

# Analysis of Conceptual Metaphors in Inaugural Addresses of American Presidents

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**Analysis of Conceptual Metaphors in Inaugural Addresses of American  
Presidents**

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University of Split  
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Department of English Language and Literature

**Analysis of Conceptual Metaphors in Inaugural Addresses of American Presidents**

BA Thesis

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## 1. Introduction

Most people nowadays perceive metaphor as a literary technique and rhetorical device – the language of the extraordinary rather than the everyday. Nonetheless, as Lakoff and Johnson assert in their book *Metaphors We Live By*, “metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action” (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 4). The two authors introduced *Conceptual Metaphor Theory* (CMT) which holds that metaphor is an essential component of human thoughts, not just a feature of language (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 4). Our conceptual framework, which mostly relies on metaphors, directs how we behave daily (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 4). Consequently, a person uses metaphor across both their daily speech and in how they perceive various surroundings (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 4).

Political discourse has historically been seen as strongly shaped by ideologies. As a result, it is frequently ambiguous and complex for individuals to grasp. This thesis applies the Conceptual Metaphor Theory to the presidential inaugural addresses of Joe Biden, Donald Trump, and Barack Obama. As Chilton (2004: 51-52) explains, politicians prefer using metaphor to describe their political opinions and stances to persuade and inspire others by projecting concrete, everyday themes onto distant political concepts. This thesis will investigate the inaugural addresses of each of the previously mentioned presidents and examine the metaphors POLITICS IS WAR and UNITY IS A TOOL by noting their recurrence. It will also contrast how each president uses these metaphors to support and effectively communicate their individual ideas and aspirations. This analysis contributes to a broader understanding of how political leaders navigate the challenges of fostering and inspiring collective action in diverse and complex societies.

## 1.1. Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Lakoff and Johnson wrote their book after realizing how little different philosophical perspectives value metaphor's role in comprehending the world and oneself. As Kövecses (2002) explains in the preface to his book, CMT, has a long tradition and it is grounded on centuries of research that views metaphor as a conceptual weapon for structuring, restructuring, and even creating reality rather than just a linguistic adornment. As Lakoff (1993: 7) clarifies, language takes a backseat to intellect and reason in metaphors; metaphors are not only words. A conceptual metaphor is the comprehension of one area of experience (often abstract) in terms of another area (typically concrete). The abstract domain is also called the *target domain*, while the *source domain* is the one that is more concrete. Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 8) use an example of the metaphor TIME IS MONEY, in which *time* is the target domain, something abstract that we are trying to describe, which is unfamiliar, whereas *money* is real, physical, and tactile. Additionally, they illustrate how we utilize that exact metaphor without recognizing it in modern English. For instance: You're *wasting* my time. Not time but money is typically wasted (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 8).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 10) further explain how metaphorical concepts can also cause concerns with hiding and highlighting. A metaphorical idea may distract us from focusing on other parts of the concept that are at odds with the metaphor by allowing us to concentrate on just one (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 10). During a heated dispute, when we are focused on opposing and defending our own claims, we might lose track about the collaborative nature of argumentation (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 10). You might disregard a metaphorical remark made during a debate and interpret it literally. Particularly if the metaphor is unusual or a person is unfamiliar with it, it could be misunderstood.

### 1.1.1. Conceptual metaphor classification

Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 14, 25) classified metaphors into three groups: *structural*, *orientational*, and *ontological*. When one concept is metaphorically constructed in terms of another, this is known as a structural metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 14). For instance, RATIONAL ARGUMENT IS WAR (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 62):

He *attacked every weak point* in my argument. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 5)

His criticisms were right on *target*. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 5)

To exemplify, by using the term *war* as a metaphor, we can better understand what a rational argument is. The typical behavior in war consists of challenging one another to intimidate the other, creating and defending territory, attacking, defending, counterattacking, fleeing, and giving up. Similarly, in a no-holds-barred argument, we use all the verbal tools at our disposal to attack, defend, counterattack, etc. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 63).

Furthermore, there is another type of metaphorical concept, one that “organizes an entire system of concepts in relation to one another” rather than structuring “one concept in terms of another” (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 15). Since most of these metaphors relate to spatial orientation, they are referred to as orientational metaphors: up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow, and central-peripheral (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 15). An example of an orientational metaphor would be HAPPY IS UP (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 15):

Thinking about her always gives me a *lift*. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 15)

He is really *low* these days. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 15)

There are many non-metaphorical notions; for instance, describing that the balloon went up has nothing to do with metaphors (Geeraerts, 2006: 188). When addressing abstractions or emotions, metaphorical knowledge replaces tangible physical experiences as the norm.



Ontological metaphors, on the other hand, treat things like events, activities, feelings, ideas, etc., as substances and entities (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 26). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) divide ontological metaphors into four categories: entity, substance, container, and personification. Ontological metaphors perform a variety of functions, and the several types of metaphors available reflect the distinct functions they carry out (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 26). A concrete instance of an ontological metaphor would be THE MIND IS A MACHINE (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 28).

I am a little *rusty* today. (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 28)

My mind just is not *operating* today. (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 28)

### **1.1.2. Metaphorical coherence**

Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 52) also distinguish between a conceptual metaphor and its metaphorical linguistic expressions. Metaphorical linguistic expressions or linguistic metaphors are reflections of the systematic metaphors that underlie our behaviors and thinking (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 52). This sheds light on the interconnectedness between language, cognition, and behavior, revealing how systematic metaphors shape our thinking and communication patterns.

THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS is a conceptual metaphor, whereas metaphorical verbal statements that render the metaphor concrete would be:

His theory has thousands of little rooms and long, winding corridors. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 54)

Complex theories usually have problems with the plumbing. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 54)

What Lakoff and Johnson (1980) find important to note is the role of intention in a discussion of coherence. When a metaphor serves a purpose, such as aiding in comprehending a certain subject, it is effective. When two metaphors effectively serve two different purposes, overlaps in the purposes will also occur in the metaphors. These overlaps can be distinguished by shared metaphorical entailments and cross-metaphorical correspondences (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 94). The example of metaphorical entailment is the following:

AN ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 91)

*When we get to the next point*, we shall see that philosophy is dead. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 91)

We have *arrived at* a disturbing conclusion. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 91)

A JOURNEY DEFINES A PATH (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 91)

He *strayed* from the path. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 91)

They are *following* us. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 91)

Putting together AN ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY and A JOURNEY DEFINES A PATH, we get:

AN ARGUMENT DEFINES A PATH (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 91)

He *strayed* from the line of argument. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 91)

Do you *follow* my argument? (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 91)

Additionally, paths are thought of as surfaces (imagine a carpet rolling out behind you as you move along):

THE PATH OF A JOURNEY IS A SURFACE (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 91)

We *covered* a lot of ground. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 91)

He strayed *off* the trail. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92)

Considering that AN ARGUMENT DEFINES A PATH and THE PATH OF A JOURNEY IS A SURFACE, we get:

THE PATH OF AN ARGUMENT IS A SURFACE (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92)

We have already *covered* those points. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92)

We have *covered* a lot of ground in our argument. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92)

We have an array of instances here that relate to the phrase AN ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92). They are systematic because of a pair of metaphorical entailments that are based on two facts about journeys:

A JOURNEY DEFINES A PATH (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92)

THE PATH OF A JOURNEY IS A SURFACE (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92)

The metaphorical entailments are the following:

AN ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92)

A JOURNEY DEFINES A PATH (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92)

Therefore,

AN ARGUMENT DEFINES A PATH (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92)

AN ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92)

THE PATH OF A JOURNEY IS A SURFACE (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92)

Therefore,

THE PATH OF AN ARGUMENT IS A SURFACE (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92)

Here, metaphorical entailments describe the internal organization of the metaphor AN ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY, i.e., they make all the examples that fall under that metaphor coherent (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 92). Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 95) further state that the overlap between these two metaphors' abstract topological concept of a surface is not clear enough for it to create an image. Additionally, they explain that as each metaphor prioritizes one aspect of the argument and enables us to understand one aspect in terms of a more clearly defined concept, understanding the difference between coherence and consistency is necessary. In basic terms, there isn't a single metaphor that will do the trick because none of them will allow us to grasp the argument's content and direction at the same time.

### **1.1.3. Conceptual metaphors and culture**

Another point made by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) is that CMT acknowledges the existence of *universal conceptual metaphors*, which are metaphors used across a wide range of languages. Kövecses (2005: 283) outlines the way culture is believed to include, among various things, shared knowledge and thinking of the world. One can conclude that culture is the reason why specific conceptual metaphors are present in different languages. Geeraerts (2006: 233) also confirms this by saying that “metaphorical mappings vary in universality; some seem to be universal, others are widespread, and some seem to be culture specific.” Metaphors are products of human nature; they can either be universal or specific depending on one culture or another (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 119). Primary metaphors, which are directly rooted in our day-to-day experience and connect our sensory-motor experience to the domain of our subjective judgments, give rise to complex metaphors (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 256). These metaphors tend to be universal across different cultures. For example, our first experiences

with affection are physical, like the warmth of being held close; we have the primary conceptual metaphor AFFECTION IS WARMTH (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 256). Universal metaphors often tap into basic human experiences that everyone faces or bodily sensations, transcending cultural boundaries. Certain metaphors cannot be universal because they have their roots in a person's experience and are unique to a culture (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 68). Differences in experience and differences in cognitive preferences or styles are two kinds of causes of cultural variance in metaphor, according to Kövecses (2005: 231). Differential experience refers to the abundance of metaphors that differ because people have different life experiences (Kövecses, 2005: 231). Every experience occurs against a broad background of cultural presuppositions, according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 57), and culturally particular metaphors arise because they highlight an experience that is common among people of the culture in question (Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 69). The connection with the physical world gives culture-specific metaphors their form (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 56–57). Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 68) believe they are grounded in our physical and cultural experiences. Both within-culture and cross-culture variation exists (Kövecses 2010: 215). Metaphoric variation among cultures is caused by the overall cultural structure and the natural and physical surroundings. According to social conditions and over time, there are differences in within-cultural variation (Kövecses 2010: 217). Different cultural perspectives blend with fundamental metaphors, creating unique metaphorical systems that vary across societies. (Gibbs et al., 2008: 26). This shows us how culture plays a significant role in shaping the way we use and understand metaphors, highlighting the diverse ways in which people perceive and make sense of the world around them.

Kövecses (2017: 17) also noted the close relationship between metaphorical aspects of our cognitive processes and the wide range of external situations that affect the creation of metaphors. As a result, it is now possible to account for metaphors that may be completely

frequent but do not fit any pre-established conceptual metaphors, leading to a far more detailed description of metaphor (Kövecses, 2017: 17). Also, context-induced metaphors can generate new metaphors that are known as "context-induced" ones (Kövecses, 2017: 18). To exemplify, Kövecses used an example from USA TODAY (2007, September 21, Section 6B):

”The 2005 hurricane capsized Domino’s life, though he’s loath to confess any inconvenience or misery outside of missing his social circle...” (Kövecses, 2011: 64).

The metaphorical phrase "The 2005 hurricane capsized Domino's life" is based on the metaphors LIFE IS A JOURNEY and LIFE IS A SEA JOURNEY, interchangeably (Kövecses, 2011: 64). The speaker may be prompted by the physical situation to expand an already-established conventional conceptual metaphor and select a metaphorical phrase that best suits the context (Kövecses, 2011: 64). This "triggering effect" might be viewed as a type of priming derived from the immediate local context, making this a “context-induced” metaphor (Kövecses, 2011: 64). Finally, there is a range of metaphors, that go from fundamental universal metaphors to context-induced non-universal metaphors, which means that metaphors can originate from the body, cultural specificities, and the more general context (Kövecses, 2017: 17).

## **2. Politics and language**

Chilton (2004: 3) defines politics as a form of interaction in which the practices and institutions are utilized by society to settle conflicts over matters like power, influence, liberty, and similar matters. The human ability to communicate through language serves the purpose of "indicating" — that is, denoting — matters understood by the group to be advantageous or not according to shared beliefs, as well as what is right and bad (Chilton, 2004: 5). The issue in politics is ambiguity, or as Chilton (2004: 6) states: “At the level of use of language, at the level, say, of wording and phrasing, political actors themselves are equivocal.” For this very

reason, publicists of all kinds are employed by political parties and government organizations (Chilton, 2004: 8). Their duties involve overseeing the flow of information and access as well as creating and keeping track of expressions and phrases so that they can respond to current or anticipated problems (Chilton, 2004: 8). Chomsky discusses a variety of language and political issues in his book "Language and Politics" from 2004. Chomsky (2004) examines how political speeches use framing devices, deceptive rhetoric, and reinforce prevailing ideas. He emphasizes the crucial part that language plays in power dynamics and how political speeches affect public opinion (Chomsky, 2004). Likewise, Hague et al. (2004: 3-4) emphasize how politics relies on communication. They assert that in politics, disputes are resolved through conversation and persuasion (Hague et al., 2004: 3). Hague et al. (2004: 3) also quote Miller (1991: 390), who stresses that negotiation and persuasion are prevalent in the political system. Regardless of its definition, politics possesses a linguistic, discursive, and communicative component that participants and theorists typically only acknowledge in certain instances, if at all (Chilton: 2004: 4). Linguistic strategies, persuasive rhetoric, and discourse manipulation shape public opinion and maintain power structures, highlighting the intricate relationship between language and politics and its implications for society at large.

## **2.1. Language as a political tool**

Human language is a system of communication that relies on reciprocal altruism and the ability to check for consistency and cheating (Chilton, 2004: 32). Chilton (2004: 45) states how Habermas (1971) discusses the "strategic" use of language when interests distort communication. Whether a certain use of a language may be considered strategic depends on social and political judgment, and it is easy to be overly eager while looking for such information (Chilton, 2004: 45). Chilton (2004: 45-46) explains the three strategic functions: (1) coercion, (2) legitimization and delegitimization, and (3) representation and misrepresentation. Coercion in political discourse refers to the use of language and discourse

strategies to manipulate or force compliance, often through the exertion of power, authority, or the threat of negative consequences (Chilton, 2004: 45). Legitimization and delegitimization involve using language and discourse strategies to establish or reinforce the validity, authority, or acceptance of a particular political entity, ideology, policy, or action (Chilton, 2004: 45). Representation and misrepresentation refer to the process of constructing, framing, or presenting political entities, issues, ideologies, or events through language. Misrepresentation refers to the intentional or unintentional distortion, manipulation, or misleading portrayal of political entities, events, or information (Chilton, 2004: 45). Understanding these strategic functions in political discourse is crucial as it unveils the power dynamics, persuasive techniques, and potential manipulation inherent in language, shaping our perception of political entities, policies, and events.

Hague et al. (2004: 105) state how politicians' major line of work is communication; it is their responsibility to let other players in the political game know about their objectives, programs, and plans. Indeed, in public affairs, words frequently carry more weight than deeds (Hague et al., 2004: 105). Hague et al. (2004: 105) further say the traditional 'transmission model' is a useful research guide that explains communication as consisting of who says what to whom, through which media, and with what effects. The model distinguishes five aspects of any communication: a sender (who), a message (what), a channel (how), a receiver (to whom), and a presumed impact (with what effects) (Hague et al., 2004: 105). For example, a local party might distribute a leaflet advocating voting at a forthcoming election with the result that turnout increases (Hague et al., 2004: 105).





Figure 1 The transmission model of political communication (Hague et al. 2004: 105)

The transmission model receives criticism for being unidirectional and neglecting to consider numerous meanings, although it does help research by dissecting the communication process into its constituent parts (Hague et al., 2004: 105-106).

## **2.2. Metaphor within politics**

Metaphor has long been acknowledged as significant in political speech, but the cognitive understanding of metaphor is new (Chilton, 2004: 51). Metaphors allow politicians to express their political vision, promote specific policies, and frame political issues in a particular light. Metaphorical mappings can enter complex bundles of meaning that involve other cognitive factors such as structured cultural knowledge (Chilton, 2004: 52). They enable inferences that would otherwise be conceptually inaccessible or ambiguous. Metaphors also have persuasive power. Politicians can sway public opinion, inspire action, or strengthen their arguments by evoking emotions and tapping into deeply rooted cultural associations. Metaphors are therefore used for reasoning about target domains that are ill-understood, vague, or controversial, as the source domains are intuitively understood and have holistic structure (Chilton, 2004: 52). For instance, Chilton (2004: 52) uses the example of Adolf Hitler. Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* uses the source domain of microbes and disease to generate an array of inferences (Chilton, 2004: 52). Microbes are parasites and can cause disease, while diseases can be removed (Chilton, 2004: 52). Our minds almost instinctively draw a wide range of conclusions because of the mapping of the "parasite" frame onto the "Jew" frame (Chilton, 2004: 52). Politicians can use metaphors to convey abstract ideas by using relatable, concrete pictures. They assist in helping the listener relate to and vividly remember abstract concepts. By emphasizing some parts of an issue while downplaying others, metaphors play a significant role in structuring political discourse.

The ontological metaphor of personification, according to Kövesces (2002: 35), "uses for the source domain one of the best, ourselves." Borčić et al. (2016: 80) claim that this metaphor is frequently used in political discussions to impart human traits to political parties, organizations, or specific events, which affects the formation of favorable or unfavorable associations in the subconscious of the individuals who receive it.

### **3. The study of metaphors in American presidents' inaugural addresses**

#### **3.1. Inaugural addresses and metaphors**

According to Xue et al. (2013), the inaugural address is crucial for the incoming president and his government. One could argue that the inaugural address, which will have a lasting impact, is the focal point of every presidential inauguration (Xue et al., 2013: 679). They give newly elected or re-elected leaders a chance to lay out their vision, priorities, and objectives for their tenure in office. Inaugural speeches frequently set the tone for an administration, motivate citizens, and give leaders a platform to address pressing issues at home, bring people together, and forge a sense of unity around a common goal. They should be easy to understand and remember, using common and simple words and making them transient and momentary (Xu, 2010: 6). Clarity encourages transparency, increases trust, and makes it possible for the public and the leader to participate in constructive discourse. It aids in preventing misunderstandings, conflict, and other potential pitfalls of communication. They should also be carefully planned and written by experts under the guidance of rules and principles, so they should have some features of written discourses (Xu, 2010: 6).

The new presidents often employ language abilities to attain their goals (Xue et al., 2013: 679). Many presidents use metaphor significantly in their inaugural addresses because it represents a few of those language talents that can suit their aims appropriately and efficiently (Xue et al. 2013: 679). They use metaphors to improve communication, elicit feelings, create

images, construct stories, and build trust with the audience. What Sheppard (2009: 79) finds important is how the use of metaphors also carries certain risks. They categorize concepts and highlight specific aspects, potentially distorting their definition and fit (Sheppard, 2009: 79).

This thesis examines the conceptual metaphors POLITICS IS WAR and UNITY IS A TOOL in the inaugural addresses of Donald Trump, Joe Biden, and Barack Obama. The decision to specifically examine these conceptual metaphors is based on their applicability and importance in the setting of politics and government. These metaphors are frequently employed in political discourse and have been found to have a significant impact on the development of political narratives, approaches to policy, and public opinion (Xue, 2010: 16). These metaphors shed light on the leaders' rhetorical tactics, governing ideologies, and national unity strategies. This study aims to identify how these presidents communicated their political ideals, mobilized their supporters, and positioned themselves by analyzing the language used in these speeches. Anyone interested in politics or language may find the results of this analysis useful, focusing on the time and thought that goes into composing political speeches.

## **3.2. POLITICS IS WAR**

Lindel (2009) states how the idea that POLITICS IS WAR is omnipresent. Two key factors account for its frequent occurrence in political discourse. On the one hand, our cultural understanding and experience of physical confrontation make it easier to comprehend impersonal political activities, as Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 157) point out. On the other hand, battle metaphors seek to inspire listeners to take the necessary actions to achieve the desired results by conjuring up images of conflict and effort (Lakoff and Johnson, 1989: 158).

### **3.2.1 Joe Biden**

Joe Biden's use of this metaphor in his Inaugural Address demonstrates a nuanced understanding of politics as a group effort to overcome obstacles and bring the country together.

His inaugural address, delivered on January 20, 2021, contained approximately 2,477 words. The lexical items from the semantic field of war appear 53 times in Biden's Inaugural Address, as indicated in Table 1:

Table 1. Lexical items from the semantic field of war, Biden

Lexical item	N° appearances
challenge	6
power	5
peace	4
defend	4
force	3
prevail	3
war	3
to face	2
duty	2
service	2
defeat	2
struggle	2
fight	2
crisis	1
battle	1
protect	1
victory	1
allies	1
adversaries	1
endure	1
foe	1
triumph	1
confront	1
strife	1
gain	1
chaos	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>

Biden uses several conceptual mappings that result from the cross-mapping of WAR and POLITICS. Politics is thought of as a battle; thus, its ultimate objective is to protect against and prevail. Biden uses the words "duty," "protection," "defending," and "defeating" in (1):

(1) *And each of us has a duty and responsibility, as citizens, as Americans, and especially as leaders – leaders who have pledged to honor our Constitution and protect our nation — to defend the truth and to defeat the lies.*

Rather than emphasizing power as a struggle or domination, Biden's use of this metaphor revolves around collective empowerment and unity. One example of the power metaphor in Biden's speech is when he states:

(2) *Today, we celebrate the triumph not of a candidate but of a cause, the cause of democracy.*

Here, Biden emphasizes the idea that power lies in the collective will and engagement of the people and that democracy is a strong force that transcends individual leaders. By highlighting the power of unity and cooperation, Biden expands on the metaphor of power.

(3) *To overcome these challenges, to restore the soul and secure the future of America, requires so much more than words. It requires the most elusive of all things in a democracy: unity.*

In this statement, Biden suggests that unity is a powerful force that can bring about positive change and overcome obstacles. In addition, the imagery of war also gives prominence to the conceptual map POLITICIANS ARE SOLDIERS to further foster feelings of loyalty and devotion towards a "heroic" figure with whom people can connect and to assist Biden projecting himself as a strong protector, as demonstrated in (4) and (5):

(4) *We will repair our alliances and engage with the world once again.*

(5) *I will fight as hard for those who did not support me as for those who did.*

Although he uses language about war Biden does not aim to issue a call to war or incite emotions of anger, disdain, or violence. He employs strong language to establish empathy with the audience and demonstrate his understanding of their feelings, as shown in (6):

(6) *Uniting to fight the common foes we face:*

*Anger, resentment, hatred.*

*Extremism, lawlessness, violence.*

*Disease, joblessness, hopelessness.*

Given that he regularly uses the words "peace," "protect," and "defend" in his use of war analogies, it is clear from Biden's political campaign that he has a great dislike of conflict and war. The speech takes on a reconciling and friendly tone because of these language patterns, which form an appeal for peace and community, conversation, and compassion.

### **3.2.2. Donald Trump**

The concept that POLITICS IS WAR is used frequently in Donald Trump's Inauguration Address which shapes his vocabulary and frames his style of government. By using this metaphor, Trump presents politics as a power struggle with winners and losers, strategies, and tactics. His inaugural address, delivered on January 20, 2017, contained approximately 1,433 words. As shown in Table 2, the lexical terms from the semantic area of war are mentioned 28 times in Trump's Inaugural Address.

Table 2. Lexical items from the semantic field of war, Trump

Lexical items	N° appearances
protect	7
power	2
victory	2
allegiance	2
defend	2
fight	2
win	2
face	1
challenge	1
confront	1

triumph	1
ruler	1
carnage	1
ravage	1
alliance	1
soldier	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>

The constant use of militaristic and belligerent images throughout the speech is one noticeable metaphor.

(7) *This American carnage stops right here and stops right now.*

(8) *We must protect our borders from the ravages of other countries making our products, stealing our companies and destroying our jobs.*

(9) *We will reinforce old alliances and form new ones, and you unite the civilized world against radical Islamic terrorism, which we will eradicate completely from the face of the Earth.*

Words like "American carnage," "ravages of other countries," and "we will reinforce old alliances" conjure up images of battle and place the country in a constant state of conflict with foreign enemies. Trump appeals to his audience's anxieties and desire for security by depicting politics as a conflict, establishing himself as a powerful leader capable of protecting the interests of the country.

(10) *I will fight for you with every breath in my body, and I will never, ever let you down. America will start winning again, winning like never before.*

Trump's use of power-related metaphors further supports the idea that politics is like war. Words like "seize power," "take back control," and "winning like never before" highlight the desire for domination and the requirement to establish authority. His supporters are inspired by the metaphorical language, which frames his administration as a calculated battle to win and restore what is thought to have been lost authority. However, the overuse of this metaphor also

leads to a climate of hostility and discord, making it difficult to promote harmony and agreement.

### 3.2.3. Barack Obama

The conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS WAR is included throughout Barack Obama's inaugural speech representing the view that political rivalry and government are comparable to battle. A sense of political struggle analogous to the difficulties encountered during times of war was portrayed using language that stressed conflict, unity, and the necessity of collective action. Barack Obama was in office for two terms, meaning two inaugural addresses. The second, which was given on January 21 and contained 2,116 words, is the one being examined here. The table below shows the 26 lexical components that make up the conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS WAR:

Table 3: Lexical items from the semantic field of war, Obama

Lexical item	N° appearances
peace	4
war	3
power	3
secure/safe	2
seize	2
allegiance	1
fight	1
protect	1
sword	1
challenge	1
resilience	1
enemy	1
defend	1
alliance	1
victory	1
battle	1
threat	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>



The assumption that political rivalry and government resemble the dynamics of conflict is reflected in this metaphorical framework, as shown in (11):

(11) *But we are also heirs to those who won the peace and not just the war; who turned sworn enemies into the surest of friends -- and we must carry those lessons into this time as well.*

Obama emphasizes the idea that political achievement should not be confined to defeating adversaries in combat but should also entail the ability to construct and preserve peace by alluding to being "heirs to those who won the peace and not just the war." The figurative inference is that securing and maintaining peace needs the same talents and efforts as winning a war, just as doing so necessitates strategic planning and execution. Furthermore, Obama uses the term "seize", as shown in (14), to emphasize his political viewpoints:

(12) *My fellow Americans, we are made for this moment, and we will seize it -- so long as we seize it together.*

The expression "so long as we seize it together" emphasizes the value of teamwork and cooperation in overcoming obstacles. It implies that cooperation, teamwork, and a feeling of purpose are necessary for success in both politics and war. The metaphor here is that the American people must come together and work together to achieve their goals, just as an army wins battles by cooperating. Even though he doesn't use words explicitly associated with conflict or power, it nonetheless adheres to the metaphorical framework of POLITICS IS WAR by highlighting the nation's need for readiness, action, and a team effort to navigate and meet its problems. There are a few more instances of implied war metaphors, like in the examples that follow:

(13) *This generation of Americans has been tested by crises that steeled our resolve and proved our resilience.*

According to this line from Obama's inauguration address, the current generation of Americans has suffered significant hardships that have strengthened their resolve and shown their unflinching resiliency in the political sphere. It implies that managing the complexities of politics requires a similar steadfastness and the capacity to persevere in the face of hardship, just as engaging in warfare takes fortitude and the ability to withstand hurdles.

(14) *We will defend our people and uphold our values through strength of arms and rule of law.*

As with troops defending their friends in battle, the term "defend our people" conjures up images of protecting citizens. To defend national ideals and security, this statement emphasizes the employment of force, the protection of citizens, and the application of legal systems. This phrase serves as an example of the metaphorical connection between politics and war.

Obama uses war-related rhetoric and images to emphasize the size of the responsibilities at hand. By using this metaphor, he highlights the careful planning, resolve, and teamwork needed to manage the complexities of politics and overcome challenges. Overall, Obama's inaugural speech serves as an example of how the metaphor POLITICS IS WAR can be utilized to emphasize the seriousness of political endeavors and motivate everyone to persevere in the face of difficulties.

### **3.2.4. Biden's, Trump's, and Obama's inaugural address comparison in terms of the conceptual metaphor POLITICS IS WAR**

In their inaugural addresses, Barack Obama, Donald Trump, and Joe Biden all used the idea POLITICS IS WAR in different ways. To emphasize the need for harmony and healing, Biden utilized the metaphor POLITICS IS WAR in his inauguration addresses. Although he acknowledged the nation's problems, he urged cooperation and teamwork to solve them. Biden's use of the analogy emphasized the notion that, like the unity needed during times of war, political differences can be overcome, and progress can be made through a joint effort.

Trump, on the other hand, used the analogy in a more aggressive way. He portrayed himself as a fighter, framing his political rivals as enemies with confrontational language and imagery. Trump emphasized the idea of winning and losing through the usage of the metaphor. This strategy emphasized the notion of rivalry and conflict in politics. Obama used the metaphor in his inaugural address to highlight the difficulties the country is currently facing and the importance of working together to find solutions. He compared political conflicts to war, emphasizing the transformative force of struggle and sacrifice. Obama's use of the metaphor emphasized that careful preparation, tenacity, and the capacity to resolve problems are necessary for political success.

Although all three presidents used the metaphor POLITICS IS WAR, their differing interpretations of it reflect their different leadership philosophies, political environments, and rhetorical strategies. Trump underlined rivalry and conflict, whereas Biden put an emphasis on reconciliation and cooperation. Obama also stressed togetherness and the transformational force of struggle. These variants show how the same metaphor can be used to communicate various political ideas and priorities.

### **3.3. UNITY IS A TOOL**

Metaphors play a crucial role in shaping our understanding of complex concepts, and exploring how UNITY IS A TOOL can offer valuable insights into the leaders' rhetorical strategies and visions for the nation. By investigating the use of this metaphor, it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of how these presidents employed language to convey their messages of unity and its role in achieving their goals. Additionally, comparing and contrasting the metaphorical approaches of these three leaders will shed light on the evolving discourse surrounding unity in American politics and its significance in inaugural addresses. Through this analysis, the goal

is to uncover the nuances of unity as a metaphorical tool employed by these presidents and its implications for national unity and progress.

### 3.3.1. Joe Biden

In his inaugural address, President Joe Biden employed the metaphor UNITY IS A TOOL to emphasize the instrumental role of unity in overcoming the challenges facing the nation. Through this metaphor, Biden conveyed his belief that unity is not only desirable but also a practical tool for achieving positive change. The lexical items from the semantic field of unity appear 193 times in Biden’s Inaugural Address, as indicated in Table 4:

Table 4: Lexical items from the semantic field of unity, Biden

Lexical item	N° appearances
we	90
our	42
us	25
nation	14
unity	8
to one another	7
together	6
disunion	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>

In President Joe Biden's inaugural address, he strategically and prominently employs the word "we" approximately 90 times to emphasize unity and its paramount importance. By utilizing "we" with such frequency, he consistently includes the collective audience in his message, reinforcing a sense of togetherness and shared responsibility.

(15) *We'll press forward with speed and urgency, for we have much to do in this winter of peril and significant possibilities. Much to repair, much to restore, much to heal, much to build, and much to gain.*

(16) *We'll lead not merely by the example of our power but by the power of our example. We'll be a strong and trusted partner for peace, progress, and security.*

This pervasive use of inclusive language highlights that unity is not solely the responsibility of the President but rather a collective endeavor that necessitates the participation and collaboration of all citizens. By repeating "we," Biden reinforces the idea of a united front, encouraging individuals to come together and work towards a shared vision of progress and healing for the nation. This intentional linguistic choice, with the repetition of "we" throughout his speech, underscores the central role of unity as a powerful tool in achieving national goals.

In his speech, he employs the phrase "to one another" to further signal unity and the importance of collective action. This phrase emphasizes the interconnectedness and mutual responsibility among individuals in society. Here are a few examples:

(17) *We'll get through this together, to one another, and with one another.*

(18) *We owe loyalty to one another, to our country, and to our future.*

By using "to one another," President Biden emphasizes the need for citizens to support and care for each other, highlighting the shared responsibility and interdependence that underpins unity. This phrase underscores the idea that unity is not just a vague concept but requires active engagement and support among individuals in the broader community. It reinforces the notion that by coming together, supporting one another, and recognizing our common bonds, we can address challenges and achieve progress as a cohesive society. By presenting unity as a tool, Biden conveyed the idea that when individuals come together, support one another, and work towards a common goal, they can overcome obstacles and advance the well-being of the entire nation. Through the strategic use of these language devices, Biden encouraged citizens to unite,

collaborate, and harness the power of unity as an instrumental force for shaping a better future for America.

### 3.3.2. Donald Trump

While former President Donald Trump touched on the concept of unity in his inaugural speech, his approach was more focused on promoting unity through a specific lens. He called for unity in terms of shared patriotism and national pride, rallying citizens around a common goal of revitalizing the country. The lexical items from the semantic field of unity appear 108 times in Trump’s Inaugural Address, as indicated in Table 5:

Table 5: Lexical items from the semantic field of unity, Trump

Lexical item	N° appearances
our	49
we	41
nation	10
together	4
unity	3
us	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>

In his inaugural speech, he employed the word "together" to convey a sense of unity and collective action. Here is an example of his use of the word:

(18) *Together, we will make America strong again. We will make America wealthy again. We will make America proud again. We will make America safe again.*

Trump used the word "together" to emphasize the idea that collective efforts and collaboration are necessary to achieve shared objectives and overcome challenges. The word conveys a message of unity and the need for a unified effort among the American people to accomplish the goals outlined in his speech. He used several instances where he referred to unity within the context of his administration's priorities. Here are a few examples:

(20) *We will unite the civilized world against radical Islamic terrorism, which we will eradicate completely from the face of the Earth.*

(21) *We will bring back our jobs. We will bring back our borders. We will bring back our wealth. And we will bring back our dreams.*

In these examples, Trump invoked unity by emphasizing collective action and rallying the American people around specific goals such as combating terrorism, revitalizing the economy, and asserting national interests. While the rhetoric aimed to create a sense of unity and purpose, it was often aligned with Trump's administration's agenda and policy priorities. The emphasis on unity was centered around specific issues rather than a broader call for inclusiveness or bridging societal divisions.

Overall, while unity was mentioned in Trump's inaugural address, his interpretation of unity primarily revolved around a specific vision for the nation rather than a broader emphasis on inclusiveness and bridging divides.

### **3.3.3. Barack Obama**

Former President Barack Obama did not explicitly use UNITY IS A TOOL in his inaugural speeches as Biden and Trump did. By emphasizing themes of unity, group effort, and uniting as a nation to solve issues in his inaugural addresses, these notions were communicated through his words and rhetoric without explicitly presenting unity as a "tool." However, he emphasized unity as a crucial aspect of national progress and addressed its importance in his speeches. Instead of explicitly using the metaphor, Obama employed various other metaphors and rhetorical devices to convey his message of unity. His language and rhetoric conveyed the idea that unity is an essential element for progress and the achievement of shared national objectives. The lexical items from the semantic field of unity appear 186 times in Obama's Inaugural Address, as indicated in Table 6:

Table 6: Lexical items from the semantic field of unity, Obama

Lexical item	N° appearances
our	76
we	69
us	21
nation	7
together	7
ourselves	2
unity	1
collective action	1
common effort	1
common purpose	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>186</b>

Through his speech, Obama conveyed the belief that unity, grounded in shared values and a collective spirit of service, is essential for overcoming challenges and shaping a better future for the United States.

(22) *On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord.*

In this statement, he highlights the choice to prioritize hope and unity. By contrasting hope with fear and unity with conflict and discord, he emphasizes the power of unity to overcome divisions and challenges. This statement sets the tone for his presidency, emphasizing the need for collective effort and a shared purpose to address the nation's problems.

(23) *Our challenges may be new, the instruments with which we meet them may be new, but those values upon which our success depends — honesty and hard work, courage and fair play, tolerance and curiosity, loyalty and patriotism — these things are old... What is demanded, then, is a return to these truths.*

Here, he emphasizes the enduring values that have driven progress throughout American history. By emphasizing values such as honesty, hard work, courage, and tolerance, he



underscores the importance of unity in upholding these values. The phrase "a return to these truths" suggests that unity is not only necessary for progress but also a means to reconnect with the foundational principles that have shaped the nation.

*(23) For the world has changed, and we must change with it... it is precisely this spirit [of service] that must inhabit us all.*

Obama acknowledges the changing times and the need for adaptation. He emphasizes that unity is essential in facing the challenges brought by these changes. By referencing the spirit of service and the dedication of those who serve in the military, he calls upon all Americans to embrace a similar spirit of unity and shared responsibility. This passage suggests that unity is not only a means to tackle challenges but also a fundamental part of national character and progress.

Overall, these instances from Obama's inaugural speech highlight his belief in the power of unity to overcome divisions, embrace shared values, and address the evolving challenges of the nation. They emphasize the need for collective effort, shared purpose, and a spirit of service to achieve progress and build a better future for all Americans.

#### **3.3.4. Biden's, Trump's, and Obama's inaugural address comparison in terms of the conceptual metaphor UNITY IS A TOOL**

While the comparison between Biden, Trump, and Obama regarding the metaphor UNITY IS A TOOL in their inaugural speeches highlights some differences in their approaches, it is important to note that each president had their own unique rhetorical styles and messaging strategies.

Biden's emphasis on unity as a tool was evident throughout his speech, as he consistently used inclusive language and called for collective action to address the nation's

challenges. He positioned unity as a practical instrument to bring about positive change and healing.

Trump, on the other hand, focused on unity within the context of his specific policy priorities, framing it to achieve specific goals such as national security and economic revitalization. His messaging often centered around rallying the American people around a particular vision for the country.

Obama, known for his powerful oratory skills, emphasized unity as a driving force for progress and national transformation. While he did not explicitly use the metaphor UNITY IS A TOOL, his speech consistently underscored the importance of collective effort, shared values, and a spirit of service to overcome challenges and shape a better future.

These differences in approach reflect the individual leadership styles and priorities of each president. While unity was a common theme in their inaugural speeches, the specific framing and emphasis varied, highlighting the unique perspectives and visions of each leader. Additionally, Biden, Trump, and Obama are recent presidents who have delivered highly influential inaugural addresses. Their speeches have shaped public discourse and set the tone for their respective presidencies. Analyzing their use of the metaphor UNITY IS A TOOL provides a lens to understand their unique perspectives on unity and the rhetorical strategies they employed to convey their messages to the American people.

#### **4. Conclusion**

In conclusion, a thorough examination of the conceptual metaphors POLITICS IS WAR and UNITY IS A TOOL used by American presidents in their inaugural speeches has illuminated the significant role that language and metaphor play in influencing public opinion and political discourse. This thesis, which has its roots in Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), has

examined the complex connections between metaphors, cognition, and culture, showing how these language devices are effective means of spreading political views and gaining support.

It became clear during the study that the cultural context has a big impact on how these metaphors are received. The employment of metaphors in political discourse both reflects and strengthens these cultural roots because political discourse is intricately entwined with cultural symbols, historical narratives, and societal norms. Understanding the presence and deliberate application of conceptual metaphors in political communication equips citizens to become critical thinkers to interact more intelligently with political speech. Understanding the metaphorical nature of language helps us to understand how political issues are framed and how public opinion is shaped. Our ability to engage in more educated and nuanced political debates is made possible by this awareness, which also promotes a better grasp of the underlying ideologies promoted by political figures.

In my opinion, this research has been an unexpected eye-opener into the fascinating world of conceptual metaphors and their function in political discourse. The power of language to sway our opinions, beliefs, and values, as well as the deft use of metaphors by political leaders to captivate their audiences and win support for their ideas, fascinate me. Additionally, research into the analysis of inauguration addresses has demonstrated the profound influence that culture has on the application and understanding of metaphors. Understanding the cultural intricacies of political communication is crucial for promoting empathy, cross-cultural understanding, and productive discourse in today's global society.

I now have a deeper understanding of the complexity of language and how it affects political realities after finishing this thesis. It is evident that metaphors can stir up feelings, promote harmony, and have an impact on group behavior. Going forward, developing a more

metaphor-aware society can result in a deeper comprehension of political messages and help to create a political discourse that is more inclusive, knowledgeable, and compassionate.

## 5. Sažetak

Naša spoznaja, koja se temelji na metaforama, utječe na to kako se svakodnevno ponašamo. Cilj ovog rada je primijeniti teoriju konceptualnih metafora na inauguracijske govore predsjednika Joea Bidena, Donalda Trumpa i Baracka Obame kako bi se analizirale konceptualne metafore POLITIKA JE RAT i JEDINSTVO JE ALAT, prateći njihovu učestalost. Rad započinje definiranjem konceptualne metafore i teorije konceptualne metafore, zatim analizira povezanost jezika i politike, te završava analizom dviju spomenutih metafora u svakom od inauguracijskih govora. Metafore skreću pozornost na složene odnose između spoznaje, kulture i društva. Analizirajući upotrebu metafora POLITIKA JE RAT i JEDINSTVO JE ALAT, naglašava se kako kulturni kontekst znatno utječe na to kako se te metafore poimaju, s obzirom da je politički diskurs isprepleten kulturnim simbolima i društvenim normama. Jedinstveni retorički stilovi i način na koji svaki od predsjednika prenosi određene poruke, odražavaju njihove stavove o vodstvu, političkom okruženju i prioritetima. Ovaj rad pružio je uvid u složenu ulogu jezika u političkom diskursu, ističući važnost razumijevanja kulturnih zamršenosti za promicanje empatije, međukulturalnog razumijevanja i produktivnog diskursa u današnjem globalnom društvu.

Ključne riječi: konceptualna metafora, teorija konceptualne metafore, politika, POLITIKA JE RAT, JEDINSTVO JE ALAT

## **6. Summary**

Our cognitive framework, which is metaphor-based, has an impact on our everyday behaviour. This thesis aims to apply Conceptual Metaphor Theory to the presidential inaugural addresses of Joe Biden, Donald Trump, and Barack Obama to examine the conceptual metaphors POLITICS IS WAR and UNITY IS A TOOL by noting their recurrence. The thesis begins by defining conceptual metaphor and Conceptual Metaphor Theory, goes in more depth on the connections between language and politics, and concludes by analysing the two metaphors mentioned in each of the inaugural addresses. Metaphors draw attention to the complex relationships among cognition, culture, and society. Analyzing the use of the metaphors POLITICS IS WAR and UNITY IS A TOOL, emphasizes how cultural context significantly impacts how these metaphors are received, as political discourse is deeply entwined with cultural symbols and societal norms. Each president's unique rhetorical styles and messaging strategies reflects their stances of leadership, political environments, and priorities. This research has provided insight into the complex role of language in political discourse, noting the importance of understanding cultural intricacies for promoting empathy, cross-cultural understanding, and productive discourse in today's global society.

Key words: conceptual metaphor, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, politics, POLITICS IS WAR, UNITY IS A TOOL

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## 9. Appendices

### **APPENDIX A: President Joe Biden's full inaugural address remarks**

Chief Justice Roberts, Vice President Harris. Speaker Pelosi, Leaders Schumer, McConnell, Vice President Pence, my distinguished guests and my fellow Americans, this is America's day.

This is democracy's day. A day of history and hope of renewal and resolve through a crucible for the ages. America has been tested anew and America has risen to the challenge. Today, we celebrate the triumph not of a candidate, but of a cause, the cause of democracy. The people, the will of the people, has been heard and the will of the people has been heeded.

We've learned again that democracy is precious. Democracy is fragile. At this hour, my friends, democracy has prevailed.

From now, on this hallowed ground, where just a few days ago, violence sought to shake the Capitol's very foundation, we come together as one nation, under God, indivisible, to carry out the peaceful transfer of power, as we have for more than two centuries.

As we look ahead in our uniquely American way: restless, bold, optimistic, and set our sights on the nation we can be and we must be.

I thank my predecessors of both parties for their presence here today. I thank them from the bottom of my heart. And I know, I know the resilience of our Constitution and the strength, the strength of our nation. As does President Carter, who I spoke with last night, who cannot be with us today, but whom we salute for his lifetime of service.

I've just taken the sacred oath each of those patriots have taken. The oath, first sworn by George Washington. But the American story depends not on any one of us, not on some of us, but on all of us, on we the people who seek a more perfect union.

This is a great nation. We are good people. And over the centuries, through storm and strife, in peace and in war, we've come so far. But we still have far to go. We'll press forward with speed and urgency, for we have much to do in this winter of peril and significant possibilities, much to repair, much to restore, much to heal, much to build, and much to gain.

Few people in our nation's history have been more challenged or found a time more challenging or difficult than the time we're in now. A once-in-a-century virus that silently stalks the country. It's taken as many lives in one year as America lost in all of World War II. Millions of jobs have been lost. Hundreds of thousands of businesses closed. A cry for racial justice, some 400 years in the making, moves us. The dream of justice for all will be deferred no longer.

The cry for survival comes from the planet itself, a cry that can't be any more desperate or any more clear. And now a rise of political extremism, white supremacy, domestic terrorism that we must confront and we will defeat.

To overcome these challenges, to restore the soul and secure the future of America requires so much more than words. It requires the most elusive of all things in a democracy: Unity. Unity.

In another January, on New Year's Day in 1863, Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. When he put pen to paper, the president said, and I quote: "If my name ever goes down into history, it'll be for this act. And my whole soul is in it."

My whole soul was in it today. On this January day, my whole soul is in this: Bringing America together, uniting our people, uniting our nation. And I ask every American to join me in this cause.

Uniting to fight the foes we face: anger, resentment, hatred, extremism, lawlessness, violence, disease, joblessness and hopelessness. With unity, we can do great things, important things. We can right wrongs. We can put people to work in good jobs. We can teach our children in safe

schools. We can overcome the deadly virus. We can reward, reward work, and rebuild the middle class and make health care secure for all. We can deliver racial justice and we can make America once again the leading force for good in the world.

I know speaking of unity can sound to some like a foolish fantasy these days. I know the forces that divide us are deep and they are real, but I also know they are not new. Our history has been a constant struggle between the American ideal that we're all created equal and the harsh, ugly reality that racism, nativism, fear, demonization have long torn us apart. The battle is perennial and victory is never assured.

Through civil war, the Great Depression, world war, 9/11, through struggle, sacrifice and setbacks, our better angels have always prevailed. In each of these moments, enough of us have come together to carry all of us forward. And we can do that now. History, faith and reason show the way, the way of unity. We can see each other not as adversaries, but as neighbors. We can treat each other with dignity and respect. We can join forces, stop the shouting and lower the temperature. For without unity, there is no peace — only bitterness and fury. No progress — only exhausting outrage. No nation — only a state of chaos.

This is our historic moment of crisis and challenge. And unity is the path forward. And we must meet this moment as the United States of America. If we do that, I guarantee you we will not fail. We have never, ever, ever, ever failed in America when we've acted together.

And so today at this time in this place, let's start afresh, all of us. Let's begin to listen to one another again. Hear one another, see one another, show respect to one another. Politics doesn't have to be a raging fire, destroying everything in its path. Every disagreement doesn't have to be a cause for total war. And we must reject the culture in which facts themselves are manipulated and even manufactured.

My fellow Americans, we have to be different than this. America has to be better than this. And I believe America is so much better than this. Just look around. Here we stand in the shadow of the Capitol dome, as was mentioned earlier, completed amid the Civil War, when the Union itself was literally hanging in the balance. Yet we endured, we prevailed.

Here we stand looking out on the great Mall where Dr. King spoke of his dream. Here we stand, where 108 years ago, at another inaugural, thousands of protesters tried to block brave women marching for the right to vote. And today we marked the swearing-in of the first woman in American history elected to national office: Vice President Kamala Harris. Don't tell me things can't change.

Here we stand across the Potomac from Arlington Cemetery, where heroes who gave the last full measure of devotion rest in eternal peace. And here we stand just days after a riotous mob thought they could use violence to silence the will of the people, to stop the work of our democracy, to drive us from this sacred ground.

It did not happen. It will never happen. Not today, not tomorrow, not ever. Not ever.

To all those who supported our campaign, I'm humbled by the faith you've placed in us. To all those who did not support us, let me say this: Hear me out as we move forward. Take a measure of me and my heart. If you still disagree, so be it. That's democracy. That's America. The right to dissent, peaceably, the guardrails of our republic, is perhaps this nation's greatest strength.

Yet hear me clearly: Disagreement must not lead to disunion. And I pledge this to you: I will be a president for all Americans. All Americans. And I promise you I will fight as hard for those who did not support me as for those who did.

Many centuries ago, St. Augustine, a saint in my church, wrote that a people was a multitude defined by the common objects of their love. Defined by the common objects of their love.

What are the common objects we as Americans love, that define us as Americans? I think we know. Opportunity, security, liberty, dignity, respect, honor and, yes, the truth.

Recent weeks and months have taught us a painful lesson. There is truth and there are lies, lies told for power and for profit. And each of us has a duty and responsibility, as citizens, as Americans, and especially as leaders, leaders who have pledged to honor our Constitution and protect our nation, to defend the truth and defeat the lies.

Look — I understand that many of my fellow Americans view the future with fear and trepidation. I understand they worry about their jobs. I understand, like my dad, they lay in bed at night, staring at the ceiling, wondering: Can I keep my health care? Can I pay my mortgage? Thinking about their families, about what comes next. I promise you, I get it.

But the answer is not to turn inward, to retreat into competing factions, distrusting those who don't look like you or worship the way you do, or don't get their news from the same sources you do. We must end this uncivil war that pits red against blue, rural vs. urban, conservative vs. liberal. We can do this if we open our souls instead of hardening our hearts. If we show a little tolerance and humility, and if we're willing to stand in the other person's shoes, as my mom would say, just for a moment, stand in their shoes. Because here's the thing about life: There's no accounting for what fate will deal you. Some days when you need a hand. There are other days when we're called to lend a hand. That's how it has to be. That's what we do for one another. And if we are this way, our country will be stronger, more prosperous, more ready for the future. And we can still disagree.

My fellow Americans, in the work ahead of us, we're going to need each other. We need all our strength to persevere through this dark winter. We're entering what may be the toughest and deadliest period of the virus. We must set aside politics and finally face this pandemic as one nation. One nation.

And I promise you this, as the Bible says: “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” We will get through this together. Together.

Look, folks. All my colleagues I served with in the House and the Senate up there, we all understand the world is watching, watching all of us today. So here’s my message to those beyond our borders: 11America has been tested and we’ve come out stronger for it. We will repair our alliances and engage with the world once again. Not to meet yesterday’s challenges, but today’s and tomorrow’s challenges. And we’ll lead, not merely by the example of our power, but by the power of our example.

We’ll be a strong and trusted partner for peace, progress and security. Look — you all know we’ve been through so much in this nation. And my first act as president, I’d like to ask you to join me in a moment of silent prayer to remember all those who we lost this past year to the pandemic. Those 400,000 fellow Americans. Moms, dads, husbands, wives, sons, daughters, friends, neighbors and co-workers. We will honor them by becoming the people and the nation we know we can and should be. So I ask you, let’s say a silent prayer for those who’ve lost their lives, those left behind, and for our country.

Amen.

Folks, this is a time of testing. We face an attack on our democracy and on truth, a raging virus, growing inequity, the sting of systemic racism, a climate in crisis, America’s role in the world. Any one of these will be enough to challenge us in profound ways. But the fact is, we face them all at once, presenting this nation with one of the gravest responsibilities we’ve had. Now we’re going to be tested. Are we going to step up? All of us? It’s time for boldness, for there is so much to do. And this is certain, I promise you: We will be judged, you and I, by how we resolve these cascading crises of our era.

Will we rise to the occasion is the question. Will we master this rare and difficult hour? Will we meet our obligations and pass along a new and better world to our children? I believe we must. I'm sure you do as well. I believe we will. And when we do, we'll write the next great chapter in the history of the United States of America. The American story. A story that might sound something like a song that means a lot to me. It's called "American Anthem." There's one verse that stands out, at least for me, and it goes like this:

The work and prayers of a century have brought us to this day.

What shall be our legacy? What will our children say?

Let me know in my heart when my days are through.

America, America, I gave my best to you.

Let's add. Let us add our own work and prayers to the unfolding story of our great nation. If we do this, then when our days are through, our children and our children's children will say of us: They gave their best, they did their duty, they healed a broken land.

My fellow Americans, I close the day where I began, with a sacred oath before God and all of you. I give you my word, I will always level with you. I will defend the Constitution. I'll defend our democracy. I'll defend America and I will give all, all of you. Keep everything I do in your service, thinking not of power, but of possibilities, not of personal interest, but the public good. And together we shall write an American story of hope, not fear. Of unity, not division. Of light, not darkness. A story of decency and dignity, love and healing, greatness and goodness. May this be the story that guides us. The story that inspires us and the story that tells ages yet to come that we answered the call of history. We met the moment. Democracy and hope, truth and justice did not die on our watch, but thrived. That America secured liberty at home and



stood once again as a beacon to the world. That is what we owe our forebears, one another and generations to follow.

So, with purpose and resolve, we turn to those tasks of our time. Sustained by faith, driven by conviction, devoted to one another and the country we love with all our hearts. May God bless America and may God protect our troops. Thank you, America.

#### **APPENDIX B: President Donald Trump's full inaugural address remarks**

Chief Justice Roberts, President Carter, President Clinton, President Bush, President Obama, fellow Americans, and people of the world, thank you. We the citizens of America are now joined in a great national effort to rebuild our country and restore its promise for all of our people. Together we will determine the course of America, and the world, for many, many years to come. We will face challenges. We will confront hardships, but we will get the job done.

Every four years, we gather on these steps to carry out the orderly and peaceful transfer of power, and we are grateful to President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama for their gracious aid throughout this transition. They have been magnificent. Thank you.

Today's ceremony, however, has very special meaning, because today we are not merely transferring power from one administration to another, or from one party to another, but we are transferring power from Washington, D.C., and giving it back to you, the people.

For too long, a small group in our nation's capital has reaped the rewards of government, while the people have borne the cost. Washington flourished, but the people did not share in its wealth. Politicians prospered, but the jobs left and the factories closed. The establishment protected itself, but not the citizens of our country. Their victories have not been your victories. Their triumphs have not been your triumphs, and while they celebrated in our nation's capital, there was little to celebrate for struggling families all across our land. That all changes, starting

right here and right now, because this moment is your moment --- it belongs to you. It belongs to everyone gathered here today, and everyone watching, all across America. This is your day. This is your celebration, and this, the United States of America, is your country.

What truly matters is not which party controls our government, but whether our government is controlled by the people. January 20th, 2017 will be remembered as the day the people became the rulers of this nation again. The forgotten men and women of our country, will be forgotten no longer. Everyone is listening to you now. You came by the tens of millions to become part of a historic movement, the likes of which the world has never seen before. At the center of this movement is a crucial conviction, that a nation exists to serve its citizens. Americans want great schools for their children, safe neighborhoods for their families, and good jobs for themselves. These are just and reasonable demands of righteous people and a righteous public, but for too many of our citizens a different reality exists. Mothers and children trapped in poverty in our inner cities, rusted out factories, scattered like tombstones across the across the landscape of our nation, an education system flush with cash, but which leaves our young and beautiful students deprived of all knowledge, and the crime, and the gangs, and the drugs that have stolen too many lives and robbed our country of so much unrealized potential. This American carnage stops right here and stops right now.

We are one nation and their pain is our pain. Their dreams are our dreams and their success will be our success. We share one heart, one home, and one glorious destiny. The oath of office, I take today, is an oath of allegiance to all Americans. For many decades, we've enriched foreign industry at the expense of American industry, subsidized the armies of other countries, while allowing for the very sad depletion of our military. We've defended other nation's borders while refusing to defend our own. And spent trillions and trillions of dollars overseas, while America's infrastructure has fallen into disrepair and decay. We've made other countries rich while the wealth, strength and confidence of our country has dissipated over the horizon. One

by one, the factories shuddered and left our shores, with not even a thought about the millions and millions of American workers that were left behind. The wealth of our middle class has been ripped from their homes and then redistributed all across the world.

But that is the past, and now we are looking only to the future. We assembled here today our issuing a new decree to be heard in every city, in every foreign capital, and in every hall of power, from this day forward: a new vision will govern our land, from this day forward, it's going to be only America first. America first.

Every decision on trade, on taxes, on immigration, on foreign affairs will be made to benefit American workers and American families. We must protect our borders from the ravages of other countries making our products, stealing our companies and destroying our jobs. Protection will lead to great prosperity and strength. I will fight for you with every breath in my body, and I will never, ever let you down. America will start winning again, winning like never before. We will bring back our jobs. We will bring back our borders. We will bring back our wealth, and we will bring back our dreams. We will build new roads and highways and bridges and airports and tunnels, and railways, all across our wonderful nation. We will get our people off of welfare and back to work, rebuilding our country with American hands and American labor.

We will follow two simple rules: buy American, and hire American. We will seek friendship and goodwill with the nations of the world, but we do so with the understanding that it is the right of all nations to put their own interests first. We do not seek to impose our way of life on anyone, but rather to let it shine as an example. We will shine for everyone to follow. We will reinforce old alliances and form new ones, and you unite the civilized world against radical Islamic terrorism, which we will eradicate completely from the face of the Earth.

At the bedrock of our politics will be a total allegiance to the United States of America, and through our loyalty to our country, we will rediscover our loyalty to each other. When you open your heart to patriotism, there is no room for prejudice. The Bible tells us, how good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity. We must speak our minds openly, debate our disagreements, but always pursue solidarity. When America is united, America is totally unstoppable. There should be no fear. We are protected, and we will always be protected. We will be protected by the great men and women of our military and law enforcement. And most importantly, we will be protected by God.

Finally, we must think big and dream even bigger. In America, we understand that a nation is only living as long as it is striving. We will no longer accept politicians who are all talk and no action, constantly complaining but never doing anything about it. The time for empty talk is over. Now arrives the hour of action. Do not allow anyone to tell you that it cannot be done. No challenge can match the heart and fight and spirit of America. We will not fail. Our country will thrive and prosper again.

We stand at the birth of a new millennium, ready to unlock the mysteries of space, to free the Earth from the miseries of disease and to harness the industries and technologies of tomorrow. A new national pride will stir our souls, lift our sights and heal our divisions. It's time to remember that old wisdom our soldiers will never forget, that whether we are black, or brown, or white, we all bleed the same red blood of patriots. We all enjoy the same glorious freedoms, and we all salute the same, great American flag. And whether a child is born in the urban sprawl of Detroit or the windswept plains of Nebraska, they look up at the at the same night sky, they fill their heart with the same dreams and they are infused with the breath of life by the same almighty creator.

So to all Americans, in every city near and far, small and large, from mountain to mountain, from ocean to ocean, hear these words. You will never be ignored again. Your voice, your hopes, and your dreams will define our American destiny. And your courage and goodness and love, will forever guide us along the way. Together, we will make America strong again. We will make America wealthy again. We will make America proud again We will make America safe again, And yes, together, we will make we will make America great again. Thank you. God bless you. And god bless America. Thank you. God bless America.

### **APPENDIX C: President Barack Obama’s full inaugural address remarks**

Vice President Biden, Mr. Chief Justice,

members of the United States Congress, distinguished guests, and fellow citizens:

Each time we gather to inaugurate a President we bear witness to the enduring strength of our Constitution. We affirm the promise of our democracy. We recall that what binds this nation together is not the colors of our skin or the tenets of our faith or the origins of our names. What makes us exceptional -- what makes us American -- is our allegiance to an idea articulated in a declaration made more than two centuries ago:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

Today we continue a never-ending journey to bridge the meaning of those words with the realities of our time. For history tells us that while these truths may be self-evident, they’ve never been self-executing; that while freedom is a gift from God, it must be secured by His people here on Earth. The patriots of 1776 did not fight to replace the tyranny of a king with

the privileges of a few or the rule of a mob. They gave to us a republic, a government of, and by, and for the people, entrusting each generation to keep safe our founding creed.

And for more than two hundred years, we have.

Through blood drawn by lash and blood drawn by sword, we learned that no union founded on the principles of liberty and equality could survive half-slave and half-free. We made ourselves anew, and vowed to move forward together.

Together, we determined that a modern economy requires railroads and highways to speed travel and commerce, schools and colleges to train our workers.

Together, we discovered that a free market only thrives when there are rules to ensure competition and fair play.

Together, we resolved that a great nation must care for the vulnerable, and protect its people from life's worst hazards and misfortune.

Through it all, we have never relinquished our skepticism of central authority, nor have we succumbed to the fiction that all society's ills can be cured through government alone. Our celebration of initiative and enterprise, our insistence on hard work and personal responsibility, these are constants in our character.

But we have always understood that when times change, so must we; that fidelity to our founding principles requires new responses to new challenges; that preserving our individual freedoms ultimately requires collective action. For the American people can no more meet the demands of today's world by acting alone than American soldiers could have met the forces of fascism or communism with muskets and militias. No single person can train all the math and science teachers we'll need to equip our children for the future, or build the roads and networks

and research labs that will bring new jobs and businesses to our shores. Now, more than ever, we must do these things together, as one nation and one people.

This generation of Americans has been tested by crises that steeled our resolve and proved our resilience. A decade of war is now ending. An economic recovery has begun. America's possibilities are limitless, for we possess all the qualities that this world without boundaries demands: youth and drive; diversity and openness; an endless capacity for risk and a gift for reinvention. My fellow Americans, we are made for this moment, and we will seize it -- so long as we seize it together.

For we, the people, understand that our country cannot succeed when a shrinking few do very well and a growing many barely make it. We believe that America's prosperity must rest upon the broad shoulders of a rising middle class. We know that America thrives when every person can find independence and pride in their work; when the wages of honest labor liberate families from the brink of hardship. We are true to our creed when a little girl born into the bleakest poverty knows that she has the same chance to succeed as anybody else, because she is an American; she is free, and she is equal, not just in the eyes of God but also in our own.

We understand that outworn programs are inadequate to the needs of our time. So we must harness new ideas and technology to remake our government, revamp our tax code, reform our schools, and empower our citizens with the skills they need to work harder, learn more, reach higher. But while the means will change, our purpose endures: a nation that rewards the effort and determination of every single American. That is what this moment requires. That is what will give real meaning to our creed.

We, the people, still believe that every citizen deserves a basic measure of security and dignity. We must make the hard choices to reduce the cost of health care and the size of our deficit. But we reject the belief that America must choose between caring for the generation that built this

country and investing in the generation that will build its future. For we remember the lessons of our past, when twilight years were spent in poverty and parents of a child with a disability had nowhere to turn.

We do not believe that in this country freedom is reserved for the lucky, or happiness for the few. We recognize that no matter how responsibly we live our lives, any one of us at any time may face a job loss, or a sudden illness, or a home swept away in a terrible storm. The commitments we make to each other through Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security, these things do not sap our initiative, they strengthen us. They do not make us a nation of takers; they free us to take the risks that make this country great.

We, the people, still believe that our obligations as Americans are not just to ourselves, but to all posterity. We will respond to the threat of climate change, knowing that the failure to do so would betray our children and future generations. Some may still deny the overwhelming judgment of science, but none can avoid the devastating impact of raging fires and crippling drought and more powerful storms.

The path towards sustainable energy sources will be long and sometimes difficult. But America cannot resist this transition, we must lead it. We cannot cede to other nations the technology that will power new jobs and new industries, we must claim its promise. That's how we will maintain our economic vitality and our national treasure -- our forests and waterways, our crop lands and snow-capped peaks. That is how we will preserve our planet, commanded to our care by God. That's what will lend meaning to the creed our fathers once declared.

We, the people, still believe that enduring security and lasting peace do not require perpetual war. Our brave men and women in uniform, tempered by the flames of battle, are unmatched in skill and courage. Our citizens, seared by the memory of those we have lost, know too well the price that is paid for liberty. The knowledge of their sacrifice will keep us forever vigilant



against those who would do us harm. But we are also heirs to those who won the peace and not just the war; who turned sworn enemies into the surest of friends -- and we must carry those lessons into this time as well.

We will defend our people and uphold our values through strength of arms and rule of law. We will show the courage to try and resolve our differences with other nations peacefully -- not because we are naïve about the dangers we face, but because engagement can more durably lift suspicion and fear.

America will remain the anchor of strong alliances in every corner of the globe. And we will renew those institutions that extend our capacity to manage crisis abroad, for no one has a greater stake in a peaceful world than its most powerful nation. We will support democracy from Asia to Africa, from the Americas to the Middle East, because our interests and our conscience compel us to act on behalf of those who long for freedom. And we must be a source of hope to the poor, the sick, the marginalized, the victims of prejudice -- not out of mere charity, but because peace in our time requires the constant advance of those principles that our common creed describes: tolerance and opportunity, human dignity and justice.

We, the people, declare today that the most evident of truths -- that all of us are created equal -- is the star that guides us still; just as it guided our forebears through Seneca Falls, and Selma, and Stonewall; just as it guided all those men and women, sung and unsung, who left footprints along this great Mall, to hear a preacher say that we cannot walk alone; to hear a King proclaim that our individual freedom is inextricably bound to the freedom of every soul on Earth.

It is now our generation's task to carry on what those pioneers began. For our journey is not complete until our wives, our mothers and daughters can earn a living equal to their efforts. Our journey is not complete until our gay brothers and sisters are treated like anyone else under the law for if we are truly created equal, then surely the love we commit to one another must

be equal as well. Our journey is not complete until no citizen is forced to wait for hours to exercise the right to vote. Our journey is not complete until we find a better way to welcome the striving, hopeful immigrants who still see America as a land of opportunity until bright young students and engineers are enlisted in our workforce rather than expelled from our country. Our journey is not complete until all our children, from the streets of Detroit to the hills of Appalachia, to the quiet lanes of Newtown, know that they are cared for and cherished and always safe from harm.

That is our generation's task -- to make these words, these rights, these values of life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness real for every American. Being true to our founding documents does not require us to agree on every contour of life. It does not mean we all define liberty in exactly the same way or follow the same precise path to happiness. Progress does not compel us to settle centuries-long debates about the role of government for all time, but it does require us to act in our time.

For now decisions are upon us and we cannot afford delay. We cannot mistake absolutism for principle, or substitute spectacle for politics, or treat name-calling as reasoned debate. We must act, knowing that our work will be imperfect. We must act, knowing that today's victories will be only partial and that it will be up to those who stand here in four years and 40 years and 400 years hence to advance the timeless spirit once conferred to us in a spare Philadelphia hall.

My fellow Americans, the oath I have sworn before you today, like the one recited by others who serve in this Capitol, was an oath to God and country, not party or faction. And we must faithfully execute that pledge during the duration of our service. But the words I spoke today are not so different from the oath that is taken each time a soldier signs up for duty or an immigrant realizes her dream. My oath is not so different from the pledge we all make to the flag that waves above and that fills our hearts with pride.

They are the words of citizens and they represent our greatest hope. You and I, as citizens, have the power to set this country's course. You and I, as citizens, have the obligation to shape the debates of our time -- not only with the votes we cast, but with the voices we lift in defense of our most ancient values and enduring ideals.

Let us, each of us, now embrace with solemn duty and awesome joy what is our lasting birthright. With common effort and common purpose, with passion and dedication, let us answer the call of history and carry into an uncertain future that precious light of freedom.

Thank you. God bless you, and may He forever bless these United States of America.