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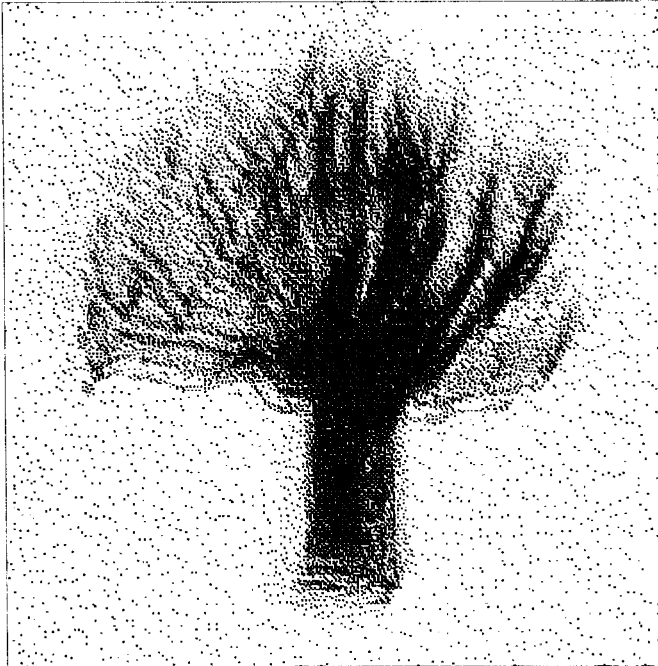

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FOLIO

A STUDENTS' JOURNAL

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Dear Readers,

this is the first issue of what we intend and hope to be a regularly published students' scientific journal of our Institute. We plan to publish two issues per term, each of them containing the most outstanding essays written by the students during the term and chosen to print by our lecturers. Unfortunately, due to high costs of printing FOLIO will appear in a limited number of copies; however, each issue will be available in our Institute's Reading Room so that anyone could get access to it even if the journal is out of print. If you have any questions or comments please contact us either by mail (you will find the address on page 2) or, if possible, leave a message addressed to FOLIO in the pigeonhole belonging to the *Kolo Naukowe* of our Institute. We hope you will enjoy the reading.

The Editors

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Kinga Taukert

Tom and Tao. A Brief Analysis of Intertextual Parallels in the Search for the Nature of a Character. *

Authors of articles and essays concerning Tom Bombadil usually focus on interpreting (or rather criticizing) his role in the story[1] or on establishing (or rather guessing) his identity[2]. Even Tolkien himself, in his letters answering the numerous questions of his readers, confined himself to these matters[3]. I would like, however, to concentrate on the nature of this peculiar character.

The heroes of *The Lord of the Rings*, both good and evil, are highly remarkable characters endowed with outstanding qualities and as such they evoke either deep admiration and love or equally strong awe and fear[4]. In comparison with noble Aragorn, angelic Glorfindel, heroic Frodo and, on the other hand, with powerful Sauron, malicious Shelob and the terrifying Black Riders, Tom does not make any impression on the reader.

As a ridiculous little old man wearing a colourful outfit, dancing and hopping all the time, singing nonsense, talking to himself in rhymes about himself and laughing apparently without any reason, he seems to be nothing more than just a jovial half-witted jester. However, his external appearance is highly misleading.
Actually, Tom is a sage and a mystic.

It is possible to acquire a more thorough insight into the real nature of Tom Bombadil with the help of intertextual analysis, as there exist striking although unintentional parallels between *The Lord of the Rings* and texts expressing the views of two great Eastern religious and philosophical systems, namely Taoism and Zen Buddhism.

The first one is based on the concept of Tao, which is an elusive andintuitive idea difficult to grasp for an analytical Western mind. *Tao Te King*, one of the sacred

* The paper has been submitted for the course 1009: *J.R.R. Tolkien* run by Ms Maria Wójcicka, MA.

books of the East and the bible of Taoism, does not provide any definition, but only tries to approach the meaning of Tao using poetical language full of metaphors and paradoxes.

> "The Way [Tao] that can be told of
> is not an Unvarying Way:
> The names that can be named
> are not unvarying names."[5]

- states Lao-Tzu in the very first words of his book. Another taoist, Zhuang-zi, is even more uncompromising: "It is not possible to explain Tao; if it is possible, this is not Tao."[6]

Tao can be interpreted, rather roughly, as a way of life based on the ideal harmony of Nature. A man can achieve happiness, fulfilment and peace of mind only by applying the universal rules of Tao to his life or, in other words, by following the philosophy of Nature.[7]

Zen Buddhism, the development of which was strongly influenced by Taoism, also strives to achieve the mystical state of this ideal harmony and understanding, which is considered to be the natural state of man. The aim of human life should be to find the way which leads to enlightenment, mainly by contemplating reality and understanding oneself.

Taoist and Zen Buddhist texts and teachings often introduce the character of a perfect man, a master, whose behaviour and attitude should be followed. This is one of the methods of explaining the meaning of Tao.

"He is the Master of wood, water and hill", Goldberry says in answer to Frodo's question about Tom. Frodo automatically jumps to the conclusion that "all this strange land belongs to him", but Goldberry immediately denies this and adds that "That would indeed be a burden."[8] According to Taoism and Zen Buddhism possession is dangerous, as it can turn a master into a slave.

> "Indeed you do not possess things,
> They have been left in your care just for a while.
> If you are not able to give them back, it is them
> that possess you."[9]

Goldberry explains that "The trees and grasses and all things growing or living in the land belong each to themselves. Tom Bombadil is the Master."[10] Paradoxically, Tom is the real master because of his absolute lack of possessiveness.

> "Whatever you cherish,
> (...)
> Set it free
> and then it will be yours."[11]

Not only does Tom refrain from possessing but also from dominating,

although he could do this easily as his power is amazing. And again, precisely because he does not feel the urge to take control and subjugate anyone, others obey him.

> "[...] the myriad creatures are worked upon by him;
> [...]
> He rears them, but does not lay claim to them,
> Controls them, but does not lean upon them."[12]

Tom easily freed the hobbits trapped by the Old Man Willow who was not just a living tree. The Great Willow was "a master of winds and his song and thought ran through the woods", he "had under his dominion nearly all the trees of the Forest".[13]

Tom also had no difficulty in defeating the ghastly Barrow-wights and breaking their evil spell. Interestingly, he had avoided the confrontation with them until they attacked the hobbits. He could have wielded his power over the evil spirits much earlier but he chose to remain neutral and he allowed them to exist.

> "Those who of old won the adherence of all
> who live under heaven
> All did so by not interfering.
> Had they interfered,
> They would never have won this adherence.[14]

So great was Tom's power that "the hobbits wished he was coming with them. They felt that he would know how to deal with the Black Riders, if anyone did."[15] It was Tom that Sam thought of in the terrifying darkness of Torech Ungol: "'I wish old Tom was near us now', he thought."[16]

Most striking, however, is the fact that Tom is the only person who can overcome the power of the One Ring. Not only does he remain visible after putting it on his finger and is capable of seeing a person who is wearing the Ring, but he also makes the One disappear itself.

The clue lies in his slightly ironic and disrespectful attitude towards things perceived as "precious". For him the Ring is only a round object made of yellow metal, "a circle of gold", and this is an appropriate, objective definition of this object according to Zen, which stresses the importance of seeing things exactly as they are - stripped of desires and illusions produced by the human mind.

Tom handles The Ring in the same way as he treats the priceless objects and jewellery from the tomb of the Barrow-downs - he just made a heap of the treasures and left it for the others. That is why he is the only one who without a moment's hesitation gives the Ring back. The Ring-bearer also has no doubts: "Frodo, to his own astonishment, drew out the chain from his pocket, and unfastening the Ring handed it at once to Tom."[17] Frodo intuitively knew that such a person as Tom would never want to take the Ring. [18]

Tom neither wants to possess the Ring nor - which is a more wicked and thus more powerful temptation - to use it for protecting and helping others. Even Gandalf and Galadriel, both so mighty and of pure mind, have to be extremely careful to avoid this snare. Only Tom is not afraid of any traps, physical or moral, as his mind is perfectly peaceful and his soul absolutely pure - like that of a child.

> "The impunity if things fraught with the power
> May be likened to that of an infant.
> Poisonous insects do not sting it,
> Nor fierce beasts seize it,
> Nor clawing birds maul it."[19]
> "The Sage, in his dealings with the world,
> seems like one dazed with fright;
> For the world's sake he dulls his wits.
> The hundred families all the time
> strain their eyes and ears,
> The Sage all the time sees and hears no more
> than an infant sees and hears." [20]

Gandalf even slightly scorns Bombadil's careless and apparently childish attitude when he says at the council in Rivendell that Tom just does not understand certain things. "(...) if he was given the Ring, he would soon forget it, or most likely throw it away. Such things have no hold on his mind. He would be a most unsafe guardian."[21]

Tom, however, in his seeming carelessness observes the taoist rule of *wu-wei*, according to which a truly wise man leaves everything as it is and lets things be, because every change should be the result of the natural flow of events and cannot be hastened or forced even in a good cause. A Taoist knows that no effort is needed, no strife, no pain for everything will come when it should come. "Non-acting does not involve inertia or stagnation. It is a conscious act of letting everything act according to its own nature and then nature will be fulfilled."[22]

When Frodo asks Tom if he heard their cries for help or was passing the willow by chance, Bombadil answers: "Nay, I did not hear: I was busy singing. Just chance brought me then, if chance you call it. It was no plan of mine, though I was waiting for you."[23]

> "Without doing anything
> the spring comes,
> the grass grows."[24]
> "The Sage's way is to act without striving."[25]

That is why Tom prefers to avoid using his amazing powers and lives in the heart of the forest, hiding from the rest of the inhabitants of Middle-earth, only occasionally visiting his friends in Shire and Bree. This seems to be a highly selfish

attitude as he apparently does nothing to help others.

> "Without looking out of his window
> He knows all the ways of heaven.
> For the further one travels,
> The less one knows.
> Therefore the Sage arrives without going,
> Sees all without looking,
> Does nothing, yet achieves everything."[26]

Tom refuses to go any further with the hobbits along the Road, saying:

> "I've got things to do: my making and my singing, my talking and my walking, and my watching of the country. Tom can't be always near to open doors and willow-cracks. Tom has his house to mind and Goldberry is waiting."[27]

This does not mean that he is selfish and shallow thinking that his walking and singing are more important than their quest. He simply follows his own Road - the Way of Tao, the Way of Life. His intuitive wisdom leads him to the Taoist notion that one serves others best by growing in knowledge and understanding, by knowing oneself and being oneself.

Tom knows himself and is himself and this is the source of his naturalness and spontaneity, which are signs of following Tao. Observing the rules of Tao results in freedom and Tom turns out to be a most independent character. "He is his own master", as Gandalf says. He is not bound by any rules or conventions, he does not try to please anyone by living up to anyone else's expectations, he does not imitate anyone. This explains why he cannot be classified in any way.

> "'Fair lady!' said Frodo again after a while. 'Tell me, if my asking does not seem foolish, who is Tom Bombadil?'
> 'He is,' said Goldberry (...). Frodo looked at her questioningly. 'He is, as you have seen him,' she said in answer to his look."[28]

Other characters can be labelled in some way, for example Gandalf is a Maia, one of the Wizards or the Istari, the keeper of Narya, the Ring of Fire. Elrond is a son of Earendil and Elwing, a half-Elf, the master of Imladris and the keeper of Vilya, the Ring of Air. Frodo Baggins is a hobbit, the Ring-bearer, later the famous Frodo of Nine Fingers who brought the One to the Cracks of Doom, etc.

Bombadil cannot be so comfortably defined by his origin (he is fatherless, the oldest and the first), by belonging to a race (he does not belong to any), by his title or function (he has none), by his possessions (again he has none) or remarkable deeds (no one seems to know anything about any such). Tom is not a king, a Ranger, a Steward or a gardener. He is not an Ent or a hobbit. He is not the hero who killed Witch-king. "He is."

Tom not only is but, moreover, he is also present: "He, who is fully aware; he, who is fully present in each moment - he is a Master."[29]

Some characters of *The Lord of the Rings* either strive to achieve a certain goal (like Frodo, Boromir and Aragorn) or wait for something to happen (Eowyn, Arwen and the Elves who dream of going to the sea), which means that they focus on the future. Others mournfully turn back to old days of past splendour and glory (Galadriel, Theoden and the dwarves who wish to go back to Khazad-dum). A Zen Buddhist would conclude that as their thoughts belong to the future or to the past, they themselves live in the future or in the past and, consequently, no one lives in the present. As only the present moment is real - no one lives. "Concentrate on the present. Only <now> brings you to the touch with life."[30]

Only Bombadil seems to understand "the miracle of mindfulness"[31] giving his full attention to persons, things and his own activities, which brings him delight and joy. This means that he has achieved the mystical state of enlightenment.

> "When the zen master finally achieved
> the state of enlightenment,
> he wrote down in commemoration:
> This is a miracle:
> I am chopping the wood!
> I am pulling a bucket of water out of the well!"[32]

According to Thich Nhat Hanh -

> "It is believed that walking on water or flying in the air are miracles, but I think that walking on the ground is the finest miracle of all. [...] Everything is a miracle." [33]

Tom's attitude shows that every moment he experiences the wonderful mystery and miracle of life which fills him with such euphoria that he almost cannot stop dancing, hopping, singing and laughing. Such behaviour is seldom considered to be appropriate for a truly wise man but Taoism and Zen Buddhism do not follow this general approach.

> "What is the aim of the Master's labour?
> To teach others how to laugh." [34]
> "If it does not laugh,
> This is not true Tao." [35]

These are the sacred qualities of a perfect man: being free from the desire of possessing; refraining from domineering and from using any power except when it is necessary; remaining neutral and not interfering with the natural course of events; following one's own way of life without imitating others or observing any conventions; being free and truly independent; knowing oneself and being oneself; being natural and spontaneous; being mindful and fully aware of what is happening

in the present moment; experiencing the miracle of life; savouring each moment; taking delight in every activity; freely expressing mystical joy. Tom possesses all the above-mentioned qualities, turning out to be one of the most profound and complex characters of *The Lord of the Rings*.

Notes

[1] "Tom fits the original (slightly childish) tone of the early chapters (which resembled that of *The Hobbit*)" - *Who or what was Tom Bombadil?,* http://www.daimi.aaa.dk/~bouvin/tolkien/tombombadil.html, 2-12-1997.

"(...) he doesn't seem to be important to the story" - W.G.Wettach, *Tom Bombadil,* http://www.chem.lsu.edu/cbury/ ETEP/Tolkien/B/Bombadil.html, 2-12-1997.

"Many readers of *The Lord of the Rings* consider Tom's presence in the first book to be an unnecessary intrusion into the narrative, which could be omitted without loss." - G.Hargrove, *Who is Tom Bombadil?*, hhtp://www.cas.unt.edu/ ~hargrove/bombadil/html, 25-11-1997.

[2] Tom could be a man, a Maia, a Vala, Iluvatar, a primal nature spirit, a personification of nature itself, a one-of-a-kind type, a kind of archetypal "vegetation god", etc. Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

[4] Interestingly, there is one more character, in addition to Tom, that does not fit this pattern, namely Golum.

[5] Lao-Tzu, 1997, p.ix.

[6] Capra, 1994, p.130. In some cases, when the original in English has not been found, quotations have been re-translated on the basis of Polish editions.

[7] I decided against defining the Taoist concept of nature by comparing it with the different approaches of Western philosophy. Firstly, this is a problem for a separate essay. Secondly, it will be better to let the Eastern texts speak for themselves and naturally guide the reader towards final conclusions. However, the idea is tempting.

[8] Tolkien, 1993, Part 1:*The Fellowship of the Ring,* Book 1, p.172.

[9] Mello, *Modlitwa żaby,* 1992, t.2, p.93.

[10] Tolkien, op.cit., Part 1, p.172.

[11] Mello, op. cit., p.93

[12] Lao-Tzu, op. cit., p.2.

[13] Tolkien, op. cit., Part 1, p.179.

[14] Lao-Tzu, op. cit., p.51.

[15] Tolkien, op.cit., Part 1, p.201.

[16] Ibid., Part 2: *The Two Towers,* Book 4, p.413.

[17] Ibid., Part 1, p.182.

[18] Cf. an Indian story told by A. de Mello in *The Song of a Bird.* Polish version: *Śpiew ptaka,* Verbinum, Warszawa 1992, p.173. A summary: There was an old wise man, who came to a poor village. One of the peasants approached him, demanding a precious stone. He explained that the god Siva had told him in a dream that an old man would come to the village and present him with a jewel, which would make him rich and happy till the end of his life. The sage took something out of his bag. "You probably mean this. I found it a few days ago, lying on the road. You can keep it, " he said and gave the poor man the biggest diamond that had ever existed. However, the next day the villager came back. "I don't want the diamond," he declared, "I'd rather have this inner strenght which enabled you to part so easily with such a possession."

[19] Lao-Tzu, op. cit., p.58.

[20] Ibid., p.52.

[21] Tolkien, op. cit., Part 1, p.347-8.

[22] Capra, op. cit., p.125.

[23] Tolkien, op. cit., Part 1, p.173-4.

[24] Mello, *Minuta mądrości,* WAM, Kraków 1992, p.99.

[25] Lao-Tzu, op. cit., p.85. Interestingly, these are the very last words of the text.

[26] Ibid., p.50.

[27] J.R.R.Tolkien, op. cit., Part 1, p.198.

[28] Ibid., p.171-2.

[29] Mello, *Śpiew ptaka*, p.31.

[30] Hanh, *Cud uważności,* Jacek Santorski & Co Agencja Wydawnicza, Warszawa 1992, p.37.

[31] The original title of Hanh's book.

[32] Mello, *Śpiew ptaka*, p.26.

[33] Hanh, op. cit., p. 19.

[34] Mello, *Minuta nonsensu,* WAM, Kraków 1994, p.98.

[35] Capra, op. cit., p.49.

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Katarzyna Rydzik

"The Book of the Duchess". An Interpretation.*

Introduction

Chaucerian love visions are difficult poems to approach. Their modes of signification are similar to that of the enigma: they offer motifs, images, and hints that need to be carefully collected to form a unified whole. The most demanding part of interpretation is theidentification of the various hints that the very often may refer to the audience's background knowledge, sometimes so obvious to medieval men that their presence in the text itself would have been considered redundant. This is the feature which most strikingly distinguishes medieval literary works from modern ones. But the Middle Ages never considered a text as a self-contained, autonomous entity: on the contrary, this is the age which wrote encyclopaedias to provide a fuller understanding of the Text.

The character of the poem influences also the interpretation. There appear conclusions which may seem too far-fetched, but whenever they are based on conventional medieval knowledge and are in accord with all parts of the poem, they will be sustained. Finally, Chaucer would agree, language, as any system of signs, is naturally susceptible to misunderstanding. But this is the risk of any interpretation.

The Book of the Duchess, the earliest dream vision poem written by Chaucer, was commissioned by John of Gaunt, Chaucer's patron, to commemorate the untimely death of his wife, Blanche. Though these circumstances unequivocally define the poem as an elegy, many critics found it unanswerable to the requirements of the genre. The major accusation poses the apparent lack of consolation that such a poem should bring as either the main drawback or the greatest riddle of the poem. I should suggest, however, that in Chaucerian fiction what is not apparent is not always altogether absent, on the contrary, the reading of other Chaucer's works

* The paper has been submitted for the course 1012: *Chaucer and the Fourteenth Century* run by Mr Tomasz Zymer, MA.

proves that the hidden that is only hinted at often becomes the major subject and the unifying theme of a given poem. That the process of identifying those allusions was a difficult task even for a fourteenth century audience has been already proved [1], the proliferation of interpretations in our times indicates not only a difficulty in their perception, but also a lack of background knowledge necessary for their understanding. At the point of departure, however, it is safest to assume that Chaucer did what he was paid for.

Remarks on the structure

The structure of the poem falls into three main parts: the *exordium* proper, the narrative about Alcione and Seys included in the proem as an example, and the main vision with the general closure of the poem. These three parts are joined by formal parallels enabling their semantic contents to be mutually supportive, and arranged according to the principle of gradation, show the two first as subservient to the main vision. Apart from the general tripartite division, the motif of blowing a horn extracts the Alcione's dream and the Knight's narrative as parallel stories subordinate to the proem.

As such a structure allows for reiteration of certain issues in the poem, each time modified and subjected to a different treatment, while discussing individual topics I should place them in the wider tripartite context.

The malady

Symptoms

The proem begins with the narrator's complaint about his psychosomatic condition: he is suffering form insomnia and melancholy. The detailed description he provides allows for a fuller account of his state:

> [..] I take no kep
> Of nothing, how hyt cometh or gooth,
> Ne me nys nothyng leef nor looth.
> Al is ylyche good to me -
> Joye or sorowe, wherso hyt be -
> For I have felynge in nothyng, (lines 6-11) [2]

The reported mood is that of indifference and separation of feelings and emotions from the outer world, followed by the lack of judgement of what is good or evil.
The narrator is 'Alway in poynt to falle a-doun;'(13), which suggests a serious distortion in the functioning of the animal spirit responsible for voluntary movement,

the faculty of sensation, and associated with the soul and intellectual activities. The next two lines openly speak of 'sorwful ymagynacioun' as the cause of the illness. This would suggest that his imagination, the faculty of receiving the sensory experience, burdened with sorrow has ceased to operate, thus cutting the person off from the outside world and subjecting him to his own fantasies. This confusion is 'agaynes kynde' , that is, he is deprived of the basic, intuitive impulse to go on living, which may result in death, as it already 'Hath sleyn my spirit of quyknesse' (26).

The story of Alcione and Seys is accessory to the proem so there is no use repeating all the symptoms again. The unnatural, self-mortifying behaviour is stressed by Alcione's refusal to eat. Also, 'ofte she swouned' (103), which again hints at the ill-performance of the animal spirit.

The Black Knight's state is the summit of melancholy: he sings 'with a dedly sorwful soun' (462), his face is pale as 'The blood was fled for pure drede / Doun to hys herte, to make it warm.'(490-1). The mention of the cold heart (508) is a reference to the malfunction of the rational soul, which according to Chaucer is housed in this organ [3]. And again, it is his imagination that provides him only with his own phantasms creating the feeling of apathy and isolation from the world. The narrator's comment: 'Hit was gret wonder the Nature / Myght suffre any creature / To have such sorwe, and be not ded' (467-9) implies that the heavy grief the Knight suffers has caused such disintegration of his organism that he is almost on the point of death.

The three descriptions identify the malady that ails each of the characters as virtually the same. Obviously, the Knight in Black's suffering is the greatest of the three, and although the two first are presented in the poem to provide the introduction of his case with greater impact and for its evaluation by means of contrast, nevertheless they play an important role in the poem as determinants of its development and are indispensable components of its overall message. For the time being, it suffices to notice that each part presents this psychosomatic condition as the problem the solution of which will be undertaken in the subsequent dreams.

Causes

The narrator is apparently bewildered by his poor mental condition and is not able to account for its source. He attributes it to 'a sicknesse / That I have suffered this eight yeer, / And yet my boote is never the ner; / For there is physicien but oon / That may me hele; but that is don.' (36-40) The malady is mysterious indeed, but the reference to the one physician that may, but does not want to cure him, might be a conventional way of talking about unrequited love. In other words, for eight years he has been in love with a lady who rejects him, and he cannot find an efficient way of winning her. This may be the cause for the present melancholy and insomnia.

On the other hand, we must realize that it would be most unfortunate for Chaucer, the poet, to identify the state of his own humble mind with the royal mind of

John of Gaunt grieving after the loss of his wife. Therefore, the motif of unsuccessful love affair is the safest, the most fitting, and, as we shall see, very meaningful in the whole structure of the poem.

As far as the narrator's awareness of the causes of his illness is limited (we suppose that there is a lady who rejects him, but we are not given any detailed information), the case of Alcione is one step further in the degree of consciousness: she already supposes that her beloved husband is dead. Her action is aimed at finding out whether this presumption is true or false.

Contrasted with the examples of the narrator and Alcione, the stance of the Black Knight whose the very first words are:

> I have of sorwe so gret won
> That joye gete I never non,
> Now that I see my lady bryght,
> Which I have loved with al my myght,
> Is fro me ded and ys agoon. (475-79)

is striking for its high degree of awareness. Indeed, the Knight is fully cognizant of the death of his beloved wife, and Chaucer breaks this message through at the very beginning of his encounter with the noble mourner.

These three cases present similar causes of the malady - all are related to the situation of a bereaved lover, yet the method of gradation becomes explicit in their arrangement: the Knight's grief is the most subtle and sublime, and his state of knowledge is the greatest of the three; the tentative suspicions of Alcione are still greater in relation to her state of knowledge than that of the narrator.

The beginning of the major vision sets forth a meaningful contrast to the characters' pitiful condition: the harmonious singing of the birds followed by the picturesque description of the beauty of Nature with its bright flowers, huge green trees and joyful animals of all ages, all these strengthen the feeling of their dreadful isolation. But they also suggest that the characters have forgotten the 'goal' of their existence and unlike lower beings have withdrawn from the participation in the divine order of the universe. The principle of this order is defined by Boethius in the *Consolation of Philosophy* as 'the comune love to alle thingis, and alle thinges axen to ben holden by the fyn of good. For elles ne myghten they nat lasten yif thei ne comen nat eftsones ayein, by love retorned, to the cause that hath hem beinge (IV, Metrum 6). Man's love should participate in the binding love of the universe:

> 'This love halt togidres peples joyned with an holy boond, and knytteth sacrement of mariages of chaste loves; and love enditeth lawes to trewe felawes. O weleful were mankynde, yif thilke love that governeth hevene governede yowr corages.' (II, Metrum 8)

The break of this bond between human and spiritual love results in the characters' alienation. The main task will be to bring them back to the 'Law of Kinde' by showing the right place of human love in the context of universal harmony.

On the whole, the problem may be summarised as follows: three characters have been afflicted by the same illness: one is an unsuccessful lover and the other two are bereaved lovers. Their unrequited love has resulted in serious disintegration of the faculties of the animal soul in general, and malfunction of the imagination in particular. This separation from the world of Nature caused by the wrong conception of love involves the distortion of their otherwise natural drive to live, which obviously may result in death.

The treatment

The narrator

The reasons for the narrator's melancholic state of mind has been identified as an unsuccessful love affair. His aim, therefore, would be first - to bring his mind to its proper function, and secondly - to learn how to win his lady. Driven by the two motivations of relieving his sorrow, and perhaps finding useful instructions, he turns to an old book, written in times 'while men loved the lawe of kinde' (56) His choice of a book written in pagan times stresses his desire to find out a solution to his problem without relying on the revelations of the Christian religion, that is while operating only within the faculties that are inherent in man's nature.

The first aim, that of alleviating his sorrow, is partly achieved through reading, since concentration on the fate of the story's heroine helps him forget his own pain. Also, the faculty of imagination is improved by the practical exercise it is forced to perform: collecting the visual data by means of the sense of sight, ordering it through the internal sense, and passing it to the reason. As far as the book fulfils the first need, it hardly satisfies the reader as a source of desired instruction. Its function is that it prevents him from contemplation of his own misery, turning his attention to a matter *ex causa*. Ideally, such examples, though they come from the outside, are designed to bring something in. The narrator's behaviour, however, indicates that he fails to grasp the relevance of Alcione's experience to his own situation. Instead, he expresses his amusement with the figure of the god Morpheus, for it is the first time he comes across such a person, and this is the 'revelation' of the story that he learns. In short, instead of taking what the story teaches about the nature and dangers of love and improving his own behaviour in that respect, the narrator goes on to a playful prayer to the god of sleep. In other words, he lacks the intellectual capacity to find the message of the story, which is strengthened by his limited conception of love, reduced in his mind to nothing more than a love affair, and the mental and physical suffering

which follows when it is not successfully conducted.

The narrator's failures to use Alcione's experience for his own edification, also suggest that he views love purely in earthly terms. In fact, his stance resembles the opinions expressed by the lower classes of birds in *the Parliament of Fowls*, and in particular that of the dove, which is a charming misunderstanding of the idea of courtly love:

> „Nay, God forbede a lovere shulde chaunge!"
> The turtle seyde, and wex for shame al red.
> „Though that his lady evermore be straunge,
> Yit lat hym serve hire ever, til he be ded.
> [...] I wol ben hires, til that the deth me take"
> (*The Parliament of Fowls*, 582-585)

What the dove does is an absurd presentation of the courtly love idea of loyalty and constancy, which he sees as binding not only when a long service does not meet the desired response, but even when the beloved is dead. What is more, the words 'I wol ben hires, til that deth me take' indicate that the dove has taken the third eagle's hyperbolic statement 'At shorte wordes, til that deth me sese, / I wol ben heres,' (*The Parliament...*,481-2) literally. The fact that the dove repeats word for word what the eagle said before, only in the reverse order, evidences the ironic treatment this character has received.

The figure of the narrator in *The Book of the Duchess* shares a number of the dove's features. First, love is according to him associated with constancy (eight years) and with unrewarded suffering which, as we have seen, causes total disintegration of the organism. Secondly, he does not comprehend figurative language: the Black Knight's elaborate metaphor of playing chess with fortune, who stole his queen, meets such a response of the narrator: 'Thogh ye had lost the ferses twelve, / And ye for sorwe mordred yourselve, / Ye sholde be dampned in this cas / By as good ryght as Madea was,'(723-6) and 'But ther is no man alyve her / Wolde for fers make this woo!' (740-1). Again, he is capable only of literal understanding of language. This intellectual inability is also recognized by the Knight himself who several times during the conversation warns his interlocutor: 'Thou wost ful lytel what thou menest; / I have lost more than thow wenest.' Thirdly, he is, like the dove, a person of lower social origin[4] who nevertheless aspires to the life of aristocracy. His status is acknowledged by the Knight when he addresses the dreamer by the pronoun 'thou' instead of 'ye' which befits people of high social or spiritual standing. Also the dreamer's reaction to the first words of the knight: 'Loo! how goodly spak thys knyght, / As hit had be another wyght; / He made hyt nouther towgh ne queynte' (529-31) resembles the satisfaction of a servant that has been kindly treated by his lord.

This identification of the narrator's humble birth is also a certification of his mental limitations, which are fundamental in the context of the poem inasmuch as they jeopardize the perception of all the subtleties of love, notably the spiritual love, which can be expressed only through elaborate and refined language.

Actually, the narrator is far even from a basic desire to comprehend love spiritually. Shortly after he gets acquainted with the story of Alcione's sacrifice of 'good wille, body, herte, and al' (116) in the name of love, he makes an offering to Morpheus:

> Of down of pure dowves white
> I wil yive hym a fether-bed,
> Rayed with gold, and ryght wel cled
> In fyn blak satyn doutremer,
> And many a pilowe, and every ber
> Of cloth Reynes, to slepe softe;
> Hym thar not nede to turnen ofte.
> And I wol yive fym al that falles
> To a chambre; and al hys halles
> I wol do peynte with pure gold
> And tapite hem ful many fold
> Of oo sute. (250-261)

This may seem to be too lengthy a passage to be quoted in one piece, but in the poem itself it appears equally out of place. The full ironic presentation of the narrator's account of his presents is introduced on purpose, as it is only the indulgence in describing the details that betrays him as a hardened materialist.

On the whole, the narrator persona appears to be the embodiment of 'vileynye' tinted by sentimentalism and driven by high ambition, despite which he still remains a thick materialist incapable of any higher conception of love.

Obviously, this self-ironic portrayal that alludes to Chaucer's position at the court is not primarily meant to diminish his status, but it was rather created for the advantage of the poem itself. The presence of the dumb-witted narrator first of all leaves much space for voicing contrasting, that is more lofty conception of love through a much nobler mouth, and secondly, it enables a juxtaposition of different attitudes, which ,by identification of one with 'vileynye' and the other with 'gentillesse', serve as a guide for the audience to distinguish the right from the wrong one.

But let us come back to the narrator, his sickness, and the proposed cure as they appear in the poem. Having lost one chance, the narrator is offered yet another possibility of learning the true nature of love. This is achieved in a supernatural way - by means of a dream vision. The identification of the type of the dream is very important here. At first glance it seems to be a *somnium naturale*, induced by the

disturbance of the balance of the four bodily humours, and the excess of melancholy in particular. That is why the dreamer sees the Knight clad in black. On the other hand, this dream can be classified as *somnium animale*, caused by the reading of a story which still occupies his mind. These two are not obviously the highest types of dream visions, on the contrary - they have nothing to do with divine revelation. But, for such a person as the narrator, they appear to be the only appropriate types that can be experienced. In other words, he is not only unworthy of *somnium celeste*, but he probably does not distinguish them, as, his reading of the Alcione story proves, he does not understand them.

Nevertheless, he is granted a dream which can be a source of real instruction on the nature of love. The teaching is delivered in the long dissertation of the Knight in Black, to whom the dreamer listens, and whom he asks questions. These questions reveal the real interest and purpose of the dreamer's quest. After the first part of the Knight's speech which figuratively presents the nature of the Knight's predicament and its causes (containing the metaphor of playing chess with Fortune), the dreamer who, as we have seen, is unable to comprehend this elaborate language and thus completely misses the point, finds the reason of the Knight's grief (losing the chess queen) inadequate to the degree of melancholy which he recognizes on the basis of its visible marks. To explain the presumed foolishness of his behaviour to the Knight, he juxtaposes the examples of Madea, Phillis, Dido and other lovers who died because of their lovers' betrayal. Being rejected by the beloved, according to him, is the highest calamity that can befall a man, just as it has happened to himself. When the Knight corrects him, warning that he did not get the right message of his speech, the dreamer, knowing that there is some loss and some love concerned, gets again interested and asks the interlocutor to report his story in a plain tale: 'Good sir, telle me al hooly / In what wyse, how, why, and wherfore / That ye have thus youre blysse lore.' (746-8). Apparently, he asks for these details because he sees an opportunity to procure information that he will apply to his own case [5].

Still, he treats the Knight and his beloved as a particular instance of 'having a love affair'. After the long description of Blanche, during which she is established as an abstract embodiment of all chaste feminine love and the Knight's devotions become something more than ordinary service to a single beloved, the dreamer interrupts: 'Hardely, your love was wel beset; / I not how ye myghte have do bet' (1403-4) and adds that it was only to him that Blanche seemed so ideal. Here, as well as some time later (ll. 1112-4), he exhibits total incomprehension of the nature of the instruction that he is receiving.

His mistake is that he does not see, and even does not want to perceive the universality of the Knight's love. In fact, he is rather interested in individual women and indulging in the qualities of the ideal is not an attractive perspective to him: 'Ye han wel told me herebefore, / Hyt ys no nede to reherse it more, How ye sawe hir first, and where.' (1127-9) Instead, he wants to learn from the Knight's case some

particular details of how to win a lady. As he has already experienced the Knight's eloquence, he asks: 'But wolde ye tel me the manere / To hire which was your firste speche, / Therof I wolde you beseche;' (1130-2).In short, he wants to know what the best way to approach a lady is. His other questions also concentrate on the particular stages of a love affair, each time demanding a detailed report of the Knight's doings.

On the whole, the narrator loses his chance that he is granted by being directly confronted with the authoritative instructor. As the Knight repeats several times: 'Yee! thow nost what thow menest; / I have lost more than thou wenest.' The reasons of his failure can be attributed to his base origin and the resultant intellectual incapacity, and general orientation that excludes any refined conception of love. That is why his only comment about the grand vision he has experienced is: 'Thys ys so queynt a sweven' (1330) But thanks to this non-performance, there remains much space for other voices to appear.

Alcione

The story of Alcione is serviceable to both the proem and the main vision. It is also the middle stage between the narrator's and the Knight's case. Alcione, in contrast to the Chaucerian persona is, like the Knight, a person of noble and royal blood, a true example of 'gentillesse'. She is also a devoted wife, able to sacrifice everything in the name of love. When she suspects that her husband is dead, she asks Juno for a dream which would bring information about the fate of her husband. This being granted, she learns about his death, and dies herself. The type of dream that she receives is an *oraculum*, classified as *somnium celeste*, in which her husband (or, rather, Morpheus in the appearance of her husband, but that is a technical detail) appears before her mind's eyes to inform her about his death and instruct her how to behave. This is what he says:

> Awake! let be your sorwful lyf!
> For in your sorwe there lyth no red.
> For, certes, swete, I nam but ded;
> Ye shul me never on lyve yse.
> But, goode swete herte, that ye
> Bury my body, for such a tyde
> Ye mowe hyt fynde the see besyde;
> And farewel, swete, my worldes blysse!
> I preye God youre sorwe lysse.
> To lytel while oure blysse lasteth! (202-211)

It is important here to notice the differences between Chaucer's version of the tale and the Ovidian original, which puts in Seys's mouth the following words:

> Do you recognize your Ceyx, O most wretched wife? or is my face changed in death? Look on me! You will know me then and find in place of husband your husband's shade. [...] Get up, then, and weep for me; put on your mourning garments and let me not go unlamented to the cheerless land of shades.[6]

The details that Chaucer omits are those concerned with the pitiful state of the husband and the order to lament his death. Chaucerian Seys addresses his wife more kindly and discourages her from excessive mourning. He even preys to gods to help her overcome the grief. Clearly, Chaucer indicates that the right solution is to abandon sorrow and go on living. This is, however, what the heroine does not do. On the third morning from the time she learned about Seys's death, she dies. Any other circumstances of her death are not given in the poem, we are left only to tentative conjectures. There seems to be, however, a very simple and causal relation between the death of the husband and the death of the wife. Alcione, just like the narrator though in a different manner, understands love only in particular instances. That is, she equates love with the individual object of love. That is why when he dies, for her there also dies love - the life-sustaining principle in Nature, and when this disappears she is also doomed to die. The narrator's introduction to this tale meaningfully points to the theme the story is preoccupied with:

> And in this bok were written fables
> That clerkes had in olde tyme,
> And other poetes, put in rime
> To rede and for to be in minde,
> While men loved the lawe of kinde. (52-6)

Alcione's case, then, is set as a negative example of a person who refuses to comprehend her love as participating in divine love, which is an act of rebellion against the 'lawe of kinde'.

There is also a second cause of her failure: the appeal to pagan gods, which are only surrogates, lower images of the real good. Even if they are able to provide the supplicant with a dream, their workings undermine its worthiness. Obviously, Chaucer does not deny the validity and truthfulness of this vision, but nevertheless he exposes it to such an ironic treatment, that the whole story becomes almost a burlesque of the dream-vision. Such a handling of the role of the gods is however necessary for the considerable diminishing of their significance, which otherwise would prove an attractive direction to follow, distracting the audience from the desired line of thought. The cursory examination that the Alcione story obtains suggests that it is introduced only as a negative example to prefigure the dangers that the Man in Black will have to struggle not to fall prey to.

The Knight in Black

The Black Knight's behaviour is the summit of 'gentillesse', 'curteysye' and 'franchise'. He is a real aristocrat, both in relation to his lady and, what is more meaningful, towards his interlocutor. He is the most worthy character in the poem. His intellectual distinction is fullest indicated by the linguistic sophistication. His speech is pure, clear, perspicuous, but refined: he uses figurative language to achieve a more precise expression of his emotions and thoughts. His favourite tropes are metaphor, simile and hyperbole (most often hyperoche), but there also appear other figures like anaphora, chiasmus (double), antithesis (used to bring out paradox), subiectio, exsecratio, litotes, polyptoton, correctio, icon (imago) and congeries[7] . It should be noted, however, that his method of presentation first of all aims at lucidity, which prevents the speech from excessive ornamentation, and the rhetorical figures are introduced only when they are needed to establish fuller understanding. Another significant feature is the frequent use of figures and tropes that produce semantic modification and are based on figurative modes of signification. They suggest not only the Knight's sophistication, but also his ability to express as well as to perceive the nuances and intricacies of love.

Such a person is undoubtedly worthy of receiving the highest form of consolation. If we review the methods of treatment to which the two other characters were subjected, the principle of gradation in their arrangement becomes explicit: the narrator's dream is the lowest type, bordering on *somnium naturale* and *somnium animale*; the dream that Alcione receives is already a *somnium celeste*, subcategorized as *oraculum*; thus, the only higher type of vision adequate for the Knight would be *visio*.

But before an examination of the celestial consolation, we must concentrate on the basic treatment of the Knight's malady. As it has been described above, the illness is primarily due to the malfunction of the animal soul, and in particular to the sick 'sorwful imaginacioun' which has refused to collect the sensory data and transmit it to the reason. This causes disconnection of the faculties of the soul: reason, memory and imagination itself. 'Hert hunting', as the Oxford physicians called healing madness, and Chaucer borrows to denote the Knight's treatment, will then involve re-establishing the connection between the mental faculties.

'Hert', the most frequent word in the poem provides the key to the understanding of the method of healing. Among its other meanings it is used by Chaucer to signify intellect, but its another connotation is memory, which once considered its property, was still poetically referred to as 'heart'[8]. The importance of the Knight's memory is further stressed by the scenery in which he is placed, that is a forest, which, again, was a common metaphor in the Middle Ages to talk about memory, but this time with a special emphasis on the malfunction of a confused and disorganized faculty. Moreover, the word 'heart' throughout the poem signifies by

metonymy the beloved Blanche, and, by extension, love in general, thus providing a meaningful link between the Knight's memory, intellect and his idea of love. The re-establishment of the faculties of the Black Knight's mind to their proper functions must, therefore, be carried out in relation to the process of conceptualization of love as taking place in the intellect and aided by the memory.

This process began obviously before Blanche's death. Its early stage can be extracted from the Knight's account of their first encounter. Namely, he falls in love when he looks at her: the first stimuli, then, are perceived by the sense of sight. These are next apprehended by the imagination in the form of a *species*, which already is a unified perception of the object, though still possessing material qualities. This image is then judged and valued by the reason. This stage is so accounted for by the Knight:

> But wherfore that I telle thee
> Whan I first my lady say?
> I was ryght yong, soth to say,
> And ful gret nede I hadde to lerne;
> Whan my herte wolde yerne
> To love, hyt was a gret empryse.
> But as my wyt koude best suffise,
> After my yonge childly wyt,
> Withoute drede, I bessette hyt
> To love hir in my beste wyse, (1089-1097)

Next, the *species* enters the memory:

> So mochel hyt amended me
> That, whan I saugh hir first a morwe,
> I was warished of al my sorwe
> Of al day after, til hyt were eve;
> Me thoghte nothyng myghte me greve,
> Were my sorwes never so smerte.
> And yet she syt so in myn herte,
> That, by my trouthe, y nolde noght,
> For al thys world, out of my thoght
> Leve my lady; noo, trewely! (1102-1111)

It is noteworthy that the Knight's memories of Blanche are still restricted to *species sensibilis*, and evaluated only by the particular intellect, which keeps the image of the beloved as still inseparable from matter but no more dependant on its direct perception. This is only a partly abstracted image, as it still associates love with the particular individual. The characterisation of the Knight's idea of love we define as prior to conversation is strikingly similar to that held by Alcione. But in the Knight's

case, it is the point of departure.

When we first meet the Knight we hear him trying to compose a lament after his wife's death. This song, however, 'a maner song, / withoute noote, withoute song' (471-2), is not a proper, finished product yet: the rhymes are faulty and it altogether lacks elaboration and ornamentation. It is only a raw matter, a gist of what the Knight wants to compose. Normally, at this stage of composition medieval poets would not write it down: it was treated as preparation before *inventio* -a 'wholly mental process of searching one's inventory'[9]. The Knight's helplessness in recollecting the information necessary for the production of the poem refers us back to the image of the forest as disorganized memory resulting in unformed poetical material the Knight is unable to utilize. This initial attempt at making a poem passes unnoticed by the Dreamer quite rightly since it belongs only to the internal dialogue of a working poet with his memory and as such it is not a literary work yet. Besides, in order to become a piece of literature, it needs an audience. But before the Dreamer becomes the Knight's interlocutor and his audience, this episode enables the reader to learn the topic of the future speech: the Knight's song consists of two parts: the first dealing with the Duchess's death, the second trying to describe her. These two subjects bring about sorrow and happiness - two emotions that are not easily reconciled. Moreover, they probably evoke two different topics in the Knight's memory which jeopardizes his endeavour to unite them into one coherent whole - a poem. The reader, then, is prepared to witness the course of accommodation of the new experience of death and the resultant re-arrangement of the memory - all these happening during the process of literary composition.

The Knight's speech has attracted a great attention of the literary critics: C.S. Lewis's opinion is that 'successful panegyric is the rarest of all literary achievements'[10], A.C. Spearing, on the other hand attacks 'its stiffly idealized rendering of courtly love'[11] , also Gardner defines it as 'poetic artifice and figurative, poetically conventional language'[12]. Finally, Lewis notices that 'In this poem the bereaved lover has passed through all the same phases as the dreamer in the *Roman*...[13] and Morgan adds that 'The Knight's tirade is composed chiefly of most of the conventional ideas regarding Fortune found in the literature of the period.'[14]All these critics are right. This is precisely what the Knight does. When he is forced to talk about his wife and about their love, he turns to 'old books' as the source of, and the means of, self-expression and communication. But in the Middle Ages those 'old books' were contained within one's memory, conceived as *thesaurus*, 'storage room', in which all knowledge, derived either from personal experience or from 'auctoritee', is sorted, classified, and kept. The Knight's appeal to his memory is therefore not only an act of recollecting the phantasms originating from the sensory perception of an individual object but a conscious *inventio*, a search for literary images imprinted in his memory, in order to complete his personal experience as well as to support his composition. And many memories of the same thing, as Albertus Magnus writes,

perfect the experience, especially, as Aquinas adds, when they come from sundry sources. [15] Thus, the Knight's 'reliance' on old books gives him access to a higher understanding and greater knowledge. To those books of the Knight's memory we shall now turn.

The first fundamental source for the Knight's shaping of his own story is the *Romance of the Rose*. It is most conspicuous in the account of the love-affair: the Knight assumes the persona of the *Roman*ce, and, as Lewis notices, passes through the same phases of falling in love. Secondly, the first part of the speech which closely corresponds with the first part of the song is cast into an elaborate, extensive metaphor of playing chess with fortune. And thirdly, the Knight's account of his sorrowful state is again faithfully modelled on Reason's definition of love:

> Love, it is an hateful pees,
> A free acqiutaunce, withoute relees,
> A trouthe, fret full of falsheede,
> A sikernesse all set in drede. (ll. 4703 -6)

or:

> And hethe full of maladie,
> And charite full of envie,
> And hunger full of habundaunce,
> And a gredy suffisaunce;
> Delit right full of hevynesse,
> And drerihed full of gladnesse; (ll. 4723-8)

The Knight proceeds in a similar fashion:

> My song ys turned to pleynynge,
> And al my laughtre to pleynynge,
> My glade thoghtes to hevynesse; (ll. 559-601)

or:

> Myn hele ys turned into seknesse,
> In drede ys al my sykernesse;
> To derke ys turned al my lyght
>
> My wyt ys foly, my day ys nyght. (ll. 607-10)

It is important to notice here that the Knight's apparent indebtedness to *the Romance* is restricted to the part written by William of Lorris, first in the sphere of the narrative, and secondly in the sphere of language as continued and explored by Jean de Meun. To begin with the language, Reason's definition of Cupid's kind of love was taken from Alain de Lille's *De planctu naturae* and adapted to Reason's argument to show the linguistic perversion of the god of Love manifested in its operation by antiphrase. Such an abuse corrupts language and impedes the proper reading of both the function

of love in the universe and a text that attempts to discover it.[16] The Knight's lengthy account of his sorrow is structured according to exactly the same oxymoronic procedure. The abuse of language that Jean de Meun carries to extreme further includes the courtly euphemistic diction which refuses to call things by their names. The numerous examples from the *Romance* like the plucking of a rose, besieging a castle, or chasing a rabbit are first to be conjured up by the Knight's chess metaphor. This is a serious charge against the Knight as a man that

> denies that he is a man of Nature, fashioned in art -
> The barbaric alien. Art does not please him, but rather trope.
> And yet such trope could not be called metaphor;
> Rather, the figure sinks into vice.[17]

as Allain de Lille puts it. Thus, the first activation of the memory brings about the material which makes the Knight a servant of the god of Love. This results in a dangerous conception of love that corrupts language in order to render any higher understanding of love non-feasible. Ironically, it manages to unite the experience of death with the experience of love, but in doing so it equates love with death (the response to them is virtually the same), that is to say it blurs and falsifies the two experiences instead of accommodating them through lucid ordering.

The Knight's initial mistake brings us again to the *Consolation of Philosophy,* the end of book I where Philosophy attributes Boethius's lack of self-knowledge to the misfortune that befell him saying that 'the nature of thoughtes deceyved is this, that, as ofte as they casten awey sothe opynouns, they clothen hem in false opynouns, of the whiche falso opynyouns the derknesse of perturbacion waxeth up, that confowndeth the verray insyghte.'(I, Prosa 6). Lady Philosophy diagnosis of the patient's lethargy points to the mistake of forgetting his own place in the hierarchy of being and the goal of humankind, the result of which is his 'descent' to the lower forms, and consequently search for happiness in lower, imperfect goods. The figure of Fortune which dominates book II and the Knight's first speech is a symbol of disorder and mutability of happiness that those earthly things can give. The Knight's espousal of the *Romance of the Rose* 's concept of courtly love is in itself a limitation of the vision of love precisely to those corruptible, sublunary phenomena. But the 'divine spark' that both Boethius and the Knight still possess allows them to see the workings of Fortune as restricted to the earthly appearance of things which placed in a wider context of the divinely ordered universe reveal their participation in the higher, universal good. The Knight's acceptance of Fortune's 'constant inconstancy' that brought such a misfortune to him, should not be read as resignation, but on the contrary, as a vital step in the active search of the spiritual concept of love which purely exists beyond the reality of this world, but in which all human love participates. But in order for this search to bear fruit, the Knight must, like Boethius,

be fully aware of his own position in the order of things and the nature of his knowledge it conditions and gives access to. Philosophy instructs his patient on this subject:

> For the wit comprehendith withoute-forth the figure of the body of the man that is establisschid in matere subgett; but the ymaginacioun comprehendith oonly the figure withoute the matere; resoun surmountith ymaginacioun and comprehendith by an universel lokynge the comune spece that is in the singuler peces.
> (V, Prosa 4)

This is the process of the formation of knowledge that we have witnessed so far: this is the nature of the image of love that the Knight has built and cherishes in his memory. But human cognition enables more than this. Philosophy continues:

> But the eihge of intelligence is heyere, for it surmountith the envyrounynge of the univerite, and loketh over that bi pure subtilte of thought thilke same
> symple forme of man that is perdurablely in the devyne thought. (V, Prosa 4)

And this is the task that the Knight will undertake in the subsequent part of his speech.

It is important to remember that the composition the Knight produces is still based on images recollected from the memory. Although the first attempt proved to be a failure, the phantasms the Knight has stored in his memory while reading the *Romance of the Rose* are by no means limited to the naive reading in accord with William's of Lorris design. At the beginning of the main vision Chaucer defines the literary content of the Knight's memory in terms of pictures painted on walls as 'bothe text and glose, / Of al the Romaunce of the Rose.' (ll. 3304) The reference to glosses here is of great significance since one of the peculiar forms of the dialogue between the authors of the *Roman....* and the reader is a repeated promise to gloss the text in order to facilitate correct reading. This promise, however, was not fulfilled. Apparently, Jean de Meun assumed that either his critique of William of Lorris is clear enough or that readers are capable for providing glosses. But since reading was conceived as a process of internalizing the material, in order to interpret and gloss correctly medieval readers needed a well-functioning memory that would make new and recollect old phantasms. Moreover, the medieval attitude the role of memory in the process of reading was stressed by the conviction that 'the "dicta et facta memorabilia", exemplary deeds and works of others impressed into our memories like a seal into wax, shape our moral life in shaping our memories.'[18] In the account of the Knight's service to the god of Love, Chaucer is careful to indicate one profound difference between the Lover of the *Romance of the Rose* and the Knight. During the second conversation with Reason the Lover rejects his interlocutor's proposal to read poets in order to comprehend love saying that he has no liking for poetical metaphors

and stories and only after his love affair is finished will he turn to books (*Romance of the Rose*, ll. 7165-7198). The Knight, however, although he is quick to assert that love was his 'first craft', nevertheless admits having studied other arts and letters. We also know that he used to compose poems himself. Thus, we may assume that he Knight's memory apart from sensorily-perceived phantasms of the beloved women contains also literary images of love other than those created by simplistic reading of the *Romance*, and that recollection and composition will activate both types of experience.

In medieval theory and practice the processes of recollection and composition were based on the activities of separating, dividing, combining, interpreting and judging the material. In the Knight's case. when the idea of love is sill in the process of formation, recollection and simultaneous composition will first of all involve the division of the object of thought into smaller parts which in turn will be associated and combined with other ideas. Thus, the Knight's description of Blanche is a total of smaller units, each headed by a memory of a singular *res*, e.g. beauty of Blanche's eyes, loyalty, treachery, and elaborated with literary images, e.g. of Penelope and Lucrece in connection with the Duchess's loyalty. The longer the Knight speaks, the more direct literary examples he gives to amplify his concepts. And so by the process of association, comparison and contrast, the species of his beloved is abstracted and thus freed from the remaining materiality. Moreover, the projection of the literary tradition onto his own beloved and the story of his own love affair must certainly impede any further consideration of love as confined to any individuality. The process of abstraction also clears the concept of love from the elements of passion that until this point accompanied the Knight's understanding of love.

Taking into account that this refinement is achieved by intellectual powers solely, the only possibility is that this change has been caused in the active intellect by itself. This *intellectus* is the contemplative in man, the one that comprehends universals and sees directly into the truth of God. In the case of the Knight, his sudden change in the understanding is not due to any external stimuli as his imagination still does not transmit any information from the exterior. Similarly, as in the case of madmen speaking truth, it must come through the activation of *intellectus agens*. But, as Avicenna maintains, even sudden inspirations would disappear were they not associated with images already stored in memory.[19] Thus, the concept of love that the Knight arrives with, is the one corresponding with the idea of love that exists in the mind of God, but based on, and worked out from, the various experiences of love he drew from his memory. And this is the true revelation, the *visio* that surpasses even Alcione's *oraculum*. To sum up, the Knight's achievement is not only the consolation that springs from the spiritual understanding of love, but also the accomplishment of his knowledge which turns into wisdom.

This newly acquired understanding helps the Knight to reconcile with the death of his wife by elevating love from the restrictions of the earthly conditions to the spiritual principle governing the world. But in order for this experience to be rightly stored, the Knight must plainly verbalize the acknowledgement of his loss. The final 'She ys ded!' goes back to the argument from the *Romance of the Rose*, to show that the Knight has rejected William's of Lorris view of earthly and sensual love, and finally is able to abandon the falsifying courtly diction. This allows to place this experience and the new knowledge in the right 'compartments' in the memory. But inasmuch as the right concept of love enables the orderly re-arrangement of the memory, it also shows that just like human love leads to divine love, human intellect participates in the divine intelligence. The knowledge and experience of perfection of the mind help to re-establish connections between its faculties and bring them back to their proper functions. This is also the form of consolation that Stephen Varvis postulates for the patient from the *Consolation of Philosophy* suggesting that the words 'consolation' and 'consolidation' derive from the same Latin root.[20] But unlike Boethius, Chaucer does not place the greatest emphasis on the intellect. As Colin Wilcockson notices the horn-call that concludes the 'hert-hunting' does not specify, as it should, whether the hart was slain. [21] If we interpret the 'hert' as intellect, it becomes clear that Chaucer is especially reticent in relation to this subject. He adopts a similar stance in 'The Knight's Tale' where he refuses to discuss what happened to Arcite's intellect after death. But in this case Chaucer is motivated by practical considerations. Namely, his aim is to stress the function of memory, not only because it is indispensable for maintaining knowledge and supporting the operation of the intellect, but also for the fact that with the new concept of love stored in the memory Blanche now 'lives' in the Knight's remembrance. The Knight thus accounts for this: 'And yet she syt so in myn herte / That, by my trouthe, y nolde noght / For thys world out of my thoght / Leve my lady; noo, trewly!' (1108-11) and 'Nay, while I am alyve her, / I nyl foryete hir never moo' (1124-5). But since the Knight's speech is in itself a piece of literature, the stress laid on memory gains additional importance of being an appeal to the audience for memorizing the poem, thus remembering the Duchess and apprehending the true idea of love.

Conclusion

The Book of the Duchess, although an occasional poem only, is nevertheless intended for moral and spiritual instruction of the audience. The poem's aim is the glorification of love, both courtly and spiritual, since, as we have seen, human and divine love work by the same principle, establishing hidden, yet powerful system of correspondences between things. But to comprehend this animating dependence a person, like the Black Knight, must achieve the understanding of the true nature of

love. The success is due to the divine element in human intelligence, but most importantly, *The Book of the Duchess* points to human memory as a storehouse and source of personal experience and knowledge derived from literature. In this way it also elevates and commemorates the figure of the dead Duchess who by being the object of perception and thought gradually leads the Knight to the conceptualization of love from the divine perspective. Since this subtle conception of love is difficult for mortals of ordinary mental capacities to follow undisturbed, Chaucer introduces to the poem the figure of a narrator who always misunderstands. Also his baseness and thickness further strengthen the audience's identification with the Black Knight's idea of love. Medieval aristocratic audience could not miss this point.

Notes

[1] Considerable amount of data was gathered by Edmund Reiss, 'Ambiguous Signs and Authorial Deceptions in Fourteenth Century Fictions', in *Sign, Sentence, Discourse, Language in Medieval Thought and Literature*, Julian N. Wasserman, Lois Roney, eds., (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1989)

[2] Larry D. Benson, ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed., (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987) is used throughout for quotations from Chaucer's poetical works and his translations, which will be cited in the text.

[3] 'Oonly the intellect, wihtouten moore, / That dwelled in his herte syk and sore, / Gan faillen whan the herte felte deeth.' (the Knight's Tale, 2803-5)

[4] There is no specific reference in the text of the poem to the social background of the narrator. The idea of love, however, that he exercises identifies him as belonging to the same class as the dove from '*The Parliament...*'. Besides, all the other features that are enumerated above stand in stark contrast to the idea of 'gentillesse'. Although the concept of 'gentrye' attracts lots of attention in other Chaucer's works, this time the indirect allusion to the division between 'vileynye' and 'curteysye' is in fact an appeal to the conventional knowledge every medieval audience would possess.

[5] It is also possible that due to the rebuke he has received from the Knight, and because of the bewilderment that the speech caused in him, he recognizes the Knight as a person endowed with greater wisdom than his own, thus a real authority capable of providing instruction.

[6] *Metamorphoses*, trans. Frank Justus Miller, in *The Loeb Classical Library* (New York, 1926), II, 653-64. from Joseph J. Morgan, Jr., *Chaucer and the Theme of Mutability*, (The Hague, Paris: Mouton, 1969), pp. 94-5

[7] Examples from lines: 569-71; 585-6; 600-13; 689-90; 616; 650 and 813; 896-901; 1222-26; 963-965; 1035-40, respectively.

[8] For medieval English, Latin, Italian and French use of 'heart' for 'memory;' see Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) p. 49

[9] Carruthers, 1990, p. 194

[10] C.S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love,* (Oxford, New York: OUP, 1958), p. 169

[11] Maurice Hussey, A.C. Spearing, James Winny, *An Introduction to Chaucer*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1965), p.122

[12] Gardner, 1977, p. 139

[13] Documented in Lewis, 1958

[14] Joseph J. Morgan, Jr., *Chaucer and the Theme of Mutability*, (the Hague, Paris: Mouton, 1969) p. 97

[15] Carruthers, 1990, p. 67

[16] As interpreted by Maureen Quilligan 'Allegory and Allegoresis' in *Allegory. Myth and Symbol*, Morton W. Bloomfield, ed., (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1981) and *The Language of Allegory*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1979) pp. 235 ff.

[17] In Jon Whitman, 'From the *Cosmographia* to the *Divine Comedy*' in *Allegory. Myth and Symbol*, Morton W. Bloomfield, ed., 1981, p. 75

[18] Carruthers, 1990, p.71

[19] Ibid., p.69

[20] Stephen Varvis, *The "Consolation" of Boethius*, (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1991) p. 58

[21] Explanatory Notes in Larry D. Benson, ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987), p. 975

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Paulina Reiter

Dead End.*

> Linguistically, the author is never more than the instance writing, just as I is nothing other than the instance saying I: language knows a 'subject' not a 'person' and this subject (...) suffices to make language 'hold together', suffices that is to say, to exhaust it.[1]

To talk about experience in order to create self is to transform it into fiction and that is the only possibility left for Jacob Horner - the hero and narrator of *The End of the Road* by John Barth. When Mythotherapy fails he withdraws from the world and is put on the therapy for terminal case - Scriptotherapy. It is in the process of myth-making that he can find a cure for his immobilization. Role assignment is a way to find identity. The book we read is one of the accounts of Jacob Horner, one of his incarnations, his life-story and his realization that if he can find no values in life in which he can believe and according to which he can live, he can maybe find those values in a representation of life. He becomes an author, an audience, and a critic to discover that language cannot exist beyond itself.[2] So he takes it all the way he can - to the end of the road.

"In a sense I am Jacob Horner" begins the narrator questioning his identity and involving himself in an analysis of being. Who says thus? Who is Jacob Horner? In what sense is he Jacob Horner? In my essay I would like to examine the entire book through the prism of this one statement.

The hero of *The End of the Road*, Jacob Horner, is supposed to remind us of Little Jack Horner, who also sits in a corner and rationalizes.[3] However Horner is also somebody who puts horns on, who cuckolds. Already in the beginning we have to consider the implications and collocations of a name. "In a sense I am Jacob Horner" questions the relationship between the label and the entity - especially the name and the man. Assigning characteristics suggested by the name to a person is

* The paper has been submitted for the course 136: *20th-century American Writers of the South* run by Ms Ewa Łuczak, MA.

highly artificial. The name is the label that places the entity within society and the universe, but the mental entity may, from one or more stances, range far from these enclosures and speculate about them. The artificiality of the relationship between the name and the man suggests also that the Jacob Horner who writes the story is only in a sense the Jacob Horner who lived the series of events. The only "I" that he can recognize is his name.[4] In a sense, therefore, he is not Jacob Horner. He is anyone he wants to be:

> It was never very much of a chore for me, at various times, to maintain with perfectly equal unenthusiasm contradictory, or at least polarized, opinions at once on a given subject. . . . Jacob Horner - owl, peacock, chameleon, donkey, and popinjay, fugitive from a medieval bestiary - was at the same time giant and dwarf, plenum and vacuum, and admirable and contemptible. (p.120)

He is talking about various separate persons he can identify in himself including non-persons:

> It was as if there were no Jacob Horner today (p.35)

or:

> On those days Jacob Horner, except in a meaningless metabolistic sense, ceased to exist, for I was without a personality. (p.36)

Unable to choose a relative value and act according to it Jacob Horner sees all values as equally attractive, though none of them significant, and chooses one and then another and another as his whims require:

> When one is faced with such a multitude of desirable choices, no one choice seems satisfactory for very long by comparison with the aggregate desirability of all the rest, though compared to any one of the others it would not be found inferior. (p.3)

In psychology, this state of mind is known as an approach-approach conflict, and minor examples of it are not rare. Barth himself once offered a personal example to a student who was to a student who was interviewing him.

> The great difficulty of making choices if you have any imagination... is a kind of autobiographical element in [my] books. I've often found simple choices terribly difficult. I think I mentioned somewhere the relative ease of buying a book... if you're in a store where there are only a few books, and the terrible job of deciding on a book if you are in a store where there are a great many. That's a story of my life. You imagine so many alternatives to each position that it makes you dissatisfied with any.[5]

However, Horner does not call his state of mind an approach-approach conflict. He supplies a more thematically meaningful name "cosmopsis" - the cosmic

view. One who has the broad view of things can think of nothing to do that accomplishes anything. Moreover, cosmopsis is a realization that nothing is worth doing, and that no choice is important, because choosing is unimportant. Jake is a vacuum. He is empty of emotions and the usual human feelings, so he absorbs the ideas and feelings of others. He is too much aware of the relativity of values to choose a moral code or a method of action that will give him what we call character, particularly when compared with the fierce and determined existentialism that defines Joe as a man who is known by the stand he takes. Jake can find no reason for taking a stand.

The therapy for this illness is Mythotherapy, which prescribes an oversimplification of complexity for the purpose of comprehension. The purpose of it is to establish a definable "I", that is to make a deliberate choice of essence. The Doctor says that "human existence precedes human essence, if either of the terms really signifies anything; and that a man is free not only to choose his own essence but to change it at will." (p.88). Jake has to assume a role, any role, to adopt quite arbitrarily a character which will be an alternative to the nonidentity of cosmopsis. "This kind of role-assigning is myth-making, and when it's done consciously or unconsciously for the purpose of aggrandizing or protecting your ego... it becomes Mythotherapy." (p.89)

Ready to accept different roles Horner begins to play the role of the third in the triangle of ideas and emotions. He goes to Wicomico, which becomes a battleground for the fight between Self and Non-Self, Identity and Protoplasm, The Real and the Vacuum, Order and Chaos, God and the Devil. Jake of course becomes the latter. Therefore the relationship between him, Joe and his wife Rennie becomes allegorical. Satan and God are in conflict over a human soul.vi Morgan married Rennie because she begged him to recreate her in his image: "She had peered deeply into herself and found nothing". She says "I threw out every opinion I ever owned, because I couldn't defend them. I think I completely erased myself... right down to nothing, so I could start over again. And you know, I don't think I'll ever really get to be what Joe wants (p.62). She explains Joe's demanding behavior through a fantasy which depicts him as divine: "I think of Joe like I'd think of God" (p.62). Incredible as this fantasy is she persists in it because it is the only way she
can deal with Morgan's world, especially now that Horner has been added to it.

> I thought Joe had invented the Devil to test me ... But this Devil scared me, because I wasn't that strong yet, and what was a game for Joe was a terrible fight for me ... Then when Joe saw how it was, he told me that the Devil wasn't real, and that he had conjured up the Devil out of his own strength,just like God might do (p.68)

Horner however chooses to play this role of the Devil. Once Rennie gives him the cue to play Morgan's double he takes up the role. He destroys Rennie's faith in Joe

showing her Joe masturbating and picking his nose at the same time in front of the mirror. It is exactly this, like eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge, which shatters Eve's - Rennie's illusions. She tells Joe of the sexual relationship with Jake as Eve told Adam of the serpent's persuasion. Jake makes a great deal of articulation because talking was Satan's method of seduction. Satan was the first grand liar and the first storyteller.

"In a sense I am Jacob Horner" implies existentialist problems that are to be raised in the novel. It already points to the inability to achieve finality and awareness because there is no finality or awareness in the world which it records. For according to existentialism everything in this world is tentative, relative or meaningless. Existentialism itself is parodied in the Doctor's various systems - Sartre as preparation for therapy - as well as the various systems of psychotherapy. But existentialism is mostly mocked in the figure of Joe. He takes the view that, in an ultimately meaningless universe, the one meaningful existence is man's. Morgan rejects the ready-made, ill-fitting cultural roles that delude men into feeling the sensations of identity and reality. He says there are only subjective values: "In my ethics, the most a man can ever do is be right from his point of view." Jacob Horner in contrast is a nihilist, who denies the existence of a fundamental human identity: "Nobody's authentic". Every choice of action is a piece of acting, the assumption of a role, a mask, an arbitrary pretense of identity.

But once Jake Horner involves himself emotionally in Rennie's problems, the affair becomes too complex for him to choose the proper role to play. Mythotherapy fails. So now Jacob Horner retreats to the Doctor's newly relocated farm, where he is writing his story "at 7:55 in the evening of Tuesday, October 4, 1955, upstairs in the dormitory" (p.2). The Doctor is quite likely waiting for the manuscript: with Horner too far gone for Mythotherapy to be of help, Scriptotherapy has evidently been required. And since Horner started his relationship with Joe and Rennie by taking a job as prescriptive grammar teacher at Wicomico State Teachers College where Joe taught, it is appropriate that his newest therapy has to do with words and grammar. Scriptotherapy is now the means for him to learn how to choose his own essence, but also how to change it at will:

> As everyone is necessarily the hero of his own life story ... fiction isn't a lie...but a true representation of the distortion that everyone makes of life. This kind of role-assigning is myth-making, and when it's done consciously or unconsciously for the purpose of aggrandizing or protecting your ego... it becomes Mytho-therapy.(p.89)

This true representation of a distortion is an attempt to represent not life directly, but a "representation of life"[7].

Jacob Horner is not only an actor but an audience and a critic, too. Paradoxically Horner's disease sharpens his awareness of the distinction between

these roles. Even when most affected by Cosmopsis he can watch himself play the role of the sick man: "I shook my head - at the same moment aware that I was watching myself act bewildered".(p.78). His detachment shows his realization of the difference between the self and the other.

> In a way, therefore, literature is only "in a sense" a representation of life. Barth and his narrator Horner are fully aware of the artificiality of this medium. The emphasis on the artifice in *The End of the Road* is embodied by the figure of Laocoon - "the set of that mouth was often my barometer, told me the weight of the day " (p.21)

One of the narrative devices that calls attention to its fictiveness is Horner's method of summarizing his lengthy arguments with the Morgans. He points to the fact that his report is a selection. He says:

> ...it may well be that Joe made no such long coherent speech as this all at once ... I put it down here in the form of one uninterrupted whiz - bang for convenience's sake, both to illustrate the nature of his preoccupations and to add a stroke or two to my picture of the man himself (p.47)

or presenting Rennie's confessions:

> This is what she told ... edited and condensed.

Horner's chapter headings are another mocking of convention. The norm is that they should inform readers what they are to expect. In Barth's book they are broken off sentences which have no meaning unless he goes on with the chapter they begin. "It is as if Horner, unable to maintain a sense of personal unity, must begin again with each chapter, in the hope that the narrative will provide him with an identity." [8] These chapter headings can also be perceived as an element of an exercise in Scriptotherapy. It is almost as though the Doctor gave his patient a part of a sentence and asked him to develop the story in no more than six pages for the next day. They are guidelines that should help Jacob Horner omit the problem of choosing what to write about.

Scriptotherapy is in its rules similar to Mythotherapy.

> Assigning names to things is like assigning roles to people: it is necessarily a distortion, but it is a necessary distortion if one would get on with the plot. (p.142)

Horner becomes a Writer. He seems no longer a nihilist; he has found a more or less imperfect value, but a value nevertheless, and it may indicate the first stage of remobilization, of dealing practically with the world.

> It is the only thing I can think of about which I ever had, with any frequency at all, the feelings one usually has for one's absolutes. To turn experience into speech - that is, to

> classify, to categorize, to conceptualize, to grammarize, to syntactify it- is always a betrayal of experience, a falsification of it; but only so betrayed can it be dealt with at all, and only in so dealing
> with it did I ever feel a man, alive and kicking.(p.119)

But then again it may indicate none of this. With Jacob Horner you are never sure of anything. Only in a sense is he Jacob Horner, and typically he closes his section on the value of articulation: "In other senses, of course, I don't believe this at all". "His distortion of the world in order to describe it, his distortion of people's characters in order to keep from being paralyzed among them - these betrayals of experience, these falsifications of it mirror each other." [9] Writing has become an image of living, and living an image of writing.

However, Horner has no values to believe in wholeheartedly. Action is difficult for him just as accurate writing is almost impossible. While indeed it is "enormously refreshing to articulate at all" it is also true that all feelings are completely particular and individual and that trouble starts when one attempts to label them with common nouns such as "love" or "abhorrence". Things can be signified by common nouns only if one ignores the differences between them.But it is precisely this difference that makes the nouns inadequate.

> The apparent ambivalence of Rennie's feelings about me ... was only a pseudo-ambivalence whose source was in the language, not in the concepts symbolized by the language ... What Rennie felt was actually neither ambivalent nor even complex; it was both single and simple, like all feelings, but like all feelings it was also completely particular and individual, and so the trouble started only when she attempted to label it with common nouns such as love or abhorrence ... Rennie loved me, then, and hated me as well!
> Let us say she x-ed me.(p.141)

The next step is to use "x" for all common nouns, and the step after that is to lapse into silence. For Horner to continue writing about nihilism, he would have to cease writing. He had demonstrated that words are a simplification of things, a distortion of them, hence that they cannot transform reality onto paper. Scriptotherapy ended for him in the same nihilistic impasse as Mythotherapy. He carried the language to the end of the road.

Notes

All the quotations with assigned page numbers come from:
John Barth *The End of the Road*, Bentham Books, New York 1978

[1] Barthes, 1984, p.145

[2] Russel, 1983

[3] Euck, 1965 p.12

[4] Tharpe, 1977, p.25,

[5] Prince, 1968, p.57.

[6] for development of this see also Kerner, 1980 p.91-96

[7] Barth J. *Literature of Exhaustion*

[8] Majdiak, 1980

[9] Majdiak, ibid.

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”Beautiful as the accidental meeting of an umbrella and a sewing machine on the dissection table”[1]: the Irresistible Charm of the Grotesque in Katherine Dunn's ”Geek Love”*

Edgar Allan Poe's definition of the grotesque as involving "much of the beautiful, much of the wanton, much of the bizarre, much of the terrible, and a little of that which might have excited disgust"[2] seems to be the most adequate one in the case of *Geek Love.* In order to break stereotypical conventions, the grotesque mingles traditional forms creating an effect of paradox and absurdity resulting from the clash of totally disparate elements. That is why the grotesque, with its eclectic, mongrel-like nature, stands at the margins of experience, explores the extremes of human creativity and imagination, moves beyond the boundaries of what is considered art and frequently borders on kitsch. It takes elements from the familiar world and transforms them through parody and exaggeration in such a way as to render them strange and horrifying, which accounts for the essential paradox of the grotesque: that it is both liberating and tension-producing at the same time. As a grotesque, *Geek Love,* is an embodiment of nearly absolute trash. It involves contamination, intellectual perversion, blasphemy, and aesthetic heresy. Already the first chapter, where Aloysius Biniewski describes his wife, may appall and nauseate the more sensitive readers.

> She fluttered around like a dainty bird, and when she caught those ugly squawking hens you couldn't believe she'd actually do anything. When she went right ahead and geek'em that whole larruping crowd went bonzo wild. There never was

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such a snap and twist of the wrist, such a vampire flick of the jaws over a neck or such a champagne approach to the blood. She'd shake her star-white hair and the bitten-off chicken head would skew off into the corner while she dug her rosy little fingernails in and lifted the flopping, jittering carcass like a golden goblet, and sipped! Absolutely sipped at the wriggling guts! She was magnificent, a princess, a Cleopatra, an elfin queen!
That was your mama in the geek pit.[3]

According to Wolfgang Kayser, "the grotesque is a game with the absurd, in the sense that the grotesque artist plays, half laughingly, half horrified, with the deep absurdities of existence."[4] Interestingly enough, the two notions characteristic of the grotesque: heterogeneity and the absurd, describe very well much of the post-modern culture. This is probably one reason for the popularity of grotesque images in contemporary art.

As a post-modern text, *Geek Love* uses elements of the grotesque in a very apparent way. One may be tempted to look for them only in the physical abnormalities of the main characters. Yet, it seems that the concept of the grotesque in this novel is much more complicated and, possibly, shapes the entire text.

It is not surprising that the setting of *Geek Love* includes a circus. As a collection of all kinds of abnormalities, the circus is traditionally considered a world of the absurd and the comic. It is an almost mythical place in which the usual order of things is reversed, for example, man controls dangerous animals and is able to balance on a trapeze. The audience contemplates a demonstration of humanity freed from the constrains of the culture within which the performance takes place. In this way, by emphasising the dichotomy between the cultural norms and the absence of norms, the circus plays a role similar to the grotesque. The audience's response is fascination and enthusiasm produced by the sudden freedom from culture, accompanied by the fear that this potential subversion may be generalised. It is probably this very relevance of the circus and of the grotesque to the culture that accounts for its popularity as well as its partial rejection by the high-brow culture.[5]

The so-called freak shows used to be an important part of the circus culture. As Robert Bogdan claims in his book *Freak Show* "although they are now on the contemptible fringe, from approximately 1840 through 1940 the formally organised exhibition for amusement and profit of the people with physical or mental abnormalities, both alleged and real, was an accepted part of American life." [6] Such human wonders as dwarfs, giants, armless and legless people, albinos, and Siamese twins were very common among exhibited humans. In fact, it is possible that Katherine Dunn based her ideas on real cases.

For example, the Hilton sisters were Siamese twins well known in the 1920s and 1930s. They were presented as attractive, engaging celebrities with exceptional musical talents[7], which makes them similar to Elly and Iphy from *Geek Love*. Yet,

the Binewski twins seem to be an improved version with their "upper bodies joined at the waist and sharing one set of hips"(p.51), compared to the Hilton sisters who were joined only at the buttocks. It is also possible that Dunn drew her inspiration from another case, namely Myrtle Corbin, "the Four -Legged Woman." [8] Notably, even though Siamese twins had identical genetic heritage and were raised in as similar social environments as is possible, according to most accounts, they had strikingly different personalities. However, the freaks from *Geek Love* seem much more odd and abnormal than even the strangest real cases.

Perhaps another source of Dunn's inspiration is Shakespeare's *The Tempest.* It seems that she alludes to the play not only through the motto and the name of Oly's daughter. It is also the vision of the world as a fusion of reality and imagination that makes both texts similar. In *The Tempest* normal characters coexist with imaginary ones, such as Caliban or Ariel in much the same way as ordinary, or at least probable, parents coexist side by side with their highly improbable children in *Geek Love.* In this light, it is conceivable that the image of Biniewski's Fabulon is to same extent based on the circus culture while it is also the product of the author's fantasy.

One could look perhaps for further similarities between *The Tempest* and *Geek Love*. The motto chosen by Katherine Dunn : "This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine" is the way in which Prospero describes Caliban. The son of the witch Sycorax deserves special attention since he is the only freak in the play. Both his nasty character and his looks seem to point towards Arty from *Geek Love* as his equivalent. Trinculo from *The Tempest* cries out at the sight of Caliban: "What have we here? a man or a fish. Then he describes him as 'being but half a fish and half a monster" [9]

The figure of Aloysius Binewski, on the other hand, may be an allusion to Prospero since both of them are fathers engaged in experiments from the borderline of science and magic. Yet these similarities cannot be taken any further; the ground situations in both texts and the final resolutions are completely different. However, one has to remember that the grotesque always involves a polyphony of voices and so it cannot refer to only one source, being a mixture of totally different and disharmonious elements.

Such multifaceted referentiality is in fact the achievement of the Baroque perspectivism. In *The Friday Book* [10] John Barth interprets the disharmonious variety of Baroque art as an attempt to exhaust all the possibilities existing in fiction, no matter how nonsensical or absurd they may seem. This montage technique of layered and interconnecting motifs produced in Baroque dramas a scenic conglomerate rife with ironizing about the nature and intentions of art. Similarly, the appearance of the picaresque mode with its wealth of disparate, often contradictory elements signalled a new approach in prose.

Baroque artists rejected the older chivalric and pastoral aestheticsas mendacious and comic, refusing to ignore the low, mean, deviant, ridiculous, criminal in human affairs. Assuming the point of view of a delinquent or fool constituted a major literary mode of the seventeenth century. The Baroque first-person protagonist who bore all the scars of a desperate outcast: a thief or an illusionist, went about discovering secrets just under the surface of things. Notably, such fusion of the roles of the criminal, clown, and artist appears also in *Geek Love*. Yet, it seems to serve there a more complex function than just the satirical exposure of social realities, as in Baroque novels.

Following the traces of the Baroque influence in Katherine Dunn's novel one arrives at one of the most fascinating adaptations of the idea of anti-society in that period: the Ship of Fools or the Ship of Picaresque Life, going back to the Middle Ages prototype of Biniewski's Fabulon. On its board it carried such archetypical female figures as Celestina, an energetic whore and another antiheroine, her daughter Justina. Significantly, the mythological identities of those Spanish picaras are those of witches; their male counterparts were demonic antiheros or devils, rather than ordinary rogues. Fascination with the stereotyped antihero, accompanied by the entrance of a new demonic persona into fiction, no longer in direct juxtaposition to God as in mediaeval plays, marks the appearance of new values in Baroque consciousness: intransigent individualism and the freedom of lawlessness, which are also the key issues in the circus world of *Geek Love*. Such similarities may encourage the reader to look for diabolic elements in the novel.

In *The Grotesque in Art and Literature*, a most thorough attempt to define the nature of the grotesque, Wolfgang Kayser comes to the conclusion that: "the grotesque is an attempt to invoke and subdue the demonic aspects of the world."[11] Curiously, the common belief has it that the satanic element is also very much present in the circus, where men overcome their limitations though magic and deception. Abnormalities and deformities of the human body are also the domain of the devil. In films for example, villains are usually marked by various disfigurements and disabilities, as in pictures made for children (Captain Hook in *Peter Pan*, or common images of witches). In horror films, the association of evil with disability is even more apparent. Horror film "monsters" are scarred, deformed, disproportionately built, hunched over, exceptionally large or small, or mentally ill. Such representations seem to be well grounded in western culture: the same, or even more absurd images can be found in Medieval paintings, such as *Last Judgement, Garden of Earthly Delights*, or *Hell* by Hieronymus Bosh. The artist shared this taste for monsters with his age, which was fascinated by the grotesque and the unnatural. In an engraving, Durer recorded for posterity the likeness of an eight legged pig born in 1496, while Sebastian Brant published woodcuts announcing monstrous births and similar prodigies. These were often interpreted as portents of impending disaster sent from

God as punishment for sinful mankind. It seems worth noting that the devils in Bosch's pictures frequently play musical instruments, which possessed erotic connotations; lust was often termed the music of the flesh. [12] In this light, interpreting the twins from *Geek Love* as devils seems quite justified. Yet, the nature of music is double sided, as music is also the speech of the angels. Since "Iphy was all melody and Elly was rhythm exclusively", (p.51) their duality may be read as reflecting the duality of music. Iphy, "who was kind to everybody" (p.51) is responsible for its divine nature and Elly, with "her hard and toothy soul" responsible(p.51) for its devilish part.

Yet, it is not only the anatomical abnormality of main characters in *Geek Love* that betrays their demonic nature. Their bodies are not only strange; they are strange in ways reminiscent of Christian imagery. Norval Sanderson's enquiries into the subject: "Why Only Red-Haired Women Work in the Midway of Biniewski's Fabulon" (p.222) is perhaps intended to draw readers' attention to the symbolic significance of personal appearance, although, the novel does not answer the question .One may however consider the possible meanings of red, which is traditionally considered a color of madness, Satan, and fire (the last of these connotations seems especially relevant because it foretells the way Biniewski's Fabulon is destroyed, which in itself may be associated with the Apocalyptic end of the world.) The figure of the Fly Roper wearing bright red boots may, on the other hand, be an allusion to Beelzebub as the king of flies, especially as the character is described in an extremely loathsome and ridiculous way . In this light, Miranda's tail and the fact that she lives on the thirteenth floor are almost certainly signs of her diabolic nature, all the more absurd and grotesque in the context of her immaculate conception .

One may wonder about the meaning of the word dragon, which appears only in the titles of Book II and Book IV. In many texts the dragon is a metaphor for Satan from the *Apocalypse.* At the beginning of her collection of stories, *A Good Man Is Hard to Find,* Flannery O'Connor, the prominent American Gothic writer, quotes St. Cyril of Jerusalem: "The Dragon is by the side of the road, watching those who pass. Beware lest he devour you. We go to the Father of Souls, but it is necessary to pass by the Dragon. " This figure of the diabolic dragon may be associated with Arturo, the most evil character in *Geek Love*. The title of Book II: *Your Dragon - Care, Feeding, and Identifying Fewmets* clearly relates to him and to the way he is perceived by his sister Oly, who is also the narrator. The title of the seventh chapter of this book: *Green - as in Arsenic, Tarnished Spoons, and Gas-Chamber Doors,* which describes Arty's attempt to kill his brother out of jealousy, is also very revealing. Green is both the color of jealousy and of dragons. Arturo's looks might also provide evidence for his demonic origin, as his cylindrical silhouette may be associated with that of a snake. "His hands and feet were in the form of flippers that sprouted directly from his

torso intervening arms or legs". (p.7)

Moreover, the worm-like posture of Arturo is in a way the opposite of the image of crucified Christ. The very shape of the cross which become a major symbol of Christianity stressed the presence of limbs: hands and feet gained an almost metaphoric meaning as the most essential parts of Christ's crucified body.

Arturo's behaviour confirms this hypothesis: "His favourite trick at the ages of three and four was to put his face close to the glass, bulging his eyes out at the audience, opening and closing his mouth like a river bass, and then to turn his back and paddle off, revealing the turd trailing from his muscular little buttocks.(...) As the years passed, Arty donned trunks and became more sophisticated, but it's been said, with some truth, that his attitude never really changed."(p.8) As a child he was a stupid, clowning devil of the medieval carnival, but then he became a true embodiment of evil powers.

If one adds to this picture personality betrayed by statements such as: " The truth is always an insult or a joke. Lies are generally tastier. We love them."(p.223) the connotations with Antichrist become quite justified. Arturo indeed "devours" his victims like the Dragon from O'Connor's quotation.

Arturism - the quasi-religious cult established by Arty, which offered "earthly sanctuary from the aggravations of life" (p.227) through "Peace, Isolation, and Purity"(p. 227) is a highly absurd, heretic parody of Christianity. The gospel according to St Matthew's contains a passage on the amputation of limbs, which becomes a major issue in Arturism: "If your right hand is your undoing, cut it off and fling it away; it is better for you to lose one part of your body than for the whole of it to go to hell." [13]

Yet, the distorted image of Christianity in this novel is even more complicated since the father of the family, Aloysius Biniewski, possesses some divine features. He is a crazy scientist-experimenter, fascinated with "human mechanics"(p.118). While visiting the Rose Garden in Oregon he realised that one could design children in much the same way as one grows roses ."The roses started him thinking, how the oddity of them was beautiful and how that oddity was contrived to give them value. 'It just struck me - clear and complete all at once - no long figuring about it.' He realised that children could be designed."(p.9) His act of creation makes him almost a God-like figure. One of the chapter titles refers to him as *Midnight Gardener*, as he draws his inspiration from the garden, which in the western culture is almost automatically associated with the Garden of Eden.

Another peculiar character in *Geek Love* is Chick, who represents the only clearly good and innocent power except for Iphy. He is also the only child who is not physically deformed, but golden-haired and beautiful, and able to perform miracles. It is he who, like the avenging angel sent by God destroy to Sodom and Gomorrah, ends the Biniewski's world by immersing it in oceans of fire . Moreover, Oly

describes Chick's causing the explosion in a way that makes him almost a Christ figure: "I felt him rush through me like a current of love to my cross points, and then draw back"(p.319).On the other hand, Prospero in *The Tempest* refers to Ariel as Chick, which confirms the grotesquely intertextual nature of *Geek Love* as calling forth different interpretations. In fact, it is not only the Christian tradition which is present in the novel: the Bag Man is a clear allusion to Greek mythology as the one-eyed Cyclop. Also the concept of catharsis seems present as Arty describes his audience with the following words: "They want to be amazed and scared. That's why they're here"(p.52).

According to Geoffrey Galt Harpham, the grotesque "gives a dominant impression of unity, though it is manifestly constructed of pieces and operates by means of self-abolishing incongruity." [14] Taking this into account we may look at *Geek Love* from an entirely different perspective; for example, it is possible to trace the importance of art in the novel. Such reading is quite relevant since nearly all of the main characters possess some artistic abilities. For example, the twins play the piano, Oly is writing the history of her family, and her daughter Miranda is studying to become a medical illustrator, fascinated as she is by all kinds of human abnormalities. It is worth noticing that her drawings resemble the famous grotesque heads of Leonardo. Similarly, the God-like or Prospero-like creative activities of the father, in the nature of scientific experiments, have a lot in common with the Renaissance concept of art and "the most traditional notion of the artist: the Aristotelian conscious agent who achieves with technique and cunning the artistic effect"[15]. In *The Friday Book* John Barth juxtaposes two concepts of art: "the kind that requires expertise and artistry" with that based on inspiration[16]. The element of more down to earth virtuosity seems to be present in the figure of the father whereas the metaphysical aspect is characteristic of his son: Arturo.

Arturo seems to represent the Romantic concept of art, which emphasised not the actual result of the act of creation but rather the artist himself. In this way Arty is again an antithesis of his father. By mixing art with religion, by being an actor and a prophet at the same time he is a parody of the mythologizing attitude towards the artist and the tendency to idealise the artist's image.

Arty's performances may also represent the twentieth century pop culture as the art for the masses. One should remember that it is in our age that the division between the high and the low culture almost disappeared or at least became less clear. Perhaps it is also possible to relate Arty's quasi-theatrical shows to one particular form of contemporary art, inspired by the experiments of Jackson Pollock, i.e. the performance. The main innovation of this concept is the affirmation of individualism. The "I", not the objective rules of art, become the original source of meanings and artistic experience. The performance serves as a way to approach this unattainable and transcendental "I" of the artist. Grzegorz Dziamski in his book entitled

Awangarda po Awangardzie writes about performance in the following way:

> Performance refers to the ritual as a way of narration which is firmly established in our culture. Elements drawn from various old and contemporary rituals are treated as means of representation, filled with archetypical meanings and leading to the experience of catharsis. [17]

This description fits very well Arty's metaphysical shows, which combine the ancient tradition of fortune-telling with the idea of catharsis as a liberating experience of sympathy and fear.

In this light, it may be enriching to compare the concepts of art represented by both generations of the Biniewski family. Arty's performances stress the person of the artist as the ultimate source and essence of art, rendering the whole idea highly spiritual, whereas the scientific art of the father with its emphasis on the actual product of artistic creativity seems quite materialistic-oriented.

One may wonder if the combination of Renaissance, Baroque, Romantic, and contemporary artistic ideologies may produce any interesting results, yet it should be remembered that at the very heart of grotesque there lies a technique of confusion, employing as many heterogeneous elements as possible.

Of course, it is still possible to look for completely different readings of *Geek Love* than those discussed so far. Katherine Dunn at the very beginning of her epilogue admits that "The woman in the family read horoscopes, tea leaves, coffee bubbles, Tarot cards, and palms" (p.351), as if encouraging the reader to look for such magical practises in her book. Indeed, the four children of the Biniewski family might be associated with the four basic elements of the universe distinguished in astrology. Arty as half-fish and half-human would correspond to water, Chick who burned the whole Fabulon to fire, Oly referring to herself as a worm (*The joy of the worm* is the title of the second chapter) might represent the earth, and the twins are one of the signs of the air. But such interpretation does not go very far as the personalities of the children are not compatible with astrological descriptions of these elements.

Even some elements of Freudian psychoanalysis seem to be implicated in *Geek Love*. The twins may represent two sides of personality, with Elly as the stronger masculine element and Iphy as the weaker feminine one.

> "Psychoanalytical Theory has always assumed that all human beings are constitutionally psycho-sexually bisexual. The theory of bisexuality assumes that it is possible to designate as feminine - the passive, submissive, and intuitive behaviour, and as masculine the active, assertive, and intellectual behaviour." [18]

Notably, Iphy is the one who loves their baby whereas Elly, her mental antithesis, kills him. Moreover, the fact that they destroy each other at the end may be understood as one more grotesque element in the novel.

None of the interpretations proposed here is complete and satisfying, none can exclude all the others. The text seems to invite the reader to take active part in the absurd game played with our reading habits, our stereotypical expectations and associations, in much the same way as most contemporary art. Postmodernism is, after all, an era of confusion and of deep reflections on the functions of culture. It is also the end of hegemony of any philosophical or aesthetic notions. None of them is dominant, none of them is the ultimate truth, except that of absolute relativity of human perception. The result is a mingling of reality and imagination, truth and fiction, just as in *The Tempest*. Irrationalism and rationalism, simultaneity and linearity, realism and fantasy are some of the antitheses which, according to John Barth, postmodern fiction tries to unite or transcend. In his opinion "the ideal postmodernist novel will somehow rise above the quarrel between realism and irrealism, formalism and 'contentism,' pure and committed literature, coterie fiction and junk fiction"[19]. One wonders if *Geek Love* does not fulfil these criteria to the dot.

Postmodernism is also a time when the traditional aesthetic theories based on the concept of beauty in a work of art are being denied. Such tendencies account for the revival of the grotesque in our times. In what way will it evolve? What form will it take? - are some of the questions raised by *Geek Love*. Geoffrey Galt Harpham writes about the contemporary grotesque in the following way:

> Despite the accelerating acceptance of the grotesque as a "mode" in contemporary art, this book (*On the Grotesque; Strategies of contradiction in Art and Literature* - E.B.)appears at a time when the grotesque is becoming less and less possible because of the pervasive, soupy tolerance of disorder, of the genre mixture. When the television talk-shows present the casual viewer with "in-depth" interviews with, for example, transvestites and transsexuals, how can we continue to call the hermaphrodite grotesque?[...] The most conspicuous forms of our culture contribute to this process: in more innocent times it was possible to create a grotesque by mingling humans with animals or mechanical elements; but as we learn more about the languages of animals, and teach more complex languages to computers, the membranes dividing these realms from that of the human begin to dissolve, and with them the potentiality for many forms of grotesque. In short, the grotesque - with the help of technology - is becoming the victim of its own success: having existed for so many centuries on the disorderly margins of Western culture and the aesthetic conventions that constitute that culture, it is now faced with the situation where the center cannot, or does not choose to, hold; where nothing is incompatible with anything else; and where the marginal is indistinguishable from the typical. Thus, the grotesque, in endlessly diluting forms, is always and everywhere around us and increasingly invisible.[20]

Footnotes

[1] Isidore Ducasse, quoted after *Sztuka Świata*, p. 152.

[2] Edgar Allan Poe, quoted after Harpham, p.181.

[3] Katherine Dunn, *Geek Love* (New York:Warner Books, Inc., 1990), p. 6. All the other quotations from *Geek Love* are to this edition and references to them will appear in the body of the paper.

[4] Kayser W., p.186.

[5] Bouissac P.,chapter 1.

[6] Bogdan R., p. 2.

[7] Ibid., p. 167.

[8] Ibid., p. 230.

[9] Shakespeare W., *The Tempest*, p.12.

[10] Barth J.

[11] Kayser W., p.188.

[12] Bosing W.,

[13] Matthew 5, 30.

[14] Harpham G.G., p.181.

[15] Barth J., p. 61.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Dziamski G., p.109., translation E. B.

[18] Ryctoft Ch.

[19] Barth J., p. 203.

[20] Harpham G.G., p. XX.

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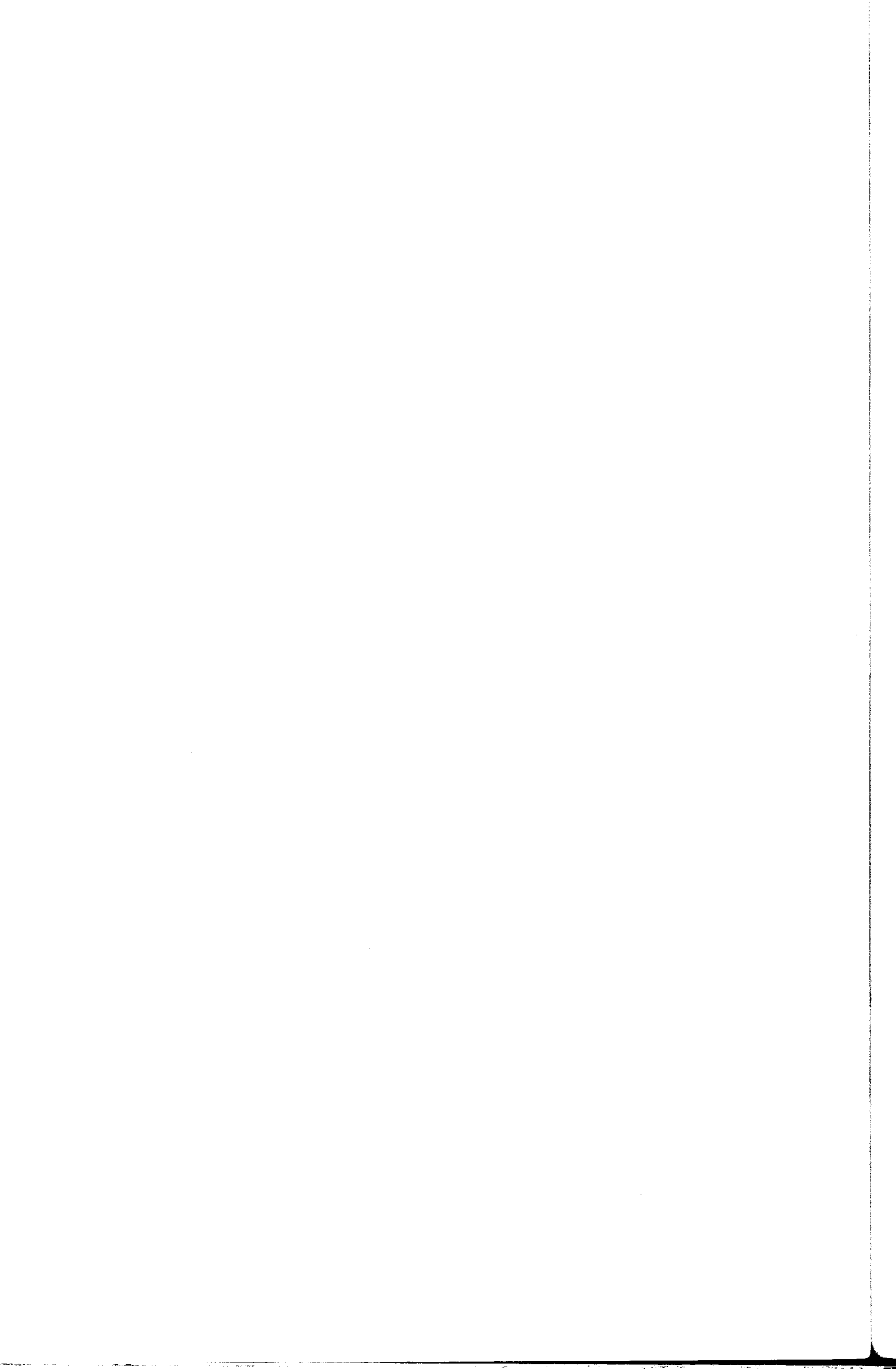
14. *The New English Bible; New Testament.* Oxford University Press, London 1961

15. Thompson, P. *The Grotesque.* Methuen & Co Ltd, London 1972



Marcin Wierzchowski

Fleshy and frolic. A short essay on "The Dance"[1] by W. C. Williams.*

In his great picture

> ...Breughel managed to render the intensity of movement and gesture at its extreme: seemingly unobserved, there goes round a boisterous and slightly vulgar dance (...) These clumsy figures, resembling stony statues of poor quality, are filled with juicy frolic.[2]

So reads M. J. Friedlander's description of *The Peasant Dance.* W.C. Williams's perception of the picture, as presented in *The Dance,* differs, obviously, on the level of form; it is enriched by the reference to music (enriching even the picture itself by new instruments); but the subject - understood as *an object focused on* - is the same: the body.

The music comes first - "the dancers going round and around" to the accompaniment of bagpipes, fiddles and a bugle. To the rhythmical accompaniment. The strong rhythm is fully revealed when we read out the poem, aloud (as poems should be read), paying more attention to the punctuation than to the very organisation of the lines; and although the metrical foot is not clear or homogenous - which is not surprising while dealing with poetry of the poet who scorned T. S. Eliot for the use of iambic pentameter (nobody speaks in iambic pentameter), it may be surprising that we deal not with the rhythm of the speech, but with the rhythm of the dance, the rhythm to which the dancers adjust their steps, their dancing. The choice of words, the majority of which contains stops (especially "b") in the stressed syllable (blare, bagpipes, bugle, bellies, butts, Breughel, etc.), strengthens the rhythm even more; strengthens in order to induce the dancers to shake their buttocks, hips and

* The paper has been submitted for the course 223: *Modernism in American Poetry* run by Mr Andrzej Sosnowski, MA.

arms more vividly, more boisterously, to fill their bodies with juicy frolic. Yet, it is the Kermess!

Kermess. "A church feast" in Dutch. I could not work it out why there is put so great an emphasis on this particular word: not only is it placed at the end of the first line, but also functions as a conclusion of the whole poem, as its coda. The epiphany happened when I was looking over a book about Breughel, containing reproductions of some of his pictures and a short comment upon the artistic life of Breughel, and there I found *The Peasant Dance* in the chapter entitled *La vie quotidienne. Le monde renverse.*[3] The world upside down? Well, that means the carnival, but... Now everything became clear (or at least much more). A Kermess was an echo of the carnival. It originated from the same stable; it was connected with the liturgical calendar. And the same thing was stressed: *carne* - body.

The Dance is - like Breughel's picture and like a Kermess itself - obsessed with body. Rolling hips, swinging buttocks, sound shanks keep parading in front of us. Kicking and tipping, they go round in their dance. And that roundness suits them, as their bellies are "round as the thick sided glasses." Williams does not have to describe the ugly, Bosch-Breughelian faces of the dancers to create a similar effect as Breughel. He makes the figures fat; so fat that he seems to be astonished himself when he writes: "those / shanks must be sound to bear up under such / rollicking measures." The line is also important for another reason: at that point heavy intersects with boisterous; the spirit, the soul flees. The dancers turned their backs upon the church and a picture of Virgin Mary stuck to the tree. There is scarcely any psychophisical unity. Just *carne.* Just flesh. Just the careless, primary, virgin joy, prancing beyond all rules and boudaries. This is the point at which there exists scarcely any difference between a horse and a man. They both prance, both kick. And they both need shanks sound enough to heave the great burden of the body, *pardon:* of the flesh.

The poem flows as a stream - a stream of thoughts. Here and there a subject is lacking ("prance as they dance"); the lines are closed with anything, it makes no difference whether it is 'the' or 'fiddles'; in the noise of the instruments a verb has been lost, causing a bit of syntactic chaos; a comparison, put within the brackets, strikes the mind unexpectedly. But the poem flows as a dance, as well. A thought has been smoothed by the rhythm, influenced by some abstract music, and thus *The Dance* becomes a closed structure, with the same line repeated, like a refrain, at the beginning and at the end.

A dance of thoughts? Whatever we shall call it, of one thing we may be sure: that watching Breughel's great picture, some time in 1944, Williams managed to render the intensity of movement and gesture at its extreme: with a boisterous and slightly vulgar dance, and with clumsy figures filled with juicy, fleshy frolic.

Notes

[1] William Carlos Williams "The Dance"

In Brueghel's great picture, The Kermess
the dancers go round, they go round and
around, the squeal and the blare and the
tweedle of bagpipes, a bugle and fiddles
tipping their bellies (round as the thick-
sided glasses whose wash they impound)
their hips and their bellies off balance
to turn them. Kicking and rolling about
the Fair Grounds, swinging their butts, those
shanks must be sound to bear up under such
rollicking measures, prance as they dance
in Brueghel's great picture, The Kermess.

[2] Friedlander M. J., *Essays uber die Landschaftsmalerei* after: Walicki M., *Breughel,* Warszawa 1957. - transl. M. W.

[3] cf. *Le gout de notre temps. Collection etabile et dirigee par Albert Skira,* Geneve, 1959.

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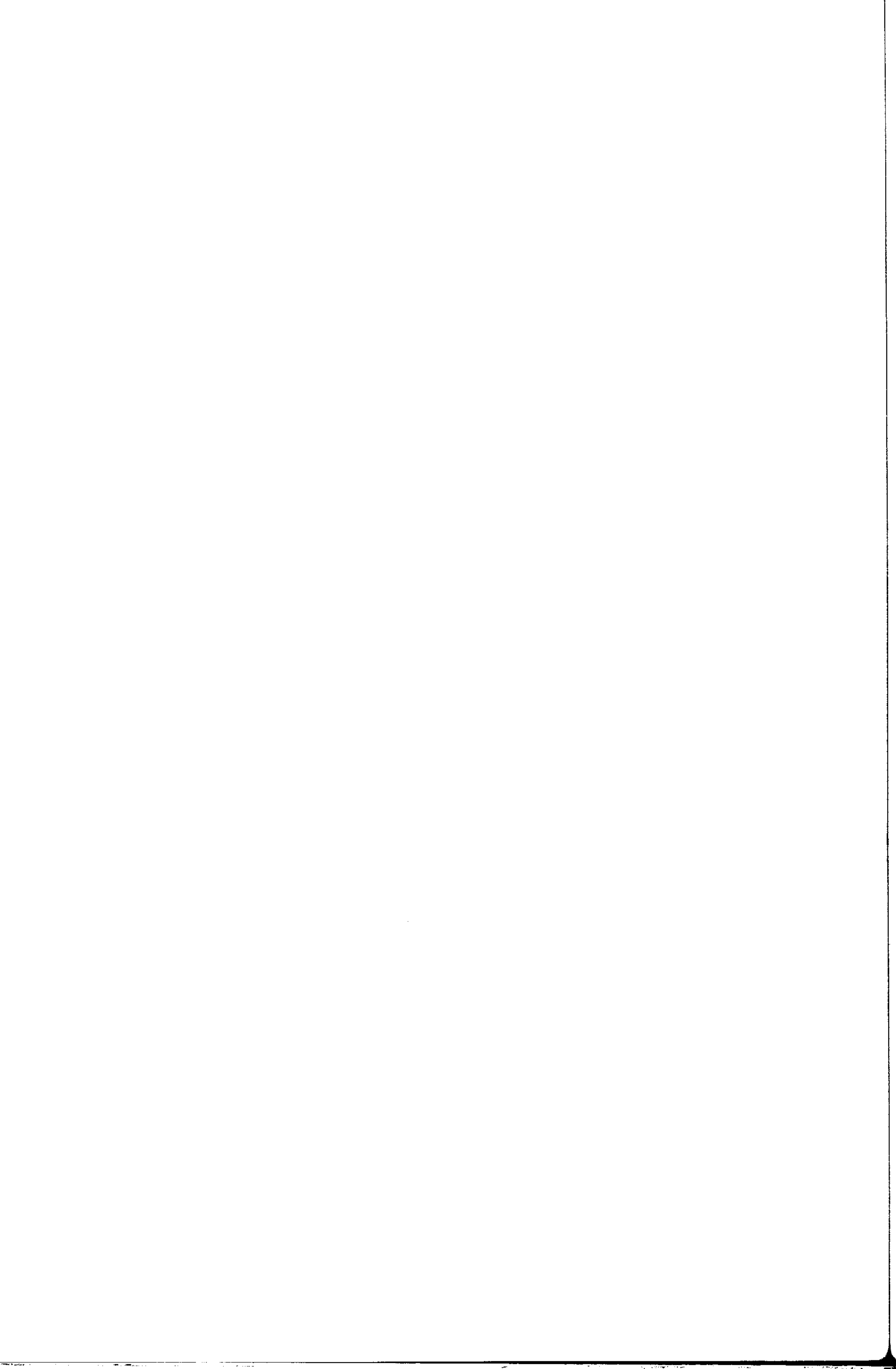

Aneta Witczak

Television Advertising in the Presidential Elections in the United States.*

From Eisenhower to Clinton, more than forty years had passed. In that period the short political commercials, or polispots, developed both distinct rhetorical modes and distinct visual styles. The polispot also grew to dominate American political campaigns, especially in national presidential elections. Most of what we observed in the 80s and 90s, the pervasiveness of TV, the skills of the political advertising people, the clash between old and new politics, the growing sophistication of the viewing public, the increasingly nasty tone of the attack ads, fits in with developments that began when the broadcast advertising art first came to American politics. To understand the seemingly dominant role of political ads today, we must begin with the circumstances of their introduction nearly forty years ago.

In the 20s, there were no commercials. Certainly, no one demanded any. The first radio station in the United States (KDKA in Pittsburgh) went on the air in 1920. In the next decade America discovered gradually the airwaves, but only for generating so-called trade name publicity.[1] No direct advertising was allowed at that time. But by the 30s short, punchy commercials, called spot announcements or simply spots, became commonplace. The change in that policy was caused by two factiors, the market crash in 1929 and the creation of a new network, the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS).

Political campaigns that radio time was for sale in the 20s. In 1924 both presidential candidates, Democrat John W.Davis and Republican Calvin Coolidge, bought radio time for speeches (but not for spots). Four years later, the first political spots were aired. Six thousand men were sent all over the country to present brief

* The paper has been submitted for the course 15B: *American Advertisement* run by Ms Małgorzata Gajda, MA.

radio talks on behalf of the Republican ticket. Scripts were prepared in advance, so that the same talk was given nationwide on a particular day.

Television went nowhere for two more decades. Gradually political operatives began to understand the power of moving images. However, World War II delayed television's commercial development until the early 50s. Then a transcontinental cable allowed nationwide TV networks to be formed. The number of TV sets rose to 19 million. By then some 40 percent of American households could have been reached by TV, and in the northeastern areas - percentage rose to even 62 percent.[2]

The first presidential campaign that used TV as the main medium for communicating with the voters was Stevenson against Eisenhower in 1952. As it marks the beginning of political advertising on TV, we shall examine it in a more detailed way. The Democrats decided to put all their TV money into 18 half-hour segments for speeches by Stevenson, Truman and other Democrats. The air they bought were nights, between 10.30 and 11 p.m. By using late-evening time slots, they wanted to save money. They also did this well in advance so as not to pay preemtion charges. But gradually drawbacks of the Democratic advertising plan became apparent. The evening speeches attracted an average audience of 3.8 m people, probably most of it were people already committed or leaning to Stevenson. In addition to that, their candidate was no TV star (he was short, stocky, almost bandy-legged man), as his distinguishing features were balding head and donnish manner. He also would get so involved in his speeches that he missed time cues.As he was heading for rhetorical climax, the televised. Stevenson would abruptly fade, in midsentence, just to be replaced by the station next program. Time cues were not a problem in filmed, carefully-edited commercials, but Stevenson's spots were very tight and focused, conveying the major themes of the campaign. Several of them advertised the candidate's courage, as the man who would "talk sense to the American people". In another a demure woman spoke in a monotone about how exicited she is about Stevenson. To sum it up, in 1952 the Democrats were strapped for money, unconvinced about the efficacy and dignity of spots, and critical of the Eisenhower advertising campaign.

The Republicans hired the advertising agency - Ted Bates and Company to prepare the polispots. Their aim became to move away from formal, televised speeches to the side of informal, intimate television productions addressed directly to the individual American and his family. The Bates agency made up a cycle entitled *Eisenhower answers America*. People coming from different parts of the country asked questions, earlier prepared, and the candidate gave answers for them. Of course, they were earlier recorded in the film studio. The Republicans tested various television formats. They aired a paid program *The Case for a Republican Congress*,

filmed cartoons and animation by the Disney studio. At the same time the Republicans stuck to the traditional paid political speech, only reshaping the form for the needs of TV. It was Eisenhower who appeared in the spots supported by his wife, Mamie. The visible use of Mrs. Eisenhower was carefully calculated, not only as an element of Ike's fatherly image but also to remind the voters that Stevenson was a divorced man, then a major taboo in American politics. The Republicans put the spots for only a three-week period.[3] The main advantages for such movement were the effectiveness of penetration, the maximum delivered just before elections, and an impossible rebuttal from the Democrats. Ultimately, Eisenhower was elected president for two, following terms.

In 1952 many politicians realized that TV was a powerful tool in shaping the public opinion. From that time, Americans have lived through many presidential races accompanied by political advertising. Let us now look at the following presidential campaigns and their characteristic polispots.

In the reelection campaign, four years later, Ike's popularity was enormous. However, both sides spent a lot of money on TV commercials. The Republicans used a new, in-between form, the five-minute spots, which proved to be very successul. Their rivals, however, appeared to be more innovative. They introduced the negative commercial as a form, creating styles that would be repeated in the years to come. One innovation used film of the opponent to attack the opponent. Another spot compared the robust economy of 1956 and 1929, arguing that they have the same weakness - the recession in farming. Finally, a series of Democratic negative spots took on Richard Nixon, suggesting he should be president in case of Eisenhower's death (Nervous about Nixon? President Nixon? Vote Democratic. The party for you - not just the few).[4]

In the campaigns of the 60s came a sharpening of skills. In those years the TV advertising arts should have been decisive mainly because nine out of ten American homes had TV sets. In1960 a democratic nominee, John F. Kennedy was a perfect candidate to win the presidential campaign. He was bright, handsome, wealthy and relatively unknown. The Democrats aired fewer half-hour speeches than the Republicans, but one Kennedy speech is still remembered for the way he handled the question of his Catholicism. Nixon made first paid TV appearances in the final twelve days of the campaign. Still for the first time the political advertising promoted name identification. It appeared that with sufficient funds, some can go on to win office.

From the start in the 1964 presidential campaign, the Democrats had the power of incumbency, and a unity achieved following the assassination of Kennedy. The Johnson vs. Goldwater campaign is remembered because of the most controversial political spot, Daisy. A little girl was picking petals off the daisy and

counting. Then came a sound of explosion and on the screen appeared atom bomb exploding. It was ran only once, but the effect was achieved because of various protests and an atmosphere of scandal.

In the 70s, advertising men used experience from the previous campaigns. Nixon focused on his involvement in the political real-world events, his visit to China, reestablishing Western ties and chipping away at his cold warrior image. Only ten years later did pdlitical advertising become the main event in the 80s. The Reagan campaigns focused on the simple themes of optimism and patriotism. In 1984 Mondale, the Reagan's opponent could not link Reagan to the mounting federal deficit, because it was too abstract for the campaign issue. People were satisfied with the Reagonomics. This attitude also influenced the outcome of the next presidential elections, Bush vs. Dukakis. By many it was described as the most deceptive campaign. The climax came with a cycle of spots featuring Willie Horton, a black convict who while on furlough from a life sentence, had committed a rape. These spots demonstrated political advertising's ability to mix- and mask - messages. Scarcely anyone was going to vote against Dukakis because he would liberalize the federal furlough program. The electorate, however, had a right to be concerned about Dukakis's values. For many voters, weekend passes for murderer sounded like left-wing ideology. In this respect, the spots contained subtext - if Dukakis is soft on crime, imagine what he will do on defense, taxes, etc. Four years later, the Republicans' negative campaign together with rising unemployment and a recession appeared to be the cause of Bush's failure. Bush was unsuccessful in calling Clinton's patriotism into question. The poll of October 19 (prepared by Newsweek) showed that 72 percent of the public did not think Clinton's anti-Vietnam war activities and his Soviet trip were important campaign issues[5]. The Democrats also carried advertising into a wider variety nonfiction formats. These, in turn, reached a greater number of viewers than traditional methods. Bill Clinton appeared on MTV and playing his saxophone on Arsenio Hall. In the last presidential election Clinton's aim was to keep his presidential image. But this question we shall discuss later.

We have briefly looked at the development of political advertising on TV. During this period a certain classification of polispots was worked out. It consists of four rhetorical modes or acts, which roughly follow the chronology of the campaign. Although it usually begins with ID or bio ads, proceed through the argument and attack phases, and end with visionary appeals, the exact length of each act may vary depending on campaign strategies. The four acts may overlap as well, again in response to campaign developments and strategies. Sometimes too, one polispot or polispot series may be intended to accomplish two or more rhetorical tasks, for example, when a candidate has limited funds.

The first act of the advertising strategy ensures that the voters have some sense of the candidate. At its most basic level this means establishing name

identification a foundation on as which subsequent information are built. Spots aiming for name ID are easily recognizable because name of the candidate is the repeated and usually it is also shown on screen as well. In 1960 John F. Kennedy used a two-minute jingle that repeated name dozens of times but also managed to address the issue of his religion (" ...to be elected President, no matter what his creed? And it's Kennedy, Kennedy..."[6]) Now as then name IDs frequently among are the simplistic of the polispots. However, a now-standard ID style builds on mispronunciation of the candidate's name. ID spots may also attempt to associate the candidate with certain implicit themes framing the candidate extension and, by the election. Mostly, the ID spots trace compact narrative histories of the candidate's life. Through film footage or stills, these spots frequently show the passages of childhood . The school, family also include interviews with people who know the candidate well - his mother or friends, relatives. Watching them, viewers may feel they have been allowed to flip through a family photo album. The president often turns to the props connected with his position, such as the Hot Line, Air Force One, and the Oval Office as the most common. In the last campaign, Clinton vs. Dole the voters could observe the same strategy. One of the Clinton thirty-second sequence showed Air Force One, the Statue of Liberty, the White House and several shots of American flags. Bob Dole referred in his ID spots to his work in the Congress, with a short introduction from his closest workmates[7].

Once the characters have been introduced, we are supposed to be told what the candidate stands for. But generally, most arguments do not get too specific. Some of them, at a later stage, are meant to appeal to emotions. But their most important feature is that they make serious, issue-oriented points. The frequently used technique is the endorsement of a person, particularly a prominent one who is linked to the specific argument. One of the examples is Eleanor Roosevelt and Adlai Stevenson who did endorsement spots for Kennedy in 1960.

Other argument spots may take form of the cinema-verite or one-on-one style. In the former natural-looking moments are the result of an expensive and time-consuming process. In another the candidate addresses the camera, often with offscreen help, such as questions posed in a separate shot or by an invisible announcer. This kind of spots was used in the first presidential campaign with a cycle of spots *Eisenhower answers America.* In the later campaigns more commonly the candidate talks to the voter directly, a style that Ronald Reagan used throughout his presidency. Partly in reaction to pure emotion in advertising, a form of high-content political ads appeared in the late 70s. The voters paid attention to these ads, because they initially made them very uneasy as they could not absorb all the facts. So next time, they would look for what they missed. The third phase of the campaign is negative advertising, i.e. attack spots. As we have mentioned before first spots were aired in the 1956 campaign, when Ike compared the Democrats to well- intentioned

but reckless drivers. First direct personal attacks on TV appeared in the mid-60s together with the controversies over the government decisions. By the mid-70s, as the wider society quieted down, so too did attack spots. In the typical late-70s and early-80s form, surrogates usually do the attacking. Then, in, 1988 negative ads became the pivot of the Bush vs. Dukakis campaign. As it was already mentioned, the Willie Horton cycle evoked much controversy and became the symbol of down-and-dirty campaigning. Four years later, the wild accusations about Clinton's communist sympathies did not bring the Republicans success. In attack ads some symbols have become cliches, as the shrinking dollarbill, a photo of the opponent with his nose growing - Pinocchio-style or the most common, the flip-flop spot showing the candidate's profile reversing (Johnson against Goldwater in 1964, Nixon against McGovern in 1972). The Bush campaign in 1992 tried to call Clinton's character into question through the use of negative spots. One of them featured a split screen showing two views of Clinton side by side. Two large video blobs covered his two faces. The male voice charged "He said he was never drafted. Then he admitted he was drafted. Then he said he forgot being drafted. He said he was never deferred from the draft...."[8]

In the last campaign, Clinton against Dole, the voters were not exposed to many negative spots. The main reason was that Clinton actually never felt threatened by Dole. However, it was Dole who did go negative first, but within certain limits. One of these spots showed black-and-white_hell with President Clinton who is responsible for the excessive spending and the largest tax increase in history (The REAL Bill Clinton? A REAL Spend and Tax Liberal). Usually negative spots employ characteristic technique with the low, revealing voice, the print words on the screen in order to be better remembered by the voters. Dole's team also once again referred to the Clinton's broken promises and his previous contradictions, for example on drug-taking. In one of such ads woman's voice says "Bill Clinton never took the drug crisis seriously. Under Clinton's liberal policies teen drug use has doubled. But now Clinton admits he was wrong. He gave us our largest tax i.ncrease in history. Under Clinton, the typical American family now pays over $1,500 more in federal taxes." The Clintonites focused on the Dole age and his work in the Congress. The spot *Dole Through the Ages* opened with pages flying off the calendar as the decades sped by in big red numbers across the bottom of the screen. The announcer says "Let's go back in time. The 1960s. Bob Dole's Congress". Cut to a black-and-white shot of Dole wearing a skinny tie. Against creating .student loans is stamped across his forehead. As the decades speed by, Dole's sins mount (Against Medicare, Against a higher minimum wage and even Against vaccines for children). The slogan of the Clinton's negative campaign was "Wrong in the past. Wrong for our future". In that way, without any fanfare, Clinton's team convinced the voters that Dole was "too old and too out of it to be president." Bob Dole did go negative and this has clearly backfired

against him. The voters always hated attack spots, although they caught their attention. But probably for the first time, it turned out that the public's distaste for them is actually having a political effect. To sum up, we may quote the story from Newsweek when GOP pollster Bob Ward pointed out to his mother how many attack ads the Democrats had run, she replied "Yeah, but they don't seem negative."[9]

At the end of the modern media political campaign, as in the conventional theater, there usually comes the quieter moment of resolution and reflection. The final phase is usually short and mild. The candidates have been introduced and IDed in their advertising. They have stated their arguments and sketched an outline of their characters. Their attack spots have provide some unfavourable details, the shortcomings and the shadows, of their opponents. It remains for each candidate to sum up. In the presidential camápaigns this phase has come to mean an election-eve program of thirty or sixty minutes. For Clinton, the key to the last six weeks of the campaign was to remain "presidential". Just before the elections he gave a half-an-hour speech on TV describing his achievements during the first term. Dole also appeared on TV with a program promising "the better tomorrow".

In the history embracing more than forty years of polispots we may answer the question how do they differ from the commercials of products. First of all, nearly all political spots are pretested with the focus groups before releasing them. Pretesting may lead to the shelving of the given ad. The fócus groups consist of representatives of all spheres of the society. This is needed because political advertising is meant for the broadest possible spectrum, i.e. electorate. In the case of mass advertising, the audience should be narrowed down to the most limited number of respondents. Political campaigns start usually before formulating any clear message. This is impossible when advertising products. Once the message was formulated, it is a very high degree of probability that it will be successful because it was tested before. In the politics it has became a habit to give the outcome of the latest polls. Showing the numbers, who is on the lead and who is behind also influence the voters. The riskiest element of the campaign is negative advertising - directly attacking the opponent. An extreme attack as in Daisy, may result in the worse results. In the commercials the brand or name of the competitive mark is not mentioned since it may increase its recognition. The attack spots, in both cases must be seen as fair.

Still political advertising, contrary to the presentation products, gave rise to many debates and discussions about its character and effects. The most important issue is the high costs of campaigning. The share of campaign spending oing to TV increased to as high as 90 percent of the budget, at the expense of the other campaign methods. In the last campaign both candidates were given "soft donations" from corporations and unions. Most of the money went on the TV spots. One solution to the problem is providing more free airtime. Another effect of political advertising is the death of the parties. Candidates no longer need parties in order to run, and if they

can be elected without their party's help, they may see little need to be loyal. A certain political cohesion is lost and governance becomes more difficult. TV has contributed to the problem. Candidates can reach the public directly, not only through newspapers. But perhaps the most negative effect of TV is the decreasing turnout in presidential elections since 1960. In 1988 barely more than half of eligible citizens voted, which was the lowest percentage in forty years. Some experts believe, that some negative ads are intended to reduce turnout. Keeping the opponent's supporters from voting is easier than getting them to switch sides, and it often creates a margin of victory. But an ad that goes too far may rile the opponent's supporters into turning out in greater numbers than otherwise. Perhaps, it is right to believe that campaign has become a kind of substitution for elections.[10]

In the future the media managers have plans for more high-tech advertising that will test the intelligence and good sense of voters. Polispots, may in fact, substantially influence voters' decisions. In the year 2000 we shall see if the new techniques will help to win the 43 rd president of the United States.

Notes

[1] Diamond, 1992, p. 32

[2] Ibid., p. 44

[3] Ibid, p. 112

[4] Ibid., p. 120

[5] Newsweek, 18 November 1996

[6] Diamond, op.cit., p. 165

[7] Newsweek, op.cit., p. 27

[8] Schell, 1996.

[9] Newsweek, op.cit., p. 31

[10] Andersen, 1995, p. 228

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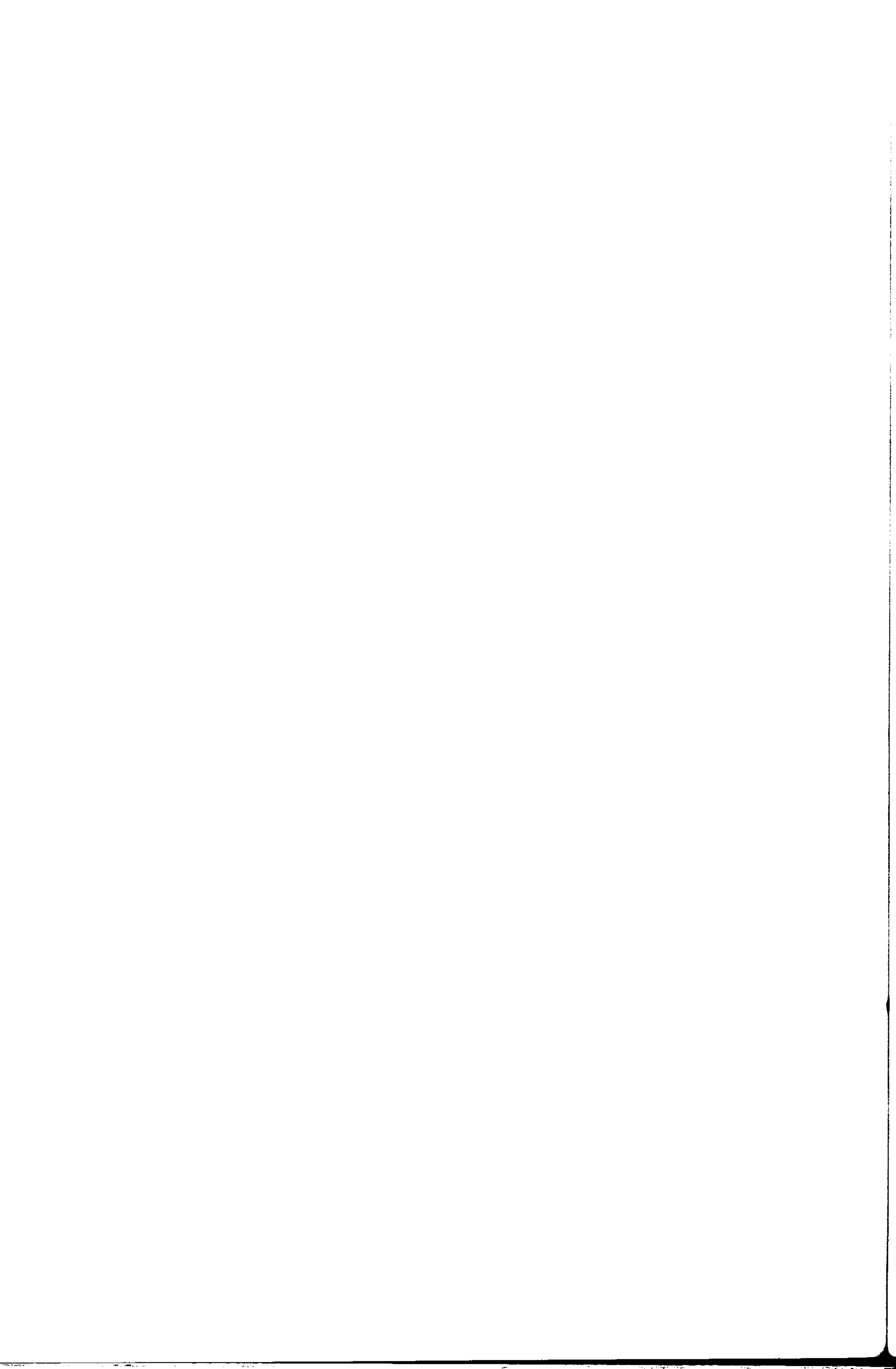

Wojtek Nerkowski

From "Schindler's List" to "Titanic": Epic Cinema Revival in the 1990s.*

Among film genres, Epic seems to be the most unusual. The first peculiarity is that we may disregard it completely while classifying any film and we will always find another appropriate category. *Titanic*, for instance, would therefore pass as a melodrama since its creator - James Cameron - describes it as "an epic romance set against a historical tragedy."[1]

Another intriguing issue is that it is possible to enumerate features that distinguish "regular" genres, for example a western (a film set in the Wild West), a comedy (it makes audience laugh), even though sometimes an attempt in drawing sharp boundaries between them is futile and sometimes one film belongs to two or more categories. However, it is extremely difficult to identify clear-cut criteria that would be characteristic for epic films. We may vaguely start from saying that there should be something big, if not to say grand, about such films. Epic pictures are monumental spectacles but, on the other hand, film is generally a large-scale art; any cinema production involves a lot of money and a large team of people. Still, the notion of grandness is a step in the right direction, after all it is hard to imagine an epic film that would feature only a handful of actors and would take place entirely indoors, in a small flat. Such films are obviously non-epic. The problem whether the film is an Epic arises only with pictures that aspire consciously to be called so.

Here we come to the third idiosyncrasy of the title genre: it is not neutral. Epic seems not to be a valuefree label, on the contrary, it is very often a desirable adjective as far as films are concerned, a promise of an unforgettable, high-quality spectacle. Therefore, film makers are tempted not only to attempt to add their productions the air of greatness during the process of filming, but they often indulge themselves into behind the screen actions, like referring to their films as "Epic" in interviews as well.

* The paper has been submitted for the course 1510: *American Popular Film Genres* run by Mr Piotr Borkowski, MA.

Therefore, it is not surprising that nowadays the term "Epic" is used, especially in popular mass media, as a synonym of "grand" and not as a synonym of "heroic". We may come across the following: In *Melody Maker* (March 2, 1996, p. 14) Kathryn Bigelow's *Strange Days*, starring Ralph Fiennes, is described as "millennial sci-fi Epic"; *Jet* (July 1, 1996, p. 14) says that *Independence Day* is "action Epic"; and *Rolling Stone* (September 7, 1995, p. 78) classifies *Apollo 13* as "space Epic". Needless to say, using the term "Epic", in the traditional meaning, in all three cases mentioned above would be highly controversial.

Leaving the debate over the definition for a moment, let us notice that the problem has always been present and has become especially relevant recently as there are more and more films aspiring to be dubbed as Epics. In cinema the genre has had a long history that started even before 1916 and D.W. Griffith's monumental *Intolerance*. Interestingly, the majority of classical Epics were historical films dealing with ancient civilisations. The history of Cleopatra was filmed twice - before the 2nd World War, in 1934, directed by Cecil B. DeMille, and again in 1963 by Joseph L. Mankiewicz. One year later Anthony Mann presented *The Fall of the Roman Empire* and also Stanley Kubrick's *Spartacus* from 1960 deserves to be mentioned. As we can see the 1960s could be named the golden age of cinema Epic, especially in comparison with the subsequent decline of the genre.

The development of television is mainly responsible for the crisis of Epic cinema. It is a general truth that epic productions are prone to be significantly longer than regular films and television is able to benefit far better from this feature. While it is difficult to imagine a film that would last for more than four hours, television series may consist of many hour-long episodes. The classic example is the mid 1980s *North and South*, which could be called an Epic not only because of the Civil War battles but also because it was able to present an extremely wide spectrum of characters and follow closely the life of each of them, the task impossible on the big screen.

However, the 1990s witness, without any doubt, the revival of Epic cinema. It is mainly caused by increasing number of cinema goers that has been reported in the last years in many countries, particularly in the United States. Competing with television may be profitable: a larger audience obviously means more money. The quality of cinema sound has improved significantly with the introduction of Dolby Digital. Special effects and filming/editing computer techniques are more advanced as well, which clearly shows perceptive supremacy of cinema over television. All of this is most effectively used in big productions, which, because of their scale, often become major cultural events.

Epic films also seem to be an alternative for the productions based upon the star system and multi-million dollar actor fees. A spectacular production may do without big names - "*Titanic* is a historic piece without major stars; it features up-

and-comers Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio."[2] One could also argue that Epics are risky enterprises but flops among such elite productions hardly ever happen. Even Kevin Costner's *Waterworld* avoided being a total disaster, and generally the more money you put in, the more you earn.

To prove the assumption that epic films have returned for good let us present some examples. While the Academy Awards may not be a reliable indicator of good films, they certainly show the American cinema trends. And for the last 5 years Oscars have been dominated by Epic productions.

First in a row, *Schindler's List* from 1993, was probably not intended to be an Epic. Steven Spielberg simply wanted to make one of the most important movies of his life, as the story carried special meaning for him. Being one of the most successful Hollywood directors, he had means for it and also experience in making grandeur films. *Schindler's List* smoothly classifies as an Epic - there are many arguments supporting such an assumption ranging from the length of the film, which significantly exceeds the standard 2 hours, to the gravity of the topic. There is a war, which almost always appears in Epic, and we follow events that influence entire nations (a struggle of a large group of people is also common in Epic cinema).

Robert Zemeckis' *Forrest Gump* - Best Film in 1994, according to the Academy, is another telling example. Again we have an extra hour and major historical events in the background, events that significantly influence the protagonist's life and the American society as a whole. And we have another war - this time in Vietnam.

Braveheart, from 1995, makes use of another grandeur trick - enormous battle scenes that involved thousands of extras. And the events concern two entire nations - Scotsmen and Englishmen. The film directed, produced and starring Mel Gibson, is third historical Epic in the row.

One could say that *The English Patient*, which won 9 Oscars in 1996, is another classical example of Epic, although this time it is an Epic melodrama as well as a historical film. One of the critics says that epic potential of *The English Patient* is evoked from an observation known ever since that "simple adultery can lead to the deaths of kings and the fall of nations."[3] High scale plot that comprises two levels of events within the 2nd World War reality requires again an additional hour. Huge epic effect is evoked by John Seale's spectacular cinematography. But most credit for *The English Patient* should go to the film creator (director, screenwriter, producer) - Anthony Minghella.

There is however no direct correspondence between the qualities and features described above and the fact that a film may be classified as an Epic. Each of the features alone may not be enough to ignite the "critical mass" that would result in the birth of an epic spectacle. For instance length: a three "plus" hour film is not

necessary an Epic. The recent adaptation of William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* lasts for four hours but definitely is not an Epic, despite its creator's spectacular ideas. Kenneth Branagh multiples mirrors and columns in his Elsinor and makes exquisite cinema but not an Epic. Why? Because the film, almost exclusively, takes place indoors and great battles are only talked about. They, without any doubt, influence greatly not only the principal heroes but Denmark, if not whole Europe, but they are not shown on screen. It does not mean that an adaptation of Shakespeare's play, which after all is a theatrical text, cannot be turned into an epic film, *Henry V* also by Kenneth Branagh being a sufficient proof. This film, by the way, shows clearly that an Epic does not necessarily have to exceed standard two hours. And *Forrest Gump* proves that a great hero is not indispensable.

We may go on with the critique of candidates for epic criteria and so we arrive at the 1997 super production - *Titanic*, an enormous vision brought to life by James Cameron that is sure to grasp the majority of Oscars.[4] Even though the film keeps us breathless for 194 minutes (again much longer than usual), this time it does not feature any war nor any grand conflict. We may ask what important events qualify *Titanic* as Epic. Can a disaster even so dramatic as sinking of a ship that resulted in the death of 1,500 people be compared to wars that did change the Humanity?

> April 10, 1912. For two previous decades technology had been regularly feeding us with its wonders and people began to believe that progress knew no boundaries. What could express human belief in his supremacy over the nature better than the maiden voyage of "Titanic", the greatest and the most luxurious mean of transport that had ever been built? However, four days later the world changed for ever.
>
> James Cameron[5]

The words of *Titanic's* creator (director, screenwriter, editor, producer) prove that the story has the potential for an epic film because it shows a turning point not only for the passengers but also for the entire civilisation. This seems to be the most important feature of Epic: to come up with an event capable of changing the lives of a large group of people and to show it from the main characters' perspective.

Epic hardly ever deals with local problems, on the contrary, it usually focuses on universal issues, it has broad reach. This leads to such films being filled with symbolism, being hyperbolic parallels. James Cameron gives away what the symbolism of *Titanic* is: "They [the passengers] thought they were safe in this big luxury hotel. In fact, they were in a steel object over 2.5 miles of water... It's a metaphor for the inevitability of death. We're all on the Titanic."[6]

Another interesting regularity that appeared in the above crush cruise through recent Epic productions is the phenomenon that Joseph W. Reed describes: "The best Epics seem to have been made by the strongest *auteur* directors."[7] Starting with Steven Spielberg and ending with James Cameron - they were all more than just

directors. Their contribution to the films in most cases started at the early stage of production and often continued even onto the editing.

Last but not least, we should mention other, minor factors often present in epic films. For instance the dialogue, which always seems to be pathetic, touching, grandeur, more spectacular than in an average film. It is manifested perfectly in this passage from the epic part of *Titanic*:

RUTH

Will the lifeboats be seated according to class? I hope they're not too crowded--

ROSE

Oh, Mother shut up!

(Ruth freezes, mouth open)

Don't you understand? The water is freezing and there aren't enough boats... not enough by half. Half the people on this ship are going to die.

CAL

Not the better half.[8]

The first two lines deliver sophisticated satire, Rose's response is pathetic and final Cal's remark is grandeur.

The above discussion about what makes Epic was concerned with films that have won the critics' approval because their epic qualities came from artistic means other than those resulting directly from enormous budgets. However, we may observe in the 1990s the influx of films that are simply grand visual and audio spectacles and nothing more. Catastrophic movies and large science-fiction productions are often described as Epic but they differ greatly from the films awarded with Oscars. That discovery leads us to splitting the title genre into two major categories that represent two different trends of modern Epic cinema:

Grand films may acquire their scale surprisingly easily. Provided the budget is big enough, you may have special effects (*Independence Day*), monumental music (*Volcano*), expensive sets (*Twister*), thousands of extras (*Star Gate*). All you need to

add to the script is a struggle that will involve significant masses of people, which as already pointed out is a primary ingredient of every Epic.

Heroic films, as the name states, acquire the right to be called Epic from the heroes. The characters occupy the highest position in the film hierarchy and all other elements should be considered from their point of view. *Titanic*, first and foremost, is a romance involving Rose DeWitt Bukater and Jack Dawson and it is only the mastery of its creators that allowed a monumental film to develop around a story of individual, appealing characters. James Cameron says that special effects were, for him, secondary. "My first goal is to create an overwhelming cathartic emotional experience for the audience. It's a true love story. It has to be about people you know and care about."[9] As soon as the characters lose their appeal and realism the film falls from high Epic to low or even entirely loses its epic attributes. That was the case, for example, with *Apollo 13*, which story is greatly deprived of human dimension. It deals primarily with a spectacular event, an unsuccessful space mission, and its technical aspects.

The heroes are vitally important but often not sufficient. In all unclear cases whether the film is an Epic or not it all boils down back to the central conflict. Not only has it to be present but it must truly involve the heroes. *Titanic*, *The English Patient*, *Schindler's List* could not take place without the major events that are at their core - the sinking of the ship and the 2nd World War.

Keeping in mind the above reasoning we should recognise any epic film effortlessly. And such a competence will become useful with new epic productions coming out every year.

Notes

[1] Weinraub, 1997, p. 13

[2] Masters, 1996, p. 90

[3] Blake, 1996, p. 24

[4] The paper was written in January 1998

[5] *Titanic* (a press book), 1998, p. 3

[6] Masters, op.cit., p. 91

[7] Reed, 1989, p. 246

[8] Cameron, 1997, p. 92

[9] Weinraub, op.cit., p. 13

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Piotr Szymczak

Geoffrey Chaucer's ”The Prioress's Tale” In Religious and Sociohistorical Context.*

"Barbara, inhumana est, petulans, furiosa, proterna,
Perfida, olanda, procax, insidiosa, rudis" etc.
Carmen de ludaeis by John Dantiscus, bishop of Warmia

Introduction

The lady Prioresse leaves little room for doubt about the intended effect of her story. While doing her best to glorify God and Mary, His virgin bride, the prioress is ready to use her *wayk konnyng* (feeble knowledge) to edify the souls and strengthen the religious faith of her audience. As it is quite frequently the case with medieval texts, though, the effect the story produces on a modern reader falls well short of the expectations. The tale, in which Christian faith shines triumphant against a foil of Jewish iniquity, has been painstakingly analysed and discussed by critics who, reluctant to believe in Chaucer's anti-Semitism, have been led to consider the tale as a humanist's bitter satire on the contemporary prevalent sentiment of Jewish hatred. Certain elements in the wider narrative framework of *The Canterbury Tales* as well as the characterization of the prioress herself have been interpreted as signs of the writer's somewhat detached or guarded attitude towards the matter of her story. On the other side of the coin, it has been noted and emphasized that the plot, not originally Chaucer's own, is situated snugly within an established medieval tradition of miraculous interventions of the Blessed Virgin (*miracula*), which were as often as not blatantly anti-Semitic[1]. While the attitude of Chaucer the

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person must indeed remain to be the object of informed guesswork, it is quite clear that as a hater of Jews Chaucer would by no means make a black sheep among his contemporaries.

However, since the idea of an eminent medieval poet being a professed hater of Jews stirs so much subconscious protest in a modern reader, this paper will attempt to re-create the spiritual landscape of the times and perhaps recapture the message of *The Prioress's Tale* as it appeared to the first ring of its readers. The main idea of this essay is that the hatred of Jews was not a rare exception, but rather a deeply ingrained belief firmly rooted in two main bastions of the contemporary thinking: (mainly) religion and (also) politics. In order to provide a succinct presentation of the tale in its proper contexts, the essay will be divided into three parts, two of them dealing with Christian theology regarding the Jewish people and the social status of Jews in medieval Europe, and the last one analyzing the tale itself more closely, demonstrating it to be a consistent and natural consequence of the theological and sociological *milieu* which produced it.

Part One: The Jews in Christian Theology

The advent of Christianity and its explosive expansion had serious consequences for the parent religion from which it was descended. The treatment of the Jewish nation in the New Testament seems to evolve quite rapidly from a more benign outlook represented by St. Paul to feelings of distrust and antipathy, clearly showing in the writings of St. John the Evangelist. The motive power of that change was probably a combination of different factors. Most importantly, the first Christian communities, founded by the Apostles in Jerusalem and then spreading to other towns in Iudaea owing to persecution, were originally made up entirely of Jews who accepted Jesus as the awaited Messiah, but otherwise had no intention of changing their ancient sacred traditions. Therefore, much criticism is levelled against those who have failed to recognize the Saviour in his coming, but otherwise no traces of wholesale condemnation of Judaism[2] are to be found in early Christian canonical writings. Only following St. Peter's famous vision and the subsequent missions among the pagans did the Church begin to recognize the universalist, *catholic* quality of its own character, and as the Jewish component shrank in proportion to the growing numbers of new pagan converts, the warm feelings toward the Jews cooled quickly.

Jesus, himself a Jew, declared that "he was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Mat. 15,24), and he spoke of Jerusalem with a mixture of anguish and love: "how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" (Luke 13,34).

Obviously, he was able to see through the plot of the Jewish leaders aimed at his overthrow and he used the harshest invectives when speaking of the Pharisees and Scribes, but his condemnation never extended to the heads of ordinary people. Following this example, St. Paul, who was also a Jew and a Pharisee, was averse to indiscriminate anathemizing of the nation as such. In the Pauline understanding of God's plan of salvation Jews remained to be the "natural branches of the good olive tree," that is God's chosen people which had never been forsaken. This had to do with the idea of Christianity itself, viewed by the Apostles as a true continuation of the Old Testament. However, when the lack of respect for Jews became clear among Christians of pagan descent, St. Paul was forced to write at length in his *Epistle to the Romans* (c. 57/58 AD) about Israel's disbelief as temporary and of their future conversion as imminent, thus seeking to show the grandeur and dignity of their calling. Unfortunately, as the much hoped-for mass conversion of the Jews was becoming increasingly unlikely, and the new religion faced oppression both from the Romans and the Jews, an adverse climate of thought began to set in among Christian authorities. The language of St. John the Evangelist, writing in the twilight of the first century, is a litmus paper indicating the changing attitudes. Where the first three Evangelists are careful to make a distinction between "the [Jewish] crowds" who eagerly listened to Jesus, and "the Priests and the Pharisees" who sought to destroy him, the Gospel according to St. John identifies "the Jews" collectively as the guilty party. Even though the word "Jew" would continue to be used as the name of a true believer some way into the second century (naturally, unconverted Jews would be denied that denomination)[3], St. John in his *Revelation* made an ominous equation between the synagogue and the Arch-Enemy of humankind, which was to be embraced eagerly in the later teaching of the Church:

> Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. (Rev. 3,9).

The so-called Apostolic Fathers, that is the Fathers of the Church who had had some personal contact with the Apostles in their lifetime, represent an attitude which is even less sympathetic. St. Peter may have been preaching to his hearers in Jerusalem that it was through ignorance that they brought about the death of the promised Saviour (Acts 3,17), but St. Ignatius (died 110 A.D.) in his letter to the Magnesians (chapter XI) opened a long list of preachers who would ever since speak of "the Christ-killing Jews." Ignatius' dislike of the Jews is naturally connected to persecutions suffered at that time by the Church, in which they were taking an active

part. The appearance of *The Encyclical Epistle of the Church at Smyrna Concerning the Martyrdom of the Holy Polycarp* (after 156 A.D.) showing the Jews as co-instigators of anti-Christian riots which resulted in the saint's martyrdom did not help to disperse the Christian enmity towards their persecutors.

The further evolution of the Christian views regarding the Synagogue can be tied in a rather embarrassing manner to the balance of power (both spiritual and political) between the two religions. The Primitive Church, originally feeling obliged to justify its novel teaching, had to defend the validity of its doctrine and to prevent the draining of Christians off to the old religion, which preoccupation with the doctrinal conflict resulted in abundant apologetic writings. However, as the stability of the Christian doctrine had been secured and the number of believers began to grow steadily, Jewish traditions came to be treated with diminishing respect. In Chapter IV of the well known *Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus* (dated variously from *c.* 150 A.D. to *c.* 250 A.D.) there is no trace left of St. Paul's veneration for the "holy, just and good law":

> But as to their scrupulosity concerning meats, and their superstition as respects the Sabbaths, and their boasting about circumcision, and their fancies about fasting and the new moons, [they] are utterly ridiculous and unworthy of notice.

In the next chapter of the same letter one can find the famous words concerning the manner of Christians' celestial life in the world ("what the soul is in the body, that are Christians in the world"). There is a sentence in that description which, although it describes Christians, with hindsight looks like a sad divination of the impending reversal of fortunes and the Jewish sufferings to come: "those who hate them are unable to assign any reason for their hatred."

The reversal of fortunes came with Emperor Constantine's Edict of Milan giving Christianity an official status of a State religion. Since the once-energetic Jewish proselytism was no longer a problem for Christian preachers by that time[4] (early fourth century), and consequently there was no more need to continue the apologetic tradition in order to put a check on apostates preferring Judaism over Christianity, a new style of writing about Jews became prevalent, in which without much ado the errors of the Jews were tacitly accepted as proven. No longer busy proving them, writers like St. Ambrose or St. John Chrysostom began instead an energetic campaign of invective in a curious mixture of truth and calumny, where accounts of actual persecutions suffered by the Church from the Jews were mingled with most fantastical abuses. "The Jews are no longer the people of God, but rulers of Sodom and Gomorrah," says St. Ambrose in his *Letter x* (AD 338), and as such they are worthy of all contempt. They are:

> slayers of the Lord, murderers of the prophets, adversaries of God, haters of God, men who show contempt for the law, foes of grace, enemies of their father's faith, advocates of the devil, brood of vipers, slanderers, scoffers, men whose minds are in darkness, leaven of the Pharisees, assembly of demons, sinners, wicked men, stoners, and haters of righteousness." (St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio in Christi resurrectionem*)

Jewish disbelief was a particularly obnoxious characteristic to those zealous Christian saints: the opinion that Jews refused to accept Jesus as their Christ through sheer spite and crucified him wilfully, albeit contrary to canonical texts, became widely credited at that time: "The Jews . . . erred not ignorantly but with full knowledge," reveals St. John Chrysostom (*Homily viii, On the Gospel of St. John*). "Looking to men, [they] gave up sound faith, knowing that he was the only-begotten Son of God, but not confessing Him, because of their rulers, lest they should be cast out of the synagogue" (*Homilies on the Gospel acc. to St. John, Verse 10*). In their hardened disbelief they were indeed worse than heathens:

> In either case the root of the difficulty is moral; with the Greeks it is a frivolous cynicism, with the Jews, inveterate obstinacy. The latter are confuted, firstly, by their own Scriptures, which predict both in general and in detail the coming of Jesus Christ. Also, the old Jewish polity, both civil and religious, has passed away, giving place to the Church of Christ (St. Athanasius, *Introduction to the Treatise on the Incarnation of the Word* [*Oriatio de incarnatione Verbi*])

The epithet "perfidious" becomes firmly attached to the name of Jews at that time, initially in its etymological sense of "lacking faith," but later with a clearly derogatory and pejorative meaning. In the Middle Ages the word "Jew" would be universally regarded as offensive.

This period is of particular interest to us since it is here that certain popular medieval superstitions connected with Jews spring into existence. St. John Chrisostom's homilies were a momentous flow of accusations, and they were to be credited unreservedly.

> the synagogue is worse than a brothel ... it is the den of scoundrels and the repair of wild beasts ... the temple of demons devoted to idolatrous cults ... the refuge of brigands and debauchees, and the cavern of devils ... a criminal assembly of Jews ... a place of meeting for the assassins of Christ ... a house worse than a drinking shop ... a den of thieves, a house of ill fame, a dwelling of iniquity, the refuge of devils, a gulf and abyss of perdition

Although nowadays these foam-mouthed accusations seem to be a strange exercise in a scatological rhetoric of abuse, in popular thinking they found very soon a way from the realm of metaphor to actual fact. Of a religious adversary, the Jew was becoming

a sorry spectacle, customarily associated with filth and impurity: "debauchery and drunkenness had brought them to the level of the lusty goat and pig. They only know one thing, to satisfy their stomachs, to get drunk, to kill and beat each other up like stage villains and coachmen." This, by way of digression, was in remarkable opposition to facts[5]. Yet they were not hated the less for their humiliation, quite the opposite. As this view of the Synagogue was sinking deep into Christian thinking over the centuries, the hatred grew ever stronger. Because of their affiliation with the Devil, to whom they were allegedly given over both hide and hair, the Jews were hysterically feared as powerful necromancers and servants of evil, and thought capable of whatever hair-rising monstrosities they were being accused of..

Thus the first four centuries of Christianity built a foundation for a series of popular beliefs concerning the Jews: the Fathers of the Church succeeded in depicting their doctrinal opponents as a people accursed by God and given over wholly to Satan. Consequently, the Jews were no better than wilful and inveterate foes to the true faith, always ready to harry the fold of Christ. Their filth and stench betrayed them as branded creatures, less than human and condemned to perpetual banishment and slavery, and sure to suffer eternal death unless saved by conversion. Later medieval conceptions, with an incredible negligence for truth and objectivity, elaborated on these three main characteristics to create a repugnant image of the "barbarous, inhuman, petulant, furious, shameless, perfidious, stinking, insolent, insidious and rude" Jew.

Part Two: Medieval Superstitions about Jews

Perhaps to speak of "unthinkable monstrosities" in the context of medieval Jewry is not so much a rhetorical device as a serious invitation to invent them: this at least seems to have been the main occupation of many people of the day. Superstitions about the Jews have been made the subject of bulky volumes, and some of them are still sickening to read. Jews in the Middle Ages were in a precarious position: on the one hand, theological evolution reached a point where it had been declared that Jews cannot be exterminated physically. Apparently, they were condemned by God to a life of penury and shame, and as such they were useful as a living demonstration of the truth of the Christian Church:

> Consult the pages of Holy Writ. I know what is written in the Psalms as the prophecy about the Jews: *God hath shown me*, saith the Church, *thou shalt not slay mine enemies, neither shall my people ever be forgotten.* They are living signs to us, representing the Lord's Passion. For this reason they are dispersed to all regions, that they may pay the penalty of so great a crime, that they may be the witnesses of our redemption,

wrote St. Bernard of Clairvaux in one of his letters (Ep. 363, "*Ad orientalis Franciae clerum et populum,*"). On the other hand, however, there was ample room for fine tuning between the concepts of extermination and mere oppression, and many Christians were inclined to test that distinction in practice.

This part of the essay will investigate into the evolution of the main three accusations (the Jewish satanism, their perfidious fight against Christians, and their revolting filth). Many of those accusations were such outrageous forgeries and follies that the mind stops short of believing them to have been part of the official ecclesiastical doctrine. For this reason it is worth bearing in mind that the official views of the Church voiced by the Holy See have frequently been at considerable variance with the *vox populi*, to which popular preachers rather than hierarchs used to act as prompters. While seldom sympathetic to Jews, some popes saw through the motives of their oppressors, which were either religious fanaticism or common greed, and stood up in their defence. In 1299 Pope Innocent III issued his *Constitutio pro Iudaeis*, saying that "Although the Jewish perfidy is in every way worthy of condemnation, nevertheless, because through them the truth of our own faith is proved, they are not to be severely oppressed by the faithful." Innocent then goes on to stipulate examples of *severe* oppression, which apparently included forced baptism, killing and wounding Jews for money, throwing sticks and stones at Jews celebrating their festivities, and digging up corpses at Jewish cemeteries (these ghoulish practices were probably performed to extort ransom from the family of the deceased).

These exhortations were badly needed to prevent the Jewish people from ruin and extinction in the times of the crusades. Suffice it to say that at the instigation of one monk called Ralph or Rudolf the first of them (1096) began and ended with massacres in Germany which took about 10,000 Jewish lives, and an utter extermination of the people was only prevented by a peacekeeping mission of St. Bernard of Clairvaux. Unfortunately, the struggle between the hierarchy and the rabble was not always victorious to the former, and indeed it appears that there were times when the struggle ceased altogether as the official hierarchy went hand in hand with the popular hatred of the Jews[6]. Therefore it is to be assumed that anti-Semitic excesses, although they can be traced back to the Church doctrine, were considered undesirable by the official hierarchy, but they were tolerated or even actively propagated by some lower clergy.

Coming back to the topic of Christian superstitions connected with the Jews, the period of the Holy Crusades shows a significant elaboration of the raw patristic material. The first charge, that of satanism, receives immense support from popular medieval literature. Throughout the Middle Ages, the Jew is shown as Satan's obedient instrument, and indeed seldom one of them appears without the other's company. Thus a later French liturgical drama titled *Le Mystere de la Passion* features Jews exultantly capering around the cross of Jesus, triumphing in their

victory; in popular medieval writings death of a Jew is an invitation for Satan to claim his soul as his own[7]. The belief in Jewish connections with the underworld is implied in legends of one Teophil, a Christian cleric willing to sell his soul to the devil, who resorts for help and advice to the Jews (obviously experts in the field)[8]. Following literally Jesus' words that the Jews have a devil for their father, the Middle Ages credited the Jew with a deepest intimacy with Satan, and sometimes even failed to make any difference between them. Contemporary visual arts frequently depict devils wearing Jewish badges and pointed hats.

The notorious reputation of the Jews as enemies of Christ and of his Church was a logical consequence of the first accusation. Charges of ritual murder were levelled against Jews (as well as Christians) as early as in the first century A.D. But what Apion of Alexandria then recounts as an anecdote from his travels (gruelling but related only from hearsay), came to be seriously studied by Christian tribunals in the Middle Ages: the first hideous Jewish ritual murder was tracked in Norwich in 1144 A.D., when the body of a little child was discovered in a ditch with terrible wounds suggesting death caused by crucifixion. The little William was duly canonized and his grave became the centre of a spreading cult. Although virtually no evidence in the modern sense of the word had ever been available to justify the ascribing of such atrocities to Jews, they were considered guilty beyond any reasonable doubt of ritual murder, and a black series of related charges followed in Gloucester (1160), Blois (1171), Pantoise (1179), London (1181), Braisne (1192), Norwich (1235), Foulds (1235), London (1244), Paris (1244), Varleas (1247), Saragossa (1250), Lincoln (1255), London (1256), and Northampton (1279)[9]. All the victims were children, usually possessed of a particular piety and sweetness of disposition. So for instance the boy martyred in Saragossa (1250) was a small church chorister, reputed for his profound yet simple faith and great gentleness. Also the boy named Hugh murdered in Lincoln (1255) became a saint and his tomb was visited by pilgrims from all over Europe.

In that series of murders the guilty Jews (who apparently needed the children or their blood for making their ritual meals) were always exposed by means of tortures and deprived of all their fortunes. This actually led to a curious practice popular among some Christian fathers whose children died natural deaths, which practice consisted in concealing the little corpses in the premises of wealthy Jews and then blackmailing them into paying hush-money[10]. German Emperor Frederick II, who did not fall victim to fraud easily, was prompted by the incidents in the middle of the 13th century to commission an investigation into the matter. Although a committee of experts ruled out any Jewish agency in such crimes[11], the charges continued.

Another Jewish way of inflicting damage to Christians lay in their alleged economic power. Although Malcolm Hay points out that Florentine and Venetian

(Christian) usurers were later to become a good deal more ruthless than the Jewish ones, Christians found it hard to forgive Jews their profession which, as forbidden by the Church to Christians, was despised and coveted at the same time. Surely, Christian rulers (including Popes) found Jewish money-lenders very useful, and often preferred their services to those of Christian bankers, thus becoming accomplices in the crime which they officially castigated. But even though the Jews were soon ousted from financial markets by repressive legislation and Christian competitors, their nation never shook off the *odium* of "foul usury." Trachtenberg (*The Devil and the Jews*, Chapter 13) points out to the fact that Judas in passion plays was frequently a satirical depiction of the usurious Jew counting his silver pennies which cost Jesus his life.

The Jews were a race damned to humiliation and were forced (often ineffectually) to wear distinctive clothes and pointed hats or yellow badges on their ordinary garment to make it impossible to conceal their shameful identity. But that was too obviously a man-made punishment, and the preachers readily came up with a supernatural proof which validated it. Namely, in the Middle Ages a theory spread according to which the Jews gave out a terrible stench. There was a controversy on whether that stench was a punishment on their perfidy, so they had to suffer their own body odour for the ancestral deicide, or just a give-away of their infernal provenience (some said that the Jews could not smell their own stench, which was only apparent to Christians and was miraculously eliminated at baptism). One way or the other, the Jews were popularly associated with all possible impurity. Numerous typical pictoral depictions of a Jew show him riding face backwards on a sow (frequently while some other Jew is sucking its udder or eagerly feeding on its excrements) or a goat (whose horns are mirrored by those on the heads of Jews).

The medieval conception of the Jew effectively eradicated his human features and showed him as a mixture of fabulous bestiality and very actual menace: the Jew was a devil (or at least one of the Devil's instruments), a vile and impure creature indefatigably plotting to ruin the Christians.

Part Three: The Prioress's Tale

The story in the *Prioress's Tale* follows closely the contemporary tradition. The tale is very short and the Jews, despite their instrumental role in the poem, are mentioned in it rather rarely (the focus of the story is obviously on the young martyr). Very typically for this sort of literature, the collective name of *Jews* is obviously a sufficient characterisation, so we never learn their real names. However, it is

interesting to see how all the principal charges and abuses mentioned in the Parts One and Two can be found in the narrator's brief comments. The very first stanza exposes the Jews, the villains of the piece, as foul and usurious leeches:

> Ther was in Asye, in a greet citee,
> Amonges Cristene folk a Jewerye,
> Sustened by a lord of that contree
> For foule usure and lucre of vilenye
> Hateful to Crist and to his compaignye ...

There is no reason given for Christ's hate[12] of the Jews and it seems that by that time this old belief had struck deep enough into popular consciousness to require no further justification: the Jews were God-haters by definition, and God answered them in kind. After all, there can be no amity between Christ and Beliar, and it would appear self-evident that the villainous Jews, who cannot be friends of Christ owing to their mortal sin of usury, must flock under the standard of the Arch-Enemy of God and humankind. Therefore it is not surprising to see that they are enticed to plan the murder by the Devil. Satan, called here *oure fyrste foo, the Serpent Sathanas*, (line 558) has his nest in the Jewish heart — another example of the belief that Jews, if they were not devils themselves, were never far removed from their Father. The wording of this phrase desrves special attention: it is interesting to note that the Latinate forms (like "*Serpent*" and "*Sathanas*") are preferred over the Anglo-Saxon ones ("*Snake*" and "*Devil/Satan*"). The most obvious reason is that what the prioress has in mind is actually a calque of a passage in the Vulgata translation of the Bible describing Satan's overthrow: "Et proiectus est draco ille magnus, *serpens* antiquus, qui vocatur Diabolus et *Satanas*, qui seducit universum orbem" (Ap. 12,9). Thus a venerable source is implicitly summoned to support and validate the claim that the Jews are Satan's synagogue and his compliant tools.

The Serpent swells up (*up swal*, line 560) (presumably with insolent pride, apparently so characteristic of the Jews) and dares the *Hebrayk peple* to suffer no more the fact that the boy is singing in their despite a *sentence* contrary to the Jewish law (again an allusion to the belief that Jews, as inveterate enemies of true faith, cannot suffer to hear the name of Mary lauded in prayer, and more generally, that the Jewish law is opposed to truth which is encapsuled in the Christian creed). Although in some versions of the tale the song in question is *Gaude Maria* "with the line 'Erubescat Judaeus infelix,' specially suited to irritate Jewish auditors," as the editors[13] explain, in Chaucer's version the song is a well-known devotional chant of *Alma Redemptoris Mater*. The fact that it makes no mention of Jews serves both to emphasize their cruelty in view of the boy's complete innocence, and to present them as foes to the Christian creed *par excellence*.

The subsequent stanza, in which the Jews decide to hire a paid murderer or a *homycide* again shows them in the least favourable light imaginable. Rather than abandon themselves in blind rage and butcher the boy on the spot, the Jews *conspired* the young clergeon's death. In the Western culture, this is despicable for at least two reasons: it is not only wilful and deliberate murder, but also an act of cowardice: obviously, the Jews did not have the guts to perform the shameful crime by themselves, so they employed a thug to do it for them. Moreover, the cold-blooded plot is made even more repulsive by the fact that wages are paid to the murderer. Since the *homycide* is also a Jew, the association with Judas might come naturally to the mind of a contemporary reader, especially as the boy is openly compared to the *white Lamb celestial* in line 561.

In their typically filthy way, the Jews throw the child's body into a privy. This act of defilement, in popular thinking well suited to the Jewish character, serves both to show their impurity and their aptitude for all shameful sacrilege. But in the medieval view of the world, God did not intend the Jews to be the victors. Quite the opposite, they are supposed be a palpable proof of the Christian faith as all their wiles are confounded by a providential *vis maior*. Accordingly, the Virgin Mary comes to aid her martyr and expose the Jewish villainy. This miraculous act of justice deserves to be studied more closely.

The *clergeon* is characterized as a typical child martyr. The mind of the little boy is filled with love of the Virgin Mary, and he shows both an admirable assiduity in his learning a long and incomprehensible song by rote solely to please the Virgin, and a remarkable constancy as he sings it day after day on his way to and from school. As the narration progresses, every new piece of information endears the *clergeon* more and more to the reader. The reader's pity is kindled by means of making the victim a poor widow's son and a schoolboy, as well as by the brutal manner in which he is seized and murdered, and finally by his simple piety. Such a wealth of goodness may appear to good to be true, and the question arises if it does not smack of irony. However, while modern readers would probably be hesitant to credit that *Emil*-like figure with any actual existence, in the Middle Ages such a characterization is rather a run-of-the-mill affair. The boy is quite seriously a true saint and a martyr, and the prioress quotes two more such remarkable instances of infant sanctity. One of them is St. Nicholas (to whom the *clergeon* is compared in line 514), who was reputed with performing in his infancy such extraordinary feats as observing fast on Wednesdays and Fridays (that is, he refused to suckle on those days). The other is the *yonge Hugh of Lincoln*, the child martyr mentioned previously in Part Two of the essay, whose memory and fame were still fresh in the times of Chaucer (*for it is but a litel while ago* that he was killed by the Jews, remarks the narrator in lines 684-686). Thus the clergeon appears not as a chance murder victim, but a hero in the perennial conflict

between good and evil. Moreover, wherever Chaucer's story differs from its analogues, the difference seems to be calculated to give a more favourable backlighting to the hero (as for instance it is the case with the child's age, reduced by Chaucer from the usual ten to a mere seven years). Therefore it might be assumed that the narrator, while trying to unmask the Jews, is trying to enhance the effect by tailoring the story in such a way as to make the hero appear even more likeable and his lot more pitiful.

The quasi-mystical aspect of the *clergeon's* presentation comes to the surface if we consider the biblical references in which it is steeped. He is the white Lamb, like Christ in *The Revelation* of St. John, and his mother, looking for him very much the way Mary looked for the boy Jesus during their pilgrimage to Jerusalem, is a "new Rachel." This last comparison is especially piquant. On the one hand, it refers straight to the Jewish oldtestamental prophetic tradition. The words come from the book of the prophet Jeremiah (Jer 31,15): "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." Because of this parallel with the fate of the Jews some critics suggested narrative irony. However, there seems to be a much simpler explanation: the Jewish tradition does not seem to be a serious trouble to the narrator because the Jews as she knows them are no longer the Chosen People, and the biblical prophecies have no longer any bearing on them. They are an entirely different race from their noble ancestors, with their tradition disdained and their religion annexed by the Christians. Instead, the medieval association with this biblical text is the liturgy of the Holy Innocents: Christ's first infant martyrs butchered by Jewish thugs at Herod's command. This reference is reinforced as the narrator calls the Jews in her story a *cursed folk of Herodes al newe* (line 574).

Conclusion

A certain quality of openness or indeterminacy present in the tale (due partly to its very schematic construction of argumant) evades any rigorous exegesis. Indeed, on the part of the writer the story may have been an ironic show of Christian folly just as well as a serious attempt at noble and useful religious writing. Yet whatever Chaucer himself had in mind writing *The Prioress's Tale* is plainly of secondary importance. Whether it is intended or otherwise, his sketch of the Christian view regarding the Jewish people is a morbidly fascinating picture of the Middle Ages in one of its most ignominous aspects. Superficially, the cruel death to which the Jewish murderers are sentenced in the story appears as a just punishment for a hideous crime. But a closer analysis of the period affords a glimpse at the murky world of hatred in

which the Jews were popularly considered to be as it were predestined for such crimes.

It only remains to be hoped that as that world with its prevailing sentiment of Jewish hatred is becoming more and more remote in time, it is also becoming less and less comprehensible to the modern reader. However, even nowadays the dark *Judenhasse* seems to come to the surface too often to be forgotten. The prioress with her *wayk konnyinge* and fervent zeal should continue to be a warning to all religions and nations.

Notes

[1] Aaron Gurievich mentions in his *Культура уобщество средневековой Европы глазами современников* that although exempla of this kind were relatively few in France and England of the 13th century, they were abundant in Germany: a third of all exempla in The Memorable Histories compiled by Rudolf von Schlettstadt is devoted to relating Jewish atrocities.

[2] Or rather Mosaism, which is the usually accepted term used when writing of the Jewish religion before the advent of Christianity.

[3] Thus for St. Paul "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter." (Rom 2, 28-29) This doctrine still confirms that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good," and it has been replaced only due to its ineffectuality for the fallen mankind. Similarly, The Epistle to the Philadelphians written by St. Ignatius of Antioch (died c. 110 AD) says that "he who denies Christ to be the Son of God, [...] is a Jew falsely so called, being possessed of mere carnal circumcision" (Chapter VI).

[4] The Jews were a missionizing religion in the Antiquity, in compliance with the Old Testament texts describing the people of Israel as a prophet for the nations (cf. Jer 1,5). Jesus mentions energetic missionary campaigns of his contemporaries (Mat 23,15) and issues similar commandments to his own disciples (Mat 10 et al.).

[5] Israel Abrahams in his Jewish Life in the Middle Agessuggests that the hygienic standards in Jewish communities were higher than elsewhere in Europe, until they degenerated later owing to penury.

[6] For a more comprehensive discussion of the topic cf. M. Hay, The Roots of Christian anti-Semitism, NY 1981 (chapters 2 and 3), or R. Chazan, European Jewry and the First Crusade , Berkeley 1987.

[7] Quoted in Joshua Trachtenberg in his The Devil and the Jews. The Medieval conception of the Jew and Its Relation to Modern anti-Semitism, Yale 1943 (Polish translation by R. Stiller, Diabeł i Żydzi: średniowieczna koncepcja Żyda a współczesny antysemityzm).

[8] This aspect of the synagogue is studied by Joshua Trachtenberg, op. cit.

[9] These charges are analysed in more detail by Hanna Węgrzynek in Czarna legenda Żydów: procesy o rzekome mordy rytualne w dawnej Polsce, Warszawa 1995 (Chapter 1), and Joshua Trachtenberg in The Devil and the Jews.

[10] "It happens that the fathers of certain dead children, or other Christians who are enemies of Jews, hide in secret these dead children and attempt to extort money from the Jews. ... They affirm most falsely that the Jews themselves have stolen these children, and immolate their hearts and blood." Pope Gregory X, Oct 7, 1272.

[11] Aronius, nr 749; Augustus Digot, Histoire de Lorraine, Nancy 1856, II, p. 144.

[12] While a modern reader may be stunned by a depiction of Jesus Christ as hating anybody, this figure was well known to medieval audiences. The first Christian to suggest that Jews were a people hated by God (and by himself, too) was St. John Chrisostom.

[13] The Riverside Chaucer, Third Edition, General Editor Larry D. Benson, Oxford University Press

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[θɪəˈretɪkl̩
ənd
əˈplaɪd
lɪŋˈgwɪstɪks]

Irmina Poniatowska

A Comparison of the Use of the Comma in Compound and Complex Sentences Joined by Connectives in Polish and English.*

There are more rules governing the use of the comma than all the other punctuation rules together. Being the most flexible of all punctuation marks in the range of its use, the comma has a frequency of occurrence almost identical with that of the period and about ten times higher than the next most frequently used punctuation mark in line.

This paper aims at taking up one dominant use of the comma - separating clauses within compound and complex sentences. The first part of the paper constitutes a classification of Polish compound and complex sentences according to the type of connectives they use. This part includes also explanations of some basic grammatical terms relevant to the problem under examination. The second part presents the English counterparts of the Polish sentence types given in the first section. Finally, the two sections are followed by a comparison of the use of the comma in Polish and English compound and complex sentences in the form of a table.

To avoid confusion in the examples presented, the analysis is confined to the simplest type of compound and complex sentences, i.e. that consisting of two clauses. The sentences used as examples are, at the same time, full sentences - ellipted clauses [zdania ściągnięte] and sentential correlatives [równoważniki zdań] have been left out. Moreover, the body of the sentential connectives presented has been limited almost entirely to the most frequently used [the few exceptions being marked by aterisks as 'książkowe' for Polish and 'very formal' for English] and simplest i.e.

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single-word conjunctions in each of the two languages under investigation. Consequently, the group of correlative conjunctions [eg. EITHER ... OR, BOTH... AND etc.] as well as two-word conjectives [e.g. AS IF, JAK GDYBY etc.] have been left out as requiring much more detailed and extensive a discussion than is in the scope of this paper. For the same reason, as well as because of problems with finding their systematic counterparts [i.e. showing some consistency in their form and joined by conjunctives] in English, the following types of complex/subordinate clauses have not been inclued in the analysis:

- adverbial clauses of manner [okolicznikowe sposobu, which answer the questions JAK? W JAKI SPOSÓB? and are most often connected with the superordinate clauses via the conjunction JAK(BY)]
- subjective clauses [podmiotowe, which answer the questions KTO? CO?, and are connected with the principal clauses via the relative pronouns KTO, CO matched with the overt or covert pronouns TEN, TA, TO in the principal clause; or via the conjunctions ŻE, ŻEBY, JAK(BY)]
- predicative clauses [orzecznikowe, which answer the questions: JAKI JEST? KIM JEST? CZYM JEST?, are connected with the main clauses via the relative pronouns CZYM, JAKI, JAKA... or via the conjunctions ŻE, ŻEBY, IŻ, and constitue an extension of the predicate in the main clause, expressed via the pronouns TYM or TAKI, TAKA...].

The classification of compund and complex sentences does not include conditionals, either.

Finally, the number of examples used has been drastically reduced because of the printing constraints on the size of this paper.

Compound and Complex Sentences [wypowiedzenia złożone] in Polish

I. ASYNDETIC CLAUSES [not joined by a conjunction]

The particular clauses within a compound sentence may be connected without conjunctions [bezspójnikowo], i.e. paratactically [parataxis - the placing of related clauses in a series without the use of connecting words]. In such a case a comma is obligatory:

Przyszedł, chciał przyjść.

Sztywnieję, spadam, umarłem.

W domu była policja, całą służbę mieli na oku, domownikom kazali zejść na podwórze. [a complex sentence consisting of extended clauses]

II. CONJUNCTIVE CLAUSES

Usually, conjunctive clauses are connected via so-called connectives or affinity markers /MAs/ [wskaźniki zespolenia], that is conjunctions or relative pronouns, which indicate the relationship between the clauses.

1. Compound/Coordinate Clauses [zdania złożone współrzędnie = w stosunku współrzędnym]
compound sentence - a sentence consisting of two or more independent, main/principal, coordinate clauses connected via coordinating conjunctions/conjunctives/connectives
The coordinate relation of a clause to another is called modified parataxis.

a) Congruent clauses [łączne]
are connected most often via the following conjunctions:
- inclusive conjunctions [spojniki łączne]: I, ORAZ, TUDZIEŻ* which coordinate the ideas expressed in two adjacent clauses
- exclusive conjunctions [spojniki wyłączajace]: [A]NI which express exclusion: 'neither this nor that'

Idę sobie i pogwizduję wesoło.
Zbierali grzyby oraz wypoczywali w cieniu drzew.
Zamknął drzwi od ganku tudzież* zaryglował okna okiennicami.
Nie lubię go ani go nie cenię.
Nie miał apetytu ani sypiać nie mógł po nocach.

b) Disjunctive clauses [rozłączne]
are connected most often via the following exclusive conjunctions:
LUB, ALBO, BADŹ*, CZY [=albo] which indicate an alternative or contrast between clauses

Postawimy płot lub zasadzimy żywopłot.
Napalimy trochę w piecu albo włączymy piecyk elektryczny.
Chodziły po parku bądź* robiły niedalekie wycieczki za miasto.
Pójdziemy pieszo czy pojedziemy tramwajem?

In a compound sentence, clauses expressing inclusion, exclusion or alternative are not set off by commas. No comma is, thus, put before the affinity markers from the I-LUB-ANI GROUP.

c) Adversative clauses [przeciwstawne]
are connected most often via the following adversative conjunctions:
A, ALE, LECZ, JEDNAK[ŻE], WSZAK[ŻE]*, ZAŚ, NATOMIAST, CHOC[IAŻ]

Niebo pociemniało, a wśród chmur zabłysły gwiazdy.
Starał się opanować, ale łzy napłynęły mu do oczu.
Nie ma jeszcze niebezpieczeństwa, lecz trzeba zachować ostrożność.
Skończyłem pisać list, jednak nie jestem z niego zadowolony.
Tatry mają cudowny klimat, jednakże chorym na serce on nie służy.
Pogoda była piękna, ranki jednak były chłodne.
Noce są chłodne, wszakże* jest już jesień.
Pewne fakty nabierają znaczenia, inne zaś je tracą.
Dziś nie mam czasu, natomiast jutro służę.
Piechota szła w bród, artylerię natomiast przeprawiano pontonami.
Wieloryb żyje w morzach, choć należy do ssaków.

When the order of the clauses is reversed, the comma separates them as well:

Choć chętnych było mnóstwo, nie wszystkich wpuszczono.

d) Result clauses [wynikowe]
are connected most often via the following resultative conjunctions:
WIĘC, ZATEM, DLATEGO, TEDY*, TOTEŻ*

Miałem dosyć jego towarzystwa, więc chyłkiem wymknąłem się do domu.
Wieczór nadchodzi, zatem pora do domu powracać.
Jest praktyczna, dlatego zapisuje wszystkie wydatki.
Był miłym kolega, toteż lubili go wszyscy.
Drzwi były zamknięte, tedy* postanowił poczekać.

Clauses introducing opposition or result in a compound sentence are set off by a comma. Thus, a comma is put before the AMs /affinity markers/ from the LECZ-WIĘC GROUP.

2. Complex/Subordinate Clauses [zdania złożone podrzędnie = w stosunku

nadrzędno-podrzędnym]
complex sentence - consisting of an independent, main/principal/superordinate clause [wypowiedzenie nadrzędne, określane] and one or more dependent, subordinate clauses [wypowiedzenie podrzędne, okreslające] connected via subordinating conjunctions / conjunctives / connectives.
The dependent relation of a clause to another is called hypotaxis.

a) Attributive clauses [przydawkowe]
answer the questions: JAKI? JAKA? JAKIE? ... KTÓRY? KTÓRA? KTÓRE? ... [WHO? WHOM? WHICH?]
and are connected most often via the following MAs:
KTÓRY, KTÓRA, KTÓRE ...[KOLWIEK]; JAKI, JAKA, JAKIE ...[KOLWIEK]

Zwiedzono ratusz, który należy do najcenniejszych zabytków w mieście.
Oto jest Warszawa, jaką pamiętamy z dawnych lat.
Decydował się na każdą pracę, jakąkolwiek by mu zaproponowano.

b) Complement clauses [dopełnieniowe]
answer the questions: CO? CZEGO? CZEMU? Z CZYM? O CZYM? ... [WHAT? WITH WHAT? ABOUT WHAT?...]
and may be connected via various conjunctions:

Widzę, że się na tym znasz.
Przypominał sobie, iż upływa termin pożyczki.
Znalazłem w encyklopedii to, czego nie było w podręczniku.
Nie rozumiem, co znaczy ta obrażona mina?
Wiadomo, kto ponosi odpowiedzialność.
Nie wiem, która wersja jest prawdziwa.
Popatrz, jaki to jest piękny widok.
Nie zauważył, kiedy wszedłem.
Trzeba wiedzieć, jak należy się odzywać.
Nie wiadomo, skąd wyszedł nagle dozorca.

c) Adverbial clauses [okolicznikowe]

- OF PURPOSE [celu]

answer the question PO CO? [WHAT FOR?]
and are connected by the following conjunctions: [A]ŻEBY, [A]BY

Dokładał starań, żeby zdążyć na termin.

Wyciągnął rękę, aby* zerwać kwiat.
Biegł, by zdążyć.

- OF REASON/CAUSE [przyczyny]

answer the question DLACZEGO? [WHY?]
and are connected by the following conjunctions: BO, PONIEWAŻ, GDYŻ*, [AL]BOWIEM*

Nie wszedł do gabinetu dyrektora, bo zabrakło mu odwagi.
Pojechał taksówką, ponieważ się śpieszył.
Nie może czytać, gdyż* bolą ją oczy.
Trzeba się było zastanowić, albowiem* nadeszła chwila decydująca.
Wyrok nie był surowy, skazano go bowiem* na karę grzywny.
[the conjunction is not used immediately after a comma]

When the order of the clauses is reversed, the comma separates them as well:
Ponieważ opór ogniwa jest niewielki, natężenie prądu nawet przy zwarciu jest niewielkie.

- OF PLACE [miejsca]

answer the question GDZIE? [WHERE?]
and are connected by the conjunction GDZIE[KOLWIEK]

Wędrował przed siebie, gdzie go oczy poniosą.
Wodził za nią oczami, gdziekolwiek się ruszyła.

When the order of the clauses is reversed, the comma separates them as well:

Gdzie dwóch się bije, tam trzeci korzysta.
Gdziekolwiek się zwróciła, wszędzie spotykały ja zawody.

- OF TIME [czasu]

answer the question KIEDY? [WHEN?]
and are connected by the following conjunctions: GDY, KIEDY[KOLWIEK]

Uszli parę kroków, gdy ich nagle odwołano.

Późno już było, kiedy wrócił do domu.
Wzdrygał się, kiedykolwiek usłyszał wycie syreny.

When the order of the clauses is reversed, the comma separates them as well:

Gdy nadchodzą przymrozki, przenosimy kwiaty do szklarni.

Extended Conjunctives

In the examples presented so far, the affinity markers are put immediately at the beginning of the attached, coordinate or subordinate clause. This does not, however, mean that an AM is always the first word of the attached clause. An AM may be extended and combined with other words. The pronoun KTÓRY, for example, may combine with prepositions or other lexical items. It is the same case with JAKI, CO etc.

Kołysała się kurtyna, spoza której dobiegało stukanie młotków.
Zostało nam tylko dwa dni, w czasie których możemy skończyć robotę.
Możliwości, wśród których często musiał wybierać, były lepsze i gorsze.
Rada nadzorcza, do której kompetencji należy kontrola spółdzielni, jest wybierana jednocześnie z zarządem.
Częstotliwość, na jakiej pracuje stacja, zależy od jej przeznaczenia.
Nie wiem, na co wydajesz pieniądze.
Melodia może podać ton, nastrój temu, dokoła czego krążą bezradnie rozproszone zdania.
Uważaj, z kim masz do czynienia.

In such a case, the comma does not immediately precede the AM but is put before the words attached to the marker, which - together with the AM - constitute one unit.

Conclusions

In coordinate sentences, the affinity markers from the I-LUB-ANI GROUP and from the LECZ-WIĘC GROUP are similarly put at the sentence boundary between the coordinated clauses. While, however the affinity markers from the LECZ-WIĘC GROUP require a comma before them, the I-LUB-ANI GROUP MAs forbid the use of the comma in front of them.

In subordinate clauses the comma is always required, independently of the sequence of the clauses in a sentence: whether it is the subordinate following the superordinate

or vice versa. In fact, when the latter is the case, a comma is always obligatory regardless of the type of the conjunctive sentence.

However, mechanical placing of the comma before certain words does not prevent punctuation mistakes. For the employment of a comma is not connected with any particular affinity marker. An AM may be extended and combined with other words. In such a case, the comma does not immediately precede the AM but is put before the words which constitute one unit with the AM. The distribution of the comma depends, thus, on the logical relationship between the clausal elements of a sentence, and the rules of its use are founded on the analysis of syntactical constructions.

Compound and Complex Sentences in English

I. Asyndetic Clauses

Like in Polish, in English commas are used to separate clauses in lists, i.e. clauses that are not connected by a conjunction:

I came, I went home, I came back again.
I came, I saw, I conquered.
He was a very able young man, he also seemed to be unlucky.
He meant well, acted stupidly, did much harm.

II. Conjunctive Clauses

1. Compound/Coordinate Clauses

a) the English counterparts of Polish **Congruent Clauses** [łączne] are connected most often via the inclusive conjunction AND, used to join two parts of a sentence or related statements together

John felt ill and he went early to bed.
They did not wish to make themselves inconspicuous and we could only approve their attitude.
The man had been drinking heavily [,] and this explained his unsteady walk.

The house badly needed painting, and the garden was overgrown with weeds.

Before AND the comma is often left out.

b) the English counterparts of Polish **Disjunctive clauses** [rozłączne] are connected most often via the conjunction OR introducing an alternative [in all the following sentences OR functions as an exclusive conjunction]

We'd better make a decision soon or the whole deal will fall through.
You should eat more, or you'll make yourself ill.

c) the English counterparts of Polish **Adversative clauses** [przeciwstawne]are connected most often via the following adversative conjunctions: BUT, YET, WHEREAS*, WHILE, [AL]THOUGH, used to express a difference.

I love tennis but I like walking too.
John felt ill, but he continued to work.
The house badly needed painting, but it looked comfortable.
Tom was not there but his brother was.
John felt ill, but nobody seemed to care.
He worked hard, yet he failed.
She's a funny girl, yet you can't help liking her.
He must be about sixty, whereas* his wife looks about thirty.
Tom is very extrovert and confident while Katy's shy and quiet.
She hasn't phoned, though she said she would.
Her steak and kidney puddings are great, though there's not much meat in them.
He passed the examination although he had been prevented by illness from studying.
I don't really enjoy sports, although I did watch the game.
He decided to go, although I begged him not to.

In the adversative type of sentences, when the second statement stands in a sharp opposition to the first, and a very marked pause occurs, or should occur, at the sentence boundary, a comma can be inserted after the first clause to emphasize the second one and, thus, the contrast between them. In such a case, a comma will be preferred even when the subjects are referentially the same [co-referential subjects - identical in both clauses of a compound or complex sentence].

When the order of the clauses is reversed, there may be a comma separating

the clauses:

Though he was only twelve he could run faster than any kid in the school.
Though he was suffering great pain [,] he walked home alone.
Though they are so poor, they have enough to eat.
Although she joined the company only a year ago, she's already been promoted twice.
Although she's only three, her mother dresses her in grown-up clothes.

d) the English counterparts of Polish **Result Clauses** [wynikowe] are connected via the resultative conjunction SO, used to give the reason why something happens, why somebody does something

There was no food in the house so we rang out for a pizza.
They cost a lot of money, so use them carefully.

2. Complex/Subordinate Clauses

A dependent clause in English may function as an adjective, a noun or an adverb.

a) the English counterparts of Polish **Attributive clauses** [przydawkowe] are RELATIVE/ADJECTIVAL clauses:

•RESTRICTIVE/DEFINING clauses, which are essential to the meaning of a sentence as they define the noun in the main clause that they follow. They are connected with the main clause via the relative pronouns WHO[M] and WHICH, which may be replaced by the pronoun THAT.

These are the men who wanted to see you.
I know the man [whom] you mean.
Is this the train that stops at Cambridge?
I can't find the books [that] I got from the library.
These are principles which we all believe in.

A restrictive relative clause cannot be separated by a comma from its antecedent in the noun phrase.

•NON-RESTRICTIVE/NON-DEFINING clauses, which are supplementary or incidental, as they add extra or unnecessary information about the noun they follow. They are connected with the main clause via the relative pronouns WHO[M] and WHICH, neither of which can be replaced by the

pronoun THAT.

He sent for Edward Fenton, who lived in a nearby street.

A non-restrictive relative clause is regularly separated from its antecedent in the noun phrase by a comma placed before the relative pronoun.

b) the English counterparts of Polish **Complement clauses** [dopełnieniowe] may be:

• nominal free relatives

The letter showed clearly what they were planning. [=the thing that/which]
Roz doesn't know how to ride a bicycle. [=the way in which]
Do you remember how we used to see every new film as soon as it came out?

• embedded nominal clauses

He couldn't see why it shouldn't be done.

• THAT clauses

He knew that he could get home in less than three hours.
It's clear that he would leave a mess.
I knew [that] he'd never get here in time.

A comma should not be used in THAT clauses.

the reverse order:
That the headmaster is going to retire is only a rumour.

c) the English counterparts of Polish **Adverbial clauses** [okolicznikowe]

• OF PURPOSE [celu]
appear to be non-finite clauses, which are introduced not with a conjunction but with the infinitival form of a verb.

He couldn't go to watch cricket.
He had to got the log way round in order to do this.

the reverse order of the clauses:
To visit his mother, he drove through thick fog.

In order to do this, he had to go the long way round.
So as to ensure independence, he took out an annuity.

The comma becomes especially desirable with preposed non-finite clauses, especially those having more than one element.

• OF REASON/CAUSE [przyczyny]
are connected by the following conjunctions: BECAUSE, FOR, SINCE, AS

We can't go to Julia's party because we're going away that weekend.
He enlisted, because it was his duty to enlist.
You can go first as you're the oldest.
It isn't certain, for nothing human is certain.

In short adverbial clauses of reason/cause the comma may be omitted. But FOR demands a comma.

> the reverse order of the clauses:
> Because he felt ill, he went to bed.
> Because the house is secluded, you will like it.
> As it was getting late, I decided to book into a hotel.
> Since we've got a few minutes to wait for the train, lets' have a cup of coffee.

• OF PLACE [miejsca]
are connected by the conjunction WHERE[VER]

I like to have him next to me where I can keep an eye on him.
You could go wherever you wanted.

> the reverse order:
> Wherever I go I always seem to bump into him.
> Wherever you look there are pictures.

• OF TIME [czasu]
are often introduced via the conjunctions: WHEN[EVER], WHILE, AS, AFTER, SINCE, BEFORE, UNTIL/TILL

She was only twenty when she had her first baby.

I was just getting into the bath when the telephone rang.
I blush whenever I think about it.
Feed the baby whenever he is hungry.
I was listening to the radio while I was in the bath.
I read it while you were drying your hair.
He gets more attractive as he gets older.
He looked weary, after he had played that long match.
The house was empty for three months after they moved out.
He has not had a day's illness since he returned to New York thirty-one years ago.
It's a year now since we went to France.
He refused to leave the house before we did.

The order of the clauses may be reversed from Principal and Subordinate to Subordinate and Principal:
When she saw him, she burst out laughing.
When the sun is shining brightly above, the world seems a happier place.
Whenever I hear the word culture I start to feel uneasy.
Whenever I go there they seem to be in bed.
As I was getting into the car, I noticed a piece of paper on the floor.
After he got married, Andy changed completely.
Since you came to town, the town has changed.
Until we left the house, he refused to go.

Adverbial subordinate clauses that are semantically closely related to the main clause of a complex sentence do not need a comma in the final position. Often, however, the length of an adverbial clause makes it seem less closely linked to the main clause than a short one and, thus, it needs marking off by a comma. Also when preposed, adverbial clauses often need to be so separated. But even with preposed adverbial clauses the comma is optional.

The English counterparts of Polish Extended Conjunctives

Like in Polish, affinity markers in English are not always put immediately at the beginning of an attached clause. An AM may be extended and combined with other words. The relative pronouns WHICH and WHO[M], for example, may combine with prepositions. It is the same case with HOW.

The death of his son was an experience from which he never fully recovered.
It isn't a subject to which I devote a great deal of thought.
Is that the film in which he kills his mother?
That is the man about whom we were speaking.

When preceded by a preposition, neither of the two relative pronouns, i.e. WHICH and WHO[M], can be replaced by the pronoun THAT.

I was horrified to hear about how she had been treated. [=the way in which]
It all depends on how you look at it. [=the way in which]

Being restrictive relative clauses and nominal free relatives, the above English extended conjunctives cannot - unlike their Polish counterparts - be separated by a comma from their clausal antecedents in a complex sentence.

Conclusions

In English in most cases the comma is optional, i.e. the insertion or the omission of the comma is a matter of taste. The relationship of the use of the comma to the structure of a sentence is, certainly, less emphasized than in Polish. It is rather the semantic relationship between the clauses in a sentence that determines the choice: the closer the semantic relationship, the less need there is for punctuation to clarify the statements. It is important, therefore, whether the subject of the second clause is co-referential with that of the first. If the subjects are referentially identical, a comma is less desirable than if there are different subjects in the joined clauses. In sentences in which the subordinate precedes the principal, a comma at the end of the principal clause is even less desirable as it would check the easy flow of the sense. The comma becomes, however, if not obligatory and essential, at least advisable, when either of the clauses or both of them are long. Otherwise we risk vagueness and ambiguity. Thus, we are dealing with tendencies rather than rules.

Table. A comparison of the use of the comma in Polish and English conjunctive sentences.

Conjuncitve Sentences

COORDINATE SENTENCES	POLISH		ENGLISH	
CONGRUENT CLAUSES	0	I, ORAZ, TUDZIEŻ; ANI	(C)	AND
DISJUNCTIVE CLAUSES	0	LUB, ALBO, BĄDŹ, CZY	(C)	OR
ADVERSATIVE CLAUSES	C	A, ALE, LECZ, JEDNAK[ŻE], WSZAK[ŻE], ZAŚ, NATOMIAST, CHOĆ, CHOCIAŻ	(C)	BUT, YET, WHILE, [AL]THOUGH
RESULTATIVE CLAUSES	C	WIĘC, ZATEM, DLATEGO, TEDY, TOTEŻ	(C)	SO

SUBORDINATE SENTENCES	POLISH		ENGLISH	
ATTRIBUTIVE CLAUSES [JAKI? KTÓRY?]	C	KTÓRY..., JAKI... [KOLWIEK]	0* C**	WHO[M], WHICH, THAT WHO[M], WHICH
COMPLEMENT CLAUSES [CO? CZEGO? CZEMU? CZYM?]	C	ŻE; IŻ; CZEGO, CO, KTO; KTÓRY..., JAKI...; KIEDY; JAK; SKĄD etc.	0	WHAT, HOW, WHY, [THAT]
ADVERBIAL CLAUSES	⇨		⇨	
SUBJECTIVE CLAUSES [KTO? CO?]		[TEN]...___ KTO, CO; ŻE[BY]; JAK[BY]		---
PREDICATIVE CLAUSES [JAKI JEST? KIM, CZYM JEST?]	C	(BYĆ) TYM, TAKI ___ CZYM, JAKI...; ŻE[BY]; IŻ		---

SUBORDINATE SENTENCES	POLISH		ENGLISH	
ADVERBIAL CLAUSES OF:				
• PLACE [GDZIE?]	C	GDZIE[KOLWIEK]	(C)	WHERE[VER]
• TIME [KIEDY?]	C	GDY, KIEDY[KOLWIEK]	(C)	WHEN[EVER], WHILE, AS, AFTER, SINCE, BEFORE, UNTIL/TILL
• PURPOSE [PO CO?]	C	[A]ŻEBY, [A]BY	0***	[IN ORDER] TO, [SO AS] TO
• REASON/ CAUSE [DLACZEGO?]	C	BO, PONIEWAŻ, GDYŻ, [AL]BOWIEM	C (C)	FOR BECAUSE, SINCE, AS
• MANNER [W JAKI SPOSÓB?]	C	JAK[BY]		---

C ....a comma is required
(c) .... the comma is optional
0 ....the use of a comma is forbidden
--- ....clause type not included in the analysis
* ....restrictive
** ....non-restrictive
*** ....non-finite

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Magdalena Jędrzejak

Loss and Gain in Translation in Terms of the Notion of Construal.*

> [N]ot even a deity is capable of assuming a neutral, 'God's eye' view when using a natural language.
>
> Ronald W. Langacker

The observation above constitutes one of the fundamental assumptions of the cognitive theoretical framework as formulated by Ronald W. Langacker and his followers. Specifically, it hints at the fact that the cognitive 'conceptualist' account of meaning is subjectivist in nature, whereby the semantic value of a linguistic expression is equated with a conceptualization, or mental experience. Consequently, at the bottom of this approach lies the notion of the conceptualizer, or the subject of conception, the primary conceptualizers being the speaker and the addressee. '[T]heir conception and portrayal of a situation can never be wholly neutral, for they must always *construe* it in some specific fashion, out of the countless alternatives that are in principle available'[1].

Essentially, however, these 'countless alternatives' are those construals that have been conventionalized in the language in which a particular conceptualization is to be expressed. Thus, language is viewed as a conventional vehicle for the symbolization of conceptualizations, where any conceptualization is uniquely construed.

The significance of the notion of construal in relation to translation becomes conspicuous in the light of another of Langacker's observations stating that 'semantic structures incorporate conventional 'imagery', i.e. they construe a situation in a particular fashion'[2]. The notion of imagery is understood as our mental capacity for construing, or structuring, a conceived situation in many alternate ways. Importantly, any complex linguistic expression subsumes a particular construal as part of its semantic value. Therefore, if we choose to define translation as a process aiming at

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achieving interlingual equivalence[3] in terms of meaning, the translator's task will naturally subsume struggling for equivalence at the level of imagery[4].

Therefore, the translator might be seen as a secondary conceptualizer, whose conceptualizations are prompted by those anchored in the original text[5]. Since no two languages provide identical bases for the symbolization of conceptualizations, the translator is bound to choose construals out of the ones conventionalized in the language he or she is translating into.

Before we take a specific example into consideration, a preliminary remark must be made. The notion of imagery covers a range of phenomena far too broad to be exhaustively discussed in this essay. Therefore, in the analysis of the example chosen for present consideration, only one of the dimensions of imagery will be adduced, namely the conceptual salience of substructures.

The following example comes from Stanislaw Lem's *Dzienniki Gwiazdowe*:

1. - [...] Pan jest **ssakiem**, prawda?
   [Mister is mammal truth?][6]
2. - Tak.
   [Yes]
3. - A więc pomyślnego **ssania**! [emphasis mine]
   [And then successful sucking]

The humor of this short passage rests on the unusual employment of the word *ssak*. Originally, it was invariably conceptualized as 'an animal that sucks'. Later on, it came to designate 'a member of the class Mammalia' due to the process of lexicalization. In this passage, the word is delexicalized as the activity of sucking, which is a part of its original meaning, is given individual status (line 3). This was possible due to the morphological relatedness of the words *ssak* and *ssać*.

In fact, the former is a deverbal noun derived from the verb 'ssać' by means of an additional suffix -ak, whose meaning can be roughly equated with 'the non-human performer of the activity specified'.

In the cognitive view, the 'analyzability' of linguistic expressions affects their semantic value[7]. Importantly, it is not mere analyzability in morphological terms, but rather a concomitant of it. As Langacker puts it, '[a] complex expression is analyzable to the extent that speakers are cognizant of the contributions of component morphemes to the value of the composite whole'[8]. Clearly, the Polish noun *ssak* in its original sense is analyzable. It provides individual symbolization for two conceptual elements, namely it highlights the fact that *the activity of sucking* is

distinctive for *the class of animals* in question. Line 3 designates that activity exclusively.

Let us now attempt to translate this passage into English. The dictionary equivalents of the words in question are *mammal* and *suck*, respectively. Unfortunately, they bear no morphological affiliation. They are also more remote conceptually. The former first appeared as an anglicized version of the Latin word 'mammalia', which is neuter plural of the noun 'mammalis'. 'Mammalis', in turn, is a derivative of the Latin noun 'mamma$_1$' ('breast') adjectivized by means of the suffix -lis.

Even though the words *ssak* and *mammal* have the same prototypical meaning - both designate 'any member of the class Mammalia' - they are not perfectly equivalent in semantic terms. The noun *mammal* does not explicitly refer to the activity of sucking, thus giving no grounds for that activity to be individually profiled in the English version of line 3. The apparent and inevitable loss of meaning stems from the lack of a conventionalized construal of animals belonging to the class Mammalia that would highlight that activity. Furthermore, its analyzability is a problematic issue, since it largely depends upon the conceptualizer's background knowledge [9].

An expert in Latin or etymology in general will be cognizant of the semantic contribution of the morpheme 'mamma$_1$', which highlights the fact that the animals in question are breast-fed. However, an average user of the English language may well be unaware of the semantic import of the stem. If that is the case, there are two further possibilities. The conceptualizer may either perceive the word as monomorphemic, hence, unanalyzable, or, since the monomorphemic word 'mamma$_2$' is a unit in English, they will conceptualize this component in its prototypical sense, viz. 'mother', thus arriving at a conceptualization of 'an animal that has a mother'. Clearly, neither of these construals matches that of *ssak*.

We may, however, try to reproduce the general mechanism that operates in the original. In fact, line 3 is a casual remark, whose unusual character stems from its utterer's inadequate knowledge about human beings. Therefore, we could substitute the remark concerning 'pomyślne ssanie' by some other casual remark as conventionalized in the English language that would provide individual symbolization of one component of the composite structure *mammal*.

For this to be possible, we must dismiss the construal of the noun *mammal* as an unanalyzable word. We may also disregard that which takes into consideration the semantic contribution of 'mamma$_1$', since the utterer's knowledge of humans is to be limited. Therefore, we are left with the third construal, where *mammal* is conceptualized as 'an animal that has a mother'.

One of the possible translations of the dialogue might read as follows:

1. - You are a **mammal**, aren't you?
2. - Yes, I am.
3. - My regards to your **mamma** then!

It should be stressed that this is an arbitrarily chosen version. The focus of this essay rests on the differences between the construal of the Polish noun *ssak* and that of the English noun *mammal* and their consequences in the translation of that particular passage. Differences stemming from different ways of asking for assertion as conventionalized in Polish (lexical) and English (tagging) as well as the motivation for the choice of the particular phrase in line 3 in the English version over other possible phrases have been disregarded.

Both *mamma*$_2$ ('mother') and *ssać* profile the most salient component of the composite structures (*mammal* and *ssak*, respectively). Paradoxically, differences in their construals welcome both a loss and a gain of meaning. The loss results from the fact that in the English version the conception of the activity of sucking is not accorded individual symbolization, while the gain is the semantic import of the word *mamma*$_2$.

Importantly, this a language-specific solution, since each natural language provides a unique conventional basis for the symbolization of conceptualizations. For more evidence testifying to this claim, we may resort to the Russian language.

The Russian verb designating the activity of sucking is сосать while that designating the class Mammalia is млекопитающее. It is a compound comprising the noun млеко ('milk') and a participle derived from a verbal stem питать ('feed'). Again, like in the case of English, the activity of sucking is not accorded individual symbolization. Instead, the fact that the class of animals feeds on milk is highlighted. Apparently, in semantic terms the Russian version of line 3 can neither 'copy' the Polish variant nor the English one, but such that would follow from the construal of 'an animal of the class Mammalia' as conventionalized in that particular language. Again, in terms of meaning, a loss would result from the lack of a construal that would match that of *ssak*.

As far as translation is concerned, several conclusions might be drawn from the data above. Firstly, since in the cognitive view, meaning is insolubly connected with construal, which is by and large language-specific, ideal equivalence in purely semantic terms seems hardly - if at all - attainable. Losses of meaning in translation will perhaps be most conspicuous in the idiomatic sphere of language. They will also follow from any difference in terms of grammar, since formal features of language (e.g. gender specificity) also are viewed as having their semantic contributions.

Notes

[1] Langacker, 1995, p.157

[2] Langacker, 1988, p.49

[3] Facing the variety of definitions of equivalence (e.g. Catford, Newmark, Nida), we will understand the term intuitively. Thereby, equivalence will be equated with the similarity of function, i.e. items will be considered equivalent if they evoke the same response.

[4] cf. Tabakowska, 1993, p.110 for her definition of translation equivalence.

[5] cf. Tabakowska 1993, chap. 2

[6] Literal interlinears.

[7] for a discussion of this dimension of imagery cf. Langacker 1988, p.79

[8] Langacker 1988, p.81

[9] Cognitive linguistics takes an encyclopedic approach to meaning, i.e. an expression is viewed as evoking a range of open-ended knowledge systems.

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Aleksander Krauze

How Montague Semantics Explains the Sentence Meaning on the Basis of a Small Fragment of Polish.*

Abbreviations used in the text:

[pas]	passive
CONJ	co-ordinating conjunction
iff, IFF	if and only if
NA	noun in accusative case
ND	noun in dative case
Neg	negation
NG	noun in genitive case
NN	noun in nominative case
NP	noun phrase
NPA	noun phrase containing the noun in accusative
NPD	noun phrase containing the noun in dative
NPG	noun phrase containing the noun in genitive
NPN	noun phrase containing the noun in nominative
PRO	pronoun
V_{dt}	ditransitive verb
V_i	intransitive verb
VP	verb phrase
V_t	transitive verb
$V_{t,sg,F}$	transitive verb, singular number, female gender

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$V_{t,sg,M}$ transitive verb, singular number, male gender

Notational convention:

$[x]^{M,g}$ denotation of x with respect to model M and variable assignment function g

Formal semantics is a branch of linguistics which attempts to describe and define what is 'meaning'. It uses the apparatus of mathematics as a tool for the description. In this paper we present a very simple language which generates a small fragment of Polish. In defining the language, context-free phrase-structure rules are used, which is a traditional way of formulating rules in formal semantics. Even though is has serious limitations and is not, in general, accepted by contemporary linguists, it will be sufficient for our purpose.

This paper follows the guidelines of Richard Montague's approach to semantics. The fundamental ideas of Montague semantics are that (1) it is truth-conditional; (2) it is model-theoretic and (3) it sticks to the Principle of Compositionality (Frege's Principle). The essence of truth-conditional semantics is that it defines the meaning of a sentence as a set of truth conditions of that sentence.[1] Truth conditions are necessary and sufficient conditions that must hold for the sentence to be true. In other words, to know the meaning of a sentence is to know what the world would have to be for that sentence to be true.[2] It shows that the semantic theory endeavours to explain the connextion between the language and the world.

As an example let us consider the meaning of 'There is a cat on the mat.' The meaning of this sentence is a set of conditions which make it true, *viz.* that there are two entities, a cat and a mat and that they stand in the 'is-on' relation. If we know these conditions, we know what the sentence means. However, one might object to such reasoning saying that it is worth nothing, as it simply translates one English sentence into another (synonymous) English sentence. Where is, then, the real explication of the meaning? To understand this, one must distinguish between the *object language* and the *meta-language*. Our sentence about the cat belongs to the object language, which is English. To explain its meaning, we have to use some means of communication, and for this we use, accidentally, also English. The language used to talk about another language is called meta-language. In the further part of the paper, the object language will be a small fragment of Polish; the meta-language will be an abridged form of a language called lambda (L_λ).

The second assumption of Montague semantics is that it is model-theoretic. It assumes a *model* which is a specification of (1) the set of entities that make up the

'world' and (2) a fixed 'link' between the object language expressions and these entities. In effect, truth-conditions of a sentence are given *with respect to the model*. If we change the model, the sentence truth values may change. The only expressions in a language that do not change their meaning when switching from one model to another are connectives, i.e. *if, and, or*, etc., whose meaning is universal, no matter what model is assumed.

The Principle of Compositionality is maintained in order to pair rules defining the semantics of a language with those defining its syntactic structure, i.e. for each syntactit rule there is a corresponding semantic rule. As a result, the meaning of a sentence is clearly and easily derived from the meanings of its components.

The following are rules (syntactic in the left-hand column, semantic in the right-hand column) and the lexicon for the object language. Because of recursiveness, they generate an infinite number of quasi-Polish sentences.

(1)	S → Neg S	t → Op_1 t (sentence negation)
(2)	S → S CONJ S	t → t Op_2 t
(3)	S → jeżeli S to S	t → t Op_2 t
(4)	S → NP nie VP	t → ~(VP'(NP')) (VP negation)
(5)	S → NP VP	t → VP'(NP')
(6)	S → PRO VP	t → PRO'(VP')
(7)	NP → PRO	NP' → PRO'
(8)	NP → NPN	NP' → NPN'
(9)	NP → NPG	NP' → NPG'
(10)	NP → NPD	NP' → NPD'
(11)	NP → NPA	NP' → NPA'
(12)	NPN → NN	NPN' → NN'
(13)	NPG → NG	NPG' → NG'
(14)	NPD → ND	NPD' → ND'
(15)	NPA → NA	NPA' → NA'
(16)	VP → $V_{i,sg}$	VP' → $V_{i,sg}$'
(17)	VP → $V_{i,pl}$	VP' → $V_{i,pl}$'
(18)	VP → V_t NPA	VP' → V_t'(NPA')
(19)	VP → V_t NPG	VP' → V_t'(NPG')
(20)	VP → V_{dt} NPA_1 NPD_2	VP' → V_{dt}'(NPD_2')(NPA_1')
(21)	VP → V_{dt} NPD_2 NPA_1	VP' → V_{dt}'(NPD_2')(NPA_1')

(22)	VP $\rightarrow$ VP[pas]	VP' $\rightarrow$ VP'[pas]
(23)	VP[pas] $\rightarrow$ jest $V_{t,sg,F}$[pas] PP_{przez}	VP'[pas] $\rightarrow$ $\rightarrow \lambda_x[V_{t,sg,F}'[pas](x)(PP_{przez}')]$
(24)	VP[pas] $\rightarrow$ jest $V_{t,sg,M}$[pas] PP_{przez}	VP'[pas] $\rightarrow$ $\rightarrow \lambda_x[V_{t,sg,M}'[pas](x)(PP_{przez}')]$
(25)	PP_{przez} $\rightarrow$ przez NPA	PP_{przez}' $\rightarrow$ NPA'

Lexicon:

NN	$\rightarrow$	{*obiad, Alek, sąsiad, Kasia, Asia*}
NG	$\rightarrow$	{*obiadu, Alka, sąsiada, Kasi, Asi*}
ND	$\rightarrow$	{*Alkowi, Kasi, sąsiadowi, Asi*}
NA	$\rightarrow$	{*Kasię, Alka, Asię, sąsiada, obiad*}
PRO	$\rightarrow$	{*ktoś, wszyscy*}
$V_{i,sg}$	$\rightarrow$	{*kicha, śpi, klnie*}
$V_{i,pl}$	$\rightarrow$	{*kichają, śpią, klną*}
V_t	$\rightarrow$	{*kocha, denerwuje*}
V_{dt}	$\rightarrow$	{*daje*}
$V_{t,sg,F}$[pas]	$\rightarrow$	{*kochana, denerwowana*}
$V_{t,sg,M}$[pas]	$\rightarrow$	{*kochany, denerwowany*}
CONJ	$\rightarrow$	{*i, a*}
Neg	$\rightarrow$	{*nieprawda że*}
Op_1	$\rightarrow$	$\{\sim\}$
Op_2	$\rightarrow$	$\{\wedge, \Rightarrow\}$

Semantics of pronouns:

ktoś	$\lambda P[\exists_x P(x)]$
wszyscy	$\lambda P[\forall_x P(x)]$

Below is the definition of the model M = <A,F>. Set of entities A defines the ontology of the model, value assignment function F defines the connexion between the object language expressions and the entities in A.

A = {MAN1, MAN2, WOMAN1, WOMAN2, DINNER}

F(*obiad'*) = DINNER

F(*alek'*) = MAN1
F(*sąsiad'*) = MAN2
F(*kasia'*) = WOMAN1
F(*asia'*) = WOMAN2
F(*kichać'*) = {WOMAN2}
F(*spać'*) = {WOMAN1}
F(*klnąć'*) = {MAN2}
F(*kochać'*) = {<MAN1,WOMAN1> , <WOMAN1,MAN1> ,
<MAN1,DINNER>}
F(*denerwować'*) = {<MAN2,WOMAN2>}
F(*dawać'*) = {<WOMAN1,DINNER,MAN1>}

Now let us define the meta-language that will be used to explicate the meanings of the sentences in the object language: an abridged form of lambda language (L_λ). Its full version was abbreviated for the purposes of this article. The elements of L_λ include:

names:	*obiad', alek', sąsiad', kasia', asia', ktoś', wszyscy'*
one-place predicates:	*kichać', spać', klnąć'*
two-place predicates:	*kochać', denerwować'*
three-place predicate:	*dawać'*
variables:	x_1, x_2, x_3 ...
connectives:	$\sim, \wedge, \Rightarrow$
quantifiers:	$\exists, \forall$

The list of syntactic rules for L_λ:

[x1] if δ is a one-place predicate and α is a name, then $\delta(\alpha)$ is a formula
[x2] if γ is a two-place predicate and α and β are names, then $\gamma(\alpha,\beta)$ is a fomula
[x3] if ω is a three-place predicate and α, β and ν are names, then $\omega(\alpha,\beta,\nu)$ is a formula
[x4] if Φ is a formula, then $\sim\Phi$ is a formula
[x5] if Φ and Ψ are formulae, then $\Phi\wedge\Psi$ is a formula
[x6] if Φ and Ψ are formulae, then $\Phi\Rightarrow\Psi$ is a formula
[x7] if Φ is a formula and u is a variable, then $\exists_u\Phi$ is a formula
[x8] if Φ is a formula and u is a variable, then $\forall_u\Phi$ is a formula
[x9] if Φ is a formula and u is a variable, then $\lambda_u[\Phi]$ is a formula

The list of semantic rules for L_λ:

[s1] if δ is a one-place predicate and α is a name, then $[\delta(\alpha)]^{M,g} = [\delta]^{M,g}([\alpha]^{M,g})$

[s2] if γ is a two-place predicate and α and β are names, then $[\gamma(\alpha,\beta)]^{M,g} = [\gamma]^{M,g}([\beta]^{M,g})([\alpha]^{M,g})$

[s3] if ω is a three-place predicate and α, β and ν are names, then $[\omega(\alpha,\beta,\nu)]^{M,g} = [\omega]^{M,g}([\beta]^{M,g})([\alpha]^{M,g})([\nu]^{M,g})$

[s4] if Φ is a formula, then $[\sim\Phi]^{M,g} = 1$ iff $[\Phi]^{M,g} = 0$

[s5] if Φ and Ψ are formulae, then $[\Phi\wedge\Psi]^{M,g} = 1$ iff both $[\Phi]^{M,g} = 1$ and $[\Psi]^{M,g} = 1$

[s6] if Φ and Ψ are formulae, then $[\Phi\Rightarrow\Psi]^{M,g} = 1$ iff either $[\Phi]^{M,g} = 0$ or $[\Psi]^{M,g} = 1$

[s7] if Φ is a formula and u is a variable, then $[\exists_u\Phi]^{M,g} = 1$ iff for some value assignment g' such that g' is exactly like g except possibly for the individual assigned to u by g', $[\Phi]^{M,g'} = 1$

[s8] if Φ is a formula and u is a variable, then $[\forall_u\Phi]^{M,g} = 1$ iff for every value assignment g' such that g' is exactly like g except possibly for the individual assigned to u by g', $[\Phi]^{M,g'} = 1$

[s9] if Φ is a formula containing an unbound variable u, then $[\lambda_u[\Phi]]^{M,g}$ is that function h from A to truth values such that for all individuals e in A, h(e) = 1 iff $[\Phi]^{M,g} = 1$ and h(e) = 0 otherwise

[s10] if u is a variable, then $[u]^{M,g} = g(u)$

[s11] if α is a name, then $[\alpha]^{M,g} = F(\alpha)$

Variable assignment function g will be defined as follows:

$g(x)$ = MAN1; $g(x_1)$ = MAN2; $g(x_2)$ = WOMAN1; $g(x_3)$ = WOMAN2; $g(x_n)$ = DINNER for all $n \geq 4$.

We must now finally detail how are the object language expressions to be translated into the meta-lanugage:

obiad, obiadu	translates as	*obiad'*
Alek, Alka, Alkowi	translates as	*alek'*
sąsiad, sąsiada, sąsiadowi	translates as	*sąsiad'*
Kasia, Kasi, Kasię	translates as	*kasia'*
Asia, Asi, Asię	translates as	*asia'*
ktoś	translates as	*ktoś'*
wszyscy	translates as	*wszyscy'*
kicha, kichają	translates as	*kichać'*

śpi, śpią	translates as	*spać'*
klnie, klną	translates as	*kląć'*
kocha, kochana, kochany	translates as	*kochać'*
denerwuje, denerwowana, denerwowany	translates as	*denerwować'*
daje	translates as	*dawać'*
i, a	translates as	$\wedge$
nieprawda, że	translates as	$\sim$
jeżeli... to...	translates as	$\Rightarrow$

We have at last the full machinery necessary to show the derivation and verification of truth values of some examples from the object language. The quasi-Polish sentences will include coordination, sentence negation, verb phrase negation, passive and finally a sentence with quantification.

Alek kocha Kasię i jeżeli Kasia nie śpi, to Kasia daje obiad Alkowi, a Asia kicha.

rule numbers in **bold**

S → S CONJ jeżeli S to S CONJ S **by (3)(2)**
t → t Op_2 (t Op_2 t (Op_2 t))

S → NP_1 VP CONJ jeżeli NP_2 nie VP to NP_2 VP CONJ NP_3 VP **by (5)(4)**
t → VP'(NP_1') Op_2 ~(VP'(NP_2') Op_2 VP'(NP_2') Op_2 VP'(NP_3')

S → NP_1 V_t NPA_2 CONJ jeżeli NP_2 nie $V_{i,sg}$ to NP_2 V_{dt} NPN_4 NPD_1 CONJ NP_3 $V_{i,sg}$ **by (18)(16)(20)**
t → V_t'(NPA_2')(NP_1') Op_2 ~($V_{i,sg}$'(NP_2')) Op_2 V_{dt}'(NPD_1')(NPN_4')(NP_2') Op_2 $V_{i,sg}$'(NP_3')

S → NPN_1 V_t NPA_2 CONJ jeżeli NPN_2 nie $V_{i,sg}$ to NPN_2 V_{dt} NPN_4 NPD_1 CONJ NPN_3 $V_{i,sg}$ **by (8)**
t → V_t'(NPA_2')(NPN_1') Op_2 ~($V_{i,sg}$'(NPN_2')) Op_2 V_{dt}'(NPD_1')(NPN_4')(NPN_2') Op_2 $V_{i,sg}$'(NPN_3')

S → NN_1 V_t NA_2 CONJ jeżeli NN_2 nie $V_{i,sg}$ to NN_2 V_{dt} NN_4 ND_1 CONJ NN_3 $V_{i,sg}$ **by (12)(15)(14)**

$t \rightarrow V_t'(NA_2')(NN_1')\ Op_2\ {\sim}(V_{i,sg}'(NN_2'))\ Op_2\ V_{dt}'(ND_1')(NN_4')(NN_2')\ Op_2$
$V_{i,sg}'(NN_3')$

Lexical insertion:

S $\rightarrow$ *Alek kocha Kasię i jeżeli Kasia nie śpi, to Kasia daje obiad Alkowi a Asia kicha.*
t $\rightarrow$ *kochać'(kasia')(alek')* $\wedge$ (~*spać'(kasia')* $\Rightarrow$ *dawać'(alek')(obiad')(kasia')* $\wedge$
kichać'(asia'))

Verification of the truth value:

[*kochać'(kasia')(alek')* $\wedge$ (~*spać'(kasia')* $\Rightarrow$ *dawać'(alek')(obiad')(kasia')* $\wedge$
kichać'(asia'))]^{M,g} = 1 IFF both [*kochać'(kasia')(alek')*]^{M,g} = 1 and [~*spać'(kasia')* $\Rightarrow$
dawać'(alek')(obiad')(kasia') $\wedge$ *kichać'(asia')*]^{M,g} = 1 **(by [s5])** IFF both
[*kochać'*]^{M,g}([*kasia'*]^{M,g})([*alek'*]^{M,g}) =1 **(by [s2])** and either [~*spać'(kasia')*]^{M,g} = 0 or
[*dawać'(alek')(obiad')(kasia')* $\wedge$ *kichać'(asia')*]^{M,g} = 1 **(by [s6])**. The antecedent of the above sentence is in actual fact true, for <MAN1,WOMAN1> is in the denotation of *kochać'*, therefore, we will concentrate on the consequent only: the whole sentence is true IFF either [~*spać'(kasia')*]^{M,g} = 0 or [*dawać'(alek')(obiad')(kasia')* $\wedge$
kichać'(asia')]^{M,g} = 1 IFF either [*spać'(kasia')*]^{M,g} = 1 **(by [s4])** or both
[*dawać'(alek')(obiad')(kasia')*]^{M,g} = 1 and [*kichać'(asia')*]^{M,g} = 1 **(by [s5])**. This, in turn, is true, just because the first of disjuncts is true: [*kichać'*]^{M,g}([*asia'*]^{M,g}) = 1, for WOMAN2 is in the denotation of *kichać'*.

Conclusion: *kochać'(kasia')(alek')* $\wedge$ (~*spać'(kasia')* $\Rightarrow$
dawać'(alek')(obiad')(kasia') $\wedge$ *kichać'(asia'))* is true with respect to model M and variable assignment function g.

Nieprawda, że Kasia daje obiad Alkowi.

rule numbers in **bold**

S $\rightarrow$ Neg S **by (1)**
t $\rightarrow$ ~t

S $\rightarrow$ Neg NP_1 VP **by (5)**
t $\rightarrow$ ~VP'(NP_1')

S $\rightarrow$ Neg NPN_1 V_{dt} NPA_2 NPD_3 **by (20)**

t → ~VP'(NPD$_3$')(NPA$_2$')(NPN$_1$')

S → Neg NN$_1$ V$_{dt}$ NA$_2$ ND$_3$ **by (12)(15)(14)**
t → ~VP'(ND$_3$')(NA$_2$')(NN$_1$')

Lexical insertion:

S → *Nieprawda, że Kasia daje obiad Alkowi.*
t → *~dawać'(alek')(obiad')(kasia')*

Verification of the truth value:

[*~dawać'(alek')(obiad')(kasia')*]^{M,g} = 1 IFF [*dawać'(alek')(obiad')(kasia')*]^{M,g} = 0 **(by [s4])** IFF [*dawać'*]^{M,g}([*kasia'*]^{M,g})([*obiad'*]^{M,g})([*alek'*]^{M,g}) = 0 **(by [s3])**. However, <WOMAN1,DINNER,MAN1> is in the denotation of *dawać'*.

Conclusion: *~dawać'(alek')(obiad')(kasia')* is false with respect to model M and variable assignment function g.

Jeżeli sąsiad nie klnie, to sąsiad nie denerwuje Asi.

rule numbers in **bold**

S → jeżeli S to S **by (3)**
t → t Op$_2$ t

S → jeżeli NP$_1$ nie VP to NP$_1$ nie VP **by (4)**
t → ~(VP'(NP$_1$')) Op$_2$ ~(VP'(NP$_1$'))

S → jeżeli NP$_1$ nie V$_{i,sg}$ to NP$_1$ nie V$_t$ NPG$_2$ **by (16)(19)**
t → ~(V$_{i,sg}$'(NP$_1$')) Op$_2$ ~(V$_t$'(NP$_2$')(NP$_1$'))

S → jeżeli NPN$_1$ nie V$_{i,sg}$ to NPN$_1$ nie V$_t$ NPG$_2$ **by (8)**
t → ~(V$_{i,sg}$'(NPN$_1$')) Op$_2$ ~(V$_t$'(NPG$_2$')(NPN$_1$'))

S → jeżeli NN$_1$ nie V$_{i,sg}$ to NN$_1$ nie V$_t$ NG$_2$ **by (12)(13)**
t → ~(V$_{i,sg}$'(NN$_1$')) Op$_2$ ~(V$_t$'(NG$_2$')(NN$_1$'))

Lexical insertion:

S → *Jeżeli sąsiad nie klnie, to sąsiad nie denerwuje Asi.*
t → ~(*klnąć'*(*sąsiad'*)) ⇒ ~(*denerwować'*(*asia'*)(*sąsiad'*))

Verification of the truth value:

[~(*klnąć'*(*sąsiad'*)) ⇒ ~(*denerwować'*(*asia'*)(*sąsiad'*))]^{M,g} = 1

IFF either [~(*klnąć'*(*sąsiad'*))]^{M,g} = 0 or [~(*denerwować'*(*asia'*)(*sąsiad'*))]^{M,g} = 1 **(by [s6])** IFF either [*klnąć'*(*sąsiad'*)]^{M,g} = 1 **(by [s4])** or [*denerwować'*(*asia'*)(*sąsiad'*)]^{M,g} = 0 **(by [s4])** IFF either [*klnąć'*]^{M,g}([*sąsiad'*]^{M,g}) = 1 **(by [s1])** or [*denerwować'*]^{M,g}([*sąsiad'*]^{M,g})([*asia'*]^{M,g}) = 0 **(by [s2])**, which is true, because the first disjunct is true (<MAN2> is in the denotation of *klnąć'*).

Conclusion: ~(*klnąć'*(*sąsiad'*)) ⇒ ~(*denerwować'*(*asia'*)(*sąsiad'*)) is true with respect to model M and variable assignment function g.

Jeżeli Kasia jest kochana przez Alka, a Alek jest kochany przez Kasię, to Alek nie denerwuje Kasi, a Kasia nie denerwuje Alka.

rule numbers in **bold**

S → jeżeli S CONJ S to S CONJ S **by (3)(2)**
t → (t Op_2 t) Op_2 (t Op_2 t)

S → jeżeli NP_1 VP CONJ NP_2 VP to NP_2 nie VP CONJ NP_1 nie VP **by (5)(4)**
t → (VP'(NP_1') Op_2 VP'(NP_2')) Op_2 (~(VP'(NP_2')) Op_2 ~(VP'(NP_1')))

S → jeżeli NP_1 VP[pas] CONJ NP_2 VP[pas] to NP_2 nie VP CONJ NP_1 nie VP **by (22)**
t → (VP'[pas](NP_1') Op_2 VP'[pas](NP_2')) Op_2 (~(VP'(NP_2')) Op_2 ~(VP'(NP_1')))

S → jeżeli NP_1 jest $V_{t,sg,F}$[pas] PP_{przez} CONJ NP_2 jest $V_{t,sg,M}$[pas] PP_{przez} to NP_2 nie V_t NPG_1 CONJ NP_1 nie V_t NPG_2 **by (23)(24)(19)**

t → (λ_x[$V_{t,sg,F}$'[pas](x)(PP_{przez}')](NP_1') Op_2 λ_x[$V_{t,sg,M}$'[pas](x)(PP_{przez}')](NP_2')) Op_2 (~(V_t'(NPG_1')(NP_2')) Op_2 ~(V_t'(NPG_2')(NP_1')))

S → jeżeli NP_1 jest $V_{t,sg,F}$[pas] przez NPA_2 CONJ NP_2 jest $V_{t,sg,M}$[pas] przez NPA_1 to NP_2 nie V_t NPG_1 CONJ NP_1 nie V_t NPG_2 **by (25)**
t → $(\lambda_x[V_{t,sg,F}'[pas](x)(NPA_2')](NP_1')\ Op_2\ \lambda_x[V_{t,sg,M}'[pas](x)(NPA_1')](NP_2'))\ Op_2$ $(\sim(V_t'(NPG_1')(NP_2'))\ Op_2 \sim(V_t'(NPG_2')(NP_1')))$

S → jeżeli NPN_1 jest $V_{t,sg,F}$[pas] przez NPA_2 CONJ NPN_2 jest $V_{t,sg,M}$[pas] przez NPA_1 to NPN_2 nie V_t NPG_1 CONJ NPN_1 nie V_t NPG_2 **by (8)**

t → $(\lambda_x[V_{t,sg,F}'[pas](x)(NPA_2')](NPN_1')\ Op_2\ \lambda_x[V_{t,sg,M}'[pas](x)(NPA_1')](NPN_2'))\ Op_2$ $(\sim(V_t'(NPG_1')(NPN_2'))\ Op_2 \sim(V_t'(NPG_2')(NPN_1')))$

S → jeżeli NN_1 jest $V_{t,sg,F}$[pas] przez NA_2 CONJ NN_2 jest $V_{t,sg,M}$[pas] przez NA_1 to NN_2 nie V_t NG_1 CONJ NN_1 nie V_t NG_2 **by (12)(15)(13)**
t → $(\lambda_x[V_{t,sg,F}'[pas](x)(NA_2')](NN_1')\ Op_2\ \lambda_x[V_{t,sg,M}'[pas](x)(NA_1')](NN_2'))\ Op_2$ $(\sim(V_t'(NG_1')(NN_2'))\ Op_2 \sim(V_t'(NG_2')(NN_1')))$

Lexical insertion:

S → *Jeżeli Kasia jest kochana przez Alka, a Alek jest kochany przez Kasię to Alek nie denerwuje Kasi, a Kasia nie denerwuje Alka.*
t → (λ$_x$[*kochać'*(x)(*alek'*)](*kasia'*) ∧ λ_x[*kochać'*(x)(*kasia'*)](*alek'*)) ⇒ (~(*denerwować'*(*kasia'*)(*alek'*)) ∧ ~(*denerwować'*(*alek'*)(*kasia'*)))

Lambda conversion:

t → (*kochać'*(*kasia'*)(*alek'*) ∧ *kochać'*(*alek'*)(*kasia'*)) ⇒ (~(*denerwować'*(*kasia'*)(*alek'*)) ∧ ~(*denerwować'*(*alek'*)(*kasia'*)))

Verification of the truth value:

[(*kochać'*(*kasia'*)(*alek'*) ∧ *kochać'*(*alek'*)(*kasia'*)) ⇒ (~(*denerwować'*(*kasia'*)(*alek'*)) ∧ ~(*denerwować'*(*alek'*)(*kasia'*)))]^{M,g} = 1 IFF either [*kochać'*(*kasia'*)(*alek'*) ∧ *kochać'*(*alek'*)(*kasia'*)]^{M,g} = 0 or [~(*denerwować'*(*kasia'*)(*alek'*)) ∧ ~(*denerwować'*(*alek'*)(*kasia'*))]^{M,g} = 1 **(by [s6])** IFF either it is not the case that both [*kochać'*(*kasia'*)(*alek'*)]^{M,g} = 1 and [*kochać'*(*alek'*)(*kasia'*)]^{M,g} = 1 **(by [s5])** or it is the case that both [~(*denerwować'*(*kasia'*)(*alek'*))]^{M,g} = 1 and [~(*denerwować'*(*alek'*)(*kasia'*))]^{M,g} = 1

(by [s5]) IFF either it is not the case that both [*kochać'*(*kasia'*)(*alek'*)]^{M,g} = 1 and [*kochać'*(*alek'*)(*kasia'*)]^{M,g} = 1 or it is the case that both

$[denerwować'(kasia')(alek')]^{M,g} = 0$ **(by [s5])** and $[denerwować'(alek')(kasia')]^{M,g} = 0$ **(by [s5])**. IFF either it is not the case that both $[kochać']^{M,g}([alek']^{M,g})([kasia']^{M,g}) = 1$ **(by [s2])** and $[kochać']^{M,g}([kasia']^{M,g})([alek']^{M,g}) = 1$ **(by [s2])** or it is the case that both $[denerwować']^{M,g}([alek']^{M,g})([kasia']^{M,g}) = 0$ **(by [s2])** and $[denerwować']^{M,g}([kasia']^{M,g})([alek']^{M,g}) = 0$ **(by [s2])**. Let us focus now on the first disjunct of this long alternative, which is a negation of conjunction. Both conjuncts are true, because <MAN1,WOMAN1> as well as <WOMAN1,MAN1> are in the denotation of *kochać'*. Thus, the negation of the conjunction is false. Therefore, the antecedent of the original implication is false, which makes the sentence true.

Conclusion: the sentence $(kochać'(kasia')(alek') \wedge kochać'(alek')(kasia')) \Rightarrow (\sim(denerwować'(kasia')(alek')) \wedge \sim(denerwować'(alek')(kasia')))$ is true with respect to model M and variable assignment function g.

Ktoś śpi i nieprawda, że wszyscy śpią.

rule numbers in **bold**

$S \rightarrow S$ CONJ S **by (2)**
$t \rightarrow t\ Op_2\ t$

$S \rightarrow S$ CONJ Neg S **by (1)**
$t \rightarrow t\ Op_2\ Op_1\ t$

$S \rightarrow PRO_1$ VP CONJ Neg PRO_2 VP **by (6)**
$t \rightarrow PRO_1'(VP')\ Op_2\ Op_1\ PRO_2'(VP')$

$S \rightarrow PRO_1\ V_{i,sg}$ CONJ Neg $PRO_2\ V_{i,pl}$ **by (16)(17)**
$t \rightarrow PRO_1'(V_{i,sg}')\ Op_2\ Op_1\ PRO_2'(V_{i,pl}')$

Lexical insertion:

S → *Ktoś śpi i nieprawda, że wszyscy śpią.*
$t \rightarrow ktoś'(spać') \wedge \sim wszyscy'(spać')$

Semantic interpretation of *ktoś'* and *wszyscy'*:

$t \rightarrow \lambda P[\exists_x P(x)](spać') \wedge \sim\lambda P[\forall_x P(x)](spać')$

Lambda conversion:

t → $\exists_x$ *spać'*(x) ∧ ~$\forall_x$ *spać'*(x)

Verification of the truth value:

$[\exists_x spać'(x) \wedge \sim\forall_x spać'(x)]^{M,g} = 1$ IFF $[\exists_x spać'(x)]^{M,g} = 1$ and $[\sim\forall_x spać'(x)]^{M,g} = 1$ **(by [s5])** IFF $[\exists_x spać'(x)]^{M,g} = 1$ and $[\forall_x spać'(x)]^{M,g} = 0$ **(by [s4])** IFF for some value assignment g' such that g' is exactly like g except
possibly for the individual assigned to x by g', $[spać'(x)]^{M,g'} = 1$ **(by [s7])** and it is not the case that for every value assignment g' such that g' is exactly like g except possibly for the individual assigned to x by g', $[spać'(x)]^{M,g'} = 1$ **(by [s8])**. Let us consider g' such that g' is exactly like g except that g'(x) = WOMAN1. Then $[spać'(x)]^{M,g'} = 1$, because WOMAN1 is in the denotation of *spać'*. Hence, the first of the conjuncts is true. To prove the truth of the second conjunct, it is enough to find at least one function g' such that $[spać'(x)]^{M,g'} = 0$. Trivially, g' = g is such a function, since MAN1 is not in the denotation of *spać'*.

Conclusion: the sentence $\exists_x$ *spać'*(x) ∧ ~$\forall_x$ *spać'*(x) is true with respect to model M and variable assignment function g.

In the word of summary let us recall the steps we have taken to show how the meaning of a sentence is explicated in Montague semantics. First, an object language was defined, i.e. syntactic and semantic rules were given, which generate an infinite set of sentences. The lexicon comprised several Polish words, thus the object language was a fragment of Polish. Second, the model was outlined: the set of entities and the connection between them and the object languag expressions. Third, a meta-language necessary to talk about the object language was defined: the abridged version of lambda language. Fourth, the translation equivalents between the object language and the meta-language were given. Finally, a derivation of five simple sentences of the defined object language was presented; for each sentence, its truth value, with respect to the defined model, was calculated.

One might ask here: 'Where are the promised truth conditions (the meaning) of the sentences?' The solution of the puzzle is that the truth conditions of the sentence are given by the semantic rules *during* the process of determinig the truth value. For example, consider the second sentence, which translates in L_λ as ~*dawać'*(*alek'*)(*obiad'*)(*kasia'*). Its meaning is the set of its truth conditions. Its truth conditions tell what the world would have to be for the sentence to be true. Under what circumstances would the sentence be true? Rule (s4) says it is true just in case *dawać'*(*alek'*)(*obiad'*)(*kasia'*) is false. By (s3) we know that *dawać'*(*alek'*)(*obiad'*)(*kasia'*) is false just in case F(*dawać'*) does not equal

<WOMAN1,DINNER,MAN1>, which is contrary to the facts of the world in our model. Thus we learn the truth conditions, i.e. meaning, of each sentence.

Notes

[1] Truth conditions are given only for declarative sentences. Montague semantics does not deal with other types of sentences. Also, it is not concerned with lexical semantics, i.e. it does not define meanings of individual words.

[2] With such definition of meaning, truth-conditional semantics implicitly adopts the correspondence theory of truth.