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INVESTIGATING THE UNIVERSALITY OF PRIMARY METAPHORS: A PERSPECTIVE FROM BUDDHISM

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Abstract: In this paper, I conduct a conceptual metaphor analysis of the "Wheel of Life", a pictorial representation of Buddhist philosophical concepts. Abstract concepts that define our everyday realities (e.g. states, causation) are claimed by some to be metaphorically structured, and reducible to a universal set of primary metaphors (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1999), while argued by others to be structured by non-metaphorical cultural understandings instead (QUINN, 1991). Recognizing the need for empirical testing of the universalist claim, I analyze Buddhist conceptualizations of states-of-being, rebirth and event structure for their reducibility to primary metaphors. I show that while some concepts are reducible to universal primary metaphors, others might be constituted by culture-specific understandings instead. I also question the concept of primary metaphor itself, suggesting that supposedly universal primary metaphors already carry culturally-biased preconceptions, and urge the Lakoffian school to justify the assumed universality of subjective experiences which give rise to primary metaphors.
Keywords: Buddhism; primary metaphors; conceptual metaphors; cultural models.

1 INTRODUCTION

The history of metaphor study has seen it evolve from being treated as an esoteric poetic device to one that is claimed to play an important role in our conceptual systems. Today, most would likely agree that the locus of metaphor is no longer confined to language, but extended to thought as well. Of particular impact has been the

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hypothesis that most of our abstract concepts, and the way we reason about them, are metaphorically structured (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1980, p. 3). When combined with other findings in cognitive science, such as the fact that thought is mostly unconscious and the mind is inherently tied to bodily functions (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1999), it becomes plausible to claim that much of our everyday subjective experiences and judgements are metaphorically conceptualized via domains of "sensorimotor experience". For example, Grady (1997) suggests that we conceptualize understanding an idea (subjective experience) as the grasping of an object (sensorimotor experience). This occurs because of our everyday tendency to obtain information about an object by grasping it, hence the development of an association between the two domains. Such "experientially grounded" mappings have been coined "primary metaphors", and are claimed to exist in our human conceptual system (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1999, p. 46).

Primary metaphors have thus acquired a powerful theoretical status. They supposedly form the basic building blocks that complex metaphors can be broken down into. Complex metaphors are defined by Lakoff and Johnson as "stable, conventionalized, entrenched and fixed" (1999, p. 60) mappings between conceptual domains. A classic example is the PURPOSEFUL LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1999, p. 60-73), instantiated by expressions such as "having lost one's way in life", "being on the highway of success", and "reaching one's life goals". Indeed, in many cultures, there is a firm belief that people are supposed to have purposes in life, and act to fulfill them. Lakoff and Johnson claim that this complex metaphor can be decomposed, firstly, into the culture-specific belief that one's life should be proactively purposeful; and secondly, into two separate primary metaphors, PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS and ACTIONS ARE MOTIONS, which collectively provide the schematic structure of journeys that underlies the complex metaphorical mapping.

This also entails a claim of universality. If metaphor is pervasive in our everyday thought, and complex metaphors inevitably are reduced to a set of correspondences between our subjective judgements and sensorimotor experiences, then it becomes inevitable that as functioning humans we all possess the same set of primary metaphors. The theory of conflation (JOHNSON, 1997) suggests that as young children, our

sensorimotor experiences are undistinguished from our subjective judgements. For example, the subjective feeling of affection is constantly correlated with the warm sensation of physical proximity. This results in a conflation between the two domains, which persists throughout our formative years. As we develop, we eventually separate the two domains, while preserving the cross-domain associations. Narayanan's (1997) neural theory of metaphor fleshes out more concretely the viewpoint above by claming that actual neural connections are triggered during the conflation period. From these strands of investigation, Grady (1997) devised a tentative list of primary metaphors which pairs various sensorimotor experiences with subjective judgements. Examples include AFFECTION IS WARMTH, HAPPY IS UP, TIME IS MOTION, STATES ARE LOCATIONS etc, demonstrating that a wide range of concepts are conceived of in terms of an equally wide range of sensorimotor domains. To further demonstrate the entrenchment of primary metaphors, Lakoff and Johnson (1999) also argued that key tenets of the western philosophical tradition are actually structured by conceptual metaphors, reducible to primary metaphors. It is important to investigate this universalist claim, and this is best done through the empirical analysis of philosophical concepts from an alternative tradition, to see if they are indeed structured in the same way.

This paper aims to provide such an investigation by examining several aspects of Buddhist philosophy, pictorially depicted by the "Wheel of Life" diagram (see Appendix).

Displayed on the walls of Tibetan Buddhist institutions, the wheel symbolizes the existential condition of living beings. It is a succinct and authoritative symbol of Buddhist philosophical concepts such as samsara, states of being, and liberation.

Comparative philosophy informs us of the different understandings humans have developed with regards to important concepts which structure our reality. These concepts range from belief about the afterlife to basic spatial-temporal perceptions. While one could attribute these differences to historical or cultural evolution, the cognitive science approach makes us probe deeper into the individual's neurobiological makeup instead of larger societal processes. Although Lakoff and Johnson acknowledge the role of cultural beliefs in shaping philosophy (1999, p. 341), they argue that the "cognitive resources"

employed to understand these theories "are not arbitrary or merely culturally constructed", but "depend on the nature of our embodied experience" (1999, p. 341). Hence, what they are claiming is that amidst the panoramic diversity of philosophical thought, all philosophy is fundamentally structured by a universal set of primary metaphors, with their overt differences a matter of cultural variation. I will directly test this claim by examining the concepts represented by the wheel for their reducibility to primary metaphor. In so doing, I will arrive at one of three possible theoretical destinations:

> a) Buddhist concepts are indeed constituted by conceptual metaphors, reducible to primary metaphors. Additionally, these primary metaphors are common across both Western and Buddhist philosophy.
>
> b) While some Buddhist concepts are structured by conceptual metaphors, informed by a universal pool of primary metaphors, there also exist concepts that are not structured in this way.
>
> c) Buddhist concepts are not structured by conceptual and primary metaphor. There is no conceivable experiential basis that structures these concepts. This is a logical but unlikely possibility, since there must be some common embodied experiences that are shared between peoples from different cultures.

Conclusion i) would provide support for the universalist position. On the other hand, conclusion ii) would resonate with alternative schools of thought which downplay the constitutive role of metaphor in our conceptual system. Amongst these, the most prominent would be the notion of cultural models - shared understandings between a community of people that organize and mediate their experiences, expectations and behavior, and provide a framework for the interpretation of everyday realities (D'ANDRADE, 1990). Anthropologists believe that such models play a profound role in human thought, and metaphor usage is highly constrained by pre-existing cultural understandings. In her analysis of metaphors used in discourses

on American marriages, Naomi Quinn (1991) attempted to demonstrate that speakers select certain metaphors not because they are crucial in structuring understanding, but because these metaphors "provide satisfying mappings onto already existing cultural understandings" (1991, p. 65). In other words, metaphors merely reflect, and do not constitute the ideal marriage values of American culture such as lastingness and fulfillment.

2 ALTERNATIVE VIEWPOINTS ON CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR

The contemporary theory of metaphor has its fair share of skeptics. Apart from the cultural anthropologists mentioned above, some believe that metaphorical comprehension and interpretation are actively constructed (GLUCKSBERG; MCGLONE, 1999), according to the requirements of the ongoing discourse. In this view, there are no pre-existing mappings constraining the interpretation of metaphor. The claim is that the Lakoffian view attempts to account for discourse-level phenomena by an over-reliance on a theory of cognition, even though "cognitive theories of communication and thought are currently in a nascent, somewhat amorphous state" (GLUCKSBERG; MCGLONE, 1999, p. 1557).

Between the two opposite ends of embodiment and culture, there have also been attempts to pursue a middle path and explore the connection between the individual embodied mind and the cultural world that surrounds it. Gibbs (1999) suggests that as the human body interacts with the cultural world, culture-specific elements may exert influence on the nature of embodied experiences, and hence play a constitutive role in the formation of conceptual metaphors. Anthropologists in different cultural settings have noted that fundamental embodied experiences such as breathing, blushing and menstruation are themselves instilled with important cultural meanings (CSORDAS, 1994; BHARATI, 1985). Under this view, the possible notion of "cultural embodiment" (GIBBS, 1999) would present an interesting theoretical blend between the two ends.

However, whether cultural or cognitive models underlie metaphorical usage is ultimately an empirical issue. As mentioned, one way to conduct empirical testing is to unearth systematic patterns in linguistic expressions, to see if any particular target concept is consistently explicated via knowledge from a different conceptual domain. Ning Yu (1998) attempted to do this with the Chinese language, analyzing metaphorical conceptualizations of emotions, time, and event structure.

Another approach is to analyze non-linguistic metaphors. As Lakoff and Johnson (1999, p. 57) put it, "not all conceptual metaphors are manifested in the words of a language. Some are manifested in grammar, others in gesture, art, or ritual". Interest in pictorial metaphors and other forms of symbolism ranges from whether there can be a theory of metaphor in pictures at all, to establishing metaphor as being constantly depicted in non-linguistic forms (FORCEVILLE, 1998). Lakoff and Johnson's implicit invitation to analyze non-linguistic metaphors is taken up in this paper, which examines the wheel in its pictorial form.

2.1 Motivation for analyzing Buddhist philosophy

Although Buddhism has been widely studied, its viability as a diagnostic ground for a universalist claim from a western academic background still holds considerable promise. As mentioned, there is a strong impetus to stretch the frontiers of empirical conceptual metaphor analysis to other languages and cultures (see SLINGERLAND, 2003, 2004). Abundant with symbolism, Buddhism offers rich data for metaphor study. Having developed in India and evolved in other parts of Asia, Buddhism has been largely free from the influence of western philosophy, and it was not until the late nineteenth century that any substantial contact occurred (COLEMAN, 2001). From the perspective of investigating a universal claim, Buddhism thus becomes a good choice due to its relatively isolated development, yet profound influence on those within its reaches.

2.2 Limitations of analysis

Before commencing the analysis it is important to discuss its limitations in order to provide the appropriate scope and perspective, and to set the general direction that future research can follow.

Firstly, it must be recognized that this is an introductory paper in exploring how conceptual metaphor can be applied to the Wheel, and therefore cannot possibly cover all the metaphors that are present. Concepts that are selected for analysis (i.e., states of being, perpetuation and event-structure) should however suffice for a general appreciation of how they differ from the western conceptualization, and what implications this bears.

Secondly, I must stress that the analyzed concepts, or even the Wheel taken in its entirety, do not sufficiently compose a fully coherent Buddhist philosophical system. There are numerous other schools of thought in Buddhism, such as Hinayana, Mahayana, Vajrayana and Zen[6]. Doctrinal intricacies are obviously not a focus for this paper, and thus when the terms "Buddhism" and "Buddhist principles" are used, they refer to general concepts that are readily accepted by Buddhists across these denominations.

In the next section, I will briefly introduce the Buddhist concepts that will be dealt with, and orientate readers to the various components of the Wheel. The main analyses of states of being, perpetuation and event structure will be conducted in sections three, four and five respectively.

3 BUDDHIST CONCEPTS AND THE WHEEL OF LIFE

3.1 Introduction to Buddhist philosophy

The most important goal of Buddhists is to attain nirvana, or liberation. This refers to the escape from samsara, the endless cycle of deaths and rebirths. We experience samsara because through our actions, thoughts and speech, we continuously generate reactions. Death is

[6] Interested readers may refer to the classic by Huston Smith (1991), *The World's Religions: Our Great Wisdom Traditions*, for an excellent introduction to the various schools.

merely an event within this stream of actions and reactions, and does not mean the cessation of the stream. As the physical body passes away, the consciousness lingers on, and enters into a new body so that the action-reaction stream may continue. Depending on the merit of deeds committed in the previous life, the being will be reborn with the character traits associated with one of the six realms depicted in the Wheel. It may then, in the next life, live luxuriously like a god, or suffer like a hell-being. It may even be literally reborn as an animal, dominated by primal desires.

However, the crucial point is that no matter what rebirth one takes, the cycle will be perpetuated as long as one continues to be bound by actions and reactions. The precise mechanism for this will be explained in section 6.2, via the concept of the twelve-fold chain of causation. To overcome samsara, living beings must eliminate the mental ills that plague them, as explained in section 2.4. Buddhist spiritual practice, known as following the Dharma, seeks nirvana by overcoming these ills. Upon nirvana, living beings are no longer subjected to samsara, and can obtain eternal peace.

After this outline of the basic beliefs of Buddhism, we can now examine the various components of the Wheel, and understand the specific aspects that are represented in each component.

3.2 Background - Buddha, yama, and the moon

In the background, Yama, the mythical Lord of Death holds the Wheel in its hands. Yama's iconographies are highly prolific in Indian culture, and he has been revered since the Vedic period in Hinduism (KNIPE, 1991). Yama clasping the wheel firmly reminds us that all living beings are under the control of death.

In the top left and right corners, the moon and the Buddha himself are depicted respectively, with the latter pointing towards the former. The moon is a symbol of nirvana. By pointing to it, the Buddha is showing the way for living beings towards liberation. More importantly, this implies that he can only show the way, but the actual process has to be undertaken by the beings themselves.

3.3 Rim of Wheel – the twelve-fold chain of causation

At the rim, twelve illustrations arranged in a circle represent the twelve-fold chain of causation, or the principle of "dependent origination". This may prove perplexing to readers accustomed to more conventional notions of causation. Essentially, the principle postulates that the manifestation of this material universe is in a continuous, interrelated flux, with events mutually conditioned by one another. In other words, no material phenomenon can be pinned down as the singular effect of a singular cause. A popular example to illustrate this is using an oil lamp (KONG, 1999). Conditions that permit the burning of a flame include air, oil, heat and wick. In turn, the presence of any of these conditions depends on yet other factors. Thus, for any phenomenon, there is a complex set of circumstances leading to its manifestation, such that nothing is inherently permanent, or arise independently, with a definite starting or ending point. Conversely, the only way for a phenomenon to cease is upon the cessation of its causal conditions. The Buddha himself summarized this principle in the following aphoristic manner:

> When this is, that is.
> This arising, that arises.
> When this is not, that is not.
> This ceasing, that ceases. (KONG, 1999, p. 146)

The principle of dependent origination applies to our individual existences as well. Owing to a series of linked conditions, our existence is perpetuated until we can take steps to cease them. The twelve illustrations symbolize these conditions, which are particular events or states of mind that living beings are subjected to. Together they form a causal chain, with one condition leading to another in a cycle. A summary table[7] follows.

[7] Obviously, these illustrations are also metaphorical representations for the corresponding mind states. However, they are not the focus of this paper.

EVENT/STATE OF MIND	ILLUSTRATION
Ignorance	Blind man
Impulses/ activity	Potter creating a new pot
Consciousness	Hyperactive monkey
Name and form/identity	Men in a boat
Sensory perception and the mind	House with a door and windows
Contact between objects and senses	Love-making couple
Sensation	Man with an arrow in his eye
Craving	Man drinking
Clinging	Monkey grasping fruits
Becoming	Pregnant woman
Birth	Child being born
Death	Man carrying a corpse

Table 1 – The principle of dependent origination.

The causal chain can be described as follows. Unenlightened souls enter the world ignorant of the illusionary nature of reality. This breeds karma, which roughly translates to "work". Karma refers to the intentional deeds we perform with our body, speech and mind, through action, talking and thinking (KONG, 1999, p. 91). We possess an impulse to engage in karma, because we perceive these deeds to be real. This impulse results in consciousness, which materializes itself as a mortal being. The being acquires a sense of identity, and becomes aware of its existence through sensory perception, which is regulated by the mind. In the process of conscious existence, the senses are constantly brought into contact with material objects, giving rise to sensation. Sensation in turn generates craving, which leads us to cling onto material objects. The unwillingness to let go leads to another process of becoming, culminating in another mortal birth. The new birth is consigned hence to another lifetime, eventually resulting in death, whereby the cycle starts again. This chain of causation is believed to govern the entire phenomenon of existence, and its perpetuating nature is the mechanism for trapping living beings in samsara. In order to attain liberation, the causal chain must be broken.

3.4 Concentric sector – the six realms of existence

The next concentric sector consists of six zones, known as the six realms of existence. The three realms indicated on the upper part of the

wheel are the realms of gods, demigods and humans, with conditions more favorable than the lower realms of animals, hungry ghosts and hell-beings. Each realm is symbolically depicted by an illustration which highlights its essential aspects. For example, the realm of gods depicts celestial beings indulging in merriment. While some still believe that the six realms are actual physical locations in the universe, modern Buddhist teachings perceive them as metaphorical projections of our mind states (KONG, 1999). For example, a miser constantly craving for wealth can be seen as dwelling in the realm of hungry ghosts, where desire is insatiable. If one constantly relies on primitive instincts and is primarily motivated by food, sleep and sex, he may be seen as dwelling in the animal realm. Conversely, one who experiences peace and joy is likely to be dwelling in the realm of gods. In line with the notion that all existence is in a continual state of flux, it is also believed that a living being transits through these mind-states as a matter of daily experience. An excerpt from a talk given by Ngak'chang Rinpoche (1994), a prominent Buddhist advocate, will clarify this viewpoint.

> […] as models of mind-states, the six realms are actually very useful indeed. Hell is actually here and now ... You only have to look at the newspaper to find hell (referring to the reporting of tragedies and disasters). You only have to look at the advertisements to find the god realm (referring to luxuries), or at least the insinuation that it's possible to coax it into existence …

3.5 Hub of wheel – the mental ills: desire, hatred and ignorance

The innermost sector of the Wheel is divided into two parts. At the very centre, three animals; the rooster, snake and boar represent desire, hatred and ignorance respectively. These mental ills are identified as the "roots of all evil", (BHIKKHU KHANTIPALO, 1970, p. 16) and are chiefly responsible for living beings not realizing the true nature of reality. Chasing each other, they form a cycle which indicates a close relationship between the mental ills. Desire for success causes us to be attached to material phenomena; hatred towards others breeds anger and resentment. Ignorance of the impermanence of material reality, and the mechanism of samsara, causes us to fall victim to it repeatedly. It is thus imperative to recognize and remove these attitudes.

Between the three animals and the six realms, a half black-and-white circle depicts the intermediary phase between death and rebirth. Beings in the white half are seen to be ascending, as they will be reborn into one of the higher realms, while those in the black half are descending to take rebirth in the lower realms.

Having briefly introduced the basic concepts in the Wheel, I will now proceed to the actual analysis of the metaphors used to illustrate these target concepts.

4 STATES OF BEING

4.1 Physical representation of states of being

As the name suggests, the "Wheel of life" predominantly comprises concepts pertaining to mortal life. The previously mentioned twelvefold chain of causation, six realms of mortal existence, and the three mental ills of mortal beings are fully represented within and only within the spatial confines of the Wheel image, demarcated into three concentric sectors. Yama, depicted as the manipulator of the Wheel, and Buddha, who has attained enlightenment, are clearly transcendent to mortal conditions, and are therefore spatially located outside of the Wheel.

The dichotomy between the inside and outside of the wheel thus corresponds to being in and out of the mortal state. Such a depiction evidently draws upon the primary metaphor STATES ARE LOCATIONS, whereby states are conceptualized as bounded regions in space, possessing an interior, exterior and boundary (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1999, p. 180). Accordingly, the correlation between states and locations is caused by early experiences of feeling a certain state while physically situated in a certain location. (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1999, p. 52). By this metaphorical inference, Yama and Buddha, who are out of the mortal state, are also out of the Wheel's physical space.

It should also be noted that the three animals situated at the hub of the wheel represent the most fundamental mental ills that are situated in the core of our being (BHIKKHU KHANTIPALO, 1970). Clearly, a degree of emphasis is accorded to the centre, as compared to other parts

of the Wheel. This conceptualization of the centre as more significant than the periphery is also present in English expressions such as "He is at the centre of attention" and "I belong to the fringes of society". Here I propose the primary metaphor IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL (conversely, LESS IMPORTANT IS PERIPHERAL), where the evaluation of relative importance is conceptualized in terms of central-peripheral spatial perception.

The justification is as follows. In our bodily interactions with the world, we are always constrained by the locus of our sensory perceptions. As we move about, the centre of our cognition follows us, and we constantly take ourselves as a point of reference in relation to the environment. Hence, from early life, we develop a strong distinction between the centre – our site of consciousness, and the peripheral – the external world as defined by the locus of our sensory perceptions.

In early life, we likely perceive the centrality of our consciousness as more significant than peripheral objects and people. It has been suggested that prior to the acquisition of cognitive mechanisms such as the theory-of-mind (PREMACK; WOODRUFF, 1978), young children are unable to empathize and thus cannot appreciate the needs and wants of others, who are at the periphery of their senses. This repeated co-occurrence of the sensorimotor experience of centrality and subjective judgment of importance would then lead to a conflation between the two conceptual domains, which may be differentiated only after the acquisition of a theory-of-mind.

Hence, when IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL is combined with STATES ARE LOCATIONS, the inference is that states at the centre are more significant than states at the periphery, which exactly accounts for the illustration. The animals at the hub of the Wheel are hence understood as the most fundamental mental ills.

Subdivisions of the Wheel into smaller spaces are also used to represent a variety of sub-states. Wheel spokes create the physical demarcations, which divide up the twelve different links in the chain of causation, and the six different realms of existence. According to STATES ARE LOCATIONS, we would expect the interpretation to be that these causal links and realms are separate and independent of one another. Between the realm of gods and demigods, a tree is drawn to physically connect the two realms to symbolize the constant effort of

demigods to access into the superior realm of gods. Hence, transforming from one state to another is equivalent to the physical transference of locations. In addition, the movement from demigods to gods is depicted as an upward climb, as the demigods see the other realm as more desirable. This correspondence between verticality and superiority is one of the many instances in which spatial orientation correlates with our subjective experiences (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1999).

4.2 Symbolic representation within the realms

We now focus specifically on the six realms, which depict the living conditions of gods, demigods, hungry ghosts, humans, animals and hell-beings. If we adopt the previously mentioned interpretation that the realms are "models of mind states" (NGAK'CHANG, 1994), symbolizing our daily mental experiences and emotions, we can investigate how specific conditions in the realms metaphorically represent these states of mind that we experience. Therefore, while in the preceding section we explored how these mind-states are generally conceptualized as locations, we now examine how the mind-states are individually conceptualized. For example, the intense heat suffered by hell beings is believed to symbolize the tremendous anger and hatred these beings possess (KONG, 1999, p. 124).

Other mind-states that are represented in similar ways include frustration, jealousy and desire. The diagram makes it clear that these are illustrated via different source domains, but it is important to question whether there is an embodied basis to them (i.e. whether these subjective experiences are conceptualized via domains of embodied experience). When we probe into how these subjective experiences are metaphorically represented in the illustrations, we discover the repeated usage of these source domains:

a) Heat and cold

b) Hunger

c) Physical pain

Situations of extreme hotness and coldness are depicted in both the realms of hell and hungry ghosts. In hell, commonly subdivided into

"hot" and "cold", creatures are shown to be tormented either by continuous burning or freezing. The experience of such intense heat and coldness is believed to correspond to experiencing the emotions of anger and apathy respectively (KONG, 1999). According to Ngak'chang (1994), "anger is the root of the (hot) hell realm", because the endless process of torture is triggered by a vicious cycle of anger. As a living being undergoes suffering, it experiences anger against its tormentors and itself. This generates more heat and suffering, and more anger in return. As Ngak'chang (1994) elaborates, "this hell condition is one in which the experiential situation becomes so intense that *the only response to it is to create further intensity* (emphasis mine)". Therefore, there is a perpetuating relationship between anger and heat.

Conversely, in the cold hell, one becomes "catatonic, completely and utterly frozen" (NGAK'CHANG, 1994), apathetic and resigned to the surrounding state of suffering. Being physically frozen thus represents a feeling of apathy towards self and others.

This would suggest the presence of metaphors such as ANGER IS HEAT and APATHY IS COLDNESS, where the former has already been demonstrated to possess an embodied basis (LAKOFF, 1987). However, they are unlikely to be reducible to *primary* metaphors, for several reasons. Firstly, although these emotions are significant in the Wheel, it is doubtful as to whether relatively complex emotions such as apathy and anger are experienced early in life. Secondly, to claim that emotions are wholly structured by conceptual metaphors would be to overlook the actual culture-specific situations that trigger such emotions in the first place, which may depend more on the interpersonal than the individual embodied plane. In his study on emotive behavior, Lazarus (1991) distinguishes between "core relational themes" (p. 359), which are biological universals that give us the *capacity* to feel emotions, and the actual manifestation of specific emotions such as anger, hatred and fear, which are regulated by culture-specific understandings. Hence, specific emotions are not embodied as part of our neurobiological makeup, as compared to the general emotional experiencing capacity. This brings us back to the alternative viewpoint of cultural models (QUINN, 1991). It seems that when discussing emotions, cultural understandings of what constitutes, justifies or evokes them play at least an equal role compared to universal embodied experiences.

Situations of hunger are also depicted in the Wheel. In the realm of animals, hunger causes the beasts to slaughter each other. In the hungry ghost realm, creatures desire food, but are unable to swallow due to their elongated throats. They also possess bloated bellies which render digestion impossible. Although they taste food in their mouths, they soon realize that their hunger and thirst can never be satisfied. This is used to represent the insatiable greed possessed by some individuals, who may be undergoing semblances of positive experience, but continuously yearn for more (KONG, 1999, p. 126). In his comments about the hungry ghost realm, Ngak'chang Rinpoche makes vivid use of the food metaphor to describe the extent of insatiable desire.

> The yidag (hungry ghost) is a being with a huge mouth and a very thin neck. It can get a hell of a lot into its mouth but it can't swallow anything… It's a bit like going to some amazing restaurant where the food is wonderful but you slather all over the table cloth and dribble on the waiter's arm…you end up spitting it across the room and vomiting on the carpet because you want to stuff it all down at once…there's so much food in your mouth at once, but you can't take it out either, because you are starving…

That points towards the metaphor DESIRE IS HUNGER. English expressions for this metaphor include "I am hungry for success", "That is a mouth-watering prospect", "The sight of that makes me salivate" etc. Unlike the conceptualizations of anger and apathy, there is justification that DESIRE IS HUNGER is a primary metaphor. Research has demonstrated that infants cry mainly to express basic physiological needs, and amongst them the most fundamental is hunger (CHAVEZ; MARTINEZ, 1979; BARRETT; FRANK, 1987). Abraham Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs likewise acknowledges the fundamental position that physiological needs such as hunger and thirst occupy in the general well-being of a human (MASLOW, 1954). As physiological needs are a reflection of our neurobiological makeup as humans, they are likely to be universally valid. Therefore, for an infant, hunger and desire are likely to be experienced simultaneously on a frequent basis, resulting in conflation and subsequent primary metaphor formation.

Pain is another common means of conceptualizing subjective experiences. In the realms of gods and demigods, the actions taken by the relatively inferior demigods to attain the status of gods are depicted by a scene of physical combat. Failure to achieve their goal, resulting in emotional hurt, is equivalent to losing the battle and sustaining physical injury. Likewise, in the realm of hell, constant physical pain represents various kinds of hurt and distress.

It appears that the sensation of physical pain is consistently used to represent all types of ill-being in general. We may tentatively posit another primary metaphor, ILL-BEING IS PHYSICAL PAIN. The experience of physical pain is present since early infancy, and the numerous sources of pain include sore tender muscles, sensitive tissues, and general infections. Moreover, the sensation of pain is often more acute for infants, whose pain-controlling nerves are yet to be developed. This primary metaphor is present in English expressions such as "That was a painful lesson learnt", "She hurt him with words", and "Ouch!" (when expressing loss).

5 PERPETUATION

5.1 Perpetual rebirth

Another concept associated with the Wheel is that of perpetual rebirth. In many commentaries, the Wheel of Life is referred to as the "Wheel of Cyclic Existence" or the "Wheel of Wandering On" (BHIKKHU KHANTIPALO, 1970), indicating that a living being, upon death, re-enters into existence once again in the same unenlightened condition, as if finding himself at the original starting point of some journey. The living being is trapped in a cycle, unaware that it is about to be brought back once again to the starting point by the turning of the Wheel. Unless one regains his volition and deviates from the path, he will inevitably be brought back to the starting point by the force that turns the Wheel.

The above conceptualization of existence as a circular journey seems to have been built around familiar primary metaphors such as PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS, CAUSES ARE PHYSICAL

FORCES and ACTIONS ARE SELF-PROPELLED MOTIONS. This is largely similar to Lakoff and Johnson's (1999) discussion of LIFE IS A JOURNEY, where life purposes are journey destinations, and difficulties in life are journey impediments. Liberation, the ultimate purpose, is conceptualized as a spatial destination beyond the confines of the Wheel, while the undesirable condition of samsara is depicted as a return to the original point, and hence, the non-arrival at the appropriate destination. Our inability to prevent ourselves from returning to the starting point is conceptualized as due to the force of desire that keeps us on the same track, and the appropriate response is to take proactive action in order to overcome the force, regain volition and deviate from the circular motion.

5.2 The embodied basis of perpetuation

When we consider our experiences of spatial movement, we begin to see how perpetuation can be conceptualized as constantly moving in a circular manner. We know that traveling along a linear path would ensure our arrival at a destination away from the starting point, while walking in a circle always brings us back to the same point. Additionally, if the radius of the circle is large enough, the traveler may not even realize he is on a circular path. A clear example is the circumnavigation of a ship, where traveling in a "great circle" means traveling a maximum distance on the earth's surface, on a seemingly straight route. Just as a traveler walking in a large circle is unaware of circumambulation, a traveler on the long journey of existence does not realize he is on a cyclical path.

However, it may be argued that the *actual* bodily experience of walking in circles is not a frequent occurrence. It is untenable to imagine any culture where people habitually walk in circles. The notion that circular travel brings us back to the starting point might not be experientially acquired, but is instead likely to be inferred from our knowledge of traveling, plus some basic understanding of geometry. Thus the metaphor PERPETUAL EXISTENCE IS TRAVELING IN CIRCLES is a complex metaphor (made up of familiar primary metaphors such as PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS, CAUSES ARE FORCES and ACTIONS ARE SELF-PROPELLED MOTIONS), but the essential component of circular travel, however, cannot be reduced to any primary metaphor. We might then again look

to cultural models for an explanation. Pre-existing cultural beliefs of recurring existence becomes the motivation for the metaphor of circularity, instead of a highly implausible experiential basis. Since a complex metaphor is supposedly made up of a core of primary metaphors, plus some culture-specific belief (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1999, p. 60), the Lakoffian school might be tempted to simply shift the notion of circularity into the latter, and claim that the same pool of primary metaphors universally underlies any conceptualization of life as a journey. However, I feel that to isolate the notion of circularity from the notion of traveling this way would be an artificial treatment of Buddhist philosophy, since they are inextricably related in Buddhist understanding. A more plausible explanation would be the appeal to cultural models, which will accommodate a completely different Buddhist notion in its entirety.

6 EVENT STRUCTURE

6.1 Radical differences in event structure concepts

This section deals with "event structure concepts" – states, changes, causes and effects, which are crucial in reasoning about how the world fundamentally operates. The Buddhist understanding of event structure concepts is laid out in the twelve-fold chain of causation, governed by the principle of dependent origination. However, before analyzing the metaphorical depiction of event structure in Buddhism for its reducibility to primary metaphors, it is of great importance to emphasize the radical differences between the more familiar "western" concept of event structure, and its Buddhist counterpart. Throughout the section, for ease of exposition, the term "western causation" will be used to refer to concepts of event structure as characterised by Lakoff and Johnson (1999). It is not my intention to create a false dichotomy between "east" and "west", or to claim that Lakoff and Johnson have dealt with the latter in an exclusive sense. My intention is to highlight the different possible ways that event structure concepts can be understood, using Buddhist philosophy as an example.

The familiar, "western" concepts of event structure and the metaphorical ways we reason about them are discussed by Lakoff and Johnson (1999) in some detail. They formulate a prototype of causation (p. 177), which forms the basic source from which various different ways of reasoning about causation may develop. The embodied basis of event structure concepts may be seen in this prototype. I will discuss two major aspects of this prototypical causation and the primary metaphors that motivate them, and proceed to demonstrate the absence of these aspects in Buddhism.

Firstly, there is a causal factor that results in a change of state, and this causal factor is conceptualized as a force. States themselves can be either conceptualized as spatial locations (STATES ARE LOCATIONS), or as objects/possessions (ATTRIBUTES ARE POSSESSIONS). The causal force results in a change of state either by acting on the original state to move it to a new location (e.g. "Hitler brought Germany into war") or by resulting in a transfer of possessions (e.g. "The noise gave me a headache"). In both cases, the primary metaphor CAUSES ARE FORCES is used. In its most prototypical case, the force is volitionally applied by a human agent to change something in the immediate environment by direct contact. Extensions of this central prototype may yield different metaphors of causation, but they are all ultimately reducible to CAUSES ARE FORCES

Secondly, the cause is always conceived as temporally preceding the effect, which entails that the effect cannot be manifested unless the cause has already appeared. There is a strict *cause-causation-effect* sequence that governs every causal relationship. The presence of the cause is the definitive starting point, and the manifestation of the effect is the end point. The process of causation bridges the gap between the two. This forms the basis for the primary metaphor CAUSAL PRIORITY IS TEMPORAL PRIORITY (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1999, p. 209).

Buddhist event structure, however, is starkly different. Broadly speaking, it is believed that events in this world are interrelated, constituting each other's causes and manifesting as each other's effects. The twelve-fold chain of causation demonstrates how a cause is itself an effect of a previous cause, and that all these causes are operating simultaneously, such that causes and effects always co-exist. This implies that we cannot isolate a definitive starting point for any causal

relationship, since there is always the presence of another prior cause. Even at the "localized" level of causation, where a singular event is observed in isolation, Buddhists hesitate to conclude that a specific cause precedes an effect, due to the interrelated and evanescent "flow" of reality as we perceive it. I shall term such a lack of sequentiality and indeterminability of a "first cause" as the *interconnectedness* characteristic of Buddhist causation.

A second important characteristic is what I term *non-agency*. Unlike prototypical western causation, where some agency, human or non-human, is overtly stated or at least implied, Buddhist causation does not attribute change of state to any agency. The progression from one state to another occurs without any conscious manipulation of the states. This resembles what Lakoff and Johnson would term as "natural causation" (1999, p. 213), a less prototypical form of western causation.

Perhaps the most baffling characteristic would be what Malalasekera (1968, p. 71) calls *consecution*. As mentioned, western causation sees the shift from cause to effect as the result of the straightforward application of a causal factor, bringing about a direct change of state. However, in Buddhist causation, the shift is not a direct change of the state of affairs, but rather a "constant, uninterrupted, infinitely graduated change" (MALALASEKERA, 1968, p. 71). The "gap" between cause and effect is seen as an infinite number of instants, such that there is no obvious and detectable shift. This is the reason why there is an overwhelming impetus for Buddhists to focus on the absolute "present moment", since it is the instantaneous moment that underlies the flux of reality. The peculiarity of such a conception has led Malalasekera to suggest taking the extreme step of abandoning the notion of causation altogether in Buddhist philosophy. Observing the non-discrete progression from cause to effect, he comments, "Strictly speaking, there is no causality at all, no production of one from the other" (1968, p. 71).

To see how the characteristics of interconnectedness, non-agency and consecution relate to each other, I return to the oil lamp example. In Buddhist terms, it is inaccurate to say that the air, oil and heat *cause* the lamp to burn. Rather, between the process of combustion and the lighting of the flame, there is an infinite amount of "air-containing, oil-containing and flame-containing moments" etc, coming together to

result in the flame (consecution). We cannot pin down any of these infinite moments as a definitive starting point, or decide whether the "air-containing moments" precede the "flame-containing moments" (interconnectedness). Neither can we determine the agency that is directly responsible for the process (non-agency).

Having contrasted the two sets of event-structure concepts, it should be clear that reducing the Buddhist concepts to the same set of primary metaphors that underlie the western concepts would be problematic. To draw this conclusion, we now turn to the Wheel, and examine the actual metaphorical depiction of event structure more closely. Two separate metaphors, which I label as the *chain* and *arising* metaphors, will be discussed.

6.2 The chain metaphor

Via this metaphor, each of the twelve elements is depicted as a separate link, interconnected to form a chain. Every individual link is tied to the next link, and is conceptualized as being its cause. Likewise, each link is also connected to the one before, and is seen as the effect of the previous link.

This conceptualization of a physical linkage as a causal relationship is discussed by Lakoff and Johnson (1999, p. 211), when they consider English expressions such as "AIDS is tied to the HIV virus" and "AIDS has been closely linked to the HIV virus", which are interpreted as meaning that the HIV virus causes AIDS. They call this the causal link metaphor, which applies the object event-structure metaphor to a situation whereby two objects, A and B, are tied together. This is spelt out below:

- Source-domain knowledge: If Object B is tied tightly to Object A, and if X has Object A, then the tie between Object A and Object B will result in X having Object B.

which is mapped onto the target-domain knowledge:

- If Attribute B is causally closely correlated with Attribute A, and if X has attribute A, then the close causal correlation

> between Attribute A and Attribute B will result in X also having Attribute B.

In short, closely correlated attributes are conceptualized as closely juxtaposed objects, and the correlation is conceptualized as the physical link between the objects. This correlation implies a causal relationship because when objects are linked, the presence of one object will result in the presence of the other. The causal force varies with the strength of the physical link. (Compare "AIDS is *strongly* linked to the HIV virus" with "*remotely* linked"). This is how the causal link metaphor reduces to CAUSES ARE FORCES.

We see how the chain metaphor illustrates the characteristic of interconnectedness. At every causal link, one link results in the next. (e.g., Ignorance is linked to impulse, and results in impulse). The interlocking of all twelve causal links into one chain implies that there is no "beginning" link, just as there is no "first cause" in Buddhist causation. Another interesting inference, unrelated to causal links, is that the chain of causation is what exactly "chains" us to the bondage of rebirth (BHIKKHU KHANTIPALO, 1970). However, the chain metaphor does not adequately conceptualize Buddhist causation, as it excludes the characteristics of non-agency and consecution.

6.3 The arising metaphor

Another metaphor commonly used to conceptualize causation is in terms of an upward motion, or arising, of an effect from a cause. Although the process of arising is not visible in the diagram of the wheel, numerous commentaries make use of this metaphor (BHIKKHU KHANTIPALO, 1970; KONG, 1999). The object moving upwards is the effect, while the upward motion is the process of causation. The causal force is the force enabling the upward motion. As already noted in section two, the Buddha summarizes the principle of dependent origination with the following verse (KONG, 1999, p. 146):

> When this is, that is.
> *This arising, that arises.*
> *When this is not, that is not.*
> This ceasing, that ceases.

where "this" and "that" refer to twelve elements of the Wheel, which arise out of one another. Lakoff and Johnson (1999, p. 213) have already dealt with the arising metaphor, labeling it as an instance of "natural causation". The verb "arise" is commonly used in passive constructions, as in the following example, "a problem has arisen in Bosnia". The agency of the arising process is unclear, and attributed to some natural situation. This is often exploited in situations whereby it is pragmatic to hide the true agency of an event (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1999, p. 213).

In this way, the arising metaphor illustrates the characteristic of non-agency. Comments such as "where contact arises, feeling exists" and "when feelings arise, cravings are produced" (BHIKKHU KHANTIPALO, 1970, p. 39-40) do not inform us who/what brought about the arising of contact and feelings.

Crucially however, like the chain metaphor above, the arising metaphor can only account for the characteristic of non-agency. In both these metaphors, the causal force cannot provide a complete conceptualization of Buddhist causation. Indeed, the radical characteristic of consecution does not appear to be reducible to CAUSES ARE FORCES, or any primary metaphor for that matter. The idea that there are an infinite number of moments bridging the gap between cause and effect does away with the need for a distinct causal force. This raises a key problem for the Lakoffian position, which claims that all theories of causation are reducible to CAUSES ARE FORCES. There are a few possible responses to this.

6.4 Possible responses

Firstly, we can also modify the scope of the primary metaphor CAUSES ARE FORCES, by reconsidering what is exactly meant by a force. The concept of force itself is prototypical, varying along dimensions such as magnitude, direction and the inherent nature of the force. Within the domain of physics, scholars have located numerous elusive forces at the atomic and nuclear levels, and are still attempting to unify them under a singular theory. This suggests that the concept of forces, and hence the nature and characteristics of the source domain, has yet to be precisely spelt out. CAUSES ARE FORCES admits only the most straightforward of forces, i.e. direct physical manipulation.

While it is admissible that this is indeed a recurring bodily experience, the case of consecution has revealed its inadequacy.

Secondly, besides CAUSES ARE FORCES, we can include other metaphorical conceptualizations of causes into Lakoff and Johnson's prototype. That is to say, their prototype can be expanded beyond what they call the fundamental case of direct object manipulation (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1999, p. 177). For example, it is possible to suggest that the infinite amount of instantaneous moments between cause and effect is enabled not by a force, but by a continuous supply of energy that maintains the moments. At the very least, this conceptualization eliminates the need to adhere to a cause-causation-effect sequence, since "causal energy" is possessed simultaneously at all three stages. The point is that causes need not always be forces, as long as within the source domain, the object successfully undergoes some physical change.

Thirdly, which I feel to be the ideal option, is to revisit the alternative viewpoints; particularly, the notion of cultural understandings constraining choice of metaphors (QUINN, 1991). The individual possesses a pre-existing knowledge of the characteristics of Buddhist causation, and this is neither dependent on nor structured by metaphors. Instead, the individual can focus on one characteristic at a time, and select an appropriate metaphor that is sufficient to illustrate that particular characteristic. This appears to be the case in the Wheel, as the chain metaphor specifically illustrates interconnectedness, while the arising metaphor illustrates non-agency. Another metaphor may serve to illustrate consecution, but it does not have to be coherent with the other two.

Appealing to the cultural basis of metaphor in this instance (and hence arriving at conclusion ii) mentioned in section 1.1) may quickly resolve the conflict that the Lakoffian analyst faces, in forcibly attempting to find metaphorical coherence between the three interrelated characteristics of Buddhist causation. As Quinn and colleagues would agree, instead of attempting to locate a universal metaphorical mechanism underlying both western and Buddhist concepts of causation, we can shift the explanatory burden away from metaphor to culture – our understanding of the world is not constituted by universal conceptual metaphors, but by culture-specific models instead.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 Summary of findings

My aim was to investigate the universality of primary metaphors using Buddhist concepts. After analyzing their reducibility, we are now in a position to draw some conclusions that will shed light on the theoretical debate concerning the constitutive role of metaphor in thought and cognition.

In section three, the Buddhist conceptualization of various states of being were discussed, from their physical organization in the Wheel, to the characteristics that defined the individual realms. IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL and STATES ARE LOCATIONS were found to underlie the schematic layout of the Wheel. Within the realms themselves, DESIRE IS HUNGER and ILL-BEING IS PHYSICAL PAIN underlie the conceptualization of desire and ill-being. However, despite the embodied experiences of hotness and coldness being used to conceptualize anger and apathy, I hesitate to argue for the presence of primary metaphors, due to the lack of universality of these subjective emotions.

In section four, the concept of perpetuation – an endless series of rebirths – was discussed. The complex metaphor PERPETUAL EXISTENCE IS TRAVELING IN CIRCLES was found to share the same set of primary metaphors as LIFE IS A JOURNEY, but the crucial component of circularity itself cannot be reduced to primary metaphors, due to the lack of any plausible experiential basis.

In section five, I examined the concept of causation. I emphasized the radical difference between Buddhist and western conceptualizations of causation, and identified the three defining characteristics of the former – interconnectedness, non-agency and consecution. These were found not to fit in with Lakoff and Johnson's causal prototype (1999, p. 177), which critically depends on CAUSES ARE FORCES.

On the whole then, among the three logical conclusions spelt out in section 1.1, we seem to have arrived at conclusion ii). Within a slice of Buddhist philosophy itself, some concepts are found to reduce to primary metaphors, while others are not. Far from dismissing the

universalist claim too quickly, I would like to offer a more detailed explanation as to why the irreducible concepts turned out to be so.

7.2 Irreducibility - a closer look at primary metaphor

The concept of primary metaphor involves the universal co-occurrence of subjective and sensorimotor experiences in early life. While our common neurobiological makeup provides reason to believe in universal sensorimotor experiences, it is far more difficult to justify the universality of subjective judgements. The analysis of emotions such as anger and apathy reveal that seemingly basic subjective experiences are far from monolithic, and should not be assumed to correlate with any specific sensorimotor experience, without taking into account the influence of cultural situations. Extrapolating from this line of argument, if we examine Lakoff and Johnson's list of primary metaphors (1999, p. 50), we will realize that justification has yet to be provided for the assumed cultural independence of subjective judgements and experiences such as affection, importance, happiness, intimacy etc. After appreciating the significant differences in Buddhist concepts, the reader should realize that there is every possibility for these subjective experiences to be differently interpreted and experienced by different communities around the world.

It appears then, that some primary metaphors themselves already carry culture-specific meanings. Recalling the analysis of Buddhist causation, where CAUSES ARE FORCES was found to be inadmissible, it appears that rather than CAUSES ARE FORCES underlying the conceptualization of causation, there exits wholly different and independent conceptualizations altogether. Instead, CAUSES ARE FORCES should be treated as a complex metaphor, and Lakoff and Johnson's discussion should be viewed as a culture-specific model of causation, instead of a universal one. Hopefully, the discussion of Buddhist concepts in this paper has helped to illuminate this subtle point.

7.3 Directions for further discussion

I conclude by recommending that the key direction to take in further investigation of the universalist claim should be to explore ideas

and concepts from cultures and traditions that are intuitively different from the western one, which some might be tempted to label as "exotic" cultures. The present analysis of the Wheel of Life has thrown up some inadequacies of the universalist account, but much more remains to examined, even within Buddhism itself. Metaphorical conceptualizations of compassion and wisdom, for example, would all be excellent choices for future work. On the other hand, for the Lakoffian school, the onus is to provide a justification for the assumed universality of subjective judgements and experiences, which are supposed to co-occur with universal sensorimotor experiences. Whichever side one is on, there is definitely much more empirical work waiting to be done in our quest towards understanding the complex relationship between metaphor, culture and cognition.

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APPENDIX

Diagram – Wheel of Life.

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Título: Investigando a universalidade de metáforas primárias: a perspectiva do Budismo

Autor: Dennis Tay Zhiming

Resumo: Nesse trabalho, examino a "Roda da Vida", uma representação diagramática de conceitos filosóficos budistas significativos, a partir da perspectiva da metáfora conceitual (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1980, 1999). Conceitos abstratos que definem nossas realidades diárias (e.g. estados, causalidade, temporalidade) são definidos por alguns pesquisadores como metaforicamente construídos, e, portanto, reduzíveis a um conjunto universal de metáforas primárias (GRADY, 1997; LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1999), enquanto outros os vêem como conhecimentos estruturados não metafóricos e culturalmente compartilhados (D'ANDRADE, 1990, QUINN, 1991). Reconhecendo a necessidade de uma testagem rigorosa da asserção universalista, preferencialmente através do uso de dados o mais distante possíveis da tradição filosófica 'ocidental', decidi analisar os conceitos budistas de estados de coisa, perpetuação do renascimento, e estrutura de eventos, devido a sua reducibilidade a metáforas primárias. Demonstro que, enquanto alguns conceitos budistas são redutíveis às mesmas metáforas primárias que seus correspondentes 'ocidentais', por outro lado, outros conceitos, particularmente a noção de causalidade, talvez sejam constituídos por conhecimentos culturalmente específicos. Concluo questionando o próprio conceito de metáfora primária, examinando até que ponto metáforas primárias supostamente universais já carregam em si preconceitos culturalmente determinados, e argumento que o ônus da defesa está com a escola Lakoffiana, que precisa justificar a suposta universalidade de experiências e julgamentos subjetivos que geram as metáforas primárias.

Palavras-chave: Budismo; metáforas primárias; metáforas conceituais; modelos culturais.

Titre: Recherchant l'universalité de métaphores primaires: la perspectif du Buddhism

Auteur: Dennis Tay Zhiming

Résumé: Dans ce travail, je fais l'analyse de la « Roue de la Vie », une représentation diagrammatique de concepts philosophiques bouddhistes significatifs, à partir de la perspective de la métaphore conceptuelle (LAKOFF ; JOHNSON, 1980, 1999). Des concepts abstraits qui définissent nos réalités quotidiennes (e. g. États, causalité, temporalité), sont définis par quelques chercheurs comme construits d'une manière métaphorique, et, pourtant, réductibles à un ensemble universel de métaphores primaires (GRADY, 1997 ; LAKOFF ; JOHNSON, 1999), pendant que d'autres les voient comme des connaissances structurées non métaphoriques et culturellement partagées (D'ANDRADE, 1990 ; QUINN, 1991). Tout en reconnaissant le besoin de l'essai strict de l'assertion universelle, surtout à travers l'emploi de donnés le plus lointain possible de la tradition philosophique 'occidentale', j'ai pris la décision d'analyser les concepts bouddhistes d'état de choses, perpétuité du renouvellement, structure d'évenements, dû à leur réducibilité aux métaphores primaires. Je démontre que, pendant que quelques concepts bouddhistes sont réductibles aux mêmes

métaphores primaires que leurs correspondants 'occidentaux', d'autre part, d'autres concepts, surtout la notion de causalité, peut-être, soient constitués par des connaissances culturellement spécifiques. Je finis tout en mettant en question le concept lui-même de métaphore primaire, analysant jusqu'où des métaphores primaires hypothétiquement universelles apportent en soi des préjugés culturellement determinés, et j'argumente que le fardeau de la défense se trouve dans l'École Lakoffienne, qui a besoin de justifier la supposée universalité d'expériences et jugements subjectifs qui engendrent les métaphores primaires.
Mots-clés: Bouddhisme; métaphores primaires; métaphores conceptuelles; modèles culturels.

Título: Investigando la universalidad de metáforas primarias

Autor: Dennis Tay Zhiming

Resumen: En este trabajo, examino la "Rueda de la Vida", una representación diagramática de conceptos filosóficos budistas significativos, a partir de la perspectiva de la metáfora conceptual (LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1980, 1999). Conceptos abstractos que definen nuestras realidades diarias (e.g. estados, causalidad, temporalidad) son definidos por algunos investigadores como metafóricamente construidos, y, por lo tanto, reductibles a un conjunto universal de metáforas primarias (GRADY, 1997; LAKOFF; JOHNSON, 1999), mientras que otros los ven como conocimientos estructurados no metafóricos y culturalmente compartidos (D'ANDRADE, 1990, QUINN, 1991). Reconociendo la necesidad de una prueba rigurosa de la aserción universalista, preferentemente a través del uso de datos lo más distante posibles de la tradición filosófica 'occidental', decidí analizar los conceptos budistas de estados de cosa, perpetuación del renacimiento, y estructura de eventos, debido a su reductibilidad a metáforas primarias. Demuestro que, mientras algunos conceptos budistas son reductibles a las mismas metáforas primarias que sus correspondientes 'occidentales', por otro lado, otros conceptos, particularmente la noción de causalidad, tal vez sean constituidos por conocimientos culturalmente específicos. Concluyo cuestionando el propio concepto de metáfora primaria, examinando hasta que punto metáforas primarias supuestamente universales ya cargan en sí preconceptos culturalmente determinados, y argumento que el bónus de la defensa está con la escuela Lakoffiana, que precisa justificar la supuesta universalidad de experiencias y juicios subjetivos que generan las metáforas primarias.
Palabras-clave: Budismo; metáforas primarias; metáforas conceptuales; modelos culturales.