

## **A cognitive linguistic exploration of metaphors within the WATER frame in Swami Vivekananda's *Complete Works*: A corpus-driven study in light of conceptual metaphor theory**

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### **Abstract**

This article investigates the use of metaphorical language in *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*<sup>1</sup>. Vivekananda is one of the most important modern-day Hindu scholars, and his interpretation of the ancient Hindu scriptural lore has been very influential. Vivekananda's influence was part of the motivation for choosing his *Complete Works* as the empirical domain for the current study. AntConc was used to mine Vivekananda's *Complete Works* for water-related terms, which seemed to have a predilection for metaphoricity. Which terms to search for specifically was determined after a manual reading of a sample from the *Complete Works*. The data were then tagged using a convention inspired by the well-known Metaphor Identification Procedure – Vrije University (MIPVU). Thereafter, a representative sample of the data was chosen, and the metaphors were mapped and analysed thematically. Four of these are expounded upon in this article. This study's main aim was to investigate whether Hindu religious discourse uses metaphors to explain abstract religious concepts, and, if so, whether this happens in the same way as in Judaeo-Christian traditions. One of the key findings in this article is that neo-Hindu thought, as reconceptualised by Vivekananda, relies very little on the FAMILY frame when conceptualising abstract philosophical ideals, and instead draws on the domain of WATER more often.

**Keywords:** Vedanta, conceptual metaphor theory, cognitive linguistics

### **1. Introduction**

The problem of religious discourse was brought to the fore by (amongst others) the logical positivists, a movement made famous by the Vienna Circle founded in 1929. They claimed that metaphysical assertions and arguments are vacuous, since such assertions cannot be verified. Given the lack of falsifiability in the domain of metaphysics, it was advocated that metaphysics

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<sup>1</sup> For ease of reference the following referencing format will be used: "(CW-1:2)" will refer to Vivekananda's *Complete Works*, Volume 1, page 2, and so on.

should be rejected *in toto* as a meaningful discipline and certainly should not fall under the auspices of the sciences. This extreme view is no longer as influential as it once was.

Currently, the complex nature of religious discourse is recognised as worth investigating, in the sense that the language used when talking about topics within the domain of religion often has nuanced connotations. For example, when analysing different religious philosophies, there is the problem that the same words are often used to talk about very different concepts, even though there may not be any “clear analogues” for that term (Harrison 2015:307). One salient case is the word *God*, for which there is literally no analogue in Buddhism. The same term applied to Hindu philosophy means something very different from the Judaeo-Christian word. When speaking in English, a practising Hindu will use the word *God*; however, “while this conception is also found in the Indian tradition, it stands in sharp contrast to the dominant conceptualisation of knowledge found in traditional East Asian philosophies” (Harrison 2015:308). These conceptual differences can stunt inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue.

The Indian saint Swami Vivekananda, in being tasked with bringing the *Vedanta* philosophy to the West by his guide and guru Sri Ramakrishna, was forced to bridge this gap, beginning with his maiden public address in Chicago, USA, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 1893. Given that the audience comprised many representatives from the Western intelligentsia, including Jewish and Christian religious leaders, Vivekananda had to find a way of being intelligible, and therefore had to adopt the standard Western frame of reference in his discourse.

One of the other strategies employed by Vivekananda was to start off with reference to something that the audience was almost certainly familiar with – something known and concrete. Sometimes it would be a parable, sometimes an excerpt from the Bible, and often it would be via an analogy with a natural object, concept, or phenomenon. The latter strategy led Vivekananda to employ a number of metaphors in expounding upon his philosophy. “Metaphor” is defined here as understanding “abstract aspects of our experience by means of mapping them onto domains of experience which are more concrete” (Harrison 2015:313). Within the context of Lakoff and Johnson’s theory of conceptual metaphor (commonly known as CMT), it is understood that metaphors are conceptual in nature, and they therefore have a direct “effect on our thought, experience, and on our everyday activity” (Harrison 2015:309). Hence, CMT has been chosen as the basis for this study, since Vivekananda employed several metaphors in his teachings.

After outlining the theoretical framework to be used as the basis for this study in the next section, the article then presents the research questions to be answered, followed by the methodology used to mine and organise the data in preparation for the results and analysis sections which follow. Finally, the article concludes with a brief discussion of limitations and recommendations for future research.

## 2. Theoretical framework

As mentioned above, the framework within which this research is embedded is CMT and falls within the paradigm of cognitive linguistics (CL).

One of the key contributions that CL has made to the field of language study is a shift away from abstract, disembodied, decontextualised studies of language. In this regard, CMT, which

forms the theoretical foundation for the current study, is fitting, as the researcher sees the theory as commensurable with the kind of holism demanded by an analysis of Vivekananda's thinking as embodied in the metaphors he employs.

The notion that metaphor is a conceptual phenomenon dates back to Aristotle. In fact, Turner (1995:179) points out that the claim that metaphor is conceptual in nature "is ancient" and that Aristotle meant by transfer nothing other than "its conceptual role" or metaphor specifically as "motivated by conceptual relations". Even ancient Chinese and Indian thought used conceptual metaphors to express philosophical ideals (cf. Siderits 1991; Sharma 1993; Chong 2006). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) is assumed to be the seminal CMT text within the field of CL. This theory assumes a conceptual basis for metaphor, which entails cognitive mapping from source to target domains. It is acknowledged that one's spatio-temporal bodily awareness plays a large role in metaphorical thought, though the aforementioned theorists, aside from Lakoff and Johnson, would not necessarily be considered embodied realists *per se*. Johnson (1987) took the notion of embodiment further and claimed that people think the way they do because of the contingent arrangement of the human body: because people happen to be vertical, the UP IS MORE<sup>2</sup> and UP IS BETTER metaphors happen to be more prominent. Johnson's (1987) text spells out the invariance principle governing conceptual metaphors: aspects of the source domain that are mapped onto the target domain are restricted to what is consistent within the target domain; it is to be noted that other theorists have discussed this at some length as well, but an in-depth discussion here is beyond the scope of the current study.

Lakoff and Turner (1989), looking primarily at poetic metaphors in modern English literature, showed that there are superordinate metaphors under which subordinate metaphors are subsumed. For example, the LOVE IS A JOURNEY metaphor encompasses the LOVERS ARE TRAVELLERS metaphor. Lakoff, in his subsequent works on framing, added to this a broader conceptual level, claiming that there is a generic frame into which these various metaphors slot (Lakoff 2002, 2008). One could say that the example just mentioned belongs to a JOURNEY frame. What the frame does is to create certain expectations in people's minds: one expects there to be a path along which the relevant people will travel; typically some sort of vehicle would be used; and the journey would culminate in a destination of some kind, such as marriage. Within this frame, certain metaphors will make sense and others will not. Pinker (2007:249) cites psycholinguistic evidence showing that metaphors that are used outside of the frame just invoked are not comprehended as efficiently as those that fall within the parameters of the frame. Though Pinker was being critical of the idea that metaphors are essential to abstract thinking, his point was that the informants understood the new metaphors "more quickly" when given a particular context, providing important evidence for the role metaphorical language plays.

In the political arena, discourse manipulation is very evident, as people need to be swayed in a particular direction and often embarrassing facts need to be covered up. This is why framing and metaphor are rife here. However, another arena where abstract subject matter has to be explained to people with the intention of persuading them is the religious domain. There are various reasons for this, including the idea that one gains some kind of credit with God for, say,

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<sup>2</sup> Following convention in the field of cognitive linguistics, underlying conceptual domains are written in upper case – this applies to domains, frames, and conceptual metaphors.

“leading non-believers to Christ” (in a Christian context), or getting people to cite the Kalimah, accepting Islam as the only way to Paradise (in an Islamic context).

Returning specifically to the use of metaphors in religious discourse, Lakoff’s claim is that people employ conceptual metaphors in their understanding of God and their relation to Him. In fact, the claim is that literal modes of thought and literal language are “simply not adequate for characterizing God and the relation of human beings to God”; furthermore, there is no “fully literal interpretation of the Bible” (Lakoff 2002:246). If Lakoff is correct, most of these metaphors would relate to some sort of FAMILY metaphor, since our first experiences are conditioned by exposure to adult authority figures, which primes the association between, say, PARENTS and AUTHORITY. For Lakoff (2002:246), then, it is not unexpected that a study of the metaphors in the Judeo-Christian tradition yielded the following results:

- God is a father, humans (or specifically Jews) are his children;
- God is a king, human beings are his subjects;
- God is a male lover, humanity (or the Jewish people) is his female lover;
- God is a shepherd, humans are his flock of sheep;
- God is a vineyard-keeper, humans are his vineyard;
- God is a watchman, humans are the treasure he guards;
- God is a potter, humans are his clay;
- God is a glassblower, humans are his glass;
- God is a blacksmith, humans are his metal;
- God is a helmsman, humans are the rudder (or ship);
- God has chosen humans, humans have chosen God.

These metaphors for God form a radial category, with GOD AS FATHER at the centre. The GOD AS FATHER metaphor is the only one that overlaps with each of the other metaphors in some way as follows:

- The father and king metaphors both attribute authority to God;
- The father and lover metaphors both attribute nurturance to God and posit mutual love between God and human beings;
- The father, king, shepherd, and watchman metaphors all attribute protectiveness to God;
- The father, vineyard-keeper, potter, glassblower, and blacksmith metaphors all attribute to God a causal ontological relationship: bringing people into being;
- The father, lover, and choice metaphors all see the relationship as between two volitional beings.

According to Vivekananda (CW-1:511), “the vast majority of mankind must deal with things that are concrete”, which is why he often illustrates his metaphysical theories using devices such as metaphor, analogy, and simile. According to Barcelona (2003:2), “religious language has to be figurative because it deals with conceptual domains and entities which are not conceptually and linguistically apprehensible in an immediate, direct way”.

It is therefore assumed that, when dealing with abstract philosophico-religious themes, the need for metaphorical language would be greater than in less abstract domains. The researcher takes cognisance of the fact this is indeed an empirical claim, which other data may or may not bear out. Be that as it may, Vivekananda does indeed make ample use of metaphorical language.

Vivekananda himself makes numerous references to the indispensability of metaphorical language, which is why he once said to an audience that “[...] none of you can think without some symbol” (CW-1:230). He stated later that he would use every analogy, every comparison and every metaphor to make the most abstruse and lofty concepts accessible and intelligible to even the layman.

Vivekananda's philosophy is premised on the ancient school thought of thought known as *Vedanta*. The *Vedanta* is one of the six orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy, according to modern-day saints like Sivananda (1977:110). The *Vedanta* is essentially based on a set of scriptures known as the *Upanishads*. Even a perfunctory overview is beyond the scope of this article, and the reader is referred to works like Sivananda (2014), Krishnananda (1973), and Harshananda (2011) for a primer on this school of thought.

### **3. Research questions**

1. Does the FAMILY frame dominate Vivekananda's discourse, as Lakoff would predict?
2. If not, what types of metaphors does he use to conceptualise various abstract domains of Indian spiritual life?

In light of the definitions used within CL, the method used to extract the metaphors from the text will now be explained, as well as the concomitant thematic analysis and cross-domain mappings that follow.

### **4. Methodology**

The Pragglejaz Group (2007:3) outline a set of criteria according to which metaphors can be identified. They call this the “metaphor identification procedure” (MIP), and it is outlined as follows:

1. Read the entire text to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
2. Determine the lexical units in the text.
- 3a. For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, i.e. how it applies to an entity, relation or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.
- 3b. For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context.
- 3c. If the lexical unit has a more basic current/contemporary meaning in other contexts than the given context, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.
4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical.

They describe “basic meanings” as more concrete: what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste; related to bodily action; more precise (as opposed to vague); or historically older. These properties are usually determined with reference to denotative semantic content from a dictionary.

This method has been updated into what has come to be known as the MIPVU method by Steen et al. (2010). It has been applied in various ways by scholars like Dorst (2011). Essentially,

MIPVU, which is a “revised and extended version of MIP”, differs from the latter in the following ways:

- The nuanced nature of metaphor is acknowledged, and a distinction is drawn between direct metaphors, indirect metaphors, implicit metaphors, and metaphor flags;
- A tagging system is used after the text has been read and the metaphoricity of relevant words (“metaphor-related words” or MRWs) has been determined. *MRW: direct* relates to words that can be more or less straightforwardly explained by some kind of cross-domain mapping; *MRW: indirect* relates to words that can potentially be explained in terms of some kind of cross-domain mapping; *MRW: implicit* relates to pronouns, ellipses, anaphors, etc. which may imply some kind of cross-domain mapping within the broader context of the discourse/text; and *MFlag* is used for terms that signal that some “cross-domain mapping may be at play” (Dorst 2011:103);
- This system aims to go through the text with a fine-tooth comb, as it were, and asks the researcher to follow a “no metaphor left behind” policy, referred to in the manual as the “when in doubt leave it in” (WIDLII) principle (Dorst 2011:112);
- Provision is made for terms that are instances of personification, in which case the MRW should also be marked with a “PP”, meaning “possible personification”. This flags the term as potentially explicable via non-metaphoric means;
- The rest of the manual goes into further detail regarding various particulars, including decisions surrounding the basic meaning(s) of MRWs, how to decide if the usage in the text is “sufficiently distinct” from its conventional use in English, and so on.

It is an established fact that “current programs do not yet match human coding abilities” (Krennmayr 2011:27). Furthermore, using this procedure, a

word may be identified as metaphorically used on a symbolic level, while it may or may not be processed metaphorically by a language user. It also may or may not have been intended to be metaphorical by the writer. In other words, the units identified as metaphorically used by MIP are *potential* metaphors.

Krennmayr (2011:30, italics in original)

Given this challenge, a hybrid approach is necessary. The researcher read through the first volume of the chosen corpus manually, making notes on the metaphorical language used, in line with step 1 of the Pragglejazz method. These metaphors were then grouped into different categories. Grouping was typically into either frames, like WATER, or according to a superordinate metaphor, like UP IS BETTER. The former was necessary when there was a range of disparate information, and the latter when there was more consistent detail pertaining to a particular metaphor. In keeping with step 2, this enabled the researcher to isolate lexical items that may or may not be linked to metaphors.

Instead of following step 3 in detail, the researcher searched the remaining eight volumes via a KWIC analysis using the lexical entries identified in steps 1 and 2. The results were then manually sifted through in order to capture only those of metaphorical import.

The issue of “basic meanings” is not addressed here, since the researcher does not assume that the basic meanings of words necessarily relate to bodily actions, for example. Given the metaphysical nature of the chosen corpus’ general theme, this may or may be the case, but

this is not relevant, since its metaphoricity is determined independently. Hence, the method used is a slightly tailored version of Pragglejaz's MIP/MIPVU method.

Regarding the first step, with its requirement of having to read the text to get an idea of the context, the researcher did the following:

Sri Ramakrishna was Swami Vivekananda's guide and mentor. As a young boy, he often used to visit Ramakrishna at his residence in Dakshineswar. The conversations that were held between Sri Ramakrishna and his young disciples were transcribed by a person named Mahendra Nath Gupta, and the resulting text is known today as *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (Nikhilananda 1974). Though not directly relevant, since Vivekananda (who, as mentioned, was known as Narendra then) was still a young boy in his formative years, the researcher read the entire text and noted that Ramakrishna uses very similar metaphors and allegories to illustrate his point, together with richly symbolic songs and poetry. It was tempting to note these down and incorporate them into the current corpus, but it would have been too much – this work alone comprises 1,046 pages of very rich text, and Naren features in only a small portion of it.

Furthermore, the researcher read volume one, a selection from volume two, and a section of volume seven of the complete works, and manually noted the metaphors used. Aside from doing this to find source domain vocabulary, it was also necessary because volume one comprises four books which were actually written by Vivekananda, whereas the rest of the volumes constitute transcriptions of his lectures by his personally appointed scribe, John Goodwin. The final volume comprises letters to friends and disciples.

Volume two was also read, but the researcher only made handwritten notes on the section entitled *Practical Vedanta*, which is a series of four lectures, and was in fact published as a separate book as well.

One famous text, entitled *Inspired Talks* (comprising part of volume seven of the CW, as mentioned above), was reconstructed from notes made by Vivekananda's disciples during a series of lectures given over a seven-week period to some of his most intimate disciples. During this time, they lived together as a community in Thousand Island Park, New York, and interacted as only very close friends do. This makes his *Inspired Talks* different from his other lectures, since those were meant for a general, often large, audience, which is why *Inspired Talks* also deserved a manual reading with handwritten notes made on the metaphors used.

This manual reading revealed the pervasiveness of water-related metaphors, as represented in Table 1 below. This justifies the decision to focus on such terms exclusively in this study.

The rest of the corpus was subjected to a KWIC analysis to complete the data. The tagging convention used by the researcher aimed to take the WIDLII principle into account, but was slightly different from that suggested in the MIPVU manual. The following tags were used when sifting through the raw data in the initial stages:

- m/ – to indicate a direct, fairly obvious metaphorical use of a term;
- ?/ – to indicate an implicit or indirect metaphor;
- l/ – to indicate that an MRW is now being used literally;

- x/ – to indicate a term that happens to appear in the data previously as an MRW, but is now not being used in that sense, making it irrelevant (like *current*, previously used to refer to the flow of a river, now being used to refer to electricity, or in the sense of “contemporary”).

Furthermore, the analysis necessarily moves beyond a conventional corpus-linguistic approach, since once the metaphors have been found, it has to be explained what they mean in the context of the Indian philosophical tradition of *Vedanta*. An age-old philosophical question, used to illustrate the difference between a type and a token, is quite relevant here: If John and Mary go to the library and they each take out a copy of Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*, did they take out the same book? Whatever the answer is, it is certainly not a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’, and requires qualification either way. One thing that precludes the researcher from answering in the affirmative is the fact that each reader will interpret the novel in his (or her) own way, superimposing their own beliefs and history onto any interpretation; even if both were asked after reading the same words to summarise the story, they would invariably come up with different summaries. Likewise, people who read Vivekananda’s teachings will interpret them differently. In particular, those who are not familiar with the broader cultural and philosophical context may well interpret his teachings differently, since they will have to incorporate notions that do not fall into their frame of reference by either discarding them or by incorporating them into their existing frames.

## 5. Results

The manual reading revealed 26 key frames, depicted below in Table 1.

**Table 1: Key frames in the *Complete Works***

Frame	Example	Number of hits (n = 893)	Percentage
FAMILY	<i>God is Mother and has two natures, the conditioned and the unconditioned (CW-7: 16)</i>	33	3.7%
BOOK/LIBRARY	<i>All knowledge that the world has ever received comes from the mind; the infinite library of the universe is in your own mind (CW-1: 20)</i>	28	3.1%
WATER	<i>That shows that consciousness is only the surface of the mental ocean (CW-1: 10)</i>	323	36.2%

CIRCUIT/CONDUIT	<i>We can send electricity to any part of the world, but we have to send it by means of wires. Nature can send a vast mass of electricity without any wires at all. Why cannot we do the same? We can send mental electricity. Each man is only a conduit for the infinite ocean of knowledge (CW-1: 138)</i>	19	2.1%
CYCLIC NATURE OF LIFE	<i>Everything in the universe is struggling to complete a circle, to return to its source, to return to its only real Source, Atman (CW-7: 31)</i>	28	3.1%
ANIMAL	<i>The human mind is like that monkey, incessantly active by its own nature (CW-1: 97)</i>	56	6.3%
LIGHT VERSUS DARK	<i>The mind is in three states, one of which is darkness, called Tamas, found in brutes and idiots (CW-1: 112)</i>	54	6%
HEAT	<i>The idea of duty is the midday sun of misery scorching the very soul (CW-7: 31)</i>	7	0.8%
FIRE	<i>Like fire in a piece of flint, knowledge exists in the mind; suggestion is the friction which brings it out (CW-1: 21)</i>	8	0.9%
PHYSICAL ACTIONS	<i>The world is ready to give up its secrets if we only know how to knock, how to give it the necessary blow. The world is a grand moral gymnasium wherein we have all to take exercise so as to become stronger and stronger spiritually (CW-1: 73)</i>	12	1.4%
MACHINE	<i>Devils are machines of darkness, angels are</i>	27	3%

	<i>machines of light; but both are machines. Man alone is alive. Break the machine, strike the balance, and then man can become free (CW-7: 33)</i>		
POWER	<i>Knowledge is power. We have to get to this power (CW-1: 81)</i>	4	0.5%
MASTER-SLAVE	<i>They will be slaves in the hands of nature, and will never get beyond the senses (CW-1: 99)</i>	30	3.4%
BUILDING	<i>Modern science has really made the foundations of religion strong (CW-7: 32)</i>	14	1.6%
JOURNEY	<i>The grandest idea in the religion of the Vedanta is that we may reach the same goal by different paths. On reason we must have to lay our foundation, we must follow reason as far as it leads, and when reason fails, reason itself will show us the way to the highest plane (CW-1: 63)</i>	19	2.1%
INSTRUMENTS	<i>Just as by the telescope and the microscope we can increase the scope of our vision, similarly we can by Yoga bring ourselves to the state of vibration of another plane (CW-1: 88-89)</i>	10	1.1%
VERTICAL SCALE	<i>The mind can exist on a still higher plane, the superconscious (CW-1: 84)</i>	69	7.7%
PLANT	<i>There is the lotus leaf in the water; the water cannot touch and adhere to it; so will you be in the world (CW-1: 60)</i>	57	6.3%

INSTITUTIONS AS TRAPS	<i>It is bad to stay in the church after you are grown up spiritually<sup>3</sup> (CW-7: 52)</i>	5	0.6%
BONDAGE	<i>Freedom is not here, but is only to be found beyond. To find the way out of the bondage of the world we have to go through it slowly and surely (CW-1: 59)</i>	48	5.4%
FOOD	<i>Those that only take a nibble here and a nibble there will never attain anything (CW-1: 99)</i>	9	1%
STAGE	<i>This world is a play. You are His playmates (CW-1: 249)</i>	3	0.3%
SCHOOL	<i>The very reason of nature's existence is for the education of the soul (CW-1: 36)</i>	12	1.3%
CONTAINER	<i>When this meditation has been practiced for a long time, memory, the receptacle of all impressions, becomes purified (CW-1: 129)</i>	10	1.1%
DISEASE	<i>Evil thoughts, looked at materially, are the disease bacilli (CW-7: 12)</i>	6	0.7%
ACCOUNTING	<i>We have to bear in mind that we are all debtors to the world and the world does not owe us anything (CW-1: 48)</i>	2	0.2%

Of the various metaphors used within the WATER frame, only a few have been selected as a representative sample at the researcher's discretion. These have been grouped into various themes in the Analysis section as follows:

1. Mind;
2. Enlightened beings;

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<sup>3</sup> As discussed in Section 4, this would be an instance of what Steen et al. (2010:15, italics in original) would refer to as an instance of a metaphor which is "implicitly metaphorical", whereby the "the discourse [...] points to recoverable metaphorical material". Note also the use of concepts like 'indirect' and 'implicit' metaphors, used within the MIPVU method, as well as the WIDLII principle, which is advocated so as to include a wider variety of analogical/metaphorical mappings.

3. The *Vedanta* philosophy;
4. The universe.

Some of the MRWs selected for analysis are displayed in the Table 2 below; note that the tagging convention explained under the Methodology section above explains what the various percentages refer to.

**Table 2: Metaphor-related words selected for analysis**

Lexical item	No. of hits	% found to be metaphorical	% found to be literal	% found to be unclear	% found to be irrelevant
BUBBLE	36	97.22	0	2.78	0
DEW	14	92.86	7.94	0	0
DELUGE	34	52.94	32.35	2.94	0
FLOOD	23	82.61	4.35	13.04	0
OCEAN	324	87.65	7.72	3.09	1.54
WAVE(S)	485	97.94	2.68	1.65	1.44
WHIRLPOOL	41	97.56	0	2.44	0

## 6. Analysis

Under the following themes, only a few excerpts from the CW are cited and expounded upon, since space constraints preclude a more in-depth analysis.

The themes focused on are recurring themes throughout Vivekananda's CW. This is not meant to detract from the other themes which come up elsewhere, nor does the listing imply any kind of hierarchical organisation.

### THEME 1: THE HUMAN MIND

THE MIND IS A LAKE

**Example:** *Picture the mind as a calm lake stretched before you and the thoughts that come and go as bubbles rising and breaking on its surface (CW-8:29)*

**Table 3: Mapping for THE MIND IS A LAKE**

Source: LAKE		Target: MIND
Lake	→	Mind
Surface of lake	→	Conscious awareness
Bubble reaching surface	→	Thought reaching consciousness
Bubble bursting	→	Thought reaching consciousness and possibly resulting in action

**Import of the metaphor:** This metaphor essentially conceptualises the mind as a water-body, with the bed of said body being like the brain, from which the mind emanates. Thoughts are

created and then *float* to the surface, just like a thought starts in the un-/subconscious mind and reaches a greater degree of conscious awareness as it *floats* to the surface.

THOUGHTS ARE WAVES IN A LAKE

**Example:** *Then there is the state called Sattva, serenity, calmness, in which the waves cease, and the water of the mind-lake becomes clear (CW-1:112)*

**Table 4: Mapping for the THOUGHTS ARE WAVES IN A LAKE**

Source: WAVES		Target: THOUGHTS
Waves	→	Individual thoughts/feelings
Lake	→	Mind
Current	→	Predilection for recurrence of particular thought
Large wave	→	Prominent thought
Receded wave	→	Subconscious/repressed thought or memory
Stone	→	Factors creating thought-waves
Whirl	→	(Distracting) mental activity

**Import of the metaphor:** Here, mental activity is conceptualised as whirlpools and waves in a lake, just as a stone thrown into a lake causes activity. Waves that have receded are like thoughts that have been repressed, and may recur in future. The predisposition to think in a certain way is compared to the current flowing in a lake, implying that to think in that manner is most natural for a particular person, and to think in any other way would require some effort.

**THEME 2: ENLIGHTENED BEINGS**

GOD/ENLIGHTENED BEINGS ARE THE OCEAN

**Example:** *Christs and Buddhas are but waves on the boundless ocean which I am. I am the whole ocean; do not call the little wave you have made 'I'; know it for nothing but a wave (CW-7:52)*

**Table 5: Mapping for GOD/ENLIGHTENED BEINGS ARE THE OCEAN**

Source: OCEAN		Target: GOD/ENLIGHTENED BEINGS
Waves	→	People
Ocean	→	God/Enlightened Beings
Waves splashing	→	Temporary separation from ocean

**Import of the metaphor:** Both God and Enlightened Beings are seen as qualitatively the same, with people being connected to that greater Being, though temporarily separated through splashing and wave action and perhaps also by the wind.

### THEME 3: THE VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY

#### LIFE IS A WHIRLPOOL

**Example:** *A current rushing down of its own nature falls into a hollow and makes a whirlpool, and, after running a little in that whirlpool, it emerges again in the form of the free current to go on unchecked. Man's experience in the world is to enable him to get out of its whirlpool (CW-1:58)*

**Table 6: Mapping for LIFE IS A WHIRLPOOL**

Source: WHIRLPOOL		Target: LIFE
Whirlpool	→	Worldly life
'Bound' current	→	Coming into this world; being born
'Free' current	→	Escaping from this world
Escaping whirlpool	→	Transcending the earthly life

**Import of the metaphor:** Birth into this world is seen as analogous to being caught up in a whirlpool, and escaping the whirlpool is tantamount to being liberated from the suffering of the world.

#### VEDANTIC THOUGHT IS A FLOOD

**Example:** *[...] like the waters of the seashore in a tremendous earthquake it receded only for a while, only to return in an all-absorbing flood [...]* (CW-1:8)

**Table 7: Mapping for VEDANTIC THOUGHT IS A FLOOD**

Source: FLOOD		Target: VEDANTIC THOUGHT
Waters	→	The <i>Vedanta</i> philosophy
Earthquake	→	Invasions by other religious groups
Flood/deluge	→	Pervasive influence which <i>Vedanta</i> will come to have
Wave (of reform)	→	Buddhist influence upon Indian society
Current	→	Re-awakening of spiritual ideals
Miasmatic pool	→	Impediment to progress

**Import of the metaphor:** The main point of this metaphor is to illustrate Vivekananda's contempt for the priestly caste, who abused their power, despite the *wave of reform* which came from the south, referring to Sankara's advent. Vivekananda points out here that the *Vedanta*, with its ideals of non-exclusive equality, will put an end to this and will inspire the whole world with its lofty principles. Vivekananda's contempt for the priestly caste was evident in his various writings; for example, he pointed out that Jesus Christ was a great prophet that "killed the dragon of priestly selfishness" (CW-8:56) and that the Kshatriya caste was responsible for protecting India through the ages from "aggressive priestly tyranny" (CW-4:182).

## EASTERN THOUGHT IS LIKE DEW

**Example:** *Slow and silent, as the gentle dew that falls in the morning, unseen and unheard yet producing a most tremendous result, has been the work of the calm, patient, all-suffering spiritual race upon the world of thought (CW-3:61)*

**Table 8: Mapping for EASTERN THOUGHT IS LIKE DEW**

Source: DEW		Target: EASTERN THOUGHT
Dew	→	Eastern/Vedantic thought
Plants being nourished	→	People benefitting spiritually
Mountains	→	Dogmatic traditions (including materialistic science)

**Import of the metaphor:** Unlike the *flood* connotation, the point here is that the ideals of *Vedanta* will influence the world in a powerful yet surreptitious way.

**THEME 4: THE UNIVERSE**

## THE UNIVERSE IS A BODY OF WATER

**Example:** *Each form represents, as it were, one whirlpool in the infinite ocean of matter, of which not one is constant. Just as in a rushing stream there may be millions of whirlpools, the water in each of which is different every moment, turning round and round for a few seconds, and then passing out, replaced by a fresh quantity, so the whole universe is one constantly changing mass of matter, in which all forms of existence are so many whirlpools (CW-1:85)*

**Table 9: Mapping for THE UNIVERSE IS A BODY OF WATER**

Source: BODY OF WATER		Target: UNIVERSE
Ocean/stream/river	→	Universe/world; human life-span
Whirlpools in the ocean	→	Objects in the universe

**Import of the metaphor:** Vivekananda speaks of everything in the universe as having a temporary existence, much like the dissipation of whirlpools, with the point being that one should not be attached to anything in it.

**7. Conclusion**

It is evident that Swami Vivekananda's use of water metaphors leads to key insights into his thinking, and provides a novel and interesting base from which to explore his thinking and philosophy. The use of WATER as a source domain is also suitable owing to its versatility and role in everyday life. Regarding the research questions put forth at the outset, it is plausible to conclude that although the FAMILY frame might dominate Western-based religious thought, this does not seem to be the case in Vivekananda's teachings, where water-related metaphors more pervasive. Assuming his teachings are generalisable to other schools of neo-Vedantic thought, it is plausible to assume that this should be the case there too, though a more thorough empirical investigation would have to be conducted to confirm this.

Notwithstanding the limitations discussed briefly below, the current study gives a representative overview of Vivekananda's thinking regarding the various matters addressed. Methodologically, the adapted system used here has proven to be a fruitful avenue for future endeavours aiming to do similar analyses, and theoretically CMT has proven to be a powerful explanatory tool.

## 8. Limitations and recommendations for future research

Limitations of this study include the fact that Vivekananda is only one of many influential modern-day Hindu scholars. In addition, there are of course many other metaphors that can be found within the corpus, and these are certainly worthy of analysis, as they will no doubt enrich our understanding of Vivekananda's thinking. As mentioned, the researcher's choice to focus on metaphors within the WATER frame was not an arbitrary one, but the other frames Vivekananda employs are also certainly worthy of close study. One way to do this, if the current study is to be taken as the basis, would be to start in descending order of 'pervasiveness', should a delimiting criterion be required.

Another recommendation for future research would be to undertake a study of other influential modern-day Hindu scholars. Though choosing to focus exclusively on Vivekananda was not entirely an arbitrary choice, the findings would certainly be enriched by a comprehensive (perhaps even a comparative) study of other saints like Parahansa Yogananda, Sri Aurobindo, Swami Sivananda, and even spiritually-minded leaders in others domains, like Radhakrishnan and Gandhi, both of whom were prolific writers and wrote extensively on Eastern philosophy in general and Hindu philosophy specifically. Though all the aforementioned scholars have spoken positively about Swami Vivekananda and his ideas, it would be interesting to see how they conceptualise the same issues and whether they employ similar metaphors when explaining various philosophical concepts. It is expected that there would be a great degree of convergence, especially in the cases of Yogananda, Aurobindo, Gandhi and Radhakrishnan, as they were all duly influenced by the Occident and spoke extensively to Western audiences, just as Vivekananda did.

Vivekananda's contemporaries (12 of them, all direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna) all became great leaders in their own right, and there is an extensive body of writing, both primary and secondary, on their lives and teachings. A study of these thinkers along similar lines could potentially lead to new and interesting insights as well.

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