

# A Comparative Analysis of Metaphors Involving Chrysanthemums

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**Abstract**—Metaphor plays a crucial role in poems and literature. Against the background of the poetess Li Qingzhao's frustrated life and unexpected emotional obstacles, and through the study of the images of chrysanthemum in a part of her poems, the essay analyzes Chrysanthemum from the perspective of *Bixing* and the cognitive perspective of the conceptual metaphor, which display the changes of the concepts of "chrysanthemum" in Li Qingzhao's poems and the influence of the "chrysanthemum" in her poems on "chrysanthemum" original image.

**Index Terms**—Bixing, conceptual metaphor, Li Qingzhao's poem, chrysanthemum.

## I. USING BIXING TO STUDY CHRYSANTHEMUM IN LI QINGZHAO'S POEMS

### A. Brief Introduction to Bixing

From the etymological point of view, the Chinese "metaphor" (*Bixing*) and the English "metaphor" are not complete synonyms. Metaphors have appeared in Chinese literature very early, such as *The Book of Songs*. Most of the hundreds of schools in the pre-Qin dynasty also achieved an understanding of other things by saying this thing. Different from the West, the study of metaphor in Chinese has never been separated from the overall category of *Bixing*. The study of *Bixing* originated from the metaphorical argument in the pre-Qin period: "The metaphor of other things is to use specific things to explain a thing or a certain truth." [1] Since then, *Bixing* has experienced a series of dynamic developments in the history of Chinese poetics, and its metaphorical view contains important concepts of traditional Chinese poetics and philosophy.

*Bixing* is a concept that poet-critics and thinkers have been paying attention to. With people's continuous understanding of the lyricism and social function of poetic *Bixing*, research on the topic of "overall *Bixing*" or "symbolic thinking" began to emerge in *Bixing* research. In fact, in history, Chinese scholars have put *Bixing* under the framework of metaphorical thinking to a certain extent. In the history of Chinese poetics and philosophy, there is no lack of insights about metaphorical views. Although the controversy over the essence of *Bixing* is still undecided, this protracted debate over *Bixing*'s debate has nurtured the ideological foundation of Chinese metaphor.

### B. The Characteristics of Bixing

The characteristics of *Bixing* can be summarized as follows:

First, the use of "Bi" needs to be based on the existence of a certain similarity. This similarity is not a similarity obtained through logical reasoning. In fact, the relationship between "Bi" and analogy is very close, as Zhiyu said, "Bi, the analogy also speaks." Generally speaking, things used as metaphors are always more vivid, concrete, vivid, and more familiar than the ontological things being compared, which is convenient for people to associate and imagine.

Second, *Xing* can resonate with a certain emotional resonance. This emotional rendering comes from the meaning of *Xing* itself. Since the "*Xing*" way of thinking is characterized by "introducing the continuum" (a similar example is used to illustrate the affairs), its origin is obviously to deepen the analogical association of thinking". Many of the poems in *The Book of Songs* embody this analogy. For example, the analogy of Ju Jiu (a kind of bird) and love in the famous poem "Guanju".

Therefore, *Bixing* is not just a means of expression in poetry, it is an analogy-based way of thinking used by our earliest ancestors and inherited in Chinese culture. Since it involves the perception of the similarity of two things, it is also a cognitive approach. *Bixing* makes use of the preexisting similarity between two concepts. This correlation is deeply grounded in people's daily experience. Mainly achieved by people's imagination and creativity.

### C. Analysis of Chrysanthemum in Li Qingzhao's Poems with Bixing

Let's look at a few examples.

Li Qingzhao and chrysanthemum originally belonged to two different categories of things, but both are living bodies. Chrysanthemum has the process of sprouting, generating, flowering, withering, and dying; people have the processes of birth, growth, maturity, senescence, and death. Moreover, the chrysanthemum has long been praised by patriots such as Qu Yuan, Tao Yuanming, etc., with high quality, so Li Qingzhao also compared herself with chrysanthemum to show her good quality. For example, in "Drunk in Blossom Shade", "Who would not say that this is overwhelming? In the westerly wind that lifts the curtains, one is thinner than the yellow flowers." In "Sheng Sheng Man", "Let fallen flowers lie where they fall to what purpose and for whom should I decorate?" And the works of singing chrysanthemums: "Duo Li Yong Bai Ju", "Autumn is about to end, and Bai Ju becomes more and more thin and snowy, and it seems to reveal the farewell feelings of its infinite attachment to people." The following will analyze the chrysanthemums in

Li Qingzhao's poems.

"Drunk in Blossom Shade" wrote after the wedding that Li Qingzhao and her husband were separated in different places to express their affection for her husband. In her poem, "Who would not say that this is overwhelming? In the westerly wind that lifts the curtains, one is thinner than the yellow flowers". It is the essence of this poem. Missing her husband's eager mood makes Li Qingzhao thinner than yellow flowers. The chrysanthemum and Li Qingzhao in the poem have similarities. The slender chrysanthemum and the thin image swaying in the wind make Li Qingzhao's thin and pitiful person's image highlighted by the chrysanthemum; In the past, the chrysanthemum was often used by noblemen such as Tao Yuanming to express their noble emotions. Therefore, the arrogant Li Qingzhao compares with chrysanthemum, so that she also has a gentleman's character in thinness. Moreover, when compared with chrysanthemum, Li Qingzhao was "thinner than the yellow flowers", which made people feel that "The dress takes to loosen gradually and I am more and more emaciated". No regretful plying at all, I am rather for her only distressed as I did." This shows that Li Qingzhao used her chrysanthemum to express her affection and miss her husband. The chrysanthemum here is mainly used to express Li Qingzhao's love for her husband, not the noble feelings of Tao Yuanming and others. At the same time, this image of the chrysanthemum has also been connected with the thin image of the woman. The sentence after "one is thinner than the yellow flowers" "At the eastern fence, one raises one's cup after dusk, the fragrance of chrysanthemum blossom fills one's robes." "Fragrance" in this sentence can also reflect the sweetness of Li Qingzhao's relationship with her husband. Although there is the pain of lovesickness, there is still a fragrance to accompany and have a beautiful and warm expectation.

It can be seen here that based on the poet's experience of chrysanthemum, not only is her spirit noble, but also compared with herself in a slim and thin form, her chrysanthemum is naturally similar to the chrysanthemum in Tao Yuanming's poems, but also has her own style, which has penetrated into women Feminine. The noble quality highlighted by the concept of chrysanthemum has added "thinness", so "one is thinner than the yellow flowers" are often used by future generations to express feelings of lovesickness. The poetess juxtaposes the image of withered chrysanthemum in the rustling wind and her thin, wizened appearance together. Consequently, a figure of an emaciated woman who suffers from lovesickness is just reproduced vividly through the expression of the poet's Bixing.

Li Qingzhao and her husband Zhao Mingcheng both have a distinguished family, but her father Li Gefei was implicated due to the faction disputes in the court, and her father-in-law Tingzhi Zhao was dragged down in the court and died in his home three days after resignation. Then the entire family was accused by Cai Jing's party, so she could not be converted to her hometown in Qingzhou for refuge. So Li Qingzhao saw the white chrysanthemum standing in the autumn wind, using the way of Bixing, and put her own perception into the word "Duo Li Yong Bai Ju", to express her lyricalness by the self-comparison of white chrysanthemum, praise the stubborn nobility of the chrysanthemum and point out the darkness of the court. In this poem, the white chrysanthemum

has high quality, beautiful shape, elegant color, and is not afraid of the stubbornness of the wind and rain. It shows the thin image of worrying about the country and the quality of not being afraid of power and oppression. And to some extent, it also tells about the cruelty suffered by her family and her loyal officials. The white petals of chrysanthemums are elegant and fragrant posture. The natural phenomena of "relentless wind and rain" and "dense smoke and dark rain" combined with the social background at that time, so that the concept of white chrysanthemum was also mapped to itself, thereby highlighting the darkness of society and its own high sentiment and worries about the country and the people. The connotation of this poem is no longer the love and affection between men and women, but the expression of its own noble quality, and it's irony of the imperial court and the power of the villain, it also shows the noble of Chrysanthemum. And despite being in seclusion, it is still tenacious, so that the image of the chrysanthemum does not fear the harsh environment is established in people's hearts.

Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng lived a happy life in their early years, but as the years passed, Zhao Mingcheng's neglect of Li Qingzhao and later Zhao Mingcheng's illness passed away. Li Qingzhao, who had moved to Jiangnan, made "Sheng Sheng Man" after the vicissitudes, and the withered yellow flower is old age Li Qingzhao. "The accumulation of yellow flowers in the ground" in the poem indicates that the season has come too late autumn, the chrysanthemums are withering, swaying in the autumn wind, thin and vulnerable, the petals are scattered all over the ground, and will gradually merge into the soil with the "light rain", slowly the passing away. At this time, Li Qingzhao experienced the country conquered and family ruined, her husband passed away and lived in another city. And Li Qingzhao at this time will also be in her twilight years, and she has spent a bleak time alone. The chrysanthemum in this poem is no longer the one that "people are thinner than the yellow flowers" but reveals the desolation and sadness of life. The scattered chrysanthemums in "light wine", "evening wind" in "dusk" no longer express the sweet affection for the couple, but an inexpressible endless thought and sorrow for the husband who died prematurely. Just like "This time, how can one be so sad" said the words of the poet. The chrysanthemums here are mainly the things that Li Qingzhao used to express his sorrows, which gave the chrysanthemum's high quality, slender image, and tenacious spirit and increased sorrows, thereby making the chrysanthemum more feminine. It can be said that in Li Qingzhao's poems: Chrysanthemums is a sentimental, high-quality, thin, and elegant lady.

Because Bixing has the characteristics of arbitrariness and intuitiveness, Bixing's interpretation is ambiguous and infinite. The use of Bixing does not involve logic, rules, systems... so when analyzing with Bixing, it is necessary to understand the cultural background of a specific period as a whole, and because of the characteristics of ambiguity, it is easy to have thousands of interpretations. And there is no systematic method.

By analyzing several poems of chrysanthemum, we can see that the message conveyed to readers by the poems explained by Bixing is not so clear. Behind the clarity of the surface is more complex ambiguity and ambiguity. At the

same time, its understanding must also be based on the discovery and understanding of a certain similarity. The Bixing method brings the reader a “fresh and new” feeling, that is to say, it also plays a role in the process of defamiliarization of poetry. Only poets can create new metaphors, and only poets can give these images new meanings. The old and new meanings of these images are intertwined with the poet's mood and eventually become poetry.

Traditional theories and methods provide us with different perspectives to understand and appreciate Li Qingzhao's ancient poems about chrysanthemums. There is no doubt that previous research is instructive. However, most of these studies remain at the level of Bixing. Therefore, there is an urgent need to broaden the method of Li Qingzhao's poetic studies and provide a new perspective for diversifying current research.

## II. STUDY ON THE CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR OF LI QINGZHAO CHRYSANTHEMUM

Although several attempts have been made to study the flowers in Li Qingzhao's poems from Bixing, there is still a lack of systemic application of conceptual metaphor theory to the study of flower metaphors. I want to analyze the chrysanthemum metaphors in Li Qingzhao's poems within the framework of the conceptual metaphor theory. By taking this approach, Cognitive linguistic study provides readers with new methods in understanding and interpreting poetry. I believe that employing the conceptual metaphor to account for flower metaphors will contribute not only to the scope of application of this theory but also to a deeper understanding of Li Qingzhao's poems about the flower.

Metaphor, in a traditional linguistic view, is an ornament or decoration of literary works for the sake of aesthetic enjoyment. With the advent of Lakoff and Johnson's seminal work *Metaphors We Live By*, metaphor is no longer taken as a semantic word but a property of concept, which is pervasive in our life and culture. And they further regard metaphor as a way of thinking that people live by. Therefore, “Metaphor is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a perceptual and conceptual tool for humans to understand the world around them, as well as a result and tool of human cognitive activities.” [2] Cognitive linguists Ungerer & Schmid further studied metaphor. They believe that the cognitive basis of metaphor is the image schema, and it is the conceptual mapping between two conceptual models (conceptual domains) [3]. The conceptual metaphor theory has already become one of the most influential theories in cognitive linguistics. It can be effectively applied to studying metaphors not only in daily expressions but also in various literary texts. Metaphor generally recognizes the unfamiliar, intangible, abstract, and rare concept domains from familiar, tangible, concrete, and common concept domains, so as to establish connections between different conceptual systems [4]. This cognitive mechanism of metaphor is also suitable for poetic phenomena.

Poetry, as an essential and typical form of literature, is an ideal material for the applied research on conceptual metaphor theory. It is acknowledged that there is a close relationship between metaphor and poetry. Metaphor is

considered as the life principle of poetry and glory of the poet [5], which means that poetry cannot live without metaphor. Although poetical language deviates from ordinary language use, and even is beyond ordinary people's understanding, though, it is still a product of the poet's cognitive thinking based on his/her experience in the world.

The cognitive linguistic study provides readers with new methods in understanding and interpreting poetry. Under the guideline of conceptual metaphor theory, the author hopes to render the structure and content of Li Qingzhao's chrysanthemum poems explicitly. Meanwhile, this part attempts to expand our awareness of the way that poetry reaches out to us and how it broadens the scope of conceptual metaphor study. Applying the conceptual metaphor theory to the research on literary texts is also one of the major orientations in the current metaphor researches. Furthermore, as a tentative study, it will, to a certain extent, shed new light on the appreciation, translation of Li Qingzhao's poems.

### A. Brief Introduction to Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Since this study is made under the guideline of the conceptual metaphor theory, it is necessary to spend time making a brief introduction to conceptual metaphor theory.

Taking experientialism as the philosophical basis, Lakoff and Johnson put forward their famous conceptual metaphor theory. They argue that “human thought processes are largely metaphorical” [6]. Based on the assumption that human beings organize and structure concepts in terms of their bodily experience, metaphor is inevitably motivated by and grounded in our bodily experience. So human metaphorical thoughts are also embodied. It becomes aware of the nature of the cognitive process of metaphor that is no other than making use of the known experience to understand the other either known or unknown experience. All in all, the way human's bodies function in and interact with the world provides the precondition of the formation of metaphor.

As we all know, bodily experience is the precondition of metaphor. But how on earth do we rely on metaphor to understand one concept in terms of the other concept? Lakoff defines metaphor as “a cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system”, which is characterized by the formula A IS B. Here A and B refer to two conceptual domains which are “any coherent organization of experience” in human's minds. Respectively, domain A is the “target domain” that we try to understand, and the other domain B is called the “source domain” on which we rely to understand the target domain. Generally speaking, the target domain is comparatively abstract, lacking clearly delineated structure, while the source domain is more concrete with richer structure. This understanding process involves a set of systematic correspondences also called “mappings between two domains”. The process can be presented by the figure:

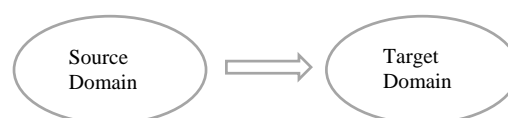


Fig. 1. Process of metaphorical mapping in cognitive metaphor theory.

Here, the source-to-target mapping is the key to the working mechanism of metaphor, a source of energy to make

metaphorical expression meaningful. However, this cross-domain mapping does not happen at random but has to undergo several processes. In Lakoff and Tuner's view, every metaphorical mapping involves four following processes:

- (1) Slots in the source-domain schema, which get mapped onto slots in the target domain.
- (2) Relations in the source domain, which get mapped onto relations in the target domain.
- (3) Properties in the source domain, which get mapped onto properties in the target domain.
- (4) Knowledge in the source domain, which gets mapped onto knowledge in the target domain. [7]

Bixing makes use of the pre-existing similarity between two concepts before the metaphor comes into being. For example, the Chinese idiom “Xiao Ye Ru Hua” uses the resemblance between the way a girl laugh and the state of a flower in full bloom in respect of beautiful appearance. This correlation is deeply grounded in people's daily experience. They juxtapose two concepts together metaphorically, and the similarity between two distinctive concepts is not realized until the emergence of the metaphor. For example, in the poem line “Fei Hong Wan Dian Chou Ru Hai”, the perceiving similarity between sorrow and the image of countless falling petals begins to exist after they are put together. Zhao Yanfang gives an explanation of this phenomenon. [8] It is due to the similar association in the cognitive domain that two entities that normally seem to be unrelated can be put together in a metaphorical structure. In consequence, human beings can utilize the perceptual blending of those two different entities to give an explanation, to make a judgment as well as to express the real feeling toward the objective reality.

In a word, the fundamental working mechanism of metaphor rest with a series of systematic mappings from the source domain onto the target domain based on the similarity between two concepts.

*B. Identification of Chrysanthemum Metaphors in Li Qingzhao's Poems*

This thesis intends to adopt a qualitative study which is from generic to specific to identify and classify chrysanthemum metaphors.

Through a thorough work by interpreting and analyzing the pieces of Li Qingzhao's poems, I find that Li Qingzhao's poems are much constructed with flower metaphors. As a concrete, familiar and easy-to-understand concept, the concept of flowers is fully utilized by the poetess to structure her thoughts about the world in her eyes. Besides taking an indispensable position in the source domain, the flower is also given status as a target domain in the construction of Li Qingzhao's poems. However, flower metaphors in the form of the flower as a source domain definitely occupy the majority of data. Accordingly, in the light of the opposite position that flower takes in flower metaphors, the author separates flower metaphors into two broad headings for the first step. Next, on the basis of the theme of flower metaphors within each class, the author classifies them into three specific categories and a specific category respectively. They are listed in the following table:

TABLE I: CONCEPTUAL MAPPINGS IN CHRYSANTHEMUM METAPHORS

The Classification of chrysanthemum Metaphors in Li Qingzhao's poems	
Chrysanthemum as source domain	Appearance is chrysanthemum
	Aspiration is chrysanthemum
	Emotion is chrysanthemum
Chrysanthemum as target domain	Chrysanthemum is Human

In Li Qingzhao's poems, the concepts of appearance, aspiration, and emotion are metaphorically structured in terms of the flower. Consequently, on the principle of Lakoff's classification of metaphor, the flower metaphors that flower as a source domain fall into the category of structural metaphor. Let's take a look at how this conceptual concept is reflected in the following Li Qingzhao's poems.

*C. Chrysanthemum as Source Domain*

Let's take a look at how this conceptual concept is reflected in the following Li Qingzhao's poems.

*1) Appearance is chrysanthemum*

“Who would not say that this is overwhelming? In the westerly wind that lifts the curtains, one is thinner than the yellow flowers.” (“Drunk in Blossom Shade”)

On the principle of conceptual metaphor theory, two distinctive characteristics of flowers are mapped onto appearances of lady. However, the mapping is only partial. The hidden part is its biological attribute as a plant, such as having roots and leaf, growing in the mud, and so on. The highlighted part is the perceived similarity in terms of the image. With respect to the pretty appearance metaphor, the similarity may be the fair rosy color, charming form, and delicate image. With respect to the emaciated appearance metaphor, the similarity may be the faded color, unpleasant form, and desolate image. The specific mapping relations between two domains are showed in the following figure:

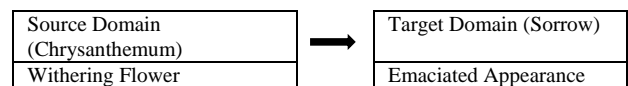


Fig. 2. Conceptual mapping in appearance is chrysanthemum.

*2) Aspiration is chrysanthemum*

Aspiration is what people long for and pursue. It has a direct connection with what kind of person he/she wants to be. Different people with different outlooks on the world and life will establish their individual aspirations. What's more, the same person may change his/her aspiration with the changes in the environment. Since aspiration is kind of spiritually abstract and implicit, there is no better way than finding concrete objects to explain. Traditionally, plant, animal, natural phenomena are the ideal source domains that get mapped onto the aspiration domain. In Li Qingzhao's poems, the flower is an excellent carrier for the poetess to set up her own aspirations and ambitions.

In the poem: “Duo Li Yong Bai Ju”: white chrysanthemum suffers from the torture of the ruthless wind and rain. It is not as delicate and charming as other splendid chrysanthemums from appearance. However, the remaining subtle perfume makes this chrysanthemum still keep its graceful bearing. This attribute of chrysanthemum exactly gets mapped onto the aspiration of Li Qingzhao. The rugged environment only makes the beautiful looks of flowers fade away, but never

stripped of its fresh and pure fragrance. As for the poetess, the strike of political persecution only brings mental anguish but never takes away her noble and proud sentiment. What the poetess aspires is the unpolished and natural beauty of personality.

The flower actually has no thought, not to mention character and morality. It is human that imposes special attributes on flower after a long-time observation. The environment lives in, the time it blooms, the process it experiences, etc., such elements enable people to associate flowers with their aspirations. In other words, the correlation between flower and aspiration put the method of expressing the poetess aspiration by means of flower metaphors into operation. In the metaphor aspiration is the flower, the specific mapping relations between two domains are shown in the following figure:

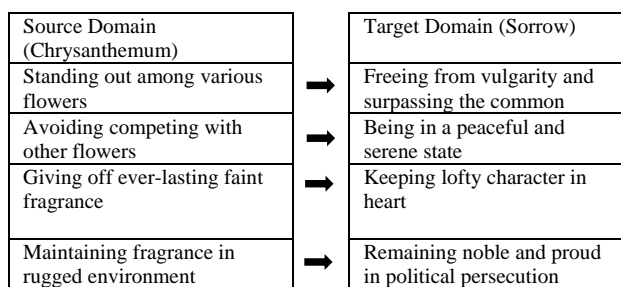


Fig. 3. Conceptual mapping in aspiration is chrysanthemum.

### 3) Emotion is chrysanthemum

According to Ortony, “emotion is one of the most central and pervasive aspects of human experience.”[9] However, this aspect is both abstract and vague in nature. Although the language is an important support for emotional expression, merely several simple sentiment words are far from explaining human's complicated emotions vividly. In the process of conceptualizing emotion, humans always need to rely on metaphors to express and describe vividly and visually. A variety of metaphorical expressions of emotion are widely used in daily language, especially in poetical language. It is generally known that poetry is the main way for poets to express their feelings and emotions in terms of other concepts, such as the moon, rain, cloud, flower, flowing water, etc. Li Qingzhao's poems are characteristic of a fresh and graceful style. The refined and delicate writing is permeated with the poetess's sincere emotions, touching the soul. In order to convey her emotions implicitly and euphemistically, Li Qingzhao usually resorts to her familiar and favorite flower. So the flower in Li Qingzhao's poems carries out an important task to construct her emotions in a metaphorical way. There is a kind of flower metaphors related to emotion:

#### Sorrow is Chrysanthemum

The emotion of sadness in Li Qingzhao's poems is of the most artistic characteristic. The poems created in the last 40 years of her years are dripping with a sense of sentimental feelings, which has a profound temperament of melancholy. Whether they are the deep worry about the current crisis of the nation, a strong affection for spring and time, or the slight feeling of loneliness and missing her dead husband, the poetess also tends to use expressions connected with flowers to express such a series of sad feelings. Through the description of the concrete flower which is pervasively

entrenched in people's common mind, readers can feel close to the poetess and can be deeply affected by the poetess's delicate and sentimental emotions.

“Let fallen flowers lie where they fall to what purpose and for whom should I decorate?” (“Sheng Sheng Man”)

The poetess transfers her inner sorrow to the withered flower in the poem line. Generally speaking, the chrysanthemum is considered the most beautiful flower in autumn. Right now, it becomes withered, and the petals scattered all over the ground. Here, a single petal of chrysanthemum represents a strand of sorrow. It seems that the poetess's unhappy feelings accumulate in her heart little by little as the petals of chrysanthemum pile up high on the ground.

In the above examples, the image of the withered flower is closely related to the poetess's sorrowful inner world. Basically, the abstract feeling of sorrow is without taste, smell, sound, or figure. By means of showing the poetess's spiritual world through the concrete flower, the poetess makes her sad emotion become something that readers can see and feel. The reason that the withered flower can be projected onto the target domain sorrow lies in two respects. On one hand, the feeling of sadness in Chinese traditional poetry is mostly cold and gloomy, which corresponds to the environment that the flower becomes faded and fallen. They both emphasize the cold situation. On the other hand, the characteristics of growth and withering of the flower can correspond to the way sorrow forms and exists in people's minds. They find certain similarities. Through the metaphor sadness is the flower, parts of the prosperities of flowers are systematically mapped onto target domain sorrow. In the mapping of sadness is the flower, the state of the withered flower is highlighted. The specific mapping relations between two domains are showed in the following figure:

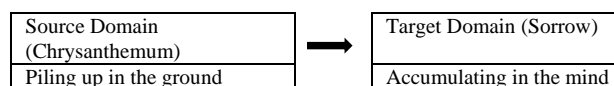


Fig. 4. Conceptual mapping in emotion is chrysanthemum.

#### D. Chrysanthemum as Target Domain

There is no doubt that the concept of the flower as a source domain has done a great job in structuring the concepts of appearance, aspiration, and emotion. At the same time, in Li Qingzhao's poems, the flower is also given a statue of the target domain by being understood in terms of other concepts. Although compared with the flower as the source domain, flower as target domain is not that systematic in terms of number. But it is still an indispensable component of flower metaphors that contributes directly to the construction of Li Qingzhao's poems.

In Li Qingzhao's poems, the flower is not only an inanimate plant in nature. It is treated as human by the poetess through endowing it with human traits and characters. In a further way, the human's other concrete traits are used for a more detailed description in order to appreciate the beauty of the flower.

“Hen Xiao Xiao Wu Qing Feng Yu, Ye Lai Rou Sun Qiong Ji.” (“Duo Li Yong Bai Ju”)

In the above poem lines, the Chinese expression “Qiong Ji” used to describe a woman's skin as pure white and smooth as

jade. Those beautiful attributes of people are mapped onto flowers pure and tender petals as well as their delicate stem. An example is a more vivid description of the flower's beautiful appearance and poses in terms of humans.

The conceptual metaphor chrysanthemum is human is quite common in Li Qingzhao's poems. This kind of metaphor is also regarded as personification which is a form of ontological metaphor. Personification makes use of one of the best source domain we have ourselves, which "allows us to comprehend a wide variety of experience with nonhuman entities in terms of human motivations, characteristics and activities." Through this metaphor, the poetess displays more attributes of flowers as vivid as possible so that readers can better appreciate the beauty of the flower.

In the appearance metaphor, the poetess can find the characteristic of chrysanthemum to describe. In emotion metaphor, when the poetess conveys her feeling vividly and implicitly by virtue of chrysanthemum, it is based on the extension of human's inner world into outer objective nature. The poetess transfers her emotion to chrysanthemum, so chrysanthemum becomes the outlet of the poetess emotion. As for the aspiration metaphor, the different attributes and characteristics of chrysanthemum are utilized to talk about the poetess's different aspirations visually. It becomes an outer reflection of her aspiration. Likewise, the poetess also finds the common ground between her life and chrysanthemum out of the impact of "Human and Nature as a Whole". Flower's natural life course is just the right portrayal of the poetess's life experience. The life chances of the poetess just correspond to the flower that goes through budding, flowering and withering. The poetess definitely juxtaposes the human's destiny and chrysanthemum together. The similarity between those two concepts is easily identified by the poetess's heightened awareness. The destiny of growing old is like a chrysanthemum that becomes faded and fallen, both of which cannot be stopped. What's more, in the metaphor chrysanthemum as target domain, chrysanthemum is endowed with human's properties and turns into a beautiful lady in poetess poems. Above all, the poetess is adept at making sense of concepts about humans in terms of the flower. Couple with the flower is human, two different states of life blend into a harmonious one. As far as poetess is concerned, humans and flowers bear so many resemblances that can be compared with each other.

In short, the theory of "Human and Nature as a Whole" exerts a great effect on the formation of Li Qingzhao's flower metaphors. It enables the poetess to project her thinking mode of a human onto the flower, giving the flower feelings, connotations, and values. In return, the flower turns into strong support for the poetess to conceptualize the world in her eyes.

In this part, I mainly talk about the characteristics, working mechanisms, and cultural-cognitive features of flower metaphors in Li Qingzhao's poems. The categorizations of flower metaphors have been stated clearly. The reason that flower and other concepts can be utilized by the poetess to make sense of each other is that the poetess relies on her bodily experience of the outer world, then finds either the physical similarity or psychological similarity between two concepts, and finally carries on a mapping process.

### III. CONCLUSION

After a systematic analysis of chrysanthemum metaphors in Li Qingzhao's poems, I find that there are three major conceptual metaphors of chrysanthemum as a target domain and major conceptual metaphors of chrysanthemum as a source domain. As a concrete, familiar, and easy-to-understand concept, the chrysanthemum is fully utilized by the poetess to structure the concepts relevant to human beings. Different aspects of the flower are mapped onto different target domains, which enable the poetess to talk about the concepts of appearance, aspiration, and emotion. Besides, Li Qingzhao also gives chrysanthemum a status as a target domain in the construction of her poems. She relies on the concepts of human and jade to talk about chrysanthemum.

This paper is a tentative study on chrysanthemum metaphors in Li Qingzhao's poems under the guideline of conceptual metaphor theory. On one hand, the findings of this study support and verify the cognitive view of metaphor. From the cognitive perspective, metaphor is not only a rhetoric device but a cognitive tool for the human to perceive and conceptualize the world. It enables human beings to make sense of and talk about one concept in terms of another. The essence of metaphor is a series of systematic mappings from the source domain onto the target domain based on either physical or psychological similarity between two concepts. The metaphor has potential and profound impact on our understanding of the world, and thus plays a very important role in the formation of human conceptual structure and reasoning. [10]

On the other hand, conceptual metaphor theory provides us with a new method to understand and interpret the poetic text. The metaphor makes up for the ambiguity caused by the use of Bixing technique in analyzing poetry. Lakoff and Johnson's metaphor provides us with a systematic and regular method of studying poetry. The commonalities between things gained through Bixing can be accepted by the world of common sense. This is a unique cognitive method of poets and a kind of perceptual cognition. Consequently, when researching poetry, we can investigate not only the use of language by combining Bixing and metaphor but also the poet's conceptualization process. By studying the use of metaphors in poetry from the cognitive perspective, we can acquire a more rational and deep understanding of the poet's creative mood so as to appreciate the poetry more deeply.

Undoubtedly, nothing can be done perfectly. There is still some room for improvement and development. Due to the complicated contexts of some poems, the flower metaphors may not be thoroughly identified. Some flower metaphors are so implicit in a particular context that they are overlooked easily. Moreover, apart from the flower metaphors, there are flower metonymies and flower metaphonymies in Li Qingzhao's poems, which cannot be studied by Lakoff and Johnson's theory and Bixing. However, the latter two are also indispensable tools utilized by the poetess to construct her poems.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

This article was researched, analyzed and written by the author.

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