

# FROG METAPHORS IN MO YAN'S NOVEL 蛙 /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (FROG): A COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE<sup>1</sup>

Yao Siqu<sup>2</sup>

## บทคัดย่อ

นวนิยายเรื่อง 蛙 /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (กบ) เป็นนวนิยายรางวัลโนเบล ประพันธ์โดยนักเขียนชาวจีนชื่อ “โมเหยียน” มีเนื้อหาเกี่ยวกับการปฏิบัติตาม “นโยบายลูกคนเดียว” (one-child policy) และระบบการยับยั้งการตั้งครรภ์ (forced abortions) ซึ่งเป็นประเด็นปัญหาที่มีการโต้แย้งกันตลอดเวลาในช่วงครึ่งศตวรรษที่ผ่านมา ในผลงานเรื่องนี้ปรากฏการณ์ทางภาษาที่เป็นอุปมาอุปไมยเกี่ยวกับ “กบ” เป็นลักษณะเด่นชัดที่สุด ซึ่งปรากฏทั่วทุกแห่งตลอดทั้งเรื่อง บทความนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาอุปมาอุปไมยเชิงมโนทัศน์เกี่ยวกับ “กบ” โดยอาศัยแนวคิดทฤษฎีอุปมาอุปไมยเชิงมโนทัศน์ของเลคอฟและจอห์นสัน (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) และระบบ “GREAT CHAIN OF BEING”

<sup>1</sup> อุปมาอุปไมยเกี่ยวกับกบในนวนิยายเรื่อง “กบ” ของโมเหยียน: มุมมองทางปริชาณ

<sup>2</sup> (เหยา ซือ จี) Ph.D. Candidate, Department of English and Linguistics, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand.

ของเลคอฟและเทอร์เนอร์ (Lakoff and Turner, 1989) รวมถึงอุปมาอุปไมยสองแบบได้แก่ “มนุษย์เป็นสัตว์” และ “สัตว์เป็นมนุษย์” ซึ่งพัฒนาโดยโคเวคเซส (Kövecses, 2002) ตลอดจนความคิดเกี่ยวกับอุปมาอุปไมยเชิงสัทศาสตร์ (phonetic metaphor) ซึ่งเสนอโดยโฟนาจี (Fónagy, 1999) มาเป็นกรอบแนวคิดในการศึกษาครั้งนี้ ผลการวิเคราะห์พบว่า “กบ” ในนวนิยายเรื่องนี้มีบทบาทสำคัญในกระบวนการสร้างมโนทัศน์ของผู้ใช้ภาษาจีนที่มีต่อเรื่องเฉพาะในสาธารณรัฐประชาชนจีนตามแบบแผน ซึ่งแสดงให้เห็นถึงความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างสิทธิมนุษยชนแบบพื้นฐาน (basic human rights) กับการดำรงชีวิตอย่างยากลำบากของสังคมในสมัยนั้น นอกจากนี้งานวิจัยนี้ยังช่วยให้เข้าใจมโนทัศน์และอุดมการณ์ต่างๆ ซึ่งได้รับอิทธิพลจากความขัดแย้งระหว่างมโนทัศน์แบบดั้งเดิมของประชาชนจีนกับการปกครองภายใต้ “นโยบายลูกคนเดียว” (one-child policy) ในสังคมจีนอีกด้วย

## Abstract

《蛙》/ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog) by the Nobel Prize winning Chinese author Mo Yan describes China's changing its highly controversial one-child policy and system of forced abortions over the past half-century. Frog metaphors are omnipresent throughout the novel. The present study aims to investigate these metaphors within the framework of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's

*(1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and the "GREAT CHAIN OF BEING" system of George Lakoff and Mark Turner (1989) to deepen our understanding of their nature and manifestations. Zoltán Kövecses's (2002) "HUMAN BEINGS ARE ANIMALS" and "ANIMALS ARE HUMAN BEINGS" were also considered as cognitive metaphorical models. Moreover, the viewpoint of "phonetic metaphor" initially proposed by Ivan Fónagy (1999) was also taken into account. Results were that in Mo Yan's work, the frog plays an essential role in the conceptualizing conventional views of certain areas in China. The analysis demonstrates how a cognitive approach offers an effective way to explore the cognitive basis of the text's view on the complex relationship between the basic human rights and the dilemmas of living in a repressive society. This paper also hopes to make a certain contribution to comprehending frog metaphors in terms of more clearly delineated concepts and ideology reflecting China's real society of a one-child policy and its traditional counter - policy notion.*

## **1. Background and Introduction**

At the end of 2015, China made an important decision to implement a two-child policy, abandoning the decades-old one-child policy which had lasted for a long time throughout modern Chinese history since the late 1970s. The highly controversial one-child policy was introduced by China's Communist leaders in order to alleviate the great pressure on

the population and also to release employment tension. It does seem to have slowed down China's population growth problem and also maintained a steady labor rate. On the other hand, a large number of issues arose as a result of the policy. The Chinese novel 《蛙》 /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog), written by Mo Yan-the Nobel Literature Prize laureate of 2012 demonstrates China's changes over the past half-century concerning the one - child policy and also forced abortions. Frogs, as a kind of animal, are seemingly unrelated to China's one-child policy. Generally speaking, every culture has its symbolic equivalent to the frog - a small green animal living near water, an amphibian with long hind limbs for leaping and a source food for predating but none of them is quite like the Chinese frog in Mo Yan's novel, which is potentially associated with fertility worship as a considerable end in itself: 'the character for frogs symbolised a profusion of children, and it has become Northeast Gaomi Township's totem' (Goldblatt, 2014 : 351).

One of the most salient features of this novel is the application of a large number of frog metaphors, attributable to animal metaphors. However, on the one hand, for the study of 《蛙》 /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog), previous researches (e.g. Zhao, 2011; Wang, 2011; Guan, 2013; Zuo, 2013; Hu, 2014; Song, 2015; Wu, 2015; Zhu, 2015) were more concerned with traditional literary appreciation concerning aesthetic values and literacy. On the other hand, the majority of animal metaphors studies in the past two decades (e.g. Di, 2006; Li, 2007; Rodríguez, 2009; Liu, 2010; Zhao,

2010; Gao, 2012; He, 2012; Mo, 2012; Liu, 2013; Liu, 2014; Zhang, 2015) have always paid attention to various kinds of animal metaphorical terms in idiomatic phrases and proverbial sayings or contrastive studies between Chinese and other languages. It is obvious that studies using a cognitive linguistic approach to this novel are seriously lacking. Therefore, this paper aims to study frog metaphors from the perspective of cognitive linguistics to explore how these frog metaphors reflect the metaphorical conceptual system of frogs widespread throughout underlying Chinese beliefs and cultural models, establishing a coherence to this novel through its conceptual governance of surface linguistic expressions.

Interestingly, the great number of phonetic metaphors used in this novel is another important feature. Actually, different kinds of phonetic metaphors have been widely applied in the areas of advertisements and cyber language (e.g. Li, 2005; Li, 2009; Wu, 2010; Li, 2012; Liu, 2012; Liu, 2013; Liu, 2015; Ma & Zhang, 2016). However, it has seldom been found in research on the phonetic metaphors in literary works, especially in Mo Yan's works. Consequently, on the basis of an understanding of the cognitive linguistic theories, this paper also analyses frog metaphors from the perspective of phonetic metaphors, which is a new perspective in the field of research on conceptual metaphor.

## **2. Conceptual Metaphor and Phonetic Metaphor**

### **Conceptual Metaphor**

Conceptual metaphors, as an indispensable part of human life, initially put forward by the cognitive linguists George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980), are regarded as a landmark of the history of metaphor study, reestablishing the recognition of metaphor from a traditional linguistic phenomenon to a matter of conceptual property. According to the cognitive linguistic view, conceptual metaphor is studied as a system of human conceptualization, operating the processing of human thought and cognition. As one of most important aspect of the human mind's operation, seeking similar attributes among things provides people with systematic mappings to understand a more unfamiliar or abstract concept in terms of another more specific or concrete concept. Therefore, conceptual metaphor refers to a set of conceptual correspondence or metaphorical mapping across two concepts or two different domains, namely, the source domain and the target domain. The source domain is the more familiar concept used to help organising and understanding the other relatively abstract concept in the target domain (Lakoff and Johosn, 1980; Lakoff and Turner, 1989; Gibbs, 1994; Fauconinier, 1997).

Animals, as animate creatures, can be viewed as typical things with salient physical characteristics and behaviours in source domain mapping on to those of human beings in the target domain. By so

doing, the similar characteristics or attributes of human beings in the target domain can be expressed through many animal metaphors. Moreover, there are five basic substances hierarchically presented in the “GREAT CHAIN OF BEING” system which are placed in the order of HUMANS, ANIMALS, PLANTS, COMPLEX OBJECTS and NATURAL PHYSICAL THINGS from the top to the bottom (Lakoff and Turner, 1989). Such a system explicitly demonstrates how “things” from different boundaries are related to or correspond with each other in the world. All of these substances are interchangeable in different conceptual metaphors and can be regarded as entities in both the source domain and the target domain; as Kövecses (2002) points out the “GREAT CHAIN OF BEING” becomes a metaphorical system when a particular level of the chain is utilised to comprehend another level and vice versa. Consequently, animals, as relatively lower-nonhuman entities, serve a good source domain in our thoughts to be used to conceptualise human beings which are generally higher-level human in the target domain, namely, it does exist as a conceptual metaphor ““HUMAN BEINGS ARE ANIMALS”. Similarly, another cognitive process “ANIMALS ARE HUMAN BEINGS” in the “basic Great Chain” system allows us to comprehend less well-understood attributes or behaviour but lack the high-order human properties in terms of being better-understood or familiar human characteristics as well (Lakoff and Turner, 1989 ; Kövecses, 2002). The choice of a particular pairing of source and target domain is motivated by experiential bases,

including bodily and cultural experience as well as the relevant social and historical factors.

In addition, according to a “decompositional” version of conceptual metaphor theory (Grady, 1997a; Grady, 1997b, Grady, 2005; Lakoff and Johnson, 1999; Lakoff and Johnson, 2003; Kövecses, 2002; Kövecses, 2005), conceptual metaphors can be divided into two kinds of types : primary metaphors and complex metaphors. In short, primary metaphors derive directly from correlation in experience and therefore are more likely to be universal or widespread whereas complex metaphors are combinations of primary metaphors and other components, including cultural beliefs, commonplace knowledge that is widely accepted in a culture and folk theories and so forth that tend to be more culture-specific.

### **Phonetic metaphor**

The term “phonetic metaphor”, as a kind of metaphor at the phonetic level, was initially proposed by Fónagy (1999) in his academic paper “*Why Iconicity*”. However, his account was merely conducted from the viewpoint of the iconic relationship between the acoustic ways (manners of articulation) and meaning and lack of giving a explicit definition of it until Branko Vuletic (2003) pointed out that phonetic metaphor primarily is a kind of association between contents based on similarity or closeness in the sound. More specifically, it is crucial to find the similarities between semantic meaning (which is based on a certain context) and phonetical form

(which depends on) in order to achieve a kind of transformational effect. In accordance with conceptual metaphor theory, phonetic metaphor not only merely worked as a rhetorical device, but also was further regarded as a cognitive mechanism for reflecting our mental states. The forms of phonetic metaphor based on the previous studies (Li, 2005; Wei and Yin, 2006; Tan and Huang, 2008; Li, 2012; Liu, 2013) are mainly classified into 4 types, including homonym metaphor, phonetic pun, perfect homonym and phonetic parody.

### 3. A Brief Introduction to the Chinese Version of 《蛙》 /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog)

《蛙》 /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog), a novel by the Nobel-prize winning author Mo Yan, discusses China's One Child Policy (OCP) and the associated system of required abortions, enforced since 1979. The book was first published by Shanghai Literature and Art Press in 2009. It achieved great success all over the world and Mo Yan won the Nobel Literature Prize in 2012. Since then, 《蛙》 /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog) has been translated into English by Howard Goldblatt and, also, other languages.

The novel is composed of three main parts: a series of letters that playwright 'Tadpole' (蝌蚪 ; Xiaopao, or "jogger") has written to Sensei-his Japanese professor, four epic life stories and a drama in 9 acts. Like other works by Mo Yan (a pen name for Guan Moye), 《蛙》 /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog) is set in Gaomi, a county-level city of eastern Shandong province in the

People's Republic of China, the writer's birthplace. However, unlike his previous novels characterised by hallucinatory realism, 《蛙》 /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog) provides a usual perspective representing the historical reality of society and pays more attention to portraying the image of the female doctor in a rural area and telling the story of her life experience. Gugu (姑姑; paternal aunt), the aunt of the narrator Tadpole, is initially revered as the midwife who brings life to Gaomi but constantly alters her role into a leader of the Communist family planning committee, strictly implementing the enforced abortions of China's one-child policy. Faced with the insoluble dilemma of famine and overpopulation, Gugu shoulders the arduous responsibility of enforcing induced abortion and tubal sterilization upon the unwilling villagers who have had their first healthy child. Gugu punishes those who violate the national policy : she chases Tadpole's wife - Wang Renmei despite their familial relationship to each other, forcing Wang to lose a place to shelter until she dies on the operating table and she even accidentally claims the life of pregnant Wangdan when attempting to escape abortion. Consequently, Gugu impulsively marries master doll maker Hao Dashou to assuage her guilty conscience.

As an invisible main character, frog as the title of this novel also significantly serves the theme indicating fertility in Chinese culture and particularly their great reverence for life. Linguistically, Mo Yan subtly express the chaotic phenomenon of fertility during the past 60 years of China by using the cognitive device of

conceptual metaphor and more specifically choosing frogs as a metaphor throughout the novel 《蛙》 /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog) emphasises the complexities and contradictions of the one-child policy (OCP) and traditional beliefs about many offspring bringing wealth to one family. In so doing, the image of frog metaphors based on the writer's social-cultural experiences towards the reality of China can be conceptualised when readers read this book.

Howard Goldblatt, as an award-winning translator of numerous works of contemporary Chinese to English, received high praise for being natural, flexible and extremely faithful to the spirit of the original works (Zhang, 2005: 76; Mo, 2005: 170). That is the reason why I chose his English version of 《Frog》 to serve as a tool to help readers, especially foreign readers who do not know Chinese accurately to comprehend the original text through the translated version.

#### 4. Analysis of Frog Metaphors in Chinese Novel 《蛙》 /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog)

Homophonic metaphors are one of various forms of phonetic metaphors (Li, 2005; Wei and Yin, 2006) which are based on homophones. In other words, homophonic metaphors refer to an efficient way of using different words with a similar or the same pronunciation, but with a distinct spelling and meaning to build up an association in meaning mapping and to further achieve a kind of effect (Fónagy,1999; Brown, 2003; Li, 2005; Wei and Yin, 2006; Tan and Huang, 2008; Li, 2012; Liu, 2013). In this study, the homophone “蛙” /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog)、 “娲” /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (‘Nüwa’, a goddess in Chinese mythology) and “娃” /ua<sup>35</sup>/ (child) represent the difference and the relations between the phonetic metaphorical expressions when talking about how “Tadpole”, the main character of this novel, entitled his new play as follows :

EX (1) 暂名青蛙的“蛙”，当然也可以改成娃娃的“娃”，当然还可以改成女娲的“娲”，女娲造人，蛙是多子的象征，蛙是咱们高密东北乡的图腾，我们的泥塑、年画里，都有蛙崇拜的实例。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 341)

暂名	青蛙的“蛙”	当然	也	可以
tsan <sup>51</sup> miŋ <sup>35</sup>	te <sup>h</sup> iŋ <sup>55</sup> ua <sup>55</sup> ty <u>ua</u> <sup>55</sup>	taŋ <sup>55</sup> ʃan <sup>35</sup>	ɥ <sup>214</sup>	k <sup>h</sup> ɥ <sup>214</sup> ji <sup>214</sup>
temporary name	‘ <u>wa</u> ’ in ‘qingwa’	certainly	also	can
改成	娃娃的“娃”	当然	还	可以
kai <sup>214</sup> tɕ <sup>h</sup> əŋ <sup>35</sup>	ua <sup>35</sup> ua <sup>35</sup> ty <u>ua</u> <sup>35</sup>	taŋ <sup>55</sup> ʃan <sup>35</sup>	xai <sup>35</sup>	k <sup>h</sup> ɥ <sup>214</sup> ji <sup>214</sup>

change into	<b>'wa'</b> in 'wawa' for babies	certainly	also	can
改成	女娲的“ <u>娲</u> ”	女娲造人	蛙	是
kai <sup>214</sup> tɕ <sup>h</sup> əŋ <sup>35</sup>	nu <sup>214</sup> ua <sup>55</sup> ty <b>ua<sup>55</sup></b>	nu <sup>214</sup> ua <sup>55</sup> tsau <sup>51</sup> .ɬən <sup>35</sup>	ua <sup>55</sup>	ɕ <sup>h</sup> ɿ <sup>51</sup>
change into	<b>'wa'</b> in 'Nüwa'	Nüwa created man	frog	is
多子的象征	蛙是咱们	高密东北乡的	图腾	我们的
tuo <sup>55</sup> tɕ <sup>h</sup> ɿ <sup>214</sup> ty ɕiən <sup>51</sup> tɕəŋ <sup>55</sup>	ua <sup>55</sup> ɕ <sup>h</sup> ɿ <sup>51</sup> tsən <sup>35</sup> mən	kau <sup>55</sup> mi <sup>51</sup> tuŋ <sup>55</sup> pei <sup>14</sup> ɕiən <sup>55</sup> ty	t <sup>h</sup> u <sup>35</sup> t <sup>h</sup> əŋ <sup>35</sup>	o <sup>214</sup> mən ty
A symbol of fertility	frog is our	Northeast Gaomi Township's	totem	our
泥塑	年画里	都有	蛙崇拜的	实例
ni <sup>35</sup> su <sup>51</sup>	niən <sup>35</sup> xu <sup>51</sup> li <sup>214</sup>	tou <sup>55</sup> iou <sup>214</sup>	ua <sup>55</sup> tɕ <sup>h</sup> uŋ <sup>35</sup> pai <sup>51</sup> ty	ɕ <sup>h</sup> ɿ <sup>35</sup> li <sup>51</sup>
clay sculptures	New Year's paintings	all have	worship of frogs	example

For now it's the **'wa'** in 'qingwa', but I can change it later to the **'wa'** in 'wawa' for babies or in 'Nüwa', the goddess who created mankind. After she populated the earth with people, the character for frogs symbolised a profusion of children, and it has become Northeast Gaomi Township's totem. Frogs appear as creatures of veneration in our clay sculptures and our New Year's paintings. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 351)

Culturally, the goddess Nüwa is the original ancestor the Chinese nation well-known for creating humanity by moulding yellow earth. In terms of Chinese local culture, the frog as a spiritual animal is an emblem of fertility which is also associated with life energy since the novel mentions that the character for frogs symbolises a profusion of children. This example gives a typical instance of homophonic metaphor which is constituted on the basis of the potentially

similar phonetic features between “蛙” /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog), “娲” /ua<sup>55</sup>/ ('Nüwa') and “娃” /ua<sup>35</sup>/ (child) in a specific cultural context. In other words, “蛙” /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog) and “娲” /ua<sup>55</sup>/ ('Nüwa'), “蛙” /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog) and “娃” /ua<sup>35</sup>/ (child) are two pairs of homophones, which respectively share similar pronunciation but are different in meaning. Therefore, this is an unconscious process for the reader that “蛙” /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (frog), as the title of novel and the name of

play created by narrator “Tadpole”, is apparently consistent with theme of this novel - “嫫” /ua<sup>55</sup>/ (‘Nüwa’) and “娃” /ua<sup>35</sup>/ (child), which mainly talks about the “giving birth to a child” or fertility issues under the particular context of Chinese society.

### Frog as a Target Domain

According to the “GREAT CHAIN OF BEING” system (Lakoff and Turner, 1989), frogs, as a type of amphibian, are endowed with some characteristics of human beings and can be viewed as a target concept owing to their own particular attributes and cultural implications. In this paper, the formation of frog metaphors or the concept of FROGS

can be demonstrated through the mapping from the source domain, HUMAN BEINGS, including WOMEN, BABIES and to the target domain FROGS. The following metaphorical descriptions related to frogs are given, including two subcategories: (1) [FROGS ARE WOMEN] and (2) [FROGS ARE BABIES].

#### (1) [FROGS ARE WOMEN]

Frogs are conceptualised as women due to their physiological similarities in this novel. The relevant example is shown as follows:

EX (2) 那些吃过青蛙的人让一群女人……剪下青蛙的头，然后，像脱裤子一样，把它们的皮褪下来。它们的大腿，跟女人的大腿一样。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 342)

那些	吃过青蛙的人	让一群女人	剪下	青蛙的头
nA <sup>51</sup> eiε <sup>55</sup>	tʂ <sup>h</sup> kuo <sup>51</sup> te <sup>h</sup> ij <sup>55</sup> ua <sup>55</sup> ty ɬən <sup>35</sup>	ɬaŋ <sup>51</sup> ji <sup>55</sup> te <sup>h</sup> yn <sup>35</sup> ny <sup>214</sup> ɬən <sup>35</sup>	teiaen <sup>214</sup> eiA <sup>51</sup>	te <sup>h</sup> ij <sup>55</sup> ua <sup>55</sup> ty t <sup>h</sup> ou <sup>35</sup>
Those	ate frogs	let women	cut	heads of frogs
然后	像	脱裤子	一样	把它们的皮
ɬan <sup>35</sup> xou <sup>51</sup>	eiɑŋ <sup>51</sup>	t <sup>h</sup> uo <sup>55</sup> k <sup>h</sup> u <sup>51</sup> tsɿ	ji <sup>55</sup> iaŋ <sup>51</sup>	pA <sup>214</sup> t <sup>h</sup> A <sup>55</sup> mən ty p <sup>h</sup> i <sup>35</sup>
then	like	taking off a pair of pants	same	PRT take their skin
褪下来	<u>它们的大腿</u>	跟	<u>女人的大腿</u>	一样

---

$t^h e i^{51} \text{ ei} \dot{A}^{51} \text{ lai}^{35}$	$\frac{t^h A^{55} \text{ m} \dot{a} n \text{ t} y}{t A^{51} t^h e i^{214}}$	$k \dot{a} n^{55}$	$\frac{n y^{214} \text{ j} \dot{a} n^{35}}{t y \text{ t} A \text{ t}^h e i^{214}}$	$j i^{55} \text{ i} \dot{a} n^{51}$
pull down	<b><u>their thighs</u></b>	like	<b><u>women's legs</u></b>	same

---

Those who ate frogs made women ..... cut the heads off frogs, then skin them, like taking off a pair of pants. **Their thighs** were like **a woman's**. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 352)

---

Example (2) evokes the image that Gugu (means aunt in Chinese) destroyed pregnant women's unborn children that resulted in all of them suffering physical and emotional injuries when she performed abortions on a surgical table and a sense of fear and guilt arises spontaneously. The writer uses “女人的大腿” (a woman's legs) for referring

to “褪了皮的青蛙腿” (a frog's legs without skin). The characteristic of the source domain A WOMAN'S LEGS is mapped on to the target domain A FROG'S LEGS WITHOUT SKIN underlying the similarities of colour and external form. The metaphorical mapping can be demonstrated in the following correspondences:

---

<Source Domain>	→	<Target Domain>
<b>WOMEN</b>	→	<b>FROGS</b>
a woman's legs	→	a frog's legs without skin

---

## (2) [FROGS ARE BABIES]

Frogs are a fascinating kind of creature which are also conceptualised in the attributes of babies in this novel. These frog images roughly correspond with the four

main categories with which frogs are identified underlying their own characteristics, namely, sound, behaviour and life cycle etc. The following sentences will be used as examples to illustrate these points.

Sound

EX (3) 那天晚上的蛙声如哭，仿佛是成千上万的初生婴儿在哭。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 236)

那天	晚上的	<u>蛙声</u>	如	哭
nA <sup>51</sup> t <sup>h</sup> ian <sup>55</sup>	uan <sup>214</sup> s <sup>h</sup> aŋ <sup>51</sup> tɿ	<u>ua<sup>55</sup> s<sup>h</sup>aŋ<sup>55</sup></u>	ɿu <sup>35</sup>	k <sup>h</sup> u <sup>55</sup>
That day	night's	<u>croaking</u>	like	cry
仿佛是	成千上万的	<u>初生</u>	<u>婴儿</u>	<u>在哭</u>
faŋ <sup>214</sup> fu <sup>35</sup> s <sup>h</sup> ɿ <sup>51</sup>	tɕ <sup>h</sup> aŋ <sup>35</sup> tɕ <sup>h</sup> iæn <sup>55</sup> s <sup>h</sup> aŋ <sup>51</sup> uan <sup>51</sup> tɿ	<u>tɕ<sup>h</sup>u<sup>55</sup> s<sup>h</sup>aŋ<sup>55</sup></u>	<u>iŋ<sup>55</sup> ɿɿ<sup>35</sup></u>	<u>tsai<sup>51</sup> k<sup>h</sup>u<sup>55</sup></u>
like	thousands of	<u>newborn</u>	<u>infants</u>	<u>were crying</u>

But that night it sounded to her like human cries, almost as if thousands of newborn infants were crying. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 250)

EX (4) 为什么“蛙”与“娃”同音?为什么婴儿刚出母腹时哭声与蛙的叫声十分相似?(Mo Yan, 2012 : 246)

为什么	“蛙”与“娃”	同音	为什么	<u>婴儿</u>
uei <sup>51</sup> s <sup>h</sup> aŋ <sup>35</sup> mɿ	ua <sup>55</sup> jy <sup>214</sup> ua <sup>35</sup>	t <sup>h</sup> uŋ <sup>35</sup> in <sup>55</sup>	uei <sup>51</sup> s <sup>h</sup> aŋ <sup>35</sup> mɿ	<u>iŋ<sup>55</sup> ɿɿ<sup>35</sup></u>
Why	“frog” and “baby”	homophony	why	<u>infants</u>
<u>刚出母腹时</u>	<u>哭声</u>	<u>与蛙的</u>	<u>叫声</u>	十分相似
<u>kaŋ<sup>55</sup> tɕ<sup>h</sup>u<sup>55</sup> mu<sup>214</sup> fu<sup>51</sup> s<sup>h</sup>ɿ<sup>35</sup></u>	<u>k<sup>h</sup>u<sup>55</sup> s<sup>h</sup>aŋ<sup>55</sup></u>	<u>jɿ<sup>214</sup> ua<sup>55</sup> tɿ</u>	<u>teia<sup>51</sup> s<sup>h</sup>aŋ<sup>55</sup></u>	s <sup>h</sup> ɿ <sup>35</sup> fən <sup>55</sup> eiaŋ <sup>55</sup> sɿ <sup>51</sup>
<u>first got out of the mother's womb</u>	<u>crying</u>	<u>with frog's</u>	<u>croak</u>	quite similar

Why does the word for frogs – wa – sound exactly like the word for babies – wa? Why is the first sound a newborn baby makes an almost exact replica of a frog's croak? (Goldblatt, 2014 : 259)

The two examples above are metaphors related to the sound of frog metaphors mapping from “婴儿哭” (newborn infants’ crying) to “蛙声” (the croaking of frogs) in this novel. In example (3), the writer uses the metaphor of the croaking of frogs for referring to the newborn infants’ cries with a sense of resentment and of grievance since his Gugu (means aunt in Chinese) who was initially a medical provider with a special

experience about frogs before she made a decision to designate and go back to her hometown for a restful retirement. Similarly, on the process of mapping, similar sound features between source domain and target domain are also highlighted in example (4). Here is a diagram of the metaphorical mapping from the source domain to the target domain as follows:

<Source Domain>	→	<Target Domain>
<b>BABIES’ SOUND</b>	→	<b>FROGS’ SOUND</b>
newborn infants’ crying	→	the croaking of frogs

### Behaviour

EX (5) 它们 (那两只青蛙) 牢牢地叼住耳垂, 像饥饿的娃娃叼着母亲的奶头。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 237)

它们	(那两只青蛙)	牢牢地	<u>叼住</u>	<u>耳垂</u>
thA <sup>55</sup> mən	nA <sup>51</sup> lian <sup>214</sup> tʂɿ <sup>55</sup> tɛ <sup>h</sup> iŋ <sup>55</sup> ua <sup>55</sup>	lau <sup>35</sup> lau <sup>35</sup> ti	<u>tiau<sup>55</sup> tʂu<sup>51</sup></u>	<u>ɣɿ<sup>214</sup> ts<sup>h</sup>uei<sup>35</sup></u>
They	two frogs	tightly	<u>attached</u>	<u>ears</u>
像	<u>饥饿的娃娃</u>	<u>叼着</u>	<u>母亲的</u>	<u>奶头</u>
eiaŋ <sup>51</sup>	<u>tei<sup>55</sup> ɣ<sup>51</sup> ty ua<sup>35</sup></u> <u>ua</u>	<u>tiau<sup>55</sup> tʂy</u>	<u>mu<sup>214</sup> te<sup>h</sup>in<sup>55</sup></u> <u>ty<sup>51</sup></u>	<u>nai<sup>214</sup> t<sup>h</sup>ou<sup>35</sup></u>
like	<u>hungry infants</u>	<u>suck</u>	<u>mother’s</u>	<u>nipple</u>

The two **attached to her ears** like **suckling infants** nearly took some of the skin with them when she pulled them off. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 251)

In this sentence, the vivid image of “两只青蛙牢牢地叼住耳垂，就像饥饿的娃娃叼着母亲的奶头” (the two frogs attached to her ears like suckling infants) is demonstrated by the behaviour “suck”, thus giving rise to a mapping from the infants’ behaviour of hungrily sucking the mother’s nipple to the frogs’ activity of tightly biting

off the aunt’s ears. The context background also lies in the fact that there are two frogs climbing on her when the aunt goes across a marshy area on a narrow, winding path. She is burning to pull them off, never worrying about any damage to her body. The metaphorical mapping can be demonstrated in the following correspondences:

<Source Domain>	→	<Target Domain>
<b>BABIES' BEHAVIER</b>	→	<b>FROGS' BEHAVIER</b>
infants' behaviour of hungrily sucking mother's nipple	→	frogs' activity of tightly attaching to aunt's ears

### Life cycle

EX (6) 蝌蚪和人的精子形状相当，人的卵子与蛙的卵子也没有什么区别；还有，你看没看过三个月内的婴儿标本？……与变态期的蛙类几乎是一模一样啊。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 245)

<u>蝌蚪</u>	和	<u>人的精子</u>	形状相当	<u>人的卵子</u>
k <sup>h55</sup> tou <sup>214</sup>	xy <sup>35</sup>	jən <sup>35</sup> ty tein <sup>55</sup> tsɿ <sup>214</sup>	eiŋ <sup>35</sup> tʂuan <sup>51</sup> eian <sup>55</sup> tan <sup>55</sup>	jən <sup>35</sup> ty luan <sup>214</sup> tsɿ <sup>214</sup>
<u>Tadpoles</u>	and	<u>human sperm</u>	look about the same	<u>human eggs</u>
与	<u>蛙的卵子</u>	也	没有什么	区别
jy <sup>214</sup>	ua <sup>55</sup> ty luan <sup>214</sup> tsɿ <sup>214</sup>	y <sup>214</sup>	mei <sup>35</sup> iou <sup>214</sup> ɣhən <sup>35</sup> my	te <sup>hy55</sup> piε <sup>35</sup>
and	<u>frog eggs</u>	also	there isn't	difference
还有	你	看没看过	<u>三个月内的</u>	<u>婴儿标本</u>
xai <sup>35</sup> iou <sup>214</sup>	ni <sup>214</sup>	k <sup>h</sup> an <sup>51</sup> mei <sup>35</sup> k <sup>h</sup> an <sup>51</sup> kuo <sup>51</sup>	san <sup>55</sup> ky <sup>51</sup> iɣε <sup>51</sup> nei <sup>51</sup> ty	iŋ <sup>55</sup> ɣɿ <sup>35</sup> piəu <sup>55</sup> pən <sup>214</sup>
there's more	you	have you seen	<u>in the first three months</u>	<u>human foetus specimens</u>

与	<u>变态期的</u>	<u>蛙类</u>	几乎是	一模一样啊
jy <sup>214</sup>	<u>piæn<sup>51</sup> t<sup>h</sup>ai<sup>51</sup></u> <u>te<sup>h</sup>i<sup>55</sup> ty</u>	<u>ua<sup>55</sup> lei<sup>51</sup></u>	tei <sup>55</sup> xu <sup>55</sup> ʂ <sup>h</sup> ɿ <sup>51</sup>	ji <sup>55</sup> mo <sup>35</sup> ji <sup>55</sup> iaŋ <sup>51</sup> ʌ
and	<u>metamorphic stage</u>	<u>frogs</u>	almost	exactly alike

Tadpoles and human sperm look about the same, and there isn't much difference between frog and human eggs. And there's more – have you seen human foetus specimens in the first three months, .....They're just like frogs in their metamorphic stage. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 259)

EX (7) .....蝌蚪比水还多。.....最终能成为青蛙的，不过万分之一，.....这与男人的精子多么相似，.....能与卵子结合成为婴儿的，恐怕只有千万分之一。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 341)

<u>蝌蚪</u>	比水还多	最终	能成为青蛙的	不过
<u>k<sup>h</sup>y<sup>55</sup> tou<sup>214</sup></u>	pi <sup>214</sup> ʂ <sup>h</sup> uei <sup>214</sup> xai <sup>51</sup> tuo <sup>55</sup>	tsuei <sup>51</sup> tʂuŋ <sup>55</sup>	nəŋ <sup>35</sup> ʂ <sup>h</sup> əŋ <sup>35</sup> uei <sup>35</sup> te <sup>h</sup> iŋ <sup>55</sup> ua <sup>55</sup> ty	pu <sup>35</sup> kuo <sup>51</sup>
<u>Tadpoles</u>	more than water	in the end	become frogs	but
万分之一	这与	<u>男人的精子</u>	多么相似	能与
uan <sup>51</sup> fən <sup>55</sup> tʂɿ <sup>55</sup> ji <sup>55</sup>	tʂɿ <sup>51</sup> jy <sup>214</sup>	<u>nan<sup>35</sup> ʒən<sup>35</sup> ty tein<sup>55</sup></u> <u>tʂɿ<sup>214</sup></u>	tuə <sup>55</sup> my <sup>55</sup> eiaŋ <sup>55</sup> s <sup>1</sup> <sup>51</sup>	nəŋ <sup>35</sup> jy <sup>214</sup>
ten thousand of them	with	<u>a man's sperm</u>	so similar	can
卵子结合	成为婴儿的	恐怕	只有	千万分之一
luan <sup>214</sup> tʂɿ <sup>214</sup> teie <sup>35</sup> xy <sup>35</sup>	tʂ <sup>h</sup> əŋ <sup>35</sup> uei <sup>35</sup> iŋ <sup>55</sup> y <sup>35</sup> ty	k <sup>h</sup> uŋ <sup>214</sup> p <sup>h</sup> ʌ <sup>51</sup>	tʂɿ <sup>214</sup> iou <sup>214</sup>	te <sup>h</sup> iæn <sup>55</sup> uan <sup>51</sup> fən <sup>55</sup> tʂɿ <sup>55</sup> ji <sup>55</sup>
penetrates the egg	become child	belike	only	one in ten million

.....there were more tadpoles than the water could accommodate. ....no more than one out of ten thousand of them would become frogs.....Just like a man's sperm, except for them, only about one in ten million penetrates the egg to make a child. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 352)

Frogs are a type of amphibian and they need to go through three metamorphosis development stages from cluster of floating egg masses to tadpoles and eventually become adult frogs. The writer not only refers to people as adult frogs but also considers the holistic diagram of the life cycle of frogs. The two examples above describe life cycle of frogs by using metaphorical linguistic expressions such as “人的卵子” (human eggs), “男人的精子” (a man's sperm) and “三个月内的婴儿标本” (human foetus specimens in the first three months).

In examples (6) and (7), the images of egg masses and tadpoles respectively refer to females' eggs and males' sperm. In the first case, there are three pairs of metaphorical expressions: (a) FROGSPAWN ARE FEMALES' EGGS (b) TADPOLES ARE MALES' SPERM and (c) FROGS IN THEIR METAMORPHIC STAGE ARE HUMAN FOETUS SPECIMENS IN THE FIRST THREE MONTHS. The mapping

from the source domains FEMALES' EGGS, MALES' SPERM and HUMAN FOETUS SPECIMENS IN THE FIRST THREE MONTHS to the target domain FROGSPAWN, TADPOLES and FROGS IN THEIR METAMORPHIC STAGE are possibly due to the similarities of external features between two domains. In the second case, the source domain and target domain are separately a man's sperm and tadpoles as well, while the conceptual metaphor “MALES' SPERM ARE TADPOLES” is established on the basis of the large quantity and low survival rate. The high fertilisation with low survival rate of tadpoles resembles that of human beings. Hence, a set of correspondences are formed via these frog metaphors in terms of life cycle perspective and although these two examples conform to the same conceptual metaphorical mode, that is “THE LIFE CYCLE OF FROGS ARE THE LIFE CYCLE OF HUMAN BEINGS”, mappings based on different salient characteristics. It can also be shown in the following correspondences:

<Source Domain>	→	<Target Domain>
<b>THE LIFE CYCLE OF HUMAN BEINGS</b>	→	<b>THE LIFE CYCLE OF FROGS</b>
females' eggs	→	frogspawn
males' sperm	→	tadpoles
human foetus specimens in the first three months	→	frogs in their metamorphic stage

From the analysis above, the writer Mo Yan uses a large number of frog metaphors to not only express his veneration towards frogs, but also shows his respect for life and the appreciation of the value of life, probably

due to “a mysterious connection existing between tadpoles and humans in the propagation of species.” (Goldblatt, 2014 : 352) (蝌蚪与人类的生育之间, 有一种神秘的联系。[Mo Yan, 2012 : 342])

### Breeding environment

EX (8) 牛蛙养殖场……真正的生意, 是帮人养娃娃。……说好听的呢, 叫“代孕中心”。 (Mo Yan, 2012 : 250)

<u>牛蛙养殖场</u>	真正的	生意	是	帮人
<u>niəu<sup>35</sup> ua<sup>55</sup> iəŋ<sup>214</sup> tɕy<sup>35</sup></u> <u>tʂhəŋ<sup>214</sup></u>	tʂən <sup>55</sup> tʂəŋ <sup>51</sup> ty	ʂhəŋ <sup>55</sup> ji <sup>51</sup>	ʂh <sup>51</sup>	paŋ <sup>55</sup> tən <sup>35</sup>
<u>bullfrog-breeding farm</u>	real	business	is	helping people
养娃娃	说	好听的呢	叫	<u>代孕中心</u>
iəŋ <sup>214</sup> ua <sup>35</sup> ua	ʂhuo <sup>55</sup>	xau <sup>214</sup> tʰiŋ <sup>55</sup> ty ny	teiau <sup>51</sup>	<u>tai<sup>51</sup> iyn<sup>51</sup> tsuŋ<sup>55</sup> ein<sup>55</sup></u>
make babies	speak	nicely	it's	<u>surrogate-mother centre</u>

The bullfrog-breeding farm's real business is helping people make the other kind of 'wa'-babies……To put it nicely, it's a surrogate-mother centre. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 265)

The linguistic expression “代孕中心” (surrogate-mother centre) in the above-mentioned example conceptualises the metaphorical expression FROGS' BREEDING ENVIRONMENT IS BABIES' CREATING ENVIRONMENT which structures the concept FROGS' BREEDING ENVIRONMENT in terms of another concept BABIES' CREATING ENVIRONMENT. The mappings from the source domain BABIES' CREATING ENVIRONMENT to target domain FROGS' BREEDING ENVIRONMENT are possibly

owing to the existence of similarities between the two domains. To be specific, the example above regards “代孕中心” (surrogate-mother centre) as “牛蛙养殖场” (bullfrog-breeding farm) since they share similar characteristics which are “pursuing illegal-business” and “seeking profits”. With the metaphorical expressions emerging, it is easier to understand the implied meaning in the example and the several correspondences or metaphorically cross-domain mappings underlying this metaphor are as follows:

<Source Domain>		<Target Domain>
<b>BABIES' CREATING ENVIRONMENT</b>	→	<b>FROGS' BREEDING ENVIRONMENT</b>
surrogate-mother centre	→	bullfrog-breeding farm
illegally product babies	→	disguisedly breed bullfrog
seeking profit from women who can't have babies	→	seeking profit from customers

From the analysis above, the prominent attributes of “代孕中心” (surrogate-mother centre) and “牛蛙养殖场” (bullfrog-breeding farm) have much in common: both expecting a new life, one is real ‘(/ua<sup>55</sup>/蛙)’-frogs, one is the other kind of ‘(/ua<sup>35</sup>/娃)’-babies. And both illegally carry on business dealings to seek profit from customers. The evidence for bullfrog-breeding farm's real business is a surrogate-mother centre to help people have their babies, namely, the role of the obstetrics department of a hospital. While local people regard the real hospital as “an abattoir” because one of most essential functions for hospital run by Gugu and village leaders is

abortion of illegal pregnancies and ligation operations for male who have more than one child. When Little Lion suggests that Chen Bi take his sick daughter to the hospital for an IV, Chen Bi angrily asked: “Is that a hospital you're running? Chen Bi fumed. Or an abattoir?” (你们那是医院吗? 陈鼻悻悻地说, 你们那是屠场! [Mo Yan, 2012: 176]). Here, Chen Bi uses “abattoir” to refer to “holy hospital” to express his extreme indignation. As a result, it's particularly ironic that a group of illegally unborn children are destroyed in the regular hospital but another group of unplanned born children are legally produced in the bullfrog-breeding farm.

In addition to those four aspects of prominent attributes mapping from the concept BABIES in the source domain to another concept of FROGS in the target domain, a complex metaphor [FROGS ARE BABIES] which is composed of the

corresponding sub-metaphors [FROGS ARE ARTISTIC CREATIONS OF CREATORS] and [ARTISTIC CREATIONS ARE CREATORS' CHILDREN] which are also involved.

EX (9) 那这只**大牛蛙**，袁腮指指院子里的**雕塑**，也是**你的孩子**了！  
那当然了，小毕道，**每件成功的作品**，都是**艺术家的孩子**。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 219)

那	这只	大牛蛙	袁腮	指指
nA <sup>51</sup>	tɕy <sup>51</sup> tɕ <sup>55</sup>	tA <sup>51</sup> niəu <sup>35</sup> ua <sup>55</sup>	juan <sup>35</sup> sai <sup>55</sup>	tɕ <sup>214</sup> tɕ <sup>214</sup>
Then	that	<b>big bullfrog</b>	Yuan Sai	point to
院子里的	<b>雕塑</b>	也是	<b>你的孩子</b> 了	那当然了
juan <sup>51</sup> tsɿ li <sup>214</sup> ty	<b>tiau<sup>55</sup> su<sup>51</sup></b>	ɣ <sup>214</sup> ɕ <sup>h</sup> l <sup>51</sup>	<b>ni<sup>214</sup> ty xai<sup>35</sup></b> tsɿ ly	nA <sup>51</sup> tan <sup>55</sup> ɿan <sup>35</sup> ly
in the yard	<b>sculpture</b>	is also	<b>your child</b> PER	of course PER
小毕道	每件	<b>成功的作品</b>	都是	<b>艺术家的孩子</b>
eiau <sup>214</sup> pi <sup>51</sup> tau <sup>51</sup>	mei <sup>214</sup> teiaen <sup>51</sup>	<b>ts<sup>h</sup>ən<sup>35</sup> kuŋ<sup>55</sup> ty tsuo<sup>51</sup></b> p <sup>h</sup> in <sup>214</sup>	tou <sup>55</sup> ɕ <sup>h</sup> l <sup>51</sup>	<b>ji<sup>51</sup> s<sup>h</sup>u<sup>51</sup> teiA<sup>55</sup> ty</b> xai <sup>35</sup> tsɿ
Xiao Bi replied	every	<b>artistic creation</b>	is all	<b>artist's child</b>

Then that **big bullfrog** must be **your child**. Yuan Sai pointed to the **bullfrog sculpture**. Of course they are, she (Xiao Bi) replied. **Every artistic creation** is the **artist's child**. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 232)

EX (10) ……高密东北乡所有的娃娃，都被他（郝大手）捏过。……高密东北乡每个人都能在他的泥娃娃里找到小时候的自己。……他卖**泥娃娃**时眼里含着泪，就像他卖的是**亲生的孩子**。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 100)

高密东北乡	所有的娃娃	都被他（郝大手）	捏过	高密东北乡
kau <sup>55</sup> mi <sup>51</sup> tuŋ <sup>55</sup> pei <sup>214</sup> eiaŋ <sup>55</sup>	suo <sup>214</sup> iou <sup>214</sup> ty ua <sup>35</sup> ua <sup>35</sup>	tou <sup>55</sup> pei <sup>51</sup> t <sup>h</sup> A <sup>55</sup> (xau <sup>214</sup> tA <sup>51</sup> ɕ <sup>h</sup> ou <sup>214</sup> )	nie <sup>55</sup> kuo <sup>51</sup>	kau <sup>55</sup> mi <sup>51</sup> tuŋ <sup>55</sup> pei <sup>214</sup> eiaŋ <sup>55</sup>

Northeast Gaomi Township	all the dolls	by him (Hao Dashou)	made	Northeast Gaomi Township
每个人	都能在	他的泥娃娃里	找到	小时候的自己
mei <sup>214</sup> ky <sup>51</sup> .ən <sup>35</sup>	tou <sup>55</sup> nəŋ <sup>35</sup> tsai <sup>51</sup>	t <sup>h</sup> A <sup>55</sup> tɥ ni <sup>35</sup> ua <sup>35</sup> ua <sup>35</sup> li <sup>214</sup>	tɕau <sup>214</sup> tau <sup>51</sup>	ɛiau <sup>214</sup> ɣ <sup>h</sup> xou <sup>51</sup> tɥ tsɿ <sup>51</sup> tei <sup>214</sup>
everyone	all can	in his dolls	find	when someone was a child
他卖泥娃娃时	眼里含着泪	就像	他卖的是	<b>亲生的孩子</b>
t <sup>h</sup> A <sup>55</sup> mai <sup>51</sup> ni <sup>35</sup> ua <sup>35</sup> ua <sup>35</sup> ɣ <sup>h</sup>	ian <sup>214</sup> li <sup>214</sup> xan <sup>35</sup> tɕy lei <sup>51</sup>	teio <sup>51</sup> ɛiau <sup>51</sup>	t <sup>h</sup> A <sup>55</sup> mai <sup>51</sup> tɥ ɣ <sup>h</sup>	<b>te<sup>h</sup>in<sup>55</sup> ɣ<sup>h</sup>əŋ<sup>55</sup> tɥ xai<sup>35</sup> tsɿ</b>
when he sell <b>dolls</b>	with tears in his eyes	just like	he was selling	<b>his own children</b>

.....He made all the dolls in Northeast Gaomi Township. ....Every resident of Northeast Gaomi Township can see what he (Hao Dashou) looked like as a child. ....He sold **his dolls** with tears in his eyes, as if he were selling **his own children**. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 107)

EX (11) 姑姑突然转变了口气，直接对着那泥娃娃说话：就是你，你这个小精灵鬼，你这个小讨债鬼，姑奶奶毁掉的两千八百个孩子里，就缺你了，你来了，就齐了。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 297)

姑姑	突然	转变了	口气	直接对着
ku <sup>55</sup> ku <sup>55</sup>	t <sup>h</sup> u <sup>55</sup> .ən <sup>35</sup>	tɕuan <sup>214</sup> piæn <sup>51</sup> lɥ	k <sup>h</sup> ou <sup>214</sup> te <sup>h</sup> i <sup>51</sup>	tɕɿ <sup>35</sup> teie <sup>55</sup> tuei <sup>51</sup> tɕy
Aunt	suddenly	changed PER	tone	face directly
那	<b>泥娃娃</b>	说话	就是你	你这个
nA <sup>51</sup>	<b>ni<sup>35</sup> ua<sup>35</sup> ua<sup>35</sup></b>	ɣ <sup>h</sup> uo <sup>55</sup> xuA <sup>51</sup>	teio <sup>51</sup> ɣ <sup>h</sup> ni <sup>214</sup>	ni <sup>214</sup> tɕy <sup>51</sup> ky <sup>51</sup>
that	<b>clay dolls</b>	speak	This is you	you
<b>小精灵鬼</b>	你这个	<b>小讨债鬼</b>	姑奶奶	毁掉的
<b>ɛiau<sup>214</sup> tein<sup>55</sup> liŋ<sup>35</sup> kuei<sup>214</sup></b>	ni <sup>214</sup> tɕy <sup>51</sup> ky <sup>51</sup>	<b>ɛiau<sup>214</sup> t<sup>h</sup>au<sup>214</sup> tsai<sup>51</sup> kuei<sup>214</sup></b>	ku <sup>55</sup> nai <sup>214</sup> nai <sup>214</sup>	xuei <sup>214</sup> tiau <sup>51</sup> ty
<b>little sprite</b>	you	<b>little debtor</b>	Aunt	destroyed
两千八百个	孩子里	就缺你了，	你来了	就齐了

---

lian <sup>214</sup> tɛ <sup>h</sup> iæn <sup>55</sup> pA <sup>55</sup> pai <sup>214</sup> ky <sup>51</sup>	xai <sup>35</sup> tɕl̩ li <sup>214</sup>	tɛiəu <sup>51</sup> tɛ <sup>h</sup> ye <sup>55</sup> ni <sup>214</sup> lɿ	ni <sup>214</sup> lai <sup>35</sup> lɿ	tɛiəu <sup>51</sup> tɛ <sup>h</sup> i <sup>35</sup> lɿ
two thousand eight hundred	foetuses	you're the last PER	with you PER	we have them all PER

---

But then her tone changed as she spoke directly to **the doll**: This is you, you **little sprite**, you **little debtor**. Gugu destroyed two thousand eight hundred foetuses, and you're the last. With you, we have them all. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 309)

---

Here are the relevant propositions (cultural beliefs), metonymies and metaphors involving the complex metaphor FROGS ARE BABIES that was formulated through close reading of the selected instances above:

- (1) propositions:
  - a. frogs symbolised a profusion of children
  - b. frogs are Northeast Gaomi Township's totem
  - c. mankind are Nüwa's children
  - d. Nüwa's created mankind by clay
- (2) metonymies:
  - a. BULLFROG SCULPTURE STANDS FOR ARTISTIC CREATION
  - b. CLAY DOLLS STANTS FOR ARTISTIC CREATION
- (3) metaphors:
  - a. FROG IS A BULLFROG SCULPTURE
  - b. FROGS ARE ARTISTIC CREATIONS OF CREATORS

c. ARTISTIC CREATIONS ARE CREATORS' CHILDREN

The conceptual metaphor FROGS ARE BABIES that is sophisticated goes through the whole novel, which displays a series of propositions, metonymies, primary metaphors and even complex metaphors in a systematic and coherent way.

In example (9), the metaphor (3a) FROG IS A BULLFROG SCULPTURE derives from the combination of metonymies (2a) BULLFROG SCULPTURE STANDS FOR ARTISTIC CREATION and metaphor (3b) FROGS ARE ARTISTIC CREATIONS OF CREATORS. As a ontological metaphor, the metaphor FROG IS A BULLFROG SCULPTURE vividly describes a big frog-like sculpture. The source domain in this metaphor BULLFROG SCULPTURE shares similar characteristics of appearance with FROG in the target domain. From this example, we can further conceive that the narrator scrutinizes the bullfrog sculpture with a feeling of wonder and admiration when he meets its gloomy gaze from its bulging eyes : "I studied the enormous frog and was properly in awe. The gloomy gaze from its bulging eyes seemed to carry a message from the ancient past." (Goldblatt,

2014: 227) (我端详着这只巨蛙, 心生敬畏。……那两只突出的大眼睛, 视线阴沉, 似乎在向我传达远古的信息。…… [Mo Yan, 2012 : 215]) , which is in accord with the frog totem of local Chinese culture in Northeast Gaomi Township. As mentioned above, complex metaphors arise from the combination of primary metaphors or other complex metaphors and of cultural beliefs (propositions). Thus, we can easily see that the emergence of the complex metaphor FROGS ARE BABIES in a particular Chinese culture is clearly based on its conventional culture's holding the combination of the two propositions (1a.

frogs symbolised a profusion of children 1b. frogs are Northeast Gaomi Township's totem) and the primary metaphor FROG IS A BULLFROG SCULPTURE as mentioned above.

In examples (9)-(11), the propositional component (1c) and (1d), which reflect the traditional Chinese culture-“Nüwa created mankind by moulding yellow clay and therefore all mankind are Nüwa' children” makes the complex metaphor ARTISTIC CREATIONS ARE CREATORS' CHILDREN quite culturally-specific. Here is a diagram of the mapping from source domain onto target domain:

<Source Domain>	→	<Target Domain>
<b>CREATORS' CHILDREN</b>	→	<b>ARTISTIC CREATION</b>
<b>CHILD</b>	→	<b>BULLFROG SCULPTURE</b>
child of Xiao Bi	→	big bullfrog sculpture
Nüwa created mankind by moulding yellow earth	→	artist's created bullfrog sculpture by moulding yellow clay
Nüwa's baby	→	artist's baby
<b>CHILDREN</b>	→	<b>CLAY DOLLS</b>
every resident of Northeast Gaomi Township	→	all the dolls in Northeast Gaomi Township
Hao Dashou's own children	→	clay dolls made by Hao Dashou
unborn children destroyed by Gugu	→	shattered dolls

Furthermore, considering the metaphorical expressions concerning “FROGS ARE BABIES” in the complex metaphor, a major difference between babies produced by a surrogacy centre or bullfrog-breeding farm in name only and “children” created by Hao

Dashou is that the former are illegally parturient whereas the latter culturally imply the necessary life extension from generation to generation yet they were mercilessly destroyed. The reasonable and natural desires for new life in the times of “family

planning” place them in a incompatible dilemma that gives food for thought.

### Frog as the Source Domain

Frogs as typical animals can be regarded as source domains as well as target domains that were mentioned in the previous part. Specifically, Kövecses (2002 : 125) put forward the “HUMAN BEINGS ARE ANIMALS” metaphor, namely, to conceptualise human beings in terms of

various kinds of animals, which is the basic level of animal metaphors usually occurring in linguistic phenomena. In this study, apparently, aspects of frogs, including appearance, behaviours and other characteristics and so forth can also map on to those of human beings. Next, the analysis turns to metaphors with frogs as the source concept and different linguistic manifestations of the “HUMAN BEINGS ARE FROGS” conceptual metaphor are mentioned.

EX (12) 黄秋雅往前一挣，嗤啦一声，褂子破了，露出了白得像青蛙肚皮一样的脊背。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 51)

黄秋雅	往前一挣	嗤啦一声	褂子	破了
xuaŋ <sup>35</sup> te <sup>h</sup> iəu <sup>55</sup> jA <sup>214</sup>	uaŋ <sup>214</sup> te <sup>h</sup> iæn <sup>35</sup> ji <sup>55</sup> tʂəŋ <sup>51</sup>	ʂ <sup>h</sup> l <sup>55</sup> lA <sup>55</sup> ji <sup>55</sup> ʂ <sup>h</sup> əŋ <sup>55</sup>	kua <sup>51</sup> tsɿ	p <sup>h</sup> o <sup>51</sup> lɿ
Huang Qiuya	lurched forward	sound of ripping,	smock	broken PER
露出了	白得像	<u>青蛙肚皮</u>	一样的	<u>脊背</u>
lu <sup>51</sup> tʂ <sup>h</sup> u <sup>55</sup> lɿ	pai <sup>35</sup> tɿ ɕiæn <sup>51</sup>	<u>te<sup>h</sup>iŋ<sup>55</sup> ua<sup>55</sup> tu<sup>51</sup> p<sup>h</sup>i<sup>35</sup></u>	ji <sup>55</sup> iæn <sup>51</sup> tɿ	<u>tei<sup>214</sup> pei<sup>51</sup></u>
expose PER	as white as	<u>frog's belly</u>	same	<u>back</u>

Huang lurched forward to free herself and we heard her smock rip, exposing her back, which was the white of a frog's belly. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 55)

Firstly, example (12) contains a conceptual metaphor in HUMAN BEINGS' APPEARANCE ARE FROGS' APPEARANCE in which the colour

of “黄秋雅的脊背” (Huang's back) can be vividly explained through “青蛙的白肚皮” (the white of a frog's belly).

EX (13) 不着急，慢慢来，像青蛙稳坐莲叶等待昆虫那样耐心；想好了下笔，像青蛙跃起捕虫那样迅疾。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 4)

不着急	慢慢来	像青蛙	稳坐莲叶	<u>等待昆虫</u>
-----	-----	-----	------	-------------

pu <sup>51</sup> t̚au <sup>35</sup> tei <sup>35</sup>	man <sup>51</sup> man <sup>51</sup> lai <sup>35</sup>	eiɑŋ <sup>51</sup> te <sup>h</sup> iŋ <sup>55</sup> ua <sup>55</sup>	uən <sup>214</sup> t̚suo <sup>51</sup> liæn <sup>35</sup> ɣ <sup>51</sup>	<u>təŋ<sup>214</sup> tai<sup>51</sup> k<sup>h</sup>uən<sup>55</sup> t̚ʂuŋ<sup>35</sup></u>
take it easy	proceed slowly	like frogs	sit on a lily pad	<b>waiting for insects</b>
那样耐心	想好了下笔	像青蛙	<b>跃起捕虫</b>	那样迅疾
nA <sup>51</sup> iɑŋ <sup>51</sup> nai <sup>51</sup> ein <sup>35</sup>	eiɑŋ <sup>214</sup> xau <sup>214</sup> lɿ eiA <sup>51</sup> pi <sup>214</sup>	eiɑŋ <sup>51</sup> te <sup>h</sup> iŋ <sup>55</sup> ua <sup>55</sup>	<u>ivɛ<sup>51</sup> te<sup>h</sup>i<sup>214</sup> pu<sup>214</sup> t̚ʂuŋ<sup>35</sup></u>	nA <sup>51</sup> iɑŋ <sup>51</sup> ɛyn <sup>51</sup> tei <sup>35</sup>
as patient as	think it over before writing	like frogs	<b>leap to catch insect</b>	as rapidly as

I will proceed slowly, without forcing the issue, as patient as **a frog on a lily pad waiting for insects** to come its way. But when I put pen to paper, it will be with the speed of **a frog jumping up to snatch an insect** out of the air. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 4)

EX (14) 姑姑说她跪在了地上，像一只巨大的青蛙，往前爬行。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 236)

姑姑	说	她	跪在了	地上
ku <sup>55</sup> k u <sup>5</sup> 5	ʂ <sup>h</sup> uo <sup>55</sup>	t <sup>h</sup> A <sup>55</sup>	kuei <sup>51</sup> tsai <sup>51</sup> lɿ	ti <sup>51</sup> ʂ <sup>h</sup> ɑŋ <sup>51</sup>
Aunt	said	she	kneel PER	on the ground
像	一只	<b>巨大的青蛙</b>	往前	<b>爬行</b>
eiɑŋ <sup>51</sup>	ji <sup>55</sup> t̚ʂɿ <sup>55</sup>	<u>teu<sup>51</sup> tA<sup>51</sup> ty te<sup>h</sup>iŋ<sup>55</sup> ua<sup>55</sup></u>	uaŋ <sup>214</sup> te <sup>h</sup> iæn <sup>35</sup>	<u>p<sup>h</sup>A<sup>35</sup> eiŋ<sup>35</sup></u>
like	a	<b>enormous frog</b>	ahead	<b>crawl</b>

Gugu said she got down on her hands and knees, like an **enormous frog**, and began to **crawl**. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 250)

Secondly, the literary discourse in (13) and (14) conceptualises the metaphorical expression HUMAN BEINGS' BEHAVIOUR ARE FROGS' BEHAVIOUR. As in example (13), the writer adjusts the manner of his literary writing based on the instruction of his

foreigner friend - Sugitani Akihito sensei. The metaphors used by the author in this example allow us to conceive the behaviour of excellent writers in terms of the performance of frogs when they are patiently waiting for insects to rapidly come their way. However, the creeping verbs in

example (14) reflecting a similar action between a source domain “青蛙四脚爬” (frogs crawled with four paws) and a target

domain “姑姑跪在地上向前爬” (Gugu got down on her hands and knees but kept crawling).

EX (15) 那些吃青蛙的人，最后都得了报应……最后，脸上的表情都与青蛙一样。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 342)

那些	吃青蛙的人	最后	都	得了报应
nA <sup>51</sup> eiε <sup>55</sup>	tʂh <sup>55</sup> te <sup>h</sup> iŋ <sup>55</sup> ua <sup>55</sup> tɣ <sup>55</sup> ɿən <sup>35</sup>	tsuei <sup>51</sup> xou <sup>51</sup>	tou <sup>55</sup>	tɣ <sup>35</sup> ɿpau <sup>51</sup> iŋ <sup>51</sup>
Those	who ate frogs	in the end	all	get PER retribution
最后	<u>脸上的表情</u>	都与	<u>青蛙</u>	一样
tsuei <sup>51</sup> xou <sup>51</sup>	<u>liæn<sup>214</sup>s<sup>h</sup>ɑŋ<sup>51</sup>tv<sup>51</sup>piɑu<sup>214</sup>te<sup>h</sup>iŋ<sup>35</sup></u>	tou <sup>55</sup> jy <sup>214</sup>	<u>te<sup>h</sup>iŋ<sup>55</sup>ua<sup>55</sup></u>	ji <sup>55</sup> iaŋ <sup>51</sup>
in the end	<u>facial expression</u>	all	<u>frogs</u>	same

Those who ate frogs all paid a price for swallowing them ..... In the end, their facial expression was the spitting image of a frog. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 352)

Thirdly, example (15) provides us with a correspondence mapping, as it is based on highlighting “青蛙的面部特征” (the facial features of frogs), which is mapped on

to “吃青蛙的人的表情” (the dull facial expression of some people who ate frogs) because frogs carried parasites that travelled up to the women’s brains.

EX (16) 听到这个消息后，哥哥姐姐像青蛙一样哇哇叫，我在地上翻筋斗。(Mo Yan, 2012 : 31)

听到	这个消息	后	<u>哥哥姐姐</u>	像
thiŋ <sup>55</sup> tau <sup>51</sup>	tʂɣ <sup>51</sup> ky <sup>51</sup> eiɑu <sup>55</sup> ei	xou <sup>51</sup>	<u>ky<sup>55</sup>ky<sup>55</sup>tei<sup>214</sup>tei<sup>214</sup></u>	eiɑŋ <sup>51</sup>
heard	this news	after	<u>brothers and sisters</u>	like
<u>青蛙</u>	一样	<u>哇哇叫</u>	我在地上	翻筋斗

<u>te<sup>h</sup>iŋ<sup>55</sup> ua<sup>55</sup></u>	ji <sup>55</sup> iaŋ <sup>51</sup>	<u>ua<sup>55</sup> ua<sup>55</sup></u> <u>teiau<sup>51</sup></u>	o <sup>214</sup> tsai <sup>51</sup> ti <sup>51</sup> ɣ <sup>h</sup> aŋ <sup>51</sup>	fan <sup>55</sup> tein <sup>55</sup> tou <sup>214</sup>
<u>frogs</u>	same	<u>wawl</u>	I in the yard	turned somersaults

When they heard the news, my brothers and sisters croaked like an army of frogs, while I turned somersaults in the yard. (Goldblatt, 2014 : 34)

Fourthly, the above-mentioned example (16) which illustrates the metaphorical mapping between the sound of frogs and the human voice. The relevant sound attribute of “蛙鸣” (frogs’ croaking) is correlated to that attribute of “哥哥姐姐兴奋地欢呼声” (brothers and sisters who are were excitedly

cheering) when they heard the news that the man who gave Gugu the Enicar wristwatch was an air force pilot. The HUMAN BEINGS ARE FROGS conceptual metaphor in this novel is based on a small number of constituent mappings, including the following diagram:

<Source Domain>		<Target Domain>
<b>FROGS’ APPEARANCE</b>	→	<b>HUMAN BEINGS’ APPEARANCE</b>
the white of a frog’s belly	→	Huang’s back
<b>FROGS’ BEHAVIOUR</b>	→	<b>HUMAN BEINGS’ BEHAVIOUR</b>
frogs crawled with four paws	→	Gugu crawled on her hands and knees
the facial features of frogs	→	the dull facial expression of some people who ate frogs
frogs’ croaking	→	brothers and sisters’ excitedly cheering

The statements of the writer explicitly demonstrates how frogs, the principal animals in this novel, correspond to different attributes and, as a result, when frogs become a source domain to refer to human beings as a target domain, their characteristics such as appearance, behaviour, sound and facial expression etc. are also transferred to human beings’ counterparts. According to Kövecses (2002), some metaphors are grounded in correlations in our experience. Just as frogs are a kind of

vitaly essential animal existing in MoYan’s living environment so these are concerned with the basis of his experiences towards the natural world in his daily life. In the cognitive view of metaphor, these experiences are assumed to play a crucial role in the formation of frog metaphors in his novel. As a result, frogs can also be frequently figured out as source domain to understand the target domain, namely, human domain in the above-mentioned examples.

## 5. Conclusion and Discussion

As this study has shown, various frog-related metaphorical terms from the traditional perspective are merely perceived as a kind of language phenomenon or a figure of speech in which one thing is compared to another. Instead, such metaphorical expressions in the cognitive view function as a way to structure our conceptual system about frogs grounded in our physical and cultural experience.

Frogs in China that can be selected to understand human beings are mainly indebted to the external aspects of adult frogs and tadpoles, the pronunciation of frogs and the profoundly cultural implications—reproductive worship. Historically, reproductive worship or fertility used to be an important and positive concept in Chinese culture. Gugu brought thousands of children into the world so that she was well known as the “Fertility Goddess” by all local people in the eighteen villages of Northeast Gaomi Township. As Gugu said in her later years, “I was a living Buddha at that time. A floral perfume oozed from my body, bees swarmed in my wake. So did butterflies” (Goldblatt, 2014: 26) (那时候,我是活菩萨,我是送子娘娘,我身上散发着百花的香气,成群的蜜蜂跟着我飞,成群的蝴蝶跟着我飞。[Mo Yan, 2012 : 24]). This seems to be a civilization that was built upon the idea of ancestral worship and the foundation of this practice is the belief that it is important to have lots of children—especially male children. In other words, frogs as metaphor for fertility used to be a good thing. Readers learn of this concept from the narrator-Tadpole’s point of view when Little Lion, his infertile wife, made the decision:

“There’s no reason to be afraid of frogs, you know, since we have the same ancestors. Tadpoles and human sperm look about the same, and there isn’t much difference between frog and human eggs. And there’s more – have you seen human foetus specimens in the first three months, how they have a long tail? They’re just like frogs in their metamorphic stage.....Why does the word for frogs – wa – sound exactly like the word for babies – wa? This was a prepared speech. Why is the first sound a newborn baby makes an almost exact replica of a frog’s croak? How come so many of the clay dolls made in Northeast Gaomi Township are holding frogs in their arms? And why is the ancestor of humans called Nüwa? Like the ‘wa’ for frog. Doesn’t that prove that our earliest ancestor was a frog, and that we have evolved from her? The theory that men evolved from apes is wrong...” (Goldblatt, 2014: 259-260)

“其实,她说,蛙类并没有什么可怕的,人跟蛙是同一祖先,她说,蝌蚪和人的精子形状相当,人的卵子与蛙的卵子也没有什么区别;还有,你看没看过三个月内的婴儿标本?拖着一条长长的尾巴,与变态期的蛙类几乎是一模一样啊。.....她像背诵似地说:为什么“蛙”与“娃”同音?为什么婴儿刚出母腹时哭声与蛙的叫声十分相似?为什么我们东北乡的泥娃娃塑像中,有许多怀

抱着一只蛙?为什么人类的始祖叫女媧?“媧”与“蛙”同音,这说明人类的始祖是一只大母蛙,这说明人类就是由蛙进化而来,那种人由猿进化而来的说法是完全错误的.....”(Mo Yan, 2012: 246)

However, seemingly all of a sudden, there comes the One Child Policy, and fertility is not a goddess to be worshipped any more. It becomes, instead, a problem that needs to be resolved, and in many cases, eradicated. As one of the typical representatives of the Communist Party, Gugu, on the one hand, regards such official political discourse on the birth control mandate as her responsibility that has to be firmly carried out under the special situation of China so as to avoid uncontrollable overpopulation. On the other hand, she gradually becomes a practitioner who has a profound hatred of villagers: “Your aunt isn’t a human being, she’s a demon! my mother-in-law jumped in. How many lives has she destroyed over the past few years? Her hands are covered in blood, and when she dies the King of Hell is going to chop her into pieces.” (Goldblatt, 2014: 146) (“你姑姑不是人,是妖魔!岳母跳出来,这些年来,她糟蹋了多少性命啊?她的双手上沾满了鲜血,她死后要被阎王爷千刀万剐!” [Mo Yan, 2012: 138]). In spite of this, Gugu still remains committed to her mission: “People have begun calling Gugu the ‘Living Queen of Hell’, and she couldn’t be prouder. For those who follow family-planning policy, Gugu takes a bath and burns incense before delivering babies; for those who get pregnant by violating the policy, Gugu deals mercilessly with them— every last one of

them!” (Goldblatt, 2014: 103) (现在有人给姑姑起了个外号叫“活阎王”,姑姑感到很荣光!对那些计划内生育的,姑姑焚香沐浴为她接生;对那些超计划怀孕的——姑姑对着虚空猛劈一掌——决不让一个漏网! [Mo Yan, 2012: 96]).

Admittedly, Gugu was not only proud of her occupation as an obstetrician but also of her social identity as a member of the communist party who resolutely carried out the tasks assigned by state. Yet it is difficult to understand that such a heroic servant of people is horrified by what she called the abnormal behaviour of those who ate frogs: “They (Those who ate frogs) made women go down to the river and cut the heads off frogs, then skin them, like taking off a pair of pants. Their thighs were like a woman’s. That’s when my fear of frogs was born. Their thighs were just like a woman’s.” (Goldblatt, 2014: 352) (他们让一群女人,在河边,用剪刀,剪下青蛙的头,然后,像脱裤子一样,把它们皮褪下来。它们的大腿,跟女人的大腿一样。我就是从那时才开始害怕青蛙的。它们的大腿.....像女人的大腿一样..... [Mo Yan, 2012: 342]). Moreover, another case explains that Gugu was scared and terror-stricken when she unknowingly walked into a marshy area on the night she announced her retirement: “The croaking of frogs is often described in terms of drumbeats. But that night it sounded to her like human cries, almost as if thousands of newborn infants were crying. That had always been one of her favourite sounds, she said. For an obstetrician, no sound in the world approaches the soul-stirring music of a newborn baby’s cries. But the cries that night were infused with a sense of resentment and of grievance, as if

the souls of countless murdered infants were hurling accusations.” (Goldblatt, 2014: 250) (常言道蛙声如鼓，但姑姑说，那天晚上的蛙声如哭，仿佛是成千上万的初生婴儿在哭。姑姑说她原本是最爱听初生儿哭声的，对于一个妇产科医生来说，初生婴儿的哭声是世上最动听的音乐啊！可那天晚上的蛙叫声里，有一种怨恨，一种委屈，仿佛是无数受了伤害的婴儿的精灵在发出控诉。 [Mo Yan, 2012 : 236])

Fortunately, Gugu survived such an hallucination where the souls of dead children rose in the guise of frogs owing to the help from a folk artist-Hao Dashou and came to fall in love with him. For the sake of atonement for all unborn children destroyed by her, Gugu eventually decided to marry Hao Dashou who makes dolls by hand so vivid that they themselves are like living children : “By employing her husband’s talents, Gugu was bringing to life all the children she’d stopped from being born. I guessed that was her way of assuaging deep-seated feelings of guilt, and there was nothing wrong with that. If she hadn’t done it, someone else would have. The men and women who defied the policy against multiple pregnancies could not escape a share of the responsibility for what happened. And if no one had done what she did, it is truly hard to say what China might be like today.” (Goldblatt, 2014: 310) (姑姑是把她引流过的那些婴儿，通过姑父的手，一一再现出来。我猜测，姑姑是用这种方式来弥补她心中的歉疚，但这不能怨她啊。她不做这事情，也有别人来做。而且，那些违规怀胎的男女们，自身也有不可推卸的责任。而且，如果没人来做这些事情，

今日的中国，会是个什么样子，还真是不好说。 [Mo Yan, 2012 : 298]).

Such an obvious transformation of Gugu is related not only to the alteration of her tremendous change in social identity and ideology but also to the change in the social and political situation. In fact, during China’s family planing period Gugu was considered the epitome of Chinese people. As the overgrowth of population presents a threat to the existence of human society, family plan policy has to be complemented in our country. With Chinese traditional ideology facing the impact of such a counter-culture policy, there are two emerging issues need to be considered:

Firstly, what does this do to Chinese society, Chinese culture and community’s identity? Apparently, the one-child policy has had a relatively positive impact in some of China’s urban areas in terms of controlling their demography and boosting economic development. The Communist party leadership aims at limiting the great majority of family units and reduce poverty so as to improve the overall quality of life for national people rather than adopting coercive and punitive measures including forced abortions and sterilizations. In fact, party workers and local officials not only designed policies to prevent unintended pregnancies but also put forward more rigorous demands on themselves : “Inserting IUDs right after birth has been ordered by the family-planning group. No exceptions. If you had married a farmer and your first child was a girl, you could remove the IUD eight years later and have a second child. But you married ..... an army officer, for whom the rules are more stringent. A second

child means immediate dismissal and a return to the farm. So don't ever think about a second child." (Goldblatt, 2014: 104) (生完孩子后放环, 是计生委的死命令。你要是嫁给一个农民, 第一胎生了女孩, 八年后, 可以取环生二胎, 但你嫁给我侄子, 他是军官, 军队的规定比地方还严, 超生后一撸到底, 回家种地, 所以, 你这辈子, 甭想再生了。[Mo Yan, 2012 : 97]) Yet some silent but easily neglected issues created by such a planned birth program, to some extent, threatens to harm China on a social and cultural level. These two situations now contradictorily coexist in Chinese society, Chinese culture and the community's identity. As Du (2014: 71) claimed, "The birth control policy has alleviated the nation's and world's resources and, meanwhile, like any national policy, has loopholes". Therefore, the implementation of the one child policy is not without drawbacks but it maybe the best and unique way to save China from a precarious situation.

Secondly, what does it do people's understanding of themselves, their society, their history, and the world? Inevitably, a majority of local people were quick to produce recalcitrant emotions: "Who said she could insert an IUD... no permission... how come I can't have more than one... who says so..." (Goldblatt, 2014: 104) (凭什么不经俺同意.....就给俺放环..... 凭什么生一胎就不让生了..... 凭什么..... [Mo Yan, 2012 : 97]). They were hampered by the culture of "more children bring more happiness" and can not get free from the constraints of such traditional beliefs. In other words, the traditional concept that "many offspring

bring wealth" still prevails in rural areas, challenging the country's population control efforts. Most families in the country's view "prefer boys to girls" or even "only want boys" and continually have the tendency to have children until they have a boy. As narrator-tadpole was taught to have second child by her mother : "Xiaopao, Mother said sadly, your two older brothers both have sons. You're the only one who doesn't, and that worries me. Why not let her have the baby?.....Are Party membership and a commission more precious than a child? It takes people to make a world. If you have no one to carry on the line, what good does it do to become a high official, even if you're second only to Chairman Mao?" (Goldblatt, 2014: 133) (跑儿啊, 母亲忧伤地说, 你大哥二哥都有儿子, 惟你没有, 这是娘的一块心病, 我看, 就让她生了吧。党籍、职务能比一个孩子珍贵? 有人有世界, 没有后人, 即便你当的官再大, 大到毛主席老大你老二, 又有什么意思? [Mo Yan, 2012 : 125]). As a result, there is no doubt that traditional ideas, especially in the preference for sons over daughters still hold sway in China's real social life. It may provide an almost insurmountable obstacle for the effective execution of processes in the one-child policy.

Last but not least, how do readers better understand these two issues mentioned above through the frog metaphors presented in Mo Yan's novel? Undoubtedly, it is difficult for readers to completely know about ideas and thoughts represented by the author and what he would like to express without a deep understanding of frog metaphors in this literary text. According to Kövecses (2002 : 69), the cognitive

linguistic view maintains that — in addition to objective, preexisting similarity — conceptual metaphors are grounded in experience, either perceptual, biological or cultural. This kind of groundedness for conceptual metaphors is often referred to as the experiential basis or motivation of a metaphor. In other words, conceptual metaphors are closely related to a variety of human experience and cognition towards the world as well as their social and cultural background, including their own beliefs in people's minds, the local traditions and customs, a series of innovations in social policies and the social system environment and so forth. After analysing the applications of frog metaphors in this novel, this study points out two main aspects of factors, namely, the relevant social and cultural factors that we have talked about in the previous section, which can be viewed as motivations which affect the formation of frog-related metaphors in this novel. Consequently, if the readers understand the formation processes of such frog metaphors in this novel that will, to some extent, help them deeply comprehend the issues concerning the contradictions between the one-child policy and traditional cultural beliefs in Northeast Gaomi Township - a microcosm of China. Hopefully, this study will not only reveal that frog-related metaphorical expressions are elaborately interpreted as mental mappings but it will also be beneficial for Chinese language learners to be keenly aware of the implied social and cultural factors behind them.

## Acknowledgements

I dedicate this article to Howard Goldblatt who is highly prized both in the Chinese and Western literary field. The success of *Frog* in the West should largely be attributed to Goldblatt's high-quality translation and without his translation work "frog" metaphors could be difficult to analyze in English.

## References

- Brown, K. et al. 2003. *Encyclopaedia of Language and Linguistics*. 2nd Edition. Oxford : Elsevier Science press.
- Di, Feng. 2006. *A Comparative Cognitive Analysis of Metaphors in English and Chinese Animal Terms*. Master of Arts (Linguistics and Applied Linguistics). Dongbei Normal University.
- Du, LanLan. 2014. Abortion in Faulkner's *The Wild Palms* and Mo Yan's "Frog." *Mo Yan in Context: Nobel Laureate and Global Storyteller*. pp. 63-76. Purdue University Press
- Fauconinier, G. 1997. *Mappings in Thought and Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fauconnier, G., and Turner M. 1998. Conceptual integration networks. *Cognitive Science* 22: 133–187.
- Fauconnier, G., and Turner M. 2002. *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities*. New York: Basic Books.

- Fónagy, I. 1999. Why Iconicity. In *From Mining Meaning-Iconicity in Language and Literature*, edited by Nanny Max and Olga Fischer. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Gao, Lei. 2012. *Animal Metaphor Chinese zodiacs sayings*. Master of Arts (Foreign Linguistics and Applied Linguistics). Qubu Normal University.
- Gibbs, Raymond W. 1994. *The Poetics of Mind: Figurative Thought, Language, and Understanding*. Cambridge / New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Goldblatt, Howard. 2014. *frog : a Novel of China / translated from the Chinese Mo Yan's novel "Wa."* Australia: Penguin Group.
- Grady, Joseph. 1997a. *Foundation of meaning: Primary metaphors and primary scenes*. Ph.D. diss., Department of Linguistics, University of California, Berkeley.
- Grady, Joseph. 1997b. THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS revisited. *Cognitive Linguistics* 8: 267–290.
- Grady, Joseph. 2005. *Primary metaphors as inputs to conceptual integration*. *Journal of Pragmatics* 37: 1595–1614.
- Guan, Guiyang. 2013. *A Study of Rhetorical Significance in "Frog"*. Master of Arts (Chinese Language and Literature). Yunnan Normal University.
- He, Yanhong. 2012. *A Study on English Cattle and Chinese Niu: Metaphorical and Cognitive Perspectives*. Master of Arts (English Language and Literature). Fujian Normal University.
- Hu, Xujing. 2014. *The Language Art Study of Mo Yan's Novel "Frog"*. Master of Arts (Chinese Language and Literature). Xinyang Normal University.
- Johnson, M. L. 1987. *The body in the mind: The bodily basis of meaning, imagination, and reason*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kövecses, Z. 2002. *Metaphor: A practical introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kövecses, Z. 2005. *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and Variation*. Cambridge / New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lakoff, G., and Johnson, M. 1980. *Metaphor We Live By*. USA. Chicago: The university of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G., and Johnson, M. 2003. Afterword, 2003. In *Metaphors We Live By* (with a new afterword), George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, 243–276. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G. 1993. *The contemporary theory of metaphor*. In *Metaphor and Thought* (2nd ed.), Andrew Ortony (ed.), 202–251. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lakoff, G., and Turner, M. 1989. *More than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Li, Zi. 2007. *Animal Metaphors in Idioms : A Dictionary-Based Contrastive Study between English and Chinese from the Cognitive Perspective*. Master of Arts (Foreigner Language and Applied Linguistics). Guangxi Normal University.
- Li, Limin. 2009. The Cognitive Interpretation of Phonetic Metaphor of English Vocabulary from Internet. *Journal of Xinxiang University* 23.3: 162-164.
- Li, Haitang. 2012. *The Application of Phonetic Metaphor in Advertisements*. Master of Arts (Linguistics and Applied Linguistics). Wuhan University of Technology.
- Li, Hong. 2005. Some Reflections on Phonetic Metaphors. *Journal of Sichuan International Studies University* 21.3: 70-74.
- Liu, Fengxian. 2015. Cross-domain Metaphor on Phonetic Level. *Journal of Eastern Liaoning University (Social Science)* 17.4: 64-69.
- Liu, Jianwen. 2013. A Comparative Study of English and Chinese Animal Proverbs— From the Perspective of Metaphors. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 3.10: 1844-1849.
- Liu, Yanjuan. 2010. *The Cultural Meanings of Chicken in Socioculture of Russian and Chinese*. Master of Arts (Russian Language and Literature). Sichuan Foreigner Language University.
- Liu, Xiaoling. 2012. *Memetic Analysis on Phonetic Metaphors in Advertisements*. Master of Arts (English Language and Literature). Southwest University.
- Liu, Zhiping. 2013. *The Cognitive study of Phonetic Metaphor in Advertisement*. Master of Arts (Linguistics and Applied Linguistics). Shanxi Normal University.
- Lu, Xin. 2014. *A Comparative Study of Snake Metaphors in Chinese and English : A Cognitive Study Approach*. Master of Arts (Foreign Linguistics and Applied Linguistics). Nanjing Normal University.
- Ma, Lijun & Zhang, Jiajun. 2016. Mapping Model within Phonetic Metaphors : the Role Homonym Plays in Understanding Homophonic Two-part Allegorical Sayings. *Journal of South China Normal University (Social Science Edition)* 60.2: 76-84.
- Mo, Jiao. 2012. *Modern Chinese Words and Phrases Research on Animal Metaphors*. Master of Arts (Linguistics and Applied Linguistics). Dongbei Normal University.
- Mo, Yan. 2012. *Frog*. Shanghai: Shanghai Literature and Art Press.
- Rodríguez. I. L. 2009. Of Women, Bitches, Chickens and Vixens: Animal Metaphors for Women in English and Spanish. *Cultural Studies journal of University* 2009: 77-100.
- Song, Linlin. 2015. *On the Image of Animals*

- in Mo Yan's Works*. Master of Arts (Literature and Journalism). Shandong University.
- Tan, Shanyan. and Huang, Shuguang. 2008. Analysis on Phonetic Metaphor in Dream of Red Mansions. *Journal of Mudanjiang College of Education* 108.2: 29-30.
- Tang, Suyue. 2012. *Analysis of Comparison between Animal Words in Chinese and Thai*. Teaching Chinese as a Foreigner Language. Xiamen University.
- Vuletic, B. 2003. Phonetic Metaphor. *Russian Literature LIV* 54: 397-414.
- Wang, Jingjing. 2011. *The Fetishism and Mo Yan's Novels*. Master of Arts (Modern Literature of China). East China Normal University.
- Wei, Wandu and Yin, Hui. 2006. Some Reflections on Phonetic Metaphors. *Journal of Huizhou University* 26.2: 61-65.
- Wu, Dan. 2015. *The Language Rhetoric Study of Mo Yan's Novel "Frog"*. Master of Arts (Chinese Language and Literature). Nanjing Forestry University.
- Wu, Zhihui. 2010. The Study of Phonetic Metaphors in Cyber Language. *Journal of Henan Institute of Engineering (Social Science Edition)* 25.1: 79-81.
- Zuo, Xiu. 2013. *The Life Memorial in the institutional Dilemma: A Case Study of Mo Yan's "Frog"*. Master of Arts (Modern and Contemporary Literature of China). Southwest University.
- Zhao, Jiekui. 2011. *Comprehensive Historical Attitudes—The Research on the Part in Which "Frog" is Beyond Other New Historical Novels*. Master of Arts (Modern and Contemporary Literature of China). Shandong University.
- Zhao, Qian. 2010. *Human beings Animals Metaphor — A Shallow Research on the Metaphor "human beings are animals" from Chinese and English Idioms*. Master of Arts (Linguistics and Applied Linguistics). Northwest University.
- Zhang, Yi. 2015. *A Contrastive Analysis of Animal Metaphors in Chinese and English Idioms from the Perspective of Conceptual Integration Theory*. Master of Arts (Foreign Languages and Cultures). Nanjing Normal University.
- Zhu, Weiwei. 2015. *Life Images in Mo Yan's Novels and Chinese Ancient Myths*. Master of Arts (Theory of Literature and Arts). Ningxia University.