

THE ROLE OF THE WAR METAPHOR IN CREATING THE IMAGE OF THE «OTHER» AS A REPRESENTATION OF THE POLITICAL CONFLICT BETWEEN ENGLAND AND CELTIC REGIONS

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Summary: This paper researches how the war metaphor structures the media discourse concerning the political conflict between England and the Celtic regions. This investigation aims at combining historical, cognitive approaches, and Critical Discourse Analysis to single out destructive strategies employed by various British and American newspapers and journals between 1995 and 2006 to represent the struggle for dominance in war rhetoric terms. The paper also draws a diachronic historical and linguistic parallel between the images of the «ancient Celt» and the way modern Celts are represented in the British mass media discourse.

1. Introduction

The study of metaphoric systems and models pertaining to different spheres of human life has become one of the major objects of cognitive linguistics. Lakoff and Johnson regard the metaphor as a fundamental aspect of human thinking. In their view, «metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language, but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphoric in nature» [Lakoff, Johnson 1980: 7].

The metaphor is seen as a key to the understanding of mentality and specific or universal images of the world. It is a cognitive process by which a concept (model or schema) from one conceptual domain is mapped to a concept from another domain [Palmer 1996: 103].

Another important assumption of cognitive linguistics, following «the weak version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis», is that «Language reflects patterns of thought, and can be seen as a means of encoding and externalizing thought... It follows from this view that different ways of expressing or encoding ideas in language represent different patterns of thought, so that encountering different linguistic ‘options’ for encoding ideas can influence the way we reason» [Evans, Green 2006: 98].

Hence, language is a phenomenon which shapes the attitude of an individual to a certain object of reality. It affects the way reality is perceived. In his work «Sprache und Mythos» (1925), Ernst Cassirer argues that not only logical, but also mythological forms of consciousness are expressed in language. He connects metaphor and myth, claiming that metaphor contains reflexes of mythological representations. He declares that metaphor is an intellectual link between language and myth which correlate reciprocally: «Language and myth stand in an original and indissoluble correlation with one another, from which

they both emerge but gradually as independent elements. They are two diverse shoots from the same parent stem, the same impulse of symbolic formulation, springing from the same basic mental activity, a concentration and heightening of simple sensory experience» [Cassirer 1946: 83-99].

Consequently, words represent symbols constituting myths, which are «databases» for all important ideas and goals. Each culture has a number of typical mythological scenarios based upon which new scenarios appear. Thus, myths may be used by social agents metaphorically when on-going or past events are represented in discourse in terms of mythological concepts. Myths are taken for granted and are not questioned concerning their validity. They are employed by mass media to increase the credibility of discourse [Почепцов 1998: 57].

An illustration to the statement mentioned above is the way in which the public opinion of the USA was prepared for the introduction of Ronald Reagan's new strategic defense initiative. The necessity of launching a new system of anti-missile defense against Soviet nuclear missiles was grounded in terms of the popular movie trilogy «Star Wars». In analogy with the film, the defense campaign was designated as «Star Wars Program» which prepared the public opinion to perceive the Soviet Union as «The Evil Empire». Therefore, American politicians skillfully manipulated the public opinion structuring their rhetoric in familiar and easily accepted terms.

2. The War Metaphor as a Medium of Representation of the Political Conflict between England and the Celtic Regions

2.1. The Recontextualization of the War Metaphor Rhetoric in Mass Media Discourse

In the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis, discourse is viewed as «a crucial and irreducible dimension of processes of social change» [Fairclough 2005]. First, in case of crisis, competing strategies appear on the part of different groups of social agents to resolve the crisis. In response to the crisis, new discourses which represent the strategies, constituting «imaginaries» for a new order, emerge. The discourses «compete» and the «contestation» may lead to the hegemony of one of the discourse types.

In reference to the political relations between the Celtic regions and England, it is possible to assume that the competing discourses, produced by the domineering and the dominated groups, are recontextualized in national and local scales of social life of Great Britain. The reason for the crisis is the regions' ambition to gain more independence and England's one to retain its dominance. In this section it will be considered which types of «strategies» are being used.

The usage of metaphors in mass media texts helps various political groups to achieve goals and sway public opinion, or form an attitude in the political sphere of life, because the main aim of the political discourse is to gain and retain power. It is the interplay between heterogeneous senses, that are symbolically united into a conceptual system, and the ability to «overcome» this semantic «inconsistency», that give force to a metaphor [Гирц 1998].

A political metaphor, appealing to the general cultural «database» of society, creates a basis due to which social agents inculcate into the minds of addressees those opinions which are not generally accepted [Кобозева 2001: 235].

In cognitive processes, complex mental models correlate with simple, familiar concepts. An ordinary reader, as a rule, is not an expert with an independent opinion, so «a metaphor helps to broaden the scope of knowledge in a sphere which is difficult for understanding by means of the transition of extra knowledge from a more familiar situation» [Петров 1990: 139]. Investigations of political discourse prove that «the social dialogue» is militarized which is connected with the militarization of social mentality in general [Баранов, Караулов 1993].

In British and US-American newspapers and journals (*The Independent*, *New Statesman*, *The Economist*, *Spectator*, *Sunday Herald*, *The New York Times*, *The Independent Sunday*, *History Today*, *Contemporary Review*, *The English Historical Review*), writing on the problem of the Irish, Scottish and Welsh nationalism and ethnic identification, representations of ethnic groups are created in accordance with the convictions of the authors. Such articles reflect the political struggle and disagreement between the British officials and the representatives of the regions during the period between 1995 and 2006. This decade became crucial for the Celtic regions, especially Scotland and Wales, for it covered the time span when the referendums for devolution were held, the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly were elected and started functioning. The rhetoric reflecting the political interaction between England and the Celtic regions of this period is constructed with the help of war terms. Political leaders resort to «tactics», wage «a battle of principles», choose a «standard-bearer»:

1. «Unfortunately for the Nationalists, stage one never happened. Now, with the election of a new party leader, John Swinney, Scottish nationalism is moving into a new phase of *subtler tactics*» (The Economist (US), Sept. 30, 2000).
2. «The new strategy was in fact introduced by Alex Salmond, who served as leader for ten years, with Mr Swinney as his deputy for much of that time. But the fact that these flaws in the *strategy* could also be identified in the old stance undermined Mr Neil's campaign which, as it became steadily more rancorous, eventually looked more like a personal *attack* on Mr Salmond than a *battle of principle*. As the two sides lined up, it also became clear that Mr Swinney is the *standard-bearer* for a younger generation of Nationalists (The Economist (US), Sept. 30, 2000).

Besides, Celtic languages and culture are viewed as objects of defense, for they must be protected from extermination and neutralization:

3. «Plaid, whose roots lie in *defending* the Welsh language, was less protest-orientated, but in 1999 it still picked up Labour voters upset by Tony Blair's interference in Welsh politics» (The Economist (US), May 10, 2003).
4. «As English becomes a global language, and smaller languages are *exterminated* by the growing world culture, his attempt to forge a useable,

complex written Scots, looted from archaic dictionaries, appears *quixotic* at best» (New Statesman, May 3, 1999).

5. «After 1745, and the final defeat of the Jacobites, the determination of the English and the Lowland Scots to *neutralize Celtic culture in Scotland* is quite evident from their policies in dealing with the Highlands» (Contemporary Review, Nov. 1994).

It is a characteristic fact that, according to the state principles and social morality, all the people of a country become united to participate in a war if the country's independence is endangered. So, the leaders of the Scottish National Party (SNP) are trying to represent their political struggle as a national war for independence willing to unite different political forces («socialists, Greens, feminists and non-aligned»).

6. «There are all kinds of political *forces* that can be brought together behind a national movement for independence – socialists, Greens, feminists and non-aligned» (Sunday Herald (Glasgow, Scotland), August 1, 2004).

It has been mentioned above that metaphors are based on the national cultural mentality. Hence, they reflect fundamental cultural values and are capable of forming new concepts. Thus, the concept «the great pillar – box war» designates a form of protest on the part of Scottish nationalists:

7. «McDiarmid's views saw him kicked out of the SNP in 1934, but other ultra-nationalists continued to *fight the party's democratic ideals* from within. Their fundamentalist *tactics* involved vandalism such as “*the great pillar – box war*” of the 1950s, during which groups sought to prevent the use of the term “Elizabeth the Second” on the grounds that the Queen was not the second Elizabeth to rule Scotland. ER II symbols were blown off post boxes and other official ironmongery» (The Independent (London, England), March 6, 2002).

2.2. The Role Myths Play in Positive Self- and Negative Other-Presentations

Investigations on Negative Other-Presentations reveal that «the Others are represented in terms of socio-cultural differences, deviation from dominant norms and values, and violence and threat... Cognitive and discursive polarization may fluctuate between emphasizing differences, stressing deviation and focusing on the Other as a menace to ‘our’ most cherished material and symbolic resources: territory, nationality, neighbourhood, space, income, housing, work, language, religion, welfare and so on...» [van Dijk 1998: 15-16].

Symbolic metaphors representing the myth about «the hero» and «the villain» (or «enemy») may be regarded as a channel of transmission of the «menace» idea. The myth can clearly demonstrate the «virtues» (or «heroism» etc.) of the «hero» and the «aggressiveness» or «danger» etc. of the «villain» [Lakoff 1991].

On the basis of the examined texts it is possible to determine that the political resistance of the Celtic nations and the English has resulted in the fact that each of the sides creates the image of the «enemy» to morally diminish the force of the adversary and justify the advancement of their own political views.

So, SNP cultivates the idea that England is an enemy, aggressor and Scotland is a victim. For example:

8. «It may be regarded as the banter of friendly rivalry but the Scottish view of the English as “*the auld enemy*” may conceal deeper racist tendencies...» (The Independent, June 29, 1999).

It is essential to point out a strategy to which political leaders resort: in their speeches they refer to the heroic events of the past connecting them with the modern political struggle and thus assigning such qualities as heroism and romanticism to their actions and words. The names of heroes of the past are deliberately used in political rhetoric, for heroic proper names possess a strong associative potential forming stable connotations which are systematic and significant for all language speakers [Петунская 1996: 164-165].

The positive evaluative potential of the nominative unit «Braveheart» (William Wallace's nickname) is used in political rhetoric for the purpose of Positive Self-Representation. National leaders use the name as a symbol of their political struggle:

9. «The MPs placed the lion's share of the blame on the Scottish National Party. It stoked the fires with weasel words and coded references to the English. It went along with the violent football terrace rhetoric and *the equation of Englishness with evil and effeteness*. The *Braveheart phenomenon*, the painting of Scots as victims of English rapaciousness, was a major and deliberate theme of SNP policy, they claimed» (New Statesman (1996), August 14).

The metaphor «SNP LEADERS ARE THE HEROES OF THE NATION», which is employed to idealize the political struggle of the Scots for independence, produces an opposite effect when used by their opponents in the ironic sense:

10. «But what about *Braveheart – the kilted image* pur sang? Not a few observers have actually attributed SNP success to ‘*the Braveheart factor*’ put in play by Mel Gibson's Hollywood version of the medieval wars of independence. All Scottish parties *clambered onto the William Wallace bandwagon*, as they had done in the Unionist 1860s when a spiky monument was raised above the site of his greatest victory at Stirling» (History Today, Sept. 1999).
11. «There was no indication by Mr Trimble during yesterday's press conference that he had found time to view *Mel Gibson's performance as the hero of Scottish nationalism*» (The Independent (London, England), April 29, 2003).

Thus, the political adversaries of SNP diminish the idea of Scots' unity attributing to the above mentioned metaphor an ironic sense. The phrase «clamber onto the William Wallace bandwagon» has a negative connotation, thus the idea that the SNP leaders are heroes is mocked at.

The Loch Ness Monster and its «younger sister» in Loch Morar are also ranked among the national heroes, which creates a comic effect and shows the absurdity of Scotland's unity around the nation's heroes:

12. «...All this after a succession of film-makers unearthed our heroes for us – *Rob Roy, Wallace, Bruce, Nessie* – and it's just a question of time

before we get Burns, Bonnie Prince Charlie and Mary, Queen of Scots, then Kenneth McAlpin, the first king of the Scots, and King Brude, and finally Morag who (the tourist maps promise you) is Nessie's little sister in Loch Morar. The perception fae sooth would appear to be that all this has made the natives restless, cringing for their own parliament again, the nationalists even *hitching Mel Gibson in his Wallace guise to their cause*» (New Statesman, Nov. 22, 1996).

13. «We turn around again and *find Braveheart* in our midst and a London newspaper telling us the English don't get it» (New Statesman, Nov. 22, 1996).

The supporters of Great Britain's unity oppose the idea of «Scottish heroism» by resorting to the metaphor «ENGLAND IS A RESCUER» which is realized through the metaphor «SCOTLAND OF THE HEROES' EPOCH IS AFGHANISTAN UNDER TALIBAN'S REIGN»:

14. «If *Scotland's Wallace, Bruce and other heroes* had been successful, Scotland might be an *Afghanistan* still. Tartans, Highland Games and other such inventions of Victorian sentimentality apart, the truth is that no small, geographically marginal country is likely to avoid resentful provincialism unless (as enlightened Scotland succeeded in doing) it integrates with something larger» (The Independent Sunday (London, England), Jan. 6, 2002).
15. «Arthur Herman solves the problem in question in an absolutely preposterous way. He does it by claiming that the Scottish Enlightenment invented the modern world. I kid you not. He appears to think he can appease ferocious Scotch pride by redescribing its *rescue* by England from the Dark Ages (think *Afghanistan in its Taliban days*: that was Scotland up to the XVIII century) as Scotland's invention of modern times and all its amenities, benefits and advances» (The Independent (London, England), April 29, 2003).

2.3. Cultural Knowledge as a Contextual Background for the Interpretation of Images

It is an interesting fact that there is a certain connection between the images of ancient and modern Celts. The name «Celt» was originally given to the Gauls from Latin plural *Celtoe* 'Celts'. In Skeat's Etymological Dictionary it is stated that the word probably means 'warriors' [Skeat 1956], which is confirmed by cognates from other Indo-European languages: Lithuanian *kalti* 'to strike', Icelandic *hildr* 'war', Anglo-Saxon *hild* 'war', Latin *percellere* 'to strike through'. The etymological knowledge correlates with the historic fact that warriors played an immense role in ancient Celtic communities. For example, Fenians, Irish ancient warriors, defenders of Ireland, constituted a brotherhood and belonged to the Celtic elite. The word *Fenian* was later borrowed into English to denote «a member of an organization formed in the 1850s in the US and Ireland in order to end British rule in Ireland» [Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English 2011].

Here is an example, taken from A.Ripley's novel *Scarlett*, illustrating the significance of this organization in Ireland in the 19th century, when the struggle for the independence of Ireland was especially intense:

«Like their fathers and grandfathers and generations before them, Stephen, Jamie, Matt, Colum, and even Uncle James were all militantly opposed to English rule over Ireland. For more than two hundred years the O'Haras had risked their lives to fight, sometimes even kill, their foes, in abortive, ill-fated small actions. Only in the past ten years had an organization begun to grow. Disciplined and dangerous, financed from America, the Fenians were becoming known throughout Ireland. They were heroes to the Irish peasant, anathema to English landowners, and to English military forces revolutionaries fit only for death.»

The name of modern Fenians is etymologically traced back to Old Irish *Fēne* – one of the names of the ancient population of Ireland. But their political and military activity gave rise to an association with the Celtic legendary warriors and the word was later confused with Old Irish *Fiann*, a body of warriors who defended Ireland in the time of Finn, due to which the image of modern Fenians was romanticized: «They were *heroes* to the Irish peasant». They displayed military resistance to the English and were for them «anathema» and «revolutionaries fit for death». Thus we see how the nation's cultural tradition represents and connects modern Fenians with the legendary heroes of the Celtic myths.

Apart from the cultural tradition there is another factor that constructs a positive representation of Fenians. This factor is the role of the author who resorts to lexical units with positive connotations: «had risked their lives», «disciplined», «known throughout Ireland», and «heroes».

It is a well-known fact that the political organization was financed by the US who, having achieved independence from Britain, were ready to support the Irish who also strove for sovereignty. Thus, it would be logical for an American author, if she/he is sharing the country's ideology, to sympathize with the Irish fighters for independence.

Hence, it is possible to make a conclusion about the relevance of the language's function in expressing cultural reality: «Words express facts, ideas or events that are communicable because they refer to a stock of knowledge about the word that other people share. Words also reflect the authors' attitudes and beliefs, their point of view...» [Kramsch 1998: 3].

The analysis of historic and/or etymological facts helps to determine the cultural foundation on which the national identity of ethnic groups was formed. There is an opinion that it is even necessary to investigate the prehistoric epoch of a nation «to reach» the essence of the national spirit [Гачев 1998]. Such resources as historical or mythological legends contain elements of socio-cultural knowledge on which a nation's system of values, ideology, etc. is built and developed. These social representations are taken for granted by the members of ethnic groups. It may be supposed that this shared memory comprises not only recent but also distant past events and facts.

This observation argues for the succession of the past and the present and confirms the postulate that the knowledge of the historic «past» of the word

helps to understand its sense and the laws of its usage. The etymological meaning of the word serves as a basis for the interpretation or the deciphering of ethnic images. The following examples show how mythological or historic notions or events are used as derogatory terms. The historic concepts (Scottish heroism, courage and pride, the war spirit) become associated with regress, cruelty and aggressiveness and, therefore, the significance of the Scottish identity is diminished:

16. «...Jacobites represented a critique of Whig commercialism – and by implication, of its successor, modern capitalism, with its associations in Scotland of Highland clearance and industrialization – and live on as a ‘*sleeping warrior*’ myth round which a free and humane Scotland could revive» (The English Historical Review, Nov. 1994).
17. «Nonetheless a bloody past is echoed in the music. One has only to tour the Highlands to hear from Scots about the terrible things Scots have done to one another. Muir's point is that *courage and pride* “made us a nation, robbed us of a nation”» (The New York Times, May 10, 2004).
18. «The historian's problem is not how to explain this miracle, since the reason for it is very simple: it happened because of Scotland's union with England, which brought vast benefits to Scotland as a result. Rather, his problem is how to make this point without offending the pride of Scottish patriots, who would rather die than concede that anything good ever came to Scotland from across “The Wall”. Before any *claymore-swinging Big Mac* comes after me for the sovereign contempt I hope this shows for Scottish nationalism, I should mention that my mother's maiden name is Burns and her birthday is 25 January – which entitles me to agree with Dr Johnson that the best prospect that ever lay before a Scotsman, in the centuries before the Act of Union at least, was the road to London» (The Independent Sunday (London, England), Jan. 6, 2002).

Another symbol of national identity, apart from the heroic history, is language. The number of Welsh speakers, for example, is reducing and the reason for it is the centuries-long policy of England to weaken the cultural identity of the Celtic regions. Consequently, those who love Welsh must «fight a heroic battle in its defence»:

19. «Those who love the Welsh language above all else must still *fight their heroic battle in its defense*» (Spectator, Jan. 24, 2004).
20. «Very, very gradually, in my view, Wales is genuinely finding itself, as its fierce *defensive nationalism*, which alone has kept its self-respect alive down the centuries, matures into noblesse oblige» (Spectator, Jan. 24, 2004).

3. Conclusion

The Welsh, the Scots, and the Irish fight in the «heroic battle» for their national identity, resort to the «defensive nationalism» «defending» their language and culture. Scottish nationalists resort to «new tactics», one of the SNP leaders is

the «standard-bearer» for the younger generation of nationalists. Parties employ «new lines of attack», «defend», use «weapon», take part in «fights».

However, any political opposition may be structured in terms of war. The metaphor «England is a Military Adversary» is part of a more general cognitive metaphor «Politics is War» which is a universal stereotype shared by the whole world community. Correspondingly, definite metaphoric models are created: «ENGLAND IS A WAR ADVERSARY, AGGRESSOR»; «THE CELTIC REGIONS ARE VICTIMS»; «NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES ARE RESCUERS». The general formulation of the metaphor of this type is «SOCIETY IS A PERSON».

Such metaphors are metaphors of personification because characteristics of an individual are implicitly attributed to countries or ethnic groups.

Though, it is also important to point out that political conflicts in Great Britain are based not only on social but also on national factors. Such clichés as «an important weapon», «a defensive fight», «tactics», and «strategy» reflect the desire of ethnic groups to save their national identity.

On the other hand the political discourse structured in terms of war is a consequence of the relations between England and «the inner colonies» which participated in real battles against each other.

The animosity of the English and Celts is traced back to a very distant past. By the end of the thirteenth century, a large part of eastern Ireland was controlled by Anglo-Norman lords in the name of their king, and the whole of Wales was under his direct rule. Scotland lost its parliament in 1707 when the Act of Union was passed and the Scottish parliament was dissolved. After the second failure to put a Catholic Stuart monarch back on the throne, many inhabitants of the Highlands were killed or sent away from Britain and the wearing of the highland dress (the tartan kilt) was banned. The Celtic way of life was destroyed [O'Driscoll 1995: 22-24].

Modern Celts emphasize that they are followers of the ancient Celtic tradition which determines their national spirit and character and unites the nations during the modern epoch. Therefore, the historic heritage and the legendary past are important factors which constitute or restore national identity.

Hence, the examined articles abound in images and symbols inherited from the common past of the Scots, the Irish, the Welsh, and the English. On the basis of these images various metaphoric models reflecting the views of modern politicians, journalists, and political scientists are formed. The most essential function of the above mentioned units of language and mind is to create Positive Self- and Negative Other-Presentations, the aim of which is to affect public opinion.

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