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The Demonstrative Pronoun "This" in Troilus and Criseyde

Masahito Nishimura

I Introduction

In Chaucer's "Troilus and Criseyde" there is considerable use of the demonstrative pronoun "this." My opening example is the following:

O blynde world, O blynde entenchioun!
How often falleth al the effect contraire.
Of surquidre and foul presumcioun;
For kaught is proud, and kaught is debonaire.
This Troilus is clomben on the staire,
And litel weneth that he moot descenden;
But alday faileth thing that fooles wenden.

(TC.I,215) (1)

(And still, oh blind world and purpose of man! can he pluck as proud a peacock. How often falls the even contrary to overweening and foul presumtion, for caught is, the proud and caught is the humble! This Troilus has climbed aloft, and little weens that he must come down. But ever fail fools' thoughts.) (2)

Concerning the usage of "this," Coghill (3) calls it the "Possessive Demonstrative" and describes it as follows:

This Januarie: here is a uniquely Chaucerian idiom that may be called the Possessive Demonstrative----
The word carries many a shifting overtone of affection, patronage, mockery, indigantion, condescen-

tence, conversationalism, and other subtly-varied shades of feeling, but in all of them a certain possessiveness of Chaucer's in respect of the character he is describing, shared a little with his audience----The Possessive Demonstrative may perhaps have its origin in a fact which dominates all Chaucer's storytelling; the sense that he is sharing his story with his hearers springs form his extreme sensitiveness to the royal audience his personal acquaintances) for whom he wrote it; it helps to bring his hearers onto the speaker's side, favourably rather than condescendingly, though seldom without some touch of condescension, who should say 'This Troilus I am telling you about, this Troilus of ours, this fellow we met last week....

In addition the the remark above, Nakao (4) also said that Chaucer was trying to add some connotations to the demonstrative "this." In other words, it possesses an addi-
tional meaning. On the basis of these explanations, this paper purports to investigate two things in more detail. One is to show the historical study of this usage and the
other is to reexamine what emotional meanings Chaucer was trying to add to describe the characters in *Troilus and Criseyde*.

II Historical Survey

I will try to give some explanations about this usage from the viewpoint of a historical study. Sufficient diachronic explanations have not been made so far, but Nakao explains that this usage is characteristic of Chaucer's or Gower's poetry. Then, let us first see if it appears in Old English. Look at the following example.

Eart þu se Beowulf, se þe wið Breca wunne, on sidne sæ ymb sund flite, ðær git for wlence wada cunneden ond for dolgilde on deop wæter aldrum neþdon?

(Are you the Beowulf who contended against Breca, competed in swimming on the open sea, where in your pride you two explored the flood, and risked your lives in deep water for the sake of a foolish boast?)

"This" is not shown in this example, but "se" (=that) has a similar usage. Furthermore, in studying *Troilus and Criseyde*, the influences of Italian and Latin literature must be taken into consideration. Chaucer followed the main outline of Boccaccio's poem throughout, translating stanza by stanza. At the same time he increased the number of his lines and added creations and innovations of his own. Similar usage has not been discovered in *Il Filostrato* by Boccaccio but some examples have been found in Latin literature. An example is shown below.

Denique etiam a philosophia profectus princeps Xenophon, Socraticus ille, post ab Aristotele Callisthenes comes Alexandrii, scripsit historiam, et is quidem rhetorico paene more; (Cicero, De Oratore II.xii.58) (7)

(And at length historians appeared who had begun as philosophers, first Xenophon, that notable follower of Socrates, afterwards Callisthenes, Aristotle's disciple and Alexander's familiar friend.)

Another example is from "The Aeneid."

"quis te, nate dea, per tanta pericula casus insequitur? quae vis immanibus applicat oris? tune ille Aeneas, quem Dardanio Anchisae alma Venus Phrygii genuit Simoentis ad undam?" (Book I, 617) (8)

(What fate pursues thee, goddes-born, amidst such perils? What violence drives thee to savage shores? Art thou that Aeneas, whom gracious Venus bore to Dardanian Anchises by the wave of Phrygian Simois?)

Like "se" in Old English, "ille" (=that) is used in Latin with a personal pronoun and in this case means "famous" and is placed after a personal noun. In addition, the demonstrative pronoun "hic" in Latin has a similar usage to "ille." And example is "Platō hic." (9)

So far, a clear idea of the origin of this usage hasn't been shown. The examples in this section indicate that this usage is mostly restricted the demonstrative pronoun "that."

III The Demonstrative Pronoun "This" in *Troilus and Criseyde*
So far the historical study of this usage has been looked at. In this section, the use of the demonstrative pronoun in Troilus and Criseyde will be observed. Concerning this usage, the contexts are very important, so let us decide as objectively as possible what additional meanings Chaucer tried to give.

The examples of this usage have been found and divided into six categories according to personal names. The following table (10) shows the numbers and personal names.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Troilus</th>
<th>Pandarus (Pandare)</th>
<th>Diomede</th>
<th>Calkas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Sarpedoun</td>
<td>Meleagre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It follows from this result that the demonstrative pronoun "this" is mostly used with Troilus, Pandarus and Diomede.

Secondly, the contexts have been examined thoroughly and divided into six categories in relation to what meanings Chaucer tried to give.

(i) Sadness
Chaucer gave an additional connotation "sadness" to show the characters who were sad.

But thanne felte this Troilus swich wo,
That he was wel neighe wood; for ay his drede
Was this, that she som wight hadde love so,
That nevere of hym she wolde han taken hede.

(TC.I, 498)

(This Troilus felt such woe that he was
wellnigh mad, for his dread was ever this, that she
so loved some other man that she would never take
heed of him.)

Other examples: TC.I, 215, 582, 773. TC.III, 78, 786, 1065,
1443, 1521. TC.IV, 148, 219, 365, 379, 519, 822, 1121, 1156, 1422. TC.
V, 22, 64, 281, 414, 505, 520, 682, 1100, 1121, 1182, 1291, 1482, 1632,
1647, 1655, 1732, 1828.

(ii) Pleasure
Chaucer tried to give an additional connotation "pleasure" to show the characters who are happy.

But right as floures, thurgh the colde of nyght
Iclosd, stoupen on hire stalke lowe,
Redressen hem aygin the sonne bright,
And spreden'on hire kynde cours by rowe,
Right so gan tho his eighen up to throwe
This Troilus, and seyde, "O Venus deere,
Thi myght, thi grace, yheried be it here!"

(TC.II, 972)

(Even as flowers, closed through the cold of night,
and bent low on their stalks, erect themselves in
the bright sunshine, and stand spreading and blooming in rows,—so did Troilus revive, and threw up
his eyes and said, 'O beloved Venus, praised be thy
might and grace!')

Other examples are: TC.I, 1037. TC.II, 120, 939, 1093.
TC.III, 1184, 1205, 1352, 1590, 1660, 1717, 1738. TC.IV, 631.
(iii) Earnestness
Chaucer tried to give an additional connotation "earnestness" to show that the characters who are purposeful.
Whan this was don, this Pandare up anon,
To telle in short, and forth gan for to wende
To Troilus, as stille as any ston; (TC.II,1492)
(And after him Pandarus departed quietly to
Troilus, and told him word for word how he had
hoodwinked Deiphobus.)
Other examples are: TC.I,1058. TC.II,1142,1339,1681.
TC.III,235. TC.V,1120.
(iv) Cunning
The next example is used with Deomed and Chaucer tried to give an additional connotation "cunning" to show Diomede's character.
This Diomede, as he that koude his good,
Whan this was don, gan fallen forth in speche
Of this and that, and axed whi she stood
In swich disese, and gan hire ek biseche,
That if that he encresse myghte or eche
With any thyng hire ese, that she sholde
Comaunde it hym, and seyde he don it wolde.
(TC.V,106)
(In due season Diomed, knowing full well what he was about, began to fall in speech of this and that, asked why she was in such distress, and besought her that if he could in my wise advance her pleasure, she should command it him, and he would do it, he said.)
Other examples are: TC.V,92,771,844,1010,1034,1041,1087.
(v) Nobility
Chaucer tried to give an additional connotation "nobility" to show the characters are noble.
This Troilus, as he was wont to gide
His yonge knyghtes, lad hem up and down
In thilke large temple on every side, (TC.I,183)
(Troilus, as he was wont, with his young knights,
was going around and about in that broad temple
ever beholding the ladies of the town;)
Other examples are: TC.I,268. TC.II,624. TC.III,953.
TC.V,435,799.
(vi) Hatefulness
Chaucer tried to give an additional connotation "hatefulness" to show each character who is hated by others.
Whi nyl I slen this Diomede also?
Why nyl rather with a man or two
Steale hire away? Whi wol I this endure? (TC.V,46)
(Why not slay this Diomed, or why not rather with
the help of a man or two steal her away?)
Other examples are: TC.V,1517,1519,1703,1757.
(vii) Despised
In the following example, Chaucer tried to give an additional connotation to "despised" to show Calkas is vulgar.
So whan this Calkas knew by calkulynge,
And ek by answer of this Appolo,
That Grekes sholden swich a peple bryngye,
Thorough which that Troie muste ben fordo,
He caste anon out of the town to go;  {TC.1,71}  
{So when this Calchas knew by reckoning and eke by
answer of Apollo that the Greeks should bring such
a force as should over throw the the city, he laid
his plan to leave it anon;}

The following table indicates the seven semantic
categories and the number of examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Sadness</th>
<th>Pleasure</th>
<th>Earnestness</th>
<th>Cunning</th>
<th>Nobility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meaning</td>
<td>Hatefulness</td>
<td>Despised</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number</td>
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From this result, we have found that Chaucer describes
the individuality of each character in *Troilus and Criseyde*
with this usage that is peculiar to him.

IV Conclusion

So far we have observed the demonstrative pronoun
"this" in *Troilus and Criseyde*. In this section I would
like to briefly point out the results.

(1) Historical survey shows that Chaucer's usage and
the usage in Old English and Latin are different but "se" in
Old English and "ille" in Latin have a similar usage.
Moreover, it is worthy of note that "hic" in Latin has the
same usage.

(2) The use of "this" with a personal name mostly
occurs with Troilus, Pandarus and Diomedes. {Table 1}

(3) Chaucer gave some additional connotations to
describe the individuality of each character in *Troilus and
Criseyde*. {Table 2}

(4) This usage is not found in *Il Filostrato
di Giovanni Boccaccio*, so that in this sense, it is
Chaucer's innovation.

Notes

(1) References are to the line numbers in Robinson's
Text.

(2) The modern translation is from Tatlock, John S.P. &
Mackaye, P. The Complete Poetical Works of Geoffrey

(3) Coghill, N. : "Chaucer's narrative art in the
Canterbury Tales" Brewer, D.S.(ed.). Chaucer and
134-135.


(5) Ibid., 205.

(6) Swaton, M. Beowulf. New York: Manchester University

English Translation by E.W. Sutton. B.C.L. and H.
Rackham: Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University
240-241. (The Loeb Classical Library)

(8) Virgil. Virgil, Eclogues, Georgics, Aeneid I-VI
with an English Translation by H. Rushton


(10) The result is different from Coghill's. He says in the same page of his paper shown in the note (3). "The most significant statistic about this curious usage in Chaucer is we hear forty-two times of this Troilus and eleven of this Pandarus; but never once of this Criseyde."

My investigation excludes the following examples. But at the laste this woful Troilus (TC.III,372) To Troie is come this woful Troilus (TC.V,197) But Lord! this sely Troilus was! (TC.V,529)

Text

Bibliography