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IN SEARCH OF THE DEFINITION OF POETIC 'IMAGE'. AN OVERVIEW OF LITERARY TRADITION AND MODERN LITERARY CRITICISM

Introduction

Readers of critical essays or books on poetry or drama must have often come across the terms *image/imagery* in one of the following contexts. Consider the examples: *Poetry, says Puttenham, is more 'eloquent and rhetorical' than prose because with its music and* ***imagery****, it sooner 'inveigleth the judgement of man'; [...]* (Ford 1991:90, bold mine). Or a remark about Donne: *Sensual* ***images*** *and language are as much to the fore in his overtly religious poetry as religious* ***images*** *are constantly present in his secular verses* (Wynne-Davies 1994:29, bold mine).

What is however the meaning of the two terms so widely used in literary theory and literary criticism? Frazer (1960:149) writes that *"Image" is one of the most common – and ambiguous – terms in modern literary criticism.*[1] And what do we mean by Shakespearian, Donne's or Elizabethan imagery if, as Frazer (1960:149) argues, we are using the term that was unknown to them?

For many *image* has become coterminous and interchangeable with metaphor although the two terms are totally separable.[2] In actual fact, *image* has a much wider context than merely figurative and it has become a carrier concept for many philosophical, literary and linguist theories. Stępnik (1988) concedes that *image* in its broader sense may be included within the field of *ideas* (i.e. picturing/reflecting concepts), logic (i.e. a relation of thought to reality), or our cognitive ability (i.e. the ability of imagination). It is thus the aim of this paper to

[1] Cf. Whalley (1967:161) who observes: *There is no way of deciding where an image begins or where it ends; and there is no definitive criterion by which we can say what is an image in poetry and what is not. Yet the word continues to be used with a misleading air of precision.*

[2] On this issue see, for example, Stępnik (1988:66); Whalley (1967:161–2).

reveal at least some of the meanings that *image* incorporates in itself and illustrate some of its functions.

Literary tradition: The origin of the term

A brief look at the randomly chosen definitions of the term *image* will not provide us with a straightforward vision of the term in question. Consider the following definitions: *image* is defined as "any figurative or descriptive language that appeals to one of the five senses" (Gill 1995:385) or "a literal and concrete representation of a sensory experience or of an object that can be known by one or more of the senses" (Holman and Harmon (1986:248)). Apart from the sensory qualities of the image, many writers and critics stress its pictorial propensities. Thus, Ciardi (1959:864) states that images are pictures that flash through our mind and shape our consciousness. In order to verbalise these impressions, a poet *tends inevitably to metaphor* (Ciardi 1959:864). Similarly, Lewis (quoted after Whalley 1967:161) defines *image* as *'a word-picture with emotion or passion'*. And finally, poetic images are shown as essential devices for interpretation affecting meaning. Holman and Harmon (1986:248) conclude that *[...] The image is, therefore, a portion of the essence of the meaning of the literary work, never a mere decoration* (cf. Brooks and Warren (1965:268–273)).

From the above discussion one can clearly see that image carries with it a number of meanings and functions: from the merely aesthetic, sensory or cognitive experience to its verbal realisation, and what follows, its figurative dimension (cf. Frazer (1960:149)). But this modern meaning of the term had been evolving gradually and not until 1562[3] had it been applied in literary contexts. Originally, however the word *image* meant "picture, imitation or copy" (Frazer 1960:149) or, as Furbank (1970:25) puts it, the word meant "an artificial imitation or representation", or "optical appearance" or "mental picture" or "typical embodiment" (cf. *NSOED*).

After Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique* (1562) and Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) the term started to freely emerge in various literary contexts. But what it meant for the Elizabethans remains a riddle for many critics although, most probably Shakespeare's contemporaries used the terms *image/imagery*[4] in the

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[3] In that year 'image' appeared for the first time in Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique* (see Furbank (1970:26)).

[4] One should note, however that I speak here of imagery in Elizabethan lyric as opposed to the imagery in Elizabethan/Shakesperian drama where imagery displayed other functions and acquired entirely different dimensions. (Cf. Lewis (1947:48) who says that *We must never forget, in reading Elizabethan lyric verse, that much of it was written for music and almost all of it under the influence of music. [...] But when the words are written for tunes [...] the resulting poems tend to be subdued in their imagery and to seem shallow or even lifeless out of their musical setting*). See

sense of figures (cf. Frazer (1960:150)) and figures constituted a part of 'decorum'. By 'decorum' they understood *consistency and fitness of style, every detail in a composition being suited to its purpose, occasion, audience, its material, characters and formal conventions* (Ford 1982:90). Likewise, Tuve (1961:27) speaks of the principle of 'formal beauty' that shaped Elizabethan verse and she defines it, *as far as images are concerned* [as] *design given to the natural otherwise inadequately expressive, through the admirable craftsmanship of the maker; [...]*. Further on, she specifies that 'formal beauty' cannot be equated with figurative language although she admits that *Rhetorically figured language is not the sole instrument for achieving pure formal beauty, but it had the most immediately distinguishable effect upon images* (Tuve 1961:33). Most critics of the Renaissance poetry, however, concede that 16–17th century imagery was a decorative addition and this opinion is best summed up in *The Poetic Image* by C.D. Lewis (1947). He claims that the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century critics *were apt to talk of imagery as ornament, mere decoration, like cherries tastefully arranged on the cake* (Lewis 1947:18; cf. Tuve (1961:63)).

Eventually, creating a fully 'delighting'[5] image demanded from a poet a real craft[6] that in the Renaissance ensued from the fusion of logic and rhetoric and, as a result, *The Elizabethan poet is continually reasoning, persuading, demonstrating analogies and logical connections; even his imagery and rhythm are marshalled into argument* (Ford 1982:90). Poets also relied, to a great extent, on figures[7] as the techniques of expression in poetry, which were their tools of molding language (Frazer 1960:150).[8] Poetry was then an exercise in language with its end to *teach by delighting – to 'interpret nature' and to influence men's actions* (Ford 1982:90).

But how faithful was the image to nature or reality? Tuve (1961:27) contends that the faithful rendering of the reality was less significant than the criterion of 'formal beauty'. The poet's task was primarily to imitate nature[9] and represent it in his verse. The art of poetry was then equated to the art of painting and Horace's saying *ut pictura poesis* ("so is poetry, so is painting") underlied the Elizabethan

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also Nemerov (1979:151–2) who acknowledges the superiority of the relation between image and meaning in Shakespeare's plays over, e.g. Shakespeare's *Sonnets* where *meaning is baldly asserted*.

[5] Cf. Tuve (1961:27) who says that images were primarily to delight through their formal beauty. She argues that *images are delightful if they make for a greater intellectual richness* (Tuve 1961:121).

[6] On poetry seen in terms of craftmanship see Ford (1990:52); Tuve (1961); Frazer (1960:150).

[7] *Figure* is used here in the sense of *Trope* (see Holman and Harmon (1986:249)).

[8] Cf. Ford (1982:91).

[9] The Renaissance poets strongly believed in the close affinity between Art and Nature (see, e.g. (Ford 1982:91)).

conception of art until the 18th century.[10] If poetry was to be regarded as a painting, its aim was then to *capture and retain a likeness* (Abrams 1960:33) and also to *reflect the visible world indirectly, by the significance of its words* (Abrams 1960:33). What these both arts have in common is regarding art as a mirror which reflects nature. Abrams (1960:32) accounts for it in the following way: *'What should painting be called,' [...] 'except the holding of a mirror up to the original as in art?'* Similarly, the poem represents the external world in a mirror-like fashion, but *often the reflector is reversed, and images a state of mind rather than of external nature* (Abrams 1960:50). This conception of art as a mirror, derived from Plato, was discarded by the Romantics who conceded that it was music, not painting that had the closest affinity with art (cf. Abrams (1960:50)).

This skilful handling of figures in lyric verse by the Elizabethan poets *was to become suspect in the later seventeenth century* (Frazer 1960:150). 'Decorum' or ornamentation of language (that we call *imagery)* was then refuted as dubious, false, fictitious and secret, denying our realisation of 'truth' and enhancing the sense of duplicity and concealment (cf. Abrams (1960:285–6); Sawday (1994:15–17)). This sense of doubleness is underlying many Renaissance texts, e.g. in Shakespeare's Sonnet CXXXVIII which explores mutual trickery of two lovers who pretend to appear differently in the other's eyes: *But wherefore says she not she is unjust? / And wherefore say not I that I am old?*[11] As Sawday (1994:16) observes *Wherein can 'meaning' lie if, as Puttenham was to observe some fifty years later, we 'speak otherwise than we think'?* Shakespeare's actual words in this sonnet nicely elaborate on the issue of concealed meaning by means of skilfully handled language. At long last, the revolt against rhetoric and figures, together with Hobbes' demand for a reform in language entailed the emergence of the term *image* in literary criticism. As Frazer concludes: *The proscription of rhetoric proscribed the chief vocabulary of the past. Image was one of the terms to fill the vacuum* (Frazer 1960:149).

Who was the first person to use the term in a figurative sense remained a controversy. Frazer (1960) claims it was Dryden who employed the term in discussing metaphors, and Furbank (1970) maintains that Samuel Coleridge established a permanent association between the words *image, metaphor* and *simile*. Nevertheless, by the middle of the ninetienth century the word *image* was regularly used as a comprehensive synonym for metaphors and similes and this definition had reached the dictionaries (Furbank 1970:30). If, and to what extent image is coterminous with metaphor has become a bone of contention for the critics and I will present the views for and against further in the paper.

Apart from its figurative dimension, *image* conveys yet another two useful meanings in literary criticism (Furbank 1970:23). The first one is in a descriptive

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[10] Cf. Tuve (1961:50–60).

[11] The text taken from Mazur and Bela (eds) (1997).

poem and the other one, the Imagist poem. In a descriptive poem, image acquired its pictorial dimension and the eighteenth-century dictionaries define *image* as "a description or evocation of a scene so vivid that it makes the listener almost believe he is actually witnessing it" (Furbank 1970:26).[12]

For the Imagists, *image* meant a whole poem, it was that which *presented an intellectual and emotional complex at an instant of time* (Furbank 1970:39). What is stressed here is the instantaneity of the impression that a poem has on its reader. A reader of the Imagist poem can start *scanning the picture wherever he chooses* (Furbank 1970:39). It is made possible by the poet's refutation of all conventional syntax or sequence of discourse and thus achieving the sense of ultimate freedom from all norms. Apart from this, Imagists also saw the need to work with metaphors and they perceived the task of the artist as such use of metaphors as to *cast a more vivid and definite image than a layman can cast* (Furbank 1970:41).[13]

The role of image in the creative process and aesthetic experience was first stressed by Thomas Hobbes who defined the *image* as a connecting link between experience and knowledge (Frazer 1960:154). He asserted that *images* were registered in mind through sensations; an object perceived caused an impression or print which would convey the idea of the subject to the mind (Frazer 1960:154). Image in this sense acquired the meaning of a vast storage of past experiences that a poet is then free to recall in a frenzy of his artistic creation. *For after the object is removed, or the eye shut, we still retain an image of the thing seen, though more obscure than when we see it* (Hobbes 1972:63).

Evidently then, the beginning of the twentieth century leaves the critics with a cloud of half-formed meanings around the term *image*. *Image*, until then, acquired at least three dimensions: *image* as painting (descriptive poetry, Imagism), *image* as a substitute for *metaphor* and *simile*, or eventually *image* as a sensational phenomenon (Hobbes). And what does it really mean in modern literary criticism? Following Frazer (1960) I shall distinguish between three bases for its definition: **sensuous, figurative** and **meaningful.**

Image is sensuous

The basic distinction of an *image* is that it appeals to our senses. Thus, Tuve (1961:3) writes: *the simplest function an image can have is the*

[12] On nature of *image* and *description* see Stępnik (1988:60–61) who, nevertheless claims that you cannot draw an analogy between the two terms. *Description* („deskrypcja") is not, by its nature, able to evoke associations, and is therefore, confined whereas image allows for many interpretations and is thus open.

[13] On image in Modernism, see, e.g. Albright (1997); Kolek (1997).

transliteration of any sense experience. Her view is shared by Brooks and Warren (1960:555) who say that an image is *the representation in poetry of any sense experience.* In keeping with the above definitions, images may be further divided according to the senses to which the appeal is made. Bacon and Breen (1959:189) state that:

> *A usual classification would consider images as visual, tactile, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, thermal and kinaesthetic in reference to the senses of sight, touch, hearing, smell, taste, temperature and motion.*

Images may invoke senses individually or in a combined way – synaesthesia. Readers, in turn, may differently respond to a particular image; what is primarily a visual image for one person may be primarily auditory for another person (cf. Ciardi (1959:864–5)). The author naturally cannot control the nature of the reader's response to a particular image, but what he can control is the form of this response (Furbank 1970:10). Furbank (1970) quotes the following example (a passage by Milton) in support of this thesis:

> *His spear, to equal which the tallest Pine*
> *Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the Mast*
> *Of some great Ammiral, were but a wand.*

Furbank argues that part of the control which Milton exercises over the reader and of the controlled cooperation which he requires from him, is primarily connected with visualisation. Thus, the reader is encouraged to do some fairly easy mental picturing before reaching the words *were but a wand*. Then he realises that he has been led into a trap; he has to revise his whole image of a pine or a mast and consider it a *wand*. Sometimes the effort is too much, and the reader quickly gives up. *The little diagram of effort is the same for every reader, regardless of how he actually pictures or combines spear, tree, hills, mast, ship and wand* (Furbank 1970:10).

The nature of the author's control over the reader's realisation of a given image is, by all means, a crucial element in the appreciation of literature, and it is indissolubly linked with the poet's techniques of expression such as the selection of a particular syntax, pattern of words, rhythm, sound-sequence, ambiguities of meaning embodied in words, etc. All these features of poetic language will be realised sensually by individual readers.

Image is figurative

Those critics who are in favour of this thesis claim that *image* is expressed by means of a figurative language; that is such expressions that *depart from the accepted literal sense, or from the normal order of words, or in which an emphasis is produced by patterns of sound* (Baldick 1990). The most common

figures of speech in the modern theory of literature are metaphor, simile, metonymy, synecdoche, irony, hyperbole, and litotes. Figures of speech refer us to *perceptible, concrete objects, scenes, actions, or states, as distinct from the language of abstract argument or exposition* (Baldick 1990).

Having specified what a figurative language is, let me now quote a sample of definitions supporting the figurative nature of image:

- image is *a mental picture evoked by the use of metaphors, similes and other figures of speech* (Frazer 1960:149).
- *I use the word image here as the only available word to cover every kind of simile, as well as every kind of what is really compressed simile – metaphor* (Spurgeon 1958:5).
- *What do we understand then by the poetic image? In its simplest terms, it is a picture made out of words. An epithet, a metaphor, a simile may create an image; or an image may be presented to us in a phrase or passage on the face of it purely descriptive, but conveying to our imagination something more than the accurate reflection of an external reality* (Lewis 1947:18).[14]

As one can see from the above quotations, image is most often associated with a metaphor and simile rather than other figures of speech (Spurgeon, Lewis). Since a simile, according to Spurgeon, is a metaphor, then, the controversy around *image* as a substitute for a *metaphor* crops up again as the echo of the ninetieth-century criticism. Murry (1960:67) in his essay on metaphor tries to solve this problem in the following way:

> *Yet though the suggestion of the word image is dangerous, the word is necessary. For metaphor and simile belong to formal classification. The word image, precisely because it is used to cover both metaphor and simile, can be used to point towards their fundamental identity; [...] – if we conceive the image not as primary or independent, but as the most singular and potent instrument of the faculty of imagination – it is a more valuable word than those which it subsumes: metaphor and simile. To them clings something worse than false suggestion: a logical taint, an aura of irrelevancy.*

What Murry suggests first is to use the term *image* as a superordinate term for metaphor and simile, which both derive from Aristotle and are artificial. Also, Murry asserts that whether a particular passage is a simile or metaphor, the act of creative perception remains the same. Therefore, there is no need to distinguish between them since they are fundamentally alike. The word image is different from them in the way that it is more ‘recalcitrant’: it loses some of the sense of the word simile, and it tends to force the part played by the visual image too much into the foreground (Lewis quoted after Furbank 1970:69).

It appears, then, that Murry fully acknowledges the necessity of image as an adequate term under which metaphors and similes can be subsumed. In general, his whole argument goes to show that he is more in favour of a new terminology

[14] Cf. Ciardi (1959:866) who specifies the figurativeness of the image by using the term *metaphoric sense/metaphoric contract.*

(*image*) rather than the old one (*metaphor* and *simile*). Nevertheless, the concluding remark about the essay might be the one proposed by Furbank who says that Murry *sets up to deal with metaphor and ends up on 'imagery'* (Furbank 1970:71). To Murry then, image is a renamed metaphor.

Whether **image** could be regarded as a valid substitute for *metaphor* and *simile* became an insoluble problem for the critics. Remy de Gourmont, a survivor of the Symbolist movement, distinguished between two kinds of images; an *image* which is not a metaphor and an *image* expressed by means of metaphors which he called images[15] (Furbank 1970:36). Images which are not metaphors Gourmont defines as *simple transcriptions of observed reality* (Gourmont quoted after Furbank 1970:36). This concept stresses the *image's* affinity with the art of painting.

Finally, Furbank discards any connection between image and metaphor by referring to the principle *ut pictura poesis* and by saying that if a picture is a likeness of anything, an image in the sense of metaphor[16] cannot be a likeness of anything. By saying for example that a verse is *a living record of your memory* (Shakespeare, Sonnet LV)[17] you cannot claim that a verse is a *likeness* of your memory.

From the above discussion one can rightly assume that it is not easy to specify the 'figurativeness' of an image. The answer to this problem comprises a range of possibilities: from figurative language on one extreme to a metaphor only on the other. The indubitable fact, however, is that image and figurative language are closely and inextricably related entities.

***Image* is meaningful**[18]

Granted that image is sensuous and that it is conveyed to us with or without the aid of figurative language, one can ultimately wonder what is the relation between *image* and meaning. The most common answer to this problem is that image serves to *release and clarify meaning* (Kenner quoted after Furbank 1970:149). To make the above assertion more explicit, let me quote Haeffner (quoted after Furbank 1970:56):

[15] Cf. Stępnik (1988:66–67).

[16] The sense referred to is defined by, e.g. Furbank (1970:8) who claims that metaphor points to a likeness between heterogeneous things. Also, see Ciardi (1959:867): *All metaphor is basically a way of speaking of the unknown in terms of the known.*

[17] The text of the sonnet taken from Mazur and Bela, op. cit.

[18] Image is meaningful also because it is like a word: it has both denotation and connotation, it has a history and it becomes a stereotyped cliché (Ciardi 1959:865). Also see Nemerov (1979:151).

By expressing himself through images, [...], the poet can tell us more about his subject or theme by interpreting them in terms of something else. In this way, too he can put us in touch with the mysteries of existence as he sees them.

Nemerov (1979:151) compares it to the relation between a photograph and a caption. Look at X, says the poet. I will describe it clearly, and then I will tell you what it means, at any rate what it is going to mean while it is in my poem (Nemerov 1979:151). Nemerov stresses, though that such relation of image to meaning is the least favoured and the least elegant in modern times. So how relevant is image to the meaning?

The relevance of image to meaning can be best shown by referring to Elizabethan/Shakespearian drama where poetic imagery complements and directs the flow of plot, the development of characters or it fashions the design of plot (cf. Nemerov (1979:151); Ford (1982:102–103)). Scragg (1994:31) adds that the function of imagery in drama was to *suggest the atmosphere of a scene, to reveal the attitudes of his* [the playwright's] *speakers, or define the nature of the universe in which his dramatis personae function.* A great number of critics argued in favour of the meaningfulness of Shakespearian imagery, but the first two who daringly exposed the nature of Shakespearian images were Caroline Spurgeon and Wolfgang Clemen.

For Spurgeon (1958:9), image is a crucial element in any play because it is used by the author *to illustrate, illuminate and embellish his thought*. Further on, she specifies that a function of image is to *transmit to us, [...], something of the 'wholeness', the depth, and richness of the way the writer views, conceives, or has felt what he is telling us* (Spurgeon 1958:9). This definition stresses the importance of the author's personality in creating particular images. As Clemen (1967:15) rightly remarked: *Spurgeon evaluates the images as documentations of Shakespeare's senses, tastes and interests and also as witnesses to his personal equipment, his bodily and mental qualities.* Ultimately then, images are for Spurgeon meaningful so far as they help to reveal the personality of the author.

Her method, although much appreciated as a pioneering work on Shakespeare's imagery, was at the same time frowned on by many. Furbank considers Spurgeon's collection and classification of the images a very *retrograde step*. He asserts that:

For the great achievement of modern criticism has been to establish that literary works are integral wholes, [...], so that we now poke fun at the Victorians for collecting gems of wisdom or 'immortal sayings' from Shakespeare. Yet collecting and categorizing the images in Shakespeare comes much to the same thing (Furbank 1970:12).

Whether Spurgeon was right to collect the images according to their subject matter will remain another bone of contention for the critics. The apparent result of her work is, however, the attempt at showing what function images may have within a play. In this way, she confirms the thesis that images are meaningful.

Unlike Spurgeon, who analysed the content of images, Clemen set out to scrutinise the 'environment' in which images appear in the text. His main assumption included in the 'Introduction' to his book *The Development of Shakespeare's Imagery* (1967) is the following: *Every image, every metaphor gains full life and significance only from its context* (Clemen 1967:3). Clemen also asserts that images form *a link in a complicated chain of the drama*, and that each image appears as *a cell in the organism*. He is strongly against an isolated analysis of images; single images are only *half-images*. Therefore, Clemen emphasises that an organic way of understanding images is the only appropriate one of studying them. He suggests the following criteria for such a method:

- one should focus on the immediate context in which the image stands;
- one should check what situations in the play are especially productive of images;
- one should ponder whether the characters in the play express themselves through particular imagery;
- one should see whether a form of dramatic speech has influence on the nature of image.

To sum up, Clemen stresses the meaningfulness of image by its immediate and more 'remote' context. The idea behind such an assumption is that works of literature should be studied as the integral wholes within which images are subtly interrelated. To put it more explicitly, let me quote Furbank (1970:50):

> *A figurative allusion in a Shakespeare play is before anything else a part of a passage of verse, or prose, in which all sorts of other things – metrical, tonal, architectonic, scenic, psychological – are going on at the same time; and each of these things not only acts on all the others, but is acted on by them.*

Image as grammar

In the preceding sections I have shown a literary approach to the term *image*. This is, however, not the only one. The school of Cognitive Linguistics with its main proponent, Ronald W. Langacker, offers a very interesting, and by all means, a revelatory view on poetics and what constitutes it, sets of images. Langacker's main assumption is that grammar is 'imagic' in character – when we use a particular construction or grammatical morpheme, we thereby select a particular image to structure the conceived situation for communicative purposes (Langacker 1990:12). On the basis of this claim Cognitive Linguists formulated the definition of imagery, which namely is: *man's ability to construe a conceived situation in alternate ways – by means of alternate images – for purposes of thought and expression* (Langacker quoted after Tabakowska 1997:169). It is

grammar which provides us with these 'alternate images', that is, grammatical structure, and which constitutes an inventory of conventionalised ways of symbolisation of the semantic content.[19]

Granted that imagery is affected by grammar and linguistic conventions, Cognitive Linguists gave rise to a cognitive study of literature, called hence *cognitive stylistics* or *cognitive poetics*. This view of literature became increasingly popular in the 1990's and it amounted to studying the mind of the author who produced a particular image or sets of images as well as to studying the mind of the reader and his actual response to the image in writing. Although the previous decade saw unabated enthusiasm for the method, the beginning of a new century brought a slight change in the view on *cognitive poetics*. Namely, as Hamilton (in print)[20] concedes (expressing also the views of other members of *PALA* (*The Poetics and Linguistic Association)*,[21] cognitive readings of literature have led to the disappearance of literature altogether. *When a literary critic studies the mind rather than literature, she practices cognitive science without a license* (Hamilton, in print). What would be the future of *cognitive stylistics* or *cognitive poetics* remains to be seen, nonetheless the usefulness of the method so far in deciphering the complex meaning of a literary work through a cognitive reading of its imagery is unquestionable. As Langacker (1990:12) points out: *As languages differ in their grammatical structure, they also differ in the imagery that speakers employ when conforming to the linguistic convention.*

From the above discussion it follows, then, that *image* is as much a literary invention (in the sense of a trope, meaning, sensual experience on the part of a reader) as well as a linguistic phenomenon in terms of 'imagic' grammar. Granted that, *image* clearly blurs the borderline between literature and linguistics and brings the two sciences together in a joint effort to study and appreciate the artistry, ambiguity and meaningfulness of poetic expression of which, doubtless, *image* constitutes the most basic and fundamental part.

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[19] In analysing imagery the following dimensions are taken into consideration: selection, abstraction, perspective, specificity, and figure/ground alignment (Tabakowska 1993a).

[20] This paper is due to be published in *Studia Anglica Resoviensia 2*.

[21] The author of the paper was a participant of the symposium of *PALA*, held in January 1999.

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