor systems.

In 2008 Beijing, China, hosted the Summer Olympics officially known as the Games of the XXIX Olympiad. In preparation for the Beijing Olympics, China spent billions of dollars not only constructing sporting venues, such as the Bird's Nest and Water Cube, but also trying to make her people ready for this significant international gathering in China, and especially in Beijing, the host city. One of the efforts on the latter front is to wage a major campaign on mass media to promote civility and national pride among the Chinese people because, as was said, hosting the Beijing 2008 Olympics is for China "To mount the stage of the world, and to put on a show of China" (登世界的台, 唱中国的戏).¹ For example, China Central Television (CCTV) designed and produced a series of TV commercials "to greet the Olympics, to cultivate civil behavior, and to foster a new spirit" (迎奥运, 讲文明, 树新风). This kind of commercials on CCTV is meant to be educational, with the purpose of attempting to change people's way of thinking, understanding, and acting. The series of the CCTV Olympics commercials was aired,

¹See Yu (2011) for a detailed analysis of multimodal manifestations of the Beijing opera metaphor for the Beijing Olympics.

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with high-frequency repetition, for a period of about three years, and was not stopped until about one year after the event itself.

On CCTV-4, the international Chinese-language channel, the last episode of the Olympics commercial series aired is the one that converges on the thematic slogan of the Beijing 2008 Olympics: “One World, One Dream” (同一个世界, 同一个梦想), which highlights the notion of the present world as a “global village.” This article applies a decompositional approach to metaphorical compound analysis (DAMCA) based on the distinction between primary and complex metaphors. It analyzes the metaphorical structure of this Olympics TV commercial in the spirit of “real-world metaphor research,” which, aiming to be “ecologically valid,” focuses on metaphorical data naturally occurring in real-life discourse in human communication (Gibbs, 2010; Low, Todd, Deignan, & Cameron, 2010). To do so, I take the theoretical perspective of Cognitive Semantics, whose theory of metaphor is generally known as conceptual metaphor theory (CMT; Gibbs, 1994; Johnson, 1987; Kövöcses, 2005, 2010; Lakoff, 1987, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999, 2003; Lakoff & Turner, 1989; Sweetser, 1990; Turner, 1996).² According to this theory, metaphor, which gives rise to mappings across conceptual domains, “is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 3). In what follows, I will show that the Olympics TV commercial to be analyzed, which was designed and produced to influence people’s thought and action, is structured by a metaphorical imagery of a bird’s nest being built by birds from all over the world. Before the analysis, however, a synopsis of the commercial itself is in order, with references to the stills from the commercial.

SYNOPSIS OF THE TV COMMERCIAL

With the chirps of birds and orchestral music, the commercial starts by showing a large eagle hovering high above a mountain almost submerged under a sea of clouds, carrying a twig in its beak (Figure 1a). Then, in succession it shows a small bird among the blades of grass (Figure 1b), the close-up of a bald eagle’s head (Figure 1c), a crane flying high overhead (Figure 1d), all holding a twig in their beaks. Another small bird breaks a twig; the eagle perking on a tree takes off. Some doves also take off from the historical site, the Acropolis of Athens (Figure 1e). One after another, some birds, a variety of them, pick up twigs from the surface of water or land while flying. Flocks of birds fly past the famous landmarks of the places in the world, such as the Sydney Opera House (Figure 1f), the Pyramids in Egypt (Figure 1g), the Eiffel Tower of Paris (Figure 1h). All varieties of birds, large and small, fly together (Figure 1i). A twig slips off the beak of a bird and is falling in the sky when another bird catches it and flies on (Figures 1j–1l).

The twigs that birds carry flying from all over the world are used to build a bird’s nest (Figure 2a). Birds carrying twigs are arriving from all directions. At the same time, large flocks of birds are still flying over mountains (Figure 2b), rivers (Figure 2c), lakes (Figure 2d), and oceans (Figure 2e). There are also birds flying over the Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet (Figure 2f).

²See also *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought* (edited by Raymond W. Gibbs) for some new developments of this and other theories, including studies on nonverbal manifestations of metaphor in art (Kennedy, 2008), pictures (Forceville, 2008), gestures (Cienki & Müller, 2008), and music (Zbikowski, 2008).

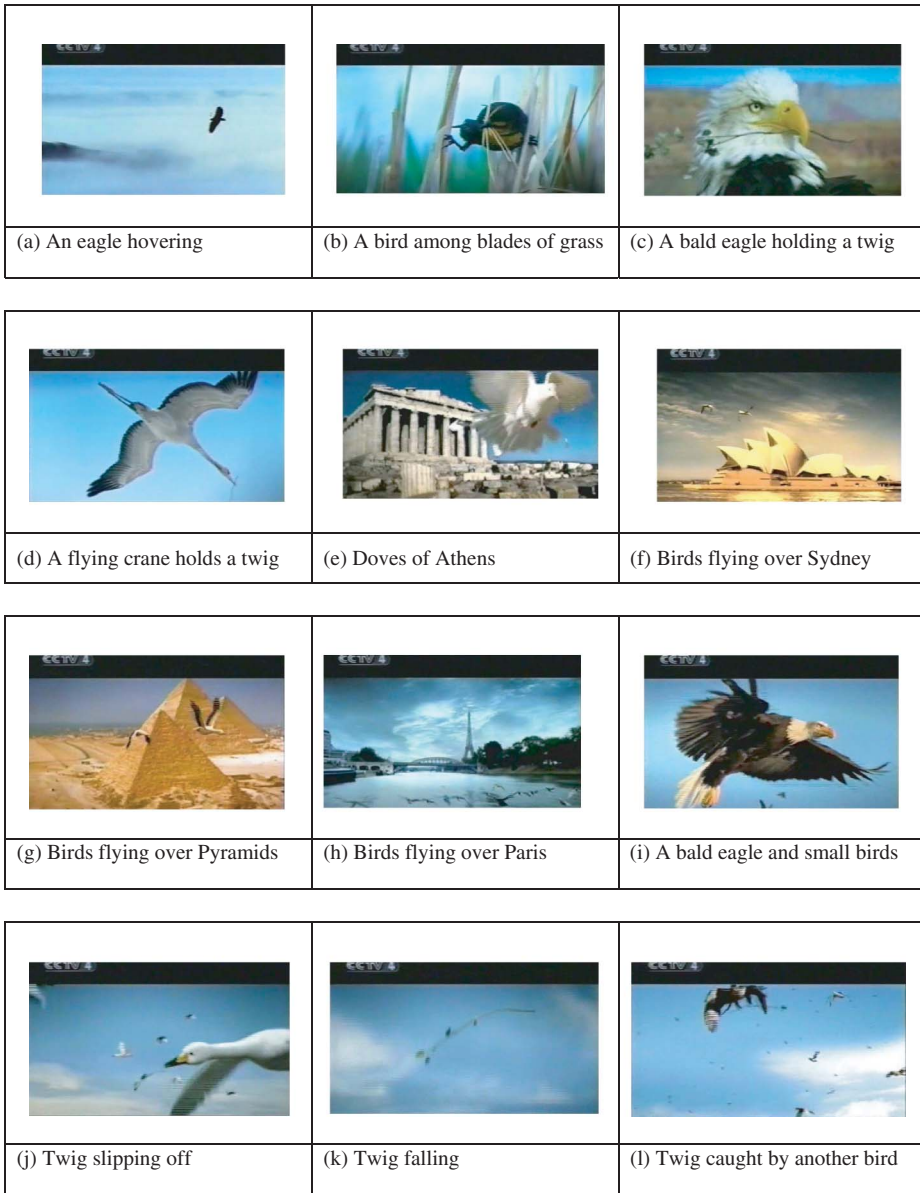


FIGURE 1 Stills from the first half of the TV commercial (color figure available online).

The destination of all the birds flying is the bird's nest, which they, big and small, are building together (Figure 2g). In the meantime, other birds are still coming flying in large quantity, descending where the Forbidden City is, which suggests that the location of the bird's nest being built is in Beijing, China (Figure 2h). After the construction is completed, the birds on the nest

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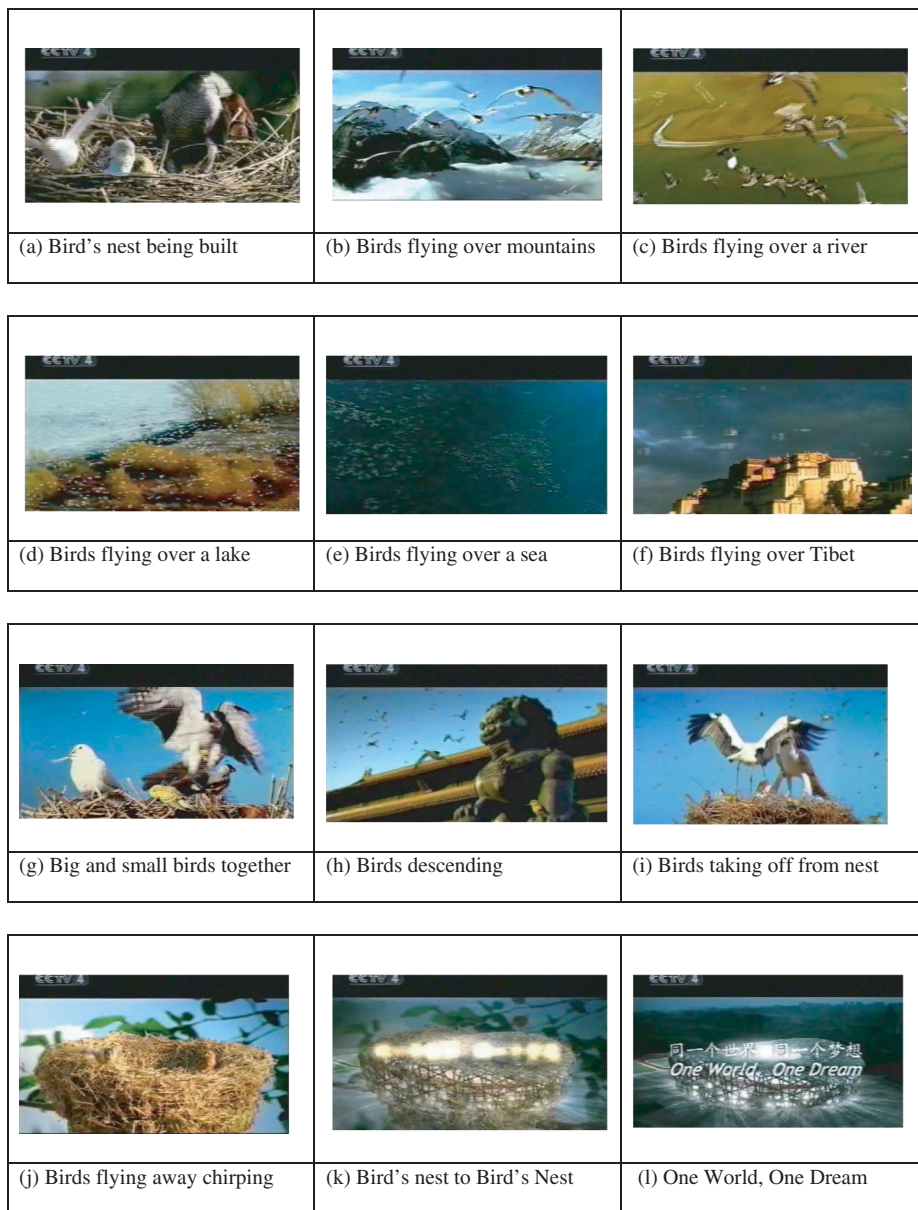


FIGURE 2 Stills from the second half of the TV commercial (color figure available online).

take off one after another until the last two small ones fly away chirping (Figures 2i and 2j). At this moment, the bird's nest fades into the Bird's Nest, the Beijing National Stadium of China, which was built specially for the Beijing 2008 Olympics as its main venue, the motto of the Olympiad "One World, One Dream" appearing as the caption over the stadium in both Chinese and English (Figures 2k and 2l).

ANALYSIS OF THE TV COMMERCIAL

As seen from the preceding section, the TV commercial under analysis, produced in celebration of the Beijing Olympics as an important sporting event of the international community, hinges on the theme “One World, One Dream” with the metaphorical image of a bird’s nest being built by the birds, a vast quantity and a wide variety of them, from all over the world. The present section will take a DAMCA to analyzing this TV commercial as a multimodal discourse and will argue that it is framed and structured by a complex metaphorical compound consisting of a series of cognitive mappings, both metaphoric and metonymic.

Initial Analysis

Before I go into a detailed analysis of this metaphorical compound, however, I would like to point out that the four key and most recognizable mappings are as follows:

- (1) a. “*PEOPLE ARE BIRDS*” (a metaphor)
- b. “*THE BIRD’S NEST STADIUM IS A BIRD’S NEST*” (a metaphor)
- c. “*THE BIRD’S NEST STADIUM STANDS FOR THE BEIJING OLYMPICS*” (a metonymy)
- d. “*CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TWIGS*” (a metaphor)

That is, peoples of the world contributing to the Beijing Olympics are metaphorically visualized as “the birds building a bird’s nest”; the Beijing National Stadium, known as the “Bird’s Nest,” is metaphorically visualized as a real bird’s nest; and the Bird’s Nest Stadium, which is the main venue of the international sporting event, metonymically stands for the Beijing 2008 Olympics. The contributions that peoples of the world make to this Olympiad are visualized as twigs that birds flying from all over the world bring to build the bird’s nest with.

Of the four mappings in (1), (1a) is a particular instantiation of “*HUMANS ARE ANIMALS*,” which is a major metaphorical mapping in the basic Great Chain Metaphor system (Lakoff & Turner, 1989, pp. 160–213; see also Kövecses, 2010a, pp. 152–162). According to the folk theory of basic Great Chain of Being, the nature of things is defined and arranged in terms of a hierarchy as listed below (Lakoff & Turner, 1989, pp. 170–171):

The Basic Great Chain

HUMANS: Higher-order attributes and behavior (e.g. thought, character)

ANIMALS: Instinctual attributes and behavior

PLANTS: Biological attributes and behavior

COMPLEX OBJECTS: Structural attributes and functional behavior

NATURAL PHYSICAL THINGS: Natural physical attributes and natural physical behavior

As a folk theory of how things work in the world, the Great Chain of Being stresses that the attributes a form of being has lead to the way that form of being behaves, and each form of being has all of the attributes lower on the hierarchy. According to Lakoff and Turner (1989, p. 172), the Great Chain Metaphor, as “a conceptual complex,” “allows us to comprehend general human character traits in terms of well-understood nonhuman attributes; and, conversely, it allows us to comprehend less well-understood aspects of the nature of animals and objects in terms of better-understood human characteristics.” As a conceptual complex, Lakoff and Turner (1989) argue, the Great Chain Metaphor consists of four things: (a) the folk theory of the Nature of Things, (b) the Great Chain, (c) the “*GENERIC IS SPECIFIC*” metaphor, and (d) the pragmatic principle

of the Maxim of Quantity. As noted in Grady (2005), however, “*GENERIC IS SPECIFIC*” may not be a metaphor itself, but a common metaphorical pattern for the mappings of specific concepts.

In the TV commercial under discussion, the motivation for “birds” to be chosen as the source of the “*HUMANS ARE ANIMALS*” metaphor is threefold. First, birds, or some kinds of birds, tend to stay and act together, in “flocks.” This attribute of birds is apt to suggest the concepts of “unity” and “harmony” among human beings, the concepts that the Beijing Olympics Organizing Committee attempted to emphasize and highlight, hence the thematic slogan “One World, One Dream.” Secondly, there exist metonymic ties between some kinds of birds and some nations in the world. For instance, a list of more than 80 “national birds” in *Wikipedia* (n.d.) contains examples such as the red-crowned crane of China and the bald eagle of the United States. The third and more evident reason for the selection of “birds” as the source here, however, is the “Bird’s Nest” as the special architectural landmark of the Beijing Olympics. This is a good example of “context-induced creativity” in metaphor use in actual discourse (Kövecses, 2010a, pp. 289–298, 2010b). It is well known that the “Bird’s Nest” is so named because the Beijing National Stadium, designed by the Swiss architectural firm Herzog & de Meuron, physically resembles a bird’s nest. That is, the metaphor in (1b), which primarily involves the mapping of images rather than concepts, as illustrated by Figures 2j–2l, is a typical case of image or resemblance metaphor (Grady, 1999; Kövecses, 2010a; Lakoff, 1993; Lakoff & Turner, 1989; see also Ureña & Faber, 2010). It is worth noting however that, when it is said that the metaphor “primarily” maps images rather than concepts, it does not exclude the mapping of concepts (see, e.g., Ureña and Faber, 2010). Instead, the above-mentioned concepts of “unity” and “harmony,” in addition to “comfort,” “safety,” and “productivity,” are intrinsically associated with the concept of “bird’s nest” too, and for that matter are mapped in this metaphor as well. Given below in (2) are some linguistic examples from the corpus of the Center for Chinese Linguistics at Peking University, which illustrate some of the metaphorical meanings of “bird’s nest” in Chinese. Each Chinese example is followed by a more literal English translation (of my own):

- (2) a. 他们被新的时代驱逐了，如同鸟巢被捣，鸟儿四处飞散各自去远处寻觅藏身的窝。
 “They were dispersed by the new era, as if a bird’s nest had been smashed with all the birds scattered flying far to look for their own dwelling places.”
- b. 那时候会想起一首儿歌：小河在他的河床里，小鸟在他的鸟巢里，小孩在他妈妈的怀抱里，上帝在他的天堂里。
 “At that moment I would think of a children’s song: The little river is in its river bed, the little bird is in its bird’s nest, the little baby is in its mother’s arms, and God is in His Heaven.”
- c. 用他自己的话说，他有一个“爱的鸟窝”。
 “In his own words, he has a ‘bird’s nest of love.’”
- d. “没有一个好的鸟巢，就不会引来凤凰”，他彻底改造城镇的决心更坚定了。
 “‘This place wouldn’t be attractive to phoenixes without a good bird’s nest,’ and his determination to thoroughly transform the town had become more steadfast than ever before.”
- e. 小说在传统现实主义的鸟窝里孵出了中国小说的新种。
 “This novel has hatched a new variety of Chinese fiction in the bird’s nest of traditional realism.”

As can be seen, the concepts mentioned above as being associated with “bird’s nest” are involved in these examples in one way or another.³

³A real-life English example came multimodally in a printed ad that I received recently in the mail “about insuring another important asset—your retirement income.” The verbal message of the ad goes, “You insure your nest . . . So,

Now let us turn to the third mapping (1c). It is a metonymy “*VENUE FOR EVENT*” or “*LOCATION FOR ACTIVITY*” (i.e., the stadium for the sporting event and the competitions in it). More exactly, (1c) involves a metonymic chain, namely the main venue (PART) stands for all the venues (WHOLE), and the venues (VENUE) for the event (EVENT). The last mapping in (1d) is a metaphorical one that follows from and fits with the previous three. That is, the contributions made by the peoples of the world to the Beijing Olympics are the twigs brought in by the birds to build the bird’s nest with, and building that bird’s nest is the “One Dream” shared by all the birds of the world.

It is important to notice that the three metaphors and one metonymy listed in (1) above interact with one another and contribute simultaneously to the theme of the Beijing Olympics by constructing a central or overarching metaphor, which is manifested multimodally through the whole TV commercial as a multimodal discourse. The central metaphor is given in (3).

(3) The central metaphor of the TV commercial:

*“PEOPLES OF THE WORLD MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BEIJING OLYMPICS
ARE BIRDS FLYING FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES TO BEIJING WITH TWIGS TO BUILD
A BIRD’S NEST.”*

However, the structure of this central metaphor is far more complicated, as we will see when a DAMCA is applied below (see also Yu, 2011).

Further Analysis

In this subsection I will further analyze the central metaphor of the TV commercial, formulated in (3) above, as a complex metaphor, by applying a decompositional approach. This analytical approach, which was originally formulated to explain the motivational differences and commonalities observed among conceptual metaphors, is based on the distinction between primary metaphor and complex metaphor that characterizes a newer version of CMT (see, e.g., Grady, 1997a, 1997b, 1998, 2005; Grady Taub, & Morgan, 1996; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, 2003). According to this approach, primary metaphors are derived directly from experiential correlations that pair subjective experience and judgment with sensorimotor experience. As such, they tend to be widespread or even potentially universal. In contrast, complex metaphors are composed of primary metaphors combined with commonplace knowledge and cultural beliefs. As such, they are more likely to be specific to cultures.

For example, Grady (1997b) argues that “*THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS*,” a complex metaphor, is composed of its two separate and independently motivated metaphorical component parts, which could occur in other complex metaphors as well: (a) “*ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE*,” and (b) “*PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT*” (or “*FUNCTIONAL IS ERECT*”; Grady, 2005). Lakoff and Johnson (1999, pp. 60–61) provide the following example as a complex metaphor, which is composed not only of two primary metaphors, but also of two literal propositions as cultural beliefs:

why not insure your nest egg?” against the static cartoon image of a big bird’s nest on a small tree, with three smiling little birds in or around the nest, while a Dalmatian dog seems to be pondering close to the tree with one claw supporting its head. This is also another multimodal example of the “*HUMANS ARE ANIMALS*” metaphor in the Great Chain Metaphor system.

- (4) “*A PURPOSEFUL LIFE IS A JOURNEY*”
 a. “*PEOPLE ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE PURPOSES IN LIFE*”
 b. “*PEOPLE ARE SUPPOSED TO ACT SO AS TO ACHIEVE THEIR PURPOSES*”
 c. “*PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS*”
 d. “*ACTIONS ARE MOTIONS*”

That is, the complex metaphor in (4) is composed of two cultural beliefs (4a and 4b) and two primary metaphors (4c and 4d). The metaphorical compound has a two-level structure: the complex metaphor at the higher level, and the primary metaphors and cultural beliefs which compose the complex metaphor at the lower level.

Yu (2008, 2009, 2011) tries to further develop this decompositional approach to analyzing complex metaphors by (a) differentiating multi-level structural complexity in analysis, (b) postulating complex metaphors at the intermediate levels of analysis, and (c) allowing metonymies into the equations of analysis. For example, Yu (2008, pp. 253–256) sees the complex metaphor “*DIGNITY IS FACE*” as the shorthand form for the metaphorical compound “*DIGNITY IS FACE AS A VALUABLE POSSESSION*,” which then can be decomposed as follows:

- (5) “*DIGNITY IS FACE AS A VALUABLE POSSESSION*” (a complex metaphor)
 a. “*DIGNITY IS A FACE AS A PHYSICAL OBJECT*” (a complex metaphor)
 b. “*DIGNITY IS A FEELING*” (a proposition)
 c. “*FACE IS A PHYSICAL OBJECT*” (a complex metaphor)
 d. “*A FEELING IS A PHYSICAL OBJECT*” (a primary metaphor)
 e. “*FACE STANDS FOR A FEELING*” (a metonymy)
 f. “*DIGNITY IS A DESIRABLE FEELING*” (a proposition)

Here indentation indicates lower-level components that make up the component immediately above them. That is, the complex metaphor in (5) is decomposed into the combination of another complex metaphor (5a) and a proposition, a cultural belief, in (5f). Then, (5a), still a complex metaphor, is decomposed into two components: (5b) is a proposition presenting a commonplace knowledge about the target concept, whereas (5c) is another complex metaphor representing the source concept. The source-domain concept in (5c) itself is a complex metaphor composed of a primary metaphor (5d) and a metonymy (5e).⁴ Thus, the source concept in (5) is a composite “*FACE AS A PHYSICAL OBJECT*,” where “*FACE*” stands metonymically for “*A FEELING*,” which in turn is understood metaphorically as “*A PHYSICAL OBJECT*.” This “*PHYSICAL OBJECT*,” because “*DIGNITY IS A DESIRABLE FEELING*” (5f), becomes “*A VALUABLE POSSESSION*,” which people do not want to lose (5). The metonymy in (5e) serves as the bodily basis for the whole compound, supporting the association and connection of the face with feelings. The final complex metaphor (5) presupposes the combination of all the components in (5a–5f).

Adopting such a decompositional approach, DAMCA, in what follows I will analyze the central complex metaphor of the CCTV commercial under study by taking it apart step by step. For simplicity, I will use the following abbreviations: PR = Proposition, CM = Complex Metaphor, PM = Primary Metaphor, RM = Resemblance Metaphor, and MY = Metonymy.

⁴Note that (5d), “*A FEELING IS A PHYSICAL OBJECT*,” or simply “*A FEELING IS AN OBJECT*,” is a primary metaphor on the same par with “*A STATE IS A LOCATION*.” These two primary metaphors as a pair represent, respectively, the object-dual and location-dual (i.e., the two subsystems, of the Event Structure metaphor system; see Lakoff, 1993; Yu, 1998, Ch. 5).

- (6) *“PEOPLES OF THE WORLD MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BEIJING OLYMPICS ARE BIRDS FLYING FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES TO BEIJING WITH TWIGS TO BUILD A BIRD’S NEST”* (CM)
 a. *“PEOPLES OF THE WORLD ARE BIRDS FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES”* (CM)
 b. *“THE BIRD’S NEST STADIUM FOR BEIJING OLYMPICS IS A BIRD’S NEST”* (CM)
 c. *“MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO BEIJING OLYMPICS IS FLYING TO BEIJING AND BUILDING A BIRD’S NEST WITH TWIGS”* (CM)

Here for the first step, the central complex metaphor is decomposed into three lower-level complex metaphors, which are subject to further decomposition. First, (6a) can be decomposed into a multi-level and multi-component structure as in (7):

- (7) *“PEOPLES OF THE WORLD ARE BIRDS FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES”* (CM)
 a. *“PEOPLES OF DIFFERENT NATIONS ARE BIRDS OF DIFFERENT VARIETIES”* (CM)
 b. *“PEOPLE ARE BIRDS”* (RM)
 c. *“PEOPLE AND BIRDS SHARE SOME ATTRIBUTES/BEHAVIORS”* (PR)
 d. *“NATIONALITIES OF PEOPLE ARE VARIETIES OF BIRDS”* (CM)
 e. *“NATIONALITIES ARE ABSTRACT IDENTITIES”* (PR)
 f. *“VARIETIES ARE PHYSICAL DIFFERENCES”* (PR)
 g. *“ABSTRACT IDENTITIES ARE PHYSICAL DIFFERENCES”* (PM)
 h. *“LANDMARKS FOR COUNTRIES STAND FOR THE WORLD”* (MY)
 i. *“LANDMARKS STAND FOR COUNTRIES”* (MY)
 j. *“COUNTRIES STAND FOR THE WORLD”* (MY)

The complex metaphor in (7) is decomposed as follows. It is first broken down into two components in (7a) and (7h): i.e. a complex metaphor and a (complex) metonymy. Then, (7a) is interpreted as consisting of three components in (7b–7d). Of these three, (7b), *“PEOPLE ARE BIRDS”* is an instance of *“HUMANS ARE ANIMALS”* of the Great Chain Metaphor, linking the top two forms of being in the basic Great Chain. This one is based on the similarity in attributes and behaviors between people and birds, as is formulated as a proposition in (7c), and for that reason is classified as a resemblance metaphor (Grady, 1999; see also Gibbs, 2010), which is herein treated as a “building block” and is not subject to further decomposition. If so desired, however, further decomposition can be conducted following Lakoff and Turner (1989), who argue that the Great Chain Metaphor is a conceptual complex, whose core is the *“GENERIC IS SPECIFIC”* metaphor, such that the attributes and behaviors specific to a form of being (in this case, birds) are mapped onto other forms of being (in this case, human beings) that share the generic-level attributes and behaviors of this form of being. As in (7d), *“NATIONALITIES OF PEOPLE ARE VARIETIES OF BIRDS”* is still a complex metaphor that can be taken apart as the three components in (7e–7g). While (7e) and (7f) are two propositions that represent commonplace knowledge with regard to people and birds, (7g) is a primary metaphor that can no longer be decomposed.⁵ This primary metaphor is derived from the experiential correlation in

⁵Just to point out in passing that a possible alternative analysis is to further decompose (7g), *“ABSTRACT IDENTITIES ARE PHYSICAL DIFFERENCES,”* into two components: (a) *“IDENTITIES ARE DIFFERENCES”* (a proposition) and (b) *“ABSTRACT IS PHYSICAL”* (a primary metaphor). However, strictly speaking, the nature of *“ABSTRACT IS PHYSICAL,”* or sometimes formulated as *“NONPHYSICAL IS PHYSICAL,”* is just like that of *“GENERIC IS SPECIFIC.”* In other words, it should be treated, preferably, as a common and productive metaphorical pattern that connects specific concepts as metaphorical mappings, rather than as a metaphor itself. See footnote 1 above, and footnote 1 in Grady (2005, p. 1601). As such, this metaphorical pattern is responsible for the ontological

which people who share common identities (cultural and social) often look and behave in some common characteristic ways (physical and sensorimotor). In the same vein, people also judge others' identities based on the characteristic ways they look and behave. After all, people's identities are embodied in the differences with which they look and behave, and that is the metonymic motivation or basis for the primary metaphor in (7g).

The second principal component under the complex metaphor in (7) is (7h), which comprises a metonymic chain: LANDMARKS (SALIENT FEATURES) → COUNTRIES (PLACES/PARTS) → WORLD (WHOLE). The notable landmarks include the Acropolis of Athens (Figure 1e), the Sydney Opera House (Figure 1f), the Pyramids in Egypt (Figure 1g), and the Eiffel Tower of Paris (Figure 1h). These famous landmarks in the world stand metonymically for the countries in which they are located (7i), which in turn stand metonymically for the world as a whole (7j). It needs to be pointed out that another landmark in the TV commercial, the Potala Palace of Lhasa in Tibet (Figure 2f), should be interpreted as metonymically standing for the Tibetan as a minority nationality in China, which in turn, arguably, stands metonymically for the other over fifty minority nationalities of China. It means that the effort to host a successful Olympics by China is supported not only by its Han majority, but by all its minority nationalities as well. It is worth mentioning that Tibet figured prominently in the real event of the Beijing Olympics, when the Olympic flame reached the top of Mount Everest, the highest peak in the world, during the pre-games Olympic torch relay.

Having analyzed (6a) as a major component of the TV commercial's central metaphor, I now turn to its second major component, (6b), which is further decomposed as follows in (8):

- (8) *“THE BIRD'S NEST STADIUM FOR BEIJING OLYMPICS IS A BIRD'S NEST”* (CM)
 a. *“THE BIRD'S NEST STADIUM LOOKS LIKE A BIRDS' NEST”* (PR)
 b. *“THE BIRD'S NEST STADIUM IS A BIRD'S NEST”* (RM)
 c. *“THE BIRD'S NEST STADIUM STANDS FOR BEIJING OLYMPICS”* (MY)
 d. *“BEIJING OLYMPICS IS A BIRD'S NEST”* (CM)
 e. *“BEIJING OLYMPICS IS AN EVENT”* (PR)
 f. *“A BIRD'S NEST IS AN OBJECT”* (PR)
 g. *“AN EVENT IS AN OBJECT”* (PM)

As can be seen, in the complex metaphor in (8), the target itself contains a metonymy, where the Olympic stadium stands for the Olympics itself. Under this complex metaphor, (8a) is a proposition representing the commonplace knowledge that the Olympic stadium, nicknamed “the Bird's Nest,” actually looks like a real bird's nest, which accounts for the motivation for the resemblance or image metaphor in (8b), as is illustrated visually by the stills in Figures 2j–2l. While the target of (8b) is the Olympic stadium, this stadium however stands metonymically for the Beijing Olympics itself as its main venue, as in (8c). Therefore, the real metaphor behind the image metaphor in (8b) is the one in (8d), *“BEIJING OLYMPICS IS A BIRD'S NEST.”* This metaphor is still a complex one, which can be decomposed into two propositions in (8e) and (8f), and a primary metaphor in (8g).

It is noteworthy that as a primary metaphor (8g) is plugged in the Event Structure Metaphor system that Lakoff (1993, pp. 219–228) discusses in detail (see also Kövecses, 2005, pp. 43–49,

nature of metaphors, by which abstract ideas, experiences, traits, etc. are understood in terms of, say, physical objects and substances. See Lakoff and Johnson (1980, pp. 25–32; 2003, pp. 264–267).

2010, Ch. 11; Yu, 1998, Ch. 5). In this system, various aspects of event structure, including such fundamental concepts as states, changes, processes, actions, causes, purposes, and means, are characterized cognitively via metaphor in terms of space, location, object, motion, and force. This metaphor system as a whole is characterized by a location-object duality. Lakoff (1993, p. 225) cites the following pair of examples as an illustration of this duality characteristic: *I'm in trouble* (“TROUBLE IS A LOCATION”) and *I have trouble* (“TROUBLE IS AN OBJECT”). Thus, one can *get into* and *out of* trouble as a location, and one can *get* and *get rid of* trouble as an object. In the location-dual, trouble is conceptualized as a state, but the primary metaphor for states is “STATES ARE LOCATIONS.” In the object-dual, trouble is conceptualized as an attribute, but the primary metaphor for attributes is “ATTRIBUTES ARE OBJECTS.” In the case under discussion, the metaphor “BEIJING OLYMPICS IS A BIRD'S NEST” in (8d) has the target “the Beijing Olympics” and the source “a bird's nest.” As in (8g), the “bird's nest” is interpreted as a physical “object” because it is “built” and as such is “a constructed object.” In reality, however, a bird's nest can be conceived of as a location as well (i.e., a dwelling place for birds), as much as the Bird's Nest, the Beijing National Stadium, can be thought of both as an object (i.e., a man-made architectural structure) and as a location (i.e., a venue in which events take place). In the object-dual of the Event Structure Metaphor system, “PURPOSES ARE DESIRED OBJECTS” and “ACHIEVING A PURPOSE IS ACQUIRING A DESIRED OBJECT” (Lakoff, 1993). In the specific TV commercial, “ACQUIRING A DESIRED OBJECT” is instantiated as “building a bird's nest.” It is worth noting that in a different CCTV Olympics commercial, the Beijing Olympics is conceptualized and expressed multimodally as an “international stage,” which is a “location.” It is thus an example of the location-dual of the Event Structure Metaphor system, where “PURPOSES ARE DESIRED LOCATIONS (i.e., DESTINATIONS)” and “ACHIEVING A PURPOSE IS REACHING A DESIRED LOCATION (i.e., DESTINATION).” Therefore, as is expressed by a verbal message in that TV commercial, for Beijing to be the host city of the 2008 Olympics is for China “To mount the stage of the world, and to put on a show of China” (see Yu, 2011).

Now I turn to the complex metaphor in (6c), “MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO BEIJING OLYMPICS IS FLYING TO BEIJING AND BUILDING A BIRD'S NEST WITH TWIGS,” which can be decomposed as in (9) below:

- (9) “MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO BEIJING OLYMPICS IS FLYING TO BEIJING AND BUILDING A BIRD'S NEST WITH TWIGS” (CM)
- a. “ACTIONS ARE SELF-PROPELLED MOVEMENTS” (PM)
 - b. “A PURPOSE IS A DESTINATION (A DESIRED LOCATION)” (PM)
 - c. “A PURPOSE IS A DESIRED OBJECT” (PM)
 - d. “CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TWIGS” (CM)
 - e. “CONTRIBUTIONS ARE BENEFICIAL ENTITIES” (PR)
 - f. “TWIGS ARE USEFUL OBJECTS (IN BUILDING A BIRD'S NEST)” (PR)
 - g. “BENEFICIAL ENTITIES ARE USEFUL OBJECTS” (PM)

As enacted metaphorically by “flying (to Beijing)” and “building (a bird's nest),” namely (9a), all the birds have a common purpose and are conducting one purposeful activity, which is visualized metaphorically as a journey to a destination (9b; cf. 4 above), where they build one bird's nest (9c) with the twigs they bring (9d). In the above, (9a–9c) are all primary metaphors. While (9b) and (9c) respectively represent the location-dual and object-dual of the Event Structure Metaphor system, (9a) refers to the actions taken in “reaching a desired location by flying” and “acquiring

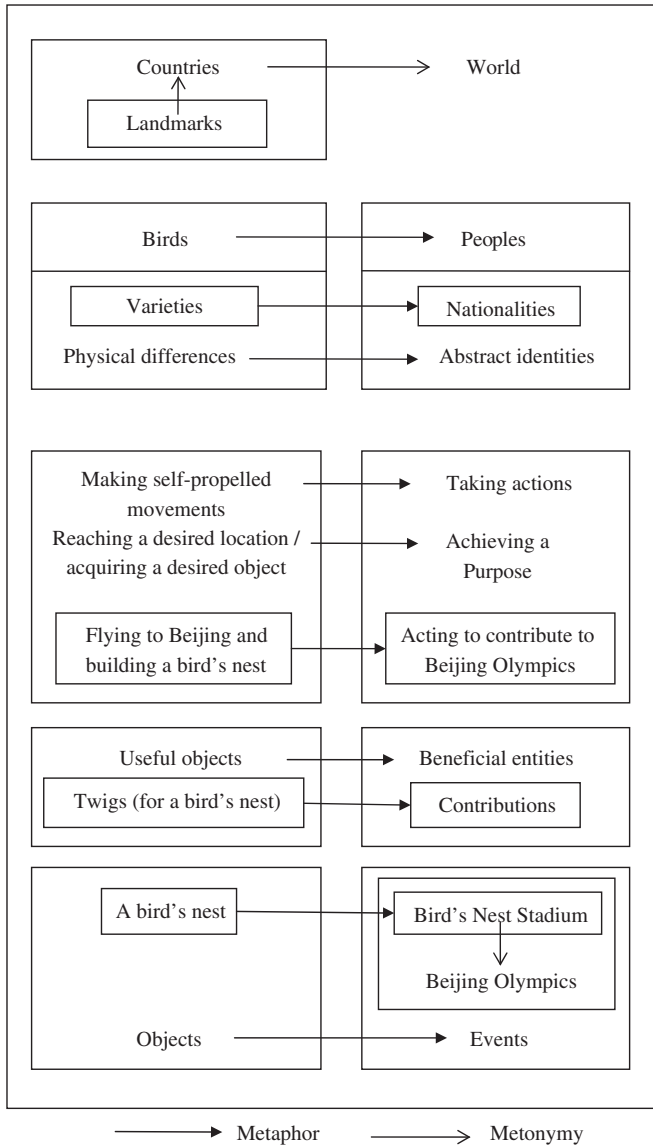


FIGURE 3 Major elements, frames, and directions involved in the mappings in the TV commercial.

a desired object by building.” As Lakoff (1993, p. 220) points out, the mappings in the Event Structure Metaphor system generalize over “an extremely wide range of expressions for one or more aspects of event structure.” In the case of the TV commercial under analysis, the common purpose of the peoples of the world is to contribute to the Beijing Olympics in particular and to the world civilization and heritage in general. In addition to the three primary metaphors in

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(9a–9c), (9d) is a complex metaphor which can be further decomposed as consisting of two propositions in (9e) and (9f) and a primary metaphor in (9g). Once again, the primary metaphor here is the core that is responsible for the general ontological nature of the metaphor in (9d), whose mapping between “contributions” and “twigs” is not really conventional, but specific to and fit with the central complex metaphor in (3).⁶ Note that the word *contributions* can refer to money or things contributed, or, more abstractly, some kind of help without financial or material consequence (e.g., temporal, moral). It is the latter that is meant in this particular context. For instance, a “supportive attitude” toward the Beijing Olympics was perceived as an important or crucial contribution to the event. Thus, many world leaders were considered “strong supporters” of the Beijing Olympics by contributing their “presences” to its opening ceremony.

In sum, the decompositional analysis, DAMCA, attempted in this subsection is shown in Figure 3, which displays the major elements, frames, and directions involved in the mappings of the central metaphor. In essence, DAMCA attempts to be more specific about “What,” “Why,” and “How” of complex conceptual metaphors: (a) What elements are involved in mappings from source to target? (b) Why are these elements chosen in the context (i.e., the motivational factors)? (c) How are the mappings related to one another and embedded within larger frames to form complex metaphors or metaphorical compounds? As shown in Figure 3, the central metaphor analyzed can be divided into some sections according to their semantic relations, each with its elements mapped metonymically or metaphorically, embedded within larger frames which are either literal (i.e., commonplace knowledge or cultural beliefs as propositions) or figurative (i.e., more general complex or primary metaphors or metonymies). In short, the analysis adopting DAMCA, like the one made in this subsection, is much more rigorous, and for that reason holds much more explanatory power, than an ordinary analysis, such as presented in the preceding subsection.

CONCLUSION

In the preceding section, I have applied a sort of “deep analysis”—a DAMCA—to the “metaphorical enactments” (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003) in a real-life multimodal discourse. I have shown that the central metaphor of the CCTV commercial, “*PEOPLES OF THE WORLD MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BEIJING OLYMPICS ARE BIRDS FLYING FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES TO BEIJING WITH TWIGS TO BUILD A BIRD’S NEST,*” can be analyzed as having a multi-level structure, with each level consisting of multiple components. The component parts vary, ranging from complex metaphor, primary metaphor, resemblance or image metaphor, metonymy, to proposition as literal commonplace knowledge or cultural beliefs. They form an intricate network of cognitive mechanisms, each playing its role at some level of conceptual buildup and in combination with others, in contributing to the central metaphorical compound summarized in (3) in particular, and to the overall meaning of the CCTV commercial in general.

⁶It is interesting to note that the Chinese idiom 添砖加瓦 *tianzhuān jiāwǎ*, which literally means “to add bricks and tiles,” is a BUILDING metaphor, where “bricks and tiles” is mapped onto “(small) contributions” that one can make to a general purpose. “Bricks and tiles” used to build “a house” by people is parallel to “twigs” used to build “a bird’s nest” by birds.

It is especially interesting to notice that the central complex metaphor, which appears to be highly culture-specific and occasion-specific and for that matter quite novel, is plugged in two fundamental metaphor systems, which are at least widespread if not universal: the Great Chain Metaphor system and the Event Structure Metaphor system (Kövecses, 2010a, Ch. 11; Lakoff, 1993; Lakoff & Turner, 1989, Ch. 4). This metaphor is manifested over time through the whole multimodal discourse. While its metaphorical mappings take place between corresponding entities across two conceptual domains: PEOPLE–BIRDS, (BIRD’S NEST STADIUM–BEIJING OLYMPICS)–BIRD’S NEST, CONTRIBUTIONS–TWIGS, the static structural relationships between conceptual correspondences are made into a dynamic process via “metaphorical enactments” or “enacted inferences” (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, pp. 259–264), which are carried out in the source domain through actions of “flying to a destination” and “building a bird’s nest” and which are then mapped onto the target domain in a multimodal discourse about the Beijing Olympics. Forceville and Urios-Aparisi (2009, p. 11) emphasize the importance of recognizing the discursive character of metaphor, arguing that many metaphors are “mini-narratives,” and therefore it would “be better to conceive of metaphor as “A-ING IS B-ING,” rather than as “A IS B,” because “metaphor is always metaphor in action.” The canonical metaphor formula “A IS B” should be regarded as a convenient shorthand for what Musolff (2006, p. 23) calls a “metaphor scenario.”

When the “deep analysis” of the metaphorical structure of the TV commercial was conducted, top-down, level by level and component by component, with DAMCA, it came down to a few primary metaphors, which serve as the “cornerstones” in the foundation of the metaphorical compound. As Grady (2005, p. 1595) argues, primary metaphors are the “ready-made” metaphoric counterpart connections, “i.e., entrenched metaphoric correspondences between concepts, that provide the basis for the real-time construction of metaphoric blends.” They are “inputs” to, rather than “products” of, such cognitive processes, forming “the basis of the metaphor system of a given language, and possibly a universal system of metaphors which guide human conceptualization more generally” (p. 1612). It needs to be pointed out that the “deep analysis” conducted in this study (i.e., DAMCA), bears no implication for the real-time, on-line process of production or comprehension of meaning. All it shows is the complicated network of possible cognitive mechanisms and conceptual relations involved, with which such production or comprehension is achieved, as well as the general cognitive foundation and its “cornerstones” upon which the more complex and specific metaphorical compounds are built. Real-time, on-line production or comprehension of meaning is, presumably, achieved on the basis of “building blocks.” But building blocks themselves still have internal structures that are open or subject to structural and material analysis. It goes without saying that DAMCA as an analytical instrument still needs tune-ups, to receive further refinements in, for instance, the definition of what counts as a primary metaphor (see, e.g., Evans 2003, Ch. 5) and the operation of its componential analysis.

The central metaphor under analysis is manifested through a multimodal discourse, the TV commercial, and it is therefore a case of “multimodal metaphor” (Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009), which is defined as metaphor “whose target and source are each represented exclusively or predominantly in different modes” rather than one mode (Forceville, 2009, p. 24). In the case under discussion, the aural mode plays a relatively limited role, with an orchestral music played throughout in combination with occasional chirping sounds of birds, which contribute to the source domain. Predominantly, it is through the visual mode that the source domain of the metaphorical scene is unfolded and established, with moving images that show a vast quantity

and a wide variety of birds flying from various countries to Beijing, China, each holding a twig in its beak, and all coming for the common goal of building one bird's nest. Interestingly, it is until the very end of the TV commercial that the target domain, the Beijing Olympics, emerges when the image of the completed bird's nest transforms into the image of the Bird's Nest stadium with the thematic slogan "One World, One Dream" of the Beijing Olympics appearing over it as the caption (see Figures 2j–2l). At that moment, the target domain is established, and the mapping between the source and target concepts, the bird's nest and the Beijing Olympics, is accomplished. It is worth noting that, without the caption "One World, One Dream," which is all and only presence of the verbal mode, the metaphorical connection between the bird's nest and the Beijing Olympics could still have been achieved, because the instant transformation of the image of the bird's nest into that of the Bird's Nest stadium cues this connection and leads viewers to this interpretation. Nevertheless, the brief presence of the verbal message at the very end "hits the home run." The brief verbal message, as the motto of the Beijing Olympics, clinches the point that the whole world shares the common course to the common goal. In a multimodal discourse, the verbal elements play an anchoring role: They "serve to cue and thereby restrict possible interpretations of the visual elements" (Koller, 2009, p. 47). By being the thematic slogan of the Beijing Olympics, the verbal caption actually "sends a strong message" that not only cues but also restricts possible interpretations of the moving images that precede it. Thus, for example, the famous landmarks (see Figures 1e–1h) should stand metonymically not only for the countries that own them, but by further extension also for the whole world, of which those countries are parts (i.e., LANDMARKS → NATIONS → WORLD). That is, this "chain" interpretation is sanctioned as well as cued by the verbal message.

In his recent book review of *Multimodal Metaphor*, Johnson (2010, p. 2850) points out that studies on multimodal metaphors, in addition to supporting the cognitive status of metaphor, contribute to our knowledge that "how much more complex our metaphorical understanding is than was envisioned in earlier theories" and that "we must have a dynamic, process-oriented account of the ways meaning develops in the ongoing communicative exchange in which these multimodal metaphors operate." It is hoped that this study has added to that contribution.

As the motto of the Beijing Olympics, "One World, One Dream" reflects the notions of "unity" and "harmony" that the Beijing Olympics Organizing Committee wanted to promote. These ideas, or ideals, are also reflected in the theme song of the Beijing Olympics, *You and Me*, sung together by one British and one Chinese singer, Sarah Brightman and Liu Huan, at the closing ceremony. The words of the song were written in both Chinese and English, as provided here, with the Chinese lines followed by a literal translation in English placed in the parentheses:

我和你 / 心连心 / 同住地球村 (You and me, heart linked with heart, live together in the Village of the Earth) / 为梦想 / 千里行 / 相会在北京 (For our dream, we travel a thousand miles to meet in Beijing) / 来吧 / 朋友 / 伸出你的手 (Come on! My friend, reach out your hand) / 我和你 / 心连心 / 永远一家人 (You and me, heart linked with heart, are forever members of one family) / You and me / From one world / We are family / Travel dream / A thousand miles / Meeting in Beijing / Come together / Put your hand in mine / You and me / From one world / We are family / 来吧 / 朋友 / 伸出你的手 (Come on! My friend, reach out your hand) / You and me / From one world / We are family.

The CCTV commercial under analysis conveys a very similar message, although its message is mainly conveyed visually rather than verbally, via multimodal but predominantly visual

manifestations of a conceptual metaphor “*PEOPLE ARE BIRDS*,” which transforms the human world metaphorically into an animal world. In this world, birds of all sizes and all varieties come together to build a common bird’s nest. If even birds, which belong to a lower-order form of being in the Great Chain, know what to do for a common purpose, why not humans?

As has been argued, the “bird’s nest” in the TV commercial is a metaphor for the Beijing Olympics. The summer Olympic Games is the biggest international sporting event that takes place once every four years. Hosting such an event has been China’s “Olympic Dream of a Hundred Years.” Now that this dream had come true, China wanted the whole world to share it. This happened against the background in which China is geared for a “peaceful rise” promoting the notion of a “harmonious world.” In this sense, the bird’s nest can also be conceived of as a metaphor for such a “harmonious world” yet to be constructed.

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