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Collision with China: Conceptual Metaphor Analysis, Somatic Marking, and the EP-3 Incident

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Recent research suggests that cultural differences in Chinese and Western modes of conceptual reasoning play a significant role in political discourse and relations between the United States and China. In contrast, our analysis of the discourse surrounding the 2001 collision of an American surveillance plane with a Chinese fighter jet over international waters reveals a surprisingly high degree of similarity in conceptual metaphors used across the two cultures. Using tools from cognitive linguistics and cognitive science, we compare U.S. and Chinese conceptual metaphors used to frame the incident over a 13-day period, ultimately distinguishing between *shared* metaphorical conceptualizations (War, Journey, and Economic) and *competing* metaphorical conceptualizations (Game, Technical Fix, Victim, and Civil Relations). Our analysis allows us to make empirically grounded claims about Chinese–American relations that avoid cultural stereotypes and suggest possibilities for further integration of interpretive and scientific approaches for understanding intercultural discourse.

On April 1, 2001, an American EP-3E surveillance plane collided with a Chinese F-8 fighter jet over international waters. The Chinese pilot Wang Wei was lost and the U.S. plane was forced to make an emergency landing, without authorization, on China's Hainan Island. The collision occurred over China's Exclusive Economic Zone, a legal designation of 200 nautical miles out from coastal states. While customary international law allows such flights, China insisted that the U.S. spy plane could be endangering Chinese security and national interests. For instance, there were reports that the surveillance plane was eavesdropping on radio transmissions

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and monitoring military communications traffic, and that it was interfering with communications between Chinese armed forces (Valencia and Ju 2002). Additional reports alleged that the spy plane's mission was to briefly, but deliberately, violate Chinese airspace to set off Chinese radar stations and other electronic defense systems in order to map the blind spots in their defenses (McGregor 2005:184).

The mid-air collision, the loss of the Chinese pilot, and the subsequent illegal landing of the U.S. plane on Hainan Island resulted in a diplomatic impasse that was characterized by publicly reported negotiations over the possibility and wording of an American apology. Despite U.S. President George W. Bush's appeal for access to the plane and its U.S. personnel, authorities in China held the 24 man crew, demanding an American apology and a halt to U.S. reconnaissance missions of the Chinese coast. This demand was met with resistance from the United States, who claimed that it would not apologize because it was not at fault.¹ The Chinese fighter pilot had caused the accident by flying too close to the American plane. Subsequent American expressions of regret were met with continued Chinese requests for an official apology. The impasse was ultimately resolved on April 11 when U.S. Ambassador Joseph Prueher delivered an ambiguous "very sorry" letter to the Chinese Foreign Minister. This nuanced letter—which expressed regret for the loss of the pilot and the incursion into Chinese airspace but ignored the issue of culpability—allowed both sides to emphasize the most politically convenient interpretation of the text for domestic and international consumption.² Despite the freeing of the crew and subsequent release of the disassembled plane, this "Collision with China," as the *New York Times* headlines referred to it, demonstrated the sensitive nature of U.S.–China relations, and the importance of drawing lessons for future crisis negotiations. The Hainan incident raises several important questions. Were the U.S. and China working from incompatible cultural understandings of the incident, conceptualizations of the Sino-American relationship, or images of international politics more generally? What meaning did the crisis have for the participants? What values underlie each side's approach to the negotiations?

While this case has attracted attention within the International Relations (IR) and China-studies literature, existing academic treatments of the incident seem to us to frame improperly the problem of intercultural communication at the root of this standoff. For example, Yee's (2004) analysis of the incident deploys a "two-level games" approach to negotiation, a theory premised on the recognition that decision makers must satisfy both their international and domestic constituencies. Negotiators achieve cooperative outcomes by aiming to create policies within their "win-set," the set of "policy options that are acceptable to political leaders on the one hand, and ratifiable by domestic constituencies on the other" (2004:60). Yee argues that the Chinese and American win-sets were enlarged, and each side's minimum acceptable gains lowered, by the linguistic ambiguities inherent in the American use of "very sorry." One question not raised by Yee's study is the effects of using spatial ("levels") and "game" metaphors to organize its arguments—which elements of the incident are privileged and which are hidden by this approach? Further, two-level game approaches assume a stark separation between international and domestic spheres that may not be empirically present. As Michael Marks (2001) argues, the generative nature of metaphors in human interpretation and reasoning cross-cuts all spheres of society. For Marks, the legacy of game theoretic models of IR for

¹ Secretary of State Colin Powell's heavily qualified usage of the words "sorry" and "sorrow" are indicative of the American position during the negotiations: "With respect to 'regret,' 'sorry,' 'very sorry'—they were related to very specific things . . . to the loss of the young Chinese pilot's life. The death of anyone diminishes us all in some way, and so we were expressing the fact we were 'sorry,' 'very sorry,' 'regret' the loss of his life . . . [the pilot landed without permission] and we're very sorry—but we're glad he did." (Sanger and Myers, 2001:A1).

² Zhang (2001) provides a very helpful review of the original English text of the letter, the Chinese translation offered by the U.S. Embassy website, and the Chinese translation actually published in the *People's Daily* on April 11—the last of which inserted apologetic language missing from the first two.

two-level games is the assumption of an adversarial relationship such that “each level of analysis is assumed to comprise inherently contradictory interests” (2001:365). As Yee notes, the “zone of agreement”—in other words, the range of international cooperation—is in this case “bounded by the outer limits of what the negotiators believe to be possible” (Yee 2004:61). It is at this point that we can start to see how a metaphor analysis of the meaning and values of the two sides can be of some use, metaphors being integral to the cultural construction of “what is possible.”

A more common approach to analyzing the EP-3 incident has focused on supposed differences between “Eastern” and “Western” modes of thought. For instance, Gries and Peng (2002) ask what role culture played in U.S.–China. “apology diplomacy,” focusing on the differences between the “analytic” Western and “holistic” Eastern reasoning styles, and the demonizing “out-group” attributions leveled by both sides in common. Drawing on cross-cultural psychology, they argue that resolution of the incident was slowed by cultural tensions surrounding the issue of responsibility between the American focus on fault and blame, and the more pragmatic Chinese concentration on consequences. Besides the immediately obvious problems with classifying the complex and internally diverse societies of the world in such broad, monolithic brushstrokes, we can discern lurking in the background of such “Eastern” versus “Western” analyses venerable and corrosive orientalist stereotypes. Less starkly formulated but similar “cultural difference” explanations for the standoff—for example, Chinese are polite and Americans are not—were by far the most common theories offered in both the popular press and subsequent scholarly literature (Chu 2001; Chung 2001). Other analysts focused on the discourse strategies of the two parties as straightforward reflections of competing ideologies.

In this paper, we approach the Hainan incident as an episode of intercultural interaction, using tools from cognitive linguistics and cognitive science in order to provide a case study using a powerful new model of discourse analysis. We argue that the difficulties encountered by the United States and China in dealing with this incident were grounded in their very different metaphorical conceptualizations of the situation, evoking correspondingly different emotional-normative reactions. The failure to perceive these differences accurately served to fuel further misunderstandings. If the value reactions of different sides of a dispute are encoded and expressed in the conceptual metaphors with which they speak and think, then intercultural misunderstanding will often grow out of a failure to recognize these metaphors and their function in emotional biasing. Making people—particularly policy makers—aware of these differences might help to reduce misunderstandings. Moreover, the manner in which unanalyzed metaphors unconsciously bias and limit our perceived policy choices and reactions make the need for conceptual metaphor analysis particularly acute.

Theoretical Orientation

*Cognitive Linguistics and Conceptual Metaphor Theory*³

One of the basic tenets of the cognitive linguistics approach is that human cognition—the production, communication, and processing of meaning—is heavily dependent upon mappings between mental spaces. Another is that human cognition is independent of language: linguistic expressions of cross-domain mappings are merely surface manifestations of deeper cognitive structures that have an

³ For a basic introduction to contemporary metaphor theory, see Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 1999), and Johnson (1987, 1981), and Ortony (1993) are helpful resources that provide a variety of theoretical perspectives on metaphor.

important spatial or analog component.⁴ These mappings take several forms, but perhaps the most dramatic form—and the form we will be primarily concerned with here—is what George Lakoff and Mark Johnson refer to as “conceptual metaphor,” where part of the structure of a more concrete or clearly organized domain (the *source* domain) is used to understand and talk about another, usually more abstract or less clearly structured, domain (the *target* domain). “Metaphor” understood in this manner thus encompasses simile and analogy as well as metaphor in the more traditional literary sense. The most basic patterns of sensory-motor source domain schemas are referred to as “primary schemas,” and these come to be associated with abstract target domains through experiential correlation, resulting in a set of “primary metaphors.” Lakoff and Johnson (1998:50–54) provide a short list of representative primary metaphors (derived from Grady 1997) such as Affection is Warmth, Important is Big, More is Up, etc., specifying their sensory-motor source domains and the primary experience correlations that give rise to them.

Traditional theories usually portray metaphor as a relatively rare and somewhat “deviant” mode of communication thrown in to add rhetorical spice, but one fully reducible to some equivalent literal paraphrase. Metaphor understood in this way is thus viewed as a purely optional linguistic device. An important claim of the cognitive linguistics approach to metaphor analysis is that metaphor is, in fact, primarily a matter of *thought*, not language, and that conceptual metaphor is ubiquitous and unavoidable for human beings. While abstract concepts such as “time” or “death” may have a skeleton structure that is directly (i.e., nonmetaphorically) represented conceptually, in most cases this structure is not rich or detailed enough to allow us to make useful inferences. Therefore, when we attempt to conceptualize and reason about abstract or relatively unstructured realms, this skeleton structure is fleshed out (usually automatically and unconsciously) with additional structure provided by the primary metaphors derived from basic bodily experience, often invoked in combination with other primary schema to form complex metaphors or conceptual blends. When primary or complex source domains are activated in such cases and mapped onto the target domain, most aspects of the source domain conceptual topology—that is, inference patterns, imagistic reasoning pattern, salient entities, etc.—are preserved, thereby importing a high degree of structure into the target domain.⁵

To give an illustration of this process, consider the question of how we are to comprehend and reason about something as abstract as “life.” Lakoff and Johnson (1998:60–62) note that, when reasoning or talking about life, English speakers often invoke the complex metaphor, A Purposeful Life is a Journey, whereby speakers use the framework of a physical journey in order to think and reason about the abstract entity “life,” which in itself is unstructured and therefore difficult to reason about. As Lakoff and Johnson (1998:62) note, the full practical import of a metaphor such as this lies in its entailments: that is, the fact that the metaphoric link between abstract life and a concrete journey allows us to recruit our detailed and robust knowledge about literal journeys and apply it to decision making and reasoning with regard to the more abstract, less obviously constrained domain of

⁴ See Fauconnier (1997:1–5) for a brief discussion of how this treatment of language as mere “signals” connected to a deeper, nonlinguistic structure differs from structural or generative linguistic approaches. See Johnson (1987) and Barsalou (1999) for arguments that linguistic representations have an analog, spatial component rather than being a modal, formal symbols.

⁵ There is a growing body of empirical evidence that metaphors in fact represent conceptually active, dynamic, language-independent structures, including a large corpus of linguistic evidence (reviewed in Lakoff and Johnson 1998:81–89), spontaneous gesture studies (McNeil 1992), priming experiments (Gibbs 1994; Gibbs and Colston 1995; Boroditsky 2000, 2001), reasoning-constraint studies (Gentner and Gentner 1983), and fMRI studies (Rohrer, 2005). See Pecher and Zwaan (2005) and Gibbs (2006) for recent reviews of empirical evidence concerning the sensory-motor basis of human concepts.

“life.” So, for instance, we unconsciously assume that life, like a physical journey, requires planning if one is to *reach* one’s *destination*, that difficulties will be *encountered along the way*, that one should avoid being *side-tracked* or *bogged down*, etc.

As we can see from this example, a single complex, conceptual metaphor structure can inform a whole series of specific linguistic expressions. This is a crucial proposition of cognitive linguistics: that metaphorical expressions are not simply fixed, linguistic conventions but rather represent the surface manifestations of deeper, active, and largely unconscious *conceptual* structures. This means that a metaphoric structure such as A Purposeful Life is a Journey exists independently of any specific metaphoric expression of it and can thus continuously generate new and unforeseen expressions. Anyone familiar with the A Purposeful Life is a Journey schema can instantly grasp the sense of such metaphors as *dead-end job* or *going nowhere* upon hearing them for the first time and can also draw upon the conceptual schema to create related but entirely novel metaphoric expressions.

Over the last decade, in particular, there has been an increasing appreciation of the promise of cognitive science for the fields of IRs and political science.⁶ It is increasingly recognized that the foundational thinkers of political science such as Thomas Hobbes denied and claimed to eschew the use of metaphor even while they depended on it for their arguments (Miller 1979; Chilton 1996). Following Lakoff’s work on U.S. domestic politics (1996) and the 1991 Gulf War (1991), a growing body of work has applied conceptual metaphor analysis to IRs and political science.⁷ Paul Chilton and his co-authors have adopted a “cognitive interactive” account of metaphor to illustrate how metaphors can become contested as their underspecified entailments are formulated in different linguistic and political contexts (Chilton and Ilyin 1993; Chilton and Lakoff 1995; Chilton 1996). Other studies have treated President H. W. Bush’s metaphorical construction of the post-Iraqi invasion pre-U.S. involvement Iraq (Rohrer 1995), attended to the proliferation metaphors in post-Cold-War security (Mutimer 1997), and explored the metaphorical underpinnings of the “Prisoner’s Dilemma,” a model foundational to “game theoretic” approaches to IR (Marks 2001).

Although at an early stage, the literature treating metaphor in IR offers the building blocks of an intercultural approach to metaphorical political rhetoric by focusing on how metaphors function in international politics to highlight systematically some aspects of IRs while hiding others. Our project builds on these advances in a systematic and empirically informed way, while incorporating insights from conceptual blending theory and neuroscience, which we turn to in the next section.

Conceptual Blending and the Recruitment of Emotion Through Metaphoric Blends

A more recent development in cognitive linguistics is mental space and blending theory, originally developed by Iles Fauconnier and Mark Turner (2002). Blending theory encompasses conceptual metaphor theory, but goes beyond it to argue that *all* of human cognition—even literal and logical thought—involves the creation of mental spaces and mappings between them. In this way, it serves as a kind of unifying theory identifying conceptual metaphor as merely one particularly dramatic cognitive process (a single- or multiple-scope blend) among many more pedestrian processes, such as categorization and naming. It also goes beyond linguistic production to describe the manner in which novel motor programs,

⁶ Approaches to analogical reasoning in IR, for example, have often seen the use of analogy as detrimental to policy, highlighting policy makers’ tendencies to use analogies poorly (see for example, Khong, 1992, cf. Chilton, 1996:33. On the differences between analogy and metaphor from a political psychology approach to foreign policy, see Shimko (1994), and for more a general discussion, see Ortony (1979/1993).

⁷ For recent examples, refer to the essays collected in Beer and De Landtscheer (2004).

technological interfaces, and social institutions are created through a process of space blending.⁸

One of Fauconnier and Turner's insights is that many expressions that seem to be a simple source to target domain mappings (what they call "single-scope" blends, equivalent to Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphors) are in fact "double-scope" blends, where structure from both of the invoked domains are selectively projected to a third, blended space. In our analysis of the EP-3 incident below, we will, for the sake of simplicity, use Lakoff and Johnson's notation, treating all of the metaphors we discuss as a simple source to target domain mappings—in most cases, a perfectly accurate first approximation. We wish to raise the issue of double-scope blends, however, because these provide a particularly clear illustration of a phenomenon too often overlooked both within cognitive linguistics and in the broader field of political discourse analysis: the role of emotion in human reasoning and decision-making processes.

Fauconnier and Turner argue that, in many double-scope blends, the purpose of invoking the more concrete domain is to "achieve human scale"—that is, to compress a situation with diffuse temporality, complex causality, or many agents into a single scene that is easy to visualize. Consider, for instance, their classic example of a double-scope blend, the expression "digging one's own financial grave" (Fauconnier and Turner 2002:131–133), which involves blending two spaces: "Death and Dying" and "Unwitting Financial Failure." Although at first glance this may seem like a standard source to target domain projection (with grave-digging serving as a template to structure our understanding of financial decision making), Fauconnier and Turner point out that most of the important structural features of this blend—such as agency, causality, and intentionality—come from the "Unwitting Financial Failure" space. That is, in literal grave digging one does not normally dig one's own grave, one could not be digging a grave without being *aware* that one was doing so, and completing one's grave could not be the direct cause of one's death. It is in fact the financial decision-making space that is giving the blend this structure: in making a series of bad investments, one is both the agent and recipient of one's actions, one can be making financial decisions without being aware of the consequences, etc. Fauconnier and Turner argue that the point of recruiting the "Death and Dying" space to the blend is to achieve an image that has "direct perception and action in familiar frames that are easily *apprehended* by human beings" (2002:312; emphasis added), which is accomplished by giving the blend tight compression, such as one type of action versus many different types of action, a short time frame versus extended time frame, etc. In other words, the single vivid image of "digging your own grave" allows one to have a clearer grasp of both what one has been doing in the investment arena and what the consequences of this behavior might be.

In considering this blend at more length, however, one might wonder precisely how urgent the need to achieve human scale is in this situation. Although not ideally human scale, the process of financial decision making is not terribly abstract or complex, and human beings seem perfectly capable of reasoning about it literally. This concern is heightened by the fact that, in this blend, all of the relevant *intellectual* decision-making information—agency, intentionality, causality—is coming from the "Unwitting Financial Failure" space, which makes it puzzling why one would need to involve "grave digging" at all in one's deliberations. "Grave digging" not only contributes nothing to the abstract structure of the target of the blend (financial decision making), but in many respects is also actively *incompatible* with it in terms of agency, intentionality, and causality. Drawing upon "grave digging" as an input to the blend, despite its potential usefulness in creating a slightly tighter

⁸ For the most recent and comprehensive statement of blending theory, see Fauconnier and Turner (2002); for a brief introduction and comparison with conceptual metaphor theory, see Grady, Oakley, and Coulson (1999).

compression, would thus seem at first glance to be profoundly maladaptive if the point is simply better apprehension of the situation.

This puzzling feature is characteristic, upon analysis, of many single- and double-scope blends (for the sake of simplicity, we will refer to both interchangeably as “metaphors” or “metaphoric blends” in our discussion). This suggests that, in many cases, the primary purpose of using a metaphor in order to achieve human scale is not to help us intellectually *apprehend* a situation, but rather to help us to know how to *feel* about it.⁹ The apparently clumsy choice of “grave digging” as a metaphor for financial decision making becomes decidedly less so when we think of its recruitment as designed, not to provide tighter structure per se, but rather to import the negative, *visceral* reactions inspired in human beings by graves, corpses, and death into the blend. The purpose here is not necessarily to help the recipient of the metaphor to better apprehend the situation intellectually—she presumably already knows that she has lost a lot of money on Cisco, and that the stock price is not likely to recover anytime soon—but rather to help her know how to *feel* about it, to convey a sense of impending doom and thereby goad her into making the decision to cease her current activities immediately. The creator of the metaphor has a very particular normative position to communicate (continued investment in Cisco is *bad*), and attempts to communicate this judgment through the exploitation of powerful negative emotions. If the metaphor is accepted by the recipient, the choice is clear: no one wants to end up in the grave. This highlights a feature of metaphorical blends that is not always emphasized: they are not simply normatively neutral devices for accurately apprehending situations, but are in fact often created and communicated in order to advance particular normative agendas, which they accomplish through the stimulation of predictable visceral reactions.

We believe that that this emotive–normative function has been somewhat overlooked in most previous discussions of metaphoric blending: such metaphors *do* guide reasoning, often in very particular directions chosen by the creators of the metaphor, but often by means of inspiring normativity-bestowing emotional reactions. This is why conceptual metaphoric blending is arguably *the* primary tool in political and religious-moral debate, where human-scale inputs are recruited polemically in order to inspire somatic-emotional normative reactions in the listeners.¹⁰ Acceptance of the validity of the metaphor inevitably commits the listener to a certain course of action (or, at least, a *potential* course of action), and this effect can be reliably predicted by the metaphor author because of the relatively fixed nature of human emotional–somatic reactions. Understanding the role of emotion in the construction of metaphors and metaphoric blends allows us to connect the insights of cognitive linguists with those of neuroscientists who argue for the importance of somatic–emotional reactions in human valuation and decision making.

Emotions and Human Decision Making: The Somatic Marker Hypothesis

In the last decade, there has been an explosion of literature on the role of emotions in human reasoning in such fields as behavioral neuroscience, cognitive science, and philosophy.¹¹ In the interest of brevity, we will focus on one well-known representative of this trend: Antonio Damasio. In his breakthrough work, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (1994), Damasio argues that—*pace* Descartes and the Enlightenment model of the self—emotionally derived and often unconscious feelings of “goodness” or “badness” play a crucial role in everyday,

⁹ Slingerland (2005). The role of affect has not been entirely neglected in the literature on blending; see Fauconnier and Turner (2002:66–67, 82–83) and Coulson (2001).

¹⁰ This phenomenon has been explored in some depth by Lakoff (1996) and Coulson (2001).

¹¹ For just a sampling, see Damasio (2000, 2003), de Sousa (1987), Haidt (2001), Haidt and Hersh (2001), LeDoux (1996), Nussbaum (2001), Ortony, Clore, and Collins (1990), Rorty (1980), and Solomon (2003, 2004).

“rational” decision making. In what Damasio refers to as the Enlightenment “high-reason” view of decision making, the individual considers all of the options open to her, performs a cost-benefit analysis of each option, and then coolly chooses the rationally optimal option. Damasio argues that this model is implausible simply because there are so *many* options theoretically available at any given moment, and the human mind is not capable of running simultaneous analyses of all of the theoretically possible courses of action. Therefore, the body contributes by biasing the reasoning process—often unconsciously—before it even begins.

This point is vividly demonstrated by cases described by Damasio where damage to the prefrontal cortex, a center of emotion processing in the brain, severely impairs an individual’s ability to make what most people would consider “rational” decisions. Although the short- and long-term memories and abstract reasoning and mathematical skills of these patients were unimpaired, in real-life decision-making contexts, they were appallingly inept, apparently incapable of efficiently choosing between alternate courses of action, taking into account the future consequences of their actions, or accurately prioritizing the relative importance of potential courses of action. Interestingly, when their decision-making processes are examined closely, these patients appear to approach something like the “high-reason” ideal: deprived of the biasing function of somatic markers, they seem to attempt to consider dispassionately *all* of the options theoretically open to them, with the result that they become paralyzed by indecision, fritter away their time on unimportant tasks, or simply commit themselves to what appear to outside observers as poorly considered and capriciously selected courses of action. Revealingly, despite his almost complete real-life incompetence, the patient referred to as “Elliot” scored quite well on the Standard Issue Moral Judgment Interview—developed by the Kantian moral psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg, and that measures a person’s ability to reason their way abstractly through moral dilemmas and other theoretical problems. This theoretical ability to reason about dilemmas did not, however, translate into an ability to make actual reasonable *decisions*: “at the end of one session, after he had produced an abundant quantity of options for action, all of which were valid and implementable, Elliot smiled, apparently satisfied with his rich imagination, but added, ‘And after all this, I still wouldn’t know what to do!’” (1994:49) Damasio postulates that this statement, as well as Elliot’s inability to make effective decisions in real-life situations, can be attributed to the fact that “the cold-bloodedness of Elliot’s reasoning prevented him from assigning different values to different options, and made his decision-making landscape hopelessly flat.” (1994:51).

Less dramatically, the theory of somatic marking explains why human beings are often such *bad*—that is, not rationally ideal—decision makers, especially when operating in something other than their ancestral environment.¹² Dispassionate calculation makes it clear that we are likely to achieve a much better payoff investing \$20 weekly in some conservative mutual fund rather than using that money to buy lottery tickets, but the reasoning processes of many are (incorrectly, in this case) biased by the powerfully positive somatic marker attached to the image of the multimillion-dollar payoff. Similarly, the powerfully negative image of a jetliner falling in flames from the sky prevents many from making the “rational” decision to fly rather than drive, even though commercial airline travel is demonstrably much safer than automobile travel. While navigating by means of powerful, reasoning-biasing somatic markers must have been adaptive in our dispersed, hunter-gatherer “environment of evolutionary adaptation” (EEA), it sometimes leads us into errors of judgment in the more complex world of settled agricultural societies, especially when modern technology is thrown into the mix. Despite these potential drawbacks, however, somatic marker biasing seems to have played a crucial role in

¹² See, for example, Kahneman, Slovic, and Tversky (1982) and Kahneman and Tversky (2000); for essays emphasizing the more adaptive aspects of human “bounded rationality,” see Gigerenzer and Selten (2001).

the survival and flourishing of creatures such as ourselves. “All emotions have some kind of regulatory role to play, leading in one way or another to the creation of circumstances advantageous to the organism exhibiting the phenomenon,” Damasio notes. “Emotions are *about* the life of an organism, its body to be precise, and their role is to assist the organism in maintaining life” (1999:51). This insight into the role of emotion in human reasoning serves as an important corrective to the Enlightenment ideal of disembodied reason, as well as to approaches in IRs and political science that adopt an overly rationalist perspective.

Integrating Damasio’s insights with those of cognitive linguists, one might argue that a primary function of creating metaphoric blends is to harness emotions produced by “basic-level” scenarios and recruit them in order to facilitate or influence the direction of decision making in more complex or abstract scenarios. The manner in which this is accomplished is the projection of somatic images, along with the images’ accompanying somatic markers. These markers are probably relatively fixed for organisms such as ourselves—darkness, pollution, and physical debility are always marked with negative emotions and therefore felt as “bad”—and this is what one would expect from evolution: potential ancestors infused with warm, fuzzy feelings at the sight of putrefying meat were quickly taken out of the gene pool. The ability of the human mind to perform conceptual blending, however, means that these relatively fixed “human-scale” visceral reactions can be recruited for a potentially infinite variety of purposes, including the conscious exploitation of somatic markers by skilled rhetoricians in order to advance their own agendas.

Of course, the claim that emotional reactions play a large role in political discourse is by no means a new one—it has a long history that can be traced from Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* through Plato, Hobbes, Descartes, Hume, and Adam Smith (Marcus 2000). The role of affect has, however, been relatively neglected by recent IRs theory, inhibited as it is by the dominant assumption of rationality (Crawford 2000).¹³ Moreover, as we hope to demonstrate below, conceptual metaphor and blending theory provide us with a clear and effective methodology for documenting and analyzing precisely how basic-level emotions are recruited to bias attitudes toward more abstract or complex situations.

Analysis of the EP-3 Incident

Methods

Our analysis of the EP-3 incident relies upon grounded theory to interpret the importance of conceptual metaphors used in media accounts from *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* in the United States, and the *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, *Jiangnan Shibao* 江南时报, and *Tianjin Ribao* 天津日报 in China.¹⁴ Grounded theory is a prominent methodology for qualitative approaches to text analysis (Tischer et al. 2000), and is especially useful in text analysis where the focus is on generating fresh hypotheses about whether or how theories are supported by behavior—a focus we believe is the next logical step in conceptual metaphor analysis.¹⁵ As Strauss and Corbin (1990:23) have noted, in grounded theory “one does not begin with a theory and prove it. Rather one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge.” In this manner, our coding list was developed through a grounded theoretical approach. Our initial focus was whether current

¹³ Exceptions to the general IR neglect of affect include Jervis (1976, chapter 10), and Alker (1996, especially chapters 2, 3, and 8); see Crawford (2000:116, footnote 2) for further exceptions.

¹⁴ Our selection of Chinese sources was guided primarily by ease of access to electronic on-line texts. Although we recognize that media in the PRC is to a great extent dictated by the centralized CCP propaganda apparatus, we included outlets in Jiangnan and Tianjin for regional variation.

¹⁵ For more on grounded theory, see Glaser and Strauss (1967), Strauss and Corbin (1990), Coffey, Holbrook, and Atkinson (1996), and Tischer et al. (2000). For more on qualitative media analysis, see Altheide (1996).

theories of metaphor analysis were supported by the patterns of metaphors actually used by Chinese and American sources to discuss the EP-3 incident. We were also cognizant of potential new hypotheses generated by the coding patterns as they emerged.

Phase 1 involved a team of three native-English speakers and two nonnative Mandarin speakers, working separately, coding metaphors from more than 300 Chinese and American language news articles published in our sources over the 13-day period surrounding the standoff. Taking into account the state-run nature of the Chinese news media and the use of news agencies as communicative mediums on both sides, we believe that the media accounts we used are a suitable proxy for American and Chinese conceptualizations of the events of April 2001—public news accounts reflect the metaphorical understandings shared—although, of course, not universally accepted—by policy makers and publics alike. The approach was inductive in that we immersed ourselves in data and identified the metaphorical constructions meaningful to the actors, and deductive in that we were guided by conceptual metaphor theory. The coders were trained to look for conceptual metaphors related to the incident and code occurrences of these metaphors manually, keeping a running tally.¹⁶ Moreover, the coders were instructed to forgo any communication with one another about the project or their coding during this initial phase.

The results were encouraging: despite deliberately creating an environment adverse to intercoder reliability, the results were fairly standard across raters,¹⁷ which bodes well for the viability of conceptual metaphor analysis as a methodology for large-scale discourse analysis. We also found significant differences in American and Chinese metaphorical conceptualizations of the incident, which encouraged us to proceed to Phase 2 of the project. From the initial blind coding (Phase 1), image schemes were identified and a master list of 156 metaphors was distributed to the coders for Phase 2.

Phase 2 of the project involved two native-English coders and one native Mandarin coder repeating the analysis of the same materials using a standardized set of metaphor categories and a computer coding program, Atlas.ti.¹⁸ Our initial impressions of the data revealed major categories of metaphors—for example, Relationship as Journey, Incident as Bounded Space—which in turn suggested hypotheses on how the parties were using the metaphors and what they represented to the discussion. In particular, we were interested in whether the use of metaphors by the United States and China about this incident questioned or supported the conventional, and in our opinion shop-worn, argument that Asian and Western thought patterns are incompatible. With this in mind, we compared the conceptual metaphors used to frame the incident with an eye on distinguishing between *shared* metaphorical conceptualizations and *competing* metaphorical conceptualizations. Our results and analysis are detailed below. Our final conclusions consider what these findings suggest for metaphor theory generally, and future Sino-American diplomacy.

¹⁶ The coders' operational definition of a metaphor was a word or phrase that involved nonliteral, cross-domain mapping in order to process cognitively.

¹⁷ By this, we mean that the coding lists independently created by each coder shared most of the same metaphors (including all of the most common ones), although the manner in which they were labeled/characterized differed somewhat. An obvious outstanding problem we were unable to resolve is how to *quantify* intercoder reliability in this sort of study. After the first results were tallied, the U.S. coders traded their primary documents and recoded to check consistency between coders and then traded lists of any missed metaphors or mislabeled metaphors. Any outstanding issues were decided upon by the lead author before the final numbers were tallied.

¹⁸ For more information on ATLAS (Archive for Technology, the Lifeworld, and Everyday language) and the Atlas.ti program, refer to our data archive and Thomas Muhr (1991).

TABLE 1. Most Frequent Single Codes of 156 Total Metaphor Codes Identified

<i>China: Most Frequent Single Codes</i>	<i>United States: Most Frequent Single Codes</i>
International Relations as Social Relations (289)	Incident as Violent Fight-Confrontation (203)
Right-Border as Body-Personal Space (262)	Incident as Puzzle-Test (122)
Relationship as Journey (243)	Incident as Game-Sport (104)
Legality-Norm as Bounded Space (207)	Incident as Physical Collision-Contact (100)
Responsibility as Physical Burden (188)	Relationship as Journey (94)
Political Domination as Physical Domination (164)	Negotiating Position as Physically Held Position (89)
Incident as Emergence (160)	Incident as Physical Object to be Manipulated-Controlled (73)
Negotiating Position as Physically Held Position (123)	Nation as People with Emotions (57)
Incident as Violent Fight-Confrontation (116)	Reaction to incident as Physical Flexibility- Rigidity (50)
Rightness as Straightness (103)	International Relations as Social Relations (48)
Nation as Home being Defended from Intruder (97)	External Influence as Pressure (to be Resisted) (44)

Results and Discussion

Table 1 illustrates the 12 most frequently used single metaphor codes found in our U.S. and Chinese sources, which will provide the reader with some context for the discussion that follows. Our first step was to survey the initial single-code results as a way to think about or suggest several larger metaphorical concepts for comparison. Ultimately, our analysis focused on seven coding “families” (sets of conceptually related codes) that were particularly salient: War, Economic, Journey, Game/Puzzle, Technical Fix, IRs as Civil Relations, and Victim.¹⁹ The first three of these code families were found in large numbers in both the U.S. and Chinese sources (Figure 1) and have been designated *shared metaphorical conceptualizations*. The remaining four appeared in numbers that varied quite strikingly between the U.S. and Chinese sources (Figure 2) and have been designated *competing metaphorical conceptualizations*. Below, we discuss these different categories of metaphor families in turn, describing their structure and the significance of their relative frequency in the U.S. and Chinese materials.

One of the more interesting features of our analysis was the high degree of overlap between metaphors used in the U.S. and Chinese sources. Previous work on metaphor in international politics has argued that states and their spokespeople rely on a small set of common, basic schemas, including most prominently Container, Path, Force, and Link (Chilton 1996) and also State as Person (Lakoff 1991; Rohrer 1995). Indeed, the conceptual metaphor literature has argued that such basic “primary schemas,” because they are encountered so frequently in the human lived environment, should be cross-culturally universal (Johnson 1987; Lakoff 1987; Lakoff and Johnson 1999). Our results support this contention: the vast majority of complex metaphors found in both the U.S. and Chinese sources rely upon the five basic schemas described in the literature. What was more striking to us was the degree of overlap even in higher level, more complex metaphorical schemas. Three of the most common metaphorical families used to characterize the politics surrounding the EP-3 incident—War, Journey, and Economic—were found

¹⁹ The numbers used to create the illustrative tables are direct counts from 155 Chinese primary text documents (news stories) and 176 U.S. primary documents (news stories) over the 13-day period.

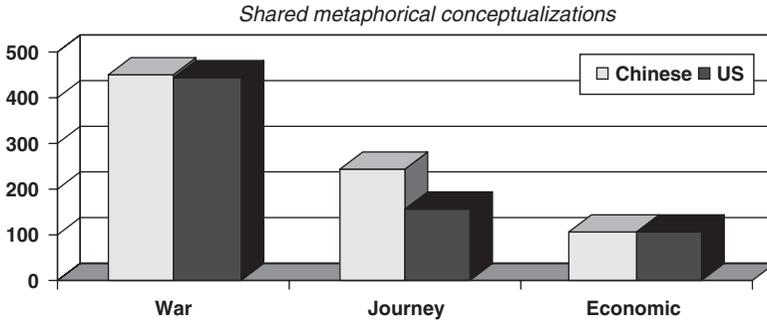


FIG. 1. Comparison of Chinese and U.S. Totals for Salient Shared Coding Families

in close to equal numbers in the U.S. and Chinese press. This suggests a considerable degree of overlap in even quite high-level conceptualizations of a complex, abstract incident. This sort of intercultural use of metaphor in international politics offers analysts a means to study both patterns of cooperation and conflict. The ambiguity and underspecified nature of metaphor can allow different interpretations and positions to be staked out, thus allowing political elites flexibility in the domestic and international realms. During a crisis or normal negotiations, policy makers and diplomats can use metaphors to frame common ground; if both sides accept the metaphor of a journey as the basis for their negotiations, for example, we may expect certain diplomatic strategies and results to follow.

Of the three conceptual metaphors of the incident shared by the United States and China—War, Journey, and Economic—none suggest victimization of one party by the other or the need for an apology. These three-shared metaphors, however, call for quite different behavior from actors. In war, one does not apologize to the vanquished; on a journey, obstacles are approached together and not blamed on one's fellow traveler; and in economic or business matters, one's negotiation position is assumed to be rational and unapologetically material.

When the metaphor of War (Table 2) is shared, the two parties likely consider themselves roughly equal in status and strength, at least on the issue at hand, if not more generally. In this sense, the War metaphor suggests a call for behavior that respects the adversary as powerful (not a victim), but suggests that "our" nation's honorable position, coupled with our strength, will ensure our security against the enemy. For example:

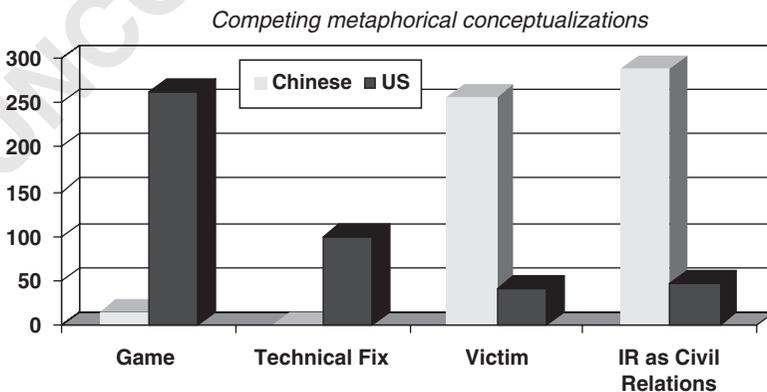


FIG. 2. Comparison of Chinese and U.S. Totals for Salient Competing Coding Families

TABLE 2. War (Five Codes) Code Family Details for Shared Metaphor Family Codes

Codes	Common Phrases (English)	Common Phrases (Chinese)
Incident as War	Battles, saber rattling, victory	战胜 (defeat, vanquish)
Incident as Violent Fight/Confrontation	Standoff, people want blood	寻衅, 挑衅 (seek a fight, provoke)
Negotiating as Physically Held Position	Fighting off/firing off	斗争 (struggle, fight)
Political Domination as Physical Domination	Bully, tough/weak, pushy	架势 (posture, stance)
Incident as Physical Collision/Contact	Confrontation/collision	打击 (hit, strike) 争取 (win, seize)

Entailments: Honor and glory in winning on a battlefield against an adversary; defending one's nation as a warrior calls up impressions of national heroes and duty to country; overcoming the adversary is not simply warranted but heroic and honorable; in war one does not apologize to the adversary.

We have won the battle, but by no means is the standoff over (*New York Times*, April 13, 2001).

"The boys at our school are quite upset," said Bo Liu, a graduate student in linguistics in Chengdu. "All of us draw a straight line between Hainan and Belgrade. People here want blood" (*Washington Post*, April 4, 2001).

Statements attributed to Wang Wei's wife, Yuan Guoqin 阮国琴:

我们要把对霸权主义的愤慨化为巨大的动力, 在党中央的正确领导下, 发奋图强, 把我们的国家建设得更加强大, 把我们的军队建设得更加强大。"We need to take the anger aroused by [the U.S.'s] hegemonic attitude and transform it into a powerful motive force. Under the straight and firm leadership of the Party center, we need to strive resolutely to make ourselves strong, building up the nation so that it is even more powerful and mighty, and building the armed forces up so they are even more powerful and mighty" (*Tianjin Ribao*, April 8, 2001).

显然是对中国国家主权的挑衅。

This is a clear challenge to/provocation related to Chinese national sovereignty (*Jiangnan Shibao*, April 5, 2001).

As we will see in a later section, the Chinese ultimately linked adversarial respect with the metaphor of uncivilized violation to demand an apology.

The second most commonly shared metaphor, Journey (Table 3), calls for cooperation between parties rather than the conquering of one's adversary. If we are on a journey toward a common destination, communication, and helpfulness are the expected behavior from fellow travelers. We may have disagreements about the

TABLE 3. Journey (Six Codes) Code Family Details for Shared Metaphor Family

Codes	Common Phrases (English)	Common Phrases (Chinese)
Relationship as Journey	Path, progress, way forward	发展 (progress, evolve) 进行 (carry on)
Relationship as Train Journey	On track, derail, different track	行径 (pass by) 初步 (preliminary step)
Relationship as Ship Journey	Blown off course/opposite tack	过去 (make progress)
Relationship as Auto Journey	In the driver's seat, stalled negotiations	走向 (direction) 过去 (past, gone by)
Problem/Impediment to Movement Forward	Impasse, taking its toll, roadblock	一道 (together; lit. "on one road")
Agreement as Destination	Steps to resolve, stop	始终 (from beginning to end)

Entailments: Journeys are joint activities with both participants working together toward a common goal, and a shared interest in overcoming obstacles.

TABLE 4. Economic (Five Codes) Code Family Details for Shared Metaphor Family

<i>Codes</i>	<i>Common Phrases (English)</i>	<i>Common Phrases (Chinese)</i>
Relationship as Economic Force	Productive, big customer, take stock	利益 (interest, benefit) 有利于 (profit for)
Relationship as Economic Bargaining	Bargaining chip, haggling, quid pro quo	代价 (cost, price) 赔偿 (compensate)
Relationship as Blackmail/Extortion	Cost of apology, setting price too high	损失 (loss) 交易 (deal, transaction)
Decision Making as Accounting	Assess blame, debts, cost, bottom line	富有 (possess, enjoy) 不值 (not worth)
Revenge as Accounting	Pay back, get even	平等 (equal, on equal footing)

Entailments: Diplomacy surrounding the incident can hold benefits and losses for both sides; balance of consequences depends on skill of negotiators; cost-benefit analysis implies rational decision making versus emotional reaction.

speed and direction of our progress, but all can be discussed in a reasonable manner to accommodate as many as possible. Because of its cooperative connotations, this metaphor is obviously appealing to those engaged in professional diplomatic discourse. For example:

Even the best-laid plans can be blown off course by stray winds. The spy plane incident is the latest in a series of seemingly unrelated, and unplanned, mishaps in American-Chinese relations (*Washington Post*, April 4, 2001).

I hope this starts us on a road to a full and complete resolution of this matter (*Washington Post*, April 4, 2001).

坚决支持中国政府按照国际法和国际惯例，通过外交途径进行解决。

We have resolved firmly to support the Chinese government's attempts to, in accordance with international law and international norms, go through international channels in order to carry out a resolution of this situation (*Renmin Ribao*, April 7, 2001).

就如何避免类似事件再次发生，双方进行磋商。

The two sides must carry out [lit. "walk forward," "move forward"] an exchange of views in order to figure out how to avoid having a similar situation arise again in the future (*Renmin Ribao*, April 8, 2001).

Finally, the Economic metaphor (Table 4), while only one-quarter as prevalent as the War metaphor, is shared equally by both parties. Our results suggest that cost-benefit analysis and an accounting model of moral responsibility played some role in the minds of both U.S. and Chinese policy makers; the Chinese sources, for instance, were peppered with references to “赔偿损失” (“compensation for [our] loss”). Other examples of the Economic metaphor include:

No one I know thinks we should let the crew members go. They are a great bargaining chip Chinese graduate student (*Washington Post*, April 9, 2001).

“We thought the crew would be quickly returned and we'd haggle over the plane,” one official said “It didn't work out that way” (*New York Times*, April 13, 2001).

By setting his price so high for the Americans—an apology—[Jiang] is probably going to fail, whatever the outcome (*Washington Post*, April 8, 2001).

美国必须就此事做出真实的解释，向中国政府和人民道歉，并且赔偿给中国。

It is imperative that the U.S. provide a true and accurate explanation for this incident, that the U.S. apologize to the Chinese government and Chinese people, and moreover provide compensation (*Renmin Ribao*, April 5, 2001).

TABLE 5. Game (U.S. dominant) Code Family Details for Competing Metaphor Family

<i>Codes</i>	<i>Common Phrases (English)</i>
Incident as Puzzle or Test	Test of wills, solve, high marks
Incident as Game or Sport	Game plan, players, pawns, win
Negotiations as Gambling	Overplayed its hand, stakes
Incident as (theatrical) Play	Following script, behind scenes
<i>Entailments:</i> Emphasizes diplomatic or negotiating skill; implies winner or loser with little value significance, no guilt inferred, no punishment required, no apology necessary.	

This result was quite surprising to one of our authors, whose experience with traditional Chinese moral discourse and intuitions about modern Chinese usage led him to expect that metaphors linking morality/obligation to accounting or bargaining would be common in Western discourse but relatively rare on the Chinese side.²⁰ This highlights one of the strengths of the approach mapped out in this study: the empirical gathering and analysis of large data sets is a helpful corrective to potentially inaccurate armchair intuitions. This of course is not to say that the relatively small set of Chinese newspaper accounts analyzed in our study exhausts the universe of available cultural meanings—one might very well obtain entirely different results looking at everyday interpersonal discourse.

Two of the most common metaphor families found in U.S. sources—Game/Puzzle and Technical Fix—are strikingly absent in the Chinese sources. We feel that this is not at all coincidental. Game/Puzzle presents the EP-3 incident as an equitable game in which two opponents seek to outwit or outmaneuver each other. (Table 5) For example:

“They are the new kids on the block, and they are playing a dangerous game,” said David M. Finkelstein, a specialist on the Chinese military (*New York Times*, April 3, 2001).

In a situation evoking the tense days of the Cold War, there were conflicting versions about what caused the collision, which occurred during a high-stakes game of cat and mouse played out between Chinese and American pilots (*Washington Post*, April 2, 2001).

The Chinese, emerging from a self-imposed shell, are still learning the game and the United States seems to learn diplomatic lessons over and over again (*New York Times*, April 8, 2001).

Having vastly overplayed its hand on the Hainan Island incident, China was forced to accept a virtually worthless letter from the United States (*Washington Post*, April 12, 2001).

Technical Fix portrays the incident or resultant U.S.–Chinese relations as a physical artifact that merely needs to be “handled” well or properly adjusted (Table 6).

Many Bush advisers have expected China to take stock of the new president’s resolve. “They can look for indications of weakness and indications of hostility,” said one administration official. “Calibrating it just right is important” (*Washington Post*, April 4, 2001).

The other sorry was a carefully crafted expression of regret for the most minor and technical violation . . . (*Washington Post*, April 12, 2001).

Bush must make the decision on the Aegis sale on its own merits and not allow Jiang to gain leverage over the sale through the spy plane incident (*Washington Post*, April 4, 2001).

²⁰ A position unfortunately argued in print (Slingerland, 2004).

TABLE 6. Technical Fix (U.S. Dominant) Code Family Details for Competing Metaphor Family

Codes	Common Phrases (English)
Agreement/Relationship as Artifact	Hammered out, crafted
Relationship as Mechanism-Engine	Backfire, safety-valve, retool
Incident-Response as Using Instrument	Adjust, recalibrate, ratchet
As Object to be Manipulated Controlled	Handle, tackle, seize
<i>Entailments:</i> Implies absence of emotion; ability to fix or repair damage with little human cost; downplays value issues, emphasis on coolly controlling the situation.	

Both families are value-neutral, unemotional, impersonal, and frame a situation in which blame and apology are equally inappropriate. When playing a sport or game, the best team wins and the losing team goes onto play another day. In such a situation, concepts of guilt, punishment, or repentance are irrelevant and overwrought. In the context of this metaphor, no apology is necessary for winning a contest of wills with an inferior opponent. Whether consciously or not, the reliance in U.S. sources of these two metaphor families makes Chinese emotionalism and demands for redress seem childish and unreasonable.

Competing Metaphorical Conceptualizations (Chinese Dominant)

Two of the most common metaphor families in the Chinese sources—Victim and IRs as Civil Relations—are found only rarely in our U.S. sources. The few occurrences one does find in the U.S. press are usually being used to characterize the Chinese attitude, or involve statements made by Chinese officials. In one respect, this is not surprising, considering that it was a Chinese pilot who was killed and that the incident occurred on or near Chinese soil. Upon reflection, however, it is not at all obvious a priori that the U.S., whose legally operating aircraft was downed because of apparent aggression on the part of a Chinese fighter pilot, and whose crew was essentially being held as hostages, would not find such metaphors intuitively appealing (Table 7).

In any case, the U.S. emphasis on the EP-3 incident being characterized as a game or puzzle is difficult to reconcile with the more emotion-laden metaphors used by the Chinese of violation, victimization, nation as home, and breach of social etiquette. One of the most common phrases repeated in almost every Chinese newspaper account of the incident is how Chinese national sovereignty has been “violated-encroached upon” (*qinfan* 侵犯), and a reoccurring mantra is the need for China to “defend itself” (*ziwei* 自卫) against a “hegemonic” (*baquan* 霸权) aggressor in order to “protect/defend” its “sacred nationhood” (*baowei zuguo* 保卫祖国).²¹ The United States is often characterized as a “rude” (*cubao* 粗暴, *wuli* 无礼) or “arrogant” (*aoman* 傲慢, *zida* 自大) person who has committed an egregious violation of proper etiquette and yet feels no sense of shame or compunction (*neijiu* 内疚). For example:

Mr. Jiang, during a visit to Chile today, said, “I have visited many countries, and I see that when people have an accident, the two groups involved always say “excuse me.” He spoke in Chinese, but switched into English to say “excuse me” (*New York Times*, April 7, 2001).

这种伤天害理的行为令人气愤。美国政府应该向中国人民道歉，这是最起码的 天理人情。

This sort of flagrantly wrong/grossly unjust (lit. “injuring Heaven/Nature and harming principle”) behavior really makes one furious. The American government should apologize to the Chinese people—even the most elementary un-

²¹ On the discourse concerning China’s “Century of National Humiliation (“*Bainian guochi*)” and Chinese nationalism, see Callahan (2004).

TABLE 7. Victim (Chinese Dominant) Code Family Details for Competing Metaphor Family

<i>Codes</i>	<i>Common Phrases (Chinese)</i>
Nation as Home Being Defended from Intruder	伤害中国的家门口 (defend China's doorstep) 强盗 (strong thief / home invader)
Nation as Victim of Violent Assault	任人宰割 (allow oneself to be cut-up/dismembered) 践踏 (being tread upon/trampled)
Right/Border as Body/Personal Space	侵犯 (violation, encroachment) 捍卫 (defend, protect, safeguard) 损害 (loss, damage)

Entailments: Violation/ invasion of home; physical threat or harm; defense of home is morally righteous, invasion of home is morally despicable; there is a guilty party requiring punishment.

derstanding of natural justice and human feelings demands it (Chinese official.
Renmin Ribao, April 9, 2001).

Someone breaking into your home and killing your son (the violation of home and family metaphor used by the Chinese) is most definitely not a game. The Chinese emphasis on violation and victimization clashes with the American emphasis on the incident as a game or puzzle in which one outmaneuvers the opponent. For example:

此说如同强盗跑到人家闹事，却不许主人干预。

On the basis of this sort of rationale, when a thief descends upon someone's house with the intention of making trouble, you would have to forbid the owner from interfering with the thief going about his business (*Renmin Ribao*, April 5, 2001). (In regard to the American reliance upon the principle of freedom of movement in international airspace to defend its actions, and [therefore] subsequent blaming of the Chinese pilot who was trailing them.)

中国的领土绝不是哪家军队随便践踏的‘后花园’，中国的领海绝不是哪家舰船‘随便游弋的‘游泳池’，中国的领空绝不是哪家军用飞机随便进出的‘空中走廊’。

Chinese sovereign territory is absolutely not some “backyard” for any nation's soldiers to come tramping through at will; Chinese sovereign waters are absolutely not some “swimming pool” that any nation's ships can come patrol at will; Chinese sovereign airspace is absolutely not some “air corridor” that any nation's military planes can enter or leave at will (*Renmin Ribao*, April 12, 2001). (Opinions expressed by Chinese military personnel who were interviewed for their reactions to the event.)

These competing metaphors help explain the contentious stalemate over the need for an apology. The Chinese metaphor of violation or egregious rudeness calls up a need for punishment of a perpetrator, or a least contrition on the part of the perpetrator to avoid punishment. If an attacker is unrepentant, this suggests that more severe action may be required in response to his wrongful intransigence—his refusal to admit his wrongdoing becomes a further violation. In this sense, the metaphor extends to our understandings of judges giving harsher sentences, or parole boards refusing to give early parole, when a criminal is unrepentant. The metaphorical conceptualizations of violation and victim by the Chinese imply insults to honor and uncivilized behavior. Once these metaphorical definitions of the incident settle into public consciousness, it is easy to follow the rationale that some form of contrition, repentance, humility, is required—a properly respectful public apology. Despite the U.S. government's insistence that its EP-3 plane was operating within its legal rights, and therefore that an apology would be inappropriate, the salience of the victimization schema in the Chinese framing on the incident did not go entirely unnoticed by U.S. analysts—a fact that may have led to the eventual compromise solution. For instance, historian John W. Dower noted that “I'm less inclined to see this apology in a cultural sense than as a part of something that is in

the air all around the world right now. It's the concept of victimization. For the Chinese, this little plane became a metaphor for 150 years of imperialist victimizing of China" (Weisman 2001:A16).

The pervasive use of home invasion or social rudeness metaphors in the Chinese press is a particularly clear example of "achieving human scale" in order to harness somatic-marker reactions. The actual EP-3 incident involved fairly complex causality, and assigning blame involved specific technical details (How close was the Chinese pilot to the American plane? Did the American plane abruptly change course or not? Was the Chinese plane in fact so much more maneuverable than the American plane that *any* movements made by the latter must have been irrelevant?) as well as abstract issues of international law, boundaries of international airspace, and rules governing the rights of aircraft under distress to request emergency landings. Once we compress this complex situation down to a single, vivid scene with clearly predictable emotional valence—an arrogant bully with hegemonic intentions breaking into our home or knocking us aside in the street without a hint of remorse—it now becomes much clearer how we are to think and feel about it. As with the U.S. sources, we leave aside the issue of how conscious this use of metaphor was on the part of Chinese officials and press; whatever the motivation behind it, its function in framing the situation is quite clear.

Discussion

As one of us has argued with regard to the human rights debate with China (Slingerland 2004), disagreements on such topics arise not out of incommensurable—and thus irreconcilable—modes of thought, but rather on different intellectual histories that have resulted in different source domains being invoked to structure such abstract domains as the self, the self's relationship with society, and the nature of "rights." Underlying our metaphor analysis approach is what Lakoff and Johnson (1998) have called the "embodied realist" stance: because much of human understanding of abstractions is shaped—both conceptually and emotionally—by basic embodied image schemas, it would not be unreasonable to expect to find a high degree of similarity with regard to conceptual metaphors across human cultures and languages, especially with regard to primary metaphor. Indeed, findings in cognitive science and evolutionary psychology suggest that some primary metaphor schemas may have, through evolutionary time, become part of the innate structure of the human brain, being deployed universally to structure our naïve or "folk" theories of physical causality, biology, and psychology.²² Conceptual metaphor and metaphoric blend analysis can serve as a bridge to the experience of "the other," because they function as linguistic "signs" of otherwise inaccessible, shared, deep conceptual structures. As Lakoff and Johnson note, "Though we have no access to the inner lives of those in radically different cultures, we do have access to their metaphor systems and the way they reason using those metaphor systems" (1998:284).

In this study, we *did* see some intriguing intercultural differences with regard to some basic metaphors. For instance, two widely recurring metaphors in the Chinese sources were Morality as Bounded Space (259 occurrences in Chinese vs. 49 in U.S.) and Causality as Emergence (160 occurrences in Chinese vs. six in U.S.), which find few counterparts in the U.S. sources. In particular, the Causality as Emergence metaphor (e.g., *fasheng* 发生, *chansheng* 产生, "emerge from," "produced by"), which draws upon plant growth or mammalian birth as a source domain, has a very different entailment structure from dominant causality metaphors in Western

²² See Damasio (1994:226–230) for a discussion of the "body-minded brain" and its probable evolutionary origins, as well as Hirschfeld and Gelman (1994) and Buss (2005) for collections of essays making the case for universal human structures of understanding.

materials, where Causality as Emergence metaphors are far outnumbered by schemas that draw primarily upon the mechanics of solid objects or human intentionality. The degree to which such differences may impact reasoning about important topics of international contention is a topic for future empirical exploration. In the case of the EP-3 incident, however, our findings suggest that the lack of cross-cultural understanding stemmed from differential use of otherwise shared metaphorical conceptualizations.

Particularly revealing in this regard is an invitation made independently in both the U.S. and Chinese press for the U.S. side to exercise the virtue that early Chinese Confucians referred to as *shu* 恕—“sympathetic understanding.” In a report in the *Renmin Ribao* on the reactions of overseas Chinese living in the United States, one interviewee remarked:

中国有句古语，“己所不欲，勿施于人”。如果中国军用飞机到美国的家门口进行间谍活动，相信美国也采取强硬的举动。

China has an ancient saying, “Do not impose upon others what you yourself do not desire.” If a Chinese military plane had been spying upon transmissions on America’s doorstep, I believe that America would also adopt a strong and unyielding stance. (*Renmin Ribao*, April 6, 2001).

Such invitations to engage in thought experiments—that is, to simulate in one’s mind a human-level scene in the expectation that this will generate sympathy or understanding—are predicated on the assumption of cross-cultural similarity in human somatic marker responses to basic scenes. No one likes getting beat up. No one reacts favorably to having his or her home invaded by brutes or animals. One conclusion of our analysis, then, is not that the Chinese think differently than Americans, but that they framed EP-3 situation in terms of particular metaphors—home invasion, physical intrusion, violations of social etiquette—that can be expected to inspire similar emotions in *any* human being. Similarly, once the United States has characterized the situation as a value-neutral game or malfunctioning artifact in need of adjustment, it is not difficult for anyone to see that adamant demands for apology are irrational and stability endangering.

Conceptual metaphor is an example of a complex, highly structured cultural phenomenon that—despite its complexity—shows a high degree of similarity across cultures and times. It is thus a good example of how embodied realism frees us from the postmodern “prison-house of language.” Under the cognitive linguistics model, the basic schemas underlying language and other surface expressions of conceptual structure are motivated by the body and the physical environment in which it is located, which—shared in all general respects by any member of the species *Homo sapiens*, ancient or modern—provides us with a bridge to the experience of “the other.” U.S. policy makers and diplomats do not have direct access to the minds of their Chinese counterparts. They *do*, however, share with them a common experience of interpersonal struggle, journeys, physical violations, etc., that can serve as a shared framework for intercultural dialogue. At the same time, the recognition that these experiences are contingent upon bodies and physical environment, that no set of experientially derived conceptual schemas provides unmediated access to the “things in themselves,” and that some degree of cultural variation in schemas is to be expected allows us to avoid the sort of rigid universalism that characterizes Enlightenment-inspired approaches to the study of thought and culture. We may have escaped the prison-house of language, but we are still prisoners of our embodied mind and the physical world in which it evolved and with which it continues to have to deal on a daily basis. The unavoidable reality of this embodiment means that freeing ourselves from certain genuinely basic conceptual structures is probably not an option. For example, as far as we can tell, human beings throughout recorded history have conceived of time in terms of physical space and causation in terms of physical force, and presumably such pri-

mary metaphors are so deeply ingrained that we cannot think without them. Lakoff and Johnson believe that these sorts of metaphorical associations are created anew with each individual through experiential correlation, whereas evolutionary psychologists and cognitive scientists would argue that many of the primary ones have become part of our built-in cognitive machinery—indeed, that we could not have any sort of coherent experience at all without such a priori structures of understanding.²³ On the other hand, most of our higher-level abstract concepts (such as morality, life, the self, etc.) are structured by a variety of complex metaphors, and—at least once we become conscious of them—we seem to have a great deal of latitude in choosing among them, discarding them, recruiting new source domains to create novel metaphors, or blending metaphors in previously unforeseen ways.

Conclusion

This analysis is the first step in a research program that can more effectively address claims about foundational clashes in cross-cultural discourse and their effect on the diplomacy of crisis resolution. We decided to test our method of studying the interaction of cross-cultural metaphor on the EP-3 incident because it is a fairly recent Chinese–U.S. diplomatic clash, one we hoped would tell us something concrete about the place of conceptual metaphors in Chinese–U.S. political discourse. While two-level games were of course important to both the Chinese and U.S. deliberations in this particular incident, as was the power relationship between a system hegemon (United States) versus a regional hegemon (China), our interest focused on how these and other aspects of diplomacy were reflected in the conceptual metaphors that became critical to the diplomatic resolution, i.e. the need for, and wording of, an apology.

We see this study as contributing to the analysis of political discourse in several ways. To begin with, current analytic models in IRs are usually based on rational actor models, according to which all substantive meaning is literal, metaphors feature only as rhetorical window-dressing, and the role of emotion is marginalized. With the work of scholars such as Daniel Kahneman,²⁴ economics is gradually outgrowing rational actor models by taking seriously the role of bounded rationality and biasing heuristics in real human actors, but we feel that IRs is behind the curve in this regard. Our primary goal in the theoretical portion of this study is to share with students of IRs recent work in cognitive linguistics and neuroscience that offers a more empirically accurate model of human cognition and decision making—one that takes into account the pervasive role of metaphor and metaphorically evoked emotion, which play little or no part in current analyses. Relied upon both in politics and personal life, metaphors guide reasoning, focus normative reactions, and create or dissipate motivations. They help to constitute interactions as meaningful, highlight some aspects of reality, and hide others. The analysis of metaphor can therefore help us to trace processes of meaning making at a cross-cultural level, and can offer clues as to the precise cultural, moral, normative, and emotional roots of cooperation and conflict.

A second goal was to draw upon metaphor analysis in order to call into question analyses of the EP-3 incident—and international disagreements more generally—that focus on deep-seated cultural differences. In this respect, our goal was not to explain comprehensively the outcome of the EP-3 incident—nor is this the aim of discourse analysis more generally. Rather, our purpose was to gather and analyze data that would either support or question traditional arguments of East versus West conceptual clashes—would they appear in the use of metaphor across a pol-

²³ For a brief introduction to the “evolutionary Kantian” position and arguments against strong “blank slate” accounts of human cognitive development, see Tooby and Cosmides (1992) and Pinker (2002:34–35, 79–83).

²⁴ See Kahneman, Slovic, and Tversky (1982) and Kahneman and Tversky (2000).

itical disagreement? We believe that the answer to this question can be critically important to the diplomacy that *does* explain outcomes. Why did some metaphors become prominent in this particular political discourse, while others did not? We found little evidence to support the common contention—in both the popular press and academic literature—that eastern versus western modes of thought or deep-seated cultural models defined the conflicting explanations of the incident. We believe that the conflicting conceptual metaphors used by the Chinese in this instance, Victim and IRs as Civil Relations, quite naturally highlighted their position in the most positive political light, as the American discourse of Game and Technical Fix likewise highlighted the positive aspects of the U.S. actions, while skirting the more questionable aspects of hegemonic or arrogant behavior.

Throughout the EP-3 incident, the United States continued to insist upon its neutral framing of the affair (Game or Technical Fix) as simply a statement of fact rather than a metaphorical standpoint. This deliberate or inadvertent “metaphor blindness” was, we believe, the main reason why China’s insistence upon an unambiguous apology and potential reparations was persistently viewed in the American press as irrational or disingenuous. In the same manner, the PRC press and public came to see and *feel about* the incident exclusively through the lens of Victim and Civil Relations metaphors. Of course, without access to the minds and private conversations of the policy makers themselves, it is impossible to say to what extent these framings were part of a deliberate strategy, but in any case it is clear that the national press and political commentator communities for the most part swallowed the respective framings as fact. As long as neither side acknowledged the contingent nature of their own framing, nor the competing metaphorical frame of the other, then consequently, each counterpart’s attitudes and behavior must only have seemed either hysterically irrational or brutally insensitive to the other (Table 8).

One way of looking at the purpose of conceptual metaphor theory is through the analogy of Freudian psychoanalysis; as long as we remain unconscious of our metaphors, they will channel our thinking in certain directions whether we like it or not, in the same way unconscious urges and complexes can dictate our behavior. Once we become conscious of our metaphors or our complexes, however, we gain a measure of power over them, as well as the ability to negotiate them with others. We believe that, in the case of this particular historical incident, an open recognition by the United States and China of both their own and the other’s metaphorical perspective—along with the corresponding normative-emotional reactions—would have allowed a faster and more efficient resolution to the crisis. By studying the incident by tracing the conceptual metaphors used, we can conclude that the United States had at least three discourse-related diplomatic choices: (1) to continue to argue from the conceptual metaphor of Game or Technical Fix, a discourse that had little chance of defusing the Chinese claims of Victimhood and International

TABLE 8. International Relations as Civil Relations (Chinese Dominant) Code Family Details for Competing Metaphor Family

<i>Codes</i>	<i>Common Phrases (Chinese)</i>
International Relations as Social Relations	人道主义 (humaneness, human-heartedness; lit. “the way of being human –ism”)
International Relations as Talking Face	自大 (self-important, arrogant), 傲慢 (high-handed), 无礼 (impolite, ill-mannered)
Face	面 / 面子 (face) 状态 (attitude) 妥善 (proper, appropriate) 内疚 (compunction, guilty conscience)

Entailments: Social niceties or interpersonal norms apply to behavior between states; ignoring these niceties in state behavior is uncivilized, deserving of reprimand; implies the importance of apology in state behavior.

Relations as Civil Relations; (2) to drop these two metaphors and concentrate on the shared metaphors of Journey, War, or Economics to explain their own position; or (3) to negotiate with the Chinese within their own metaphors of Victimhood and IRs as Civil Relations. The fact that the approach adopted was essentially option #1—and that, more generally, both sides failed to recognize the alternate metaphoric framing of the other—helps to explain both why the incident proved so difficult to resolve and why the “solution”—a nonapology turned into a somewhat face-saving pseudo-apology—left lingering bad feelings on both sides. The take-home lesson for future diplomatic strategy is that crisis can be defused or averted by engaging and negotiating within the adversary’s metaphorical concepts, rather than simply talking past them with competing metaphors—ones that too often allow one to avoid the disagreement rather than resolving it. In this respect, metaphor and metaphoric blend analysis can serve as a valuable tool for both political analysts and policy-makers alike.

A third, more general point of this paper is to argue for an “embodied realist” approach to comparative cultural studies that grounds abstract cognition in universal, embodied experience. In the case we examined, metaphor analysis allows us to make empirically grounded claims about Chinese–American relations that avoid cultural stereotypes by focusing attention on the details of the rhetorical interaction. We believe that the same tools can be applied to any language and any culture: whether an analysis of rhetoric is concerned with Croatian or Japanese or Canadian English, we will expect to find metaphors derived from embodied experience structuring the discourse and normative import in crucial ways. Shared human embodied experience then provides a bridge whereby we can imaginatively share the specific emotional and conceptual framing generated by particular metaphors, and adjust our own attitudes, behaviors, or rhetoric accordingly. We believe that this is both a more helpful—and more optimistic—model than the cultural essentialist assumptions that often inform popular and scholarly accounts of intercultural disagreement.

Finally, although we are by no means the first to argue for the importance of metaphor for analysis of IRs, we go beyond existing metaphor analyses—which for the most part focus on small samples of text and broad armchair generalizations—to attempt a comprehensive, empirically rigorous, large-scale analysis of political discourse. Our grounded theory methodology suggests how teams of metaphor analysts can develop shared and consistent coding lists, and how programs such as Atlas Ti can help to systematize the analysis of metaphor. The methods used in this study allow us to advance the cause of systematizing metaphor analysis, add to the corpus of metaphorical case studies, and contribute to the formulation of lists of common metaphors used in IRs. Our methods are also easily and obviously generalizable to work in any language, as our ability to apply the same tools to languages as widely separated as English and Chinese demonstrates. In a broader methodological sense, our results are suggestive for the project of integrating “interpretive” and “scientific” approaches to social science in general, and intercultural relations in particular.

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