UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

The Journey metaphor and the Source-Path-Goal schema in Agnès Varda's autobiographical 'gleaning' documentaries

Forceville, C.

Published in:
Beyond cognitive metaphor theory: perspectives on literary metaphor

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):
Forceville, C. (2011). The Journey metaphor and the Source-Path-Goal schema in Agnès Varda's autobiographical 'gleaning' documentaries. In M. Fludernik (Ed.), Beyond cognitive metaphor theory: perspectives on literary metaphor (pp. 281-297). (Routledge studies in rhetoric and stylistics; No. 3). London: Routledge.

The following is a pre-proof version of a chapter that was published as:

If you want to quote from it, please check the published version. ChF, June 2011.

Charles Forceville, University of Amsterdam

1. Introduction

Les glaneurs et la glaneuse ("The Gleaners and I," Dir. Agnès Varda, 2000) was a remarkable success, both in the director's native country France and abroad. The many enthusiastic reactions she received in response to the documentary inspired Varda to direct a sequel, *Les glaneurs et la glaneuse … deux ans après* ("The Gleaners and I: Two Years Later," 2002). The two films are unusual in their apparently episodic structure and in the high degree of freedom spectators appear to enjoy in interpreting the film. On a first impression, this freedom might seem to be a natural consequence of the fact that Varda's two documentaries are nonfictional "road movies" (see Cohan and Hark 1997), which almost inevitably evoke the metaphor A LIFE IS A JOURNEY (Lakoff 1993: 223; Johnson 1993: 167). Since it is the goal-pursuing aspect of life that is crucial in this metaphor, I will here reformulate it as A QUEST IS A JOURNEY. This rich metaphor, then, provides coherence to the target domain QUEST, while leaving ample room for context-driven elaboration. However, one would fail to do justice to the complexity of Varda's films to interpret their structure solely through the lens of this metaphor alone, since the metaphor A STORY IS A JOURNEY is equally pertinent. In order to capture the interrelations between the metaphors, it is necessary to examine the schema that underlies all three elements in them: quest, story, and journey.

This chapter sets out to demonstrate that the central metaphors A QUEST IS A JOURNEY and A STORY IS A JOURNEY, both rooted in the "Source-Path-Goal" (henceforth S-P-G) schema, strongly steer viewers' interpretations of Varda's films. The goal of this exercise is threefold. In the first place, since the S-P-G schema is often used metaphorically (Katz and Taylor 2008; Ritchie 2008), demonstrating its pertinence to films sheds light on the Cognitive Metaphor Theory (CMT) axiom that metaphor primarily governs thought, and only derivatively governs language (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 1999; see also Johnson 2007). In this respect, the current chapter ties in with my larger project of confronting CMT claims by considering them in the light of multimodal rather than verbal-only manifestations of metaphor (e.g., Forceville 2005a, 2006a, 2006b, 2008; Forceville and Jeulink 2008; see also Forceville and Urios-Aparisi in press). In the second place, the intention is to show that the S-P-G schema is a useful instrument for analyzing films that, in one way or another, are "road movies," and to help theorize their generic features. Finally, although no exhaustive interpretation of the documentaries can be claimed, it is hoped that the analyses provide non-trivial insights into Varda's extraordinary films.

2. The Source-Path-Goal schema

The S-P-G schema is one of the most important structures in human thinking (Johnson 1987, Lakoff 1993). It manifests itself most literally in movement: a human being runs, crawls, jumps, rides, flies, sails or moves by any other means from point A ("source") via a trajectory C ("path") to another point B ("goal"). The prototypical movement is walking, an ability that depends on the human body possessing two legs permitting motion – typically forward motion – as well as on certain motor skills. I will retain the commonly used term JOURNEY for

this literal level of the S-P-G schema, but I will sometimes alternate it with the term RELOCATION, which does not evoke JOURNEY's cultural, goal-related connotations.

Since human beings usually move from A to B with a purpose, arriving at B tends to be equivalent to having achieved something, ranging from getting at the fridge in order to fetch a beer to reaching the destination of a years' long pilgrimage. Consequently, it is probably no coincidence that we systematically use the language of journeys to describe and conceptualize the never-ending quests we undertake in our lives – even sum up our lives. Indeed, one of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980, 1999) most radical claims is that human beings systematically understand abstract things in terms of concrete things, the latter deserving that status by virtue of being visible, audible, graspable, smellable, touchable, tasteable – in short, by being "embodied." If Lakoff and Johnson are right, metaphorically structuring the abstract in terms of the concrete is indispensable to come to grips with abstract phenomena. This being said, it has increasingly become accepted in CMT that this concrete, embodied knowledge is heavily complemented by cultural knowledge (e.g., Emanatian 1995, Yu 1998, Gibbs and Steen 1999, Kövecses 2005, Caballero 2006, Forceville, Hekkert and Tan 2006). Let me call this second, purpose-oriented manifestation of the S-P-G schema the QUEST level.

A third domain in which the S-P-G schema manifests itself is story-telling. A prototypical story has parts that follow one another in a certain order: usually the beginning is followed by a middle and closed off by an ending. A story may be *straightforward* or it may *meander*, a narrator sometimes *digresses*, or, particularly in film, events occur in *fast forward*, alternatively lose tempo in *slow motion*, or start *in medias res*. Prototypical narrating, then, is metaphorically following a path from a beginning, via various developments, to a conclusion. Let me call this third manifestation of the S-P-G schema the STORY level.

There is a fourth concept that is structured by the S-P-G schema: TIME. The rationale of the TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT metaphor, and its complement TIME IS STATIONARY AND WE MOVE THROUGH IT, elaborately discussed in Lakoff and Johnson (1980: chapter 9) and Lakoff (1993), seems evident. Briefly, Western calculations of time depend on planetary movements in the first place, and when human beings move through space, this takes time. This manifestation of the S-P-G schema constitutes the TIME level.

In the road-movie genre these levels are "naturally" conflated: a hero or heroine departs from somewhere to somewhere else (JOURNEY), which takes TIME; wants to achieve something (QUEST); and the movie tells the tale of the journey-cum-quest (STORY) (see Campbell 2008/1949 for an erudite characterization of the typical hero's enterprise). This apparent "naturalness" resides in the fact that all of these concepts are elaborations of the highly embodied S-P-G schema (Johnson 1993). It is not surprising, then, that humans conceive of abstract phenomena such as time, questing and narrating in terms of the S-P-G schema. More specifically, the S-P-G schema gives rise to the conceptual metaphors TIME IS MOVEMENT, A QUEST IS A JOURNEY, and A STORY IS A JOURNEY. Given that the isomorphism between relocating from one place to another, the passing of time, going on a quest, and telling a story are all rooted in the shared S-P-G schema, the levels often enable the kind of synthesizing conflation that Fauconnier and Turner call "blending" (e.g. Turner 1996: chapter 5; Fauconnier 1997; Fauconnier and Turner 2002; for a review of the latter see Forceville 2004). The S-P-G schema constitutes the so-called "generic space" where all the shared elements are found (such as beginning, trajectory, and end); JOURNEY, QUEST, STORY, and TIME form the input spaces, allowing for many correspondences; and in particular instances in a road movie or travel documentary (or in a novel, a musical, or any other narrative pertaining to a journey), the blended space merges elements from two, three, or even all four of these input spaces. Concrete examples of such blends will be discussed with reference to

Varda's two documentaries later in this chapter. But first it is important to insist that although the blends appear natural and self-evident they are nonetheless *blends*, that is, they combine elements from *different* input spaces. Thus, while showing structural similarities, the input spaces are not identical.

It is clear that the literal level of the S-P-G schema, "movement," does not necessarily involve intention or agency. A marble that falls off a table and rolls on the floor, for instance, exemplifies the S-P-G schema in beginning its movement at a certain point, following a certain trajectory due to certain physical forces, and coming to a standstill at a certain point – but it exemplifies no agency. By contrast, a person's movement is typically a willed, physical relocation from A to B. Since this willed physical relocation usually has a purpose, the level of RELOCATION/JOURNEY already encroaches upon the level of the QUEST. But if we define a quest as a search-for-something with a certain magnitude or grandeur, it makes sense to distinguish between these two levels. The ten steps to the fridge, a trip to the supermarket, and walking the dog all serve some purpose, but they do not, under normal circumstances, qualify as quests – although they may be subcomponents of them. Quests pertain to grander purposes, such as competing for a prize, training to become the best, studying for a degree, marrying the prince, winning the lottery, overcoming a trauma, and finding a lost one. Quests involve spending energy, money, and hope; success and failure have substantial consequences in terms of material well-being, self-esteem, prestige, health, and happiness. There is a difference, therefore, between mere purposive relocations and quests.

Prototypical stories, finally, are always about protagonists' quests, not about their relocations *per se*. But while stories and quests often coincide, they are not identical, since not every quest makes it into a story. I postulate as a criterion for something to qualify as a story that it is by definition *shared*. If somebody has embarked upon a quest, but fails to share the pursuit of whatever it is she pursues with anybody else, this quest does not make it to the

story level. As such, this still excludes few situations: we usually tell stories about our quests to beloveds, friends, family, colleagues. Stories about quests that are the subject of this chapter, however, differ from such homely ones in at least one important dimension: *they are created to be shared with a mass audience*. This means that, far more so than private stories, they need to have a certain *form* (which in narratology is equivalent to "syuzhet" or "plot" – see e.g., Bordwell 1985: 50), or even *format*. The fact that these public stories are to be absorbed by strangers (rather than spouses, parents, mates, or other intimates), under conditions that are to a considerable extent determined by technology and institutions (printed on paper; preserved on celluloid, tape, or electronically; distributed by publishers, financed by studios, scheduled in theatres, etc.) imposes constraints on them. Such conditions include, for instance, that audiences may have to pay for access to the story, have limited time to take it in, and must visit a certain place to gain access. Thus public stories, far more so than private ones, need to give value for their money in terms of intrinsic interest or entertainment. This alone means that there is a difference between quests and the publicly accessible stories based on them, and warrants distinguishing between the QUEST and STORY levels.

In short, the interest of road movies and travel documentaries (and the numerous computer games that involve motion through space) depends on the fact that they constitute a blend of the levels of (1) RELOCATION/JOURNEY; (2) QUEST; (3) STORY; and (4) TIME, and that all these levels are structured by the S-P-G schema. Since there are structured resemblances between them, artistically pleasurable ambiguities arise because relations between the levels are triggered, via metaphors such as A QUEST IS A JOURNEY, A STORY IS A JOURNEY, and even a QUEST IS A STORY. However, the S-P-G schema not only allows for the proliferation of meanings in road movies; it also helps constrain them. The goal-directed nature of quests, for instance, entails that relocations are always first and foremost evaluated in terms of how they contribute, or fail to contribute, to the success of the quest. Similarly, the story-format elicits

ideas concerning future developments: we *expect* that physical relocations will be delayed by all kinds of obstacles and interesting digressions, and we *expect*, paradoxically, that we will sometimes be surprised by what will happen. Finally, we usually know at what stage of the story we are (half-way through the 350-page book, toward the end of the 90-minute film, in the fifth installment of a 24-part TV series), which means that certain things are (un)likely to happen given how much of the story is left.

Table 1 lists some of the isomorphisms that exist between the three instantiations of the S-P-G schema. (The TIME level does not allow for this kind of structuring, and is taken to be ever-present in the RELOCATION level; it is therefore not specified here.) It is important to note that the dimension/role designated in each cell matters more than the label chosen to mark it; and that not all cells are necessarily filled.

RELOCATION	QUEST	STORY
Traveler	Person	Character
Progressing	Approaching goal	Developing
Fellow-travelers	Family/friends	Helpers
Dangerous people	Adversaries	Antagonists
Meeting people	Meeting people	Introducing characters
Change in destination	Changes in purpose	Turning point
Pleasant incident	Achievement, happy event	Advancement of plot
Obstacle, delay	Misfortune	Setback in plot
Means of transport	?	?
?	?	Medium

Table 1. The S-P-G schema: Correspondences between RELOCATION, QUEST, and STORY.

3. Brief summaries of *Les glaneurs et la glaneuse* (2000) and *Deux ans après* (2002)

Les glaneurs et la glaneuse (henceforth *The Gleaners*) begins with Jean-François Millet's famous and endlessly reproduced painting of female gleaners. Varda is intrigued by people's gleaning – what in *Deux ans après* (henceforth *Two Years Later*) she calls the modest gesture of bending to collect ("le geste modeste de se baisser pour ramasser"). The main theme of the two films is portraying a wide variety of people who are gleaners. Initially, the protagonists are literal gleaners – of potatoes, grapes, tomatoes, figs and other edibles – but gradually, more of them are portrayed as gleaners in the extended sense of collectors of anything left behind by others that they find useful for their own purposes. Scenes include meetings with experts who comment on the legal aspects of gleaning, with *patrons* who communicate their views on gleaning, with gleaners both in the country and in the city, with a famous cook who picks his own herbs, with a vintner who is also a psychoanalyst, and with various artists whose art consists of *bricolages* of "found objects." In one of the many voice-over texts that accompany the images, Varda emphasizes that she herself is the "glaneuse" of the film's title: she not only collects heart-shaped potatoes and takes *res relicta* from garbage to her home, but she is also, and above all, a gleaner of images. She makes this clear visually at the beginning of *The Gleaners* when she has somebody film her standing in front of a painting of a *glaneuse* by Jules Breton, first holding a sheaf of corn in the same (but: mirroring) posture as the girl in the painting, and then exchanging the corn for her camera.

Two Years Later* is a sequel to *The Gleaners*, which Varda decided to make after the overwhelmingly positive response to the earlier film. This success transpired not only from the many prizes it won, but also from the numerous letters and presents she received from viewers. In *Two Years Later* Varda visits new gleaners, revisits gleaners from the earlier film, and deepens and broadens the gleaning theme of people actively, often happily, searching for

food and objects that others have left behind. The motif of the heart-shaped potato has become a symbol for *The Gleaners*, and a kind of personal logo for Varda (on at least one DVD cover the heart-shaped potatoes are prominently displayed, and on the menu of my "Total Film" DVD the "bullets" are in the form of red hearts).

Varda's two documentaries are autobiographical in the sense that the director mostly handles the camera, regularly films herself, and provides a forcefully present first-person voice-over text in the film. These factors also ensure that viewers are constantly reminded they are watching a film, which makes the documentaries emphatically self-reflexive. Varda herself often calls attention to this in her voice-over, perhaps most pointedly when, during one of various occasions when she films her hand, she says: "That is my project: filming one hand with the other" ("C'est ça mon projet: filmer une main d'autre main"). Given Varda's reputation as *Nouvelle Vague* director of an impressive oeuvre of fiction films, it seems moreover reasonable to approach her films as *artistic* documentaries. This means that Varda presumably has a more than average interest in forging aesthetically pleasing thematic links in her film – and is probably good at this.

4. Source-Path-Goal in *Les glaneurs et la glaneuse* and *Deux ans après*

I will first examine how each of the journey, quest, and story levels manifests itself in Varda's documentaries, and how and where they lead to aesthetically pleasing blends (some of the analyses are indebted to Meuzelaar 2001).

JOURNEY/RELOCATION level. Varda is continually "on the road" in both films. Her physical relocations are explicitly shown and verbally cued. The film features many shots taken from her car of other cars driving along the motorway, as well as of the scenery passing by. Whereas in *The Gleaners* Varda's use of transport is mainly the car, in *Two Years Later* this is

alternated with a trip by train and a plane flight, and in one shot she films her own feet, walking. In addition she shows her protagonists as they move. On a verbal level she often mentions, or shows signs of, names of places where she is heading.

QUEST level. Varda's primary quest is to collect material for her film. This includes visits to museums with gleaner-paintings, filming and interviewing gleaning protagonists, each with their own ambitious or everyday quest, and her own gleaning – for instance of heart-shaped potatoes and, in the city, *res relicta*.

TIME level. Cinema is a time-based art, so film by definition exemplifies the unfolding of time. But while many films try to make the audience forget the passage of time, Varda constantly reminds the viewer of this, specifically of her own ageing. In *The Gleaners* she films her thinning hair (repeated in *Two Years Later*) but, more importantly, she keeps shooting with one hand her other, wrinkled, hand holding an object or performing an activity (something, incidentally, that has become possible only since the introduction of small, lightweight digital cameras). At one moment Varda refers explicitly to the fact that her hands tell her that she will not have so much longer to live ("mes mains qui me disent que c'est bientôt la fin"). The passing of time is also made visible by the fact that the heart-shaped potatoes, too, become old and wrinkled – but still sprout new outgrowths. There are several references to death, the end of ageing. Varda films a dead sheep once; a woman called Delphine tells Varda in *Two Years Later* that seeing *The Gleaners* was a "renaissance" after the death of a dear friend; and in the second film we learn that one of the protagonists of *The Gleaners*, Charly Plusquellec, has died. All the other persons she meets again have, naturally, aged as well, and in the conversations with most of the people Varda recorded for both films there is a reference to the two-year gap, and to what happened in the mean time. Moreover, a number of Varda's interlocutors tell her that what they do (gleaning herbs, growing wine, collecting garbage) is something their (grand)parents did before them, evoking a sense of a tradition of quests pursued by one

generation after another. The scenes in which the various *bricolage* artists talk about what they find on the streets also help build up the importance of time: the objects they gather are emphatically things with a past, which are now given a new life.

STORY level. Finally, the report of all the questing relocations has turned into the cinematic stories of *The Gleaners* and *Two Years Later*. That these are *plotted* stories is first of all made clear by conventional filmic segments such as opening and closing credits, which "frame" the events in the film as a more or less coherent whole. *The Gleaners* comes "full circle" by beginning and ending with a painting pertaining to gleaning, while *Two Years Later* begins and ends with an image showing a heart-shaped potato. In addition, viewers are constantly made to realize that they are watching a quest-turned-into-a-story via the profound self-reflexivity of the films. Varda's voice-over often refers to the film-making process itself, the topic crops up repeatedly in exchanges with protagonists in *Two Years Later* familiar from *The Gleaners*, and she several times films herself in mirrors, or has somebody else film her filming her protagonists. In *Two Years Later* there are intertitles introducing new sequences. The first intertitle is "P.M. (Pre Filmum)" – a three-minute prologue-in-fast-motion with a summary of the earlier film. Moreover, if one views the film on DVD, there is the familiar "chapter" division – another reminder of a story's segmentation and progress. A story-feature of a different nature is the recurrence of certain motifs; these motifs – of which "hands," "heart," and "chance" are particularly noticeable – significantly help forge coherence.

Blending levels. It is because of the isomorphic structure of the S-P-G schema in the concepts JOURNEY/RELOCATION, QUEST, TIME, and STORY that elements in all four of them can reverberate among each other, leading to aesthetically pleasing polyvalent interpretations. On the most obvious level, Varda's RELOCATING blends with her QUEST: gleaning footage about people gleaning. Every time we see Varda on the move, we are aware of the purposive nature of her movements. Forward movement on the relocation level thus blends with progress on the

quest level. Interestingly, however, what counts as "progress" is highly dependent on something that is crucial in gleaning: luck, or chance. Paradoxically, then, in order to achieve her goal, Varda must let herself be guided – or at least give the impression that she is guided – by chance. In many cases, the coincidence seems genuine: when Varda stops at a bric-a-brac shop with the sign "Trouvailles" ("findings"), she not only spots a sheaf of corn there, she also finds yet another gleaning painting – which, she assures us, is really what happened. Similarly, the gust of wind that, at the Hédouin museum, shakes Jules Breton's painting of gleaners in a storm-foreboding landscape, appears to be a piece of good fortune – although Varda may have helped chance by asking for the painting to be carried outside in what, she was bound to have noticed, was windy weather. In other cases, the coincidence is at least partially imposed; partially it is also the result of the serendipity that is the reward for a filmmaker who, on the basis of her key concept, is open to any of its manifestations; surely, this is the essence of gleaning itself. Since the spectators are invited to share Varda's quest, they come to understand everything they see and hear in the films in terms of gleaning. Thus when Varda stumbles upon a herd of sheep that blocks the road, this is strictly speaking a "blockade" on the RELOCATION level, hindering progress. But since the very purpose of Varda's quest is to be diverted by chance, this blockade is in itself an example of a pleasurable diversion, as she emphasizes in her voice-over text: "I have always liked to be stopped by animals, or to stop in order to watch them" ("d'ailleurs, j'ai bien aimé être arrêtée par des bêtes, ou m'arrêter pour les regarder").

The three-level structure of RELOCATION, QUEST, and STORY is often mirrored in the scenes in which Varda films her gleaners: the gleaners recount something about what they actually glean (potatoes, grapes, rubbish, old copper …), but they also tell their stories about what motivates them to glean. And often the literal movements the gleaners make (walking and bending to pick up potatoes on the fields or vegetables on the ground after the closing down of the market, reaching up to wrench fruits from trees, bending over to find treasures in trash bins,

driving from one pile of *res relicta* to another) are shown as well. Significantly the man she meets at the beginning of *The Gleaners* in the trailer camp (we later learn his name is Claude), struggling to survive, tells us he used to be a truck driver but lost his license and his car – and then ended up being divorced. The man's difficulties in life thus started when he could no longer make literal progress, having lost the right to drive. Varda reinforces this connection between the inability to move and the failure to achieve one's goal by twice inserting a shot of an upturned car in the trailer camp.

The quests that people undertake are often intimately linked to their outlook on life. The quests for food of course are mostly a matter of basic survival, and the stories about them do not much exceed information about the gleanable things available, their quality, and good places for gleaning. But Varda also portrays a man who says that he has enough money, explaining that he only gleans food to keep his talent for gleaning honed. And the cook of a Michelin-starred restaurant tells us that he always picks his own herbs, since these are far fresher than anything he could buy in shops. In such instances gleaning has become part of people's identities, as projected in the stories they tell about themselves; it involves a rejection of consumer culture, or of readymade machine-processed food. This becomes even more transparent when what is gleaned is not food, but debris in various forms that is transformed into art, as Varda records in several cases. Here, the quests merge strongly with the autobiographic stories people tell about themselves. Many characteristics of gleaning – such as that other people have found the things gleaned useless, or difficult to collect; the blurry legal status of gleaning; the unexpected value or worth of the gleaned object – are transferred to the stories the characters tell about their gleaning, if not by these persons themselves then by Varda. The multiplying meanings of the film not only reside in the interrelationships between relocating, questing, and story-telling, but also in the fact that the mini-stories are themselves the things gleaned by Varda for her film.

Varda's gleaning of her characters' stories results in a story – the finished film – which in turn helps galvanize her own identity as an artist-filmmaker.

Figure 1. The S-P-G levels of relocation, time, questing, and story-telling all captured in a single frame from *Les glaneurs et la glaneuse* (Agnès Varda, France 2000).

There is one shot which captures the levels of relocating, questing, time, and narrating perhaps better than any other still from the film: one shot in a series where Varda makes a frame with her fingers and films passing trucks through them, and then closes her hand – an old childhood game (figure 1). The truck exemplifies the movement of relocating; Varda's (ageing) hand suggests the passing of time; the hand is the instrument *par excellence* for the quest of gleaning; and the hole Varda makes with the thumb and index finger of her hand mirrors the camera's viewfinder, and therefore metonymically conveys the story level as well as its autobiographical nature. Varda draws attention to the correspondences in her voice-over text: "And always those trucks: I would like to catch them. To preserve what passes? No, to play." ("Et toujours ces camions. Je voudrais les attraper. Pour retenir ce qui passe? Non, pour

jouer.") Even the nested structure of the film is reflected in this particular shot: just as Varda gleans footage of gleaning people, so she here films a vehicle transporting vehicles – means of relocation par excellence. Stretching the analogy further, one can see something protective in both the gesture and the mode of transportation.

One of the strongest motifs in the films, particularly in *The Gleaners*, is that of the metonymically used "hand." In CMT terminology, a distinction is made between a metonym's source-concept, that is, the metonym proper as it linguistically appears in the "text," and the target-concept, that to which it refers (Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez Velasco 2002). Usually, a metonym unambiguously refers to a specific target concept, as in examples such as "the sax was ill" for "the saxophone player was ill"; "I read Donne" for "I read poems by Donne" etc. (see Lakoff and Johnson 1980: chapter 8). However, a metonym may support a degree of ambiguity. In the phrase "Paris decrees short skirts this spring" it is not completely clear what precisely "Paris" refers to: is it the collective fashion industry located there? the most famous designer houses? fashion journalists? a mixture of these? In this case the ambiguity may be convenient, since the metonym's user is not required to specify the referent (Brdar-Szábo and Brdar 2007, Xianglan 2007). But in the documentaries under discussion here, the ambiguity of the hand metonym is made artistically productive: Varda's emphatic use has the effect of cueing different S-P-G levels simultaneously, as we saw in the discussion of figure 1. For a viewer knowing that the English word for French "aiguille" (with reference to clocks) is "hand," the hand-time theme is further reinforced in the scene where on a nighthawking trip Varda finds a clock without hands, and gives it pride of place at home. (The "time-arrested" motif is reinforced by the fact that she films herself quietly passing behind the clock, as if emphasizing all artists' eternal but doomed hope to stop time by their art.) In short, the hand is a metonym for the gleaners' quests, for Varda's story-telling, and for time passing – foreboding death. (For more discussion of the hand-metonym in film, see Forceville forthcoming.)

5. Modality and medium in multimodal metaphor: a detour

Before concluding, it may be useful – and in the spirit of Varda's project – to indulge in a very brief detour and sketch some implications of studying metaphors and blends in the realm of pictorial and multimodal as opposed to that of written texts. The discipline of multimodal metaphors and blends has only just begun to be explored, and most of the scholarly work is still ahead (for more discussion and applications, see Forceville 2006, 2008; Forceville and Urios-Aparisi in press). Here, a few pointers and speculative ideas will have to do.

Multimodal discourses such as films have more modalities at their disposal to create metaphors and blends than monomodal discourses such as written texts. Film can, on a conservative categorization of modalities, at the very least draw on visuals, written text, spoken text, music, and non-verbal sound – with gesture being another strong candidate for the status of modality (e.g., Cienki and Müller 2006, Müller 2008, Müller and Cienki in press, Mittelberg and Waugh in press). In practice, this means that a target in a metaphor (or "input space 1" in a blend) can be cued in one modality, and a metaphorical source ("input space 2") in another one – in a variety of permutations. Since modalities are closely tied to media (both in the sense of material carriers for, and institutional providers of, discourse), multimodal metaphors will have to be studied with reference to the type of discursive situation in which they occur, including an evaluation of genre.

Whereas the sequential nature that by definition characterizes written texts entails that the uptake of a verbal metaphor or blend requires processing in time, if only because target and source (input space 1 and 2) have to be cued one after the other, monomodal metaphors/blends of the visual variety can be cued simultaneously. As figure 1 demonstrates, a single film still can trigger the construal of no less than four input spaces simultaneously, although the identification of these input spaces would be impossible outside of the narrative context of the film as a whole.

*Since non-verbal modalities do not have a "grammar" in the way language has (*pace *Kress and Van Leeuwen 1996; see Forceville 1999), the construal of metaphors that do not draw on the verbal modality tends to be more open to debate and controversy.* Briefly, in language one can formulate (metaphorical) propositions of an "A is B" type; by contrast, non-verbal modalities have to suggest the "is" in manners that are not subject to the rigor of linguistic grammar. This being said, it is important to distinguish between on the one hand what is possible/impossible in a given modality, or combination of modalities, and on the other between what is possible/impossible in a given genre. Thus, it seems more difficult to deny the necessity to construe metaphors in advertisements such as discussed in Forceville (1996) than in art films (Whittock 1990, Forceville 2005b). Similarly, while in metaphors/blends, the features that are to be mapped from source to target/from the input spaces to the blend can be spelled out in the verbal mode, they must be inferred in the case of non-verbal modes.

Non-verbal modalities trigger emotions quicker, and perhaps more subtly, in audiences than the verbal mode, and this characteristic is inherited by multimodal metaphors. Since not only facts and conceptual structures adhering to a domain, may be mapped onto a target or blend, but also the evaluations and emotions evoked by them, the use of non-verbal modalities may be very effective (or: manipulative) in the communication of narratively or rhetorically significant metaphors. It may well be that "lower" modalities such as sound, taste, and smell are less consciously registered than "higher" modalities such as language and visuals (see Cacciari 2008 for discussion of the various modes), with consequences for their expected effects in multimodal metaphors.

6. Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have attempted to demonstrate that the polyvalence of Varda's films is both enhanced and constrained by the interrelations governed by the S-P-G schema. The episodic nature of the two films, which alternate between Varda's visits to gleaners and meditations on gleaning when at home, gives the impression of a series of playful coincidences that, however, in fact is prevented from disintegrating into formlessness by the intertwining of the constantly recurring themes of journey, quest, time and story-telling.

This finding corresponds to the conclusion I drew in an examination of three other autobiographical journey documentaries: Ross McElwee's *Sherman's March*, Johan van der Keuken's *De Grote Vakantie/The Long Holiday*, and Frank Cole's *Life Without Death* (Forceville 2006a). However, there is one important dimension in which Varda's two films appear to differ from these earlier three, and that is the role of chance. At first sight Varda's openness to coincidence seems to be incompatible with the purposiveness that characterizes a quest. There is, after all, a potential tension between, on the one hand, the demands of story-telling and, on the other, the anarchy and unpredictability of coincidence. The norm for classic story-telling is some form of completeness or closure (Bordwell 1985: 157-162), which must somehow have been projected or foreseen from the beginning; while coincidence by definition defies such anticipation. In the case of Varda's films, one response is that, of course, chance is by its very nature part of the quest of gleaning: gleaners need luck to achieve their goals. But that being said, gleaners' searches are not random, for they know more or less what they look for, and in what locations and circumstances they will increase the likelihood of being successful. One could say that the goddess Fortuna favors those who are receptive to her gifts. Indeed, the idea that certain things have been waiting to be gleaned by somebody surfaces several times, for instance in the view of the artist "VR" (in *The*

Gleaners) that the garbage he finds has awaited him to give it a second life ("c'est l'objet qui m'appelle, parce qu'il a sa place ici").

The same holds for Varda, the gleaner of images that are to be transformed into more or less coherent story plots. She is open to coincidence, but the concept of gleaning helps determine what counts as a happy coincidence. Moreover, Varda not only reinforces these coincidences in her voice-overs. Out of the innumerable ways in which she could forge a connection between two phenomena, she chooses one that fits the multi-faceted gleaning theme. Examples abound: When filming one of the heart-shaped potatoes in *The Gleaners*, she proposes that potato-gleaning could well be conducted by charitable organizations supplying meals for the needy (in French: "restos du *coeur*," the latter being the French word for "heart"); an old Lu biscuit ad, in the beginning of *Two Years Later*, reminds her of the many letters she has read (in French: "lu") by enthusiastic viewers of *The Gleaners*; a train in which she is seated slows down, "as if by coincidence," when passing a waste-processing firm at Ivry; she reports that the men eliciting bright-looking copper wire spools from old TVs remind her that she began her film after seeing a solar eclipse on TV, continued while a TV program showed the transition to 2000, and completed the film by May 1 (Labor Day) – a date also mentioned at the end of *Two Years Later* as the day of an anti-Le Pen protest march in Paris …. Clearly, Varda often *creates* these links. As in the documentaries by McElwee, Van der Keuken and Cole, language plays a crucial role in making explicit, sometimes imposing, the connections between levels ensuring that Varda's quest acquires the contours of a plot-like form – indispensable for sharing a story.

Nonetheless, one important difference between Varda's films and those by McElwee, Van der Keuken, and Cole deserves to be mentioned; a difference that can be located on the "meeting people/introducing characters" dimension (see Table 1) and seems to be related to the "chance" theme. While the three male directors are strongly focused on their own

"quests" – more or less: searching for a marriageable woman (McElwee); coming to terms with a terminal illness or perhaps finding a therapy against it (Van der Keuken); and "transcending death" [sic] (Cole) (Forceville 2006a) – Varda never tires of analogizing between her protagonists' gleanings and her own, thereby emphasizing the connections that exist between her and other people. The new red bag Varda mentions having acquired echoes Alain F's red bag – his blue one having been stolen; she films a heart-shaped potato in the album of Delphine and Philippe de Trentemoult; and after "Monsieur Bouton" the button collector emphasizes that finding a button means you have a link with whoever lost it, Varda chooses a button from his collection to replace one she lost when on her way to visit him (all in *Two Years Later*). Indeed, the fact that in *Two Years Later* Varda revisits many of those she filmed for *The Gleaners* suggests her interest in their quests is genuine, going beyond a need to glean material for the sequel film. More so than in the quests of McElwee, Van der Keuken, and Cole, the open and rich nature of gleaning itself enables and encourages Varda to interact with her protagonists on a virtually equal footing and in a way that simultaneously strengthens the structure of the film. It is perhaps not too farfetched here to invoke the Surrealist tradition in which French culture is so strongly rooted. The Surrealists after all were great believers in the beneficial influence of chance, and in the release of control in art, as transpires from the role they attributed to the *objet trouvé* ("found object"). Moreover, they were strong advocates of collaborative art, as in their verbal and pictorial *cadavres exquis*. Both elements, finally, contribute to the notion of playfulness (see Bigsby 1972). All of these elements surface in Varda's film. Even the subconscious, celebrated by the Surrealists, makes its appearance in the guise of vintner-cum-psychoanalyst Jean Laplanche, who says that psychoanalysis is a kind of gleaning: the therapist and his client jointly search for what has been "left behind" in the client's mind.

This interest in "connectedness" – due to her Frenchness? to her gender? both? – stands out in Varda's films, and bestows extra connections in the blended space where journey, quest, time, and story merge. The result is a story that combines a strong internal coherence with numerous ties with the protagonists it portrays, and by extension with the viewers who can empathize with both Varda's and the protagonists' identity-enhancing quests. One of the *bricoleurs* she visits, Louis Pons, succinctly sums up his art as seeing a pile of opportunities in what other people see as a pile of rubbish. With her two films, Varda pays tribute to how her gleaning protagonists impose form and order on their lives, and celebrates art as the gleaning activity *par excellence*.

7. Bibliography

Bigsby, C.W.E. (1972) *Dada and Surrealism*. London: Methuen.

Bordwell, David (1985) *Narration in the Fiction Film*. London: Methuen.

Brdar-Szabó, Rita, and Mario Brdar (2007) **"**Metonymic Zooming in and out within a Functional Domain in the Process of Meaning Construction." Paper presented at the International Cognitive Linguistics Conference, Jagiellonian University Krákow, Poland, 15-20 July.

Caballero, Rosario (2006) *Re-Viewing Space: Figurative Language in Architects' Assessment of Built Space*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Cacciari, Christina (2008) "Crossing the Senses in Metaphorical Language." *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*. Ed. Raymond W. Gibb, Jr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 425-443.

Campbell, Joseph (2008 [1949]) *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (3rd edition). Novato, CA: New World Library.

Cienki, Alan, and CorneliaMüller (2006) "Metaphor, Gesture, and Thought." *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*. Ed. Raymond W. Gibb, Jr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 483-501.

Cohan, Steven, and Ina Rae Hark (1997) *The Road Movie Book*. London and New York: Routledge.

Emanatian, Michelle (1995) "Metaphor and the Expression of Emotion: The Value of Cross-cultural Perspectives." *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity* 10: 163-182.

Fauconnier, Gilles (1997) *Mappings in Thought and Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fauconnier, Gilles, and Mark Turner (2002) *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities*. New York: Basic Books.

Forceville, Charles (1996) *Pictorial Metaphor in Advertising*. London and New York: Routledge.

Forceville, Charles (1999). "Educating the Eye? Kress & Van Leeuwen's *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*, (1996)." *Language and Literature* 8: 163-178.

Forceville, Charles (2004) Review of Fauconnier and Turner (2002). *Metaphor and Symbol* 19: 83-89.

Forceville, Charles (2005a) "Visual Representations of the Idealized Cognitive Model of Anger in the Asterix Album *La Zizanie*." *Journal of Pragmatics* 37: 69-88.

Forceville, Charles (2005b) "Cognitive Linguistics and Multimodal Metaphor." *Bildwissenschaft: Zwischen Reflektion und Anwendung*. Ed. Klaus Sachs-Hombach. Cologne: Von Halem. 264-284.

Forceville, Charles (2006a) "The Source-Path-Goal Schema in the Autobiographical Journey Documentary: McElwee, Van der Keuken, Cole." *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 4: 241-261.

Forceville, Charles (2006b) "Non-verbal and Multimodal Metaphor in a Cognitivist Framework: Agendas for Research." *Cognitive Linguistics: Current Applications and Future Perspectives*. Ed. Gitte Kristiansen, Michel Achard, René Dirven, and Francisco José Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter. 379-402.

Forceville, Charles (2008) "Metaphor in Pictures and Multimodal Representations." *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*. Ed. Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 462-482.

Forceville, Charles (forthcoming) "Metonymy in Visual and Audiovisual Discourse." *The World Told and the World Shown: Issues in Multisemiotics*. Ed. Eija Ventola and Jésus Moya. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Forceville, Charles, Paul Hekkert and Ed Tan (2006) "The Adaptive Value of Metaphors. *Heuristiken der Literaturwissenschaft. Einladung zu disziplinexternen Perspektiven auf Literatur*. Ed. Uta Klein, Katja Mellmann and Steffanie Metzger. Paderborn: Mentis. 85-109.

Forceville, Charles, and Marloes Jeulink (2008) "The Source-Path-Goal Schema in Animation Film." Paper presented at the Researching and Applying Metaphor (RaAM) conference, University of Extremadura, Cáceres, Spain, 29-31 May.

Forceville, Charles, and Eduardo Urios-Aparisi (eds) (in press) *Multimodal Metaphor*. Berlin and New York: Mouton-De Gruyter.

Gibbs, Raymond W. Jr. & Gerard J. Steen (eds) (1999) *Metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Les glaneurs et la glaneuse. Dir. Agnès Varda. Ciné Tamaris, 2000.

Les glaneurs et la glaneuse … Deux Ans Après. Dir. Agnès Varda. C.N.D.P., 2002.

Johnson, Mark (1987) *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination and Reason.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Johnson, Mark (1993) *Moral Imagination: Implications of Cognitive Science for Ethics.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Johnson, Mark (2007) *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Katz, Albert N., and Tamsen E. Taylor (2008) "The Journeys of Life: Examining a Conceptual Metaphor with Semantic and Episodic Memory Recall." *Metaphor and Symbol* 23: 148-173.

Kövecses, Zoltán (2005) *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and Variation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kress, Gunther, and Theo van Leeuwen (1996). *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design.* Revised edition published in 2006. London and New York: Routledge.

Lakoff, George (1993) "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor." *Metaphor and Thought* (2nd edition). Ed. Andrew Ortony. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 202-251.

Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson (1980) *Metaphors We Live By.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson (1999) *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought.* New York: Basic Books.

Meuzelaar, Andrea (2001) "Oneindig leven op doodlopende wegen: een onderzoek naar reisstructuur en conceptuele metafoor in twee hedendaagse documentaries." ["Endless lives on dead-end streets: an examination of travel structures and conceptual metaphors in two contemporary documentaries."] Unpublished ms., Dept. of Media Studies, Universiteit van Amsterdam.

Mittelberg, Irene, and Linda R. Waugh (in press) "Metonymy First, Metaphor Second: A Cognitive-Semiotic Approach to Figures of Thought in Co-speech Gesture." *Multimodal Metaphor*. Ed. Charles Forceville and Eduardo Urios-Aparisi. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Müller, Cornelia (2008). *Metaphors Dead and Alive, Sleeping and Waking: A Dynamic View*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Müller, Cornelia, and Alan Cienki (in press). "Words, Gestures and Beyond: Forms of Multimodal Metaphor in the Use of Spoken Language." *Multimodal Metaphor*. Ed. Charles Forceville and Eduardo Urios-Aparisi. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Ritchie, David L. (2008) "X is a Journey: Embodied Simulation in Metaphor Interpretation." *Metaphor and Symbol* 23: 174-199.

Ruiz de Mendoza, Francisco José, and Olga I. Díez Velasco (2002) "Patterns of Conceptual Interaction." *Metaphor and Metonymy in Comparison and Contrast*. Ed. René Dirven and Ralph Pörings. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter. 490-532.

Turner, Mark (1996) *The Literary Mind*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Yu, Ning (1998) *The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor: A Perspective from Chinese*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Xianglan, Chen (2007) "Metonymy and Pragmatic Inference." Paper presented at the International Cognitive Linguistics Conference, Jagiellonian University Krákow, Poland, 15-20 July.

Whittock, Trevor (1990) *Metaphor and Film*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.