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NARRATIVE POLYPHONY OF STING'S ALBUM "TEN SUMMONER'S TALES" (1993)

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Abstract. The article analyses the specifications of narrative structures and types of narrators in the song lyrics from the album "Ten Summoner's Tales" (1993), based on "Canterbury Tales" by Geoffrey Chaucer and traditionally claimed the Magnum Opus of Sting. Apparently, Chaucerian style in all the twelve verses composing the album emerges not merely as the interpretation of original "Canterbury Tales" plots or impartment of the new features to the initial characters, but predominantly as exploitation of the lyrical and ironic intonations within an image of a narrator for a certain poem. Since a song is the synthetic generic structure marked with profound internal experience, Sting's album reveals the diverse types of a speaker in every verse. Primarily, it is the 'I-narrator' embodied in poetic masks of a historian, a warrior, a saint, a gambler or a philosopher; some texts like "Fields of Gold" or "Shape of My Heart" represent the alternation of speaker types, which method of storytelling creates the special generic and narrative polyphony for a song. Subsequently, the narrative structure would determine the genre of a separate work: a detective story, a pastoral, a historical reflection, a cumulative tale, a confession, and somehow a Dante-styled epic poem. Overall, the various types of narrators in Sting's lyrics composing "Ten Summoner's Tales" (determined as 'reflexive,' 'actor,' 'pointillist' and 'medium' with all possible combinations) bring the elements of the author's own vital and creative experience into the song where they gain the generalized meanings as symbols of human life, being surrounded with verbal images and amplified with musical accompaniment.

Keywords: Sting's works; song; music; verse; narration; speaker; addressee.

Magnum opus, an idiom which entered English in the 18th century, retains the original Latin spelling and the literal meaning, "great work." Although the term most often refers to literary, musical or artistic productions, it has been used to describe many kinds of great works, including games, construction projects, and even surgical techniques (Magnum…).

This is why Christopher Gable, the author of the only authoritative research monograph about Sting issued in 2009, tends to define "Ten Summoner's Tales" (1993) his Magnum opus (Gable 2009: p. 76). Taking into account the musical component, the album is often characterized as the "*game of effects and the mix of various styles*" (Gable 2009: p. 66). Here for the first time Sting as a composer turned to such 'exotic' time signatures as 5/4 in "Seven Days," 7/8 in "Love Is Stronger than Justice," 7/4 in "St. Augustine in Hell"; to modulations that were not typical for his early works (in "If I Ever Lose My Faith in You," "Seven Days," "Everybody Laughed But You").

On the other hand, he displayed himself as an outstanding melodist in "Fields of Gold," "It's Probably Me" and "Shape of My Heart." Interesting is the fact that the latter two of the works mentioned, despite their harmonious derangement, surprisingly became the soundtracks for action movies – "Lethal Weapon III" and "Leon," respectively (Науменко 2019: p. 46; Gable 2009: p. 68).

The key to solve the riddles contained in all twelve poems of the album is hidden in its pun title – *Summoner* (originally Somnour) from Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" and *Sumner* as Sting's real surname, and otherwise in the interviews in which the singer noticed that "*it is a mixed bag of character sketches connected only by the journey it took to complete them*" (Backgrounder…). No wonder that the special block on the website www.sting.com is entitled "Summoner's Tales," setting up the expectation horizon of an argument, a suit or somewhat a black-humor story, but actually embracing sketches, aphorisms and everyday reflections, like this:

> *There's nothing more boring than a song that says "I love you and you love me". That's boring. But if you write a song that says "I love you and you love somebody else", that's interesting!* (Summoner's Tales. December 20, 2021. 4).

Eventually, Sting himself considered "Tales" one of the most luminous books in English literature, together with Shakespeare's dramas, Stevenson's "Treasury Island," T. S. Eliot's „The Waste Land" and Joyce's "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" (See Науменко 2019: p. 168).

Therefore, Chaucerian lyrical and ironic intonations are so evidently interacting within an image of a narrator for a certain poem. As it was discussed before, Sting's Summoner seems not just a certain term to name a statesman, but also an expression of a 'lyrical mask,' the well-planned way for the poet to distance himself from the image of 'a saint,' constantly keeping up to his increasing concern on the social issues (Науменко 2019: p. 169; Gable 2009: p. 66; Gardner 1980: p. 359). As the Polish literary critic Grażina Waluga observed, the Somnour in original "Canterbury Tales" represented the conceptual type of a narrator – a person who used different methods (sometimes bribery, sometimes espionage) to gather "the materials and evidences" for his future suits in order to transform them into stories (Waluga 2000: p. 98).

In turn, the Summoner as the narrator of Sting's album tells not four tales typical for Chaucerian original, but ten, additionally framed into **Prologue** ("If I Ever Lose My Faith in You") and **Epilogue** ("Nothing 'bout Me"). Therefore, the objectives of this article are to confirm the formal and substantial diversity of all twelve songs as the consequence of their polyphonic narrative structure and, what is the most essential, to outline each type of a narrator as the spokesman of the author's reflections, memories and everyday observations, thenceforth interwoven in original song plots. To accomplish this task, the poems have been categorized into four clusters regarding the specific leading motifs, linguistic elements and their interaction in a verse to create the wholesome image of a speaker.

Although every story in "Ten Summoner's Tales" is told by a first-person narrator, all of them display quite distinctive persons with their own viewpoints. The pronoun 'I' is even anaphoric in some verses,

which is not at all the evidence of a speaker's selfishness but rather his desire to draw a listener's attention to his story, especially the poignant one:

> *You could say I lost my faith in science and progress*
> *You could say I lost my belief in the Holy Church*
> *You could say I lost my sense of correction*
> *You could say all of this and worse…* ("If I Ever Lose My Faith in You." 15).

As Christopher Gable notices,

> *…here, the verses are used to list the corollary of the chorus: what Sting has lost his faith in – science, religion, government, the military, even game-show hosts. But the chorus regulates this and implies that he will never lose his faith in the person he loves. It's a love song of disillusionment* (Gable 2009: p. 67).

So rare and sophisticated from thence is the individual-authorial type of a conditional sentence (mixed 1st and 2nd Conditional) used by the speaker as a refrain, "*If I ever lose my faith in you / There'd be nothing left for me to do…*" The speculative anaphora "*you would say…*" became the key principle to figure out the image of the narrator – he is, actually, the philosopher, somewhat the beaten-by-life man turning to an implicit narratee, 'you,' should it be a single person or a large audience.

The same narrative manner, as well as the mask of the speaker, echo in two subsequent verses in Sting's album – the ninth, "Everybody Laughed but You," and, to resume, the twelfth, "Nothing 'bout Me." Together with the initial track, they make up the first cluster of poems with a type of a narrator to be called 'reflexive.' In "Everybody Laughed…" the speaker appears to appreciate the aforesaid nameless 'you' remaining the only one to understand him and sympathize with him:

> *Everybody laughed when I told them I wanted you I wanted you*
> *Everybody grinned they humored me – They thought that someone spiked my tea*
> *Everybody screamed they told me you would cost the moon we'll be there soon*
> *Everybody laughed till they were blue – They didn't believe my words were true…*

That is why the overwhelmingly used pronoun 'everybody' becomes an anaphora for the majority of lines (11 out of 15), to contrast with the closing one in each couplet, "*Everybody laughed but you*" (Sting 1993). In two following stanzas, separated from each other by the guitar outro and ending with decrease in key, the verb 'laughed' */la: ft/* in the last lines is replaced by its anagrams – 'left' */left/* and then 'fell' */fel/*. This pair of concepts is assumingly a kind of a palindrome, symbolizing, together with lower singing voice of Sting, recurrence of love in human life and otherwise imminence of somebody's 'falling' as a penalty for 'leaving,' actually leaving the speaker in trouble and showing disbelief to him.

While the narration in „Everybody Laughed but You" is built on **pronouns** as the main indicators for all the characters of the song (*everybody, I, me, my, you, they, them, their, many, much, all, some*), "Nothing 'bout Me" exploits **verbs** in the imperative mood, with which the speaker appeals to another unidentified 'you.' As for C. Gable, the pronoun 'you' should be kept in regard as plural, pointing out huge fans, 'amateur psychologists' and officious journalists:

> *He knows that, figuratively at least, fans and the media all want to get a piece of him and rummage through his various houses. But even if they do, they cannot get at his core self. It is a song about privacy and the struggle to maintain it while staying true to oneself* (Gable 2009: p. 75).

On the other hand, despite the large number of words from contemporary English (such as *surgeon, computer, college tutor, records, income tax, CV, microscope*), here we can observe Sting return to the image of Chaucer's Summoner and his main method of gathering information for an upcoming suit, which is some kind of instigation:

Lay my head on the surgeon's table
Take my fingerprints if you are able
Pick my brain, pick my pockets
Steal my eyeballs and come back for the sockets…
Run my name through your computer
Mention me in passing to your college tutor
Check my records check my facts
Check if I paid my income tax… etc. (Sting 1993).

Henceforth, be the unnamed ‘you’ an investigator, a scientist, a student, a paparazzi, a taxman and so on – one “*will still know nothing*” about the ‘reflexive-type’ speaker, even pulling together all knowledge obtained. This fact undoubtedly alludes to Kantian philosopheme, “*What might be said of things in themselves, separated from all relationship to our senses, remains for us absolutely unknown*.”

The next cluster of songs represents the ‘actor’ type of a narrator, introduced into an interpretation of a wandering plot. For instance, “Love Is Stronger than Justice,” the second in the playlist, actualizes the typical ballad collision – murder of jealousy, unlike its probable prototype, “We Are Seven” by William Wordsworth. In the preface to his “Lyrical Ballads,” Wordsworth wrote that the poems exhibit a “*power of real and substantial action and suffering*” and, in particular to “We are Seven,” to express „*the perplexity and obscurity which in childhood attend our notion of death, or rather our utter inability to admit that notion*” (Wordsworth 1955: p. xiii). The evidences of this inability in “We Are Seven” are figurative expressions ‘to be in Wales,’ ‘to be at sea’ and ‘to be buried in a churchyard.’

Obviously, Wordsworth’s poem is composed as a dialogue between the speaker and a little girl he met, whereas Sting’s “Love Is Stronger than Justice” is a monologue spoken by the youngest out of seven brothers born from different mothers. Sporadic Spanish words (rhymed and thus alleged to be the key ones – *burritos, banditos, señoritas*) and specific natural realities show the plot evolve in Mexico, therefore setting up the horizon of a western-shaped detective story. The authorities of a poor little town promised the travelling brothers some bonuses for chasing the bandits away, including “*a bride for every man.*” However, when it turned out to be a maiden to satisfy only one, then the seventh brother, told by his mother ‘the clever’ but never wishing to comply with the common ethical rules, caused his siblings to death, – what he had actually done is not written in a verse, and only the last line, “*the other six are singing in Heaven*,” gives a hint.

Finally yet importantly, Wordsworth made it clear that his principal object was

> *to choose incidents and situations from common life <…> and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain coloring of imagination… and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them <…> the primary laws of our nature* (Wordsworth 1955: p. 869).

Upon reading Sting's verses, it is evident that he has appeared to follow this rule meticulously enough, choosing incidents and situations not to challenge a witness, as Somnour would do, but to turn them into artistic archetypes. That is why the close reading of the third verse – "Fields of Gold" – evokes associations with another masterpiece of British romantic poetry, which is Robert Burns' "Among the Rigs o'Barley":

> *…The sky was blue, the wind was still,*
> *The moon was shining clearly,*
> *I set her down, wi' right good will,*
> *Among the rigs o' barley…* (Burns).

Sting, in turn, used a different stanza pattern – not an octave but a six-verse adorned with a refrain "*Among the fields of barley… Among the fields of gold*" partly borrowed from Burns; anyway, the melodiousness of both poems is evident. What is noticeable about the composition of "The Rigs o'Barley" and "Fields of Gold" is that the elements of folk songs, for instance refrains, beginnings and framings, are essential for forming the image of a narrator (Науменко 2019: p. 170; Andrews 2013: p. 27). The endeavor to create the three-dimensional heroes, accomplished by Sting as well as by Burns, motivated both authors to consider carefully the construction of the text, and thenceforth "The Rigs o'Barley" and "Fields of Gold" may be qualified as short stories with well-developed plot, capacious characters, and baroque-styled (Carswell 2009: p. 116) singing language. However, R. Burns displayed the single type of a speaker that was 'I'-narrator, while on the contrary Sting swapped the first-person (an actor) and third-person (a witness) speakers in odd and even stanzas, respectively:

> ***You'll** remember **me***
> *When the West wind moves*
> *Upon the fields of barley… (the 1st stanza)*;

*So **she** took **her** love*
For to gaze awhile
Upon the fields of barley… (the 2nd stanza).

Mythical and somewhat mystical intertext is presented in the eleventh song, "Something the Boy Said," the timeless story which has no certain prototype, but could be set in any century where there are armies and war (Gable 2009: p. 74). C. Gable defines the narrator as a 'rank-and-file' soldier who seems to be not afraid of uncertainty yet confident only among his brothers in arms. According to the plot, the troops had been preparing for the campaign (a recipient does not know where, but expectation of the event is suggested by a line "*we would find that we would find*") until the captain's little son claimed a daring prophecy: "*you'll never see our faces again / You'll be food for a carrion crow…*". Despite doubts of all the army, the prophecy came true, and only the narrator survived.

Hence another significant archetype in this song, together with 'War,' is Shadow – its immediate appearance and evanescence at the beginning ("*Sometimes we glimpse a shadow falling / The shadow would disappear…*") would symbolize overcoming of obsessive fear in warriors' souls, but the very next stanza displays Shadow the latent metaphor of inevitability, highlighted with an allusion to Biblical Horsemen of Apocalypse:

The clouds were like dark riders
Flying on the face of the moon (Sting 1993).

That is why the 'actor-type' narrator experienced the verge state ("*Am I dead or am I living?..*"), or, in this particular case, the fear of turning back for not to see "*the feast of the crow.*" Meanwhile, there is another mythical motif observed – Orpheus and Euridice: in the antique prototext, Hades's prohibition to look back on the way from underground kingdom was deliberately broken by the protagonist and caused his final loss of the beloved nymph; but talking about "Something the Boy Said," violation of the prohibition would rather signify the narrator's spiritual collapse due to his excessive arrogance (Науменко 2019: p. 150).

Within a structure of the third cluster of songs, evident is the 'pointillist' type of a narrator. As the various concepts and details are

beaded up to depict a certain situation, this type of storytelling is assumingly the result of a profound intellectual work, so possible to be called 'a glass-bead game,' due to the prevalence of monosyllabic words in these poems. This game is now serious, now humorous, making up the cumulative-tale narration in the fifth song, "She's Too Good for Me," and then the sixth, "Seven Days":

She don't like to hear me sing
She don't want no diamond ring
She don't want to drive my car
She won't let me go that far
She don't like the way I look
She don't like the things I cook
She don't like the way I play
She don't like the things I say… (Sting 1993).

Obviously, the narrator of a quoted above quick-paced story tells his inability to guess and satisfy the needs of his whimsical lady so impatiently that allows himself some deviations from language norms (contracting 'doesn't' to 'don't' or uttering a double negation in the second line). Yet it is done very skillfully due to anaphora, monosyllabic words and "playful rhymes" (Gable 2009: p. 70), including an internal one "*the way I play*." In the bridge of the song, the speaker's mood is changing from humorous to philosophical, with speculative intonations convergent to those in "If I Ever Lose My Faith in You":

Would she prefer it if I washed myself more often than I do
Would she prefer it if I took her to the opera or two
I could distort myself to be the perfect man…

and a precise resolution, "*She might prefer me as I am*" (Sting 1993).

Furthermore, in "Seven Days," the narrator's voice grows ironic and 'self-deprecating' (Gable 2009: p. 71), otherwise exposing his apprehension to be involved into some strange game of winning back his love, which would last for a week. Here is represented quite an interesting paraphrase of Chaucer's prototext, in which the Somnour looks not summoning but summoned:

When I thought the field had cleared
It seems another suit appeared
To challenge me… (Sting 1993).

This song is another epitome of 'pointillist' narrative structure, especially in a refrain where only names of days are polysyllabic:

Monday, I could wait till Tuesday
If I make up my mind
Wednesday would be fine,
Thursday's on my mind
Friday'd give me time,
Saturday could wait,
but Sunday'll be too late (Sting 1993).

This way the narrator shapes the chorus in a manner of a counter cited below:

Monday's child is fair of face,
Tuesday's child is full of grace,
Wednesday's child is full of woe,
Thursday's child has far to go,
Friday's child is losing and giving,
Saturday's child works hard for his living,
And the child that is born on the Sabbath day
Is fair and wise and good and gay.

In Sting's poem, virtues and drawbacks of 'children born on the certain day,' mentioned in the original counter, are transformed into the sequence of positive expectations: for six days prior to Sunday – 'wait,' 'make up my mind,' 'would be fine,' 'saw my mind,' 'give me time,' 'could wait,' but on Sunday it will 'be too late.' Decidedly, the duel between a rival Neanderthal, quite alike to Goliath (as C. Gable figuratively said, 'a big, muscular dunderhead' (Gable 2009: p. 71)), seems unavoidable: the beloved woman should be seriously fought for, not just won in an intellectual game like 'scrabble.' Thus, like in a traditional counter, someone has to go away.

"The sketch collection," which generic marker Sting has given to "Ten Summoner's Tales," is certainly integrated in the text of the fourth song, "Heavy Cloud No Rain," in which the 'pointillist' speaker

appeared for the first time. The main symbol in this verse is a pre-storm – in terms of meteorology, a phenomenon accompanied with increase of atmospheric pressure, thus worsening the state of human health. Along with that, from philosophical viewpoint it can be interpreted as 'the verge state,' an existential concept of inevitable changes and otherwise of uncertainty.

It is a well-known fact that weathermen would use tentative language, say "a *chance* of rain," "there *may be* a thunderstorm," "*a bit* windy," "*around* 13 centigrade" to make a forecast credible as much. In Sting's verse, the weatherman's information about the probability of rain through the whole day sounds hopefully for the time being, but then hope is eliminated by long pre-storm. The growing feeling of the speaker's anxiety is expressed in a refrain, "*Heavy cloud but no rain*" – whenever sung, the negative particle 'no' is stressed (Науменко 2019: p. 47). Meantime, the speaker associates his expectations of rain with historical events in every subsequent stanza:

– *death of Louis XVI, the French king;*

– *worrying of the court astrologist who naively hoped that the rain would postpone the king's execution;*

– *bad draught for which Medieval clergymen traditionally blamed witches;*

– *sorcery for rain on spells from an old book.*

The last stanza is the key point of the whole narration: the speaker's beloved woman warns him, "*she'd save her love for the rainy day,*" which actually means "she would not waste her feelings." Therefore, the verge state so acutely experienced by both the speaker and the recipient allowed Sting to concentrate the vision of two great periods of history (the Middle Ages and French Revolution) and, moreover, to reverse them in time for amplifying the narration.

Noteworthy for the last cluster of songs is that Sting, upon alternation of profound philosophical images and details of everyday life, verse and prose pieces, has managed to embody the compositional principle formulated by David Lodge, which is "*a bricolage of fragments, short passages that are grim, grotesque and whimsical by turns, which describe the experiences of the very two-dimensional hero*" (Lodge 1977: p. 284). In "Ten Summoner's Tales," we can

clearly observe turning a two-dimensional character into a three-dimensional one:

> *Three-dimensional characters are complex and unique, with fully developed fictional lives. This makes them seem like real people. And the more real the character seems, the more the audience will identify with them and care about what happens to them. <…> This is especially true with stories set in unfamiliar worlds, like science fiction, fantasy, and historical drama,*

as Douglas J. Ebosh wrote (Ebosh 2017). Hence, the type of a narrator presented over there can be defined 'a medium.'

"Saint Augustine in Hell" (the seventh song) should be a fine example of this phenomenon. The expectation horizon of a kind of a fantastic, somewhat infernal narration is set by the very musical derangement – the time signature 7/4 that is not typical for early Sting; the forced drum and bass section; the solo party of a Hammond synthesizer with frequent glissandos and special vibrating sound, which appears to symbolize the strong emotional awe in Augustine's soul (Науменко 2019: p. 125) or a fight between two men (Gable 2009: p. 72). The oxymoron title bears the resemblance to the collision of Dante's "Divina Commedia" that begins with a narrator's journey around hell. Respectively, the time signature conditioned the polymetric pattern of the verse – combination of long dolnyk (a three-foot meter with few syllables omitted) and six-foot trochee with a caesura after the third foot:

> *If s**o**mebody **u**p there l**i**kes me, s**o**mebody **u**p there c**a**res*
> *Del**i**ver m**e** from **e**vil, s**a**ve me fr**o**m these w**i**cked sn**a**res*
> *N**o**t int**o** tempt**a**tion, n**o**t to cl**i**ffs of f**a**ll*
> ***O**n to revel**a**tion, and l**e**sson for us **a**ll* (Sting 1993).

The commandment to abstain from evil, prominent for Augustine Aurelius philosophy, was also of a great virtue for Old Testament characters, such as Job. But what about Sting's verse, the Catholic saint, being challenged by his best friend, endeavors to represent the interweaving of seven deadly sins (similarly to Chaucer's Somnour) within a short story, highlighting treachery as the worst one. Therefore, it is necessary to turn to Augustine's authentic quote,

> *Passion is the evil in adultery. If a man has no opportunity of living with another man's wife, but if it is obvious for some reason that he would like to do so, and would do so if he could, he is no less guilty than if he was caught in the act* (Saint…).

On the other hand, Augustine, as depicted by Sting, tends to generalize about womanly nature, creating a special symbol from the archetypal female images – St. Theresa, 'the whore of Babylon,' Madonna and his mother.

Along with that, the poem represents the purely romantic compositional means dating back to Scandinavian saga, which is the synthesis of rhythmic prose and versified inserts. In the bridge performed by a piano, bass and cymbals, the host of hell (voiced by David Foxxe) is inviting Augustine to be his guest, meantime presenting the wonderful company for the Saint to spend the rest of forever with:

> *Relax, have a cigar, make yourself at home. Hell is full of court judges, failed saints. We've got Cardinals, Archbishops, barristers, certified accountants, music critics, they're all here. You're not alone, you're never alone, not here you're not… OK, breaks over* (Sting 1993).

This piece of prose within the verse would allude to Sebastiano De Grazia's book entitled "Machiavelli in Hell." The modern Italian publicist gives an extraordinary definition of hell – as for him, it is actually "*a place where makers of states gather*." Membership in this club is reserved for those who founded states either through their deeds (princes) or their writing (authors); the last category includes famous political theorists, such as Aristotle, Plato and, of course, Machiavelli. In a word, hell is "*a dwelling place of heroes*" (De Grazia 1989: p. 385).

It would be strange enough why C. Gable finds "It's Probably Me," the eighth song, "the one disappointment" in "Ten Summoner's Tales." As for him, it is deprived of contrasts and hence of a conflict so necessary for a movie soundtrack; since the relationship between two characters is "quite thin," the song sounds unconvincing. What is more, Gable defines the semantic of the title as "a song about guilt" (Gable 2009: p. 72–73), a feeling predominant in the speaker's narration.

However, there is a reason to mildly object to the researcher.

Providing that "It's Probably Me" is a separate lyro-epic story, regardless of the collisions of "Lethal Weapon III," something different from just 'thin' relationships of two people can be read between the lines of the verse (Науменко 2019: p. 48). Actually, the main characters are a traditionally nameless narratee indicated by the pronoun 'you' and his (or, what is more likely, her) invisible friend the narrator:

If the night turned cold and the stars look down
And you hug yourself on the cold cold ground
You wake the morning in a stranger's coat
No one would you see
You ask yourself, who'd watch for me
My only friend, who could it be…

The sequence of lexical and syntactic refrains encourages a recipient to comprehend – it is pretty hard for the speaker to confess that it is he who acts as a 'guardian angel' for his interlocutor:

It's hard to say it
I hate to say it
But it's probably me…

The minor melody brings intonations of enlightenment into the text, which makes up the atmosphere of hope that everyone in 'the world gone crazy' can feel protected under any circumstances:

When the world's gone crazy and it makes no sense
There's only one voice that comes to your defense
The jury's out and your eyes search the room
And one friendly face is all you need to see… (Sting 1993).

Thereby, only one friendly face and only one voice to the narratee's defense – and that is already a lot (Науменко 2019: p. 49).

Finally, the tenth song in the album, "Shape of My Heart," seems standing slightly apart from Chaucerian generic paradigm of a confession, a cumulative tale, a ballad story and a historically oriented narration. The card game to shape the plot of the story told seems to be the most reliable way for the 'medium-type' speaker to find the key to various archetypal situations through different card combinations –

probably the analogues of D. J. Ebosh's 'unfamiliar worlds' in which the paths of life have to be trodden (Ebosh 2017).

Hence, the textual canvas of the song inspires a literary scientist to read it in terms of playing card symbolism and therefore to study the winnable combinations for various games – "*the sacred geometry of chance*" shown in the coincidence of the jack of diamonds and the queen of spades (actually a *pinochle* that is sometimes used as a metonymy for all the card games). The interpretations of cards suit symbolism by different culture theorists can be generalized like the following: *diamonds – social activities; hearts – sacrifices; clubs – power; spades – justice*. Overall, the playing cards, or 'Small Tarot Arcane,' are thought to be the metaphor of a soul's journey across four parallel paths on the way to the new level of knowledge, which assertion can be backed up by the following quote:

> *I know that the **spades** are the swords for the soldiers*
> *I know that the **clubs** are weapons of war*
> *I know that **diamonds** mean money for this art*
> *And that's not the shape of my **heart*** (Sting 1993).

Various card layouts include the element of chance "*to allow people to see their lives from different angles and to encourage them to find solutions to their questions and problems*" (Gable 2009: p. 73). Nowadays, laying cards is far more psychological than mystical in substance. Just this angle does Sting take to show the man dealing with cards – a croupier, a gambler, a preference player, or merely a participant of some casual game like 'fools.' In a nutshell, we may presume that this character is somewhat forlorn, but anyway tries to arrange his life (and love, in particular) with a help of cards.

The English word 'heart,' besides its initial meaning, indicates also one of four card suits to be primary in the majority of games (say preference) and filled with mostly positive connotations in fortune telling, like *two of hearts* – passion; *three* – 'you and only you'; *six* – nice path or trip; *eight* – friendly flirt; *ten* – great joy; *jack* – new hope or a child, etc. (Divination…). This word game appears to be more symbolic within the context of cordocentrism; thus, it is expedient to accomplish an excursion into the 19th century Ukrainian philosophy.

Pamfil Yurkevych, an apologist of cordocentrism, thought a human to be a microcosm carrying the wide array of spiritual experiences typical only to him or her. As for him, heart is the center of living knowledge, emotions and creativity, in other words – the sphere of reconciliation between science and religion (Юркевич 1993: p. 76). While reflecting about perception and expression of the outer world in artistic images, P. Yurkevych acclaimed the mightiness of heart in comparison to all the set of artistic means:

> *Whenever we feel bliss contemplating the beauty in nature or in arts, whenever we are moved by hearty sounds of music, whenever we admire the majestic heroic deeds – thence all these states of more or less strong inspiration do at once leave an imprint in our heart, so suddenly and independently on our casual stream of states of mind that all the arts would perpetually complain about the deficiency of the means to express these states* (Юркевич 1993: p. 76; translation from Ukrainian is mine).

Although Sting's 'medium-type' speaker of „Shape of My Heart" tends to swindling in game ("*He may conceal a king in his hand / When a memory of it fades*"), but while assuring his addressee (a beloved woman) of his really sincere feelings towards her, he asserts, "*I'm not a man of too many faces / The mask I wear is one*". No wonder that just these lines can be the core essence of the image of the speaker in Sting's entire heritage.

To conclude, it is expedient to generalize about four types of narrators in Sting's entire album, determined as 'reflexive,' 'actor,' 'pointillist' and 'medium.' The story told by the first one is shaped as an internal monologue almost deprived of any external action, evolving in three stages – speculation, contemplation and instigation, but anyway an encouragement to a dialogue. The second type of narration exploits the wandering plots, mostly from English literature, in which the speaker plays the role of a direct participant, sometimes alternating with a witness, like in "Fields of Gold." Interesting is the third type of storytelling, clarified by the speaker's intention to portray a situation (actually, expectation) by a wide array of details from various areas, including history and mythology. The fourth type narrators tend to model their environment as a 'double-world' by connecting reality with esoteric semantic fields like journey in hell, 'invisibility'

motifs or dealing cards.

All of these types are interacting different ways, depending on the substance of a separate story. For instance, a 'reflexive' speaker attains the distinctive features of a 'medium' one in "If I Ever Lose my Faith in You," otherwise showing himself as an 'actor' in "Nothing 'bout Me" and as a 'pointillist' in "Everybody Laughed but You." Conversely, an 'actor,' a direct participant of the story told, may be revealed as a 'pointillist' in "Fields of Gold," partly a 'reflexive' in "Love Is Stronger than Justice," especially in the chorus, and 'medium' in "Something the Boy Said." Then, a 'pointillist,' upon using short words and varying the paces of his stories, may act out as an 'actor' in "She's Too Good for Me," since thinking on what to do for satisfying his woman, or as a 'medium' in "Heavy Cloud No Rain," turning back to historical events, which manner would thenceforth impart him the guise of a 'reflexive' narrator in "Seven Days." Finally, a 'medium' as the most complex type of a narrator combines the principles of story-telling of a 'reflexive' in "It's Probably Me," an 'actor' in "Saint Augustine in Hell," and a 'pointillist' in "Shape of My Heart."

Linguistic means are of no less importance in building an image of a speaker. The essential lexical categories to shape a narrator are foreign words in "Love Is Stronger than Justice," idiomatic expressions in "She's Too Good for Me," philosophical terms in "Saint Augustine in Hell" and "Shape of My Heart," historical allusions in "Heavy Cloud No Rain." The prevalent parts of speech are pronouns for the speaker of "Everybody Laughed but You," modal verbs for "If I Ever Lose My Faith in You" and "It's Probably Me," future tense verbs for "Fields of Gold," verbs in imperative mood for "Nothing 'bout Me," whereas quite remarkable is the rare usage of adjectives for not to retard the narration pace. Finally, diverse are the tropes and figures, particularly anaphora in "If I Ever Lose My Faith in You," "She's Too Good for Me," "Everybody Laughed but You," implicit-direct speech and similes in "Something the Boy Said," antithesis in "Saint Augustine in Hell," and catalogue in "Seven Days."

Actually, Sting's speakers in the entire album do not appear to be simply observers, but active participants of the stories told. Therefore, the perspective trend of studies is highlighting the ways to develop the plot of a song regarding not only an image of a narrator itself, but also

the archetypal binary oppositions between protagonists and antagonists of the poems, such as David and Goliath in “Seven Days,” a thinker and his recipient in “Heavy Cloud No Rain,” a man and a woman in “Fields of Gold” or “She’s Too Good for Me,” the saint and the devil in “Saint Augustine in Hell,” an innocent person and one’s unfair judges in “It’s Probably Me” or “Everybody Laughed but You,” a soldier and his commander in “Something the Boy Said,” a writer and his researchers in “Nothing ‘bout Me.”

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ОПОВІДНА ПОЛІФОНІЯ АЛЬБОМУ СТІНГА "TEN SUMMONER'S TALES" (1993)

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Анотація. Проаналізовано особливості оповідної структури альбому "Ten Summoner's Tales" (1993), що його традиційно визнають як Magnum Opus Стінга. Оскільки пісня – синтетична жанрова структура, позначена глибинним внутрішнім переживанням, очевидний факт, що кожен із 12 творів альбому репрезентує окремий тип наратора. Передусім це „я"-оповідач, утілений у поетичних масках історика, воїна, праведника, гравця, філософа; у деяких текстах спостерігається чергування оповідачів від першої та третьої особи, однак кожен наративний розклад оприявнює архетипні бінарні опозиції між протагоністами й антагоністами. Оповідна структура пісень зумовлює їхні жанрові характеристики: детектив, пастораль, історичні рефлексії, казка, сповідь тощо. Загалом, незалежно від типу оповідача у творах Стінга, що складають альбом "Ten Summoner's Tales", елементи авторського світобачення та творчого досвіду органічно входять у пісенний текст, де набувають значення символів людського буття, утілених у словесні образи й посилених музичним супроводом.

Ключові слова: творчість Стінга; пісня; музика; вірш; оповідь; ліричний герой; адресат.

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