

Perception, emotion, and synesthesia: Metaphorical combining in Keats

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Abstract

This article attempts to demonstrate the elaboration of poetic conceptual metaphor by way of perception verbs, emotion verbs, and expressions of synesthesia (sensorial mixing and blending). The instances of conceptual metaphor – various, but always emotionally based in nature – generally include expressions of force-dynamics, taking place within the emotional or psychosocial realm. The analyses, while focusing on a textual analysis as a whole, particularly concentrate on the grammatical and stylistic interplay between verbs and prepositions.

Key words: conceptual metaphor; cognitive poetics; synesthesia; perception; emotion; Keats.

1. Force-dynamics by way of perception and emotion verbs

Perception and emotion verbs profile specific, metaphorical, force-dynamic relations. Perception verbs are understood as any lexical verb that verbalizes sensory experience, i.e., *hear, see, smell, taste*. Emotion verbs, for our purposes here, can be considered as lexical verbs which profile relationships based on abstract or emotional qualities or situations. Givón categorizes verbs of emotion, cognition, and intent as verbs belonging to the selfsame category, with the “common denominator... [of] consciousness,” (1979: 337). This brings to mind the psychological, or psychosocial, quality of the force-dynamic interactions that are the focus of this analysis. It is thus not surprising that that this type of lexical verb is one of the primary predicative elements to express psychological, emotionally-anchored, force-dynamics. Furthermore, the lexical freedom, or openness, of the category allows for the same qualities in the force-dynamic interactions expressed by way of these lexemes.

Jespersen claims that “the verb is a life-giving element [...]” (Jespersen, 1924: 86). This article, using as its textual basis a selection of extracts from John Keats’s poetic works, will attempt to demonstrate the truth of this claim, arguing that the verbs that provide these types force-dynamic interactions with their effervescent quality. This allows for full, multi-faceted, and at times complex expansion of the causal expression. We will see that perception and emotion verbs play an essential role in the liberation of the force-dynamic expression in Keats’s works. Their use results in utterances that are often highly metaphorical or metonymical, in the domain of the sensory or the abstract, often synesthetic, and promulgating a variety of grammatical tenses. They are thus rendering the expressions in which they are placed unique and provide a quality of differentiation to them, all the while remaining within the established cognitive schema of force-dynamics. Moreover, the effect on the reader is potentially one of heightened intensity, as the notion of perception, as R. Tsur argues, “presupposes a certain kind of cooperation on the perceiver’s part” (Tsur, 2008: 30): this is perhaps even more the case in highly metaphorical or synesthetic descriptions of perception.

A high level of metaphoricity is visible in certain force-dynamic relations profiled via these emotion or perception verbs. This metaphoricity is often at a highly developed level, combining multiple conceptual schemas, due to the intrinsic causality within the expressions and the abstractness of the subject matter. We will begin by analyzing the conceptual metaphors at hand, thus examining the role of the predicates in question and their influence on the potential metaphorical combinations found within the expressions.

The analysis will continue with a look at the sensorial content of these types of expressions. An elevated quotient of sensory expression is to be noted, along with Keats’s tendency to employ “synesthetic” verbalizations of sensory experiences. This type of sensorial mixing is common in Keatsian poetry, and not only in utterances that fall under the category of force-dynamic or causal, as Fogle observes:

Synesthesia in Keats is a natural concomitant of other qualities of his poetry. [...] He has at his command an unexampled abundance of vivid sensory images. Therefore he slips readily from one order of sensation to another when it suits his poetic purpose, like a master improviser who transposes his theme into a different key. [...] The synesthetic imagery of Keats is almost always actuated by a desire to attain the fullest possible sensuous effect. (quoted in Bate, 1945: 41).

2. Metaphorical doubling: Doubling of force (dynamics)?

Lakoff (1990: 61) suggests that the Event Structure Metaphor is essential to the cognitive schematization and linguistic expression of force-dynamics. Furthermore, he purports that the notions of causation and change contain elevated levels of inherent metaphorical complexity. This most often results from the “combining” of two or more established conceptual metaphors: G. Furthermore, he notes (citing J. Espenson) that “this kind of complex interaction is common for the causes-as-forces metaphor” (1990: 61). Keats’s language provides more – poetic – proof for Espenson and Lakoff’s joint claim, as this type of combinatory metaphorical interaction is indeed present within his oeuvre, and reveals itself to be a key component of potent, psychosocial or emotional, force-dynamics.

These interactions tend to boast a stronger Antagonist, impinging upon a weaker Agonist (Talmy 1999). Furthermore, in line with the notion of multiplicity or combination inherent in the metaphorical mixing of these expressions, one can note a tightly-wound interweaving, or blending, between the notions of space and emotion: thus, more generally, a “linking of a psychological with a physical force-dynamic pattern,” (Talmy, 1988: 73). The metaphoricality of emotionally-based force-dynamic interactions brings to mind the blurred frontiers between emotional, metaphorical, and physical space: does such a distinction truly exist? And furthermore, what does it mean to truly *be*, or *exist* in a certain location? How does one enter into, or exit from, a defined place, be it an enclosed garden, surrounded by hedges or a fence with a lock and key, or state of being: a state of madness, of ecstasy, or of joy? The simultaneous simplicity, essentiality, and complexity of force-dynamics may shed some light on these questionings, by eliminating the barriers between the psychological and the physical, between the metaphorical and the literal. Allow me to indulge in a quick philosophical digression, in quoting Bachelard, who promotes a more nuanced, less dialectic approach to space, in order to support these arguments:

[...] le dedans et le dehors vécus par l’imagination ne peuvent plus être pris dans leur simple réciprocité ; dès lors, en ne parlant plus de géométrie pour dire les premières expressions de l’être, en choisissant des départs plus concrets, plus phénoménologiquement exacts, nous nous rendrons compte que la dialectique du dedans et du dehors se multiplie et se diversifie en d’innombrables nuances. (Bachelard, 1957: 195)¹

¹ “The inside and the outside experienced by the imagination can no longer be taken in terms of simple reciprocity: from now on, no longer speaking of geometry so as to verbalize the first expressions of being, in choosing more concrete beginnings – or to be exact, more phenomenological ones – we realize that the dialectic of the inside and the outside multiplies and diversifies itself in innumerable nuances,” (*translation mine*).

The verbalization of emotional force-dynamics allows for an evolution of the rhetoric of space, as space is revealed as inherently metaphorical, regardless of the “type” of space in question (imaginative, emotional, concrete, etc.). Thanks to the usage of conceptual metaphor, or the cognitive schemas of EXISTENCE IS LOCATION HERE (or the inverse, NONEXISTENCE IS LOCATION AWAY) (Kövecses, 2000: 36; 41) and STATES ARE LOCATIONS / BOUNDED AREAS (Kövecses, 2000: 52) blended with the conceptual metaphor CAUSES ARE FORCES, space is conceived of in a broader sense, based on the presence (or absence) of emotion. So as to apply this open, sensuous, and abstract approach to space, let us consider the following three examples.

- (1) *Forlorn! The very word is like a bell / To toll me back from thee to my sole self. / Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well / As she is famed to do, deceiving elf, [...]*
“Ode to a Nightingale,” lines 71-74
- (2) *Thus plaining, doth she bring / A gentler speech from burning Porphyro; [...]*
“The Eve of St. Agnes,” lines 158-60.
- (3) *‘O leave me not in this eternal woe, / For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go.’*
“The Eve of St. Agnes,” lines 314-315.

Each of these groups presents a combination of one or more of the EXISTENCE / STATE metaphors, along with CAUSES ARE FORCES: each one, of course, operating in a different manner, so that the semantic result is not identical.

In the lines from “Ode to a Nightingale,” both STATES ARE BOUNDED AREAS and NONEXISTENCE IS LOCATION AWAY can be effectively inferred from the lines at hand. The lines describe an “event” – here, of a sensorial nature, a word uttered, compared to the tolling of a bell – occurring, which moves the poetic Self in question in an internal direction, away from the interlocutor, back to his “sole self.”² The sensory event (of an auditory nature) in these verses takes on the role of the stronger Antagonist, forcing the weaker Agonist to action, as the diagrams below³ depict. In this diagram, we see the act of impingement (depicted by way of the arrow coming down from above), indicating the force applied to the stronger Antagonist, then directed towards the weaker Agonist. The force and resulting tendencies here thus change throughout the expression depicted by way of the diagram: the Agonist has an inherent tendency towards rest, whereas the Antagonist applies causal force, thus resulting in the starting of action (*tolling, bringing, and knowing*) on the part of the Agonist (Talmy, 1988: 57). Effectively, we see

² These types of cases are analyzed in Lakoff (1990: 61-65).

³ From Talmy (1988: 57).

here the Antagonist “in motion into [...] impingement,” (Talmy, 1988: 57): this is, once again, indicated by the arrow.

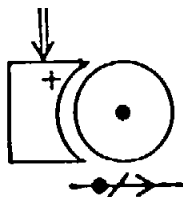


Figure 1. A shifting force-dynamic pattern: a causative pattern with a stronger Antagonist coming into position against Agonist an intrinsic tendency towards rest (Talmy, 1988: 57).

These diagrams visually clarify the greater force of the Antagonist (the grammatical subject in this case, as well) as opposed to that of the Antagonist,⁴ the causal action of the Antagonist (depicted by the arrow coming down from above), and the “starting” action of the Agonist, who was in a state of rest before receiving the Agonist’s imposition.

The Antagonist’s effect here is thus one of “causing,” (Talmy 1988: 57) a force “applied to the patient” (Lakoff, 1990: 63) resulting in the Agonist’s finding himself in a state of being in which he is more focused on his internal workings, a state of introversion, which is conceived here as a bounded area: one into which he had to re-enter, after having previously exited. The use of the present simple in these verses allows for the expression of an event occurring at one given moment, without question of repetition. However, the inherent metaphor allows for an understanding of the Agonist remaining in the location into which he has been forced: as the STATE is a bounded location, another event must occur for the Agonist to change spaces.

In the two selections of verses from “The Eve of St. Agnes,” the causal action, or movement, of the Antagonist is perceived differently. Unlike the previous verses, in which the Antagonist’s movement is portrayed and perceived as a more brusque, one-time occurrence, the Antagonist’s action in these examples is a more prolonged, elaborated motion, comparable to what G. Lakoff would deem “a continuous application of force,” (Lakoff, 1990: 62) or what L. Talmy would refer to as “extended impingement of the Antagonist,” or “extended causation,” (Talmy, 1988: 55).

⁴ This type of diagram is only possible with phrases that take the Antagonist for subject (Talmy, 1988: 57).

In the first selection of verses, the reader is confronted with the combination of the two conceptual metaphors CAUSES ARE FORCES and EXISTENCE OF EMOTION IS PRESENCE HERE (Kövecses, 2000: 36, 41). The predicate *bring* verbalizes the causal force action of the Antagonist—Madeline, and her complaints: we find ourselves once again in the domain of elocution and audition, as in the verses from “Ode to a Nightingale”—which bring about a reaction in Porphyro, somewhat ironically, or coincidentally, in the same sensorial domain of language. *Bring*, in this case, verbalizes an application of force onto the speech event, allowing it to come in to existence: specifically, in the form desired by the Antagonist, a sweeter speech, which gives form to the emotional expression so desired by Madeline (Porphyro’s “gentler speech,” as well as his “burning” with love and lust for her). The imperfective aspect of the first predicate, *plaining*,⁵ further reinforces this notion of a constant application of force, as the *-ing* ending allows for the comprehension of a repetitive, or flowing, action. The sensorial aspect of the interaction, already established by the foundation of the auditory and verbal domains in which the action takes place, is further reinforced by the sensuous adjectives of *gentler* and *burning*, which provide, as it were, an inherent contrast in and of themselves.

The last selection of verses taken as an example present a similar extended application of force as in the previously examined verses, but with a different metaphorical resonance: due to the application of force upon the Agonist, as opposed to the event, we can see in these lines the metaphorical combination of CAUSES ARE FORCES and EMOTIONAL STATES ARE BOUNDED REGIONS (Kövecses, 2008: 59).

The metaphoricity and abstraction of these lines are particularly high, and this, for a couple of reasons. The first, and perhaps the most foundational, is the fact that Madeline, the speaker in these lines (directing her speech towards her beloved Porphyro), is in a dream-like state at this point in the poem, having just experienced, and thus not being fully awakened from, the notorious dreams of St. Agnes’ Eve. Thus, the emotional state she expresses in these lines is not actually reflective of the reality at hand, but rather of the contrast between the Porphyro she sees with her real eyes and the Porphyro of her dream world. Madeline’s beloved is not actually on the verge of death, although she elucidates her fear of this in the lines preceding the extract, he simply seems to be so, in contrast with the vision she had of him in her dream. Thus, Madeline’s state of “eternal woe” is in reality not merited, as the situation she is imagining is simply that: imaginary. However, the fanciful aspect of her analysis of her emotional state, combined with the strong metaphoricity of her expression: “in this eternal woe,” in which

⁵ Intransitive verb: archaic form of the now more commonly used *complain*.

STATES ARE (BOUNDED) LOCATIONS (Kövecses, 2000: 52) allow for a rather elevated level of emotional impact within the expression.

For this conceptual metaphor, and thus, for the expression of the force-dynamic relation itself, grammar is key. The spatial preposition *in* is essential to its expression: the metaphor could not exist without it (or a prepositional synonym). Madeline verbalizes her sensation of feeling truly within a particular location: that of “eternal woe.” This articulation, however, renders the force-dynamic interaction slightly more complex. The lexical elements preceding the pure metaphorical expression lead the reader to understand that Madeline believes Poryphro to be in control of her emotional STATE, creating fertile ground for a rather typical stronger Antagonist, weaker Agonist force-dynamic schema. However, the fact that Madeline (the Agonist) is aware of the Antagonist’s strength introduces another element into the force-dynamic interaction: Madeline remains in a STATE of submission in regard to Poryphro at this given moment, but her awareness of said positioning endows her with a certain dose of strength, and the imperative utterance “O leave me not...” could even be construed as a possibility to change the situation.

Furthermore, the conditional structure in verse 315 (“For if thou diest, my Love, I *know* not where to go”) further reinforces the spatiality of the metaphor, along with Madeline’s (hypothetical) contingency, or reliance, on Poryphro’s state of well-being. His no longer being in existence would cause both mental and physical obstruction to Madeline, as clearly emphasized by way of the predicates *know* (along with the negation marker *not*) and *go*. These lines also exhibit the catenative construction previously discussed: each predicate is contingent upon the previous. Madeline’s emotional state is thus dependent on Poryphro’s: this is an example of pure “grammatical representation” – in multiple forms – of emotional force-dynamic interaction.

The following diagram⁶ depicts the force-dynamic interaction at play in these lines:

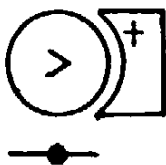


Figure 2. One of the four basic steady-state force-dynamic patterns, according to Talmy (1988: 55)

⁶ From Talmy (1988: 55).

The above diagram from Talmy demonstrates via the lower line with the dot in the middle, the resultant state of Rest of the Agonist due to the (here, hypothetical or imagined) force applied by the Antagonist.

This “grey area” of definition of force-dynamic interaction is unique to psychosocial causal exchanges—or at a minimum, physical force-dynamic exchanges between two conscious entities or beings—as the consciousness of both parties involved is a necessary requisite for this sort of complexity: inanimate objects, for example, obviously cannot be aware of the force being exerted over them.

3. *In between (spatial / locative) metaphor and synesthesia*

In *Towards a Theory of Cognitive Poetics*, Tsur (2008: 45) defines the concept of what he entitles “synesthetic metaphor” as a metaphor containing “terms derived from two sensory domains.” This type of combinatory, abstractive language has the potential to heighten the emotional quality of a text through the presence of the conceptual metaphor, which allows for a deeper cognitive imprint upon the reader. This comes along with the elevated sensorial, emotional, and poetic quality that synesthetic expression permits, as Fogle argues:

Keats’s pursuit of rich, full, sensuous effects is incidental to a more arduous quest, his search for fullness and completeness of meaning. [...] Consequently, his fusions and transferences of sensation are incidental to his deeper, more complex syntheses of poetic experience, in which intellect, sense, and emotion are inseparably interwoven. His synesthetic imagery is an outward manifestation of his intuitive sense of the Oneness of things, of the relationships between widely separate and dissimilar phenomena, of the intimate kinship of man and nature. (quoted in Bate, 1945: 42).

The qualitative analyses that Fogle mentions become all the more powerful once conceptual metaphor is taken into consideration. Keats’s use of synesthetic metaphor provides evidence for the expression of rich consciousness that appears to be one of the aims of his poetic creation: a consciousness which allows for a wide-range exposition along with a profound analysis of the Self and its multiple facets. Moreover, synesthetic expression of sensory experiences provides a certain iconicity to a text that employs such expressions, allowing them to leave a deeper imprint upon the mind of the reader. Beyond this, a combination of senses logically leads to an increase in the level of sensuousness of an expression, thus augmenting the sensate quality of the poetry. These characteristics thus have the capacity to play a role in the potency of the psychological or psychosocial force-dynamic interaction (Talmy, 1988) expressed linguistically, in their terms.

4. Synesthetic EXISTENCE OF EMOTION

So as to illustrate this combinatory use of synesthetic expression and conceptual metaphor in Keats's works, consider the following lines from "To Fanny" as an illustration of these phenomena.

- (4) *Withhold no atom's atom or I die, / Or **living on**, perhaps, your wretched thrall, / **Forget**, in the midst of idle misery, / Life's purposes, - the palate of my mind / **Losing** its gust, and my ambition **blind!***

"I cry your mercy-pity-love! -aye, love!" lines 10-14.

Let us begin with conceptual metaphor: these lines present the conceptual metaphor EXISTENCE OF EMOTION IS PRESENCE HERE. Once again, the spatial preposition *in* proves itself to be essential in the articulation of the metaphor, as seen in line 12: "[...] *in* the midst of idle misery [...]." The Poet's expression of his hypothetical STATE of misery is highly analogous to the verbalization of this conceptual metaphor seen in the precedent example: not only is the Poet's emotional state, without question, seen as a location, but the speaker's (Agonist's)⁷ occupation of such an emplacement is dependent on the stronger Antagonist's choice of emotional path. If the Antagonist (Fanny) decides to not fully give herself to the Poet, he will either cease to exist, or else find himself in a state of "idle misery." Furthermore, this is a case of a "consciously" weak Agonist. Lacking in strength in opposition with a stronger Antagonist, the Agonist is nevertheless aware of the Antagonist's power, and of the actions that the latter could take. This thus results in the manifestation of the spatial conceptual metaphor. The resultant condition for the Agonist is one of rest, as opposed to action.

Conceptual metaphor—further reinforced by the dialectic between the notions of life and death evoked in lines 10-11—evolves into sensuous, synesthetic imagery from line 13 onward, in which the mental is compared with the gustative - "the palate of my mind / losing its gust" - and the emotional with the visual - "my ambition blind" - making use of terms related to the more palpable senses so as to express the emotional state of the speaker. This provides tangibility to the emotional content and delivers a richer image system to the description of the (hypothetical) emotional state of the speaker.

The same conceptual metaphor, along with highly synesthetic imagery - employing different senses - is found in the following lines from "The Eve of St. Agnes":

- (5) *Sudden a thought **came** like a full-blown rose, / **Flushing** his brow, and in his pained heart / **Made** purple riot [...]*

"The Eve of St. Agnes," lines 146-148.

⁷ In using the terms "Agonist" and "Antagonist," I am referring once again to Talmý's theory of force-dynamics (1988).

As in the previous lines analyzed, we have a case here of the conceptual metaphor EXISTENCE IS LOCATION HERE, or even an emotional delineation of this conceptual metaphor, EXISTENCE OF EMOTION IS PRESENCE HERE (Kövecses, 2000: 36, 41). In this force-dynamic interaction, the physical entity definable as the Agonist is Poryphro, and the Antagonist, “a thought,” an abstraction. The latter clearly has emotionally-based characteristics, as the effects of its entering into Poryphro’s psyche are evidently emotional. The predicate *come*, along with the spatial preposition *in*, render this metaphorical expression possible. The diagram below⁸ depicts the force-dynamic relation profiled here, with the *thought* (Agonist) depicted as the arrow *coming* down, and the resultant effect being the “flushing of the brow” and the existence of the “purple riot” in the heart.

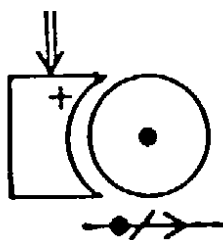


Figure 3. The force-dynamic relation profiled in example (5).

Furthermore, the emotional quality of such reactions is proven and reinforced by the conceptual metonymies of EFFECTS OF A STATE FOR A STATE, BLUSHING FOR LOVE (Kövecses, 2000: 134; 124), emphasized, in part, by the predicate (in its imperfective form) *flush*. The metonymicity of these lines is not only valuable for the cognitive support and universality that conceptual metonymy provides for such expression, but also for the reinforcement of the force-dynamic quality of the interaction taking place. The physiological effects of the emotion(s) experienced by the Antagonist, explicitly enumerated in the verses, and through the use of metonymy stand in for the emotions at hand, allow for a most profound verbalization of the result of the force-dynamic relation upon the Agonist. In general, this type of expression elucidates the interdependence of force-dynamics (or causality) and conceptual metaphor and/or metonymy (Lakoff 1990).

The synesthetic language, as in example (4), is found in a comparison between an abstraction and multiple physical senses: “[the thought] in his pained heart / made purple riot.” Firstly, the synesthetic language is placed in close proximity to the linguistic elements of the conceptual metaphor.

⁸ From Talmy (1988: 57).

This can thus be considered as synesthetic metaphor: the synesthesia takes place within the metaphorical location of the metaphor.

The use of the notion of “thought” as the Antagonist, moreover, guides the reader into the realm of consciousness, moving beyond that of simple emotion(s). The synesthetic combination of senses offers a forceful image of said result: *purple riot*—in conjunction with *thought*—brings together the mental, the visual (due to the inclusion of a color term, and this, applied to a noun with which it would normally not be combined), and a combination of visual and auditory with “riot,” as the term leads to sensory input in both domains. The element of visual input is, obviously, reinforced by the addition of the adjectival color term *purple*. This is all the more poignant when envisioned near the “flushing” (of pinkish/reddish/purplish hues) mentioned in the precedent line.

Lastly, while not necessarily synesthetic, the simile “[...] a thought came / like a full-blown rose” provides a tangible, physical quality to the notion of “thought,” working together with the conceptual metaphor(s) and metonymies to intensify the overall imagery of the verses, and thus deepening the effect of the emotional force-dynamic relation profiled within them.

The subtle combination of conceptual metaphor and/or metonymy (particularly those related to the Event Structure Metaphor, space, and the physiological effects of emotion) and synaesthetic imagery functions well hand-in-hand with force-dynamic interactions, as seen from the examples in the Keatsian corpus. These cognitively based and stylistic elements find their origins, as well as a powerful representation, in grammar.

5. Sensorial force = synesthetic effects?

A simple reading of his poetic oeuvre provides ample evidence for the highly emotional quality of Keats’s writings. This is due, in part, to the recurring presence of elaborated, imaginative, and unique imagery. This is perhaps not surprising in light of his place as a poet of the Romantic tradition. Tsur (2008: 428) suggests that this sort of transcending of more traditional imagistic description, towards a more elaborate description of sensory experiences, moves both the Poet and the Reader into the domain of discovery and of creation of relations that had perhaps not been fully grasped or developed: “the Romantic poets sought to discover, with the help of their imagination, the transcendental order inaccessible to the senses in nature, that is accessible to the senses.”

This is seen in the mixing of the expressions of sensual expressions in order to intensify and clarify the sensorial effects which take place within emotional experience. The verbalization of force-dynamic interactions is one of

the ways in which Keats excels at articulating such sensory, oneiric, and affective situations and their effects. Let us consider the following four extracts from Keats's oeuvre, which give form to the rather broad scale of sensory reflections in Keatsian force-dynamics.

(6) *Yet I never did **breathe** its pure serene / Till I **heard** Chapman speak out loud and bold: / Then **felt** I like some watcher of the skies / When a new planet swims into his ken; [...]*

"On First Looking into Chapman's Homer," lines 8-9

(7) *Fools! If some passions high have **warm'd** the world [...]*

"Modern Love," line 11

(8) *The blissful cloud of summer indolence / **Benumb'd** my eyes; my pulse grew less and less; / Pain had no sting, and pleasure's wreath no flower: / O, why did ye melt, and leave my sense / Unhaunted of quite of all but - nothingness?*

"Ode on Indolence," lines 16-20

(9) *And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue / **Flatter'd** to tears this aged man and poor.*

"The Eve of St. Agnes," lines 20-21

Each group of verses possesses and demonstrates a force-dynamic relationship with a stronger Antagonist, imposing force upon a weaker Agonist. Furthermore, the Antagonist is explicitly mentioned in all of the verses: in (6), the Agonist is the grammatical subject, but in examples (7), (8), and (9), the Antagonist reigns as the grammatical subject of the phrase(s) in which it appears. This choice has an obvious effect on the sensorial content, as well as the emotional intensity, of the examples at hand. A quick read-through of the verses provides proof that the latter three examples (in which the Antagonist is the grammatical subject) are of more forceful character than the first, thus resulting in a stronger effect on the reader. This is - as the rest of the analysis will show - not solely due to this phenomenon. It can, however, safely be assumed that the weaker, receptive position of the Agonist, when placed in the position of grammatical subject, results in a clause that follows which contains a lower level of inherent strength, whereas the inverse is the case when the stronger Antagonist is placed in the position of the grammatical subject⁹. This phenomenon - and thus, difference between (6) and (7), (8), and (9), is most likely due to the inclusion of an agent ("Chapman," or his writings) in example (6) - thus resulting in the classification of such a clause as an "agentive" clause - whereas the verses found in (7), (8), and (9) would

⁹ Of course, this would be the case if the roles were reversed in the force-dynamic relation: for example, a stronger Agonist and a weaker Antagonist, as it were.

fall under the category of “autonomous” force-dynamic occurrences (Talmy, 1988: 60).

Although both types of sentences “maintain all the same force-dynamic properties,” (Talmy, 1988: 60) the distance added into the physical construction of the sentence – specifically between the agent, the subject and the result of the force-dynamic interaction – results in a product of the interaction of lesser intensity, acting thus as an (inverse) embodiment of the conceptual metaphor CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT, in which “the effect of the syntax is to indicate the directness of the experience, and the CLOSENESS indicates the STRENGTH of that EFFECT,” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 128).

Each of our examples contains a synesthetic effect which can be described as a sort of transfer of emotional experience between an abstract, emotional entity (the Antagonist) and a sensory, physiological effect on the Agonist. This synesthetic transfer is seen in the lines above in fluctuating extremes, in regard to varying senses. We see the “breathing” of “serene” and the “feeling” of being a “watcher” as a result of an auditory (poetic) experience; “passions” which warm the world; indolence, capable of “benum’b[ing]” one’s vision, combined with a diminution of the pulse, and eventually the loss of all tactile feeling altogether; and the “golden tongue” of Music herself flattering a man to tears. Each of these paraphrased situations is a force-dynamic relation, simultaneously expressed in abstract, emotional, and tangibly sensuous terms. The sensory mixing, or synesthetic effects, result in a more powerful, more “emotional” expression of the force-dynamic interactions on the reader, as Tsur suggests, in saying that “the reader’s attitude, in turn, is determined to a considerable extent by the psychological atmosphere of the specific text: whether it contains solid objects or thing-free qualities,” (Tsur, 2008: 428).

Here, Keats offers his reader a mix of both, as if he wished to impart a dreamy, romantic, emotionality to the text, while all the while providing the reader with something palpable to rest her or his spirit upon, so as to not get lost. For each resultant effect of the emotional force-dynamic interactions – possessing a high level of abstraction or, in three out of four cases, an abstract grammatical subject – an embodied, sensuous element finds its place in the text. With regard to grammar, it is worth noting that that each predicate is found in its past simple (perfective) form.

6. Case study: “Ode on Indolence”

A case study of a selection of verses from “Ode on Indolence” will allow us to bring together the elements brought to light in the previous sections.

- (10) *The blissful cloud of summer indolence / Benumb'd my eyes; my pulse grew less and less; / Pain had no sting, and pleasure's wreath no flower: / O, why did ye melt, and leave my sense / Unhaunted of quite of all but - nothingness?*

"Ode on Indolence," lines 16-20

These verses offer somewhat more "straightforward" examples of emotional, interpersonal force-dynamics. Moreover, an abstraction (Indolence itself) acts as the Antagonist, and the poet as the Agonist. However, unlike the previous examples, the emotional force-dynamics results in a loss or lack of emotion. This (emotional) absence is primarily expressed via the predicates in the lines, and supported by nominal elements, such as *cloud*, *no sting*, *no flower*, and *nothingness*. Adjectival and adverbial elements such as *less* and *unhaunted* act as further semantic support. In this way, the Antagonist acts as a sort of psychological impediment to the Agonist, robbing him of any emotional experience (be it positive or negative) whatsoever: this results in a tendency towards "rest" as opposed to "action," to translate this situation into concrete force-dynamic terms.

The predicates here fall essentially under the category of perception verbs, in the case of *benumb'd*, reinforced by the possessive "had no sting / no flower," or emotion verbs, in a metonymic sense, as in *grew*. We have one example of a particular "force-dynamic" predicate (Talmy, 1988: 60-65) with *leave*, which can be considered as a sort of supporting predicate for the other linguistic elements present here, which have a more primary role in the force-dynamic and metaphoric expression.

"The blissful cloud of summer-indolence" robs the poet of sight: the poet's eyes are *benumb'd*, which first leads to a physical handicap, shortly followed by an emotional one: the inability to feel the sting of pain and the flower – easily interpreted as delight – of pleasure. This sensorial loss could even be considered as going a step further, given the use of the possessive predicate *have*: the emotional and physical qualities normally associated with pain and pleasure have been removed from them, according to the poet, the expression thus dares to go beyond the poet's simple perception of the situation.

Grew, concerning the diminution of the Agonist's pulse, allows for the addition of another conceptual metaphor, EMOTION IS A PHYSICAL FORCE (Kövecses, 2000: 37, 83-85). The weakening of the pulse is a physical manifestation of the poet's loss of the ability to feel or experience, for our purposes, notably emotion, but more generally, anything whatsoever. This is yet another physical expression of the force played upon the Agonist by the stronger Antagonist. The diagram below¹⁰ visually explains this preventa-

¹⁰ From Talmy (1988: 63).

tive or prohibitive force applied by the Antagonist. The stronger Agonist effectively stops the action of the Agonist, preventing it from its inherent tendency towards movement (here, either “seeing” or “feeling pain or pleasure”) thus leading to a resultant state of rest or vacuity.

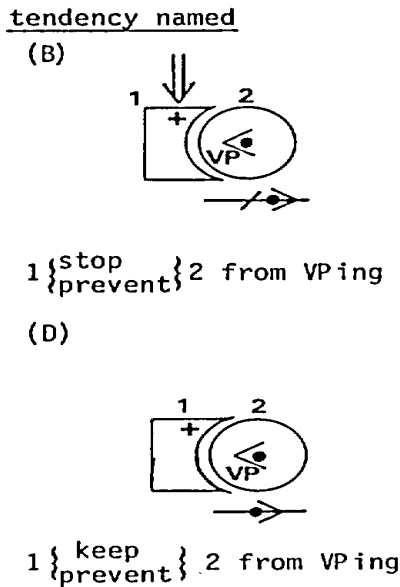


Figure 4. The preventative or prohibitive force applied by the Antagonist.

The special force-dynamic verb *leave* in these lines, placed within dialogue by the Agonist towards the Antagonist displays the Poet’s understanding of Indolence’s strength as opposed to his, as he wonders why she did not “leave his sense unhaunted”: that is to say, why did she not avoid placing the force-dynamic pressure upon him, and thus not impose the psychological brake that has been placed upon him. This dialogue demonstrates the Agonist’s awareness of the submissive force-dynamic situation in which he finds himself: thus, a certain level of consciousness of the Self is present. However, the expression of the Self is rather limited here, as it is simply able to observe what has happened, but remains (to our knowledge) unable to act.

The diagram below¹¹ depicts the force-dynamics at work in a situation in which an Agentive entity/Antagonist figure would leave the Agonist alone,

¹¹ From Talmy (1988: 65).

thus providing the Agonist with the higher level of force in the situation. What is depicted here is a stronger, external Agent/Antagonist making the conscious choice (thus, imposing strength, in a certain sense) to not impinge upon the Agonist, thus leaving the Agonist in an unchanged position. The Agonist is thus permitted to keep his inherent strength (illustrated by the + sign within the circular figure of the Agonist). Although this “leaving alone” is not the interaction which takes place within these verses, it is a particular force-dynamic interaction, and the inner workings deserve our attention.

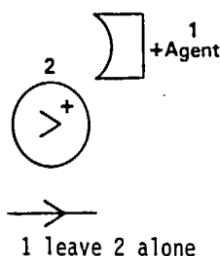


Figure 5. The force-dynamic situation in which the Agonist is “left alone.”

Furthermore, these lines could be considered as “divergent,” according to Tsur’s criteria of convergence and divergence, given the high nominal frequency within them.¹² This provides the text with “a certain elusive, emotional, or sublime quality”, or “sensuousness” (Tsur, 2008: 106) which is more than appropriate given the subject matter of these lines and the ambiguity of the poem’s namesake, Indolence.

7. Conclusion: Final observations

The observer can see in these examples from the corpus that the foundational force-dynamic notions of repose, animation, and generativity (Talmy, 1988: 72) are highly present in these abstract cases of conceptual metaphor. A large majority of the cases analyzed in throughout the above text contain multiple predicates, often forming a catenative verbal chain. This “physical” verbalization in the language—including syntax, structural organization, and grammatical implications—in combination with the semantics of the texts, allows for a better overall and more profound articulation of these notions, which are key to force-dynamic interactions, in that they “bear on conceptual organization in language and perhaps more generally,” (Talmy, 1988: 72) Repose, animation, and generativity are particularly present in

¹² “[...] convergent poems tend to have a larger number of finite verbs, divergent ones a larger number of nouns and adjectives,” (Tsur, 2002: 84-85).

psychological expressions of force-dynamics.¹³ This can also be considered in terms of Langacker's theory of predicative, or "summary" scanning, which allows for a complex and broad view of the verbal action articulated: "as we scan through a complex scene, successively attending to various facets of it, the elements apprehended at each stage are summed, or superimposed. In this way a detailed conception is progressively built up, becoming active and available as a simultaneously accessible whole for a certain span of processing time," (Langacker, 2008: 83).

It is, however, important to note that Talmy's argumentation concerning the notions of repose, animation, and generativity tends to focus more or less solely on psychological force-dynamic interactions within the Self, or the Psyche, of one individual. The examples from Keats's works have shown that this type of catenative action is possible in psychological force-dynamic relations between two (human) entities, as well as within the psyche of one individual, or between an external, but personified, abstract entity, such as emotion.

A further structural and semantic link is found in the linguistic organization of force-dynamic expressions with an Agentive presence. The force of the expression finds itself to be typically weakened when more distance is placed between the stronger force-dynamic figure and the predicate representing the effective or resultant action. This is a manifestation of the conceptual metaphor CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 128). Conceptual metaphors relative to the notions of location and space are often present in force-dynamic expressions in the corpus, often as a result of a combination of the Event Structure Metaphor and a spatially concerned conceptual metaphor, with varying source and target domains. This phenomenon is natural and observable according to the tenets of cognitive grammar:

Grammar [...] is basically metonymic, in the sense that the information explicitly provided by conventional means does not itself establish the precise connection apprehended by the speaker or hearer in using an expression. Explicit indications evoke conceptions that merely provide mental access to elements with the potential to be connected in specific ways, but the details have to be established on the basis of other considerations. (Langacker, 2009: 46).

Furthermore, the connection between the physical/physiological and the psychological within force-dynamic interactions in the Keatsian corpus is

¹³ "[...] this very linking of a psychological with a physical force-dynamic pattern is an example of the more general capacity of force-dynamic patterns to concatenate or to embed. That is, there is the capacity for the Agonist or the Antagonist of one pattern to serve in turn as a force entity in a further pattern. [...] The important point in this is that the force-dynamic system in language is not limited to a small inventory of simplex patterns but has the property of open-ended *generativity*." (Talmy, 1988: 73).

both evidence for and strengthened by, the existence of conceptual metaphor and metonymy, and the latter's direct relation, or intertwining, with the linguistic expression of force-dynamics or causality. Conceptual metaphor and metonymy relative to emotions necessarily include the physiological aspects of emotion. The cognitive and linguistic transfer of the concept of force-dynamics to the realm of the psychological or psychosocial further reinforces these links. Emotion is not only an abstraction, but rather an entity which has palpable physiological effects, repercussions, and consequences, in and of itself. It thus seems logical that a cognitive domain that was originally verbalized uniquely in terms of the physical is used to describe a mental domain such as emotion, which is a pure mix of the physical and the psychological.

In regard to these criteria, there is evidence for the grammatical and semantic representation of force-dynamics within the text, and more particularly, the link created through the use of metaphor (often referring to space), metonymy, sensuous or synesthetic imagery and references, and expressions of emotion provide tangible evidence for this.

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