

チョーサーのレトリックについて — ヨーロッパの 詩と美学 —

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On the Rhetorical Expressions of G. Chaucer — European Poems and Aesthetics —

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1. Introduction

It is a well-known fact that Geoffrey Chaucer, in his works, especially in *The Canterbury Tales* and *Troilus and Criseyde*, frequently refers not only to *Old Testament*, but also to Plato (427?- 347 B.C), a Greek philosopher, to Aristotle (384- 322 B.C), also a Greek philosopher and writer, D. Cato, a Roman poet, to Seneca (4 B.C?- A.D 65), to Boethius (480?- 524), an author of *The Consolation of Philosophy*, and to Solomon, a sage and a king of Israel of the 10th century B.C. It will be a plain truth that the thoughts, views of the world, especially rhetoric, of these philosophers, poets and writers had exercised a considerable influence on Chaucer's poetry. Particularly Publius Ovidius Naso (43 B.C- ? A.D 17), a Roman poet and an author of *Ars Amatoria* and *Metamorphoses* had exerted a favorable influence upon Chaucer. Thus the classical literature of Greek and Rome and the excellent poems and proses in the Old Testament are alive in Chaucer's works, and the rhetoric and ways of expressions of Chaucer, in turn, still move the modern readers profoundly in spite of a long lapse of time. It is indisputably clear that the sense of beauty of man in ancient times is basically the same with that of the moderns. In particular, the rhetoric and good expressions and descriptions by Ovid, written about two thousand years ago, were highly praised by many European writers including Chaucer, and still now deeply stirs modern readers. Chaucer himself, in "Introduction to the Man of Law's Tale", clearly quotes the name of Ovide (l. 54) and also his work, *Metamorphosios* (l. 93), which fact shows that Chaucer had a thorough knowledge of the work written in Latin. The works of Chaucer, notably "The Parson's Tale", written about six hundred years ago, still gives us a profound impression and evokes our sympathy, although it is criticized as a didactic literature at present.

In this paper the present writer aims to point out the examples of rhetoric and good expressions that were used by Aristotle, an excellent writer of the times before Christ, and by Ovid that are also found in the works of Chaucer and later in modern British and European literature, and how Chaucer used them to advantage to realize the fine language.

2. Language of Chaucer

First of all it will be necessary to consider briefly the language of Chaucer, the meaning of studies of Chaucer and preceding studies on Chaucer's language. Chaucer's texts have been emendated, compiled and edited by many hands such as the Reverend Walter William Skeat (1835- 1912), F. N. Robinson and Larry D. Benson. *The Riverside Chaucer* (1987) edited by Benson, based on *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* edited by F. N. Robinson, is accepted as 'the best edition of Chaucer in existence.' The manuscripts of Chaucer that were handwritten by scribes or French scribes exist more than eighty, and it is a well-known fact that there are apparent or clear differences among them. According to Robinson (1957: xxx), the language of Chaucer was that of South East Midland type as follows:

Chaucer's language, then, is late Middle English of the South East Midland type. As compared with Anglo-Saxon or some of the other dialects of Middle English, its inflections are simple and offer little difficulty to the reader of today.

Furthermore Robinson (1957: xxx) admits the great significance of the fact that Chaucer had written the poems not in French or in Latin but in English, and says Chaucer created English:

Professor Scherillo, in his history of the origins of Italian literature, commenting upon the statement frequently made that Dante created the Italian language, A similar reminder might appropriately have been addressed to those writers who have called Chaucer the creator of English The very fact that he wrote in English instead of France was significant. — (Robinson 1957:xxx)

Neither Skeat nor Robinson mentions rhetoric or style of Chaucer in their texts, but Fukuhara (1991: 217-8) clearly comments on the style and the works Chaucer had liked to copy or to read as follows:

. . . but if examined in detail, though stylistically Chaucer is much indebted to classical literature, it is clear that he was considerably affected by Ovid and Vergilins (*i.e.* Vergil. 70- 19 B.C). The writer most influenced Chaucer was Ovid. In the works of Chaucer he enumerated classical writers twice, that is, in "The House of Fame" and at the end of "Troilus and Criseyde", where he quotes as a farewell address the name of Vergilius, Ovid, Homer, Lucan and Statius (*cf.* V:1792).

— (Translated by the present author)

3. Presentation of Night, Day and Phoebus

In ancient and medieval times the mystic night, shadows of night, starry sky, dawning light, lark- trilling morning, the daytime and the change of season were described in stirring rhetoric as seen in the works of Ovid, Chaucer and later in modern English and European literature. Ovid, in his work, *Metamorphoses*, expressed the daybreak as dawn dispersing the stars as in (1), or the day and night as being governed by the goddess as in (2). These poetic and romantic descriptions have been succeeded by many European poets, dramatists and novelists.

- (1) The next morning had put the gleaming stars to flight when the chiefs, still uncertain what to do, . . .

— Ovid (1984: XV: 411,413)

- (2) I was spreading my nets to catch the antlered deer, when from the top of ever-blooming Hymettus the golden goddess of the dawn, having put the shades to flight, beheld me and carried me away, against my will . . . but as truly as she shines with the blush of roses on her face, as truly as she holds the portals of the day and night,

— Ovid (1984: V11:391)

The following quotation (3) is a passage from an enjoyable and heartwarming opera, *Die Zauberflöte* by E. Schikaneder, composed by W. A. Mozart, in 1791. Here the night is ruled by the powerful goddess, ‘diese Göttin der Nacht’ (*i.e.* the goddess of night) being the same expression with Ovid.

- (3) TAMINO (*für sich*) Sternflammende Königin? Wenn es etwa gar die mächtige Herrscherin der Nacht wäre!
– Sag mir, guter Freund! warst du schon so glücklich, diese Göttin der Nacht zu sehen?

— Schikaneder (1991:11)

(TAMINO (for himself) Star-twinkling goddess? I wish it were really the mighty queen of night! Tell me, my friend! Were you so happy to have seen the goddess of night!)

— (Translated by the present author.)

The quotation (4) is the dramatic description of the scene of the mighty goddess appearing from out of night, which will be the identical sight with the Greek-Roman myths or with that of Ovid. ‘Göttin der Nacht’ is precisely the repetition of Ovid’s phrase, ‘Nor has Diana, goddess of the night,’ (*cf.* Ovid 1984: XV: 379), which fact well shows that the works of Ovid written in Latin were widely read at schools and by modern European writers.

(4) Sie kommt! — (Donner.)

Die Berge teilen sich auseinander, und das Theater verwandelt sich in ein prächtiges Gemach. Die Königin sitzt auf einem Thron, welcher mit transparenten Sternen geziert ist. — Schikaneder (1991:17)

[She (Goddess of night) comes! (It thunders.) The mountains split in two, and the scene changes into a splendid room. The queen of night sits on the throne ornamented with the transparent stars.]

(— Translated by the present author)

In (5) by Chaucer the darkly garmented night overspreads the hemisphere, which is also the same scene with those of Ovid and Schikaneder.

(5) Night with his mantel, that is derk and rude,

Gan oversprede the hemysperie aboute;

— The Merchant' s Tale(1798-9)

In (6), the day dawns bright and sunny when the sun god, Phoebus, rose with rose-colored carriage into the sky, which is also the scene observable in the ancient Greek myths. A similar expression that shows the break of the dawn by Ovid(1984: XV: 379) is ‘ . . . and when bright Lucifer comes out on his snowy steed, ’

(6) And whiten gan the orisonte shene

Al estward, as it wont is for to doone;

And Phebus with his rosy carte soone

Gan after that to dresse hym up to fare

Whan Troilus hath sent after Pandare.

— Troilus and Criseyde (V: 276- 280)

The lively larks that soar up into the sky trilling merrily early in the morning are well known from olden times as the birds that tell daybreak, and when the burning Phoebus rose, the eastern sky smiles, which is indeed a very graceful description by Chaucer as follows:

(7) The bisy larke, messenger of day,

Salueth in hir song the morwe gray,

And firy Phebus riseth up so bright

That al the orient laugheth of the light,

And with his stremes dryeth in the greves

The silver dropes hangynge on the leves.

— The Knight's Tale (1491-6)

In the following (8) and (9) by Ovid and Chaucer respectively, the expressions of the change of season by zodiac, the celestial meridian used in ancient times, run parallel to each other. 'Ram' and 'the watery Fish' in (8), and 'the Leoun' and 'Ariete' in (9) are individually the signs of zodiac. Here 'shining Lucina' (i.e. moon) is described as a sister of Phoebus.

(8) . . .as often as spring drives winter out and the Ram succeeds the watery

Fish, so often do you come up and blossom on the green turf.

— Ovid (1984: X: 75, 77.)

(9) "And trusteth this: that certes, herte swete,

Er Phebus suster, Lucina the sheene,

The Leoun passe out of this Ariete,

I wol ben here, withouten any wene.

— Troilus and Criseyde (1V: 1590-3)

4. Description in an Active State

Aristotle, in his work written before Christ, *Aristotelis Ars Rhetorica* (ed. by W.D. Ross. Oxford Classical Texts, an English translation by Sir R.C. Jebb), says that when we describe things, we must express them vividly and animatedly, namely 'set a thing before the eyes' by using appropriate metaphors or simile that will easily and promptly call forth clear emotions.

(10) We have seen, then, that smartness depends on 'proportional' metaphor, and on 'setting things before the eyes.' We must now explain what we mean by 'setting things before the eyes,' and by what methods this is effected. This is my definition — those words 'set a thing before the eyes,' which describe it in an active state.

— Jebb (1909: 171)

The following quotations from (11) to (17) by Chaucer are the epigrammatic style observable everywhere in his works. These expressions are sharp, sometimes paradoxical and bitterly cynical, but attract and awake the hearers' keen interest. The quotations (11) and (13) may be paradoxical, cynical expressions that will take the hearers by surprise, especially 'A fool may ek a wis-man ofte gide' in (11) is certainly peculiar to Chaucer, both (16) and (17) expressing sexual desire still remains in the old, 'Gras tyme is doon' in (17) being an excellent simile, the quotations (12), (14) and (15) being highly humorous and unique to Chaucer, especially the illustration of inflammable straw in (14) being straightforward even to the uneducated persons, all of these precisely corresponding to the teaching of Aristotle, that is, 'setting things before the eyes.'

- (11) I have myself ek seyn a blynd man goo
 Ther as he fel that couthe loken wide;
 A fool may ek a wis-man ofte gide. — Troilus and Criseyde (I: 628-630)
- (12) That, in the dees right as they fallen chaunces,
 Right so in love ther come and gon plesaunces. — Ibid (IV : 1098-9)
- (13) And wel the hotter ben the gledes rede,
 That men hem wrien with asshen pale and dede.’ — Ibid (II : 538-9)
- (14) The noyse of peple up stirte thane at ones,
 As breme as blase of strawe iset on-fire; — Ibid (IV : 183-4)
- (15) For certes, whan the pot boyleth strongly, the beste remedie is to withdrawe the fyr. Slepynge longe in greet
 quiete is eek a greet norice to Leccherie.
 — The Parson’s Tale (951-2)
- (16) Oure wyl desireth folie evere in oon.
 For whan we may nat doon, than wol we speke;
 Yet in oure asshen olde is fyr yreke. — The Reeve’s Prologue (3880-2)
- (17) But ik am oold; me list not pley for age;
 Gras tyme is doon; my fodder is now forage;
 This white top writeth myne old yeris;
 Myn herte is also mowled as myne heris, — The Reeve’s Prologue (3867-70)

5. Diction and Delivery

Aristotle, as in (18), to our astonishment, already two thousand years ago, had advocated employing good diction and delivery, that is, using not a stereotyped but an elegant phraseology, in order to win the admiration of the audience:

- (18) The dramatic faculty is a gift of nature rather than of Art; but Diction is in the province of art. Hence those who are strong in diction gain honours in their turn, just as do speakers who excel in delivery; for speeches of the literary class are stronger in diction than in thought. — Jebb(1909: 146)

Considering the expressions from (19) to (21) from a viewpoint of Aristotle’s rhetoric, we soon realize that Chaucer is really an excellent and talented poet in terms of art of expression. In (19) ‘his deere mooder’ is put in another metaphorical expression as ‘my seyl and my steere,’ and in (20) ‘ypocrite’ (hypocrite) is, in the strict sense of the word, just what Chaucer had defined as ‘al the faire above... under is the corps.’ In (21) here is

the warning against extravagance of human being, this being a universal truth. Therefore (21) is certainly ‘an excellent speeches of the literary class.’ No other poets even in modern times will attain proficiency of Chaucer.

(19) In hym triste I, and in his mooder deere,

That is to me my seyl and eek my steere.

— The Man of Law’s Tale (832-3)

(20) As in a tounge is al the faire above,

And under is the corps, swich as ye woot,

Swich was this ypocrite, bothe coold and hoot.

— The Squire’s Tale (518-20)

(21) As briddes doon that men in cages fede.

For though thou nyght and day take of hem hede,

And strawe hir cage faire and softe as silk,

And yeve hem sugre, hony, breed and milk,

Yet right anon as that his dore is uppe

He with his feet wol spurne adoun his cuppe,

And to the wode he wole and wormes ete;

— The Squire’s Tale (611-617)

6. Foreign Air and Variation

Aristotle says, as in (22), that the audience will be considerably affected by the deviation from the ordinary style, that is, by the exotic style, and that, as in (23), asyndeton and tautology are generally unfavorable, but under certain circumstances these may be extremely effective, for example, as Caesar’s ‘Veni, vidi, vici.’ or, as in (23), ‘the thief, the knave, a traitor,’ the former being an example of asyndeton, the latter an effective tautology. Thus stylistics discussed by a Greek Philosopher before Christ is still the truth and useful even in modern times, which is really awe-inspiring.

(22) Deviation from the ordinary idiom makes diction more impressive; for, as men are differently impressed by foreigners and by their fellow-citizens, so are they affected by styles. Hence we ought to give a foreign air to our language; for men admire what is far from them, and what is admired is pleasant.

— Jebb (1909: 148)

(23) Thus asyndeta and reiterations of the same word are rightly reprobated in the literary style, but not so in the agonistic style, — indeed public speakers use them, for they are dramatic. But when we reiterate, we must also vary, — an art, which is, as it were, introductory to the whole art of delivery. ‘This is the thief in your midst- this is the knave —this is he who finally sought to be a traitor.’

— Jebb(1909:177)

The following three quotations from (24) to (26) just accord with what Aristotle advocates as ‘a foreign air,’ especially ‘as shour in Aperil’ and ‘white brest she bet’ in (26) being suitable expressions that tell the sorrow of women from olden times. The latter description has been a common representation that was widely adopted in European literature. For instance, Ovid (1984: X: 115) once wrote as ‘ . . . she leaped down, tore both her garments and her hair and beat her breasts with cruel hands.’ The phrases (21) and (25) are the same kind of allegorical, descriptive expression, especially the passage (25) is expressed in simple words that are fit perfectly for preaching in the church.

(24) This woful wight, this Troilus, that felte

His frend Pandare ycomen hym to se,

Gan as the snow ayeyn the sonne melte;

— Troilus and Criseyde(365-7)

(25) Looke how that fir of smale gleedes that been almost dede under asshen wollen quike agayn whan they been touched with brymstoon; right so Ire wol everemo quyken agayn whan it is touched by the pride that is covered in mannes herte.

— The Parson’s Tale (548)

(26) Therwith the teris from hire eyen two

Down fille, as shour in Aperil ful swithe;

Hire white brest she bet, and for the wo

After the deth she cryed a thousand sithe,

— Troilus and Criseyde (IV :750-3)

The following (27), parts of seven deadly sins mainly discussed in ‘The Parson’s Tale,’ is a kind of tautology but sufficient variety is added to the expression, so the phrases effectively appeal to our hearts, as Aristotle had advocated in (23).

(27) O cursed synne of alle cursednesse!

O traytours homycide, O wikkednesse!

O glotonye, luxurie, and hasardrye!

Thou blasphemour of Crist with vileynye

And othes grete, of usage and of pride!

— The Pardoner’s Tale (895-899)

7. Way of Representation of the End of the Earth in the 14th Century

In Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* there is a story of creation of the world based on Greek mythology as seen in (28), and then the capital of the world was Rome as in (29), only a few place names being cited such as Arabia and Persia as in (28). In the 14th century ‘all the world’ was expressed as ‘from Denmark unto Ynde’ or as ‘bitwixen

Orkades and Inde,' India and the Orkneys being the end of the earth at that time as shown in (30) and (31). Thus basically similar expressions are found in both poets.

(28) To these also the world's creator did not allot the air that they might hold it everywhere.... But Eurys drew off to the land of the dawn and the realms of Araby, and where the Persian hills flush beneath the morning light. — Ovid (1984:I:7)

(29) And now the ship had entered Rome, the capital of the world. — Ovid (1984:XV:417)

(30) God helpe me so, I was to hym as kynde
As any wyf from Denmark unto Ynde,
And also trewe, and so was he to me. — The Wife of Bath's Prologue (823-5)

(31) I woot ek wel; but certeyn, men shal fynde
As worthi folk withinne Troie town,
As konnyng, and as parfit, and as kynde,
As ben bitwixen Orkades and Inde; — Troilus and Criseyde (V: 968-971)

8. Metaphor, Simile and Epithet

Chaucer, much more than Ovid, but appreciably different in character, used many appropriate, colorful and striking metaphors in his works and brightened his poems. This is the distinctive feature of Chaucer's poems, although it is true there are some vulgar and trifling metaphors, for instance, in "The Miller's Tale." Aristotle had laid much emphasis on the importance of metaphor already more than two thousand years ago, and his rhetoric is still extremely useful at present in writing and speaking.

(32) The nature of each of these kinds of words, — the number of sorts of metaphor, — and the supreme importance of metaphor both in poetry and in prose, have been explained, as we said, in the Poetics. In prose the greater pains ought to be taken about metaphor, inasmuch as prose depends on his fewer resources than verse. — Jebb (1909: 149)

Metaphorical expressions by dint of specific character proper to certain animals or plants are abundantly found both in Ovid and Chaucer, as Aristotle had instructed already before Christ. Thus it is clear how Aristotle and Ovid deeply influenced not only Chaucer but also many modern writers of Europe. The following Ovid's description in (33), 'Envy was eating snakes' flesh, the proper food of her venom,' and 'came forward with sluggish step' surely gives us cold shivers even in modern ages. Ovid had indicated with accuracy the bewilderment or darkness that resides secretly in every human being. The present writer believes that there will be no other rhetoric that

surpasses Ovid.

- (33) The battered doors flew open; and there, sitting within, was Envy, eating snakes' flesh, the proper food of her venom. At the horrid sight the goddess turned away her eyes. But that other rose heavily from the ground, leaving the snakes' carcasses half consumed, and came forward with sluggish step.

— Ovid(1984:II:115)

This skillful metaphor by Ovid is of the same kind of first-class description by Chaucer as follows, such as 'Traitour with tonge of scorpion' in (36) or as 'the houndes that folwen the careyne' in (37).

- (34) O Sowdanesse, roote of iniquitee!
Virago, thou Semyrame the secounde!
O serpent under femynynytee,
Lik to the serpent depe in helle ybounde!

— The Man of Law's Tale (358-61)

- (35) Ther nys, ywys, no serpent so cruel,
Whan man tret on his tayl, ne half so fel,
As woman is, whan she hath caught an ire;
Vengeance is thanne al that they desire.

— The Summoner's Tale (2001-4)

- (36) And eek he brak his arwes and his bowe,
And after that thus spak he to the crowe:
"Traitour," quod he, "with tonge of scorioun,

— The Manciple's Tale (269-271)

- (37) Thilke manere of folk been the flyes that folwen the hony, or elles the
houndes that folwen the careyne.

— The Parson's Tale (440)

- (38) Fair was this yonge wyf, and therwithal
As any wezele hir body gent and smal.
A ceynt she werede, barred al of silk,
A barmclooth as whit as morne milk
Upon hir lendes, ful of many a goore.

— The Miller's Tale (3233-7)

- (39) He was, I trowe, twenty wynter oold,
And I was fourty, if I shal seye sooth;
But yet I hadde alwey a coltes tooth.
Gat-tothed I was, and that bicam me weel;

— The Wife of Bath's Prologue (600-3)

- (40) Four times thrust back, he took to mad flight and, like a bullock whose neck is pierced by hornets' stings,
over trackless ways he rushed. — Ovid (1984: XI:145)
- (41) And to and fro ek ride and gon as blyve
Alday as thikke as been fleen from an hyve,
And every wight han liberte to bleve
Whereas hym liste the bet, withouten leve. — Troilus and Criseyde (IV :1355-8)
- (42) No wonder is though that I swelte and swete;
I moorne as dooth a lamb after the tete.
Ywis, lemman, I have swich love-longynge
That lik a turtel trewe is my moornynge. — The Miller's Tale (3703-6)
- (43) She was ful moore blisful on to see
Than is the newe pere-jonette tree,
And softer than the wolfe is of a wether. — The Miller's Tale (3247-9)
- (44) Therefore he was a prikasour aright:
Grehoundes he hadde as swift as fowel in flight;
Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare — General Prologue (190-1)
- (45) What myghte or may the sely larke seye,
Whan that the sperhawk hath it in his foot?
I kan namore; but of thise ilke tweye — Troilus and Criseyde (III :1191-3)
- (46) And as aboute a tree, with many a twiste,
Bytrent and writh the swote wodebynde,
Gan ech of hem in armes other wynde. — Thoilus and Criseyde (III :1230-2)
- (47) This Troylus in teris gan distille,
As licour out of a lambyc ful faste;
And Pandarus gan holde his tunge stille,
And to the ground his eyen down he caste. — Troilus and Criseyde (IV : 519-522)
- (48) Com forth now, with thyne eyen columbyn!
How fairer been thy brestes than is wyn! — The Merchant's Tale (2141-2)
- (49) His eyen stepe, and rolynge in his heed,
That stemed as a forneys of a leed; — General Prologue (201-2)

'Turtel' (*i.e.* turtledove) in (42) surely has a clear relation with 'This is the time for singing; the song of doves is heard in the field.' in "Song of Solomon" (2:12) from the Old Testament, the song being well known as 'the most

beautiful of songs by Solomon,' which fact shows well that Chaucer, of course, had a through knowledge of the Bible. The following is the passages from "The Song of Solomon" (2:11-12) in the Authorized Version published in 1611. Both Latin sentences and their English translation are beautiful enough to utterly charm Chaucer.

For, loe, the winter is past, the raine is ouer and gone. The flowers appeare on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.

'As dooth a lamb after the tete' in (42) will also be a good expression being something like a verse from "Song of Solomon." 'Than is the newe pere-jonette tree' and 'softer than the wolfe is of a wether' in (43) bear a close resemblance to the sixth and seventh chapter of "Song of Solomon", where womanly beauty is lavishly praised with good locution. Likewise 'thyne eyen columbyn' in (48) is remarkably similar to 'How beautiful you are, my love; how your eyes shine with love;' (1:15) of "Song of Solomon." The description of 'hornets' by Ovid in (40) is also the same kind of metaphor with Chaucer's 'been' in (41). Particular animals, for instance, like 'serpent' in (34) and (35), obviously symbolize jealousy or wickedness, 'fowel' in (44) the swiftness, 'sperhawk' and 'larke' in (45) mean strength and weakness or sorrow respectively, 'wezele' in (38) designates graceful shape of a woman. These sensations by Ovid, Chaucer and moreover by modern men are diachronically and universally the same all over the world. 'Like a bird caught in a springe' by Hardy in (50) is the same kind of expression with (45).

(50) Tess, between the Amazons and the farmer like a bird caught in a springe, returned no answer, continuing to pull the straw. — Hardy (1891: Chapter 43)

'A barmclooth as whit as morne milk' and 'as any wezele' in (38) are a fine rhetoric that still sounds good even in modern literature. 'A coltes tooth' and 'gat-tothed' in (39) symbolize the sexual desire that still remains in the old, and 'with many a twiste' in (46) signifies the passionate embracement of Troilus and Criseyde to each other. 'As licour out of a lambyc ful faste' in (47) is a similar kind of expression to 'as shour in Aperil ful swithe' of (26), and 'his eyen stepe, and rolynge in his heed' in (49) well expresses a man with a fierce look. In this way the rhetorical expressions of both Ovid and Chaucer, the former written about two thousand years ago, and the latter six hundred years ago respectively, are much the same aesthetically, and still, to our surprise, move us profoundly, and indeed are worth reading as belles-lettres.

9. Personification

An ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle, teaches us as a device of rhetoric to give life to the lifeless things in order to emphasize or vivify expression as follows:

Or, we may use the device, often employed by Homer, of giving life to lifeless things by means of metaphor. In all such cases he wins applause by describing *an active state*: as in these words — Jebb (1909:172)

‘O Time, thou great devourer, and thou, envious Age, . . . destroy all things’ in (51) is entirely true and still produces a great impression on modern readers. What Aristotle means by ‘lifeless things’ are ‘myght’ in (52), ‘envye’ in (53), ‘ydelnesse’ in (54), ‘age’ in (55) and ‘sprit’ in (56) respectively, and these are made into the subject of sentence, which processes are indeed a personification of lifeless things. The locution of (55) is just the same with Ovid’s locution, (51), in contents. Thus Chaucer’s rhetoric may often be a straight succession of surpassing Roman classical literature.

(51) O Time, thou great devourer, and thou, envious Age, together you destroy all things; and, slowly gnawing with your teeth, you finally consume all things in lingering death! — Ovid (1984:381)

(52) Whan myght is joyned unto crueltee,
Allas, to depe wol the venym wade! — The Monk’s Tale (2493-4)

(53) That loved vertu, save Envye alone,
That sory is of oother mennes wele
And glad is of his sorwe and his unheelee. — The Physician’s Tale (114-6)

(54) That ydelnesse is roten slogardye,
Of which ther nevere comth no good n’encrees;
And syn that slouthe hire holdeth in a lees
Oonly to slepe, and for to ete and drynke,
And to devouren al that othere swynke. — The Second Nun’s Prologue (17-21)

(55) But age, allas, that al wole envenyme,
Hath me biraft my beautee and my pith.
Lat go. Farewel! The devel go therwith! — The Wife of Bath’s Prologue (474-6)

(56) I am a man of litel sustenaunce;
My sprit hath his fostryng in the Bible.
The body is ay so redy and penyble. — The Summoner’s Tale (1844-6)

Again, Ovid’s thought of (51) exactly accords with that of Chaucer in (55) in that all things are in a state of flux, which thought being a main thesis of *Metamorphoses* and also having being discussed since ancient Greek times and affected many European poets and writers. Ovid says about Time and Age in *Metamorphoses*, written in Latin, as follows, and ,of course, Chaucer had read the work with care and was surely deeply moved. Such view

is a universal truth and indeed a very beautiful passage.

Our souls are deathless, and ever, when they have left their former seat, do they live in new abodes and dwell in the bodies that have received them... All things changing; nothing dies. The spirit wanders, comes now here, now there, and occupies whatever frame it pleases... All things are in a state of flux, and everything is brought into being with a changing nature. — Ovid (1984, XV,377)

Thus Ovid's thought as cited above and also in (51), and that of Chaucer in (55) will be put together in ancient Greek as follows. This speculation is also found in the Orient, especially in Buddhism of Japan.

παντα ρει

10. Rhetoric and Grammar

Aristotle instructs us in order to acquire a desirable style, to use descriptive expression instead of simply putting a noun, to use metaphor or epithet rather than poetical expression, to use plural noun instead of singular even if it is semantically singular, to affix the definite article to each noun instead of adding only one definite article to a group of nouns, to exclude all the conjunctions in order to get a concise, vigorous style, to add a particular quality to a man or a thing in description which it does not originally possess as follows:

Dignity of style is assisted by these rules. (1) To use the description instead of the name . . . (2) To express our meaning by metaphors and epithets –avoiding a poetical colour. (3) To use the plural instead of the singular, as the poets do. Thus, one harbour being in question, still they say, 'to Achaian harbours.' . . . (4) To use the Article with each of two words, instead of connecting them with one Article: . . . (5) To use a conjunction (and other connectives); or, in concise writing, to write without connectives, but not without connexion. Thus- 'having gone and spoken'; or 'having gone, I spoke.' (6) Also the device of Antimachos is useful– to describe an object by the qualities which it does not possess — Jebb (1909:158)

Norman Davis well knows the rhetorical usage of plural noun and cites an example of plural personal pronoun from *Troilus* and *Criseyde* as follows. Here, unlike Aristotle, he uses the terms, 'formality', 'politeness' and 'intimate'.

It is approximately true that the plural forms imply greater formality and politeness; yet they can be used even in intimate conversation, or within a family, in cultivated society — in Book 3 of *Troilus* and *Criseyde*, they are the prevailing forms used by the lovers to each other: *And that ye me wolde han as faste*

in mynde/ As I have yow (III.1506-7), . . . though Criseyde momentarily changes to *I am thyn* at the end of the stanza. — The Riverside Chaucer (1987: xxxv)

In the following (57), the subjective and objective case of second person plural, *ye* and *yow* respectively, are used where *thou* and *thee* are grammatically correct. This is something like *Sie* that is used instead of *du* as a sociable expression in German. Even in present-day English, royal *we* and editorial *we* are still used in order to show the sense of superiority and moderation respectively.

(57) Syn *ye* with me, nor I with *yow*, may dele,

Yow neyther sende ich herte may nor hele.

— Troilus and Criseyde (V: 1595-6)

(58) Ye knowe ek that in forme of speche is chaunge

Withinne a thousand yeer, and wordes tho

That hadden pris, now wonder nyce and straunge.

— Troilus and Criseyde (II :22-4)

Although Chaucer, as in (58) above, denotes that usages of speech change with the times (*i.e.* in syntax, morphology and meaning), the truth is that Aristotle's instruction in rhetoric is absolutely valid even today except in American English. Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904), born in Greek, worked as a newspaperman in USA and in 1891 became naturalized in Japan, translated Bashō's haiku, a Japanese seventeen-syllabled poem, into English as follows:

(59) Old pond — *frogs* jumping in — sound of water

— Hirakawa (2000:477) (Hearn, 1898)

Here plural form, *frogs*, is used instead of *frog*, in accordance with Aristotle's indication, and also La Fayette (1634-93), in her famous novel, *La Princesse de Clèves* [(1678) 1972:152], expressed *noce* in plural with plural definite article as *les nocces* (the marriage ceremony) as in (60). Thus semantically important concepts or objects may often be put into plural forms especially among European writers.

(60) La duchesse de Lorraine, en travaillant à la paix, avait aussi travaillé pour le mariage du duc de Lorraine, son fils. Il avait été conclu avec M^{me} Claude de France, seconde fille du roi. Les nocces en furent résolues pour le mois de février.

(The Duchess of Lorraine, while establishing peace, had also worked for the marriage of the Duke of Lorraine, her son. The marriage with Princess Claude of France, the second daughter of the king, had been arranged. The date for the marriage ceremony was fixed for February.)

— (Translated by the present author)

As Aristotle directs us, an example of putting the definite article to each of the noun instead of putting one article to a noun group in order to give due solemnity to words is found in (61).

(61) *The* tendre croppes, and *the* yonge sonne

Hath in the Ram his half cours yronne,

— General Prologue (7-8)

The reason why Chaucer's works, especially "The Parson's Tale", still touch us keenly and are earnestly being studied by many scholars all over the world, especially in Japan, is that his works have a decided superiority over the other literature in good rhetoric and furthermore are rich and true in contents. Indeed his works are certainly classics. In particular the seven deadly sins that Chaucer emphasized especially in "The Parson's Tale", namely pride, envye, ire, accidie, avarice, goltonye and lecherie, and that have to do with the teaching in the Bible, will be an absolute morality that is imposed on us even in modern ages. What ever are the beautiful sentences? They are, as Aristotle explains, true enough in contents in days gone by, at present and even in the future, the expression that wins the admiration of everyone, an economical and pithy style, well rhymed, harmonious constructions and also worthy of attention. Herein we could recognize the time-tested traditions of Greek and Latin literature handed down from generation to generation to us and also to Chaucer. Chaucer had frequently mentioned Ovid in his works (*cf.* "The Wife of Bath's Prologue," l. 680 & "The Merchant's Tale," l. 2125, etc.) and his *Metamorphoses* is certainly an excellent work. In Europe, a butterfly is often carved on the gravestone in order to represent the departed soul.

And worms that weave their white cocoons on the leaves of trees change into funereal butterflies.

— Ovid (1984: XV 391)

Thus the works written mainly in Latin or French, and also the Bible, affected Chaucer considerably, so that, in a sense, his works may be a continuation or inheritance of European classical literature.

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(本稿は 2003 年 6 月 28 日に、東北学院大学で開催された日本中世英語英文学会東支部第 19 回研究
 発表会において、口頭発表したものに、その後若干の改訂を加えたものである。Chaucer の言語には、
 いわゆる Ingwäonismen としての中期低地ドイツ語の言語的特徴が、色濃く残り、他方フランス語、フ
 ランス語法の借用も見られ、レトリックにおいても優れ、その作品はヨーロッパの作品であるという
 印象を強くする。例えば *bride*: 鳥、*sugre*: 砂糖などの *r* の異分析前の語形、*ete* = *essen*, *sheene* = *schön*
 のような中期低地ドイツ語の形態は、データとして貴重である。)

[am 26.08.2006 (Sa) 外国語学部英語学科教授 平林 幹郎]

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