

**The strange case of Francis Dolarhyde
and the Dragon: Alternating narrative points
of view and the source of knowledge
in Thomas Harris' *Red Dragon***

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Abstract

This paper investigates the narrative voice employed by Thomas Harris in *Red Dragon* as a source of knowledge about the fictional universe, more particularly about the main villain, Francis Dolarhyde. Confronting important epistemological notions (knowledge, justification and their sources) with literary theoretical concepts (narrative voice and points of view), I analyse alternating modes of representation. Harris' narrator shifts between three modes: the quasi-perceptual one – sense-based, rich in descriptive elements; the quasi-introspective narration carried out from a close subjective angle, using free indirect speech or stream of consciousness; and the testimonial mode – telling (rather than showing) the story through exposition resting on the principle of cause and effect. Employing a vast array of inter-textual pragmatics, the narrative remains ambiguous. In consequence, any proposition about Dolarhyde can be empirically and rationally challenged and all propositional knowledge regarding the character is merely fragmentary.

Keywords

narrative voice and point of view, Thomas Harris, epistemology, empiricism, rationalism, cognition

**Francis Dolarhyde i Smok: zmienny punkt
narracji a źródło wiedzy w powieści
Thomasa Harrisa *Czerwony smok***

Abstrakt

Artykuł ten poświęcony jest analizie sposobu narracji zastosowanej przez Thomasa Harrisa w *Czerwonym smoku* przy założeniu, że stanowi ona źródło wiedzy o świecie przedstawionym, a w szczególności dostarcza informacji o jednym z głównych bohaterów – Francisie Dolarhyde. Analiza zmiennego punktu prezentacji świata przedstawionego prowadzona jest poprzez nałożenie na siebie kluczowych pojęć epistemologicznych (wiedza, jej uzasadnienie czy ich źródła) oraz terminów literackich (perspektywy i głos narracji). Narrator Harrisa oscyluje pomiędzy trzema trybami: pseudo-percepcyjnym – bogatym w elementy opisowe pokazywaniem wydarzeń poprzez odniesienia do poznania zmysłowego; pseudo-introspekcyjnym – ukazującym świat przedstawiony z bliskiej subiektywnej perspektywy, wykorzystującym mowę pozornie zależną i strumień świadomości; oraz w trybie oświadczenia – wspartego na zasadzie skutku i przyczyny opowiadania o wydarzeniach (a nie ich pokazywania). Używając szerokiego wachlarza wewnątrztekstowych środków językowych narracja ta buduje bardzo wieloznaczny obraz rzeczywistości przedstawionej. W konsekwencji zastosowanego sposobu narracji jakkolwiek sąd logiczny będący konkluzją czytelniczą można podważyć a, co za tym idzie, główny bohater wymyka się poznaniu w epistemologicznym tego słowa znaczeniu.

Słowa kluczowe

narracja, Thomas Harris, epistemologia, empiryzm, racjonalizm, poznanie

There is no doubt whatever that all our cognition begins with experience; for how else should the cognitive faculty be awakened into exercise if not through objects that stimulate our senses and in part themselves produce representations, in part bring the activity of our understanding into motion to compare these, to connect or separate them, and thus to work up the raw material of sensible impressions into a cognition of objects that is called experience? [...] But although all our cognition commences with experience, yet it does not on that account all arise from experience.

Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (1998: 136)

1. Introduction

The credibility of narration is considered in literary studies even if one brackets the existence of the presented world: How does the reader gain a warranted belief as to what is true in a wholly invented reality? Can the author make the reader base his/her judgment on, for instance, perception if there is nothing to sight? I hold that the key role in resolving these epistemological dilemmas is taken by narration: it is the question of what is represented (if at all representable) as well as how it is represented. My inquiry is into the latter.

For the purpose of this analysis, I have selected a few epistemological issues, namely knowledge, justification, and their sources. I intend to confront them with the theory of narrative modes. These two pillars – one stemming from philosophy and one from literary theory – form the ground for my analysis of the narration developed by Thomas Harris in *Red Dragon*. Reading Harris, I argue that any conclusion regarding his main protagonist, Francis Dolarhyde, remains open to doubt for at least two reasons. First, the ambiguous nature of Harris' representation – at times sense, at times reason-based, and the shifting point of view – leads his reader to conflicting, yet warranted, propositions that can be challenged either rational-

ly or empirically. Second, as the complexity of human nature is impossible to express in full, any representation of Dolarhyde's character can be only fragmentary. Consequently, the propositional knowledge of Harris' protagonist is scarce, leaving room mainly for assumptions.

2. The epistemic concepts of knowledge and justification

Epistemology is the study of necessary and sufficient conditions of propositional knowledge – the knowledge of facts – illustrated by the schema “*S* knows that *p*” (Steup 1998: 2-3). As such, epistemology conceives of knowledge as justified true belief, with justification as one of its defining conditions: “*S* knows that *p* only if (i) *p* is true; (ii) *S* believes that *p*; and (iii) *S* is justified in believing that *p*” (Steup 1998: 2).¹ Different epistemological schools, however, diverge in their view of how to understand the concept and how justification is to perform its epistemic role.

In a traditional approach, justification rests on the subject's reason: a belief is justified when it is rational or reasonable. As a traditionalist theory, evidentialism argues that “a belief is justified to the degree it fits *S*'s [subject's] evidence” (Steup 2014: §1.1). Both claims outline justification as subjective: in the former, the rational analysis of the belief in question is carried out from the subject's point of view (Steup 2014: §1.1); the latter defines the possession of evidence as the subject's mental state representing a proposition as true (Steup 2014: §2.2). By contrast, in the non-traditional view called reliabilism, a belief is justified when it “has a high objective probability of truth and therefore, if true, is not true merely because of luck” (Steup 2014: §1.1). As such, reliabilism holds that a justified belief originates in a cognitive process that is reliable by virtue of being objective (Steup 2014: §1.1, 2.5).

¹ *S* stands here for the *subject* that has the knowledge, and *p* for the *proposition* in question. Steup gives the following example of *p*: “The opossum is a nocturnal animal” (1998: 2).

The first contention between evidentialism and reliabilism is thus underlined by the binary subjective/objective. In the epistemological context, which is more specialized than that of everyday use, these notions refer to the subject that has the knowledge and the object of the knowledge respectively. As such, subjective signifies: based on internal processes justifying the knowledge in question and taking place in the subject's mind (Steup 2014: §1.1, 2.2, 2.3), while objective means: directed towards the object of knowledge and based on external factors (Steup 2014: §2.3, 2.5). Interestingly, narrative voices are methodized along the same objectivity/subjectivity axis.

With all the differences between evidentialism and reliabilism, there is one significant matter both camps agree on – the cognitive processes recognized as sources of evidence. Some of the processes are of empirical origin – perception, introspection, memory, and intuition; others are non-empirical – testimony (or authority) and reason (Steup 1998: 10-11). However, while evidentialism typically argues that evidence is recognized internally as a justification factor, that is, on reflection, reliabilism poses that justification rests on the external reliability of the cognitive processes in which a belief originates. These processes are reliable because they properly probabilify a belief (Steup 2014: §2.1, 2.2). To link the issue with narration, its modes are methodized along two axes – of objectivity and limitation – producing such categories as subjective, objective, omniscient or limited narrator. The system serves to determine the narrator's reliability or, using epistemological jargon, whether the narrator's account properly probabilifies the reader's belief regarding the represented reality.

3. Is narration a testimonial or perceptual source of knowledge?

Narration, the telling of a story, is the substance of literature. The rules of literary communication, narrative strategies, and ways of shaping a fictional universe have attracted theorists'

attention since Plato and Aristotle; more recently narrative tools have been explored by structuralism and narratology. The narrator, “a linguistically indicated, textually projected and readerly constructed function, slot or category whose occupant need not be thought of in any terms but those of a communicative role” (Margolin 2014: §2), holds the central place in the inquiry into the production of narrative discourse. If one takes narration to be evidence on the basis of which one comes to know the fictional reality, what kind of source does it qualify as? Literary theory frequently utilizes the vocabulary used by empiricists alluding to the use of the senses, prevaillingly to sight. Cognitively-oriented narratologists, for instance, hold that the narrated world and narrator stem from the junction of the reader’s cognitive processes and individual textual data rather than being inherent to the text.² Their scholarly focus is on the mental faculties and dispositions that provide readers with grounds for narrative experience. In consequence, cognitive narratology sees a literary text as “capable of creating in the reader’s mind the *representational illusion of observing* an ongoing process of narrative communication in which a more or less personalized narrator plays a key role” (Margolin 2014: §3, emphasis mine). In a similar vein, in literary theory the act of reading is often considered in terms of experiencing a text. Wolfgang Iser (1974) argues that in the process of reading one ideates the space represented in the text, that is, creates a mental image from what is outlined by the words (given elements surrounded by numerous blanks). Inspired by the work of Roman Ingarden, he perceives reading as a process of concretization. Moreover, Percy Lubbock (1960) uses the terms “reader” and “spectator” interchangeably.

As such, a work of fiction can become an object of the reader’s experience. Its reception may rest on cognitive processes. Yet reading it does not qualify as an empirical source of knowledge about fictional reality, since it simply lacks the directness of experience: one is always outside of the fictional

² See Fludernik (2003).

universe, becoming familiar not with the reality, but with its representation – an account of an invented universe. Therefore it can be said that the reader acquires knowledge about the fictional world through a kind of testimony called narration. As a source of knowledge, testimony differs from perception, inception, memory or reason as having no cognitive faculty of its own (Steup 2014: §4.5). In other words, if a belief rests on the testimony of another, it is based on this person's direct experience: “[T]o acquire knowledge of *p* through testimony is to come to know that *p* on the basis of someone's saying that *p*” (Steup 2014: §4.5). Thomas Reid suggests that one accepts testimonial sources as reliable unless one has any special contrary reasons not to do so (qtd. in Steup 2014: §4.5). Applying this logic, I hold that a story conveyed by a narrator qualifies as “saying that *p*”, that is, as a testimony – a very reliable source of knowledge about the fictional universe, unless one has reason to believe otherwise. Yet, by the means of showing rather than telling, the narrator is capable of deluding the reader into thinking that he/she is quasi-experiencing the fictional world, making imagination another kind of perception.

To sum up, as a source of knowledge, narration equates with testimony, even when it comes in an empirical disguise; it provides the reader with justification for what I would call a deluded belief, a true belief about a world that, by its very nature, is an illusion. Showing the fictional reality through the characters' senses gives this testimony the air of an indirect empirical source. To illustrate my assumption, I continue to analyse the narration mode employed by Harris.

4. Harris' narrative voice: General overview

Harris' narrator is a rather puzzling meaning-creation strategy. Straightforward at first sight, a single highest-level voice produces the whole third-person past-tense narrative, mingling the modes of showing and telling, mediating and reporting. Its point of view constantly changes: from presenting one charac-

ter's thoughts the narrator moves to look over another protagonist's shoulder. Proving the voice limited rather than omniscient, each perspective is marked by a different degree of intimacy: the narrator is privy to both the perceptions and the introspections of the three main characters – Francis Dolarhyde (the serial killer); his girlfriend, Reba McClane; Will Graham (an ex-FBI agent invited to participate in the man-hunt). The remaining protagonists are sketchier, which is no surprise, as every narrative is necessarily a selection. Also the distance at which one “observes” the events changes violently from a close perspective to what Lubbock calls a “scenic” or “panoramic” presentation (1960: 67).

Harris' novel provides no linguistic pragmatics to individuate the narrator: there is no deixis that would embed the voice in the fictional time-space, no indication of any particular beliefs or communicative agenda; subjective semantics pointing to a concrete mindset and narratorial comments are lacking. Additionally, the third-person past-tense mode impersonalizes the voice even further, since, as Uri Margolin writes, “the past tense is not related to any particular speech situation, but is more aspectual, merely indicative of the narrated events already having taken place” (2014: §3.2.2). All things considered, the voice seems neutral initially; however, having read the whole novel, one cannot unequivocally point to either narratorial neutrality or its lack. Also, it is not until he/she reaches the last passage that the reader realizes the extent of the limitations to the manner of presentation. To illustrate the above-mentioned features of Harris' narrative, I move on to a close reading of selected excerpts from *Red Dragon*.

5. Quasi-perceptual narrative mode

A comparison of two passages describing a fire provides an insight into Harris' technique of showing the fictional universe through varied perceptions. The first fragment is delivered

from Reba's perspective with the sensual limitations distinctive of a blind person:

She heard a match struck, smelled sulfur, heard a whoosh. Heat in the room. Smoke. Fire. [...] Smoke now and the crackle of flames. [...] She felt heat on her arms and face. Out. She stepped on legs, stumbled choking into the foot of the bed. (2002: 420)

The claustrophobic atmosphere and close perspective serve to convey a blind person's perception. Reba cannot spot objects at a distance; she can only recognize the presence of things at close range when they affect her sense of smell or when she comes into contact with them. Hence Harris shows the scene through: (1) olfactory data – sulfur and smoke; (2) auditory information conveyed through onomatopoeic expressions – a whoosh, the crackle; (3) the choice of appropriate state verbs – hear, smell, feel – or of verbs expressing movement from the angle of Reba's bodily-kinesthetic awareness – step, stumble; and finally (4) the change in temperature – she feels heat on her skin.

One more characteristic can be observed in all the passages representing Reba's perspective – a radical reduction of visually descriptive elements affecting the linguistic balance. Verbs in these excerpts outnumber other parts of speech. Interestingly, when attempting to define the descriptive mode in fiction, Janusz Sławiński points to what he sees as the only common function of descriptive elements: including the spatial parameter in the semantics of the message (1978: 17). Consequently, as he poses, descriptiveness is a semantic tendency rather than a form of communication (1978: 17). Considering the corpus of examples Sławiński analyses in another article, "O opisie" ["Of Description"], it is obvious that his understanding of the term spatial agrees with western ocularcentrism; spatial is, in his view, dominated by the visual (1981).³ Howev-

³ In "O opisie", Sławiński defines description by its contrast with storytelling. While the latter serves to develop a plot, the former is a pause in the account of events. Sławiński's examples contain predominantly graphic ele-

er, Harris' technique challenges Sławiński's claim of the primarily optic quality of description. Reduced as they are, descriptive elements nevertheless appear, stripped of visual references to convey Reba's spatial awareness, which is limited by her impairment, as in the following excerpt:

She felt the van rock as [Dolarhyde] got out. Her door opened. It was a long step down from the van. She bumped into him lightly. It was like bumping into a tree. *He was much heavier, more solid than she would have judged from his voice and his footfalls. Solid and light on his feet.* (2001: 303, emphasis mine)

The last two sentences are purely descriptive: they give an account of Dolarhyde's physique but through senses other than sight. Nevertheless there is a three-dimensional (spatial, physical) image of Dolarhyde emerging from this passage that the reader can visualize. In consequence, Harris' narrative demonstrates how the spatial consists equally in the non-visual and the visual, broadening the meaning of this term established earlier by Sławiński.

Let us now return to the comparison of the two excerpts which present a fire. At the beginning of the next chapter (merely two pages after the first passage quoted), the same fire is described as follows:

They saw the woman then, silhouetted black against the fire, saw her as she heard them and raised her arms to them.

ments: observable details rich in adjectives (or even verbs) referring to the reader's visual experience, such as drops of sweat glistening on a protagonist's forehead (1981: 123-124). Furthermore, when expounding on one of the semantic models of lexical configurations typical for the descriptive function, Sławiński identifies the model as utilizing vocabulary with meaning that relates the craft of writing to the ability to perceive or spot (*spostrzeganie*), to recognize or discern (*rozpoznawanie*), to interpret the visible (*interpretowanie widzianego*), and to order the perceptual data (*porządkowanie danych percepcyjnych*) (1981: 130). His meaning in this is obviously metaphorical, and grows out of the inspiration of Jauss and Iser; yet the intersection of writing/reading (the literary communication) and visual perception is made explicit, connecting his findings, again, with ocularcentric attitudes.

And then the great fire blasted upward, outward, burning beams and window frames describing slow high arcs into the night sky, the blazing van rocked over on its side, orange tracery of the burning trees suddenly blown out and dark. [...]

The woman was facedown in the road. Crawford and Graham and the deputies out, running past her as the fire rained in the road, some running past her with their weapons drawn.

Crawford took Reba from a deputy batting sparks from her hair.

He held her arms, face close to hers, red in the firelight. (2002: 423)

In this passage Harris conveys the simultaneousness of events by frequent reference to the sense of sight. Thus, one can derive the image of the scene from: (1) dramatic visual contrast – black against the fire, beams of fire shooting into the night sky; (2) a change of light – orange tracery of the burning trees suddenly blown out and dark; (3) observed movement – Reba raises her arms, people run past her, the fire rains; (4) vocabulary with strong visual connotations – colors (black, orange, red), dark, silhouetted, fire, beams, blazing, arcs, sparks, firelight. All the mentioned linguistic means constitute descriptive elements as defined by Sławiński. First, their purpose is to complement the unfolding drama (1981: 119). Second, owing to their distinctively pictorial quality the fire is made manifest; it emerges within the represented reality because it has been described, not merely reported on (1981: 121). Furthermore, the semantic mode appeals to the reader's visual experience (1981: 123-124). Interwoven with the account of the plot developments, these elements form neither distinguishable uniform passages, nor independent descriptive sentences; they are scattered across a storytelling excerpt. Sławiński terms such elements “the germs of descriptive mode” (*zawiazki wypowiedzi deskryptywnej*) (1981: 123) or “germinal description” (*opis zawiązkowy*) (1981: 124). Due to the shift in narrative point of view between two varying perceptions observed in *Red Dragon*, it becomes evident that in Harris' narrative these germs of descriptive mode acquire an additional function.

Apart from complementing the plot and stimulating the process of ideation, they serve to give the reader a quasi-perceptual experience of the text, an illusion of direct absorption of the represented universe through varied sensibilities (of a blind and a non-blind person).

To further stimulate the experience, Harris's narrator also changes the distance at which the scene is shown. Explaining the differing effects of close and scenic perspectives, Lubbock seems to compare the reader in the former situation to a witness or onlooker, while in the latter instance reading equates to a bird's-eye view observation:

Are we placed before a particular scene, an occasion, at a certain selected hour in the lives of these people whose fortunes are to be followed? Or are we surveying their lives from a height [...] – sweeping their history with a wide range of vision and absorbing a general effect? (1960: 66)

Contrasting the two passages on fire discussed in this paragraph, one instantly grasps the radical change in both narrative voice and the point of view: from a close-up, the narration zooms out; it shifts from a subjective to an objective voice; from a personal, almost intimate perspective to that of a non-personal observer; or, as Lubbock notes, from close-range participation the narration moves to observing the scene in detachment from a safe height. However, the contrast in Harris' novel is not always that stark. Most frequently, it is a perceptual change from one character to another, occurring on the chapter basis or from line to line, as in the following excerpt:

The street was empty. Most of the houses were dark. He carried her to the van. Ralph Mandy's feet stuck out of the shrubbery into the yard. Dolarhyde didn't bother with him anymore.

She woke on the ride. She was on her side, her cheek in the dusty carpet of the van, transmission whine loud in her ear. (2002: 408-9)

The first part presents Francis Dolarhyde's point of view, rich in visuals, only to shift to Reba with the next cut. That is immediately seen in the choice of details referring exclusively to the senses of touch and hearing, and to her bodily awareness.

To sum up this section, Harris's narrator uses a variety of means to maintain a textually projected illusion of participation in or perception of the unfolding events in the reader's mind. This technique serves to epistemize (justify and make non-accidental) the reader's beliefs about the fictional world formed in the process of reading.

6. Perceptual seemings and quasi-introspective mode in narration

Discussing crime fiction, particularly the case of *Red Dragon*, Wendy Lesser (1995) examines the varying impact the genre exerts on the reader through narrative discourse. She contrasts two narrative modes: the "perspective of the 'eye'", closely resembling the quasi-perceptual narrative technique I discuss above, and the "perspective of the 'I'" – a narration style that "forces us, lures us, invites us to identify with the murderer" (1995: 55). In Lesser's view the (implied) reader accepts such an invitation without hesitation (1995: 55). Moreover, his/her readiness to form a bond with the villain in the story is presupposed by the text: "Sometimes this identification is deplored or disguised or unwilling or unconscious; sometimes it is brazenly signaled by having the murderer be the work's narrator. But whatever the technique, the presumption of identification is crucial to the story, and to its effect on us" (Lesser 1995: 51).

In *Red Dragon* the identification with the murderer is unwilling and disguised. The way to it is paved by the illusion of experiencing the fictional reality directly; yet it is not until the reader becomes privy to Dolarhyde's introspection – examination of his own thoughts and emotions – that the bond is formed. This section of my discussion is devoted to a consider-

ation of the narrative instances employing the quasi-introspective style and their epistemic impact on the reader. However, before moving to the analysis, it is necessary to explain the main protagonist, in particular the discrepancies between his different personas: *Dolarhyde* and the *Dragon*. Except for one instance, Harris always refers to his main protagonists by his surname – Dolarhyde – which echoes, also in the spelling, the character from Stevenson’s novella. Yet here, Dolarhyde seems to represent the humane side: neither all good nor entirely bad, he falls in love, hopes for a normal life, has doubts, makes efforts to free himself from the Dragon. Dolarhyde inspires the reader’s sympathy: born with a cleft palate, rejected by his mother soon afterwards, raised by his abusive grandmother, he has lived the life of an outsider – full of humiliation, deprived of affection.

By contrast, Harris uses the label the Dragon sporadically. The Dragon represents the homicidal alter ego of the main protagonist. Talked about rather than a participant in the events, he is featured as a physical character only in one scene, which is conveyed from the perspective of a blindfolded victim. The fictional reality is never presented through the Dragon’s senses or thoughts and consequently, he remains a puzzle. Even mentions of the details of his appearance are scarce. In the majority of scenes which include him, he is only audible, not visible. His intimidating, often offensive words addressed to Dolarhyde and written in block letters signify his otherness and controlling nature, as in the following passage:

Dolarhyde was lifting, straining, pumping more weight than he had ever lifted.

[...]

Up. Two hundred and eighty pounds from the floor to his chest in one heave. Now over his head.

“WHOM ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?”

Startled by the voice he nearly dropped the weight, swayed beneath it. (2002: 356)

Dolarhyde is surprised by the Dragon's presence. It is clear, then, he takes the Dragon's persona to be a separate entity whose coming he cannot predict. On the other hand, the reader can assume that both voices are projected by Dolarhyde, for the Dragon's voice affects Dolarhyde's throat: "It seemed to come from behind the sweatshirt, but its rasp and volume hurt his throat" (2002: 356). The passage reveals Dolarhyde's perceptual seeming – an instance in which the world appears to him for what it is not, a perceptual false experience (Steup 2014: §4.1). The fact that Dolarhyde cannot introspectively recognize auditory hallucinations leads the reader to the conclusion (a "justified belief") that he probably suffers from a mental disorder.

The scene of his visit to the Brooklyn Museum under the false name of Crane seems crucial for understanding Dolarhyde's psyche:

Paula Harper realized he wasn't following and turned around.
He was rigid before a niche in the wall of portraits.
She came back to him and saw what he was staring at.
"That's a Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington," she said.
No, it wasn't. (2002: 380-1)

The passage starts with neutral/objective third-person observation but ends in a subjective mode. The reader turns to Dolarhyde's point of view only to realize that he/she is reading the account of yet another perceptual seeming. The narration continues to present Dolarhyde's distorted perception and ends with elements of his stream of consciousness:

Washington with his hooded eyes and bad false teeth stared out of the frame. My God he looked like Grandmother. Dolarhyde felt like a child with a rubber knife.
"Mr. Crane, are you okay?"
Answer or blow it all. Get past this. *My God, man, that's so sweeeet.* YOU ARE THE DIRTIEST . . . No. (2002: 381)

The last elements – Reba’s words in italics and the Dragon’s in block letters, both without quotation marks – are frequently repeated in Dolarhyde’s thoughts, making these haunting instances come close to a stream of consciousness. From this point on, the narrative voice takes on certain features of a first-person mode:

“No. Go ahead. I’m coming.”

And you are not going to cut me, Grandmother. God damn you, I’d kill you if you weren’t already dead. Already dead. Already dead. Grandmother was already dead! Dead now, dead for always. My God, man that’s so sweeet. (2002: 381)

One can instantly recognize Reba’s words and notice that this time the font is regular: it is an instance of internal monologue breaking into a stream of consciousness that further proves the main protagonist’s troubled mental state. The narrator frequently adopts Dolarhyde’s perspective, mingling the quasi-perceptual mode with quasi-introspection. Hence, the narration delivered from his point of view frequently breaks into free indirect speech:

In six days, if he could wait that long, he would kill Reba McCane. He made a sudden high sound through his nose.

Maybe the Dragon would be willing to take the Shermans first and wait another moon.

No he wouldn’t. (2002: 363)

Dolarhyde’s thoughts run to Reba and the night they spent together in almost every following scene. The instances conveying his growing attachment to her through free indirect speech become what seems to be reliable evidence of Dolarhyde’s humanness – introspective recognition of falling in love. In epistemology, introspection enjoys a special epistemic status:

Compared with perception, [it] seems to be privileged by the virtue of being error-prone. [...] [W]hen it comes to introspection, there is no difference between appearance and reality; therefore introspec-

tive seemings are necessarily successful introspection. [...] Hence, there is an idea that introspective experience of *p* eliminates all possible doubt as to whether *p* is true. (Steup 2014: §4.2)

Moreover, introspection possesses “an epistemic kind of directness that cannot be found in perception” and thus provides the subject with a firm foundation for his/her beliefs about external reality (2014: §4.2). As there is nothing to imagine (it is all appearances, no reality), the reader can take quasi-introspective narration at face value.

Coming back to Dolarhyde, he can fail to recognize that what he sees or hears is, in fact, a case of perceptual seeming, but how can he be wrong about his emotions? It seems impossible. If Dolarhyde cannot be wrong, neither can the reader when he/she makes a crucial assumption: Dolarhyde is not a cold-blooded psychopath, but a mentally disturbed individual struggling to break free from his evil self. The bond formed in quasi-introspective instances allows the reader to conclude: Dolarhyde is the equivalent of Stevenson’s Jekyll, while the Dragon must his diabolical alter ego.

7. Testimonial narrative mode

When Sławiński defines the descriptive mode of narration, he does so by contrasting description with storytelling. In his view, the former is unpredictable because purely summative and logic-less. Consequently, its composition can be changed without harming the whole. The latter, on the other hand, has a logic, as Sławiński refers to it, an algorithm—the elements already revealed implicate those yet to come. Linear in its nature, storytelling is a construction necessarily fixed by the chain of cause and effect (1981: 122). In this way Sławiński points to the convention once valued in literary realism, and still influential in narration – the plausibility of represented developments achieved through maintaining the reciprocal relationship between cause and effect.

Thinking in terms of motive or deliberation in the criminal justice system bears a close affinity to this convention. It is no accident, then, that cause and effect play a significant role in *Red Dragon*: their interconnection becomes the foundation of all the FBI's actions. As such, the prevailingly non-descriptive, expository passages in Harris, concerned exclusively with the investigation, always allude to rationality. What follows is a shift in the mode of representation: from empirical to rational recognition of facts; from a posteriori sense-based depiction of the concrete to a priori conceptual presentation achieved through appealing to the faculty of reason. Paradoxically, however, rather than letting the reader interpret the events using his/her own faculty of reason, expositions supply the reader with ready-made inferences supported by logical links between assumptions and conclusions. The connection is made by applying laws of classical thought aided by the principle of cause and effect. The expository passages are devoid of quasi-perceptual narration and, consequently, amount to a purely testimonial mode.

The embeddedness of those narrative instances in the principle of cause and effect discussed by Sławiński can be observed in Crawford's explanation of how Dolarhyde staged his suicide in front of Reba. According to Crawford, Dolarhyde's motive was to convince her and the FBI of his ultimate incapacitation and to gain advantage over law enforcement agencies. The Dolarhyde with whom the reader is familiar – the man in love, torn by internal conflict, clinging to life – is missing from the account. He is replaced by an individual rationally devising the meticulous details of a cold-blooded crime. Crawford reports to his colleague, Will Graham:

“You know the routine about the key hanging around [Dolarhyde's] neck – that was to make sure [Reba] felt the body. So she could tell us she certainly did feel a body. All, right, it's this way and that way. 'I can't stand to see you burn,' he says and he blows Lang's head off with a twelve-gauge.

“Land was perfect. He didn’t have any teeth anyway. Maybe Dolarhyde knew the maxillary arch survives fires a lot of times – who knows what he knew? Anyway, Land didn’t have any maxillary arch after Dolarhyde got through with him. He shot the head off Lang’s body and he must have tripped a chair or something for the thud of the body falling. He’d hung the key around Lang’s neck.

“Now Reba’s scrambling around looking for the key. Dolarhyde’s in the corner watching. Her ears are ringing from the shotgun. She won’t hear his little noises. (2002: 450)

Is Crawford’s exposition equally believable as the quasi-perceptual part? It is, particularly since the majority of details overlap with the quasi-perceptual account given from Reba’s perspective. Reason, guided by the principle of cause and effect, allows him to fill the blanks with hypotheses – “maybe Dolarhyde knew [...] who knows what he knew?”, “he must have tripped a chair” – and to substitute opinions for justified true beliefs (knowledge). A conclusion based on a conceptualization of the villain that functions in the society must follow: such a carefully devised and executed scheme can only be developed by a psychopath. Has the Dragon dominated Dolarhyde or has the humane side never existed?

Shortly before the climax the narrator reveals that the Dolarhyde persona is merely an act: “He still looked and sounded like Francis Dolarhyde – the Dragon was a very good actor; he played Dolarhyde very well” (2014: 408). The reader has the right to feel manipulated, especially since it is difficult to shake off completely the image of a conflicted, psychologically disturbed individual, despite this rather straightforward statement. One can understand the purpose of this elaborate deception to drive away the police and FBI, but why use it towards the reader? One could reasonably argue that Dolarhyde could aim at obtaining the reader’s sympathy and trust; yet it is not Dolarhyde who narrates the story. What motives could the narrator possibly have to deceive the reader? It is impossible to find any inter-textual pragmatics. In the absence of any

explanation, should the reader assume that no such motive has ever existed? And if so, should the reader take the narrator's testimony to be a reliable piece of evidence? Answering these questions utilizes the faculty of reason and calls into question all the quasi-empirical evidence provided by the narrator.

8. Conclusion

To summarize, Harris' alternating narrative voice conveys the fictional universe by the means of showing it in a quasi-empirical mode through different narrative voices and points of view. Additionally, the narration is supplemented by expositions made in a testimonial mode resting on the chain of cause and effect but often contradicting the sense-based findings. The mixture of styles creates a rather ambiguous source of justification. In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant posits that although cognition begins with experience, it must necessarily be complemented with reason (1998: 136). As if following this recommendation, Harris' narrative provides the reader with both kinds of sources, failing twice to be a justifiable source of true beliefs, especially when it comes to the main protagonist, Francis Dolarhyde. In a world so presented, all knowledge is fragmentary: it never adds up to an irrefutable whole and the closure of the novel gives rise to conflicting, though seemingly justified, propositions that can be either empirically or rationally challenged.

Consequently, the murderer remains a conundrum. In terms of the nomenclature proposed by Aristotle in *Categories*, his substance escapes cognition. Having read through Harris' narration, one fails to form any justified belief about Francis Dolarhyde. One merely becomes acquainted with what Aristotle calls accidents – the manifest and thus representable features. However, in epistemic terms, the state of “being acquainted with” does not qualify as propositional knowledge.

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