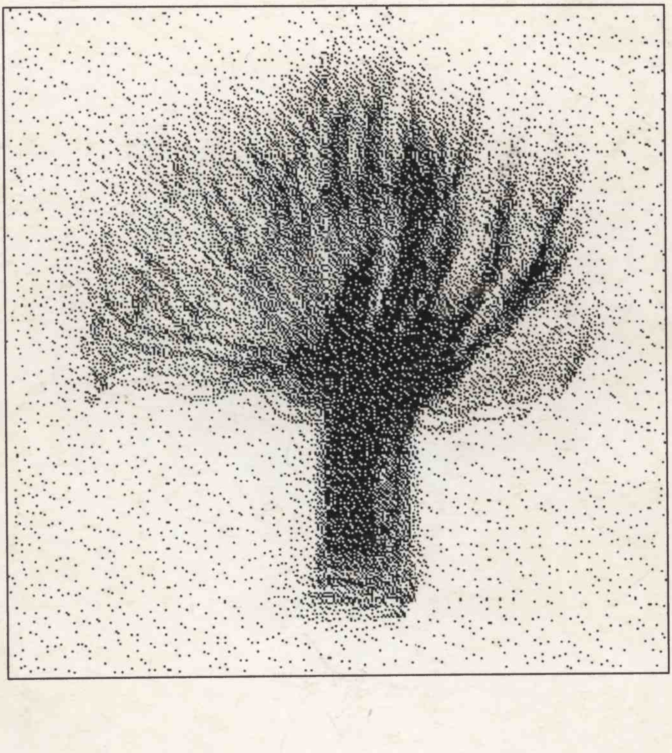
FOLIO

A STUDENTS' JOURNAL **No. 3/4**

winter term 1998/99



INSTITUTE OF ENGLISH STUDIES

WARSAW UNIVERSITY

FOLIO

A STUDENTS' JOURNAL

Zespół redakcyjny

Ewa Brykowska
Joanna Gręzak
Małgorzata Śmietana
Klarysa Szewczyk
Adam Lipiński
Piotr Ostrowski
Jarosław Zawadzki

Projekt okładki

Dorota Biczel

Adres redakcji i wydawnictwa

Redakcja "Folio"
Koło Naukowe Studentów IA UW
Instytut Anglistyki Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego
ul. Nowy Świat 4
00-497 Warszawa

Redakcja serdecznie dziękuje dyrektorowi Instytutu Anglistyki UW, Pani Profesor Emmie Harris, oraz firmie OPTIROL zajmującej się sprzedażą soczewek kontaktowych OPTIMUS AUSTRALIA za pomoc finansową, bez której ten numer naszego pisma nie mógłby się ukazać.

© Copyright by Koło Naukowe Studentów IA UW 1999

ISSN 1506-1930

Druk i oprawa: Zakład Graficzny UW, zam. 455/99

CONTENTS

literature

AGATA ZYGLEWSKA
Riddles as a Literary Genre in *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R Tolkien 9

KRZYSZTOF ZYCH
Visual Imagery in Kenneth Branagh's *Frankenstein*: a Comparison to the Literary Original 15

EDYTA BASIAK
The Cinematic Design of Elsinore in Franco Zefirelli's and Kenneth Branagh's *Hamlets* 19

MARCIN POLKOWSKI
Squire Power: Certain Epic Elements in Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* 25

ADAM LIPIŃSKI
From Duessa to Vampirella: The Romantic Femme Fatale 39

JOANNA SZTENCEL
Self-Reflective and Strangely Referential. On William Gaddis's *Carpenter's Gothic* 47

PIOTR SZYMCZAK
Three Remarks on James Merrill's 'The Victor Dog' 61

PAWEŁ WOLAK
The Need for the Centre in Eliot's *The Waste Land* and in Pound's 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley' 67

CULTURE

MARCIN POLKOWSKI
'Authenticating' Techniques and their Function in Renaissance Utopias 85

ADAM LIPIŃSKI

Costumes Make It Better: Some Metaphysical Observations Concerning Charlie Chaplin's Dandyish Appearance 95

ANITA MARKOWICZ

The Representation and Treatment of Women's Insanity in Inter-War Britain 103

KINGA TAUKERT

Mermaids of Dreamland. A Woman in Edward Burne-Jones's Paintings 111

[lɪŋˈgwɪstɪks]

IRENA OZGA

Metonymy within the Cognitive Network Model 121

MARCIN WIEWIÓRKA

The Manipulation School and its View on Translation and Translations 129

JOANNA GRĘZAK

When the Impossible Becomes Possible: How to Reduce your Teacher Talking Time 135

KARINA ZDRZYŁOWSKA

How to Teach how to Learn: Self-Access Facilities 141

ANNA BURDZIEŁOWSKA

Why do I Teach Like I Teach or Teachers' Personalities, Attitudes and Beliefs and their Influence on Teaching 147

LIST OF PLATES

I. THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA

II. THE BEGUILING OF MERLIN

III. TREE OF FORGIVENESS

IV. PYGMALION AND THE IMAGE - THE SOUL ATTAINS

V. THE WEDDING OF PSYCHE

VI. THE PRINCESS SABRA LED TO THE DRAGON

VII. THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

VIII. THE BRIAR ROSE - THE SLEEPING PRINCESS

All paintings by Edward Burne-Jones

Dear Readers,

Don't you ever believe that we will keep our promises. As you may remember, last time we promised you two issues of our journal packed with brilliant academic papers by May 1999. Here they are. As you can see, two issues have been squeezed into one thickish volume and May has been postponed till mid-October. We hope you will forgive us our failures, great and small, and instead of booing you will get down to reading at once.

You might have noticed that for the first time we have included full-page illustrations in our journal. It goes without saying that their quality leaves a lot to be desired, but this quality is a compromise between what we wanted those pictures to look like and what we could afford. Like most scholarly periodicals nowadays we rely heavily on sponsors, and if we can't find any, the trouble begins. This is why we humbly request your assistance - buy our journal, easy and painless.

> *Come forward, Host, you shall be the first to pay*
> *And kiss my holy relics right away*
> *Only a groat. Come on, unbuckle your purse!*

The Editors

literature...

Agata Zyglewska

Riddles as a Literary Genre in *The Lord Of The Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien*

Riddles as a genre have been part of the human history since the beginning. They belong to the oral tradition, but we can find their traces in various written sources from The Bible, The Koran and ancient mythologies of Greece or Iceland to medieval fables (e.g. ”Disputationes quasdicuntur habuisse inter se mutuo rex Salomon sapientissimus et Marcolphus...”) or The Exeter Book[1]. They can take different forms – from simple questions to extended kennings or short tales. In any of these forms maximal condensation of information is the prime aim. Narrative perspective can vary: a subject of the riddle may present itself directly in self–description; the narrator may introduce himself as a witness of some events (“I saw a strange creature”[2]) or he may keep himself hidden (like a novelistic, omniscient narrator). This last option seems characteristic of the most serious riddles: prophecies. But the *raison d’être* of riddles is invariably their reference to a non–textual reality.

I will try to analyse here how J.R.R. Tolkien uses the genre in *The Lord of The Rings* – what are the functions of riddles and how do they influence the plot.

THE RIDDLE OF ARAGORN

All that is gold does not glitter,
Not all those who wander are lost;

---

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

> The old that is strong does not wither,
> Deep roots are not reached by the frost.
> From the ashes the fire shall be woken,
> A light from the shadows shall spring;
> Renewed shall be the blade that is broken,
> The crownless again shall be the king. [3]

This appears twice in the text. Its first appearance is when it is cited by Gandalf in his letter to Frodo. Literary texts in Middle –Earth are not treated as fiction, they never give false or mistaken information. That a sentence belongs to literature guarantees its reliability and truthfulness.[4] Here the power of the riddle-text is doubled by its placement within another written text coming from the most charismatic character of the story - Gandalf. The riddle consists of two parts. The first four verses repeat by examples the general truth that one shouldn't judge things or people by all appearances. These represent a genre very popular in Old English literature – the gnomic verse. The last four lines are prophetic in meaning and style (using the form: shall). They make the riddle an important link in the chain of events building a story that surpasses the literal content of the book we are reading. The riddle refers to Aragorn and its aim is to convince the hobbits as to his identity. The life or death of the characters depends on solving the riddle - i. e. on recognising Aragorn as the legitimate and expected king. Such a function of the text lets us relate it to the Icelandic *Edda* (especially to songs such as: "Vafthrúdnísmál" or "Alvísmál"). In "Vafthrúdnísmál" we find a duel between several riddles in the riddling dialogue between Odin and Wafthrudnir, a wise giant. The first who fails to answer the question will die. The structure expanded to many questions and answers reminds Tolkien's text. This Icelandic dialogue begins with general questions showing us the history and rules of the world (i.e. general truths like Tolkien's: "All that is gold does not glitter...") and then proceeds towards prophetic ones - precisely connected with Odin. The giant is slowly led to the conclusion who his interlocutor is in the same way as the hobbits are guided by 'their' riddle. However in *Edda* using a literary form does not mean being honest (unlike in *The Lord...*)– that is why the giant must die for not having answered Odin's unfair riddle (and this duel of riddles recalls the similar scene between Bilbo and Gollum in *The Hobbit*[5] which is also finished by unfair question asked by Bilbo). In both works the same knowledge confirms membership of the same sphere and gives the characters a feeling of safety and mutual confidence, whereas inability to answer properly can immediately change them into enemies.

The second time Aragorn's riddle appears is during the council in

Rivendell. It serves again as a shield for the future king of Gondor and for his rights to the throne. Being the literary subject strengthens his nobility. What's more, during the same council we get to know that it is not the only text connected with the Strider.

THE RIDDLE OF BOROMIR

Seek for the sword that was broken:
In Imladris it dwells;
There shall be counsels taken
Stronger than Morgul – spells.
There shall be shown a token
That Doom is near at hand,
For Isildur's Bane shall be waken,
And the Halfling forth shall stand.[6]

"The instance of prophecy implies the existence of the transcendent realm outside ordinary time and power."[7] A riddle is the classical form of prophecy - the most significant examples come from *The Bible*, the Greek mythology (the oracle at Delphi) or from *The Edda* ("Völuspá"). Another characteristic feature of prophecy, if it comes directly from the divine forces, is that it enters one's dreams. In Tolkien's story the magical power of the dream is multiplied by the fact that two people - Boromir and his brother, Faramir – dream it simultaneously. In the dream they hear a voice coming of a pale light that "lingers" in the West . This information , as well as the prophetic text itself, again sends us beyond limits of the particular book we are reading. A reader who does not know *The Silmarillion*[8] seems to have a competence similar to Boromir - i.e. such a reader can hardly understand the message of the dream (whereas a reader who is acquainted with *The Silmarillion* - containing, what is history for the characters, but, compared to reader's reality, amounts rather to a mythology – shares the competence of the wisest ones in the Middle-Earth like Elrond or Gandalf). To sum this up - the main functions of Boromir's riddle are to show the existence of eternal divine forces (i.e. Valars) able to oppose the power of Mordor , being "above" the whole story, but still on the side of our noble heroes. A Christian reader might without hesitation associate pale lights and remote voices with the God's appearance in the many dreams in the biblical stories where characters (mainly prophets) were to change the life of their society. Another effect is to imply further that, by reading *The Lord of the Rings*., we communicate only with a small fragment of a world, that has its own highly detailed history; and what we encounter are just the memories of two its inhabitants.

THE RIDDLE OF GANDALF

Ere iron was found or tree was hewn,
When young was mountain under moon;
Ere ring was made, or wrought was woe,
It walked the forests long ago.[9]

Ents are older than any of the children of Iluvatar - using a riddle as a form of information about them stresses additionally this fact. Ents belong to the old world that is slowly leaving the Middle-Earth as well as Gandalf does – he tells the riddle to people born in the Third Age and these creatures are to shape the future, a different world. Being so enigmatic (in giving them information) he works according to the divine plan, in which people as the youngest race will inherit alone the whole planet. In the Third Age the races (ents, elves, hobbits, dwarfs and other mysterious creatures) still coexist, but people are pictured as not completely fitting to the rest. They tend to change the reality, they are the easiest tools of Sauron's plots (and Sauron as a servant of evil, destructive forces also seems not to belong to the Middle-Earth world). I find the picture of people invading Shire very significant – they personalize the eternal power of changes that cannot be stopped – this picture resembles very strongly another one: from Marquez's *Hundred years of solitude* – the book concerning lapse of time. In both cases the past is less important for people than for any other race. Tolkien's ents represent the farthest past; from the humans' point of view they are already shadows. The old, mysterious literary form seems to be the best for describing the oldest mysterious creatures of the Middle-Earth.

THE RIDDLE OF GOLLUM

Alive without breath;
as cold as death;
never thirsting, ever drinking;
clad in mail, never clinking.
Drowns on dry land,
thinks an island
is a mountain;
thinks a fountain
is a puff of air.
So sleek, so fair!
What a joy to meet!
We only wish to catch a fish,
so juicy sweet! [10]

vanishing form or (should I say) vanishing skill of the human mind. Unfortunately we live in times when the only riddles are given to us by TV (but their primitive character insults our dignity and a ridiculous price for answering a ridiculous question insults the tradition of the genre) or by computer and the only expected answers are: "enter" or "cancel".

Footnotes

[1] an early medieval English manuscript containing among others a set of 96 Old-English riddles

[2] *The Exeter Book*, pp. 235, 242

[3] Tolkien, pp. 167, 241

[4] assumed after Kokot J., pp. 79-93

[5] by J.R.R. Tolkien

[6] Tolkien, p.240

[7] Dowie W., p. 281

[8] by J.R.R. Tolkien

[9] Tolkien, p. 531

[10] Tolkien, p. 607

Bibliography

Dowie, W. "The Gospel of Middle – Earth according to J.R.R. Tolkien" [in:] Salve, M. and Farrell, R.T. (eds.) *J.R.R. Tolkien Scholar and Story Teller, Essays in memoriam;* Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London 1979

Edda poetycka; Biblioteka Narodowa, ZNIO 1986

The Exeter Book [in:] Crossley-Holland, K. (ed.) *The Anglo-Saxon World – An Anthology;* Oxford University Press 1984

Kokot, J. "Funkcje kulturowe wypowiedzi artystycznych w *The Lord of the Rings*" [in:] *Tolkien – recepcja polska – studia i eseje*, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego 1996

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Lord of the Rings* ; HarperCollinsPublishers 1995

Krzysztof Zych

Visual Imagery in Kenneth Branagh's *Frankenstein*: a Comparison to the Literary Original*

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* seems to conform to certain limitations on the use of visual imagery such as the images of fire and water. The confines of the narration allow them to build up the atmosphere and play on the reader's associations and curiosity. However, there is no possibility of their becoming the chief object of interest and as a result the vehicle for the progression of the plot. Important as they are, they belong to the illustrative part of the novel and by constructing only the setting for the conveyance of Shelley's philosophy, they remain the passive parts of the whole composition. The film adaptation directed by Kenneth Branagh does not observe the above restriction. The border between the setting and the progression of the plot is obliterated with visual imagery encroaching on the area of the succession of the narrative. Although the transgression cannot impede the integrity of the film, it does emerge as an independent level of artistic expression. The images of fire and water appear as almost autonomous protagonists playing a complicated philosophical game which essence revolves around the matters of life and death. The idea is not absolutely innovative nor unjustifiable as the literary text provides enough hints for the screen adaptation to be perceived as quite faithful. But how does the presentation of fire and water reach the level of an independent development in the film and how does it enhance the meaning?

The act of the creation of the monster is not explicitly explained in the book. Following Victor's obsession with the new phenomenon, the reader may expect the use of electricity necessary to provide 'the spark of life'. The film adaptation eagerly takes up the hint and develops it into a significant scene where fire and water in their various mutations, are the chief instruments in the creation or rather re-creation of life. The whole process is presented as an artificial sexual intercourse between the two elements as a result of which a new life form is born. The large metal coffin filled with water resembles the womb waiting to be fertilised: the sperm cells symbolised by the electrical eels are freed from a swollen container and enter the womb through a long pipe stuck into the awaiting body. The effect is strengthened by the needles connected to the electrical circuit and plunged into the coffin. The fire that burns below heats the coffin resembling an affectionate mother nurturing an unborn child in her bosom. The scene makes the viewer believe in the human nature of the new born creature presenting fire and water as co-operating powers working on the creation of a new biological life. And it is here that the game between the two elements begins. The effect of their co-operation is not satisfactory - the process is not harmonious but rather erroneous and defective. The two elements do not suffice as the donors of the energy of life but rather appear as unrestrained and unpredictable powers.

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 1003: *The Gothic Novel* run by Professor Andrzej Weseliński.

The role of fire changes completely when the monster's grief caused by his rejection makes him burn the cottage of the people he was trying to live with. The fire consumes the hut and serves as the projection of the feeling of the monster who now stands promising to avenge his misfortune. Now the viewer understands the meaning of the scene presenting Victor's mother's death where a lightening being the embodiment of fire destroys a tree in the yard - a clear symbol of family. The true uncertain nature of fire stands in opposition to its former life-giving character. The destructive part of its temperament has replaced the fatherly instincts and will now continue to be associated with death rather than life. The scene is now replaced by the snow-covered mountains on the monster's way to Geneva. Isolation, emotional alienation and danger are all aroused by the uninviting and cold landscape. Another scene comes to the viewer's mind: Victor and his family playing on a green and peaceful meadow behind which a powerful icy mountain rests like a bad omen - the embodiment of the always present and haunting responsibility. From now on, fire and water are personalised figures, members of the cast more important than the illustrations provided by the literary original.

Water is again portrayed when the monster requests a meeting with his creator by a desolate sea of ice. Victor is pushed down a narrow tunnel inside an icy mountain which resembles a living creature swallowing its defenceless victim. Thus, water takes over the development of the plot playing its Ping-

Pong game with fire that has been playing the most important role so far. It becomes the symbol of Victor's responsibility for what he thinks was a hideous deed - a nightmare that cannot be pushed aside. He is forced to dive deep inside his burden, the long tunnel representing the synchronic perspective of his soul: his hopes for the future and the distant, but still reverberating past. The tunnel scene, barely mentioned in the book, effectively stresses Victor's efforts to forget about his past and his falling down anticipates the eventual tragedy.

In the literary original, Victor explains the purpose of his scientific pursuits to Clerval concentrating on the idea of giving life to those he loves. The film adaptation follows the hint and develops a new motif of bringing the dead Elizabeth back to life. The piercing scene when Victor carries the body of his beloved woman wrapped in a red, fire-like coat foreshadows the entering and intervention of fire. Elizabeth chooses self-destruction crushing an oil-lamp over her body and is consumed by the spreading flames. In this way, fire marks its unquestionable reign. Its mission is completed and the game seems to reach its climax - the roles of fire and water are for now established as different: destruction and never-ending persecution.

Yet, the final scene does not accord to that solution. In the book the monster declares to collect a stake for self-destruction so that his ashes will obliterate the remembrance of himself and his creator. The ending is rather dark and peaceful when the monster vanishes on a raft among the waves. Again, Kenneth Branagh has developed the motif to provide a cunning illustration to the monster's final reconciliation with its creator and to stop the pendulum-like interplay of fire and water. The two elements are re-united at the death of the monster just as they were at its birth. They take the body of Victor and its creation into oblivion in the same way as they brought them to life.

The two stories are thus completed and the sub-story of the interplay of fire and water appears now as the parallel, or perhaps a shadow of Victor's life and misfortune. He started from venturing into the unknown, from playing God with the elements of nature. He lost control and was seized by the avenging power of his creation. His actions did not result in anything apart from misery and death and the elements proved untameable and unmoved. Branagh's presentation of the elements showed the same pattern: they united their powers in the conception of a new life but then, as they became more materialised, they proved uncontrollable and independent only to re-unite at the end preserving the everlasting status quo in nature.

The circular arrangement of the book was thus copied not only in the organisation of the scenes but also in the development of the significance of the novel's central images of fire and water. Branagh managed to direct the viewer through the film drawing his attention to the colourful and imaginative use of the elements bestowing on them the main weight of the action. He exploited the living side of seemingly inanimate components of nature which appeared as the embodiment of Victor's psychological reflection upon his actions. They have been materialised and gained the status of full-fledged and expressive determinants of the whole construction of the film. The viewer has been confronted with something more than a mere setting - the theatrical animation of the elements has become the main focus and most important carriage of the philosophical load. Fire and water work actively on the development and significance of the action leaving the viewer with the impression that they are not only the central images but the central characters as well.

Sources:

Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, directed by Kenneth Branagh, Tristar Pictures 1994

Edyta Basiak

The Cinematic Design of Elsinore in Franco Zeffirelli's and Kenneth Branagh's *Hamlets* *

Setting and stage properties constitute an integral part of a theater performance whether they are scarce or abounding. Their importance is most obvious in the elaborate stage design of the Baroque. In the Elizabethan theater, although they were scarce and limited to the necessary minimum, setting and props carried a highly symbolic and emblematic potential. Even the lack of stage properties can become a statement used to manipulate with the text of a play. Yet, only the movie industry was able to make the most of the potential inherent in setting and properties, owing to the use of close-ups. In a film production, the setting not only reinforces – or subverts – the 'message' of a play; it very often becomes the very subject of the movie. In the productions of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* by Franco Zeffirelli and Kenneth Branagh, the design of Elsinore becomes one of the most crucial aspects of the presented story. Shakespeare was anything but specific about the design of the castle in his stage directions. The only thing the reader finds out about its architecture is that there were the banks (or ramparts) and a Great Hall there, and that Gertrude had her own closet (not meaning a 'bedroom' yet). Thus the possibility for playing with the imagination was enormous and it was used in a variety of ways, supplying the viewer with a different outcome in each production.

For Franco Zeffirelli, the screening of *Hamlet* was not the first encounter with Shakespeare's plays, nor was it his first attempt to bring them to a wider audience. His main goal being to popularize Shakespeare, on stage as well as on the screen, he has often been accused of over-simplifying the dramatic import of the original. His productions have been criticized as 'distracting from the underlying play'[1] and as 'visually splendid but less successful dramatically'[2]. Yet, they have always been appreciated for their undeniable aesthetic value. Zeffirelli was one of the representatives of the *riesumazione* – a style based on the return to the 19th century realistic sets, props and costumes. Thus, in Franco Zeffirelli's *Hamlet* the castle of Elsinore is a very typical medieval one. In comparison with the two other Elsinores, the Olivier's and the Branagh's, it is set in a more definite period of history. Such a strict positioning of the scene of the tragedy can be argued to distract from its symbolic and universal meaning. Hamlet's afflictions become more remote and perhaps less appealing to the modern spectator who may tend to discard them as a medieval specialty.

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 2004: *Drama in Performance* run by Ms Anna Cetera, PhD.

This castle is above all spacious and sunlit. Having watched the film, the viewer is left with the prevailing sense of openness and unlimited space. Even the vault, which is the arena for the 'To be or not to be' monologue, is not completely dark and gloomy. Instead, it is lit from above by rays of sun coming in probably through a window in the ceiling. As a result of this simple maneuver combined with the rearrangement of the text, the monologue is to a large extent deprived of its tragic dimension. According to Neil Taylor, Zeffirelli wishes to make Elsinore an 'a-tragic world of people going about their daily business in a glamorous, open, sunlit, cinematogenic environment, and then tell the unglamorous story of that society's ability to waste its young.'[3] This Elsinore is actually pervaded with an atmosphere of coziness and interior warmth. From the more 'traditional' point of view, the castle is not a very adequate stage for the gloomy and extremely tragic events which will eventually take place in it. It is more like a warm, safe home, and the royal family inhabiting it is almost a nuclear family living more or less on happy terms with one another.

Although the castle is very spacious, it is not empty or overwhelming in its size. The interior of Elsinore is furnished with cozy, wooden furniture, the rooms are adorned with animal skins, there are signs of animated life everywhere: cups, candlesticks, and literally hundreds of books. Yet, something is rotten behind this cheerful facade. Thus Hamlet is given the position of a 'spy in the world of spies,' and he uses the castle to his own ends. It turns out that Elsinore offers numerous possibilities for spying and eavesdropping. Mel Gibson wanders on the stairs and corridors and is able to overhear almost all of the plotting against his life and safety. The height of the castle is also used for this purpose. It allows for the powerful images of Hamlet looking down (in both meanings of the phrase) on the wrongdoings of his uncle and step-father in one. Apart from four images of Hamlet spying from above, there are also two other scenes that use a similar perspective. In one of them, Polonius is the witness to a silent encounter of the Prince and Ophelia which takes place immediately after the ghost scene. Here, restless after the meeting with his deceased father, Hamlet loses his alertness and becomes the vulnerable object of Polonius' spying. In the other scene shot from the high angle, we see Gertrude watching the raving Ophelia. The perspective used in this particular scene gives the viewer the impression of Gertrude distancing herself from Ophelia's drama – an impression not really justified by, and consistent with, the queen's behavior in the preceding and subsequent scenes.

Another characteristic feature of Zeffirelli's Elsinore is the fact that it does not imprison its inhabitants. While in Olivier's, and especially in Branagh's movie the castle was definitely a prison for the prince and for his family, in this case the 'court is not only equestrian but also peripatetic.'[4] The protagonists of the tragedy are allowed to leave the castle whenever they want to, and they do not hesitate to take this chance. Even Hamlet, who usually seems unable to leave Elsinore – the scene of his father's murder and his mother's infidelity – goes out to the green meadows that look more like Wales or Scotland than Denmark. Mel Gibson – a man of action – cannot bear the pressure and emotional strain after the monologue in the royal mausoleum and so he mounts his courser and goes for a ride. Thus he 'follows the conventions of Beverly Hills cops and rides out of town into the open countryside in order to commune with nature.'[5] It might be argued that every stressful situation, every misunderstanding in the royal family, is followed by a purifying contact with nature. But this freedom to leave is inconsistent with the nature of Hamlet's irresolution, especially combined with Gibson's craving for some action. Zeffirelli saw in him the Hamlet of the 1980s, but as a result the spectators wonder why he keeps coming back to Elsinore if it is supposed to be a prison, and why he runs away in the first place if it is such a nice place to live in.

While Franco Zeffirelli's design of Elsinore was to a considerable extent influenced by Lawrence Olivier's production, Kenneth Branagh offered his spectators a new and original approach to the cinematic design of the castle. First of all, he decided to stress the universal appeal of the tragedy by moving Elsinore to another, timeless and spotless dimension. In this version of the story, the castle reminds the viewer of St. Petersburg or perhaps Vienna at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. The court bears many features of being a military and an imperial one, with Claudius and Gertrude the emperor and the empress. The castle is by no means a family nest; it is rather cold, empty and alienating. It is extremely beautiful, with its wonderful artifacts and marble floors, but apart from purely aesthetic appreciation of its design, the only feeling resulting from its contemplation is the sense of coolness verging on sterility. In such an interior, there is no place for genuine feelings. The tragedy of Hamlet becomes also a tragedy of an individual whose emotions are repressed (or suppressed) by the physical reality surrounding him. This design of Elsinore is similar to the one of Olivier's in that it creates an atmosphere of alienation – yet using completely different means. While in Sir Lawrence Olivier's film the castle, built entirely of stone, is merely furnished with Hamlet's chair and Gertrude's bed, in Branagh's version it is not without fancy furniture and artifacts. Yet it is a sterile asylum, which is also emphasized by the appearance of the cell which the mad Ophelia is kept in. The floor and the walls of this room are coated with some soft material preventing the unfortunate girl from hurting herself. Similarly, the whole castle is a cell imprisoning the mad and dangerous prince and preventing his endangering the throne.

While in Zeffirelli's *Hamlet* the protagonists of the drama, including Hamlet himself, were at all times free to go out and leave the castle, in Branagh's production, on the contrary, Elsinore is a luxurious prison from which there is no escape. There exists an invisible yet extremely strong relationship between the prince and the castle; a connection that cannot be broken, unless by death. Thus Hamlet only leaves his home-prison reluctantly and for a short time. One of the few times the spectator sees him outside is when he's partaking in or directing a fencing lesson on the royal grounds – a scene being a premonition or a foreshadowing of the future duel between himself and Laertes. Another example is the scene in which Rosencrantz and Guildenstern come to visit (or rather to spy upon) the prince and are led by him through a series of narrow and winding corridors inside the castle. There is only one moment in the film when Branagh is completely alone in the vast space of an ice-desert and is delivering a monologue accompanied by powerful music. This is the only time he really leaves Elsinore, but he does not seem to like it. Instead, he is so small and lost among the white nothingness that the viewer can only feel pity rather than relief. Similarly, during Hamlet's encounter with his father's ghost, the setting of the scene – a forest – is extremely dangerous and ominous.

As has been already mentioned the interior of the castle is characterized by the enormity of its vast space, which is further emphasized by numerous mirrors. It might seem that such a design would make it impossible to convey an atmosphere of intimacy. Nevertheless, thanks to the brilliant camera movement, the sense of secrecy is achieved. The best example of limiting the space through the camera-eye is the first scene in the Great Hall. This colossal room is filled with courtiers, and yet Hamlet's words 'A little more than kin and less than kind' are delivered and filmed in such a way that they remain a secret known only by the prince and the spectators. In the same scene, during the conversation between Hamlet and Gertrude, this enormous space and the lack of intimacy are dramatically limited. Thus, the colloquy of the mother and the son becomes so private that the viewer virtually forgets about the presence of numerous courtiers. Another example of such a technique is the scene taking place in Hamlet's room when he is being notified about the ghost's appearance by Horatio and Marcello. The atmosphere of secrecy that surrounds their conversation is furthermore emphasized by the camera limiting the picture to their faces only. Moving from one face to another, the camera creates a scene that is almost claustrophobic in its intimacy.

The elements of Branagh's Elsinore also allow for a symbolic reading. The countless mirrors not only enlarge the space, but also reflect – or blur – the true nature of the protagonists. Hamlets seeks in them the answers to the questions that keep troubling him and when he looks in his own eyes, he also looks his greatest enemy – his uncle straight in the eye. The numerous secret passages and winding corridors constitute a parable of the tangled paths of human mind or the dark methods of the villainous Claudius. One object in particular has been put to the best possible use by Kenneth Branagh. In several scenes he uses a confessional as the background or the setting proper. Of course he uses it in the proper confessional scene and never before has Hamlet been as close to killing Claudius as he is in this scene.

Each of the directors discussed in this essay viewed the text of *Hamlet* in a different way, saw different aspects of it, and each of them has used it to a different purpose. Zeffirelli's main goal was to bring it as close as possible to the audience of the '80s accustomed to the Hollywood action movies. For such an audience, at least according to the director, Hamlet's wavering would be obscure and incomprehensible, and so it had to be reduced. For a similar reason the design of the scene of the tragedy had to be concretized, limiting simultaneously the possibilities of its universal appeal. The spectator does not need to ask himself where and when the story takes place; he is told explicitly: Those are the Middle Ages, so don't you worry none![6] Branagh, on the other hand, decided to stress the universality and timelessness of Shakespeare's story. He does not simplify the task of analyzing his work; instead he encourages the viewer to work out the multifarious possibilities offered by the four-hour film. The success of both productions can be estimated in at least two aspects. The *Hamlet* produced by Franco Zeffirelli is definitely more accessible to an average man and has been a greater financial success reaching a wider audience. Kenneth Branagh's screening of *Hamlet* is far superior as far as its artistic value is concerned, but only connoisseurs will have enough passion and patience to appreciate the film's art, particularly taking into account its unusual length.

Undeniably, each of the directors has achieved his goal and it is only up to the viewer to decide which version – and which design of Elsinore – is more adequate, if not better.

Notes

[1] Boyce, p.724.

[2] Wells, p.191.

[3] Taylor, p. 193.

[4] Pilkington, p. 167.

[5] Taylor, p. 192.

[6] cf. Henahan: '[Zeffirelli] is most charitably thought of nowadays as a fashion designer and interior decorator'.

Sources

Hamlet, directed by Kenneth Branagh, Castle Rock Entertainment 1996

Hamlet, directed by Franco Zeffirelli, Warner Bros. 1990

***

Boyce, Ch. *Shakespeare A to Z: The Essential Reference to his Plays, his Poems, his Life and Times, and More.* Oxford and New York, 1990.

Henahan, D. 'More Zeffirelli on the Grand Scale in the Met's New "Traviata"'. *The New York Times*, 18 October 1989.

Pilkington, A. G. 'Zeffirelli's Shakespeare' [in:] Davis A., Wells S. (eds.) *Shakespeare and the Movie Image*, Cambridge University Press 1994

Taylor, N. 'The Films of *Hamlet*' [in:] Davis A., Wells S. (eds.) *Shakespeare and the Movie Image*, Cambridge University Press 1994

Wells, S. *Shakespeare: An Illustrated Dictionary*. Oxford, 1985.

Marcin Polkowski

Squire Power: Certain Epic Elements in Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews**

Without presuming to embark at once for the heart of the matter, namely on a search of the epic constituents of Henry Fielding's *The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews, and of his Friend, Mr Abraham Adams*, one may ask the question what did the 18th century author and his contemporaries include in their understanding of the term 'epic'. By way of introduction, one may cast a glance therefore at the expectations with which the readers of, say, 1741, serious gouty squires, scholarly ladies, and rakes with a predilection for learned wit could have approached such a text as Fielding's, and at their ideas on the nature of the epic as they are exemplified in the writings of the most esteemed critics of a period spanning more or less 80 years, Joseph Addison, John Dryden, and Samuel Johnson. As one may expect, the range of their reading was slightly different from ours: *Beowulf*, for example had not yet been translated; nor would it have interested a scholar of the Augustan Age, except perhaps as a barbarous relict. Thus, to present the topic in a highly simplified manner, the learned squire had the following on which to form his taste: Homer and Virgil, some assorted English or French romances, Tasso, and Milton, of which the first two constituted the primary sources for studying the genre, while the last one seemed for many the highest point in its development. To aid him, he had a number of critical texts, ancient, such as Aristotle's *Poetics* and Horace's *Art of Poetry*, and modern, like Père René Bossu's *Traite du poème épique* which 'was immediately absorbed into English critical thought.'[1]

All three of these sources were used by Joseph Addison in his enlightening article on Milton's *Paradise Lost*[2], which, as it appears to contain several useful hints as to the Augustan approach to the Epic, one may take the liberty of discussing at greater length. According to Addison, the judgement in epic poetry is passed according to the 'fable,' or plot, which 'is perfect or imperfect, according as the action which it relates is more or less so. This action should have three qualifications in it. First, it should be but one action. Secondly, it should be an entire action; and thirdly it should be a great action.'[3]

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 101: *English Novel of the 18th and 19th Centuries* run by Ms Maria Wójcicka, MA.

The primary qualification one may summarize as follows. For the oneness of action to be preserved, the device of a beginning *in medias res* should be introduced, where the poet 'hastens into the middle of things, as Horace has observed,'[4] and centring round one event which forms the story, is able to recount the others as a series of analepses, thus lending perspective to his work, emphasising their significance for the story, and escaping the discord of several actions connected merely chronologically. In the process of doing this, Addison admits Aristotle's critique of Homer and Virgil, as the poet can easily lapse by producing episodes that seem '(...)excrescences, rather than parts of the action,'[5] a pitfall which Milton successfully avoids by ingeniously connecting the main theme to a subordinate plot -'the Fall of Man,' and 'the fall of those angels who are his professed enemies'[6]-in such a way as to increase the unity by means of similarity or opposition, almost a kind of metaphysical wit, in other words '(...)the same kind of beauty that critics admire in *The Spanish Friar, or The Double Discovery.*'[7]

Secondly, the entireness of the action demands that 'Nothing should go before it, be intermixed with it, or follow after it, that is not related to it.'[8] All of the narration should be thematically motivated, and contribute to the whole in a very specific way, based on meaning extracted from the story, rather than on some vague and idiosyncratic general effect or mood to be conveyed. For the poet this obviously entails rigid planning (as Alexander Pope wrote, 'Hear how learn'd Greece her useful rules indites, /When to repress and when indulge our flights'[9]), so that every element is decorous, necessary to the greater whole, and bears its unmistakable stamp, like the anger of Achilles in the *Iliad*, which is impressed upon the reader in all scenes relating to that hero, whether in past (analeptic) or present narration.

The last necessary ingredient of the epic is 'greatness'. The subject should be of the greatest possible consequence, affecting the fate of kingdoms, nations, or in the case of Milton the whole human species. In addition to this, each of the forming parts should be 'great' in its own respect to maintain an imaginative harmony with the imposing edifice which metaphorically they are expected to construct when combined. Furthermore, with relation to the extent in time, a similar kind of grandeur is discernible. Both the historical perspective, the time of action, and, one must suppose, the sheer bulk of the work, possess the quality which is normally denominated epic. The chronology of reading during which the mind of the audience is filled with suitably momentous moving images should be neither too protracted or too brief, but precisely adjusted for the strongest effect to be achieved, also contributes to this effect. So does language, which actually falls under all three categories. Elevated style, described as 'wild and daring sallies of sentiment in the irregular and eccentric violence of wit'[10] in Samuel Johnson's accusation of John Dryden, is a necessity for the epic, which by definition is the most magnificent genre. Thus, no offence against Nature is made, and the tone remains one and the same throughout. As Dryden writes, wit consists of 'thought and words elegantly adapted to the subject,'[11] and in the case of heroic, epic poetry (for, as E.M. Tillyard remarks, both terms were at that time used interchangeably[12]), 'sublime subjects ought to be adorned with the sublimest, and consequently, often with the most figurative expressions.'[13]

To this interesting mixture the promising poet must not fail to add some seasoning. As Samuel Johnson observes in his *Milton* sparing not superlatives, that since 'Epic poetry undertakes to teach the most important truths by the most pleasing precepts, and therefore relates some great event in the most affecting manner,'[14] thus, quoting Bossu, 'the poet's first task is to find a *moral,* which his fable is afterwards to illustrate and establish.'[15] The Epic, as the most inspired of all poetical genres must needs combine the instructive with the entertaining; and the chief aim with which one of the inspired train is faced is to suitably 'convey' the disguised moral in the vehicle of a 'fable'.

As one may observe from the above summary, views on the nature of the epic in the time in which Fielding wrote *Joseph Andrews* were rigidly defined, and fitting them to actual works seemed to give 18th century critics, the likes of which have been mentioned above, the highest satisfaction. Was Fielding's Joseph Andrews similar to the classical epic, or did it constitute something completely new and original? And above all, what was the connection between a traditional form supported by the authority of the Ancients and by Nature, and an extremely young and modern genre, the novel? These are some questions one may tackle and having acquired consciousness of the fact that a theoretical examination of the precepts of the Ancients is a very melancholy business indeed for any squire, one may, if the *good-natur'd Reader* does not *object*, have recourse to the point from which one ought to have departed, namely Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*.

Joseph Andrews is written, as Fielding tells the reader on the title page, 'In Imitation of the *Manner* of Cervantes, Author of *Don Quixote*.'[16] The italics seem to be revealing, for the 'imitation' is, according to the author, not of the content, but of the form. However, as one may not have the leisure to reach for the folio of the Spaniard and comment on Cervantes, the Reader is left to ponder over this allusion; and yet it seems to indicate some indebtedness to the form of the epic romance (also in prose); *Don Quixote* possesses, E.M. Tillyard states, 'the true epic range,'[17] and 'passages (...) of such weight and density as to bear comparison with [epic] poems'[18], yet he maintains that an epic it is not, as 'its construction does not show the human will stretched and sustained to the utmost.'[19] Whatever one may say in response to that, *Don Quixote* does have, it seems, two things in common with Fielding's work, namely comedy (though of a very melancholy nature), and moreover the introduction of a consciously new form ('this kind of writing, which I do not remember to have seen hitherto attempted in our language'[20]). It is these two traits of *Joseph Andrews* that Fielding wishes to warn his English readers about, having in mind probably those of his audience who expect a performance on the lines of '*Clelia, Cleopatra, Astraea, Cassandra,* the *Grand Cyrus*'[21], 17th century romances verging on the later Gothic so strongly that one is reminded of 'the wearisome adventures of *Perceforest, Tirante the White, Palmerin of England,* and the *Knight of the Sun*'[22] which are read by the Spaniard Don Raymond, for after all 'Novels are so full of nonsense and stuff; there has not been a tolerably decent one come out since *Tom Jones*, except the *Monk*; I read that t'other day... .'[23]

Indeed, the romances mentioned are in fact very similar to those whose protagonists' exploits are parodied in *Don Quixote*; although some subtle difference may be discerned between the first lofty heroic examples mentioned by Fielding and the titles listed by Lewis, it doesn't seem implausible to connect them as part of a long-lasting historical tradition, the 'canonic nature,'[24] as M.M. Bakhtin calls it, of their genre lending itself perfectly to parody. To quote that scholar once more, 'Parodic stylisations of canonized genres and styles occupy an essential place in the novel'[25]. This quotation elucidates slightly the correlation between the novel and the epic in Fielding's case might be. Returning to Bakhtin then, it should be possible to glimpse in *Joseph Andrews* some signs of a great historical shift from a 'harmony of the genres'[26] and a 'wholeness of literature' expressed in 'the great organic poetics of the past-those of Aristotle, Horace, Boileau,'[27] to a structure dominated by the novel, 'the only developing genre'-as a matter of fact the outcome of a prodigious 'struggle of genres.'[28]

Leaving Fielding's 'Preface' to his work aside for further scrutiny later on, one may now venture a closer look at the hero of the novel, Joseph Andrews. The fact that his name constitutes the title recalls, among others, *Don Quixote*, voluminous chivalric romances, works focused strongly on the person of the main character who is perhaps used as an artistic device (which for the contemporary reader may recall George Gordon Lord Byron's immortal antihero, Don Juan), to facilitate the author's progress from one adventure to another. At the same time, it is obviously a continuance of a tradition, very recent at that time, of novel-writing; it suffices to glance at the characteristic titles used by Defoe, Smollett, Richardson, and a host of minor scribblers. One can imagine that, as a relatively new genre at that time, the novel needed some strongly cohesive element, easily provided by the figure of the peregrinating protagonist, a convention which was finally successfully turned on its head by Laurence Sterne in *Tristram Shandy*. But this, critics might argue, is a reading imposed on *Joseph Andrews* against the contents of the novel. Bringing together the different threads of interpretation, namely that *Joseph Andrews* is superficially a 'life,' and on a deeper level a parody of a 'life' (Fielding had been amused by the Letters of Mrs. Pamela B., carefully edited by Mr. Richardson[29], and by the 'fulsome, conceited'[30] and no doubt quite rewarding biography ('An Apology...'[31]) of one Colley Cibber, both of which works the narrator mentions as the instructive models for his authentic history), and the fact that after the manner of the ancients the opening features a genealogy of the hero[32] reminding an antiquarian of *Beowulf*,[33] one may reach the conclusion that those traits can only be combined in a mock-heroic way, a major element of *Joseph Andrews*, which however one may prefer to examine with certain reservations on the example of the heroic epic.

What would the action of *Joseph Andrews* be, as identified according to the precepts of Mr. Addison? For a heroic epic it would hardly seem fit for the life of the hero to be the subject; the action of the *Iliad* is not the life of Achilles (although it may obviously be reconstructed), nor is the *Odyssey* actually or merely about the life of Odysseus. *Beowulf* once more intrudes; but even there, where the lifespan of the hero can almost equally be equated with the plot, or 'fable,' the action itself seems to consist more of heroic doings, than of a chronological, historical representation of the hero's activities. Therefore, in order to continue the search for epic elements in *Joseph Andrews*, it appears that one must lay aside mock-biography, and instead hasten to join Mr Abraham Adams and Mrs Slipslop in Sir Thomas's *kitchin*.

An acute observer of the epic may struck by the lack of a typical beginning in medias res upon the first page of *Joseph Andrews*. The criteria for identifying this device may be diverse: any book, novel or otherwise, starts in some sense in the middle of *its* things; yet is an enumeration of Joseph's still unobscured ancestors necessary for the action of the epic, apart from artistic, comic considerations (the former seems true, in any case, with relation to the point of departure, but as catalogues of family names are in any case requisite for the ancient heroic mode, the point might be precarious to maintain). To give an example of one still different commencement, (quoting Cervantes): 'In a certain corner of la Mancha, the name of which I do not choose to remember, there lately lived one of those country gentlemen...,'[34] in other worlds a fairy-tale one. Indeed, in a fictional world not recognised as realistic, such a beginning performs a function similar to the *in medias res* of the epic, furthermore performing the role of a genre determiner. In such a case one may argue that in *Joseph Andrews* an *in medias res* opening is detectable, although for the sake of the comedy element and the mock-biographical novelistic convention it is disguised to prevent instantaneous identification, instead allowing for a gradual establishment of generic consciousness after the reader is drawn for some time into the fictional world.

In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus, who

> (...)longing for his wife and homecoming,
> Was detained by the nymph Kalypso, bright among goddesses,
> In her hollowed caverns... [35]

resembles in his predicament Joseph Andrews, who, though not exactly held captive (perhaps slightly so, by difference of station), but seduced against his will by Lady Booby, longs to rejoin Fanny. It is this moment after the death of Sir Thomas when Lady Booby reveals her affection for her young footman, that the reader can finally identify as the novel's *in medias res* beginning, and rest assured. The action of *Joseph Andrews*, therefore, one may in simplification state as being a parodic, mock-heroic translation of the *Odyssey*, in which the hero's journey consists of Joseph's return to Booby Hall, planned in order to rejoin his beloved. As it turns out, however, this element proves only partially similar, which is not only due to Fanny's character being slightly different from Penelope's; nevertheless, Fielding's inspiring classical, as well as the biblical source for this situation, would have been easily recognisable for his contemporaries.

As one is already in some way familiar with the main character, Joseph Andrews, it is possible to look at whether or not, and how he fulfils the qualifications for the epic hero. One has already remarked on his relation to mock-biography and mock-authenticity; original traits, surely, for one in whom one would like to see some characteristic features of Odysseus or Achilles as seen by 18th century readers, yet one must not forget, once more, the comic composition of the novel. It is above all highly rooted in its times, which according to Bakhtin, is one of the most obvious and natural specifications for a novel ('maximal contact with the present [with contemporary reality] in all its openness'36). While one can introduce and debate many variations on this theme, for example asking oneself in what way does the term *present* alter for a novel read 250 years after it was written, the idea resulted, according to Bakhtin, in a clash with the classical (or classicist) ideas on the epic, culminating in something as remote from Fielding as German Romanticism, von Blankenburg's *Versuch über den Roman*, and Hegel. 'Epic distance,' which, as Bakhtin puts it, places 'the represented world of the heroes on an utterly different and inaccessible time-and-value plane,'[37] vanishes in the novel, where both appear on the same level of reality, the said 'time-and-value plane'. One may notice that the past already fulfils (if only partially) these conditions, all the more so, if greater changes occur between the real and the fictional world. While one can look at *Joseph* through the distance of time and mannerism of style, for the 18th century reader, especially if he came from the lower or middle classes, it was probably intensely up to date and vigorously 'real,' perhaps having an imaginatively similar role to that fulfilled in the 20th century by films or television. The comic journey of a footman out of livery, later joined by a young servant-wench and an unimposing country parson gives rise, in an epic (or, more modestly, mock-epic) way, to a compounded mixture of 1740s popular culture (by *popular* meaning the application of the 'squire as the judicious standard of criticism). By such intricacies of scholarly wit one has arrived quite close to one of the 20th century definitions of the word 'epic'. And indeed, to quote from an essay by Wojtek Nerkowski, which deals with the epic in cinematography, 'we may vaguely start from saying that there should be something big, if not to say grand, about such films.'[38]

A search for epic grandeur in *Joseph Andrews* is alas liable meet with misunderstanding. True, Fielding's novel is mock-heroic, and not divided into twelve parts as it should be, a shortcoming which any future epic author should rectify; nor are there any imposing catalogues of proper names, 'not solely nor chiefly for their sound, but because they are the names of splendid, remote, terrible, voluptuous, or celebrated things'[39]. The number of books hints to the reader that he or she is dealing with a work which in its form or especially its graphic arrangement does not consciously parody the epic, but rather operates with an inversion, substituting the low for the high. The names again uphold this; while many of them are telling: Lady Booby, Mrs. Slipslop, Mr. Towwouse, Peter Pounce, Beau Didapper, Miss Grave-airs, etc., the main protagonists, Joseph and Mr Abraham Adams, have plain and evidently typical, ostentatiously realistic ones, as it has been said earlier, very different from those of preceding romance heroes. An effect of grandeur is hardly achieved through such names; and if one looks at Fielding's work in as conventional a way as the above, little can be added. Places are rather unindividualised, and they are grouped around two extremities: London and Booby Hall; in between one visualises inns, also quite similar to each other, towns and villages distinguished among themselves only by their inhabitants (landlords, parsons, stage-coach travellers, highwaymen), the imaginative effect is more of timelessness. However, if one assumes the point of view of a 'squire, as was hinted at in the previous paragraph, one may perceive how a very different, but still epic, grandeur, is expressed. *Joseph Andrews* is a picaresque novel, heroes, who can sometimes be villains, meet different sorts of ruffians on the road, get mixed up in wild adventures of mistaken identity, surprising discoveries and coincidence; whilst the distances and personages involved are not great in universal terms, it is great in every sense of the word for the unimportant, mock-epic, characters involved. *Joseph Andrews* is, on its individually large and in reality small scale, like its epic model, the *Odyssey*, a mock-heroic journey, which can also be viewed as a diminished, nevertheless proportional, heroic quest.

The problem of '*Joseph Andrews* as a quest-romance' seems to be a topic for yet another essay of voluminous proportions, one without any guarantee of reaching the coveted goal. One observes that the necessary elements of a detached object and a journey to attain it are present, though in curtailed proportions, and whilst Joseph's aim is to get home and find Fanny, hers to find Joseph, and Parson Adams's to deliver to London a book of manuscript sermons, the effect is of three different quests, all complete with the necessary obstacles (e.g. Parson Adams's discovery of having had the sermons taken away from him by his wife and fresh shirts substituted instead). On the mock-heroic character of these quests, it seems, no further comment is needed.

The most visible, and visual way in which Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* appears to have a close link with the epic, or more precisely to be a mock-heroic epic, is through the use of explicitly parodying some stock components which had already by that time become associated in the minds of the audience with those genres, both tragic and comic. For the sake of brevity two examples of this kind will be dealt with here, the first of which might be called an opening paragraph, an apostrophy setting the scene for Joseph's appearance before Lady Booby. It is, as Fielding ironically calls it 'some very fine Writing,'[40] which is directly based on several similar instances which may be found opening the books of the *Odyssey* or the *Iliad*. The 18th century squire would recognize the key mythological names, Hesperus, Thetis, Phoebus, and that the way the actions of these characters (getting up for the moon-Hesperus, and resting at home after the work of the day was done for Phoebus-the sun) metaphorically presented a description of what Fielding sums up aptly in the concluding lines: 'In other words it was in the evening when Joseph attended his Lady's orders.'[41]

The novelty, or so it seems, of Fielding's use of such a typical, not to say clichéd epic element was its firm anchoring within the comic, and hence mock-heroic, structure of the novel. Mythological characters are refreshed for the reader through an interesting instance of what could be perhaps called familiarizing defamilarization. Stock characters of ancient mythology are made comically up to date, Hesperus becomes a rake wearing breeches, and, one may only guess, a powdered wig; Thetis is a 'good housewife'[42] who 'puts on the pot'[43] for her husband, Phoebus, whom in turn one may imagine to look like some 18th century farm hand or yeoman who surprisingly did not choose to go to the pub that evening.

The second instance of an obvious 'epic element' deployed in a parodic way can be the narrator's invocation of his muse, and the following description of Joseph's cudgel, which are both based, as the above-mentioned opening, on well-known examples of poetic art from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Comedy, and a change from heroic to mock-heroic, is achieved through a combination of the lofty form and ludicrous, low, and for 20th century readers delightfully obscure references; for what spirit must the muse instil to have 'exalted the manly, nervous style of thy Mallet,'[44] or 'forced Colley Cibber to write English.'[45] The cudgel description, belonging itself, along with the invocation, to a broader complex which may be entitled 'the mock-heroic battle,' follows the same comically-Homeric lines, with an epic grandeur and magnitude, whose sweeping scope connects at once, without disrupting the main 'action of the poem, such unlikely things as a 'mighty strong man of Kent,'[46] foppish beaus 'walking about the Park,'[47] a night at the theatre, where the reader is carried, breathless, but with no fear of being dropped, along with 'criticks in embroidery (...) from the boxes to the pit,'[48] and back to the galleries, and at once whisked inside the picture of a Hogarthian auction room, beholding one Mr Cock 'with astonishment wondering that *Nobody bids more for that fine, that superb*—'[49].

As a conclusion, it may be fitting and proper to return to Fielding's 'Preface' which one has hitherto rather neglected, and scrupulously note down some elements of the epic. Namely *Joseph Andrews*, on the authority of Fielding, is to be based on the theoretical assumptions of a lost poem of Homer, in that it is epic (not dramatic), and comic (not tragic), furthermore not in verse, but prose, otherwise possessing 'all its other parts, such as fable, action, characters, sentiments and diction.'[50] It does not seem not necessary in this context to improve on Fielding's assessment of his own work, though there must have been, in his own time, quite a few squires who were not at all in the clear as to what *Joseph Andrews* exactly was, and who probably benefited from such a critical explanation. As many different sorts of excellent writing are included under the designation 'epic', the 'comic epic in prose'[51] needs further to be differentiated from other works by its comedy, and 'the use of the ludicrous instead of the sublime,'[52] where 'burlesque may sometimes be admitted, (...) as in the descriptions of the battles, and some other places, not necessary to be pointed out to the classical reader.'[53]

One may conclude this essay by trying guardedly and cautiously to disprove Bakhtin's claim that the epic is dead, and 'moribund'[54] genre. One may conclude by stating, after Tillyard, that although there exists a fairish 'epic spirit,'[55] and questing for it in works as diverse as *Joseph Andrews*, 'the great modernist epics,' or J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, it sadly remains as elusive as it was, even more so with its new vehicle of the novel. One may continue like this almost indefinitely, for in doing so, one will, like the squires of old, preserve the unity of this *epick* essay.

Notes

[1] [a footnote in:] *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol.1, p. 2206

[2] Addison, p. 2206

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Pope, p. 2218

[10] *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol.1, p. 1842.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Cf. Tillyard

[13] Dryden, p. 1843

[14] Johnson, p. 2408

[15] Ibid.

[16] Fielding,

[17] Tillyard, p.8.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid., p.5.

[20] Fielding, op. cit., p. 25.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Lewis, M.G., p.134

[23] Austen, p. 1026

[24] Bakhtin, p. 6

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Richardson

[30] Brissenden, p.9

[31] Ibid.

[32] Fielding, p. 41

[33] *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, p. 28

[34] de Cervantes Saavedra, p. 27

[35] Homer, p. 307

[36] Bakhtin

[37] Ibid.

[38] Nerkowski, p.75

[39] Lewis, C.S., p. 39

[40] Fielding, op. cit., p.56

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid., p.227

[45] Ibid., p. 228

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid. p. 25

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid. p.26

[53] Ibid.

[54] Bakhtin, op. cit.

[55] Cf. Tillyard, pp.4-11

Bibliography

Addison, J. '*Paradise Lost*: General Critical Remarks', *The Spectator, No. 267, Saturday, January 5th, 1712*, [in:] *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol.1, W.W. Norton & Co., New York, 1993

Austen, J. *Northanger Abbey*, [in:] *The Complete Novels of Jane Austen*, Penguin Books, 1983

Bakhtin, M.M. 'Epic and Novel', [in:] n.p., n.d.

Brissenden, R.F., 'Introduction' [in:] Fielding, H. *Joseph Andrews*. Penguin Books, London 1977.

de Cervantes Saavedra, M. *The History and Adventures of the Renowned Don Quixote de la Mancha.* [transl. Tobias Smollett], Farrar, Straus, Giroux, New York 1986.

Dryden, J. *The Author's Apology for Heroic Poetry and Heroic License*, [in:] *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol.1, W.W. Norton & Co., New York, 1993

Fielding, H. *Joseph Andrews.* Penguin Books, London 1977.

Homer, *The Odyssey* [in:] *Great Books of the Western World*, vol. 3, Encyclopaedia Brittanica Inc., Chicago, 1990. [transl. Richard Latimore]

Johnson, S. *Milton*, [in:] *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol.1, W.W. Norton & Co., New York, 1993

Lewis, C.S. *A Preface to Paradise Lost.* OUP, London 1944.

Lewis, M.G. *The Monk*, OUP, 1989

Nerkowski, W. "From 'Schindler's List' to 'Titanic': Epic Cinema Revival in the 1990s", [in:] *Folio*, No. 1, Ko³o Naukowe Studentów IA UW, 1998.

Norton Anthology of English Literature. vol.1. W.W. Norton & Co., New York 1993

Pope, A. *An Essay on Criticism.* Part 1, [in:] *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol.1, W.W. Norton & Co., New York, 1993,

Richardson, S. *Pamela.* vols. 1 & 2. Everyman, 1964.

Tillyard, E.M. *The English Epic and its Background.* OUP, New York 1996.

Adam Lipiński

From Duessa to Vampirella: The Romantic Femme Fatale[1]*

The aim of this brief paper is to draw a general outline and present some defining characteristics of the supernatural femme fatale, the vampirish faery lady, whose haunting image is so frequently encountered in the poetry of the Romantics. We shall examine the causes of her popularity and make an endeavour to establish her possible origins.

The earliest accounts can be divided into two equally important and separate sources: the folk tradition of medieval England and, surprisingly, Greek mythology. The English words *faery* and *elf*, before they assumed their present clichéd connotations of little winged creatures from, let us say, *Peter Pan*, denoted supernatural beings that were generally feared and considered malicious. In *Beowulf*, for example, elves are mentioned, next to giants, as enemies of God; in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the mysterious challenger is described as 'an alvish man' (line 628). The popular superstition had it that faeries, when encountered in wild and desolate places, kidnapped little children and never returned them. Missing girls, supposedly long dead, could be seen later on, raven-haired, with long pale faces, as evanescent apparitions that deceived late-night travellers and led them to their deaths in swampy moors.

Similarly, in Greek mythology there existed *lamia*, a monster represented as a serpent with the head and breasts of a woman and reputed to prey on human beings and suck the blood of children. Several medieval sources written in Latin use the word *lamia* as a direct translation of *elf* and *faery*. Taking into account all those links, we may state that *faery*, *elf*, and *lamia* may be considered as more or less the same creature – a beautiful enchantress, superficially vulnerable but extremely dangerous when followed.

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 20D: *Romantic Poetry* run by Professor Stoddart Martin.

Spenser, the great Renaissance predecessor of the Romantics, makes use of this kind of femme fatale in his *Faerie Queene*. In the first book, the knight of the Red Cross is deceived by Duessa, a striking beauty who, in the fashion of her fellow seductress from *Sir Gawain...*, lures him into unfaithfulness to the chaste Una. Yet, by the end of the book, the true nature of Duessa is discovered; she is stripped of her attire and proven to be a loathsome monster. It may be worth our time to look upon that description.

> So as she bad, that witch they disaraid,
> And robd of royall robes, and purple pall,
> And ornaments that richly were displaid;
> Ne spared they to strip her naked all.
> Then when they had despoild her tire and call,
> Such as she was, their eyes might her behold,
> That her misshaped parts did them appall,
> A loathy, winckled hag, ill favoured, old,
> Whose secret filth good manners biddeth not be told.
> Her craftie head was altogether bald,
> And as in hate of honorable eld,
> Was overgrowne with scurfe and filthy scald;
> Her teeth out of her rotten gummes were feld,
> And her sowre breath abhominally smeld;
> Her dried dungs, like bladders lacking wind,
> Hong downe, and filthy matter from them weld;
> Her wrizzled skin as rough, as maple rind,
> So scabby was, thet would have loathd all womankind.
>
> *(Faerie Queene, Book 1, Canto 8, 406-423)*

After such a horrid revelation, Spenser's Red Cross abandons Duessa, decisively and forever, in utmost abhorrence and contempt. For him, Duessa suddenly appears as a loathsome, repelling monster. A knight in a poem by John Keats or Coleridge would have pined and remembered her *at least* until his death (the idea of becoming a vampire was not infrequent in Romantic art – see, for example Byron's *Giaour* and Polidori's *Vampyre*). Spenser's description of Duessa makes us turn away; a Romantic poet would make the same Duessa beautiful. The Romantic description would evoke pity and, in the more masculine reader, even a strange kind of sexual desire.

This change of attitude may be explained as caused by the specific philosophy of the Romantic period. Edmund Burke, the man whose work *The Sublime and the Beautiful* (1796) influenced all the Romantic poets, stated that 'Beauty in distress is much the most affecting beauty.'[2] Hence, it may be said, the Romantic cult of the consumptive complexion and frail build – both features normally considered negative. In order for a withered Duessa to be considered lovely and endangered a certain clouding of the senses was necessary. Burke argued that 'No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear.'[3] Therefore, the more horrifying our Duessa was, the more exciting she seemed to the fear-intoxicated beholder. According to Burke, the ultimate condensation of pain and danger led nowhere else but to the experience of the Sublime. This definitively Gothic assumption was later confirmed by Edgar Allan Poe, who said that 'Beauty of whatever kind, in its supreme development, invariably excites the sensitive soul to tears.'[4] From the quotations above, we may infer that the ultimate Beauty should appear both vulnerable and dangerous at the same time. She should be a Sleeping Beauty with the hidden fangs of a vampire. The task of the poet is to present her in a proper way.

John Keats, the most 'beauty-oriented' of the Romantics, succeeded in conceiving two such supernatural fatal ladies. The first one, the woman from 'La Belle Dame sans Merci,' is the medieval faery we know from the folklore. The very form of the poem, which is that of the ballad, makes the association more explicit. The unhealthily pale knight describes his mysterious seductress as 'a fairy's child,' which most probably means a girl kidnapped by faeries and considered dead to the real world. She appears as a lonely maiden, wild-eyed, a beauty in some sort of distress, inviting help. It may be observed that she seems to pity the knight, that she feels sorrow because of his imminent fate. 'She look'd at me as she did love / And made a sweet moan,' the knight remembers pensively. Was the moan a sign of pain? Of pleasure? Or – since it is a Romantic poem – of both?

We watch as the lady intoxicates the knight, first with her 'fairy's song,' then with a mixture of curious roots, manna and honey. When introduced into the state of intoxication, the knight, although he does not know her strange language, thinks that she confesses her love. When she takes him into her 'elfin grot' she still weeps and sighs with sorrow. In that way she evokes his pity; he kisses her crying eyes to sleep. In his immediately following dream, the knight sees many faces, heroic faces, with dry, parched lips, warning him that he has joined their ranks of the lady's victims, the men possessed. There is no hope for the knight at arms. He shall die, pining for his mysterious faery lady, dreamless, on the cold hill side where no birds sing.

Another femme fatale of Keats's is unmistakably the Greek kind, and indeed her name is *Lamia*. From the very beginning of the poem, she seems quite deceitful and acts according to a certain stratagem. Yet, we pity her for her love, for her undeserved transformation into a serpent, for her beauty. She is a double-faced Duessa, but a Duessa whose serpentine nature makes her far more attractive than a mortal woman.

In the poem she is contrasted with Apollonius, a rational philosopher, Lycius's teacher. Both Lamia and Apollonius are, if we try to be objective, certainly not perfect. Lamia is driven by her selfish love, and disregards her lover's safety. Apollonius is merciless, and the sight of love fulfilled does not forestall his killing of the vampire. It is only Lamia's beauty that makes the reader's sympathy focus upon her, and not on the philosopher. Apollonius is acting with good intentions, he strives to save his disciple from the power of the enchantress, but, as we see, mere rationality and goodwill shall not win when confronted with a perverse mixture of ambiguous evil, fatal love and unearthly beauty, especially a dying beauty in utmost distress. In the end the fatal Lamia perishes, pierced by the philosopher's beam of condensed rationality. Yet, it would be hard to imagine a Romantic reader exclaiming praises of this salutary action on the part of our bald-headed Apollonius.

Lord Byron, although he considered Keats's 'piss-a-bed' treatment of beauty nothing but 'mental masturbation' (in his letter to John Murray, 9 Nov. 1820), created a remarkable fatal woman of his own in his dramatic poem *Manfred.* The hero's dead relation, his only love and most probably his sister, comes back as a hellish yet still mysteriously erotic vision of a hectic, consumptive spectre, a close resemblance of the pale-mouthed thrall of victims in 'La Belle Dame sans Merci.' Her name is Astarte, which was the name of a Near Eastern goddess of licentious warlike fertility, almost of ritual rape and sacred prostitution. Manfred's desperate pining following the termination of this incestuous love is one of the possible causes of his death. 'Alone and palely loitering' throughout the three acts of the play, he does not know, or does not wish to reveal, the exact cause of his torment. Unlike Keats's knight, Manfred is not innocent. He is a fatal man, a brooding sinner, and at least as demonic and guilty as his deceased beloved, the lady whose devilish nature may be confirmed by adding that, in a cancelled fragment of the original manuscript, she reappears, at Manfred's wish, as a demon called Ashtaroth.

While William Wordsworth was not particularly interested in fatal women, he apparently helped his friend S.T. Coleridge compose a poem which contained one. *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, no matter how interpreted, will always contain the image of Life-in-Death represented as a supernatural, terrifyingly beautiful woman. She sails, together with Death, sent as a Metaphysical allegory of a curse. She chooses the fate of her victim carelessly, laughing, whistling, by mere chance. Her appearance is certainly that of a vampirish beauty, full of – to use Yeats's words – murderous innocence:

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was white as leprosy,
The Night-mare LIFE-IN-DEATH was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

(The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, 190-194)

In *Christabel*, another poem by Coleridge, the femme fatale is closer to the malicious faery of the old English tradition. The motive of her actions may be descried as some kind of revenge, first on Christabel, then probably on Sir Leoline. Geraldine might be considered a typical vampire, especially when we pay attention to the fact that, as in numerous folk stories and later in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, she cannot step over the threshold and through the iron gate of the victim's house on her own accord; Christabel must willingly carry her in. Despite the vampire's spell, the 'old mastiff bitch' shows some signs of unrest when the night guest passes by.

Like in Keats's ballad, seduction is preceded by intoxication with wine, this time on the part of the seductress who, it seems, must be encouraged to her act of sin. So are the roles reversed? Is it the *victim* that tempts the femme fatale? And why is the victim female? Who is the actual seductress? Who is innocent? Regardless of the answer, this Duessa's lamia-like transformations before going to bed with Christabel as well as her somewhat refreshed appearance the morning after clearly suggest that lady's vampirish nature. This is further confirmed by Bracy the Bard, who, in his dream, sees Christabel as a dove with a serpent coiled around its neck and yet unable to define the cause of its suffering. Both Christabel and Leoline seem to get under the vampire's deadly influence. Bracy heroically resists: he tries to shake off the dream, he chooses 'To wander through the forest bare,/ Least aught unholy loiter there.' Yet, the dreadful vision persists, Geraldine rolls her 'wild, wild eyes,' and the bard's ravings and warnings disturb the Baron. 'Why, Bracy! Doest thou loiter here? I bade thee hence!' shouts Sir Leoline. Bracy is finally sent away, and the poem, which we may perceive as the fruit of his mind, abruptly ends. The striking similarities to the ballad of Keats, who wrote his 'La Belle Dame sans Merci' four years later, should not be overlooked. It seems that the younger poet's recurrent use of the phrases 'O what can ail thee...', 'wild, wild eyes,' as well as the word 'loitering,' was not completely accidental. Moreover, the form and subject matter of 'La Belle Dame sans Merci' seem directly derived from Coleridge's 'The Ballad of the Dark Ladié'. But that is a good subject for another essay.

Naturally enough, the aforementioned Romantic poets found many followers in their representation of the fatal woman. Edgar Allan Poe recreated her various incarnations in his stories *Ligeia* and *The Fall of the House of Usher.* Baudelaire depicted her in his poems 'Allégorie,' 'Les Métamorphoses du vampire,' 'A une passante,' 'Danse macabre,' and several others. To W.B. Yeats we owe Dectora, and to Wilde the memorable Salomè. Iris Murdoch used the same recipe, although for a slightly different purpose and to a different effect, to create the person of Catherine in her novel *The Bell.* The spectre of the femme fatale has slunk into such diverse corners of literature that further enumerating of single specimens is, if not impossible, at least quite pointless and, as we move forward in time and farther from the Romantic centre, increasingly controversial. This is also the case with what I described as the Romantic understanding of Beauty: in its later, decadent development the chilling yet highly admirable Romantic Beauty became a rotten, perversely deviant and deliberately obscene form of the poet's inspiration (and thus, as some critics argue, a separate concept).

Instead of a final conclusion, or a concise summary, it may be better to refer the reader to a short story by Angela Carter entitled *The Lady of the House of Love.* In that remarkable and unforgettable piece, all the qualities we have mentioned here are, as Carter openly admits, deliberately clichéd and gathered together in order to form the character of the vampirish Countess who, not surprisingly to us at this point, is at the same time a perfect image of a faery Sleeping Beauty and a lethal bloodsucker. Both unhealthily beautiful and strangely exciting, she embodies the ultimate object of the very peculiar, poetic desire that the Romantics seemed to share. Angela Carter uses the word '*Vampirella*' (evoking both horrid and pleasant connotations) to denote such type of ambiguous female character. The femme fatale is, to use Nietzsche's famous phrase, 'a dangerous plaything.' As Angela Carter wrote in one review, it is mostly her unrestricted, sometimes innocently unconscious, unpredictable freedom of action that makes her so fatal.[5]

Notes

[1] This piece of particularly passionate criticism was written during one October evening in 1998, and it was more or less at that time that I became interested in the way women were represented in Romantic poetry. Since that day, a lot has changed in my approach to the subject, and my more recent research helped me realise certain facts I was unaware of when writing this paper. Nonetheless, since the femme fatale will be the subject matter of my forthcoming MA thesis, I preserve my first essay on that enthralling topic in its original form. I can only hope that there are people who will welcome it with a faint smile of detached appreciation.

[2] Burke, p.11

[3] op. cit. pt. 2, ch. 2, p.32

[4] Poe, p.84

[5] 'Femmes Fatales' [in:] Carter, 1994, p. 231

Bibliography

Burke, E. *The Sublime and the Beautiful.* Introduction. Routledge, London 1969

Byron, G. *The Works of Lord Byron.* Wordsworth, London 1994.

Carter, A. *The Bloody Chamber.* Virago, London 1977.

Carter, A. *Shaking a Leg.* Chatto and Windus, London 1994.

Coleridge, S. T. *The Works of S.T. Coleridge.* Wordsworth, London 1994.

Keats, J. *The Works of John Keats.* Wordsworth, London 1994.

Lewis, C. S. *The Discarded Image.* CUP, Cambridge 1964.

Marchand, L. A. (ed.) *Byron's Letters and Journals.* The House of Murray, London 1975.

Nietzsche, F. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.* Penguin, London 1994.

Poe, E. A. 'The Rationale of Verse' in *The Pioneer* (March 1843) [in:] *Essays and Reviews.* Pelion Press, New York 1984

Poe, E. A. *Selected Tales.* Penguin, London 1994.

Praz, M. *The Romantic Agony.* Oxford University Press, London 1970.

Rogers, P. (ed.) *The Illustrated History of English Literature.* Oxford University Press, London 1987.

Sage, L. (ed.) *Flesh and the Mirror: Critical Essays on the Art of Angela Carter.* Virago, London 1995.

Wilde, O. *Complete Works of Oscar Wilde.* Wordsworth, London 1994.

Yeats, W.B. *The Works of W.B. Yeats.* Wordsworth, London 1994.

Joanna Sztencel

Self-Reflective and Strangely Referential. On William Gaddis's *Carpenter's Gothic* *

> *The key to the novel's origins and development may well lie in parody, in the unmasking of dead literary conventions and the establishing of new literary codes.*
>
> Linda Hutcheon

> *The major work creates in a sense a new genre and at the same time transgresses the previously valid rules of a genre.*
>
> Tzvetan Todorov

It is a widely shared view that the novel as a genre is in decline. The concern it displays in reference to itself - its so-called metafictional character - is treated as a symptom that the novel is no longer able to point to anything beyond itself. But in fact, as Linda Hutcheon remarks[1], the novel has always displayed a degree of consciousness, no matter whether we refer to it as parody, self-reflectiveness or metafiction. It is only a period of so-called *realism* (primarily used only in reference to 19th century novels of the Balzacian or Richardsonian type) where one may encounter novels that try to conceal their self-consciousness, pretending that it does not exist. If this gesture served not to undermine the realism of the story told, it was, in fact, very artificial. Moreover, the role it granted to the reader was a passive one. Consequently, one might ask why this temporal shift in the development of the genre should become a paradigm for the contemporary novelists? Furthermore, the term *mimesis,* as understood by Aristotle, comprises both the interest in the story told and the very process of storytelling.[2] In other words, it should include *diegesis* as well. What one may observe nowadays may then be looked at in terms of a return to the Aristotelian tradition. If the novels of today are different in any respect, it is rather a question of a degree to which they seem to be concerned with *diegesis*, the existence of which realistic novelists sought to deny. Nevertheless, in most cases it is still possible to defend contemporary novels against, as Hutcheon puts it, "the claims of self-peering introversion"[3] and to perceive metafiction not as "a degenerate version of a moribund genre" but as a "significant, 'vital', mimetic form of literature".[4]

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 227: *Postmodernism and Beyond: Literature, Poststructuralism, New Directions* run by Mr Tomasz Basiuk, PhD.

One of the novels "vital" enough to prove this point is William Gaddis' *Carpenter's Gothic.* It may be argued that it is a text which displays a high degree of self-consciousness. This feature of *Carpenter's Gothic* is quite striking, even though the author does not overtly reveal himself to his audience. Nevertheless, what distinguishes this text from a traditional, realistic novel is the intensity with which the presence of the author can be sensed by the reader. The act of reading necessarily forces the reader to enter a game; the reader takes up the task of making sense of what is offered, while the author constantly undermines literary codes and conventions.

This gesture of examining literary devices that one uses is, in fact, typical of more overtly narcissistic literature, that may be said to prevail in our times. It is a *signum temporis* that the writers of today are afraid of being too dogmatic (or maybe too naïve, as sometimes the two seem to coincide), not only in the views they present but also in their treatment of literary techniques. This seems to have its origins in the modernistic attitude towards art. As Bernard Bergonzi writes:

> As an attempt to describe some salient characteristics of modernism in fiction and poetry one can suggest the following: nothing can be taken for granted in literary form, there must be no unthinking reproduction of what is already familiar, conscious aesthetic attention is essential.[5]

Since no convention may be 'taken for granted', each has to be carefully tested; finally, its artificiality has to be acknowledged and then demonstrated to the reader.

One of the devices that draws the reader's attention in Gaddis' novel is the quality of language. Apart from its function of telling the story, the poetic function of language seems to be equally important, sometimes even to take over. In fact, the reader is made to read some of the passages as if he were dealing with samples of poetry. The author uses many devices that are commonly attributed to poetry. Let us focus on two: alliteration and enjambment.

One of the most characteristic features of the language of *Carpenter's Gothic* is the difficulty one might have with determining which words go together forming syntactic units, which units refer to which objects. If in poetry we talk about run-on lines, here we may talk about run-on phrases.[6] The frugality of punctuation seems deliberate; the reader is encouraged to participate more actively as it is his task to decide on the interpretation, starting with the level of words. Moreover, like in poetry, in Gaddis' prose all the possible interpretations frequently seem to be valid. Sometimes the ambiguity appears to be very conscious, as in the passage where Liz complains to her husband that he does not allow her to see her friend Cettie in hospital:"(...) lying there half dead, you never thought of me did you, that I might really want to see her."[7] If this fragment seems to be relatively clear at the first reading of the novel, "lying there half dead" being automatically related to Cettie's health condition, in the second reading it may be said to gain a double meaning. The reader, knowing that Liz is going to die in one of the last chapters, may treat the fragment in question as foreshadowing her death.

Gaddis' dialogues offer a great deal of ambiguities. But only to some extent can this be explained by the author's effort to gain the effect of *real*, natural speech. True, when people talk in real life they do not have to employ full sentences; they combine pieces of information. Still, in real life, dialogues are being listened to, rather than being read. It is the speaker's intonation that makes us give the right interpretation to the words. If some misunderstandings occur, they are not as frequent as in reading Gaddis' novel. The gesture of not tailoring dialogic parts to the needs of the written text, as it is usual for writers, is again a signal given to the reader. Even our linguistic reality, as represented in the book, turns into something artificial, unable to mirror the outside world. Instead, all the possible interpretations have to come into play. The reader's task is mirrored at the thematic level in a humorous fragment where Paul is trying to make sense of what Liz is saying:

> I sat in his waiting room for an hour there was a TV set going I was watching something about grasshoppers and this awful woman came over and switched it to a soap opera doctor who's just lost his leg and I turned it off and his nurse came in and told me I had no right to deprive the other patients of their pleasure.
> - Good damn good thing...paper tore - doctor Yount lose his leg got what's coming to him, that's *(p.99)*

Here Paul obviously misses the fact that there are two doctors in Liz's story. In this he resembles the reader, who may easily find himself in a similar situation of misinterpreting the author's point.

The use of alliteration in prose may strike the reader with its artificiality, and in this again the novel's language draws attention to itself. Let us consider, for instance, the following: "(...) holding it still, before hanging it up as though to give it time to **re**consider, to **re**treat, **re**tract or at the least offer some **re**prieve". *(p.186)*

Or:

> (...) rolling it **s**tealthily (...), up **s**lamming it at the refrigerator, the counter top, the table finally **s**tanding there wiping his hand down his face and **s**lumping back in the chair, **s**weeping up the pile of envelopes, **s**purious **s**alutations, bills **s**taring at the top of professional **s**ervice rendered. *(p. 260; emphasis mine)*

In the above passages the reader is confronted with a very deliberate, poetic way of description. Through the use of recurring syllables ('re') and letters ('s') the question: *How it is said?* gains an equal importance or even prevails over the question: *What is said?*. Thus, the passage gains self-consciousness. But what would appear as only slightly uncanny in the narratorial passages, becomes quite extraordinary when found in dialogue, as, for instance, in the following phrase uttered by Paul:

> **S**tumpp **s**erving a **s**ummons on you some **s**eedy process **s**erver comes to the door tell them a mile away, some down at the **h**eels **h**opeless looking bastard they get **s**even dollars a **s**ummons **h**e **h**as to **h**and it to you, has to touch you with it, see some burnt out case out here on the doorstep you open it and all he says is Mrs. Booth? *(p. 49; emphasis mine)*

Here, unexpectedly for the reader, Paul's sudden anger, directed at Liz, results in an utterance, which appears, in fact, very elaborate, if one considers its recurring 's's and 'h's. This quality of the phrase strikes the reader, as it does not agree with the logic of everyday experience. Judging by the context, more spontaneous diction would seem more appropriate.

The use of alliteration is probably aimed at demonstrating to the reader that there is no objective way of talking about reality, since reality must be approached through language. The simplest way of telling the story would be as much of an artifice as any more elaborate diction. Thus, Gaddis's alliterated novel should not worry the reader as strange, it is, in fact, as natural (or as artificial) as any other novel.

The employment of alliteration is also reflected at the thematic level of the book. Liz, in her effort to become a writer, looks up different words in *Webster's* dictionary. If at first she is more interested in the spelling and usage of these words, later they start to gain a magical meaning for her, as they reveal themselves one after another on the page, each starting with the same letter:

> (...) and she caught the towel together at her breast up fetching Webster's New

> Collegiate Dictionary (...). Opened to the Ds now, licking her fingertip past dogtrot, dive her finger ran down dishevel, dishpan hands till it reached disinterested, where the precisely incorrect definition she sought was confirmed in a citation from a pundit for the times, she drew a line through indifferent and wrote it in worrying at calm with faint prods of the pencil point: the cool, disinterested calm of his eyes belying. She hatched calm in a cuneate enclosure, licking her finger paging back to the Cs, for cunning, past cut-rate, cunt, running down from cuneiform and held abruptly at cunnilings. She was reading slowly, finger back to her lips, pp. of lingerie, more at LICK, when the phone rang again. *(p. 94)*

This passage is worth noticing also for another reason. One may argue that some of the words used here perform a double function; they belong both to the level of discourse and to the thematic level. It is best visible with the word *disinterested* which, when it appears for the first time, evokes the reader's doubt whether it is a concrete word, Liz tries to look up, or maybe the description of the manner with which her finger traces the page. Even if later the first suggestion appears to be more probable, still, the first suggestion has already managed to evoke an image that remains inscribed in the reader's mind. The author also plays with the word *lick:* while Liz is actually licking her finger, the word appears as a dictionary quotation.

Generally, the realities presented in *Carpenter's Gothic* interweave. Very often, for instance, the television reality enters Liz's world. And again the reader may be puzzled as it is his task to determine which elements belong to which world. If Liz's reality should be treated as true(and this is what most readers will intuitively assume) any intrusive elements have to be separated. And, in fact, what happens on the screen is as fictitious as what Liz is described as performing; she is only a character in the book. Let us consider, for instance, the following:

> That's telling them, Elton, came down the hall to her from the below, -Jew liberal press... and she was up to get the door closed, back to shy an uncovered breast from the abrupt gaze of Orson Welles enveloped in a riding cloak, fur collared, and steel clasped, with stern features and a heavy brow; his eyes and gathered eyebrows looked ireful and thwarted now demanding to know where she'd come from, just below? Do you mean that house with the battlements? Pointing to Thornfield Hall on which the moon cast a hoary gleam, bringing it out distinct and pale from the woods, that, by contrast with the western sky seemed one mass of shadow demanding Whose house is it? Mister Rochester's. Do you know Mister Rochester? No, I have never seen him. Can you tell me where he is? I cannot. (...) The door slammed open - Liz! Now what in the hell! A touch of spurred heel made the horse first start and rear, and then bound away; the dog rushed in his traces: all three vanished. *(p.51)*

In this scene the dialogue between Paul and Elton on the phone mixes with a description of what Liz is doing, then quite unexpectedly a film (an adaptation of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre)* enters the reality of the book. "(D)emanding to know where she had come from" seemingly applies to the heroine of the film Jane Eyre (when Mr Rochester met Jane first he did not know that she was the new governess and she did not know Mr Rochester) but it may also, in a way, apply to Elizabeth's standing in front of her TV set and being looked at by Orson Welles. Is "Western sky" the sky Elizabeth may really observe from the window of her alcove? Then again Paul invades, his "What's in the Hell" alliterating nicely with the expression "the spurred heel" that refers to Jane's reality. These two phrases seem to form a new quality on the page. It is also worth noticing that the word *below* applies both to the position occupied by Liz and Jane. *Carpenter's Gothic* is abundant in similar passages. In the following one, for instance, the real elements mix with a title, a newspaper's headline and a picture on the cover (the Masai warrior): "Lights went out behind her, TEARFUL MOM wailed mute from the coffee table where town and country lay menaced by the Masai in a glint from the streetlight". *(p. 93)*

As can be seen from the above, in *Carpenter's Gothic* all the elements seem to be equalized at the level of discourse. If a distinction is to be made between the ones that are considered to be real by the characters and the ones that are fictional for them, it must be made by the reader. The overall effect is that of the non-existence of the real in the novel. Everything is fiction and the way fictions are related to one another is of no factual importance.

The problem of narration, however, is even more puzzling. It would be good if we were dealing with one author mixing realities. But we may suspect that the narration is sometimes invaded by Elizabeth, who in the novel is writing her own book. Unfortunately for the reader, in her text she refers to the same elements that the author employs to talk about her reality. Elizabeth is said to write an alternate version of what happens. This propensity for creating alternative versions is thematized in the text by the fact that she lies to many people (McCandless, Eddie, Paul). In fact, if the author's task is to impose order, ascribing meaning to reality which in real life has none, Elizabeth's task would be to re-impose it in a different way. One might say that Elizabeth is competing with the author in that way, in so far as he provided her with the real, if also imperfect, version of what happened.

> (...) here in her own hand at least lay some hope of order restored that of a past itself in tatters, even amended, fabricated, in fact from the very outset to reorder its unlikelihoods, what it all might have been if her father and mother had never met, if he'd married a chorus girl instead or if she'd met a man with other lives behind him (...). *(p. 247)*

When Elizabeth meets McCandless he also appears in her book, distorted by her manner of looking at him: "(...) her eyes fallen fixed on these hands harbouring her breasts (...) standing out yellowed, rust spotted as she'd left them in her own cramped hand on the lined paper safe under blouses and scarves." *(p. 232)* Here the reality of the book (McCandless' hands as presented by the author) turns into the reality of Liz's book, as she selected this particular fragment of the world surrounding her for her fiction. "Rust spotted" is probably her own invention, her projection of McCandless' hands, as it brings the reader back to the passage where "she is bearing down with the pencil on his hands, disjointed, rust spotted" *(p. 94)*, while writing. "Yellowed" is probably an authorial remark, "yellowed hands" being a logical consequence of McCandless' smoking habit.

It is true for many metafictional texts that the process of writing is thematized in the text. Apart from the motif of Liz writing a novel, also Paul and McCandless have something to do with this writing. As far as Paul is concerned, his role here is more humorous than exemplifying the strains of literary creation. Paul intends to write "The Wayne Flickert story" *(p. 201)*, about the mother of Billye Flickert, who died while being baptized by Reverend Ude. He wants to "(s)ketch it out and get this writer this Doris Chin (...) get her in for a final polish before we get into the movie tie in (...)."*(p.202)* If the motif of Paul reflects the novel's structure in any way, it is in his phrase: "Didn't say I'm writing a book by a woman did I?" *(p. 112)*, uttered when he is trying to persuade Liz to write a letter on behalf of Reverend Ude's mother. In fact, *Carpenter's Gothic* may be also referred to as a book by a woman but written by a man, if we consider the fact that Liz's fragments are but intrusions. Here the author's effort gains an ironic dimension as he relates himself to Paul and his heroine to the illiterate mother of Elton Ude. McCandless is presented as the author of "a chapter for a school textbook that's what it is, a chapter on life forms that appeared half a billion years ago"*(p. 166)* but he is a creative writer as well. And again, his novel may be referred to as a projection of his life even though he himself would deny it. Lester wages the accusation that the novel's hero Frank Kinkead is supposed to be McCandless' alter ego:

> (...) He is supposed to be you isn't he.
> -Not supposed to be anybody, what do you think a novel... *(p. 136)*

McCandless himself refers to his novel as" a footnote, a postscript, look for happy endings.*(p. 139)* In this he resembles Elizabeth with her alternate versions of what would happen. One might ask what the function of the motif of writers is. In most overtly metafictional novels they are meant to reflect the process that is going on also in that particular novel. For contrast, in a detective story, which is also said to be metafictional (on the basis of the degree of authorial manipulation), the motif of a book within the book seems to provide a very strong realistic motivation. In detective fiction we may, for instance, encounter a dialogue between characters who try to guess who would be the murderer if it took place in a novel and not in real life (by *real life* they obviously mean the reality of the particular book which they are in).[8] Here, however, the author's intention seems to be different than that of a detective story writer. At least Liz's fiction appears to function at the same level as the fiction of *Carpenter's Gothic.* Here again the author signals to his readers that the reality of his novel is as artificial as any other realities we encounter there. Thus, in the case of Gaddis' novel we should rather talk about *the unrealistic motivation,* if we might conceive of such a term.

Still, a contrast may be noticed between what we called *the unrealistic motivation* that exists in Gaddis' text and the strong bonds with reality that the novel displays. Indeed, the effort of finding out what the author refers to, as regards the hints at particular situations concerning American political and social life, is tempting, to recall Christopher J. Knight's book on Gaddis' fiction, in which he tries to establish the link between fiction of *Carpenter's Gothic* and our empirical world.[9] Such a task would be found of little value by many critics. Linda Hutcheon, for instance, would claim that a novel is not to be read for its "documentary value". It is "associated with ways of verifying facts, since it often records or describes factual events." But "this superficial explanation alone does not suffice to account for the intransigent belief(...) that the referents of fictional language are real, that is, that they are of necessity part of the empirical world as if there actually were a stable and objective reality 'out there"[10]. What the process of reading necessarily involves is the gradual building of "the heterocosm of fictive referents"[11], which differs from our reality not only by virtue of the fictiveness of the elements that compose it but, more importantly, by the fact of its being a cosmos, a coherent whole.[12] If we might look for links between the novel and our empirical world they would obtain the fact that literature sometimes mimics the processes of the real. As Hutcheon writes: "The novel is not a copy of the empirical world nor does it stand in opposition to it. It is rather a continuation of that ordering , fiction-making process that is part of our coming to terms with experience"[13].

But Gaddis' novel may also be regarded in terms of a game. The whole of *Carpenter's Gothic,* or at least parts of it, could be treated as a *roman à clef,* however absurd such a suggestion might seem at first glance. Still, Robert Detweiler's description of this type of literature turns out to be worryingly similar to the process that may be observed to go on in the act of reading Gaddis' novel.[14] As Detweiler points out, in a *roman à clef* the reader is forced to acknowledge the fictiveness of all the elements that form the novel, as the author manipulates them to demonstrate their artificiality. But this game, which would suffice in most European narcissistic novels, turns out to be only preliminary. It is only a point of departure for another game where the reader is made to find the connection between the fictive world of the novel with the world he lives in. Hence, similarly as in the case of Gaddis' novel, the element of tension between the fictive and the empirical world comes into play.

Another way of looking at the novel would be to claim that at least parts of it are satirical. Here we would also have to consider the mechanisms of a game or play and relate them either to the structure of this particular novel and the demands it imposes on its readers, or to the way the activity of playing has been thematized in the novel, or both. In fact, a new understanding of the notion of satire entails the idea of play; it is in satire that one may observe the revival of this phenomenon in literature. In their essay "Satire as a Rhetorical Play"[15] Irving and Harriet Deer make an attempt to present how the concept of satire has been taken up by some post modern writers. If it was modernism that shed a new light on the understanding of satire, it is by virtue of the fact that its critics claimed that satire at its best may be defined as a dramatic situation where each opinion is presented satirically. Modernist critics also drew our attention to the fact that it is not only the content of the work that may be presented in a satirical way but the form as well. Thus, by the use of satire the work gains a greater degree of self- consciousness. This was attractive for post-modern writers because it allowed them to distance themselves from their work, to keep an ironical attitude towards the very conventions and codes they employed. This also granted a new role to the reader, making him participate in the process of reading, in fact, co-create the work. But contrary to modernism the new concept of satire claims it to be a rhetorical art, rather than art that for its own sake should be deprived of any traces of rhetoric (understood by modernism in terms of manipulating the reader, directly appealing to him). Rhetoric is defined by post-modernism as a sort of a stylistic game, as a good way of looking at the human effort of constructing the world, the main tool being the analysis of the way people use language to present their visions of the real. This interest in rhetoric may be referred to our contemporary view of the world, deprived of stable meaning, where rhetorical play becomes a necessity.

As Irving and Harriett Deer point out, both in traditional satire, where the reader was made to conform to one particular view (no matter whether it was the authorial view or the view presented by the authorial *alter ego*), or in what modernists considered to be *good* satire, where the reader's role was constrained to acknowledging different points of view as presented in the novel, the role of the reader was passive. In post-modern novels that use satire (or any game structure), one is invited to participate actively. Hence, the distance between the reader and the work seems to diminish or even disappear. In *Carpenter's Gothic* this distance is made smaller by the fact that the very act of writing has been thematized in the book and thus shown in a detached, satirical manner. Thus, the reader enters a game where, paradoxically, he is forced to acknowledge the fictiveness of the world he, too, is creating in the act of reading.

The motif of a game also takes on the aspect of role–playing, which seems to be the only way in which characters may gain their identity. The external reality is a subject of different visions which are presented in the characters' speech. Although the range of experiences seems to be more or less the same, both people's projections and deliberately created visions are strikingly different.

Probably the most amusing moments occur whenever Reverend Elton Ude ("the dynamic leader of Christian Recovery for America's People" *(p.78)*) is mentioned. The reader follows his actions as revealed, in most cases unintentionally in other characters' speeches (e. g. Paul's quoting indirectly from Doris Chin). Indeed, the contrast between what the reader may gather from inadvertently dropped hints and the official version, created by Paul and Doris, is striking. Sometimes the two visions appear within one passage, the language of propaganda unable to mask everything, revealing a more adequate version of what takes place:

> Concluding his spirited call to action as the television cameras rolled closer, Reverend Ude pledged to send absolutely free, in return for donations for purchase of the land, a bottle of water from Pee Dee (...). Closing his appeal with words from Revelation, And he showed me a pure river of water of life and let him that is athirst to come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely (...) *(p. 81)*

Here apart from a strange mixture of the Biblical style with expressions imitating television advertisements ("absolutely free") we encounter a contradictory statement: "free" but "in return for donations". Thus, Ude's actions gain a satirical dimension. Sometimes even mistakes are loaded with a satirical overtone as when, instead of "on the bank," Doris places Ude "in the bank", the slip hinting at Ude's intentions. *(p. 78)*

In the book it is Elizabeth who ridicules the figure of Ude for the reader once and for all. She adorns his picture in the newspaper with "shaggy blue feathers and these little dots on his shirt" that "make him look like a good damn bird, a duck", to quote Paul *(p. 52)* and, as a result, unintentionally deprives Ude of any traces of dignity. On this occasion Paul presents Ude more fully, which contributes to the effect produced by Elizabeth: "Just because he's about four feet tall you had to put these (...) feathers sticking out off the back of his bald head (...)" *(p. 52)*. But if Elizabeth makes Ude appear as a *"cartoon" (p. 52)* so does the author providing this character with children such as the illiterate Bobbie Joe and his two sisters, presented in a manner far from subtle:"(...)look Bobbie Joe is your sister there...? She just wet her what? No, no I mean Betty Joe your big sister Bet..., locked up in the what?" *(p.103)* Ude also has a mother, Sally Joe, "not too damn great with a written word" *(p. 110)*. His wife is said to have run off "with a feed salesman" *(p. 110)* as Paul put it. Together they form a cartoon family.

However one will evaluate Paul on the basis of his close contacts with the ridiculed Reverend Ude and his respect for Ude (*"the whole future of our nation may depend on Elton's not cracking up" (p.112)*), it has to be admitted that Paul is not a *type*, being presented in a more objective, more human way. The problem with interpreting Paul is that it is hard to determine whether he always believes in the views he presents in his speeches. The reader should keep in mind that Paul remains Ude's media specialist. But sometimes he seems to express his own opinions as in the following passage:

> -pieces fit together problem's just too many pieces, even penetrated the Vatican's true Liz big God damn third world peace offensive Vatican intelligence network cover the whole continent even penetrated that, Jesuits speak Swahili convert a few spades in the right places get them in the confessional word goes straight too the bishop right up the God damn hot line to Rome see that? *(p.230)*

Liz, to whom it is uttered, probably does not even attempt to; she does not think in terms of plots as he does. She does not have the feeling, however justified in the couple's case, "that after him **they**'re after me **they**'re after all of us"(emphasis mine). *(p. 205)* But if Paul is a person many readers will distance themselves from, it is not only because of his slightly paranoid views, or because he, for instance, beats his wife. Apart from this, many readers will be struck by the fact that, like Ude, he is ready to make money on his co-believers. This is a reason why the readers may be more inclined to believe in what McCandless is saying. Even if McCandless may be said to suffer from another kind of mania (however well-rooted his fears and suspicions may be), he propagates his point of view for the idea's sake and not to gain any profit. He also thinks in terms of "them", in terms of "scenarios" ("Paul thinks he's been using Ude but Ude's been using him and Lester's been using them both because he wrote the scenario" *(p. 236)*). But in the views presented by McCandless the main concern is related to the problem how easily people are carried away by different visions and fears, created for them and meant to conceal very concrete aims such as power or money: "The greatest source of anger is fear, the greatest source of hatred is anger and the greatest source of all this is this mindless revealed religion anywhere you look." *(p.185)*

But if the amount of evidence that McCandless has gathered against politicians and religious leaders is overwhelming and his view of society may seem convincing, the reader will be reminded not to identify himself with this character. This distance is mainly achieved by the fact that Elizabeth does not always agree with McCandless; she accuses him of inaction ("You are (...) letting them all go out and kill each other over something that is not really there?" *(p.242)*) and despising people who "cannot afford" better visions than those offered by leaders of various kinds. "I think you are, you may be wrong about everything."*(p.239)* says Elizabeth at one point, forcing the reader to reconsider everything McCandless is saying in the novel.

Does the truth exist? The answer is not offered, but at least in the world of politics, as presented in the novel, this notion does not seem to apply. Politics may be defined in terms of creating appearances for people to believe in. By the fact that the author undermines his own vision, in this particular book, he demonstrates to his readers that they should not let others manipulate them. Furthermore, as no one can be said to be the author's *alter ego*, the readers are able to consider some of the versions of reality as more and some as less adequate without being forced to accept anything as truth. Here also the act of reading appears to be a preliminary stage: the way of reading the book becomes a model for reading and interpreting the empirical world. Everyone has to take up a role in order to invest existence with meaning but people should be more critical towards the roles they perform. Detachment is advised, at least for those who do not want to "become convicts locked up in some shabby fiction doing life without parole who want everybody else in prison with them". *(p.186)*

Notes

[1] Hutcheon, *Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradox.*

[2] I owe this point to Linda Hutcheon, who in her book, in the chapter "Process and Product: The Implications of Metafiction for the Theory of the Novel as a Mimetic Genre" examines the notion of *mimesis* as understood by Aristotle. (Ibid.)

[3] Hutcheon, p. 155.

[4] Ibid., p. 162.

[5] Bernard Bergonzi [in:] Rogers, p.408.

[6] In fact, constant enjambment is a feature that designates one of the kinds of free verse, the so-called *meditative* and *ruminative* or *private*. According to Fussell this verse is *a vehicle for themes that are sly or shy, or uncertain, or quietly ironic, or furtive.*(Fussell, p. 81.*)*

[7] Gaddis, p. 99. All the other quotations from *Carpenter's Gothic* are to this edition and references to them will appear in the main body of the paper.

[8] I owe this point to Linda Hutcheon who in the chapter "Actualizing Narrative Structures: Detective Plot, Fantasy, Games and the Erotic" points out that "the character's belief that certain things occur in life (that is, in that novel), others in fiction" is one of the characteristics of the genre. (Hutcheon, p. 72)

[9] Knight, "Carpenter's Gothic's Bare Ruined Choirs"

[10] Hutcheon, p. 88.

[11] The process is described in detail in the chapter "The Language of Fiction: Creating the Heterocosm of Fictive Referents"(ibid.)

[12] Ibid., p. 91.

[13] Ibid., p.89.

[14] Dotweiler, pp. 408-411.

[15] Deer I., Deer H. "Satyra jako gra retoryczna"

Bibliography

Deer, I., Deer H. "Satyra jako gra retoryczna" [in:] Lewicki, Z. (ed.), *Nowa proza amerykanska, szkice krytyczne*, Czytelnik, Warszawa 1983, transl. by J. Anders. (English ed.:"Satire as Rhetorical Play", 'boundary 2', nr 3, Spring 1977)

Detweiler, R. "Gry i zabawy we współczesnej literaturze amerykanskiej" [in:] Lewicki, Z. (ed.), *Nowa proza amerykanska, szkice krytyczne*. Czytelnik, Warszawa 1983, transl. by J. Wioniewski. (English ed.:"Games and Play in Modern American Fiction", 'Contemporary Literature', XVIII, nr 1, Winter 1976)

Fussell, P."Free Verse" [in:] *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form*, Random House, 1978

Gaddis, W. *Carpenter's Gothic,* Elizabeth Sifton Books, Harrisonburg 1986

Hutcheon, L. *Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradox*. Methuen, New York and London, 1984

Knight, C. J. "Carpenter's Gothic's Bare Ruined Choirs" [in:] *Hints and Guesses, William Gaddis's Fiction of Longing*, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1997

Rogers, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of English Literature.* Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York 1994

Todorov, T. "The Typology of Detective Fiction". [in:] Lodge, D. (ed.) *Modern Criticism and Theory. A Reader.*, Longman 1988

Piotr Szymczak

Three Remarks on James Merrill's 'The Victor Dog'[1] *

This is more of a loving look cast at a worthy poem than a strict analysis. Therefore, I will focus on just three aspects of the work and leave aside any full-blown readings or comprehensive interpretations. These aspects are the poem's rhymes, its artistic treatment of music, and its semantic condensation. And since the poem clings to me with some obstinacy, I take the liberty to head my essay with a motto taken from 'Un fantome de nuées' by G. Apollinaire.

Comme un air de musique qui vous poursui

The Form

At first glance, 'The Victor Dog' offers little in terms of formal brilliance. Designed in 10 rather regular quatrains along the ABBA pattern of rhymes and near-rhymes, its traditional form does not exactly seem like a dazzling technical feat. Yet a closer scrutiny of the rhymes and their patterns declares the formalist poet, as Merrill is sometimes described, triumphant.

Merrill's (near-)rhymes are based on simple consonance. Delightful in being either unpredictable flashes of sure-handed mastery or simple homespun variations on everyday words, in stylistic terms it is all or nothing, without any awkward phrases caught halfway between the ordinary and the perfect.

On the one hand, to introduce foreign names or phrases into a rigidly formalised poem has always been something of a challenge. Aeschylus did it in

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 230: *American Poetry after World War II* run by Mr Andrzej Sosnowski, MA.

The Persians[2], for a medieval golliard it was already an established literary game[3], T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound made it into a creative device in its own right[4]. Here the challenge consists both in finding an English equivalent for the [mostly French] alien phonological material and in securing a rhyme that is as natural as it is fresh. Merrill interlaces *the same* and *qui s'aiment*, *smells* and *Ravel's* or *Minore* and *story* with exhilarating unpredictability.

On the other hand, quiet consonance like that in *hit* vs. *heat* or *groves* vs. *grave's* exerts a soothing influence: its very ordinary, natural quality anchors the poem in down-to-earth plain English and thus erases any trace of preciousness possibly brought about by the sophisticated parlance of foreign antecedence. But the best thing is that the poem's foreign phrases would probably work admirably even without this life-saving gear: they seem woven into its fabric rather than patched onto it. No heavy-handedness.

The Music

The poem's assured technical mastery (no doubt a bow to Elizabeth Bishop to whom it was dedicated) underscores the poem's argumentative line. At the end of the day, the famous logo of the Victor label becomes the vehicle for a weighty metaphor, yet for a long time it seems to be mentioned with little more reason than to provide a pretext for talking about music. Excusably so, for Merrill speaks of it with relish and taste. Matters of musicology are not to be discussed here, and suffice it to say that the poem's original musical metaphors are never bland, and at their best they indeed seem little short of inspired. Incidentally, the continuity thus accomplished is no mean feat in itself: there is not a trace of monotony in the listing of ten composers (and sixty per cent of them with names beginning with a B, too...[5].)

The Knot

One of the many possible qualities of excellent poetry is condensation of meaning(s): *dixit* Pound. Elaborating on Pound's view of poetry, it might be added that the poem ideally aspires to a state of total compression, like a tight, intricate knot whose every filament touches dozens of others in hundreds of places while retaining its individuality. At his best, Merrill manages to tangle diverse elements into a single stanza and give them new meanings without losing the original ones. I might use an example here. Lines 36-38 describe the little dog's allegorical dream vision, complete with the rotating celestial bodies and the music of the spheres. But before we have time to frown at this rather lofty piece of aesthetics, we realise that we are reading a description of the logo on a turning vinyl record: 'A little dog revolving round a spindle'. The record, rotating on the turntable, produces music: 'harmonies beyond belief'. RCA Victor Records being a quality label, the [operatic?] performers are probably top-class: 'A cast of stars'.

This device gives the work a stereoscopic aspect, transforms its two-dimensional shape into a three-dimensional solid. Or, simply, makes it a poem.

Notes

[1] *ACKNOWLEDGEMENT*: This paper was originally submitted as a credit requirement for Mr. Andrzej Sosnowski's course on modern American poetry. I take this opportunity to thank Mr. Sosnowski for his inspiring classes and for his own excellent poetry from the *Stancje* volume of 1997.

[2] In that ancient drama the exclamations of the crestfallen Persians have a distinctly non-Greek ring to them. Certain scholars have read this as a conscious foreignising device on Aeschylus' part.

[3] *Codex Buranus* offers some examples of such verse (*e.g. cf.* CB 185), which was to evolve into a regular genre of the so-called *maccaronische Dichtung* or macaronics, popularised by Folengo in his *Liber Macaronices* of 1517.

[4] That is to say, they removed foreign linguistic borrowings from the sphere of light verse and frequently used them for their aesthetic potential. Fascinatingly, among Pound's pet languages there was the medieval Provençal: it does seem like history has come a full circle.

[5] The sixth B (besides Bix, Buxtehude, Boulez, Bloch, and Bach) is of course Alban Berg, alluded to in the title of his opera *Wozzeck* (line 18.)

The Poem

James Merrill (1926-1995)

The Victor Dog

for Elizabeth Bishop

Bix to Buxtehude to Boulez,
The little white dog on the Victor label
Listens long and hard as he is able.
It's all in a day's work, whatever plays.

From judgement, it would seem, he has refrained.
He even listens earnestly to Bloch,
Then builds a church upon our acid rock.
He's man's—no—he's the Leiermann's best friend,

Or would be if hearing and listening were the same.
Does he hear? I fancy he rather smells
Those lemon-gold arpeggios in Ravel's
"Les jets d'eau du palais de ceux qui s'aiment."

He ponders the Schumann Concerto's tall willow hit
by lightning, and stays put. When he surmises
Through one of Bach's eternal boxwood mazes
The oboe pungent as a bitch in heat,

Or when the calypso decants its raw bay rum
Or the moon in *Wozzeck* reddens ripe for murder,
He doesn't sneeze or howl; just listens harder.
Adamant needles bear down on him from

Whirling of outer space, too black too near—
But he was taught as a puppy not to flinch,
Much less to imitate his bete noire Blanche
Who barked, fat foolish creature, at King Lear.

Still others fought in the road's filth over Jezebel,
Slavered on hearths of horned and pelted barons.
His forbears lacked, to say the least, forbearance.
Can nature change in him? Nothing's impossible.

The last chord fades. The night is cold and fine.
His master's voice raps through the grooves' bare groves.
Obediently, in silence like the grave's
He sleeps there on the still-warm gramophone.

Only to dream he is at the premiere of a Handel
Opera long thought lost—*Il Cane Minore.*
Its allegorical subject is his story!
A little dog revolving round a spindle

Gives rise to harmonies beyond belief,
A cast of stars. . . . Is there in Victor's heart
No honey for the vanquished? Art is art.
The life it asks of us is a dog's life.

(1972)

Paweł Wolak

The Need for the Centre in Eliot's *The Waste Land* and in Pound's 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley'*

T.E.Hulme's essay 'Romanticism and Classicism' (1911-1912[1]) is probably one of the most influential literary manifestos of our century. The lucid and appealing dichotomy that Hulme draws from the very first lines of his text is very often said to epitomise what artistically and philosophically modernism in 1910s and 20s really was. Such generalisations are never accurate but they always contain a grain of truth. Modernism was much more than Hulme's classicism, but I think that his anti-romantic and deeply anti-enlightenment anthropology was so powerfully and directly presented that its basic notions can be applied to almost all post-Hulmian modernism. In paraphrase, Hulme claims (not being very original but very skilfully converging contemporary intellectual currents[2]) that for romanticism the centre is constituted by an individual human being, 'an infinite reservoir of possibilities'[3] capable of unlimited progress that leads into the state of heaven on earth. In classicism, however the centre lies definitely outside an individual. Man is limited and fixed and only 'tradition and organisation can get something decent out of him.'[4] The centre, as understood in terms of religion, culture and racially unified society, is indispensable in shaping individual human beings - a man without the centre is a degenerated romantic, a source of revolution, anarchy and destruction. The need for such a centre and an attempt to define it more precisely is one of the most important themes of modernist poetry, fiction and literary criticism. Its influence can easily be noticed even in politics - both in the modernist disappointment with democracy and liberalism and in the Auden generation's fascination with communism.

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 223: *Modernism in American Poetry* run by Professor Agata Preis-Smith.

Thomas Stearns Eliot and Ezra Pound were preoccupied with the creation of this classical centre throughout their lives. Eliot's famous 1928 statement, that he is a classicist in literature, an Anglo-catholic in religion and a royalist in politics, marks a point in which the centre is being formed. Pound's extraordinary biography, numerous labels that he stuck to himself (e.g. imagism, vorticism, aestheticism, fascism, etc.) his inexhaustible, yet often shallow penetration of exotic and forgotten cultures can be interpreted as a search for what modernism demanded - namely the centre. Both Pound and Eliot established their centres in the late 1920s and it should be pointed out that Eliot was much more consistent and clear in the critical and poetical writings in which he presented his final philosophical stance. 'Ash Wednesday' (1930) and 'Four Quartets' (1942) in poetry and 'The Idea of a Christian Society' (1939) and 'Notes towards the Definition of Culture'(1948) in socio-cultural criticism, form a very coherent commentary on and explication of the above quoted statement of Eliot. Pound's case is much more problematic but definitely 'The Cantos' that started to appear as early as 1917 is a series of poems which, although less coherently and overtly than Eliot's late writings, presents a systematic and organised exposition of what Pound included under his definition of the centre.

At a certain point every centre ought to be defined in strictly anthropological terms. The basic distinction of 'us' and 'them' makes the description of our world possible. In modern times contrary to Ancient Greece where the motto 'Get to know yourself!' suggested self-description as the first step in the process of cognition, it is the Other, the excluded 'they' that must be defined before 'we' starts to gain its distinct identity. Pound and Eliot began with the negative assessment of the world that must be excluded for their centres to come into the full existence. This gesture in which the Other is brought to the fore, criticised and driven away from the community that we consider moral, healthy and civilised is the first step in the long process of forming the world in which the centre and the periphery form a basic binary opposition. In Eliot's dictionary the words 'provincial' and 'peripheral' have utterly negative meanings. The classical civilisation is described as mature, universal and central[5], despised empiricism and liberalism are said to be provincial philosophies[6], uniformity of culture and a certain body of knowledge that should form the basis of the education system are essential features of a Christian society[7]. Province, periphery, immaturity, imitation, cosmopolitanism and finally romanticism are notions that for Eliot constituted the Other. I believe that this need for the centre can on the level of Eliot's and Pound's poetic work be most clearly seen in *The Waste Land* and in 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley'.

The waste land – the land of romantic heresy

The Waste Land is full of people - it is not an accident that the first version of the poem was entitled 'He Do the Police in Different Voices'. The people do not only speak, they have their names and personalities. Although very often the boundaries between their utterances are blurred, it is impossible to deny that the voices, the various personae the numerous people that speak or are talked about form a crowd of individualities that inhabit the waste land. We may say that the waste land is a country that suffers from romanticism, a country whose ruler is disabled because romanticism being 'spilt religion'[8] does not care about tradition, rituals and the preservation of the cycle in which all life is inherent.

In the first part of *The Waste Land* ('The Burial of the Dead') it is the figure of Madame Sosostris that seems to reveal a clear-cut persona most apparently. Her name, and this is very much in Eliot's style (remember Prufrock, Sweeney, Bleistein etc.), is meaningfully ironic. The juxtaposition between the name of the Egyptian pharaoh (Sesostris) and a woman who is 'a famous clairvoyante' is both striking and common. In the 20th century, fortune telling and various forms of astrology have been utterly debased - from the level of respected science that finds its roots in Platonism, it descended to the point at which it started to form popular culture. Trivialised, it has gained the status of knowledge for common people, the wisdom of pharaohs that cannot he explicated but is supposed to tell us something about our future. Eliot includes this whole branch of low culture under one ironic statement 'Madame Sosostris (...) is known to be the wisest woman in Europe' The famous clairvoyante is a fraud, a debased Merlin to whom the young protagonist comes for help. She uses 'a wicked pack of cards' - another emblem of an old, esoteric tradition that was appropriated and canalised by popular culture. Her wisdom is the wisdom of the waste land, which is just 'a heap of broken images', a body of knowledge that needs unification, that desperately look for the centre. The horoscope that Madam Sosostris casts is very unclear, fragmentary and joins many different traditions (vegetation rites, Shakespeare, the original meaning of the Tarot pack of cards). The clairvoyante's fortune telling can only be understood when the underlying pattern is discovered this pattern is what constitutes our tradition, it is the centre that will make the knight able to find the Grail and the Fisher King regain his lost powers. Madame Sosostris is not wise in the philosophical sense

(Greek *sophьs*) - she is rather smart and canny. She is able to master the debased knowledge that originates in the belief that man is capable of discarding 'superstitions' (Christianity, mythology, metaphysics) and creating a rational and wholly empirical knowledge himself, here and now. The Romantic heresy is what stands behind Madame Sosostris. 'You cannot say, or guess for you know only / A heap of broken images' - a blend of old convictions that only fortune telling pretends still to comprehend.

In the first part there is also one very important figure, that although not evidently present, is constantly alluded to. References to Munich, to the Starnbergersee, to the world of the 19th century aristocracy and finally to death by water point to the king of Bavaria Ludwig the Mad (1846-86) who is said to be an embodiment of German romanticism. Eliot visited Munich several times and I believe that the ghost of Ludwig hovers somewhere in the opening passage of the poem. His mysterious death (of course by water - he was probably drowned in the Starnbergersee), his controversial reign and his homosexuality make him an emblem of the decadent romantic figure. His way of life, his artistic views (the castles he built in neo-medieval style are traditional only in the sense kitsch can be traditional) and his mental instability were all facts that Eliot deeply despised. If we read *The Waste Land* as a cry from the verge of the abyss, the moment in Eliot's life in which he had only two possibilities - the muzzle of a pistol or the foot of the cross, then the figure of Ludwig is a caution that makes Eliot discard the former and choose the latter. Ludwig the Mad is for Eliot the proof that the centre must hold.

'A Game of Chess' is a part about women. From the point of view of my argument, the realistic conversation in the pub that forms the last section of this part is the most interesting. I use the word 'realistic' not accidentally - the dialogue in the London pub is full of references to the situation in England just after the Great War. We have a demobilised soldier's wife talking with her friend about the problems her husband's arrival will cause. Lil (the wife) is not yet old but she does not take care of herself, she looks unkempt, her teeth are ugly and although the husband sent her money to get 'a nice set', she has spent it all. She had an abortion and is really in poor condition, but her husband is coming home and 'he wants a good time'. This terrifying conversation interrupted several times by the shouts of the pub owner ('Hurry up please its time ') and concluded by mad Ophelia's last words, shows us in almost the report-like style the brave new world of the city life after the war. Although the women seem to be the working class, the names appearing in the passage are quite aristocratic or even royal family-like (Lil, Albert, William, Lou, May). This Eliotic irony makes the conversation an image of what the relation between the people who lived in England during the war (mainly women and children) and the soldiers in the trenches was really like. This dialogue is symptomatic of the world which destroys emotional bonds between husband and wife - the function of marriage is only carnal love, a pleasure that a woman should give to her man. Abortion and plastic surgery that were means to introduce heaven on earth make people unhappy or even suicidal. Progress, which after the Great War was often equated with the techniques of killing, is presented here in the form of the utopian belief that science solves human problems. For the women in the pub it is quite contrary - we can imagine that a woman waiting for her husband coming back home from the Crimean War would be much happier and more eager for his arrival. It is not the war that Eliot stigmatises but a cityscape and the ideas of Progress and heaven on earth that make human beings miserable and lost .

The third part ('The Fire Sermon'), by references to Buddha's sermon against passions and Christ's sermon on the mountain deals mainly with the problem of spiritual purification and repudiation of the bodily pleasures. The scene that dominates this section of the poem is the meeting between a young typist girl and her lover. Their secret encounter is devoid of any signs of intimacy privacy, infatuation or even pleasure. The sexual act itself is more a rape than a long awaited fulfilment, the relations between the clerk and his 'victim' remind us more of Philomel's being 'rudely forced by the barbarous king' than of the pleasure and passion that such a rendezvous should evoke. When the lover departs the girl sighs:
'Well now that's done: and I'm glad it's over' and plays a record on the gramophone. This image of utter emotional numbness and the state of inertia after the event that in the past could have led even to a suicide, makes the sermons against passions as if obsolete. The secret lovers are completely devoid of not only awareness of sin but simply of any feelings, passions included. It seems that the lack of the centre which points towards the ideal makes the periphery (i.e. the sphere of damnation) non-existent as well.

'The Fire Sermon' is full of similar images that generate the omnipresent atmosphere of stagnation and torpor The section opens with a description of the River Thames that mingles with the allusions to the Ovidian rats' alley. The refrain 'The nymphs are departed' emphasises the state of desolation - even the decadent, immoral side of the city life (nymphs are of course prostitutes) is now extinct:

> The river bears no empty bottles, sandwich papers,
> Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends
> Or other testimony of summer nights.'

When there is no morality, no unified code of behaviour, immorality and libertinism become automatic gestures that signify nothing. Using Hulme's terminology we may claim that extreme romanticism is sheer disintegration - the lack of boundaries and hierarchies destroys not only order but also the possibility of the negation of this order as well. Lack of sexual passion recurs in the third part of *The Waste Land* in one of the songs of the Thames-daughters ('By Richmond I raised my knees / Supine on the floor of a narrow canoe.') and in the passage in which Mr Eugenides, the Smyrna merchant, makes an indecent proposal to the young protagonist. Homosexual overtones of this passage will he important while discussing the modernist gesture of exclusion, but now the figure of the merchant itself gains prominence - the whole of part IV is an elegy on the death of a merchant.

'Death by Water' is often considered to be one of the most beautiful wholly humanistic passages in the poem yet we should remember that in the original draft the noble death of Phlebas was opposed to the death of a Jew (Bleistein - the fragment was entitled 'Dirge'[9]) that is commonly considered to be Eliot's most anti-Semitic piece of poetry. In my opinion Phlebas' death is not so noble and dignified as some critics suggest.[10] Phlebas is a Phoenician sailor and in view of Eliot's Weltanschauung Phoenicians, the inventors of money and the most affluent merchants of antiquity were whom Jews are nowadays. The death of Phlebas, 'who was once handsome and tall as you', is a subtle way of implying that at the Pythagorean crossroads the Phoenician way of life is the one leading downwards, towards the Lady of Pleasure, towards disintegration and damnation. The figure of the merchant in *The Waste Land* epitomises a certain walk of life which Eliot and the modernists despised - the life in which money, 'the profit and loss', 'luncheon at the Cannon Street Hotel / Followed by a weekend at the Metropole' are basic values.

Aesthetics of Romantic Heresy

'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley' is not only a series of poems unified by the title character - it is, like *The Waste Land* densely populated, but here particular characters are much more distinct, their personalities and names very often refer to real life figures, after all the poem is 'an attempt to condense the James novel',[11] and the way the characters are here presented has some parallels to the famous Jamesian technique of the point of view.

Almost everything is played out in the sphere of aesthetics and Mauberley's artistic credo is throughout the poem juxtaposed with other characters aesthetic views. In the middle of the poem two sections ('Yeux Glauques' and 'Sienna Mi Fe; Disfecemi Maremma') deal with the late 19th century artistic movements which formed an opposition to then dominant Victorian culture - namely the Pre-Raphaelites and the symbolist poets of the 1890s (The Rhymers' Club) . Monsieur Verog 'the last scion of the/ Senatorial families of Strasbourg' is a sort of 'a pickled foetus' that still remained faithful to the ideals of his youth. After a quarter of the century, the first attempts to oppose the Academy and Tennyson do not interest anybody, they are dead gestures and artistic revolution under the art-for-art's-sake banners can now only be compared to a death caused by 'falling from a high stool in a pub' What seemed to be shocking, decadent, anti-social and revolutionary now seems to be petty, unimportant and insignificant:

> M. Verog, out of step with the decade,
> Detached from his contemporaries,
> Neglected by the young,
> Because of these reveries.

The 19th century aestheticism was just a reverie, but M. Verog can be seen as an old H.S. Mauberley who desperately slicks to his artistic ideals. To put Mauberley's and Verog's views straightforwardly, it is just to say that art. is for them the centre that governs the order of things. Art that is only superficially revolutionary – art. that is deeply rooted in tradition, especially in classical Greek and Roman art. The tone of nostalgia, disillusionment and loss prevails in the poem and Monsieur Verog is both a pitiful figure and Mauberley's spiritual father, a man who still opposes 'the age demanded' of the popular culture.

Lady Valentine from section XII is very similar to Eliot's patroness of arts from 'Portrait of a Lady'. She is an elderly woman with a sense of vocation, she is wealthy but alone, sensitive but untalented, aristocratic yet in favour of the modern especially in art. Forever imprisoned in her 'stuffed-satin drawing room' she values her literary taste high, yet Mauberley is 'doubtful, somewhat, of the value / Of (her) well-gowned approbation / Of literary effort.' Lady Valentine stands on Mauberley's side in the poem's aesthetic dichotomy but like Monsieur Verog she seems to be rather superficial and ostentatious. Symbolism and aestheticism are only a prelude to the real revolution – the strange revolution whose aim is to reintroduce the centre, the centre that 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley' tries to define but fails. Lady Valentine and Monsieur Verog are figures that prove that pure art is a weak material for this enterprise.

On the other side of the barricade we find two figures - Brennbaum and Mr. Nixon. Brennbaum is a character out of a huge gallery of Jewish portraits in Eliot and Pound. His basic feature - 'the stiffness from spats to collar' - brings to mind at least two direct allusions - to Prufrock's pin and to Yeats' poem 'A Coat' (the coat that the persona throws away is 'from heel to throat'). Stiffness, inability to move, confinement, even mental limitation in connection with 'the sky-limpid eyes'[12] (fish-like, deceitful, dull) constitute a Jewish figure that epitomises emotional and intellectual baseness and inferiority. 'Usury age-old and age-thick'[13] should be directly referred to Brennbaum - money and commerce is what debases art and Brennbaum never 'relaxing into grace' is simply the lack of any artistic needs and experiences. His faith is insincere , his by-name 'The Impeccable' is just an ironic mask of whose irony Brennbaum is not conscious. His money and his attitude towards art is what leads to the existence of such figures as Mr. Nixon (it is not an accident that the section entitled 'Brennbaum is followed by 'Mr. Nixon').

Mr. Nixon is a successful novelist whose fame and fortune are the effect of bribery and pragmatism. His writings is mendacity, 'a prose kinema' and 'tawdry cheapness' .The novelist discards poetry ('there's nothing in it'), and remembering Hulme's views on prose (prose delivers you at a destination while verse is a pedestrian taking you over the ground[14]) it is essential to point out that in 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley' the prose-poetry dichotomy equals the opposition between low and high culture. Mr. Nixon is a very dangerous figure - his collaboration with men such as Brennbaum brings destruction to the art of poetry. And for Pound poetry and art in general was to create the centre of Western civilisation...

Ugly touches in *The Waste Land*

Many readers acknowledging the poetic merits of 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley' and especially *The Waste Land*, claim that the message of both poems is just annoying whining about the deplorable state of Western civilisation. Simplistic and unjustified as such assumptions are, it is important to note that both Pound and Eliot avoid making any positive statements in the texts discussed. We cannot find any positive didactic or preacher-like remarks in the texts that would not be ironically modified by the context, although 'Ash Wednesday' or 'Canto XCV' are highly moralistic in the sense that they reveal the Truth. Neither *The Waste Land* nor 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley' construct the centre in the positive terms - they establish an atmosphere which can be called 'the need for the centre' and they bring the Other to the fore. 'Us' is described in terms of negation, of what we are not and should not be like. The Other is defined through exclusion and rejection - high modernism exists only in opposition to the despised 'them'- namely popular culture, the world of commerce, democracy, Jews, homosexuals, liberals, red-revolutionaries and nihilists.

In *The Waste Land* the basic image of depravation and disintegration is the cityscape. The city is the world of commerce and capitalism, the world of typists, house agent's clerks, City directors, nymphs and merchants. Those people do not live in the proper sense of the word; they are like robots performing various activities without any engagement and emotions. In the scene of the meeting between the typist and the clerk the only words spoken are 'Well now that's done and I'm glad it's over' uttered by the girl after she had been deserted by her lover. The inability to communicate is omnipresent where the cityscape appears - it seems that when the young protagonist talks to Stetson his questions and statements remain without answers, the conversation between the husband and his mentally disturbed wife as well as the dialogue in the pub are full of suspension and incoherence, it is as if the people were talking without listening. The structure of the dialogue is distorted, the inhabitants of the city are neither alive nor dead. They are serial products of commerce and capitalism, of faith in the power of money. Triviality of such a stance is symbolised by the figure of the dead merchant - dead by means of water which although is commonly regarded as a saving force and without which the waste land will not regain its fertility, is dangerous and even hostile to merchants, the inventors of commerce and money.

Although there are no overtly anti-Semitic passages in *The Waste Land* , Eliot's contempt for the city life and the world of trade and the constant presence of the merchant figure (either Phoenician or from Smyrna - the same geographical region of the Near East) suggest a certain ill-will towards the nations dealing with commercial activities. One of the discarded passages from the first drafts of the poem is 'Dirge', according to Christopher Ricks 'the ugliest touch of anti-Semitism in Eliot's poetry'[15]. The first stanza runs as follows:

Full fathom five your Bleistein lies
Under the flatfish and the squids.
Graves Disease in a dead jew's eyes!
When the crabs have eat the lids.
Lower than the wharf rats dive
Though he suffer a sea change
Still expensive rich and strange.[16]

This passage was to form a juxtaposition to the noble death of Phlebas and it must be admitted that the contrast is really shocking. Bleistein is deprived of all his humanity - he is a jew (no capital letter) being eaten by crabs and covered with sea creatures. He has no lids and his abominable body is more fish-like than human (lids are features of a higher level of evolution - Jews are the most primitive creatures connected with water, that is the place where the crudest forms of life took their origin).He lies 'lower than the wharf rats dive' - Jews are even meaner than the most despised animals, the comparison being more cruel when we remember that 'Jews' and 'rats' are synonymous in the anti-Semitic dictionary but for Eliot Bleistein is worse than the characteristics usually ascribed to his nation. The problem remains whether the unpublished fragments should he judged in more than poetic terms[17] yet in view of Eliot's earlier writings ('Gerontion', 'Sweeney among the Nightingales' or 'Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar') the exclusion of Jews from the sphere of European civilisation is quite obvious. The official version of *The Waste Land* is more tentative and scorn is directed rather at more general notions of commerce and capitalism yet fragments such as 'Dirge' prove that Jews are still present in Eliot's realm of the Other.

The figure of a merchant and a homosexual mingle together in the character of Mr. Eugenides, the Smyrna merchant. Homosexuality, similarly to capitalism and Jews, is another object of veiled disdain in *The Waste Land.* Mr.Eugenides' indecent proposal directed to the young protagonist is marked with definitely negative overtones. Firstly, the merchant comes from Smyrna and he is unshaven - his lack of gentility and alluded scorn for the nation that both deals with commerce and is literally dirty (Southerners' skin is dark which connected with being unshaven evokes the image of dirtiness) make a really despicable figure out of Mr.Eugenides. If we add that the scene takes place in the Unreal City (the city of the walking dead and money crazed robots) and the setting is submerged in brown fog (similar to the sexually characterised fog from 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock') then this homosexual invitation assumes the qualities of something deeply immoral, depraved, dirty, degrading and mean. Mr.Eugenides is not only morally and physically ugly - his proposal is uttered in 'demotic French'. He is inferior culturally; French becomes profaned in him mouth, the language of high culture and European intellect is debased, becomes a tool for making immoral sexual advances .The Smyrna merchant is thus not only a homosexual procurer but a source of the humiliation of European culture. Trivialised Western tradition makes Europe weak and prone to the influences of inferior and foreign customs and patterns of behaviour. Mr. Eugenides' strength is triggered by the power of low and popular culture that by gaining prominence destroys Western civilisation.

Pseudo-religious practices of Madame Sosostris, Shakespeherian Rags, Sweeney and Mrs Potter washing their feet in soda water are all instances of the invasion of the Low. Old astrological rituals and the mysterious Tarot pack of cards become icons of pseudo-wisdom and simple beliefs for the masses. Shakespeare is no longer played in the theatres but becomes familiarised in popular forms of crude entertainment - the adjective is no longer 'Shakespearean' but pretentious and tawdry 'Shakespeherian'. Andrew Marvell's metaphor of the relentless passage of tine ('But at my back I always hear / Time's winged chariot hurrying near') is part of the folk song sung by the Philistine excursionists - Sweeney and Mrs. Potter. For Eliot pop culture is dangerous not only in the aesthetic dimension (as it definitely is for Pound) but in the political sphere as well. Lower strata of society, foreigners and strangers are becoming dominant and threaten the traditional rule of the moral, virtuous and educated. The allusion to the Bolshevik revolution in part V ('Who are those hooded hordes swarming / Over endless plains') epitomises the danger which low culture, working classes, and democracy will bring.

Exclusion in 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley'

'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley' by Ezra Pound, especially parts I-V, is also a repudiation of modern Western civilisation grounded on liberalism, popular tastes and fashions, democracy and the faith in Progress. Although the greater part of the poem deals with the aesthetic debate between contemporaneity and high classical culture, there are many hints and references that enable us to treat the need for the centre in this poem not only in strictly artistic but in socio-philosophical terms as well. The fierce critique of contemporary popular art in 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley' has its roots in anti-romantic anthropology of T.E. Hulme, anti-liberal political views of Action Français and there are definitely some discernible influences of the Nietzschean eulogy of antiquity and pre-Christian (or even pre-Socratic) ethic. The recurring phrase 'the age demanded' points out to the tension between the artist's being always a social figure who is forced to write for a certain audience and the independence of any artistic creativity that is, according to Neo-platonic tradition, always elitist and often even of supernatural origin. The dichotomy of prose and poetry is the basic opposition that forms the frontline:

The age demanded chiefly a mould in plaster,
Made with no loss of time,
A prose kinema, not, not assuredly, alabaster
Or the 'sculpture' of rhyme.

On the one side we have Christ, pianola, Caliban and the marketplace, on the other side Dionysus, Sappho, Ariel and the Greek *kalós*. This list of oppositions constitutes – the whole part III of the poem – every form of sublimity, civility, intellectuality and vivacity is contrasted with the miserable ersatz that the contemporary society offers. It seems that the essential cause of this degeneration is what preoccupied Pound obsessively in his later writings - namely usury and the world of free market economy.

In the world in which the basic driving forces are the profit and loss the figures of bankers and archetypal usurers - Jews must appear. It is not only the kalós that is 'decreed in the marketplace' but all religious ceremonies are also for sale:

> We have the press for wafer;
> Franchise for circumcision.

Both Christianity and Judaism (in the form of the most distinctive features that characterise the religious believers, namely the Holy Communion and the circumcision) have become commercialised and it seems that they no longer form the ground on which the reconstruction could take place. Religion is too weak an opponent for such a powerful enemy as usury. After all it is Judaism that allowed money to be put out to interest for Gentiles and thus a religious law enabled evil to spread. Christianity, although less fiercely attacked than Judaism (this happens in the already discussed Brennbaum section), is also in a very Nietzchean spirit criticised for its weakness and servitude. Christian beauty is also defective and as Brennbaum's lifelessness, Christ's basic feature is maceration, i.e. excessive fasting. Western civilisation poisoned with impotent religions and contaminated with usury loses all its vital powers. The Milésian traditions from part XI that symbolise the healthy Dionysian spirit of fertility, vivacity, and energy are blunted by the Philistinian life of the middle-classes and their Victorian morality:

> But in Ealing
> With the most bank-clerkly of Englishmen?
> No, 'Milésian' is an exaggeration.
> No instinct has survived in her
> Older than those her grandmother
> Told her would fit her station.

Liberal democracies are also founded on the slavish notions of men's essential equality. Pound derides these foolish assumptions and ironically states that all men are equal but 'only in law'. As a proof, probably the oldest anti-democratic argument is quoted - in democracy 'We choose a knave or an eunuch

/ To rule over us.' It is of interest that again an allusion to sexual disability appears– all that is weak, effeminate and defective is absolutely discarded and placed outside the centre.

In my opinion, the authoritative gesture of exclusion and derision that is omnipresent in 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley' at a certain point lacks what *The Waste Land* at least tries to provide. Eliot's citations from Buddha, clear references to the rescue that lies outside European civilisation (the famous note that 'The Peace which passeth understanding' is a feeble translation of the content of the word 'Shantih'[18]) and the Fisher King's probable recovery by means of tradition ('These fragments I have shored against my ruins') all these call for the way out of the waste land and foreshadow Eliot's later poetry - controversial yet firmly constructed around the Christian centre. The rejection of almost entire contemporaneity in 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley' is feebly balanced with the main character's utter defeat:

Mouths biting empty air,
The still stone dogs,
Caught in metamorphosis, were
Left him as epilogues.

It seems that in view of the above passage 'Envoi' and 'Medallion' are not sufficient justifications of Mauberley's aesthetics – a beautiful medallion after the rejection of all temporariness and dependence on utter artistic elitism cannot constitute an adequate centre. Pound's medallion is similar to the poet's being gold enamelling made by Grecian goldsmiths 'to keep a drowsy emperor awake' in Yeats' 'Sailing to Byzantium'. Such art becomes only a sophisticated ornament, and everlasting and universal as it is, it cannot be a proper way of 'resuscitating the dead art of poetry'.

***

The Waste Land and 'Hugh Selwyn Mauberley' mark a turning point in both Pound's and Eliot's careers. It is extremely interesting to study these texts not as the autonomous masterpieces which they actually are, but as the steps in the development of both poets' social and political credos. Both poems are testimonies of philosophical pursuits and very often they betray some characteristics of the decadent stance - especially of the state of standing on the verge of the abyss. The necessity of overcoming this state is manifested in the strong conviction that only the firm centre that structures reality can be an unyielding alternative to the decadent corruption.

Looking at the discussed texts from the perspective of Eliot's Christian verse (especially *Four Quartets*) and Pound's political engagement and his complex yet for many unconvincing and ineffective *The Cantos* it becomes clear that, when we disregard poetry as such and focus on the socio-philosophical content, both poems mark a breaking point in writers' development. From around 1922 it became evident which way Pound and Eliot respectively wool choose. The need for the centre evolved into the attempts to construct the centre with all positive and negative sides that accompany such enterprises. In this essay I have tried to point out not only the poets' dissatisfaction and disillusionment with current political convictions (mainly with what Hulme called romantic heresy) but also emphasise their authoritative rejection or even censure of certain modes of behaviour, views, walks of life and the whole nations. It is indisputable that in the early 1920s anti-Semitism, anti-liberalism, elitism or even fascism were quite widespread among Western intellectuals. All the above *-isms* were not yet wholly discredited and they did not prove to carry any lethal consequences. Yet for many contemporaries of Eliot and Pound and still more for the people who witnessed the outcomes of such ways of thinking, prejudiced exclusion of Jews, homosexuals, liberals, democrats, and uneducated masses, was a hideous and extremely dangerous attitude that for the sake of order and in the name of defending Western Civilisation led to dividing people into inferior and superior on purely imaginary and irrational grounds. Unfortunately, the need for the centre in this case meant ordering the world not by getting to know ourselves but by condemning and rejecting the Other.

Notes

[1] The essay is undated, but Michael H. Levenson very convincingly proves it must have been written in late 1911 or in early 1912 (Levenson, pp. 87-88).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Hulme T.E. , p. 94.

[4] Throughout this essay I use terms 'romanticism' and 'classicism' as understood and defined by Hulme: 'Here is the root of all romanticism: that man, the individual, is an infinite reservoir of possibilities; and if you can rearrange society by the destruction of oppressive order then these possibilities will have a chance and you will get Progress. One can define the classical quite clearly as the exact opposite to this. Man is an extraordinarily fixed and limited animal whose nature is absolutely constant. It is only by tradition and organisation that anything decent can be got out of him.'(Hulme, p. 94)

[5] Eliot, 1975, p. 122.

[6] Ibid. p. 199

[7] Ibid. p. 289.

[8] Hulme, p. 95.

[9] Ricks, pp. 39-40

[10] ibid.

[11] Kenner, p. 16.

[12] It is very similar to Bleistein's 'lustreless protrusive eye' from Eliot's 'Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar'.

[13] Interestingly it is the first place in Pound's work that contains the word 'usury' (Kenner, p. 317).

[14] Hulme, p. 102.

[15] Ricks, p.38

[16] ibid.

[17] Christopher Ricks defends Eliot on the ground of 'Dirge' being left unpublished while for Anthony Julius this fact is insignificant and does not make Eliot less guilty.

[18] Levenson, pp.205-206

Bibliography

Ackroyd, P., *T.S. Eliot*, Sphere Books, London, 1988

Eliot, T. S., *Collected Poems 1909-1962*, Faber and Faber, London. 1974

Eliot, T. S., *Selected Prose*, edited by Frank Kermode; Farrar, Strans and Giroux, New York, 1975

Hulme, T. E., 'Romanticism and Classicism'.[in:] Lodge, D. (ed.) *20th Century Literary Criticism - A Reader*, Longman, London 1972

Julius, A., *T.S. Eliot, Anti-Semitism, and Literary Form*, Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Kenner, H., *The Pound Era*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1971.

Levenson, M. H., *A Genealogy of Modernism*, Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Pound, E., *Selected Poems,* A New Directions Paperback, New York, 1957

Ricks, Ch., *T.S. Eliot and Prejudice*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1988.

CUL
TU
RE

Marcin Polkowski

‘Authenticating’ Techniques and their Function in Renaissance Utopias*

One may distinguish two basic approaches to the problem of utopianism and its textual projection, namely the one that insists on treating the text as another species of political manifesto, to be put in practice after its author wins the election or seizes power in some different way, and the other, which apart from the socio-political content and the author’s heroic, Promethean striving to elevate and improve mankind, puts a greater emphasis on the form of literary artifice within which these goals are achieved. In this latter approach, which hopefully will suffice for the range of this essay, serious scholarly consideration can be paid to such aspects of utopian studies as the relation to distopia and learned wit, the literary tradition and to what can very imprecisely be described as realism, science-fiction or fantasy, or indeed the subject of this essay, the use of certain ‘authenticating’ techniques.

And what is this devious machinery, thus insinuatingly treated with inverted commas? In general, one may commence by saying that ‘authenticating’ techniques may be perceived as certain devices, employed by the author of a utopia in order to convey an illusion of reality in his Sub-creation[1]. The purpose may be, quite simply, to lend greater conviction to his work. A political manifesto distributed, let us say, at a political conference, exerts that ability to persuade by extratextual means. The context and situation serve to give at least partial credibility to the contents of a party manifesto, although some of the participants of the said conference could just as well say that it is nothing more than empty promises. Utopian literature reflects, though from a different angle and by different means, the same uplifting hope that an ideal political system may be created and people made happy in spite of what can be seen in the surrounding world, which is to be found in some political speeches or election pamphlets. Slightly simplifying the problem therefore, one may look at a utopia as containing (though not necessarily) two basic elements: the 'political' core of the author's ideas, and an 'authenticating' fringe intended as an introduction, providing a fairly realistic setting, and inducing, through art, a Coleridgean suspension of disbelief (not willing however, but most probably as in all that combines truth with beauty, detached from the operation of the faculty of will).

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 1404: *Introduction to Social Thought: Utopian Views* run by Mr Paweł Rutkowski, MA.

In this essay I will consider the problem of 'authentication' chiefly on the example of Thomas More's *Utopia*, complementing it with several glances at Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*, and Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun*. It may perhaps appear as a structural weakness that more space will be devoted to, and more conclusions drawn from the former than from both latter works. Yet it seems that although chronologically the first modern attempt at such writing, *Utopia* seen as a purely literary exercise is a much more developed, and indeed much more enigmatic for scholars, than the later attempts for which in a sense it helped to pave the way. As it is a judicious procedure among utopian scholars to refer the concept of utopia to existing historical reality, such as, to quote Paweł Rutkowski, 'Jan van Leyden's Kingdom of Münster in Westphalia (1534-35) and Florence under "the reign" of Fra Girolamo Savonarola (1494-98)'[2], it is equally understandable that while endeavouring to clarify some aspects of its literary realisation one can draw parallels between it and other, seemingly far removed, works of literature. And this, in fact, is the course which a scholar may be obliged, in a case like this, to pursue.

Renaissance utopias, such as Thomas More's *Utopia*, Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun*, and Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*, appear to share in most respects the same structure which is used as a device for anchoring their authors' surprising, and sometimes extravagant socio-political ideas within the world of contemporary reality. To explain this, one can refer to Samuel Taylor Coleridge's theory of the poetic imagination[3] and its later development by J.R.R. Tolkien[4], both of which accurately help to describe the creative process in a formally presentable way. Applying their model, one may imagine an entity called the Primary world of the author, from which all the elements of his work, whether they be images, words, sounds, ideas, or in the case of utopian studies for example existing social institutions, are first selected, and then fused into a comprehensive, artistically satisfying Secondary world through the medium of language, which then re-enters the Primary world in the shape of an artefact, the book. For the reader, the procedure is modified slightly while being reversed.

The words of the text he or she is presented with put in motion a mechanism of image selection from his or her Primary World which naturally differs from the author's. These images are then fused (or not, as the case may be) for a second time in a new representation of the author's Secondary world.

Whether one agrees with such an interpretation or not, it is visibly useful for analysing a great diversity of literary works, and looking at them from the author's perspective without being charged with the biographical heresy.

While as it has been mentioned, the main area in which utopist's fancy operates is the rearrangement of such elements as make up the substance of his, let us say, ideal state, one can also look at the way in which this imaginary world, or true Secondary world (not to use the unscientific, and furthermore insultingly imprecise term Land of Faerie) is connected to the Primary world (as it was represented to the author and his audience) *within* the literary Secondary world of the text itself. One can make such a statement, complex though it might seem, just because the very nature of a utopia is to concentrate in an obvious manner on a single effect, the one created by the utopian core of a given work, and at the same time precisely separating its own logic from contemporary reality. That is why the expression 'Secondary world' can in fact be ambiguous or even misleading. A reader of a travelogue-like Renaissance utopia for example should keep in mind that depending on where (inside or outside the text) he or she is looking from, it might mean both the world of the utopian island (or, as in Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moon*,[5] of the Lunar sphere), or the whole of the literary world as it is contained within the text. A picture illustrating this has been appended by the Editor to this essay.

I shall attempt to continue this line of thought first on the example of Thomas More's archetypal exercise in the genre. Within the Secondary World of *Utopia*, one may discern two basic imaginative areas, that coincide with the narrative frame structure of the work. On the outside, if one may call it so, is the blatantly realistic world of More's life, his journey to the Low Countries, etc., while the core of the text is formed in the reader's, and More-the-character's imagination, as the story and Raphael Nonsenso's discourse progresses. The contrast between the two areas is lessened for us by the influence of time, but for More's contemporaries who knew him as a scholar and statesman, and who could have followed with interest Henry VIII's dispute with Prince Charles of Castille and its repercussions for the woollen trade with Flanders, the realism (one has to bear in mind that this was before the advent of the modern novel) was so great that several innocent people were taken in by the fiction. With regard to the frame structure based on a character's telling a tale, one is reminded of a similar device in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*[6] where, visually, the narrator's focalization on the yacht switches to Marlow's in the tenebrous centre, and back again. Quite visibly, in both cases there is contrast, and in the former the peripheral down to earth events of a few weeks from More's life (the journey to Antwerp and meeting with Peter Gilles are autobiographical elements) serve to give credibility to the otherwise extraordinary core. If one chooses a different interpretation, it can be said that Thomas More projects upon his sojourn in Flanders and the images relating to it his vision of the island of Utopia. It is telling that the first part of *Utopia,* that is the most interesting one about the Antwerp incident, was written spontaneously during his stay in that city.

In Tommaso Campanella's work this pattern is reduced to a bare minimum, and although the basic framework of a traveller recounting his adventures and a listener(the usual connecting link between the utopian and the everyday world) is retained, the device manages to lay itself bare to the satisfaction of the audience, the resulting mixture, with its simple dialogue form reminding one more of an absurd stage-play than anything else.

Compared to More's and Campanella's work, Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* also shares the structure of a traveller's account, however with some significant differences. The narrator is revealed gradually: first as 'we', only gradually do we learn that he is a European, most probably an Englishman, and the captain of the ship. He is telling his tale, but its addressee is not mentioned in any way; perhaps it is one of those descriptions of journeys and experiences in foreign lands which were actually often published by seamen, merchants or travellers during the Renaissance and later, with authors such as Daniel Defoe or Jonathan Swift adapting them for the purposes of the novel. That one cannot learn what form this account takes is further aggravated by the fact of its being unfinished, concluding abruptly in the middle just after the most important elements of the life on New Atlantis are conveyed to the reader. John Keats's *Hyperion* and *The Fall of Hyperion*[7] are similar in this respect, where the author's breaking off in the midst of poetic fury enables the reader to remain in a state of Negative Capability[8], that is in a state of doubt, also about what has happened, without having to reconcile the contradictions of the text. Thus what may strike the reader as a peculiarly unrealistic proceeding detrimental to 'authentication' could also be viewed in the light of adding another dimension, one of strangeness and mystery, to a precise examination of politics and society; so that if one for a moment disregards the printer's preface to Bacon's work, one may imagine the text of *New Atlantis* to be some obscure tale of an anonymous captain, which lieth loose-leaved, incomplete and decaying, lingering deep in the recesses of one of the antiquarian's shops in Flanders waiting for some curious scholar to dig it out of a heap of odds and ends, who perceiving its price to be negligent would place a guilder on the counter and proceed home to ponder over his new acquisition.

Appropriately enough, the scene for the meeting with Raphael is Flanders, that portion of western Europe which now is Belgium (with the towns of Antwerp and Bruges or Brugge mentioned) and the south-western part of the Netherlands (although the term was used indiscriminately for all of the Dutch and Flemish-speaking countries during much of the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and even later). The already mentioned autobiographical element provides authentication, real events which occurred to More are 'translated' or 'projected' into the secondary world directly, almost without any changes. Thus it is possible for the Secondary world More and his friend Peter Gilles to talk to a fictional character in a place which they both visited in the Primary world of real life. Additional authentication, or realistic motivation is provided by the two letters, written by More to Gilles, by the latter to a Flemish scholar called Jeroen Busleiden, and those omitted in certain editions, namely Busleiden's reply, and a letter by one John van der Broeck, another learned Fleming. It hardly needs to be added that all these letters, whose authors existed in the Primary world, are written in a tone of scholarly debate, More desiring Gilles to verify some details of Raphael's narrative, while Gilles tells Busleiden that he was not able to find out the exact location of Utopia, as 'at the critical moment one of his colleagues started coughing rather loudly-I suppose he had caught cold on the boat...'[9]. Flanders seems to be, therefore, almost as crucial an element as Utopia itself, for by transplanting More-the-narrator from his home and affairs in England, it provides not only a credible and authentic setting, but also a plane on which diverse ideas, and characters as divergent as More and Nonsenso, are allowed to coexist. Were one an adherent of magic realism, one could almost see a parallel with Angela Carter's *Lady of the House of Love*, where a gentleman 'of that generation for whom history has already prepared a special, exemplary fate in the trenches of France'[10] collides somewhat ludicrously in a kitschy Romania with 'the timeless, Gothic eternity of the vampires'[11].

The geographical details are another instance of lending credibility to a text on utopia. As the most common way to reach a utopian realm was to make a voyage by sea, it is not surprising that More's Raphael Nonsenso should not only be a famed mariner, but also one who had been Amerigo Vespucci's companion on some of his journeys; exploring on his own, he happened to come across the island of Utopia. This contemporary reference, placed in the context of Renaissance voyages of discovery, is yet another step for a gradual advance from the real to the unreal, from actual places such as England, Flanders, or the fort at Cape Frio where Vespucci left Nonsenso with his companions, to Utopia-No Place. Similarly in *The City of the Sun* or in *New Atlantis*, the reader is provided with hints as to the actual location of the utopia in question, whether as in the former, close by the remote isle of Taprobane, or as in the latter, also in the South Pacific, between Peru and China or Japan.

This detached location does not exclude other connections between utopia and our world, although as it appears from *New Atlantis* and the practice of its rulers to send disguised secret agents to countries in Europe and elsewhere, it is virtually impossible either to prove or to deny it. Less sensational links exist however, and one of these is religion, the remaining ones are language and history. The fact that in both New Atlantis and Utopia the travellers are able to communicate with the natives provides realistic motivation, in addition to extricating the author from the necessity of providing troublesome explanations. The Atlanteans for example, are able to converse in Spanish in addition to being proficient in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Christianity, arriving in the ark which is used significantly as a sea-vessel, is another element which the inhabitants of New Atlantis have in common with Europeans, and which adds credibility to their culture. If this were not enough, the history of New Atlantis can be fitted into that of the rest of the world that we know-some of the wars fought by ancient Atlantis were the very ones whose faint echoes, passed down through the ages, were chronicled by Plato. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that in spite of the isolation (in New Atlantis at least, one-sided) of utopia-which can only be reached after a long and arduous journey, certain elements of the fringe world, the Secondary depiction of Europe, are transferred to it for greater authenticity, realism, or in order for perhaps simply to enable the author to prove his point.

A short comment can be made here about the role of the specimen of Utopian verse, which was thoughtfully added to More-the-character's text by Peter Gilles. It presents the text which follows in the character of a work of learning, perhaps in mockery or imitation of some contemporary treatise of exploration. The precisely constructed Utopian language, appears to be on the whole an immense philological joke, while the alphabet imparts to the gullible reader the sense of perusing a truly learned text. A fine touch of parody can also be detected, by means of which More, almost unperceived, exploits the pseudoscientific, sometimes ludicrous and no doubt enormously popular travellers' tales for comic purposes in his work, a procedure applied with an equally humorous effect by J.R.R. Tolkien in *Farmer Giles of Ham*[12]. A similar mechanism, although completely seriously this time, is used in Campanella's

City of the Sun, where by means of subtle astrological diagrams, the reader is presented with concrete proof of the verity of the Genoese mariner's account and soundness of the Solarians' assumptions. By such extratextual graphic devices, another level is added to the depiction of utopia, and the images in the reader's imaginary Secondary world are reinforced through the merciless exactitude of science.

To conclude, one can point out another, though not wholly conscious, means of authentication available to Renaissance and other utopists, namely through images. As Paweł Rutkowski observes, 'None of the descriptions [of utopia], even though many of them are journey accounts, do resemble a film telling a story, being rather a sequence of photographs which naturally immobilise utopian reality'[13]. These pictures of utopia, static shapes coming from the Primary World, are so strongly rooted in it that the resulting description or work of the artist's fancy hardly ever achieves that quality of 'strangeness and wonder in the Expression'[14] which it seems to promise on a purely intellectual plane, and which is to be found in true art. One may observe this phenomenon closely in science fiction, which appears to share distantly certain common roots with utopianism. Science fiction is very often strongly bound visually (in the sphere of images) with its own times, hence in spite of its freely escapist tendencies its presented visions of the future often remain aesthetically unsatisfying, reminding the reader more of the author's not very distant past, and thus of the same reality one wishes to avoid. In utopian writing, this mechanism performs first of all a familiarising function for the writer's contemporary, for whom the visions of, say, different social institutions, or as in the very interesting case of Bacon's *New Atlantis*, novel and amazing inventions are given in readily accessible, familiar terms through the focalization of an Elizabethan sea-captain. Conversely, it introduces for the reader from the future that very element of wonder and strangeness, even delight, which one can rashly assume to be lacking in utopia, for example while describing the so-called houses of the deception of the senses. It is as if Bacon's poetic imagination had caught a projection from the 20th century, a confusion of airplanes, rockets, submarines, sound transmission and amplification devices, food processing and lifejackets, or more paradoxically More and Campanella had had a momentary vision of some land under communist rule. Of course, this is a mere flight of fancy, and has no place in a scholarly paper.

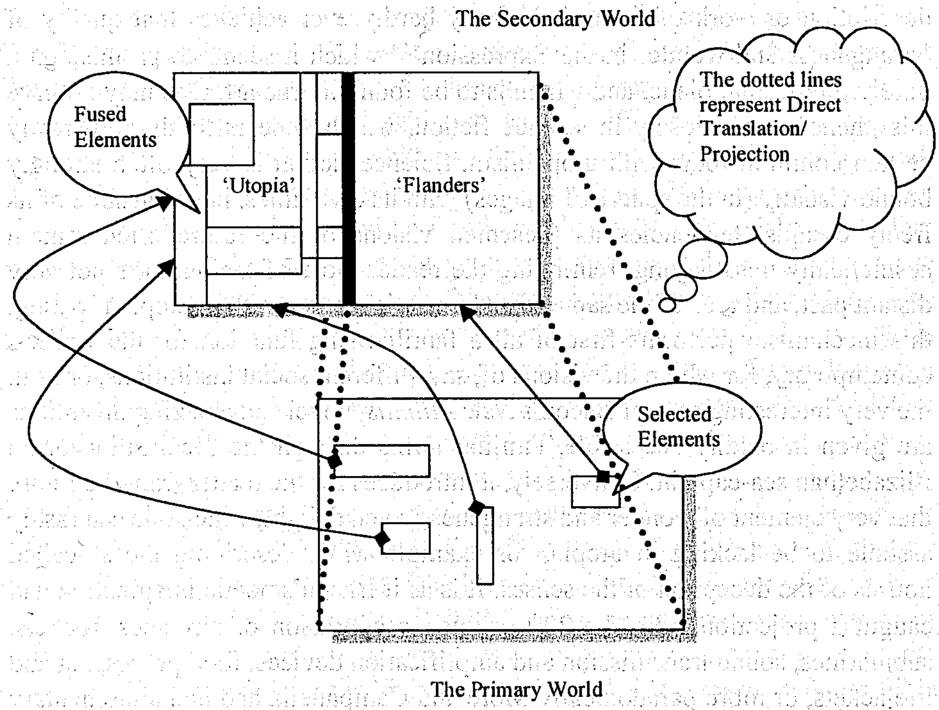
As one can see, the authenticating techniques used in Renaissance utopias are many and varied. In this essay I have purposely concentrated on the Morean connection in the vast field of utopian studies. As it appears from this short presentation, *Utopia* contains all the elements later used by other

Renaissance writers to impart an air of authenticity and realism to their works, while the use of Flanders is indeed the key to a better perception of the devices employed by utopian authors.

Pictorial Appendix[15]

A simplified rendering of the Primary and Secondary Worlds, with Direct Translation/Projection, on the example of Thomas More's *Utopia*.

Fig. 1.


The Secondary World
Fused Elements
'Utopia'
'Flanders'
The dotted lines represent Direct Translation/ Projection
Selected Elements
The Primary World

Notes

[1] Cf. Tolkien, 1964.

[2] Rutkowski, p.53.

[3] Coleridge, p. 223.

[4] Tolkien, 1964.

[5] From the *Introduction* by Paul Turner to Thomas More, *Utopia*, Penguin Books, 1987.

[6] Conrad, Joseph *Heart of Darkness*, Penguin Books, 1989, I have in mind particularly pp. 27-28 and 120-121.

[7] *The Works of John Keats*, Wordsworth Editions, 1995, pp. 249-279 and 443-485.

[8] From John Keats's letter to one of his brothers, [in:] *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol.2, W.W.Norton & Co., 1993, p.831.

[9] More, p.34.

[10] Angela Carter, *Lady of the House of Love*, [in:] Chris Baldick, *The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales*, OUP, 1993, p.487.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Tolkien, 1949.

[13] Rutkowski, op. cit., p.54.

[14] Tolkien, 1964..

[15] Based on S.T. Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* and J.R.R. Tolkien's essay *On Fairy Stories*, and on the author's essay, 'The Concept of Recovery in J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings'.

Bibliography

Bacon, F. *Nowa Atlantyda i Z Wielkiej Odnowy*. Wydawnictwo Alfa, Warszawa 1995.

Campanella, T. *Miasto Słońca*. Zakład Imienia Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1955.

Coleridge, S. T. *Verse and Prose*. Progress Publishers, Moscow 1981.

More, T. *Utopia*. Penguin Books, 1987.

Rutkowski, P. *Utopia in Motion: Vienna in* Measure for Measure *as a Perfect(?) Moral Commonwealth*, in *Anglica, Papers on Literature, Culture and Language.* Weseliński, A., Wełna, J. (eds.), Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warsaw 1998.

Tolkien, J.R.R. 'On Fairy Stories' in *Tree and Leaf*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London 1964.

Turner, P. 'Introduction' [to:] More, Thomas, *Utopia*, Penguin Books, 1987.

Adam Lipiński

Costumes Make It Better[1]: Some Metaphysical Observations Concerning Charlie Chaplin's Dandyish Appearance*

It may be supposed that every young man endowed with a higher degree of sensitivity has, before he grew old and bleary, striven to attain a similar kind of abstract ideal, a fairy-tale illusion, a dream projected far beyond the sphere of the moon by the sheer force of his heroic desire. Throughout history, from the times of the ancients up to the present, successive cultures of each age have developed numerous instances of such an ambitious, overreaching hero. All literary genres, from the simple folk fairy tale to the grand, lofty epic, contain works that depict the hero's endeavours to achieve his dream, his glorious rise and attainment of the ideal, and, quite often, his headlong fall into the abyss of ultimate failure. No matter if the hero was someone like Paris from Homer's *Iliad*, someone resembling a knight errant from a chivalric romance, someone as roguish as Tom Jones or Don Juan, a Faust-like individual like Manfred or a Promethean Victor Frankenstein, a Stephen Dedalus or a Werther, he always distinguished himself from the rest of the society by his idiosyncratic manners and, almost in every case, by wearing suitable apparel which underlined his original personality.

This very idea of dressing up has soaked so deeply into the quicksand ground of popular culture that, at some point, it became no longer necessary to be familiar with, let us say, the basic concepts of applied chivalry or the works of Lord Byron in order to be subconsciously convinced that, if we want to be perceived as striving idealists, we should put on a uniform to make both our present position and projected desires manifest to others.

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 1406: *Introduction to 20th Century Cinema: Charlie Chaplin* run by Mr Piotr Borkowski, MA.

These, in the opinion of many critics, were the underlying factors that triggered such social phenomena as, to quote the most outstanding example, Romantic dandyism among well-off, aristocratic youths who wished to become noted poets of consumptive mien and decadent manners without managing to scribble even a single poem of greater artistic value. As the most illustrious of dandies, Oscar Wilde, wrote in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*,

> Good artists exist simply in what they make, and consequently are perfectly uninteresting in what they are. A really great poet is the most unpoetical of all creatures. But inferior poets are absolutely fascinating. The worse their rhymes are, the more picturesque they look. The mere fact of having published a book of second-rate sonnets makes a man quite irresistible. He lives the poetry that he cannot write. The others write the poetry that they dare not realise.[2]

It must be remembered that this was written in 1891, long before the idea of high art tumbled down to the post-modern rubble of our present mass culture, long before the pseudo-aesthetic creativity of the dandy turned into the 'creative violence' of the modern working-class punk rocker or the 'upward mobility' of the yuppie. Yet, one should be aware that even among Wilde's contemporaries there were voices that prophesied the imminent decline. As early as twenty years before Wilde published his *Dorian Gray*, the great French poet Charles Baudelaire remarked:

> Dandyism is the last flicker of heroism in decadent ages. . . . Dandyism is a setting sun; like the declining star, it is magnificent, without heat and full of melancholy. But alas! the rising tide of democracy, which spreads everywhere and reduces everything to the same level, is daily carrying away these last champions of human pride, and submerging, in the waters of oblivion, the last traces of these remarkable myrmidons.[3]

It is only from our present perspective that one may say that Baudelaire's fears were by no means exaggerated. Gradually, as things fell apart and mere anarchy was loosed upon the world,[4] the concept of the dandy was seized upon by the working [drinking - (*Oscar Wilde)*[5]] classes and used, in a more down-to-earth way, to express their own disillusionment and pretensions. Instead of a creator of beauty for beauty's sake, Oscar Wilde's dandy turned into a creator of popular nonsense, surrealistic absurd, sham art, exaggerated kitsch. The words of the American essayist Susan Sontag seem to be the best illustration of the drastic change:

> Detachment is the prerogative of an elite; and as the dandy is the nineteenth century's surrogate for the aristocrat in matters of culture, so Camp is the modern dandyism. Camp is the answer to the problem: how to be a dandy in the age of mass culture.[6]

The aim of what she calls 'Camp' is, according to Sontag, to

> dethrone the serious. Camp is playful, anti-serious. More precisely, Camp involves a new, more complex relation to "the serious." One can be serious about the frivolous, frivolous about the serious.[7]

In other words, everything is turned upside down. There is no longer room for pale-faced Byronic heroes who, their dishevelled hair floating in the western wind, soar up to reach the Keatsian nightingale and fall down upon the thorns of life to bleed out to death. Their pathetic voices of inner despondence are distorted by the carnival frenzy of modern art, the fallen art that no longer recognises the importance of their strife:

> The man who insists on high and serious pleasures is depriving himself of pleasure; he continually restricts what he can enjoy; in the constant exercise of his good taste he will eventually price himself out of the market, so to speak. Here Camp taste supervenes upon good taste as a daring and witty hedonism. It makes the man of good taste cheerful, where before he ran the risk of being chronically frustrated. It is good for the digestion.[8]

And here, ladies and gentlemen, Charlie Chaplin, on whom the spotlight of this reeling essay is supposed to be focused, finally strolls in.[9] Just like W.B. Yeats who, living in the grey haze of modernity, was the last poetic warrior for the sake of heroic, masculine tradition, the Tramp seems to be the last successful defender of beauty on the arena of popular culture. His costume may be perceived as that of a fallen Wildean dandy, whose most essential qualities he still retains: although now he belongs to the working class and acts to appease the popular taste for absurdity, he proves to be a *hopeless* worker, a wretched dreamer who pokes his nose into a blooming rosebud whenever the circumstances allow; he sleeps in the gutter, yet makes constant attempts to carry himself with gentlemanly dignity and grace; he is dirty and unkempt, but still is terribly self-conscious about his appearance; he is a grey city-dweller, and still his visage is adorned with visible decadent makeup.

Similarly, in spite of the fact that the initial impression he evokes on the watcher might be that of T.S. Eliot's Alfred J. Prufrock freshly fired from work, the Tramp does not let his lapsed appearance cumber his spontaneous flow of powerful feelings and faerish flights of Romantic imagination. His love affairs are chivalric to the point of exaggeration. His concept of beauty (assuming that the Tramp's concept of beauty matches that cherished by Chaplin) is unmistakably that of a decadent Romantic – 'a field in Flanders where thousands had died'; 'Perseus, holding high the head of Medusa with her pathetic twisted body at his feet,' which is for Chaplin 'an epitome of sadness' and makes him 'think of Oscar Wilde's mystic line: "For each man kills the thing he loves"'; also, the city of Venice, the place where the gross majority of both would-be and actual Romantic decadents met their death and which reminds him of his own 'Victorian' love affair.[10] His idea of romance has been 'inspired by a theatrical poster showing a girl standing on a cliff with the wind blowing through her hair.'[11] In short, he is an old-fashioned dandy of the former times who, hurled down into the boiling pit of modern reality, still raises his hat and pretends that nothing has changed.

The more literately-minded reader will not fail to notice that the Tramp's behaviour and adventures may be compared to those of Byron's decadent Don Juan, a mock-heroic character praised by the existentialists as the ultimate development of the Absurd Man: even though he is always the central character, he does not seem to have much influence upon the flow of events. On the contrary, as if in defiance to the vitality of his efforts, things simply *happen* to him according to a mysterious, fairly random scheme of irrational fate.

Finally, what is the most important defining feature of the Romantic dandy, the Tramp does not make any successful endeavours to create artefacts approaching the condition of art: his entire poetic heritage lies in his colourful life, a fully-lived life which is full of fairy-tale poeticality, a poeticality whose nature lies suspended between the past and the future.

In other words, the Tramp is at the same time already distant from the clichéd poetic conventions of the end of the Victorian era and still a long way from the 'creative violence' of modern youth subcultures. He is the middle link between the Decadent Dandy and the Working Class Hero.

As if looking forward to the later decades of the twentieth century, Chaplin is able to perceive – and in some way identify with – the phenomenon of the juvenile delinquents of his times, the notorious Teddy Boys:

> I can well understand the psychological attitude of the teddy boy with his Edwardian dress; like all of us he wants attention, romance and drama in his life. Why should he not indulge in moments of exhibitionism and horseplay, as does the public-school boy with his gadding and ragging? Is it not natural that when he sees the so-called better classes asserting their foppery he wants to assert his own?
>
> He knows that the machine obeys his will as it does the will of any class; that it requires no special mentality to shift a gear or press a button. In

> this intensate age is he not *as formidable as any Lancelot, aristocrat of scholar, his finger as powerful in destroying a city as any Napoleonic army?*[12] [my italics]

As it may be observed, Chaplin sounds partly like the Romantic idealist P.B. Shelley and, surprisingly enough, partly like the postmodernist author Angela Carter in one of her articles concerning social implications of modern fashion, particularly in her 'Notes for a Theory of Sixties Style'. Carter, it must be noted, recognised modern subcultures, such as hippies and Hell's Angels, as our equivalents of the decadent dandies who used to dress up in distinctive uniforms and manifest their carelessness in the face of death (Carter provides a dramatic example of a bare-chested, leather-clad Hell's Angel speeding down a sunlit motorway at maximum velocity). According to Angela Carter, the main weapon of the rebellious dandy was his appearance, through which he deliberately wanted to 'confuse' people.[13]

Chaplin, in all probability, was of the same opinion. Taking into account the skilful way in which he controlled his appearance in order to manipulate the effects it evoked, it seems quite reasonable to disregard his comment on the accidental origin of the Tramp's costume as another dandyish caprice. After all, was it not predictable that the Absurd Man would blame it all on his luck?

Now, in order to convince the reader of the validity of my convoluted metaphysics, I shall take the liberty to apply my theory of the Tramp as suspended between the Dandy and the Teddy Boy to two of Chaplin's films: *The Gold Rush* and *City Lights*.

At the very beginning of *The Gold Rush* the Tramp is presented as a walking parody of a typical Romantic poet: he is high above the surging crowd of uniform gold-seekers; we see him strolling, quite careless, defying death, on the edge of a mountain precipice. Although he is at the same time engaged in the working-class search for easy fortune, he successfully manages to evoke, by his flamboyant manners and original dress, a contrary impression on the part of the viewer. True, the gentlemanly outfit the Tramp is wearing seems shamelessly makeshift; yet, it only underlines his decadent neglect. Does he behave strangely? Well, as I said, our hero does not create art. Instead, he simply *lives* the art he is unable to convey through other media. Hence, I would argue, there is nothing particularly strange nor unexplained in his behaviour.

Despite the fact that he finds himself in extremely harsh conditions, the Tramp retains his somewhat aristocratic, poetic personality. He is proud and creative enough to pretend that the cooked boot is actually a meal partaken of in a fancy restaurant. Even when threatened with being eaten himself, he still manages to keep his conduct. Unable to gain the love of a woman, he evokes her in his somewhat decadent dream: a dream in which he closely resembles a Keatsian 'wretched wight'[14] tormented and subsequently abandoned by midnight faeries. Although his search for fortune seems to be a chain of mere accidents, the Tramp ultimately reaches his superficially undesired working-class goal – he becomes a multimillionaire. Yet, he never gets rid of his decadent, explicitly provocative caprices. How else would one explain his eagerness to dress in his old uniform, even though it means being taken for a stowaway?

City Lights is another film in which the Tramp, engaged in a working-class struggle to gain money, endeavours to present himself before his beloved as a perfect gentleman who has enough cash not to care about it. While working hard on his stratagem to procure the necessary funds for the blind girl's rent and eye operation, he manages to pass, owing to his wealthy friend's drunkenness, as a rich dandy of note, even if a decadently eclectic one. And, all the time, he brightens the sad reality with his ability to live originally, apparently by chance, in the truly poetic way. The scene at the ball is the best example of the Tramp as a fusion of a rich personage, an eclectic dandy, a creative, unpredictable artist, and, we are tempted to say, almost a juvenile delinquent. It is only in the final scene, the scene when he confronts his no longer blind beloved, that we see his true face: tired, worn out, full of doubt, adorned with an uncertain smile and – as we have noticed earlier – a shade of visible decadent makeup...

To sum up, let me recapitulate my metaphysical assumption that the Tramp's social desires were directed at the same time both upwards and downwards. It is for that reason, I would argue, that the Tramp remained hovering in the void somewhere between, unable to fall or rise in either direction. Gradually, in the films *Modern Times* and *The Great Dictator*, the Tramp's desires changed into those of the working class. Yet, in *Monsieur Verdoux*, the unbalanced ratio shifted back towards the Wildean, now partly existentialist, more refined dandy. As Sartre said[15], the murderer, that is a man like Verdoux, does not create beauty. He himself is, in a way, something approaching the embodiment of that elusive concept. The very essence of the mysterious Monsieur is defined at the very beginning of the film, in the scene in the rose garden. It is enough just to look at the way he cuts and smells the red flowers... 'For each man kills the thing he loves,' as Wilde, in the passage already quoted by Chaplin when talking of beauty, loftily remarked.

As my concluding and somewhat detached remark, I would like to ponder upon the extraordinary, to a certain degree magical,[16] feature of the Tramp's famous outfit – namely, its immortality. Angela Carter writes that, in the post-modern era of floating signifiers, the unbreakable relation between the personalities of individual people and the clothes they wear has been severed and can no longer be relied upon. Uniforms and costumes are no longer static attributes reflecting and describing the people who wear them. And, although many teachers still tend to make themselves more 'teacherly' by putting on glasses and tweed suits, although some curious people still resemble walking replicas of their favourite characters from books, although ardent advocates of feminine vampirism still dress like Baudelaire's 'Allégorie' or the lady in 'A une passante', these days everyone can swap apparels according to their capricious intentions. For that reason, quite unfortunately, costumes become more and more independent, like theatre props put on accordingly to a chosen role; detached from their former static owners, they become meaningless:

> Iconic clothing has been secularised. . . . A guardsman in a dress uniform is ostensibly an icon of aggression; his coat is red as the blood he hopes to shed. Seen on a coat-hanger, with no man inside it, the uniform loses all its blustering significance and, to the innocent eye seduced by decorative colour and tactile braid, it is as abstract in symbolic information as a parasol to an Eskimo.[17]

It is amazing to notice that, after all those years, the costume of the Tramp – so often presented alone, as a generally understood symbol, without the legendary owner inside – has not ceased to indicate one, clearly defined, forever fixed, unmistakable meaning: ***CHARLIE CHAPLIN.***

Notes

[1] This catch phrase was invented by Dr Stoddard Martin, and I decided to use it in my title for the humorous, perhaps a little ironic effect it creates. The entire essay, although recommended for publication in *Folio* by Mr Piotr Borkowski, initially came into existence as a bunch of loose, unconnected notes scribbled during a night of spiritual elation. It was only later on, in a much different, very bitter mood of desperate dejection that I transformed it into this present form. Nevertheless, mainly for the sake of the content (my own metaphysics), the general subject matter (Chaplin's comedies and dandyism), and certain other reasons that cannot be disclosed as long as I am still among the living, I decided to retain, within the loosely understood limits of academic reason, the humorous tone with all its sinister implications. Perhaps, for the more sensitive reader, it may radiate a slightly decadent, dandyish flavour of both moral and intellectual decay which I am constantly striving to promote.

[2] Lord Henry in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, ch. 4, p.42. I find this well-known passage particularly applicable to real life.

[3] Charles Baudelaire, *L'Art Romantique*, "The Painter of Modern Life," sct. 9, p.67

[4] as in W.B. Yeats's 'Second Coming'.

[5] 'Work is the curse of the drinking classes,' as Wilde habitually used to say.

[6] Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation* (*Evergreen Review,* December 1964), "Notes on 'Camp'", note 45, p.106.

[7] op. cit. Note 41, p.104.

[8] op. cit. Note 54, p.110.

[9] Belatedly, staggering, but still...

[10] All quotations come from: Charlie Chaplin, *My Autobiography*, pp. 351-352.

[11] op. cit. p. 102. I can only suppose that her hair was of a raven hue. Anyway, Chaplin still dreamt in monochrome.

[12] *My Autobiography*, ch. 6, p. 93.

[13] All the examples paraphrased here come from: Angela Carter, 'Notes for a Theory of Sixties Style' in New Society (1967) and other essays collected in *Shaking a Leg*, an anthology of her journalism.

[14] from the second, slightly inferior version of 'La Belle Dame sans Merci'.

[15] as quoted in the epigraph of 'The Bloody Countess' in Chris Baldick's *Oxford Book of Gothic Tales* (Oxford, 1994), p.466.

[16] 'magical' in Yeats's meaning, that is connected with the influence of symbols upon human subconsciousness. For an outlining overview of Yeats's concept of magic, I can refer the curious reader to my essay entitled 'A General Introduction to Escapism and Symbolism in the Art of W.B. Yeats'.

[17] Carter, 'Notes for a Theory of a Sixties Style' [in:] *Shaking a Leg*, p.198.

Bibliography

Baudelaire, Ch. *Selected Prose.* Delta Books, New York 1975

Carter, A. *Shaking a Leg.* Chatto and Windus, London 1994

Chaplin, Ch. *My Autobiography.* Penguin, London 1992

Sontag, S. *Against Interpretation and Other Essays.* Icon, London 1980

Wilde, O. *Complete Works of Oscar Wilde.* Wordsworth, London 1994

Anita Markowicz

The Representation and Treatment of Women's Insanity in Inter-War Britain*

The years following the First World War witnessed a number of important developments in the field of psychology which seriously affected women patients. First of all, Sigmund Freud's famous theory of psychoanalysis, which threw a new light on the matter of female sexuality and femininity, gained vast popularity in Britain. Many women doctors were drawn to psychoanalysis because it challenged the tenets of Darwinian psychiatry (dominating the English scene up to the First World War) whose advocates believed that insanity revealed itself through hereditary physical traits and perceived the insane as 'evolutionary failures'.[1] Moreover, for the first time in history, the psychoanalytic therapy (known also as the 'talking cure') allowed the mentally disturbed patient to participate in the treatment as an active (although still not equal) partner. The inter-war period recorded also a changing attitude towards women in the field of conventional psychiatry. Gradually, psychiatry was becoming less and less biased against women's participation and eventually in 1927 "the employment of women doctors in London county mental hospitals was sanctioned."[2]

The changes, however, failed to bring any considerable improvements in the situation of women inside as well as outside of the asylum. During the war many women found employment in industry (especially in ammunition factories) but when the war ended, returning soldiers needed their jobs back therefore the process of dismissing women started. As a result, the percentage of female workforce dropped dramatically. The government launched a widespread campaign encouraging women to return to domesticity and, again, the strict standards concerning sexual conduct were in force. Denied their work and one more time pushed into the subservient roles of wives and domestic servants, women started to fill up the mental hospitals. "By the 1930s, the

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 1410: *Women in Inter-War Britain* run by Ms Katarzyna Janitz-De La Rue, MA.

Tavistock Clinic, founded for the psychoanalytic treatment of functional nervous disorders, reported that 61 percent of its patients were women."[3]
The women's situation was also worsened by psychoanalysis. Although in its early years it did offer a considerable advance in the knowledge about female psychology, eventually, with the publication of Freud's essays on femininity - *Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Differences Between the Sexes* (1925), *Female Sexuality* (1931) and *Femininity* (1933) - it turned into another discourse debasing women.

"The cornerstone of the Freudian theory of womanhood is the conviction that a woman is a castrated man. It is assumed that she considers herself to be thus deprived and much of her motivation stems from the attempt to compensate herself for this lack by having children", preferably male ones.[4]
Freud's theory implies therefore that only through childbearing a woman can arrive at the condition of mental health. Freud's assumptions about feminine psychology seriously hindered the women's fight for independence as it strengthened the popular belief that the woman who pursued active goals was ill-adapted to her real role and in a way abnormal. Surprisingly, the Freudian theory was also extremely influential among women themselves and some of them assumed its tenets to be indisputable. The evidence of its tremendous impact can be found in the writings of many female writers. Antonia White, for instance, who between the years 1935-1938 underwent a psychoanalytic therapy, wrote in her diary:

> I suppose I want a book in some funny way to be a male child, something powerful, able to fertilise other people. I can understand he extraordinary satisfaction of producing a son. A woman has not a penis but she can produce a being with a real penis.[5]

Therefore, despite the existence of women in the ranks of the psychoanalytic movement, a theory of female sexuality from the feminist point of view was not formulated. Karen Horney, the German analyst, was one of very few women doctors who openly disagreed with Freud's views. In her papers written between 1926 and 1935, she condemned psychoanalysis as a male-dominated and misogynic discipline stressing that Freud in his assumptions entirely neglected the socio-cultural aspect of women's lives.[6] Horney's ideas, however, did not find many followers and soon she herself abandoned the controversial topic. In Britain, the female analysts also failed to advance the field of female psychology. They either supported Freud's views or chose not to discuss the issue of womanhood shifting their attention to child psychiatry, mother-child relations and marital problems, thus accepting a pre-war view of a woman's place within the family.

The lack of any substantial changes in the theory of female insanity was parallel to the lack of improvements with regard to the treatments available for mentally disturbed women. The insane, especially those from the working class, were incarcerated in asylums and mental institutions which were still deeply rooted in the Victorian times as far as the methods of therapy were concerned. Women met there with harsh conditions and brutal handling. They were straitjacketed, tied down to bed, heavily drugged and forcibly fed. Antonia White, who in 1923 was certified insane and spent a year in Bethlem Royal Hospital (one of the oldest mental hospitals in Europe), gave an account of her asylum experiences in the short story entitled 'The House of Clouds'. In White's narrative the asylum presented through the eyes of the story's heroine, Helen, emerges as a place of punishment for women who challenge the norms of feminine conduct. "What is this place?" asks Helen. "A hospital for girls who ask too many questions and have to give their brains a rest. Now go to sleep," answers the nurse.[7] The descriptions of feeding evoke the archetypal patterns of masculine dominance and feminine submission. Helpless Helen is held down by an uncomprehending, cruel doctor who inserts a tube down her nose and pours some liquid. In the story, Antonia White implied also that women were the victims of not only the male-dominated psychiatry but also of the male-formulated definitions of madness as relatives, and husbands in particular, were the first judges of the woman's mental stability. Her fate often depended on the husband's understanding of the term 'madness' and his perception of her behaviour.

Middle class women had a few more alternatives with regard to the treatment of their nervous disorders. There were many nursing homes and sanatoria, very fashionable at this period, which eagerly offered the rest cures to women going through mental crises. In a majority of cases, however, the treatment turned out to be ineffective, which was the case with Virginia Woolf and Vivien Eliot. Vivien Haigh-Wood Eliot, T.S. Eliot's first wife spent half of her life in various centres for nervous disorders trying to cure, what now would be probably diagnosed as one of hormonal imbalance or deficiency. The symptoms included headaches, cramps and over-frequent menstrual cycles. In order to control her moods she was given alcohol-based items and various morphine derivatives to which she eventually became addicted and which were responsible for her frequent attacks of anxiety and restlessness. In 1923 she underwent a therapy prescribed to her by a German physician, Dr Marten, who specialized in a treatment which combined near starvation of the patient with the injection of animal glands.[8] The cure increased her bouts of aberrant behaviour. She also started to suffer from numbness and paralysis and her physical health was quickly deteriorating. Another patient of the sanatorium described Vivien's appearance:

> (...) she walked almost as though in a trance along the wooded path. Her black hair was dank, her white face blotched. Her dark dress hung loosely over her frail form; her expression was both vague and acutely sad.[9]

Finally, Vivien Eliot became a resident of the mental hospital and spent the rest of her life in confinement.

The cases of women with problems similar to Mrs Eliot's were not rare in the inter-war period. Another large category of asylum admissions constituted women whose insanity was related to childbirth. British evidence from this period indicates that "childbirth was a real source of fear and distress, accompanied by feelings of anxiety and depression, and that such feelings were common across the classes."[10] The women's distress arose from a conflict between their role prescriptions and the realities of their lives. The inter-war period was characterised by a strong ideology of motherhood but at the same time birth control and sexuality were considered as social taboos. Women found it very difficult to gain access to information on birth control and in many cases they were not able to use any method of contraception due to the lack of privacy at their homes. Moreover, fertility control usually required the knowledge and consent of the husband as in the 1920s "those few family doctors who would talk to patients about birth control preferred to talk to the husband."[11]

Women encountered also new difficulties in the field of childcare. During the inter-war years the standards regarding child-rearing were much higher. A strong emphasis was put on the psychological needs of the child and satisfying them became the mother's duty. Child psychologists and experts in childcare, for example, Sir Frederick Truby King devised complicated infant-feeding routines and training schedules aimed at building the child's character and securing his/her success in life. Many women, struggling to follow the instructions of specialists, paid for it with a strong depression.[12] As a consequence, women feared pregnancy. The attention directed to the problem of venereal diseases only deepened their fears. Even before the war, feminists such as Christabel Pankhurst and Cicely Hamilton claimed that women were superior creatures as far as sexual conduct was concerned and they supported their stance with unconfirmed statistics according to which as many as 80 percent of men were infected with VD. Thus pregnant women "were made to feel embarrassed and ashamed of their condition."[13]

All these socio-cultural factors made the inter-war years quite significant for the history of female insanity. But only the appearance of a new disorder known as schizophrenia ('split mind') ultimately confirmed its importance. Elaine Showalter in her book *The Female Malady* states that schizophrenia "offers a remarkable example of the cultural conflation of femininity and insanity."[14] According to her, schizophrenia "does carry gender-specific meanings."[15] First of all, although not only women suffer from it, its symptoms, such as: depersonalization, disembodiment and fragmentation seem to reflect the typical female anxieties. Being always dependent on the male as the provider of their identities, women turn to external appearance for confirmation of their existence. Thus, women's looking in the mirror may be the sign of "desperation rather than narcissism", as Showalter noticed.[16] Female preoccupation with make-up, clothes and other adornments of the body may be also viewed as the result of their awareness of themselves as visual objects who are continually surveyed by males. Antonia White confessed in her diary that she was always conscious of her looks,

> 'When I was seventeen I was afraid of marriage because I thought I should look so repulsive in the early morning that a lover would be disgusted. Powder and face cream have come to acquire a value for me which I cannot explain - it is almost like a lust or a kleptomania.'[17]

Such a situation creates a split between the body as sexual object and the mind as subject. Furthermore, it makes women dependent on socially constructed definitions of attractiveness, thus, vulnerable to all sorts of problems connected with the loss of youth and beauty.

Another parallel between schizophrenia and female identity can be drawn with regard to the treatments available for this illness. As Showalter writes in her book, "from the 1930s to 1950s the main English treatments for schizophrenia were insulin shock, electroshock and lobotomy."[18] All the three of them were used overwhelmingly on female patients and all resulted in submission and infantilization. Under insulin therapy women gained a lot of weight so, in this respect, the treatment seemed to have symbolic association with pregnancy. Moreover, insulin injections often led to the deterioration of the patient's memory. The most frequently applied treatment for schizophrenia was electroconvulsive therapy. Since short-term and partial amnesias were acknowledged to have been the side effect of this treatment, women constituted a decisive majority of patients who underwent it, as persons "judged to have less need of their brains."[19] Lobotomy was the most radical medical intervention in schizophrenia as it took the form of a surgical operation during which a part of the brain was cut away in order to modify the behaviour of a particular individual. The changes brought on by lobotomy were utterly dehumanising. Patients were turned into creatures completely devoid of personalities and free will.

The treatments of women suffering from schizophrenia show the extent to which the inter-war psychiatry was oppressive to them. In the women's literature dealing with madness and institutionalization it emerges as a fundamentally patriarchal institution applying sexist definitions in the diagnosis of women. Females, however, "were not only oppressed because of their diagnosed madness, but their insanity was often caused by dominating societal institutions"[20]. Women found that there were not many career prospects available for them. They were supposed to get married and have children and when they failed to do it, they were often labelled as 'mad'.

Notes

[1] Showalter, p. 107-108

[2] Ibid., p. 196

[3] Ibid., p. 197

[4] Greer, p. 91

[5] White, 1991, p. 139

[6] Showalter, p. 200

[7] White, 1928, p. 108

[8] Ackroyd, p. 134

[9] Ibid., p. 158-159

[10] Purvis, p. 170

[11] Lewis, p.117

[12] Ibid., p. 116

[13] Ibid., p. 133

[14] Showalter, p. 204

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid., p. 212

[17] White, 1991, p. 27

[18] Showalter, p. 205

[19] Showalter, p. 207

[20] Machiorlatti, p.66

Bibliography

Ackroyd, P. *T.S. Eliot*, Hamish Hamilton, London 1984

Greer, G. *The Female Eunuch*, Paladin, London 1971

Lewis, J. *Women in England 1870-1950: Sexual Divisions and Social Change*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, Hemel Hempstead 1984

Machiorlatti, J. 'Surveying Popular Films of Oppression: The Ideological Constitution of Women and Madness' [in:] Loukides, P., Fuller, L. (eds.) *Beyond the Stars 5. Themes and Ideologies in American Popular Film*, Bowling Green State University Popular Press, Bowling Green, Ohio 1996

Purvis, J. (ed.) *Women's History: Britain 1850-1945*, UCL Press, London 1995

Showalter, E. *The Female Malady. Women, Madness and English Culture 1830-1980*, Virago Press, London 1987

White, A. 'The House of Clouds' (1928), [in:] Knight L. (ed.) *Infinite Riches: Virago Modern Classics Short Stories*, Virago Press, London, 1993

White, A. *Diaries 1926-1957*, Constable and Company, London 1991

Kinga Taukert

Mermaids of Dreamland. A Woman in Edward Burne-Jones's Paintings*

Aesthetic Pre-Raphaelitism

In the mid-50s of the 19th century a new group of artists appeared on the field of British visual art - the so-called second generation of Pre-Raphaelites. However, some critics call attention to the new-comers' original features which distinguished them from the artists of the Pre-Raphaelite circle and made them the predecessors of later movements: the Arts and Crafts Movement, Aestheticism and the decadence of *fin de siecle*[1]. From the PRB (the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood) some of them adopted deep admiration for medieval art (e.g. Arthurian themes in works by E.Burne-Jones, W.Morris and J.Waterhouse) and the characteristic dreamy mood of D.Rosetti's early paintings. With the Aesthetes and Decadents they shared the belief in art for art's sake, disapproval of moral suggestion in art and concern for delivering aesthetic pleasure (esp. F.Leighton and E.Burne-Jones). "For them, beauty lay in exquisiteness, in objects that gave pleasure simply by being well-formed, in works of art with an arrangement of lines, shapes, colours... that had a life and grace of its own, independent of whatever it might describe"[2]. Therefore, in order to describe the characteristics of the group more accurately a new term was proposed: Aesthetic Pre-Raphaelitism[3].

The influence of the most famous artist of the group, Sir Edward Burne-Jones, extended even into the 20th century, as he was one of the great precursors of symbolism. An echo of his works may be found in the artistic output of e.g. Jean Lorrain[4], Fernand Khnopff[5], Franz von Stuck[6] and many more. Although some regarded his art as purely decorative and highly ornamental and as such devoid of any deeper meaning[7], a closer analysis reveals under the smooth surface the intriguing underworld of symbols.

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 1405: *Introduction to the Culture of the 19th Century* run by Ms Dorota Babilas, MA.

Women, sirens and mermaids

E.Burne-Jones's Dreamland[8] is peopled with women -strange women: pale and slender Botticelli-type figures with expressionless androgynous faces and lifeless empty eyes. They remind the viewer of enchanted somnambulists moving slowly - as if under water - in a mesmeric trance. These enchanted and detached creatures are unexceptionally immersed in their own unfathomable world of inexplicable dreams and complete *desinteressement*. They seem to be passive and weary, thus lacking any strength. However, this impression is deceptive and may prove dangerous for the unwary. Terminally dangerous.

The concept of mysterious women-like creatures, endowed with power of enchantment and living in a world alien to mere mortals, has been known from the Antiquity. The mythical sirens were represented as bird-women and fish-women, the first inhabiting and ruling the element of air, the latter - the element of water. Both enjoyed the power of enticing wayfarers with their voice, mermaids being additionally endowed with great charm and beauty. However, the allure of the mermaid proved to be lethal for those who boldly entered the hostile element instead of keeping their feet firmly on the ground.

The symbol of a mermaid is a very powerful one and complex as well. It draws attention to the alluring power of the unknown, the inexplicable and dangerous realms of - human experience? soul? imagination? art? A precise answer cannot be offered, for the most persuasive symbols escape all attempts of pinning them down with an accurate explanation.

Before one immerses oneself in the dreamy world of E.Burne-Jones's symbolic paintings, a warning has to be issued: each adventurer and explorer undertakes the journey at his or her own risk. This world is inhabited by mermaids. Waiting mermaids.

The Depths of the Sea (1887)

This is arguably the most powerful image of female demonic powers in E.Burne-Jones's artistic output. The watercolour depicts a mermaid dragging a drowned man - quite probably enchanted by her song and charm - to the bottom of the sea. It is not possible to underestimate the powerful impact of the drawing, mainly because of the striking expression on the mermaid's face. This seems to be the only work by E.Burne-Jones where his model actually smiles. She smiles an inhumane smile, which leaves no doubt that she is clearly enjoying her power. However, she cannot be condemned. She escapes any moral judgement for the moral rules of the world of mortals do not apply to this creature dwelling in unknown depths[9]. In some sense, it was the man who had entered her dominion - either by his own will or attracted by her - consequently falling victim of the rules governing that perilous realm.

The Beguiling of Merlin (1874)

Nimue was apparently the only person taught magic by Merlin. Enamoured with the beautiful seductress, the great magician unwarily awakened the power within her - the power which had been dormant, coiled up like a snake, but ready to rise when stirred. The painting depicts the dramatic moment when the empowered traitor casts a spell on enervated Merlin, entrapping him forever in a hawthorn bush. Nimue is presented in an upright position with her body bending and twisting in a snake-like manner. There are snakes entwined in her hair, while the ripples of her blue-purplish dark dress resemble the waves. The fabric clings to her body as if wet.

It is not coincidental that there is a close connection between fish-women and serpent-women. N.Auerbach traces the origin of the mermaid to ancient mythological serpent goddesses[10], J.E.Cirlot links the mermaid with the French viper-fairy, stating that both "are complex figures... It seems that they are largely the symbols of the "temptations" scattered along the path of life... beguiling it (i.e. the human spirit) into remaining on the magic island"[11]. This symbolism is evident in Burne-Jones's paintings, where those treacherous and dangerous creatures deceitfully charm the susceptible into entering their magic realm and staying there - under their spell.

Tree of Forgiveness (1881-82)

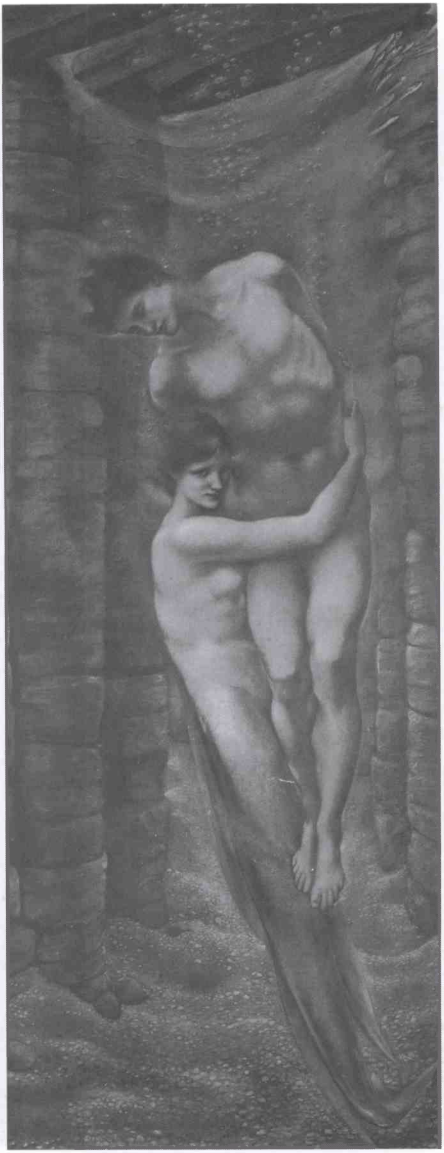
Another case of struggle between man and woman, the oil version of the watercolour *Phyllis and Demophoon* (1870), is definitely more erotic and dynamic than the original. The nymph emerging from a tree trunk captures her long-lost lover in a tight embrace, while he desperately tries to free himself. It is significant that the artist created his own version of the Greek legend, altering the end of Ovid's tale, which originally ended with the disloyal lover returning and embracing an almond tree into which Phyllis was turned after her suicidal death. The tree immediately burst into blossom, thus showing that Demophoon was forgiven. Ovid's *Heroides* mentioned neither the resuscitation of the nymph nor the anxiety of the lover, who in E.Burne-Jones's version is as alarmed by Phyllis's forgiveness as he would be by her vengeance. Ironically, it is Demophoon himself who stimulates Phyllis's hidden, alarming strength, which enables her to go back to life[12]. This makes his situation similar to that of Merlin and, in some aspects, to that of Pygmalion.

Pygmalion and the Image - the Soul Attains (1868-78)

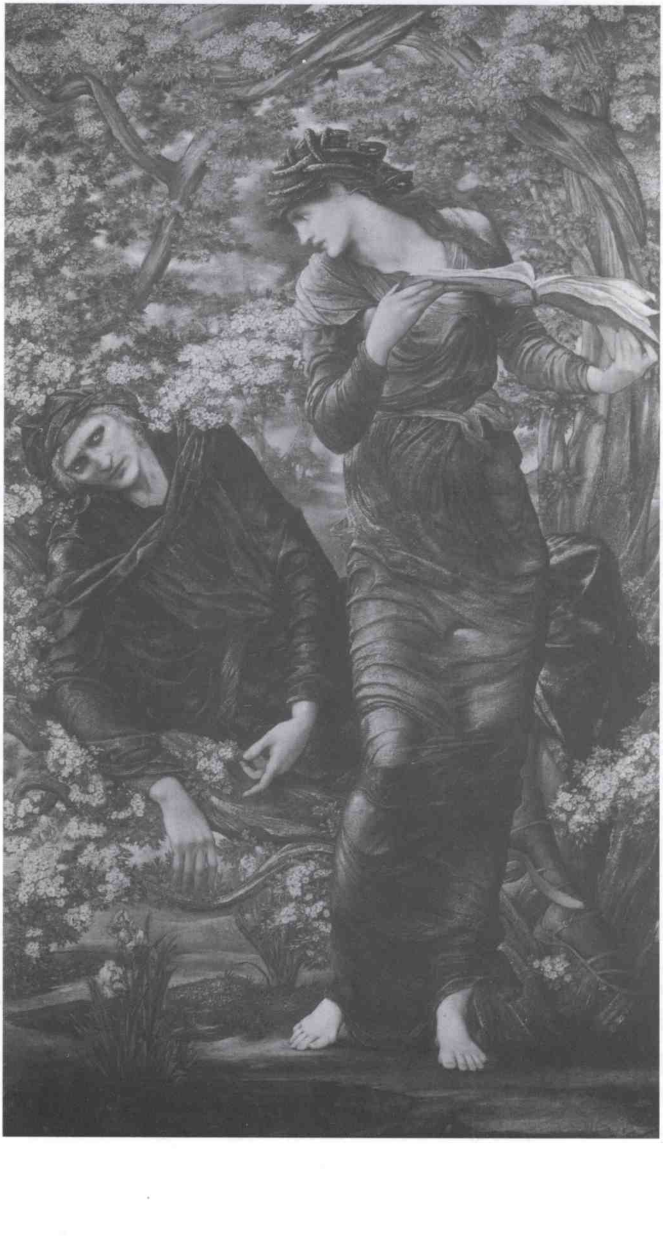
Pygmalion's prayers have been answered. The ivory statue of a woman which he had sculpted and then fell in love with was animated by a goddess of love. The painting shows the king kneeling down and looking up lovingly on the ethereally beautiful creature. However, she never looks back at him. Although he has brought her to existence, she does not even seem to notice her creator and remains detached in spite of the homage he pays to her. Galatea's unfocused gaze indicates that she sees beyond the reality surrounding her, that she does not fully belong to the world into which she was summoned by Pygmalion's desire to possess her body and soul. However, his claims to the latter will not be met for her soul dwells in unfathomable depths of mysterious realms peopled with beings created by magical power of imagination.

The wedding of Psyche (1894-95)

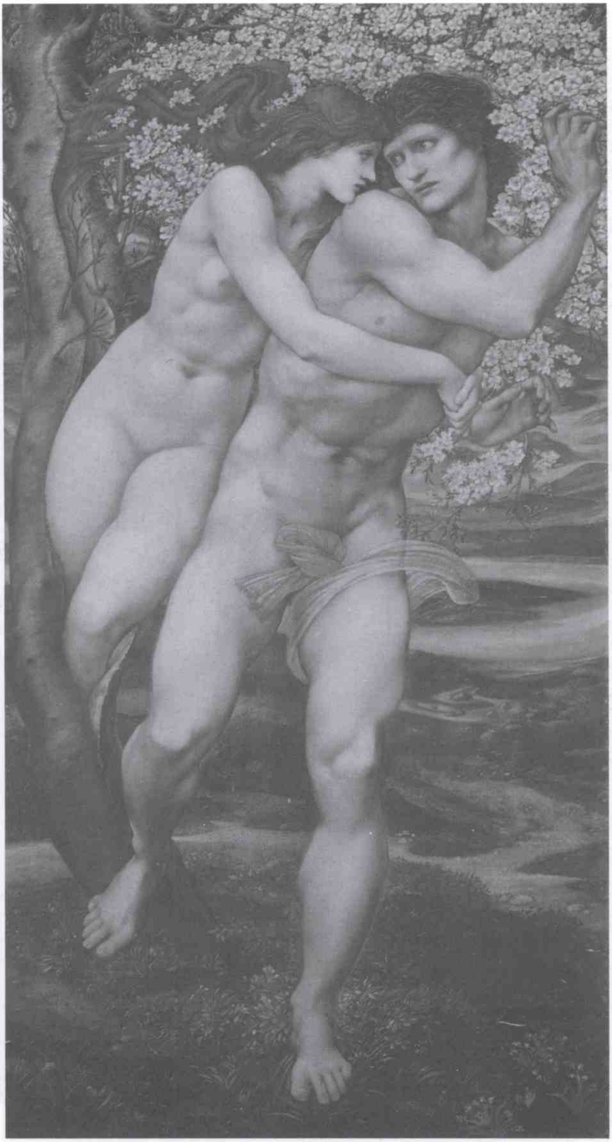
In certain aspects Psyche from E.Burne-Jones's oil painting resembles his vision of Galatea. Both are passive, resigned and immersed in their own secret world. Significantly, Galatea is depicted facing her future husband and Psyche walking towards the site of her marriage. Despite colourful outfits of attending maidens and roses scattered along the way, the procession resembles a funeral. The semblance is even stronger when the painting is compared to the much earlier *Princess Sabra Led to the Dragon* (1866). One woman is led to death, another to marriage, but they look almost exactly the same - walking slowly in a procession of fair maidens, with bent head, one hand clutching at her heart and another grasping a shroud-coloured robe.



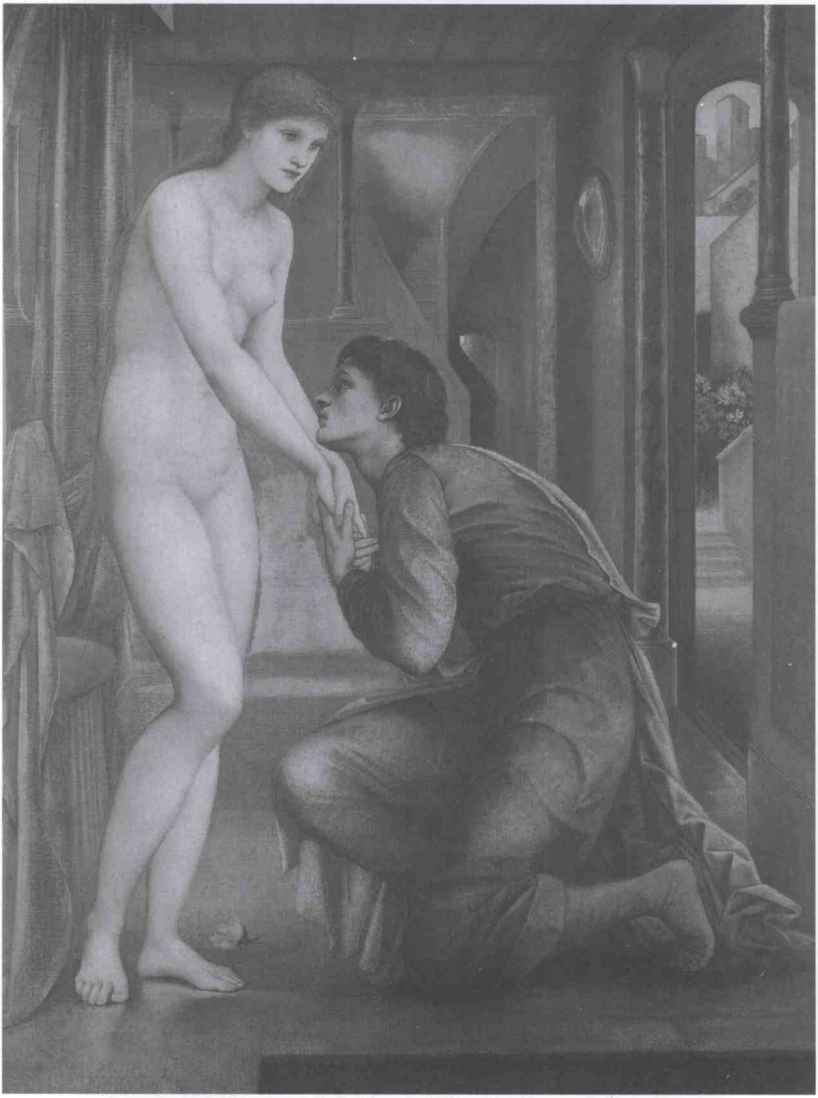
I. The Depths of the Sea



II. The Beguiling of Merlin

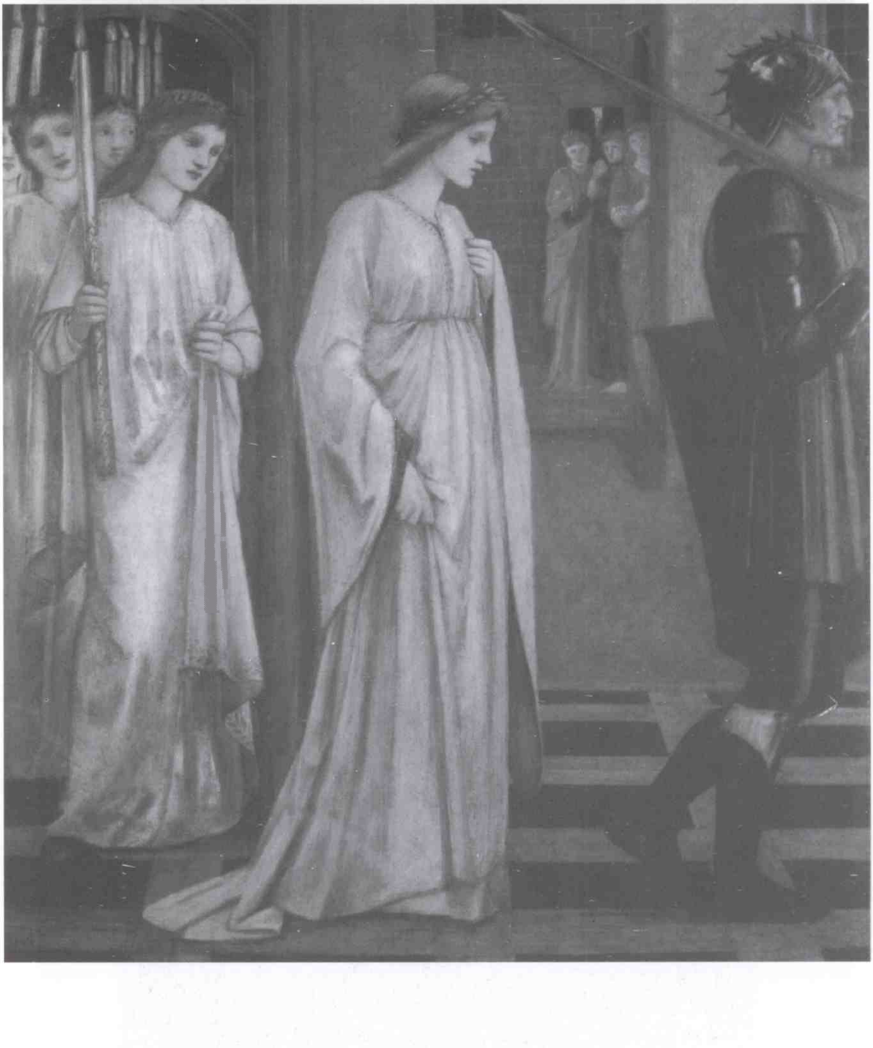


III. Tree of Forgiveness

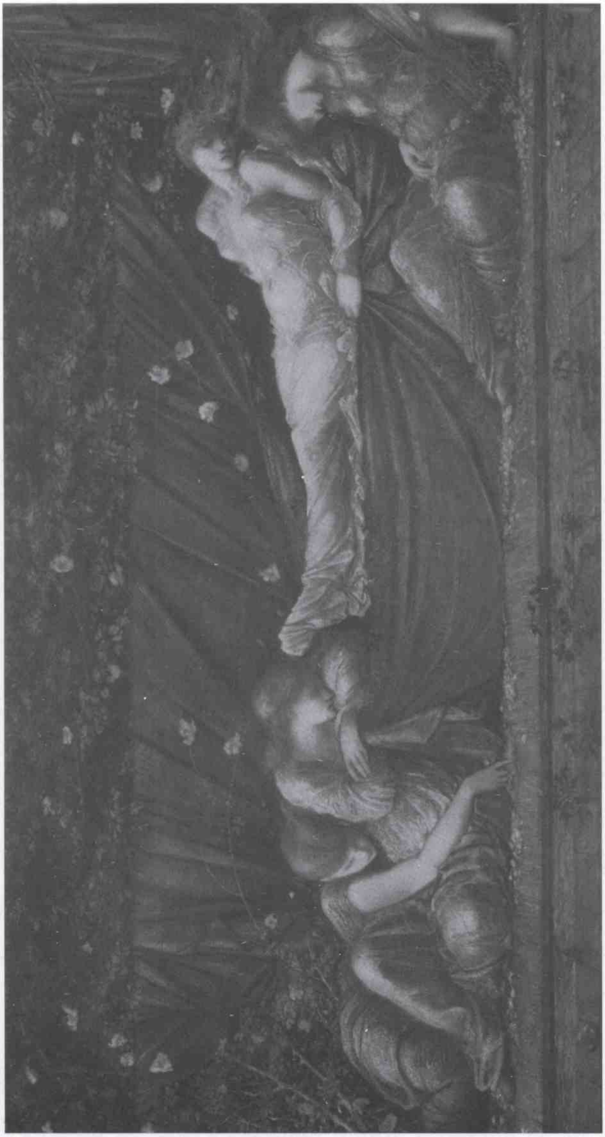


IV. Pygmalion and the Image - The Soul Attains

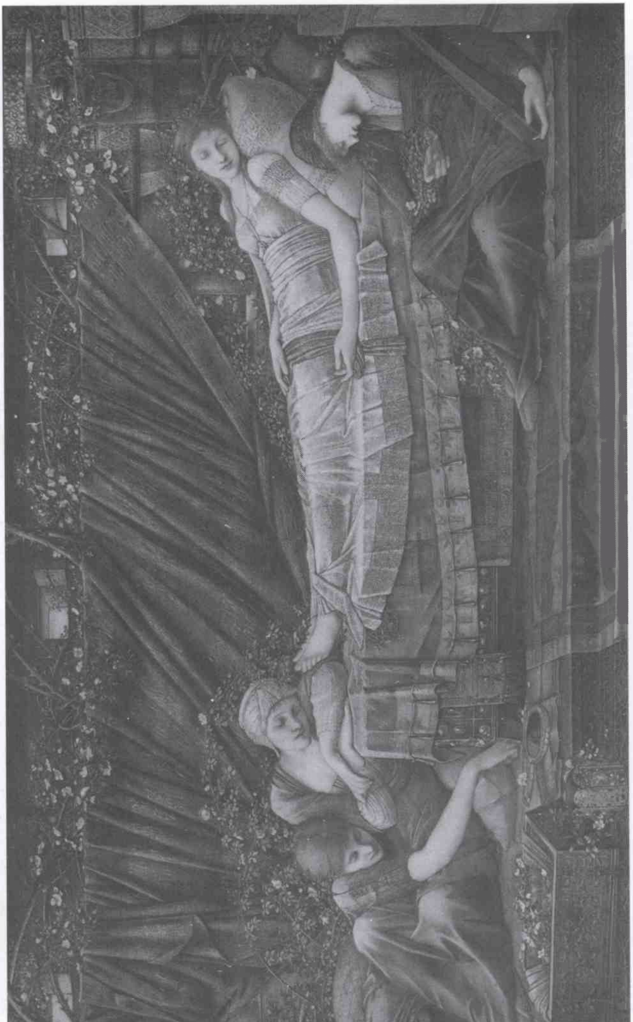
V. The Wedding of Psyche



VI. The Princess Sabra Led to the Dragon



VII. The Sleeping Beauty



VIII. The Briar Rose - The Sleeping Princess

As long as a mermaid remains in her own realm, she retains her endlessly reinvigorating powers, but when she enters the world of mortals, she becomes a crippled creature, like in Ch.Andersen's tale: "...she allows her tongue to be amputated and her unearthly song to be lost, she abandons her home in the immortal sea for the possession of a problematic soul only the Prince's caprice can bestow. Were she to kill the Prince, her wounds would be healed and her native magic restored"[13].

Burne-Jones's Galatea and Psyche are like the mermaids who decide to suppress their preternatural powers, but then suffer as a result. Galatea suffers because of a whim of Pygmalion, who brings her to his world, Psyche suffers because of Eros, who forbids her to look at him, and when she disobeys, punishes her by leaving her alone in a barren land away from the safety of her home. Both reconcile themselves to their plight - two mermaids who have renounced their power.

***The Sleeping Beauty* 1870-71**
***The Briar Rose - The Sleeping Princess* 1873-90**

Burne-Jones painted two oil series illustrating Perrault's tale of the Sleeping Beauty. The earlier one, consisting of three paintings, is owned by Museo de Arte de Ponce in Puerto Rico, while the later, extended into four pieces, remains a part of the Faringdon Collection in Berkshire. In both series the painting on the far left depicts the prince entering the enchanted wood, the one on the far right shows the Sleeping Beauty, while in the middle there are linking scenes with sleeping courtiers and servants. The setting, however, does not bring to mind a nice fairy tale told in a nursery. The artist produced a detailed representation of a grim tangle of thorny branches invading the space in which limp human figures lay scattered on the ground as if dead - "...it is certainly typical that he dwells on the strange, sombre imagery of tangled, thorny briars and slumped bodies, as though forgetting the happy ending"[14].

This may be another case of creating a very personal new version of a well-known story[15]. E.Burne-Jones may have again had in mind the concept of unexplained powers awakened within a female character by a man who in some way exerts his power on her (e.g. by kissing a sleeping, thus defenceless woman). However, it has already been demonstrated that taking a sleeping beauty away from her mysterious world of dreams and bringing her to one's own reality may prove perilous.

When the paintings of the Sleeping Beauty from both series are compared, some striking differences may be observed. The later version seems rather static, while the earlier picture is arguably more expressive and symbolic. The first depicts a chamber scene with a bed occupied by a rather rigid figure of an innocent maiden (her virginity is indicated by a sash tied around her hips - this hints at the symbolism of undoing a knot)[16]. The princess is accompanied by servants clad in sensible dresses. Two of the servant-women have their heads covered.

The setting of the Ponce version seems similar as the outline and composition remain the same. However, significant changes have been introduced. Firstly, this is an outdoor scene which means that it does not take place in a place created by humans for humans. Secondly, the colour is different - various shades of green dominate the whole picture: the background, the foreground and the luscious draperies. The shapes of green drapery covering a bed and the blue one hanging behind the Sleeping Beauty's head bring associations with the element of water: the pattern of circles on the water and a cascade. Also the garments of the sleeping women remind the viewer of the waves and foam on the crest of a wave. Their heads are not covered, their wavy chestnut hair is exposed in its full splendour.

The most prominent woman figure of the earlier version do not resemble the character from the later one. One can rather observe a certain similarity between her and the sleeping woman depicted on J.Fuseli's *The Nightmare* (c.1782-91). Both lie sleeping in an abandoned position, with their head thrown back, with their hair loose and tangled - as if after intercourse. E.Burne-Jones's woman is virtually naked for the robe reveals all the enticing curves of her upper body. As far as the lower part of her body is concerned, the viewer cannot have any doubts: it has a perfect fin shape.

The prince does not know what awaits him, but he has been forewarned as the threatening maze of thick thorns shows only too clearly that no-one is supposed to enter the enchanted domain. As he wants to break the spell he confidently advances without realising that he is going to disturb the dreaming mermaids...

Enigmatic like sphinxes, E.Burne-Jones's mermaids zealously guard their secrets. They seem to represent the alluring power of the mysterious realm - within ourselves perhaps - but nothing can be stated for sure. Maybe they symbolise the perilous world of a spiritual journey? Maybe they epitomise the inner struggle of an artist? Maybe...

Notes

[1] Cf. Konopacki, pp.11-12; also: Warner, pp.27-8.

[2] Warner, p.27.

[3] Landow, *"Pre-Raphaelites: An Introduction"*.

[4] Cf. Cassou, p.52.

[5] Ibid., p.100.

[6] Ibid., p.160.

[7] Cf. Hughes; also: Warner, p.145.

[8] D. Rosetti's term: "Rosetti, though only five years older than Burne-Jones, immediately adopted him as his pupil, describing him as 'one of the nicest young fellow in Dreamland' " [in:] Ash, p.7

[9] "The painter need not show the tail for us to see that human moral categories are inadequate to her preternatural intensity" [in:] Auerbach, p.94.

[10] Ibid., p.94.

[11] Cirlot, p.283.

[12] Cf. Auerbach's description of various instances of male characters exerting influence over a woman and then being threatened by her mysteriously awakened powers and her inexplicable ability of regenerating herself [in:] op. cit., Ch. 1: *"The Myth of Womanhood: Victims."*

[13] Auerbach, p.8.

[14] Warner, p.143.

[15] Cf. Auerbach's analysis [in:] op.cit., p.42. She also quotes a significant comment by the artist himself: "I wanted to stop with the princess asleep and to tell them no more." – ibid.

[16] Her dress will be later reproduced as Psyche's wedding gown in *The Wedding of Psyche,* (1894-5) - also with a tied sash.

Bibliography

Ash, R. *Sir Edward Burne-Jones*, Pavilion Book Limited, London 1997.

Auerbach, N. *Woman and the Demon. The Life of a Victorian Myth.* Harvard University Press 1982.

Bendiner, K. *An Introduction to Victorian Painting.* Yale University Press 1985.

Cirlot, J.E. *A Dictionary of Symbols*. Routledge Kegan Paul Ltd, London 1962.

Cassou, J. (ed.), *Encyklopedia symbolizmu*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 1997.

Hughes, R. "An Escapist's Dreamworld". *Time*, June 15, 1998.

Konopacki, A. *Prerafaelici*. Arkady, Warszawa 1989.

Landow, G.P. "Aesthetes and Decadents of the 1890s - Points of Departure". http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/hypertext /landow/victorian/decadence/decadence.html

Landow, G.P. "Aesthetic Pre-Raphaelitism". http://www. stg.brown.edu/projects/hypertext/landow/victorian/art/art3.html

Landow, G.P. "Art, Autobiography and Eros in the Art of Burne-Jones". http://www. stg.brown.edu/projects/hypertext /landow/victorian/art/burne-jones/theme1.html

Landow, G.P. *"Pre-Raphaelites: An Introduction*". http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/hypertext/landow/victorian/art/art1. html

Warner, M. (ed.) *The Victorians. British Painting 1837-1901*. Editors Office of National Gallery of Art, Washington 1997.

[θɪəˈretɪkl̩ ənd əˈplaɪd lɪŋˈɡwɪstɪks]

Irena Ozga

Metonymy within the Cognitive Network Model*

> 'All of language is metonymic in origin.'[1]
> Günter Radden

Traditionally, metonymy was regarded as a stand-for relationship between names. Cognitive linguistics has dramatically changed this view by stressing the conceptual nature of metonymy and the significant role it plays in cognitive processing on account of its reference-point character. This paper will focus on metonymy as an important process of meaning extension within the schematic network.

The network conception

Langacker's approach to meaning is non-reductive in that it views lexical categories as typically polysemous and hence unreducible to a single representation[2]. Instead, a speaker's knowledge of the conventional meaning of a lexical unit[3] is best represented as embracing a whole network of interrelated senses as shown in fig.1:

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 269: *Lexicon and Morphology in Cognitive Linguistics* run by Ms Elżbieta Górska, PhD.

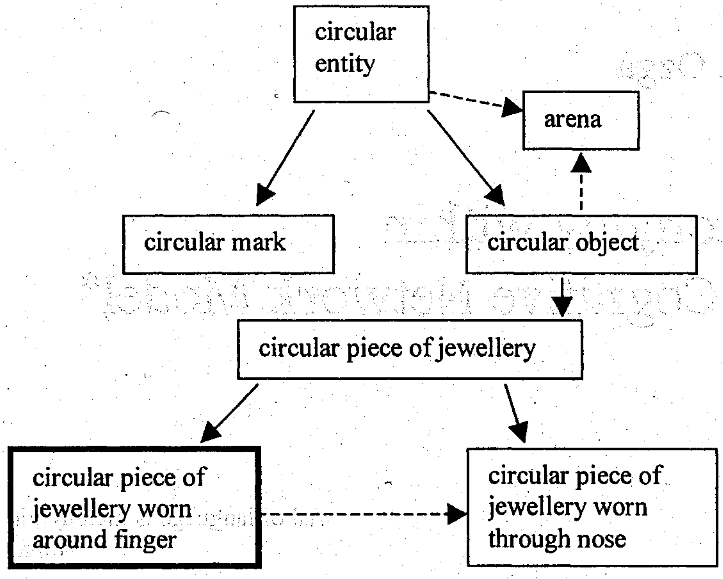

circular entity
arena
circular mark
circular object
circular piece of jewellery
circular piece of jewellery worn around finger
circular piece of jewellery worn through nose

Figure 1 (after Langacker, 1988a, p. 52)

Two[4] basic types of categorising relationships are postulated to hold between the nodes in the network. A relationship of extension (marked by a dashed arrow in fig.1) from either a local or the global category prototype is established on the basis of a perceived similarity[5]. Extension, as Langacker[6] stresses, 'implies some conflict in specification between the basic and extended values.' A relationship of schematicity, on the other hand, is designed to grasp the commonality of the different senses which elaborate/instantiate the schema 'at contrasting levels of specificity'[7] with no conflict in specification[8].

Significantly, the two types of categorisation are closely connected[9]: the perception of similarity coincides with the discovery of commonality between two structures, thus creating the potential for the extraction of a schema[10] (see fig.2 below).

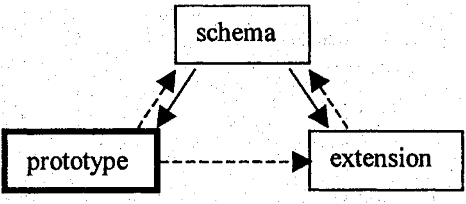

schema
prototype
extension

Figure 2 (after Langacker, 1993, p. 2)

Consequently, 'a category's outward extension from the prototype should tend to be accompanied by a certain amount of upward growth'[11]. The network model, as Langacker[12] observes, constitutes a dynamic structure with each node and categorising relationship exhibiting a varied degree of cognitive salience, which is 'shaped, maintained and modified by the pressures of language use'[13].

Metonymy

The two most fundamental mechanisms of meaning extension within the network model are metaphor and metonymy, the basic difference between the two being that metaphorical mappings are unidirectional and involve two cognitively distant domains[14], while metonymic mappings operate within one domain and can be bi-directional. In their recent theory, Kövecses and Radden[15] follow Langacker[16] in viewing metonymy as a 'reference-point construction' which serves 'a useful cognitive and communicative function'[17] of providing a convenient passageway to a target via a highly salient vehicle: ' Metonymy is a cognitive process in which one conceptual entity, the vehicle, provides mental access to another conceptual entity, the target within the same ICM'[18].

According to this definition, a prerequisite for establishing a metonymic relationship between two entities is the existence of a common knowledge structure, that is, a common domain[19]. On the basis of an assumption that the structured domains (ICMs) that we have tend to be perceived as a whole with parts, Kövecses and Radden[20] postulate two basic types of metonymy- producing relationships:

A whole ICM and its parts (see fig.3a)
Parts of an ICM (see fig.3b)

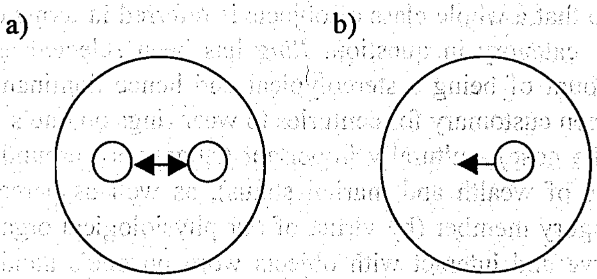


Figure 3 (adopted from lecture given by Günter Radden in October 1998, at the Institute of English Studies, Warsaw University).

The relationship between a whole and its parts primarily concerns things commonly perceived as forming a gestalt composed of various parts while the configuration involving parts of an ICM usually refers to events typically felt to consist of a number of parts[21].

In order to account for an evident preference given to certain vehicles in metonymic expressions as well as the irreversibility of some vehicle-to-target routes by virtue of their entrenchment, Kövecses and Radden[22] postulate the following principles of cognitive salience:

1. The principle of human experience, which gives priority to humans and objects from their immediate experience.
2. The principle of perceptual selectivity, which gives precedence to stimuli on account of their spatial or temporal immediacy.
3. The principle of cultural preference, which favours stereotypical, ideal, and typical category members[23]

The motivation of a given metonymic expression is strengthened with the increase in the number of cognitive principles invoked by that expression[24]and, in fact, it forms 'a continuum ranging from fully motivated default metonymies to little or unmotivated non-default metonymies'[25]. Significantly, there is a possibility of overriding some important cognitive principles which condition the choice of a preferred vehicle for social-communicative or rhetorical reasons[27].

As an illustration of metonymic extension as viewed by Kövecses and Radden[28], I shall consider some of the different senses of *ring* as they are represented in fig.1. The meaning of the category prototype 'circular piece of jewellery worn around the finger 'can be metonimically extended to refer to various circular objects worn on certain parts of a body, such as earring, a ring worn through one's nose, a metal ring in a bull's nose or a ring around a pigeon's leg, so that a whole class of objects is referred in terms of one salient member of the category in question. *Ring* has been selected as a preferred vehicle on account of being a stereotypical and hence dominant (in western culture it has been customary for centuries to wear rings on one's fingers rather than through the nose), culturally important (rings worn around one's finger were exponents of wealth and marital status), as well as perceptually most immediate category member (by virtue of our physiological organisation, it is easier to observe and interact with objects worn on one's hands rather than ears).

Significantly, metonymy is to a large extent consistent with what Langacker describes as an 'active-zone phenomenon'[29] An entity's 'active-zone' with respect to a particular relationship is defined as 'those portions of the entity that participate most directly and crucially in [a given, I.O.] relationship'[30]. Normally, a discrepancy can be observed between the profiled entities and their active zones with respect to the profiled relationship[31]. In the sentence *she is wearing a diamond ring, she* stands as a whole for the active-zone part involved in the relationship of wearing a ring, that is the woman's finger. Consequently, a highly salient human participant is metonimically used as a reference-point to evoke the relevant active-zone part, which renders the whole sentence 'communicatively efficient (...), and cognitively natural'[33].

The cognitive account of metonymy carries profound implications for the analysis of meaning as represented in the network model. Furthermore, previously neglected and considered marginal, metonymy proves to be one of the basic mechanisms underlying our way of thinking.

Notes

[1] during his lecture given in October 1998 at the Institute of English Studies, Warsaw University.

[2] cf. Langacker, 1987, 1988, 1988a

[3] The network model is, in fact, applicable to all kinds of linguistic categories.

[4] I don't discuss here various bi-directional relationships holding within the network model.

[5] cf. Langacker,1988, p.134

[6] ibid., p.135

[7] Langacker, 1987, p.91

[8] cf. ibid.

[9] Langacker also describes them in terms of full and partial schematicity (cf. Langacker, 1987, p.379)

[10] Langacker, 1987, p.379

[11] Langacker, 1988, p.140

[12] Langacker, 1987, pp. 380-381

[13] ibid., pp. 381-382

[14] cf. Lakoff and Johnson, 1980

[15] cf. Kövecses and Radden, 1998

[16] cf. Langacker , 1993

[17] Langacker, 1993, p. 30

[18] Kövecses and Radden, 1998, p. 39

[19] Lakoff (1987) proves that every domain is actually an idealized cognitive domain.

[20] Kövecses and Radden, 1998, p. 49

[21] cf. ibid. For an exhaustive list of Whole-and-parts ICMs see Kövecses and Radden, 1998, pp. 48-59.

[22] ibid., p. 63

[23] Two communicative principles (the principle of clarity and relevance) are also regarded as contributing to 'the default selection of a metonymic vehicle.' (ibid., p.69)

[24] cf. ibid., p. 71

[25] ibid.

[27] ibid.

[28] cf. Kövecses and Radden, 1998

[29] Langacker, 1993, p. 31

[30] ibid.

[31] cf. ibid.

[33] ibid., p. 32

Bibliography

Kövecses, Zoltan and Günter Radden. 'Metonymy: Developing a cognitive linguistic view.' *Cognitive Linguistics* 9.1 (1998)
Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors we Live by.* University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London 1980

Langacker, Ronald W. *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar. Volume1: Theoretical Prerequisites.* Stanford University Press, Stanford 1987

Langacker, Ronald W. ‘A usage-based model’ [in:] Rudzka-Ostyn, B. (ed.), *Topics in Cognitive Linguistics.* John Benjamins, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1988

Langacker, Ronald W. ‘A view of linguistic semantics’ [in:] Rudzka-Ostyn, B. (ed.). *Topics in Cognitive Linguistics.* John Benjamins, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1988a

Langacker, Ronald W. ‘Reference-point constructions’. *Cognitive Linguistics* 4.1 (1993)

Marcin Wiewiórka

The Manipulation School and its View on Translation and Translations*

In the history of literature and linguistics, there have been many different approaches to translation and translations. While discussing translation, scholars have usually focused on such controversial issues as free translation, literal translation, fidelity, faithfulness, adequacy, equivalence or translatability, trying to define them and discussing the problems connected with them. As for translations, they have usually been considered to be of secondary importance and the emphasis has been on the original text to which the translation is usually supposed to be faithful or equivalent in some way.

The goal of this essay is to show one particular approach to translation and translations, that of the Manipulation School, and to discuss some of its most characteristic features and peculiarities. Particular attention is paid to such issues as equivalence, descriptiveness, prescriptiveness, the role of translation theory, and the status of translations in the target culture. In order to show and emphasise the main characteristics of the approach, references are made to other, often conflicting, translation theories.

The term *Manipulation School* refers to a group of scholars, translators and translation theorists such as José Lambert, Gideon Toury, André Lefevere, Theo Hermans, Ria Vandauwera, Susan Bassnet and James Holmes.[1] One can also include here Itamar Even-Zohar, who is not a translation theorist, but whose work can be regarded as the theoretical foundations of the Manipulation School. The school's own preferred names are either *Translation Studies* or the *Low Countries group*, although the latter name is misleading since the group includes scholars not only from the Netherlands but also from Israel and England.[2]

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 293: *Contemporary Approaches to Translation Studies* run by Ms Aniela Korzeniowska, PhD.

Unlike many other scholars, such as Eugene A. Nida in the United States, J.C. Catford in England, or the members of the so-called Leipzig School in Germany, whose approaches to translation were linguistically oriented, all main exponents of the Manipulation School reject the influence of linguistics on their field of studies. Moreover, they also work almost exclusively in Comparative Literature, and deal mainly with literary translation, which the linguistically oriented German scholars rejected as deviant language unsuitable for rigorous scientific explanation.[3] The view of the Manipulation School on linguistics is summarised by Theo Hermans, who contends that although linguistics benefited the understanding of translation, it turned out to be too restricted to be applied to literary studies and not capable of dealing with the numerous complexities of literary works. Consequently, "it became obvious that it could not serve as a proper basis for the study of literary translation".[4]

The name *Manipulation School* aptly characterises another important tenet of the approach, which is described by Theo Hermans in the following way: "From the point of view of the target literature, all translation implies a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose".[5] Gideon Toury, who studied prose fiction translations from English, Russian, German, French and Yiddish into Hebrew at the University of Tel Aviv, maintains that most texts were selected for ideological reasons and that examples of complete linguistic equivalence to the source text were rare. He claims that it was so because the translators wanted to produce translations that would be acceptable in the target culture.[6] Therefore, they changed certain aspects of the texts and manipulated them in order to "bring the Target Text into line with a particular model and hence a particular correctness notion, and in so doing secure social acceptance, even acclaim".[7]

What follows from this is a completely new attitude to translation, and especially equivalence. In "scientifically" and linguistically oriented translation theories, equivalence played a very important role, and often determined the definition and understanding of translation. In the Leipzig School, for instance, the translation process was often perceived as consisting in determining the so-called translation units and selecting the so-called optimal equivalents from all potential equivalents provided by the target language.[8] Similarly, J.C. Catford defined translation as the replacement of textual material in the source language by equivalent textual material in the target language.[9] Moreover, he even went so far as to claim that the central task of translation theory was to define the nature and conditions of translation equivalence.[10] Another example could be Eugene A. Nida, whose dynamic equivalence was also the yardstick of an acceptable translation.

On the whole, it can be said that all such theories are source text-oriented and prescriptive. This is so because the correctness of translation is, according to them, always measured against the degree of correspondence with the source text[11], of which the target text is supposed to be a reconstruction.[12] Furthermore, they impose criteria specifying how translation should be done rather than describing how it is really done.[13] In contrast, one of the main assumptions of the Manipulation School is that no translation is ever completely adequate or equivalent to the original version, for the simple reason that the norms and expectations of the target culture cause shifts from the source text structures. Moreover, this fact is not viewed as the translator's fault, but accepted and regarded as inevitable. Accordingly, equivalence ceases to be the central concept of the translation theory. It is no longer a hypothetical ideal determining the target text but an empirical fact: the target text may or may not be equivalent to the source text.[14] In Toury's view each original text contains a certain number of properties and meanings, and all translations privilege only certain properties and meanings at the expense of others.[15] Thus, equivalence can be defined as a set of features which characterises the particular relationships between the source text and the target text.[16] The approach is then target text-oriented, the reason being that although the target text is based on another text which exists in another culture, its identity is believed to be determined mainly by the target culture.[17] Furthermore, the approach is also descriptive since the scholars who work in it try to understand, explain and describe the phenomena connected with translation instead of laying down principles prescribing how translation should be done.

What seems to be particularly interesting about the Manipulation School is its view on the status of translations in the target culture. According to Toury, despite changes in the translated texts and the fact that they are often only partially equivalent to the source texts, they are still often accepted as translations in the target culture.[18] This affects the definition of a translation, which Toury defines as any target language utterance that is presented or regarded as a translation within the target culture, on whatever grounds.[19]

To fully understand the way translations are viewed in the Manipulation School, one must have a look at the work of Itamar Even-Zohar, an Israeli cultural theorist who, early in the 1970s, developed the so-called polysystem theory. While working on a model for Israeli Hebrew literature, he coined the term *polysystem* to refer to the whole network of related and competing literary and extra-literary systems within society. What is especially interesting about his approach is his view on translated literature. Translations have usually been classified as secondary to and less important than the original works. However, it is not so in Even-Zohar's model. The data that he accumulated suggest that in certain circumstances, translations may play a very important role within a given polysystem.[20] A good illustration of this is Israel and the revival of Hebrew for everyday use. After the diaspora in the 6th century BC, Hebrew started to be used only for religious purposes, as a holy language, but was no longer used in everyday life. Consequently, over time, it stagnated and had no means to express many of the concepts of everyday, contemporary life. Second, since it had long existed only in written form, it lacked the spoken variant. When the need to revive Hebrew and make it into the national language of Israel arose, these two obstacles proved difficult to overcome. It may be said that it was translations that, to a large extent, helped to make Hebrew into a living language. By introducing neologisms, changing or enlarging the meaning of old words, or giving new meaning to words whose old meaning had been forgotten, translations enriched Hebrew, which finally evolved into a living language capable of meeting all the verbal needs of contemporary Jews.[21] Accordingly, the scholars of the Manipulation School emphasise that translations may frequently play a primary, creative and innovative role in a given literary system. Moreover, "they are seen as a text-type in its own right, as an integral part of the target culture and not merely as a reproduction of another text".[22]

All in all, it may be said that the translation theory formulated by the Manipulation School includes numerous tenets that are original and quite revolutionary, especially when compared with the so-called traditional or linguistically oriented approaches. First, the Manipulation School rejects the influence of linguistics. Second, the approach is target text-oriented, which naturally results in focusing on describing, analysing and comparing different translations, and rejecting the prescriptive and evaluative attitudes so characteristic of the earlier approaches. Third, the concept of equivalence is relegated to a role of secondary importance. Fourth, emphasis is shifted from the translation process and the problems underlying it to the result, the translated text as part of the target culture and a historical fact. Finally, the scholars of the Manipulation School believe that in a great deal of cases, translators change and manipulate the translated text, which can be influenced by norms, cultural expectations or ideology.

Notes

[1] Pisarska A., T. Tomaszkiewicz, pp. 37-38.

[2] Shuttleworth M., M. Cowie, p. 101.

[3] Snell-Hornby M., p. 23.

[4] Hermans T. *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation* quoted in Snell-Hornby M., p. 23.

[5] Ibid. quoted in Snell-Hornby M., p. 22.

[6] Gentzler E., pp. 125-127.

[7] Hermans T. "Translational Norms and Correct Translations" quoted in Shuttleworth M., M. Cowie, p. 101.

[8] Snell-Hornby M., p. 16.

[9] Shuttleworth M., M. Cowie, pp. 181-182.

[10] Ibid., pp. 49-51.

[11] Gentzler E., p. 127.

[12] Shuttleworth M., M. Cowie, pp. 164-165.

[13] Ibid., p. 130.

[14] Gentzler E., p. 128.

[15] Ibid., p. 129.

[16] Shuttleworth M., M. Cowie, pp. 50-51.

[17] Toury G. "Translation, Literary Translation and Pseudotranslation" quoted in Shuttleworth M., M. Cowie, p. 165.

[18] Gentzler E., pp. 126-127.

[19] Shuttleworth M., M. Cowie, pp. 181-182.

[20] Gentzler E., pp. 103-117.

[21] Atangana Nama Ch. et al, pp. 55-58.

[22] Snell-Hornby M., p. 24.

Bibliography

Atangana Nama Ch. et al. [in] Delisle, J., J. Woodsworth (eds.) *Translators through History*, John Benjamins Publishing Company & Unesco Publishing, Amsterdam, Philadelphia 1995.

Gentzler, E. *Contemporary Translation Theories*, Routledge, London & NewYork 1993.

Hermans, T. (ed.) *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*, Croom Helm, London 1985.

Hermans, T. "Translational Norms and Correct Translations" [in:] *Translation Studies: The State of the Art. Proceedings of the First James S. Holmes Symposium on Translation Studies*, Rodopi, Amsterdam 1991.

Pisarska, A., T. Tomaszkiewicz. *Współczesne tendencje przekładoznawcze. Podręcznik dla studentów neofilologii*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Im. Adama Mickiewicza, Poznań 1996.

Shuttleworth, M., M. Cowie. *Dictionary of Translation Studies*, St. Jerome Publishing, Manchester, UK 1997.

Snell-Hornby, M. *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach* (revised edition). John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam, Philadelphia 1995.

Toury, G. "Translation, Literary Translation and Pseudotranslation" [in:] *Comparative Criticism 6*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1984.

Joanna Gręzak

When the Impossible Becomes Possible: How to Reduce your Teacher Talking Time*

Introduction

Listening to one's own lesson recorded can cause a minor (if not huge) identity crisis but at the same time it acts as a perfect stimulus to a change of bad teaching habits. Having your every single shameful (inaccurate, ridiculous, etc.) utterance stored on tape is an excellent and reliable basis for personal constructive criticism.

Recording myself regularly every two months helped me notice my mistakes concerning the amount of teacher talking time (TTT) I took up and the proportion of Polish used during the lesson. In this paper, I will describe my way of dealing with the above mentioned issues which I invented myself and tried out during my lessons. I will give a detailed account of the procedure I undertook after having realized that the amount of my TTT (both in English and Polish) is not used adequately and therefore should be changed. The method can also beneficial as far as the correction of speaking mistakes is concerned.

The problem

I became aware of the problem on two recordings of my 60 minute lessons. One of them was conducted in quite a big group of children (aged 10) at school while the other was a one-to-one lesson with Ania (aged 11). The recordings, made in May and September 1998 respectively, dissatisfied me because of the following things:

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 190: *Methods and Techniques in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language* run by Ms Maria Birkenmajer, MA.

i. It took me far too much time to get my pupils down to work. Generally, children are wonderful and eager learners but there are times when they, for some reason or other, can do practically everything to prevent themselves from being taught even the slightest bit of English. What is more, young learners do not listen to any reasonable argument why they should concentrate on English - such explanations simply do not appeal to a child. With their short attention span, children can be easily distracted from the learning process and it requires a lot of effort on the teacher's part to make them focus on English again.

ii. When my pupils switched into Polish I also tended to use it in order to bring them quickly back to English.

iii. I also noticed my absurd habit of giving positive feedback to my pupils in English and then repeating it in Polish, e.g. *Excellent! Wyśmienicie!*. I suppose I was so keen to express my appreciation that I mechanically doubled my praise.

The solution

I wanted to devise something that would help me cope with these problems. Since I knew how difficult it was to control myself, I did not want it to be just a set of rules for me to obey, but something that would actually help me not to speak. I knew it should be something amusing and easy to handle; something that could be used during more than one lesson.

I chose Ania to experiment with since I thought it would be easier to find a solution suitable for one particular pupil and put it into practice. I had been teaching her for 2.5 years and the book we were working with at the time of the experiment was STEPPING STONES 3, written by Julie Ashworth and John Clark and published by Nelson ELT in 1993.

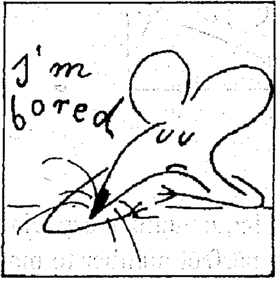
At first I thought about pictures with a funny character saying some of the expressions the teacher normally utters, e.g. *Speak English, please.* This solution had two advantages:

i. The pictures were likely to prevent me from talking too much.

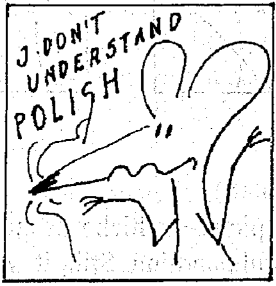
ii. It would not be the teacher who asks the pupil but a nice cartoon character. We must remember that children are more likely to refuse their teachers than the lovely cartoon creatures! I had made use of this phenomenon previously: as I had a hamster at home I made Ania believe that he did not understand Polish (which in fact was true!). Thus, whenever she unnecessarily switched into Polish I used to tell her that she should speak English, since otherwise the hamster would get bored. This little trick worked very well.

As Ania also happened to have a hamster and was a great animal lover, I decided to prepare some pictures with this friendly rodent. The results were as follows:

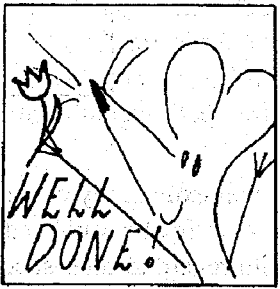
PICTURE 1



PICTURE 2

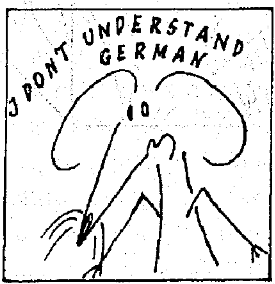


PICTURE 3



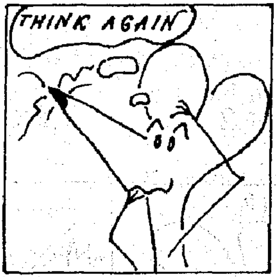
Since I also had a very specific problem with Ania, namely, she knew some German and frequently mixed it up with English (it is especially easy to confuse numerals or pairs such as *good* - *gut*), I decided to add the following picture:

PICTURE 4

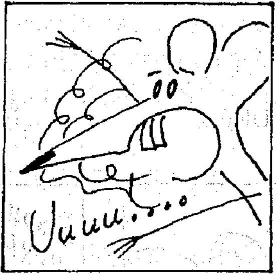


I thought that this set of four pictures would be enough but the cartoon saying *Well done!* called for other one that would enable me to correct Ania’s mistakes clearly and quickly, without me talking too much. Hence, after a lot of thinking, I came up with:

PICTURE 5

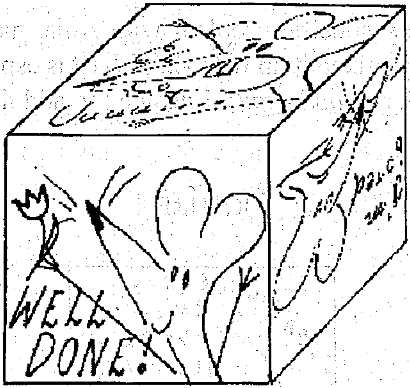


PICTURE 6



(I will explain my choices later.)

In this way I had six pictures which was quite a large number, especially with regard to their successful handling. Still, it was a perfect number to make a cube out of them:


WELL DONE!
Uuuu...

The experiment

I started using my HAMSTER’S CUBE at the beginning of October 1998. As I had used various strange drawings, objects and games before, Ania was not surprised and the introduction of my magic device went quite smoothly. What I actually did during the next 20 lessons was:

i. When I wanted Ania to get down to work I showed her PICTURE 1. I always uttered the proper expression simultaneously, unless it was the tenth time Ania saw the same drawing during the lesson — then her quick look at the picture was enough and saved time.

ii. If Ania unnecessarily used Polish I showed her PICTURE 2. It took much less time than before to convince her to speak English again (after all, she knew that there was no use arguing with the hamster!). It also automatically prevented me from using Polish or of giving long speeches on the advantages of learning English.

iii. If Ania happened to use a German word I indicated it to her with PICTURE 4. Ania was usually able to correct herself; in case of any difficulty I provided her with the English equivalent and later during the lesson I tried to use the English word several times in order to eliminate her further mixing it up with German.

iv. When I wanted to give Ania positive feedback I showed her PICTURE 3. At first I could not restrain myself from adding something like *Well done, really! Look! The hamster is smiling at you!* but the good thing was that I switched into English in this context. Now, having observed Ania's reactions, I feel confident that the expression *Well done!* and the picture of the smiling hamster is a satisfactory reward and no praise in Polish is needed.

v. For correcting mistakes I used PICTURES 5 and 6 from my cube:

- PICTURE 5 was used when Ania's answer was wrong so as to encourage her to work further on the problematic issue. Only when Ania failed the second (or, in some cases, the third) attempt to provide the right answer I helped her solve the problem.

  It happened twice that Ania, after being asked a question, remained silent and looked anxious. Such behaviour usually suggests that it is some kind of stress rather than a real lack of knowledge which prevents a child from producing an answer. In those cases I showed Ania the same picture saying *Think for a while, take your time.* It always released the tension and enabled her to answer correctly.

- I try to be very careful about criticising children. They are very sensitive to any kind of criticism, which much more often appears to be discouraging rather than stimulating. Sometimes even the slightest criticism makes them too stressed and ashamed to think successfully. However, PICTURE 6 is reserved for extreme cases of carelessness and neglect on their part, e.g. Ania would be shown it after producing a sentence like *What do Kate doing?*. The picture always caused immediate self-correction which proves that in such cases the mistake is never a matter of the child's inadequate knowledge but a simple slip of the tongue at a moment of poor concentration.

The results

My observation of the lessons conducted with the help of the HAMSTER'S CUBE showed that the time I spent talking in both languages was reduced by circa 70%. It means that the invention is really extremely useful. Of course, there are still certain situations that require my speaking English or even occasionally resorting to Polish but I have managed to get rid of unnecessary TT. Ania is now well acquainted with my device and treats it as an ordinary teaching aid that is used a lot, just like, for example, her student's book.

A final remark

The HAMSTER'S CUBE that I used with Ania is obviously only one of its possible versions devised for this particular lerner. The set of pictures can be changed and in each case adapted according to the specific needs of the teacher and the particular classroom conditions.

Karina Zdrzyłowska

How to Teach how to Learn: Self-Access Facilities*

> '... It is learners who do the learning. Teachers, however good, cannot do it for them.'
> A. Maley

What is self-access?

Most traditional classrooms all over the world look similar. As the assumed source of knowledge is the teacher, classes are based on teacher talk, students are mainly silent. The content of the course as well as the method of teaching are chosen in advance without the participation of the students. The theory of learner independence appeared in order to change this situation. 'It views learners as individuals with their own motivations, interests and learning strategies who actively seek out meaning and solutions'[1]. It allows the students to become aware of the process of their own learning and to use this knowledge outside the language classroom. Self-access centres are to let students supplement their classroom knowledge by the choice of materials interesting to them, which they can use in the way they prefer, at their own pace. To be prepared for this, they need to be helped to recognise their individual learning styles and develop independent learning strategies.

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 291: *Language Aquisition and Learning in the Primary Context* run by Professor Hanna Komorowska.

Why?

Responsibility

The traditional classroom teaches students dependence upon the teacher. Students are told what to do and how to do it. Transmission of knowledge, selection of materials and correction of errors are the teacher's tasks. However, the research by Naiman et al.[2] shows that 'the most successful language learning strategies are connected with assuming responsibility for one's own learning'[3]. Self-access facilities give students the opportunity to take such responsibility.

Learning to learn

No teacher is going to teach his students for life. Therefore, he needs to teach them how to learn when they are left alone. It is not going to work only with the knowledge of a foreign language. As Sheerin points out, during their working life the students may need to supplement their knowledge 'either to keep abreast of developments in their occupation, or to change a redundant occupation for a new [...] one.'[4] She quotes after Rogers:

> The only man who is educated is the man who has learned how to learn; the man who has learned how to adapt and change; the man who has realized that no knowledge is secure, that only the process of *seeking* knowledge gives a basis for security.[5]

Therefore we need to equip our students with tools they need to learn on their own.

Individual differences

I think everyone would agree that people are different. In particular, students are different. Sheerin mentions five types of individual differences which may affect teaching a foreign language.[6]

The first type are psychological differences. Students differ in their cognitive abilities and language learning aptitudes, which means that some learn languages more easily than others. There are also differences in learning styles: there are auditory learners as well as visual and kinesthetic ones. Some students' left hemisphere of the brain is dominant and others' right one is stronger, which affects the way of thinking.

The second type are differences in study habits. Different people have their own preferences in types of activities, group arrangements, places and times of study etc.[7]

There are also differences in personalities of learners. The three possible variables mentioned by Sheerin are: the degree of introversion/extraversion, the degree of tolerance of ambiguity and the degree of ethnocentricity.

The fourth and the fifth types of differences, that is differences in motivation and purposes in learning a language, are interdependent. People learn languages for different reasons. Some need it for their jobs, some are going to emigrate, some like to travel. Therefore, there are differences in these people's motivation. A person who wants to learn a language will certainly be a different student from the one who has to.

Individual differences are another argument for the individualisation of learning. It is necessary to supplement the syllabus, which is impossible to be designed in such a way as to suit everyone in the class.

Level differences

Apart from the differences mentioned above, there are differences in the level of the students' knowledge. Teachers usually 'receive' classes consisting of students who have been taught by different teachers, with the use of different methods and who have followed different syllabi. Even if the students have all been taught by one teacher, there are still differences in the 'bits' of language each of them has acquired. Self-access facilities enable the students to develop their knowledge at their own level, which is rarely possible in the traditional classroom.

Possible problems

Sheerin, after Stevick[8], points out that the prerequisite for learner independence is a change of the traditional roles of the teacher and the student.

Teacher

paternal / assertive → fraternal / permissive
dispenser of all knowledge → resource person / consultant
fostering dependence → training for independence

Student

passive → active
no responsibility for learning → assume responsibility for learning
seeking approval → doing without overt approval
submissive → involved in decision-making

Such a change may cause problems, which must be dealt with. As for the teacher, a change in the role from 'parent' to 'equal' necessitates a change in attitude. Teachers may suddenly realise that their students do not need them as much as they used to, which may be very traumatic.

As far as students are concerned, one problem may be connected with responsibility. It is much more difficult to be responsible for oneself than dependent upon another person. Another problem may be a cultural one. In some cultures and religions the position of the teacher is very high. It may be difficult for the students to accept the partnership between the teacher and themselves.

How? Learner training vs. learner development

Self-access facilities, however good, do not constitute all the tools we need to equip our learners with. Students need to be instructed how to use them effectively. There are two levels on which students are to be instructed, referred to as 'learner training' and 'learner development'.

Learner training deals with imparting certain basic skills to the student, if he lacks them. Such basic skills will include the orientation in the self-access centre, the ability to use a card index or a dictionary.

If the learner is already in possession of these skills, he needs to be trained on a higher level. Learner development means helping the students to 'come to a deeper understanding of how he or she learns best, and to a greater awareness of what is involved in learning to communicate in a foreign language.'[9]

Firstly, the student needs to know what the level of his knowledge is. (What is meant here is not a level in any absolute sense, but in relation to the system we provide the student with.) This can be done by means of informal assessment by the teacher, more objective placement testing or the student's self-assessment. The latest method seems to be the closest to the idea of learner independence, however, all three have their strong and weak points.

Secondly, the student has to realise his needs. He needs to find out how he learns best[10] as well as about the purpose he is learning for and therefore the 'bits' of the language he needs to acquire[11].

The less experienced students may need the teacher's help in designing their study plans. They may want the teacher to help them decide on how much time they need to spend on studying and what kind of activities would be useful. We may provide the students with so-called pathways, that is ready-made mini study programmes suggesting activities or activity types to be dealt with in a certain order. The idea of pathways may contradict the idea of learner independence and responsibility, however it is very useful especially in the early stages of self-access learning.

The financial problem

Money may be a serious problem. Not every teacher can afford to establish a professional self-access centre, especially not in a state school. A solution to this problem may be mini self-access centres, that is self-access corners in language classrooms. Most teachers should be able to bring some materials to the class from time to time and let the students choose and use them in the way which suits them best.

Notes

[1] French, p.4

[2] Naiman N., Fröhlich M., Stern H.H. and Todesco A. 'The Good Language Learner'. *Research in Education Series*, no.7, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education 1978; referred to in Sheerin p.3

[3] Sheerin, pp.3-4

[4] Sheerin, p.4

[5] Rogers C.R. *Freedom to Learn* Columbus, O.H. Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co. 1969; referred to in Sheerin p.4

[6] Sheerin, p.5

[7] cf. Rodgers T. 'Strategies for Individualized Language Learning and Teaching'; [in:] J.C. Richards (ed.) *Understanding Second and Foreign Language Learning: Issues and Approaches*, New York, Newbury House 1978; referred to in Sheerin, p.5

[8] Stevick E.W. *Memory, Meaning & Method* , New York, Newbury House 1976; referred to in Sheerin p.4

[9] Sheerin p.34

[10] cf. task 2.2 'What kind of learner are you?' in Sheerin pp.41-44

[11] cf. task 2.3 'Needs analysis' in Sheerin pp.44-46

Bibliography

French, D. 'Learner Independence', *Newsletter of IATEFL Pl*, Issue 1. December 1998.

Sheerin, S. *Self-access*, Oxford University Press 1989. With a foreword by A. Maley.

Anna Burdziełowska

Why do I Teach Like I Teach ? or Teachers' Personalities, Attitudes and Beliefs and their Influence on Teaching*

(based on Wright)

Part One: Teachers' personalities

- born teachers vs. routine teachers
- teaching style centered on personal relationships
- Stevick's steps towards encouraging students to participate in classroom activities

Many authorities believe that teaching style is basically a matter of personality. One of many examples that may be quoted here comes from R. Gower and S. Walters who say that: "in the main, your style of teaching will depend on the sort of person you are."[1] Therefore it is essential to discover what kind of personality we have and how it relates to our behavior in the classroom.

First of all, we have all heard, or maybe even used ourselves, the expression 'He/she is a *born* teacher.' The criteria for considering someone a born teacher are very subjective, of course. It may be totally opposite for two people, nevertheless what we actually mean is that for some people being a teacher is natural, teaching seems to be second nature to them. These people may simply somehow be predisposed towards good communication with others, and hence able to relate to students more effectively. And it is true that these people are more likely to succeed in the classroom than people who treat teaching merely as the routine transmission of knowledge[2] and spending their days at school just as painful obligation.

---

* The paper has been submitted for the course 295:*Classroom Interaction* run by Professor Hanna Komorowska.

Yet, it is necessary to point out here that a teaching style centered on personal relationships rather than learning tasks can only succeed in a group who expects such an approach from the teacher and approves of it.[3] To back this statement up with a true-to-life example, Malamah – Thomas[4] writes about a teacher who came to teach a class of adults and thought it would be nice to begin with some activities. It was meant to start a successful relationship between himself and the class. Hence, he made the activity very personal. However, his students were used to traditional teaching, most likely they expected him to come and teach them grammar right away. Therefore the teacher was unsuccessful and perceived as strange, or even stupid in their eyes.[5] Furthermore, the school authorities have to believe it is in the best interest of their learners, otherwise you are likely to come into conflict with them.[6] Finally, when it comes to teaching children and teenagers, parents have their say concerning the teaching style as well.

I have already mentioned that some teachers find it easier to teach and be successful than others. But it does not mean that you cannot learn how to be a successful teacher. On the contrary, there are some methods for improving our teaching style, one of them suggested by Stevick[7] and aiming at getting the learners to participate in classroom activities. According to him we should follow some steps in all classroom activities if we want them to be attractive for our students. The questions we should ask ourselves before deciding on an activity are:

1. how relevant are these ideas to you personally ?
2. do you believe that by following steps you would develop as a teacher ?
3. what risks would you run into if you tried to implement any of these in your present working situation?
4. could you turn any of them into a practical action in the classroom?
5. how would they help the learner to develop and what aspects of the learner would they develop?[8]

Stevick also advises that we should:

- build a fuller picture of our students as people (their motivation, attitudes, the social pressures on them)
- scrutinize our methods and techniques in terms of the amount of control and student-led activity

- give more control and responsibility to the learners
- think positively and communicate this to the learners
- act ‘normally’ in class, as another participant in the process, rather than as a teacher
- become less evaluative of the learners’ efforts, allowing them for being evaluative of their own
- give the students the chance to discuss and evaluate the course, the language, their fears, and frustrations[9]

As we can see, teacher’s personal involvement, the attitude towards teaching, constant desire for improvement, sensitivity to students’ needs, ability to share responsibility and lessen the teacher - student distance are very important personal features helping teachers to be more successful in their profession. To sum up the first part of the issue, let me quote an American psychologist Carl Rogers[10], who gives three core teacher characteristics that help to create an effective learning environment. They are:

RESPECT - a positive and non-judgmental regard for another person
EMPATHY - ability to see things from the other person’s perspective, as if looking through their eyes
AUTENTHICITY - being oneself without hiding behind job titles, roles or masks (i.e. interaction not prescribed by roles)[11]

What Rogers adds to this is the remark that these “are not clothes to put on as you walk into the classroom, not temporary characteristics that you take on for the duration of your lesson, but qualities rooted at the level of your genuine intentions.”[12]

Part Two: Teachers’ attitudes and beliefs

- influence on teacher’s style - types of teachers
    - Barnes: Transmission Ts vs. Interpretation Ts
    - Scrivener: Explainers, Involvers, Enablers
    - Komorowska: Laissez-faire, Democratic, Consultative, Paternalistic, Autocratic
- influence on teacher’s instructional strategies
    - lecture, elicitation, evaluation, lockstep
    - inquiry-centered learning
- influence on teacher’s choice of materials and resources
    - general beliefs and attitudes about education (what is language teaching for)

- attitudes and beliefs about the role of knowledge itself, the type of knowledge that forms the basis of classroom language learning (what is language and how it is best learnt)

Not only the personality of the teacher but also his/her attitudes and beliefs have a strong influence on their teaching style. As Wright points it out:

> The teacher's style is inevitably going to be influenced by his beliefs and attitudes. These include:
>
> 1. cultural and social beliefs and attitudes about how to behave in social groups
> 2. beliefs about the role of knowledge in teaching and learning
> 3. beliefs about the nature of learning
> 4. beliefs about the nature of knowledge (in the case of language teachers i.e. a view of language)[13]

Although everyone of us is unique, there are some features that we share with other teachers. On the basis of what we believe in and what attitudes towards different aspects of learning and teaching we have, for example, we may identify ourselves with certain groups of teachers. The typology and the number of divisions is vast, therefore I will present just a few of them to show that they differ, yet they have some commonality.

First let me mention the division suggested by Barnes[14], who identified two basic types of teachers (which, as he points out, are not clear-cut opposites, but rather two tendencies towards one extreme). He divides teachers into the **transmission** and **interpretation** types. The characteristics he gives and the influence on the teaching style are included in the table below[15]:

Transmission teachers	**Interpretation teachers**
believe in:	**believe that:**
→ strict boundaries between disciplines, each of which has 'content' or 'things to learn' → ascribed standards of performance → evaluation and correction being main tasks → making access to the discipline difficult for Ss	→ knowledge = ability to organize thought, interpret facts, and act on them → Ss are intrinsically interested and inclined to explore their worlds → main task = setting up dialogues in which Ss recognize their existing state of knowledge → Ss already know a lot, extend and refashion knowledge

Transmission teachers	**Interpretation teachers**
influence on their teaching style:	**influence on their teaching style:**
→ high degree of control over Ss → Ss either conform or fail → T = embodiment of the subject → exam results – criterion of T's success	→ disperse responsibility of learning among Ss → control maintained by persuasion → Ss develop knowledge of the subject and refine personalities → understanding - criterion of T's success

Within both characteristics there are some hidden roles[16] of:

evaluator of students' efforts and contributions (checking if they are valid, relevant and correct)
guide to the subject and the ways in which it is learnt in the classroom
resource of knowledge about the subject and how to acquire it
organizer of classroom activities, setting up tasks, assisting in doing activities.

The second division I want to present is the one made by Scrivener[17], who distinguishes three types of teachers. These are: **explainers**, **involvers**, and **enablers**. And again, their characteristics are summarized in the table below:

The explainer	**The involver**	**The enabler**
→ knows subject matter → limited knowledge of teaching methodology → relies on 'lecturing' → lessons interesting if done with wit and enthusiasm → Ss listen, occasionally answer, not personally involved or challenged	→ knows subject matter → familiar with teaching methodology → explaining is just one of many options → tries to involve Ss actively (appropriate activities) → retains control over classroom and what happens	→ knows subject matter and teaching methodology → aware of how Ss feel and think within the class → responds to it in planning and working methods → builds effective working relationships and good classroom atmosphere → confident to share control with Ss, negotiates decisions → creates conditions enabling Ss to learn for themselves

Yet one more division I chose for presenting is the one given by Hanna Komorowska[18]. She suggests grouping teachers under five headings: **Laissez-faire, Democratic, Consultative, Paternalistic,** and **Autocratic.**

This division is based on the criterion of decision making. The last three types of teachers share one important feature, namely, they all are in the position of the decision-makers. What differentiates them from one another, however, is the fact that while autocratic teachers tend to take entire responsibility on themselves, having everything in the classroom be the way *they* want it to be, paternalistic teachers make choices that they know will be good for their learners, even when they are unpleasant. Consultative teachers, then, are still different, since they seek students' opinions and consider them, not granting that they will be fulfilled, however.

Democratic teachers are connected with the notion of autonomy in the classroom. These people believe that there are some ground rules (musts) that should be followed, but there is always some room for possibilities (options) within them. Rather than negotiating they choose delegating some of the responsibility to their students.

As we may expect, *laissez-faire* (Fr. let them do) teachers, being the opposite of autocratic teachers, are the ones who leave the responsibility for the decision-making entirely to their students.

As Wright states it, "The beliefs and attitudes of the teacher are obviously going to be realized in classroom action. The way a lesson is planned and run will give clues about a teacher's attitudes towards the learning task and the role of knowledge."[19] One visible reflection of a teacher's attitudes and beliefs shows undoubtedly in the modes of instruction.

We may observe that some teachers favor such modes of instruction as:

- LECTURING, where the teacher expounds at length on a topic; it is worth noticing here that explaining is a kind of 'mini lecture'
- ELICITATION, where the teacher conduct a close questioning in order to bring previously acquired knowledge to the surface
- EVALUATION, where the teacher assesses what the learners already know
- LOCKSTEP, where the teacher leads the class through a tightly controlled sequence of activities centered on a new language point, and all the learners work at the same pace under the direction of the teacher[20]

All the above-mentioned modes share two key features: the teacher is in control of the activity, and all learners are focused on the teacher or an individual student. Therefore the transmission teacher, according to Barnes' typology, are more likely to favor them.[21]

An alternative to this way of teaching is the so called **inquiry-centered learning**[22]. Its basic assumption is that ”the students will learn more if they are given opportunities to participate in discovering ideas for themselves.”[23] Teacher's roles here are primarily of a facilitator who sets up tasks and provides the materials, and then guides them through the process of discovery and understanding. Finally, the teacher needs to be an assessor, but only to classify concepts where necessary.[24]

The advantages of the inquiry-centered learning are: the fact that students' own ideas and beliefs are employed by the teacher, who refashions them if it is necessary. Another plus of this approach is that the process of learning is seen as equally important with the content of learning. This approach is in contrast with the emphasis on knowledge in approaches like lecturing.[25]

To sum up, the kind of personality we have as well as our attitudes and beliefs concerning life in society (here: classroom), knowledge, aims, approaches to teaching, etc. are very influential and unavoidably shape us as teachers.

Footnotes:

[1] quoted in Wright, p. 60

[2] Wright, p. 61

[3] ibid., p. 61

[4] Malamah-Thomas, pp. 9-10

[5] ibid., p.

[6] Wright, p.61

[7] referred to in ibid., p. 61

[8] quoted in ibid., p.61

[9] quoted in ibid., pp. 61-62

[10] referred to in Scrivener, p. 6

[11] referred to in ibid., p. 8

[12] referred to in ibid., p. 8

[13] Wright, p. 63

[14] ibid., pp. 62-63

[15] The table was prepared on the basis of Barnes' description of these two types of teachers included in Wright T., pp. 62-63. The abbreviations used by me denote: Ss = students, Ts = teachers.

[16] Wright, p. 63

[27] Scrivener, p. 8

[18] The division is taken from one of H. Komorowska's lectures on the methodology of
TEFL delivered on 10. Oct. 1994 at the Institute of English Studies, Warsaw University

[19] Wright, p.64

[20] ibid., pp. 70-71

[21] ibid., pp. 71-72

[22] ibid., p. 72

[23] ibid.

[24] ibid.

[25] ibid.

Bibliography:

McArthur, T. *A Foundation Course for Language Teachers*, CUP, 1984

Wright, T. *Roles of Teachers & Learners*, OUP, 1987

Scrivener, J. *Learning Teaching, The Teacher Development Series*, Heinemann, 1994