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18 STRAIGHT WAYS TO GIVE LAST CALL (MULTIMEDIA ASPECT OF THOMAS AND HIS WORKS)

*This article describes genial poet and writer, famous Welsh author Dylan Thomas in the frame of multimedia aspect. Through depicting some of Dylan's works, article touches upon the efficient metaphysical question: What is the sense of life? Surely, only one of the many possible answers to that is revealed and analysed here. Thomas, as a truly metaphysical author, every time gives his own view on the course of lifetime in his poetry, coding by metaphors images of life, death, time and man in these forces. Inner world of Welsh author comes far further to future generations, leaving a question mark behind every line: how shall we live? Are we really living or just imitate the life? The mystery of Thomas's life and death, indeed, gives a push to modern multimedia interpretations, which in their turn, are trying to decode the message that had been left to us. However, even this expected boost in Dylan's nowadays popularity, leaves not so many cinematic pictures to look upon. 'Edge of Love' (2008) shows the early period of author's life when just married to Caitlin and keeping in touch with his childhood friend Vera Phillips. Apparently, the film concentrated on the square-relationship of the main characters: Dylan, Caitlin, Vera and her husband-to-be captain William Killick. The plot, though seems to be imaginary and untrue, is based on the David N. Thomas's book 'Dylan Thomas: A Farm, Two Mansions and a Bungalow' (2000). Other cinematic versions almost simultaneously reveal to spectators the last days of Dylan's life on his fourth tour in America. 'Set Fire to the Stars' (2014), 'A Poet in New York' (2014) and 'Last Call' (2017) open up a line of characters well known to literary critics and investigators of Thomas's work such as John M. Brinnin, Caitlin Thomas, Liz Reittel, Dr. Felten and others. The latter film is being analysed by the author of this article. Made mostly in noir, the picture mirrors outer 'bright' and 'colourful' world through 'dark' and 'obscure' Thomas's inner one. As zoomed in as zoomed out, the main aim of the plot is not to **tell** the story, but rather **reflect** it upon the possibly puzzled viewer and/or reader. Through his last day and 18 straight whiskey toasts the spectators plunge into perfectly built frames of whole Thomas's life seeing them literally as if before dying. Profound philosophy speaks from every dialogue or poem's line. All of this encourages and leads the literary investigator into wonderful journey to Welsh poet's world reflected through the heart of director Steven Bernstein...*

Key words: multimedia, interpretation, welsh poetry, cinematic, metaphysics, metaphor, features, life and death.

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ВІСІМНАДЦЯТЬ ЗАСОБІВ ДЛЯ ОСТАННЬОГО ПОКЛИКУ (ІНТЕРМЕДІАЛЬНИЙ АСПЕКТ Д. ТОМАСА ТА ЙОГО ТВОРЧОСТІ)

Стаття описує життя та творчість відомого геніального валлійського поета і письменника Ділана Томаса крізь призму інтермедійності. Відбиваючи деякі твори Ділана, стаття фокусується на важливому та необхідному питанні метафізики: В чому сенс нашого життя? Проте, звісно, лише одну з можливих відповідей на це розглянуто та проаналізовано у статті. Томас, як дійсно метафізичний автор, кожного разу презентує своє бачення картини світу у поезії, за допомоги метафор кодуючи символи життя, смерті, часу та людини – заручника цих сил. Внутрішній світ валлійського автора поширюється на майбутні покоління, залишаючи знак питання під кожним рядком: то як ми повинні жити? Чи дійсно це життя, або лише імітація? Таємні кутки томасівського життя та смерті дають поштовх створенню багатьох сучасних інтермедійних інтерпретацій, які, в свою чергу, намагаються декодувати меседж, залишений для нас. Однак навіть такий очікуваний наразі зріст зацікавленості томасівською творчістю все одно лишає для дослідника небагато кіно-інтерпретацій для аналізу. «Заборонене кохання» (2008) розповідає про ранній період життя автора, коли він тільки одружився на Кейтлін та водночас підтримував стосунки з подружкою дитинства Вірою Філіпс. Здається, фільм концен-

трується на «квадратурі» романтичних відносин між головними героями: Діланом, Кейтлін, Вірою та її нареченим, капітаном Вільямом Кілліком. Сюжет виглядає не біографічним, проте кінокартина екранізована на базі книги Девіда Н. Томаса «Ділан Томас: Ферма, Два Особняки та Бунгало» (2000). Інші кіноверсії майже водночас демонструють для глядача кадри з останніх днів життя Ділана протягом четвертого туру Америкою. «Запалюючи Зірки» (2014), «Поет у Нью-Йорку» (2014) та «Останній Поклик» (2017) відкривають цілу низку відомих для будь-якого томасівського дослідника персонажів. Це і Джон М. Бріннін, і Кейтлін Томас, Ліз Райтелл, доктор Фелтенс та інші. Останній фільм розглянуто автором цієї статті. Знятий здебільшого в нуар, фільм віддзеркалює зовнішній «яскравий» та «кольоровий» світ крізь «темний» та подекуди «незрозумілий» внутрішній стан Томаса. З різних перспектив сюжет намагається не стільки **розказати** історію, скільки змушує самого глядача та/або читача **рефлексувати** протягом сцен. Останній день та 18 порцій чистого віскі занурюють глядача у ідеально структуровані кадри з томасівського буття. Здається, ніби все життя пробігає одним великим кадром, ніби перед кінцем. Філософічні думки пронизують кожен діалог та рядок поезії. Все це заохочує та закликає літературознавчого дослідника до дивовижної подорожі у світ валлійського поета, почутого серцем режисера фільму Стівеном Бернстайном...

Ключові слова: інтермедія, інтерпретація, валлійська поезія, кінематограф, метафізика, метафора, засоби, життя та смерть.

Problem statement. Genial poet and writer, hopeless alcoholic, faithless (or faithful?) husband... No one will be sure enough to categorise famous Welsh author strictly into one of these frames. Dylan Thomas remains to be the most extravagant, ambiguous and incomprehensible human and artist. He invites readers and listeners all over the world to solve his puzzles knowing in advance that it is impossible. It is exactly that beautiful mystery which attracts book lovers to his personalia. Currently there are several film representations which, one way or another, try to depict Thomas's life. Do they succeed? The question might seem quite provocative and even pretentious at first glance. Thus, let us dive into the world of distinctive Welsh author and try to understand and feel his creations through the cinematography lenses.

Research analysis. The traditional approach in literary research tells us to lay upon social, historical and private background of one or another author. That is, when studying the art, it is desirable to look back on writer's biography and search the evidence or explanation – code, which might help to decipher his piece of work. It is right to start from that point, at least, to know artist's thoughts, way of life and preferences. It is really helpful and, by all means, poet or writer puts part of himself into art every time he / she starts writing.

Sometimes, in case of Thomas, the question might be raised, how does *the poet* personality differ from the *human* one? The behaviour and feelings are so distinguishable that from time to time it is hard to believe that such profound thoughts were written by this pretentious chap. Dylan Thomas is truly brilliant in this incredible combination. In habitual life he was quite a sociable, or what is sometimes called a “party man”: drinking in bars, living in debts... Though poetry was that anchor in life which helped to reveal his deepest potential of a philosopher. “*He was a slow and patient craftsman, and he had become slower*

since the early poems. His method of composition was itself painfully slow. He used separate work-sheets for individual lines, sometimes a page or two being devoted to a single line, while the poem was gradually built up, phrase by phrase. He usually had beforehand an exact conception of the poem's length, and he would decide how many lines to allot to each part of its development. In spite of the care and power and symmetry of its construction, he recognized at all times that it was for the sake of divine accidents that a poem existed at all” (Watkins, 1957: 17).

“*Before there were rock stars, there was Dylan Thomas*” is an opening line of the *Last Call* trailer. Thomas really is one of the most magnificent and impenetrable personality of modernism era. Born in 1914, he creates the whole new world which affects humans' comprehension. The ordinary reader might get entangled and puzzled in frequently used complex metaphors, intricate associative images and Welsh background in his works.

The aim of this article is to investigate multimedia aspect of Thomas's works and define how it reflects the poetic context upon spectator / reader. Ukrainian and Welsh cultures contain more alterity than similarity, thus, it was and it is still a great challenge for translators to represent Mr Thomas's legacy to Ukrainian people. Soviet linguists gave translations in the Russian language while Ukrainian is still lacking in a lot of material, such as famous play of voices *Under Milk Wood*, collection of stories *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog* and greater part of the poems.

“*To translate a text from one language to another is to transform its material identity*” (Young, 2003: 139). However, to discover this material truly, it is efficient to be able to look upon the work of art using different perspectives. Author's historical background, social surrounding, private life – all of these are inevitable aspects to take into account. Multimedia interpretations are indispensable in this

process of investigation. Cinematic approach is one of the essential ways to visualise the images necessary for transformation of original source into translation.

Main part. Multimedia has a variety of possible representations. Films, TV series, theatrical plays, musical compositions (both instrumental and vocal based), computer games (!)... each of these reflects rather author's path in life, attitudes, preferences, or way of thinking, context of art, mind's philosophy. Though IT industry might be still in process of creating pieces connected with Thomas's world, cinematic versions are ready to give some thoughts on author's vibe.

The latest in production film is devoted to Dylan's last days of life in his fourth tour by America. *Last Call*, or, as it was alternatively named, *Dominion* (which seems to be more conclusive as it would give a reference to the famous line *And Death Shall Have No Dominion*), has relatively low rates among eastern european viewers. At the same time, overseas it has got high appreciation in commentary section. One way or another, the new film (produced in 2017 and dubbed in 2020) undoubtedly catches the eye not only of ordinary spectators, but mostly experts in humanity sciences.

Thomas puts a question about the difference between poet and human. Is poet Dylan the same as human being Dylan? Does poet, writer, creator differ from husband, friend, man? During the film, while Thomas is drinking his 18 portions of whiskey, we get to know more about philosophy and way of his life as both. He uses each glass as a chronological step during habitual lifetime. For example, in an episode when Dylan is in the bar only starting his drinking marathon, he explains: "*Giving name to the object, we change the essence of it. Memory, what a mess. It is as much fiction as it is truth. We want to remember, but memory is no more than illusion. It doesn't contain so much truth*". (Bernstein, 2017) It resonates a lot with Nietzsche's saying that even truth is just a metaphor that we have forgotten is a metaphor.

This film contains the whole spectrum of thinking, which might lead to the full exploration of Welsh poet's art. Apparently, it represents the atmosphere of Thomas's work in general and summarises the subcontext ideas laid between the lines. Thomas himself helps us in deciphering the labyrinth of mind palace. He gives us hints, which we might use in our further investigation as match points and become one step closer to translations.

Thus, let us follow the poet's trail on his drinking way and, glass by glass, walk into the world of notions named by author himself. Before that, it could be useful to get acquaintance with main key characters in the picture:

- Caitlin Thomas (born as Caitlin Macnamara) – Dylan's wife and mother of three beautiful children. They married hastily and spent all the time together. The happiest time spent by family was their first years of life in Laugharne. In one of the letters to Vernon Watkins, Dylan wrote: "...she looks like the princess on the top of a Christmas tree, or like a stage Wendy; but, for God's sake, don't tell her that" (Watkins, 1957: 28).

- John Malcolm Brinnin – an American poet and literary critic. He was shown as a young author, who tried to demonstrate his new work to Dylan. Both, in real life and in film, he organised American tours for Welsh poet, where the latest read his pieces of poetry and prose. Brinnin did a great job putting the things together, because most American agencies declined to work with Mr Thomas due to his "reputation" (problems with alcohol).

- Bartender Carlos – one of the central characters who was created by imagination of the director Steven Bernstein. Though the place he works in is real. The famous tavern White Horse in New York was the last drinking place of the poet. Carlos is rather mystical and his character is not on the surface. Thus, he needs a precise look upon him.

Obviously, there are more characters in the story. However, these three, all together help to seize the image of Thomas from both sides of his life. It is interesting that the second layer of film is done in the form of interview with less or more close people to Dylan from mentioned above (except Carlos).

The film was shown at Cannes festival unfinished. Shot in 2014, it had troubles as the production ran out of money. Nevertheless, producers were willing to present film at Cannes as they might find there a sponsorship for further work. Finally, *Dominion* (as *Last Call* was named back then) won at the 2017 POFF Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival, which is the largest festival in Northern Europe. The Hollywood Reporter mentions "Rhys Ifans, star of the U.S. pic *Dominion*, ... collected best actor honors" (Kozlov, 2017).

Speaking about other reviews, the inquisitive researcher might spectate a lot of them all over the cinema sites, such as Rotten Tomatoes, IMDb, electronic journals ESTADAO, CRITICA, ISTOE and some articles of film industry experts (as is Sheila O'Malley's one). "*An Homage to Great Film Making*", "*Terrifying and Wonderful to Watch*", "*Heartbreaking and Warming at the same time*", "*A powerful and emotionally impactful*", "*Moving and poetic...*" – all of these kinds of reviews are seen among the IMDb viewers. As well, there are some as "*Dark, great acting, but who cares*" and "*Dark, cold, depressing*", but only one of seventeen people gave

4 out of 10. Appreciation of others laid between 8 and 10 out of 10. One thing is certain: film did not leave indifferent each person. And we are not an exclusion, particularly as this picture gives the moving portrait of Dylan Thomas.

To be more specific, user I-dlessmann mentions “*Thomas would have loved it not because it is flattering but because it is art at its best; truthful and moving and really in all its aspects an homage to great film-making.*”. Taking into account the cinematic features Bernstein used, it is clear why his film is considered to be an art. Artistic expression has a comment of afosbinder96: “*Dominion is a rare gem in a sea of monotony*”. Finally, tlrbooulder notes that “*you learn a lot about Thomas – the beauty of his language and his mind, as well as the ugly side of his life outside of his craft and sullen art.*”. However, sometimes the film might awaken rather dark emotions for people who have not heard about poet before, or rather are not caught by his style of work, as, for instance, can be seen in celt007 comment: “*Dylan Thomas per this movie was a mean drunk arrogant and a raging self destructing alcoholic. ... I don't see him being a genius more than just having talent*” (Bernstein, 2017).

The Brazil journal ISTOE, giving assessment to director's work after the festival, includes: “*Também digno de Oscar é o Rhys Ifans de Dominion, de Steven Bernstein. ... poeta Dylan Thomas... tomou 18 doses duplas de uísque. Entrou em coma, e morreu. Bernstein, também roteirista, não tenta decifrar o mistério. Por que ele bebia tanto, por que se destruiu?*” (“As well Oscar-worthy is Rhys Ifans from Dominion. ... poet Dylan Thomas ... drank 18 double shots of whiskey. He fell into a coma, and died. Bernstein, also a screenwriter, does not try to decipher the mystery. Why did he drink so much, why did he destroy himself?”) (O Estado, 2016).

Sheila O'Malley (who achieved BFA in Theatre and Master in acting) gives more appreciation to Thomas as a historical personality, underlining the great acting of Rhys Ifans. She mentions as well Thomas's characteristic feature not to “read”, but to “sing” his poetry, like “*a spell he wove on his audiences. ... Ifans captures Thomas' thrumming recitative style, which was more about creating a mood than conveying meaning*”. On the second thought, she is not so involved into the film itself, naming it “*a pretty grim watch. Not “gorgeously grim”. Just grim, end-stop*” (O'Malley, 2020). As well adding that she loves Thomas, but does not recommend this picture as for the acquaintance start.

Last Call shows wide range of incomprehensible images. From time to time it is surrealistic and even gives an impression of the arthouse picture. Despite

the fact that it seems like a “not-for-everyone” type of film, this work gains a lot of appreciation and positive reviews from different parts of the world. Counting all of the mentioned above, it is efficient to stop on features director used to represent the Welsh poet. One of these techniques was mentioned in majority of reviews.

Black-and-white scenes. Contrasting with brightly coloured flashbacks, black-and-white shots give a spectator the feeling of sadness, melancholy and even depression. This was mentioned above as grim, dark, cold. Though if we think about it more precisely, where else it is possible to observe the same way of expression? Documentaries of the previous century currently might be coloured. It is sort of fashion and a lot of old films has already been repainted for the modern viewer. Let us take into account such films as *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* or *Treasure Island*. Meanwhile, it is another wave of fashion when modern films are produced in black-and-white style and it costs a penny. Those are films such as *Mank*, *Malcolm and Marie*, *The Lighthouse* and others. There are different reasons why creators want to use this technique in their pictures, but speaking of *Last Call* one of them might be to plunge spectator in documentary genre. To give a feeling everything is real and approve the actuality of every scene representing this last and the only one day in New York tavern.

If we stick to the first associations that come to the minds of almost all viewers, black-and-white would stay for loneliness, alienation / detachment, and unhappiness in current moment of life. Thomas drinks and one of the answers to the question “why is he drinking so much?” might be “because he is afraid of emptiness”. And he might feel empty inside, as phrases said by him relate to it: “*I said everything. I have nothing more to say*” (Bernstein, 2017). His path has ended. Later, he reveals to Carlos his greatest fear – to be lone. And that is an explanation why flashbacks are so rich in colours. That time in his childhood at Swansea, then with his beloved family in Laugharne were the happiest moments of his life, when he had a lot to say, to claim, to cry to the outside world. He lived, and to live is not the same as to exist. The latter makes all colours of life become dim and dull and later they might totally disappear.

It is believed when human's life is close to an end, one starts to dive into memories. One goes deep into the subconscious and all of life images stand brightly. The light for Thomas is his home, family, the landscape of Wales, his wife Cathelin, his children. All of this represents the happy and bright, clear images of the past. Even in the bar, when Thomas sees Cathelin (the picture of his imagination), he sees her full of colour. For him, she is the symbol of life itself. When she

leaves, the life of Dylan goes with her. *“New York is so big and dusty. Maybe you can go with me? I find it really hard to breath there”* (Bernstein, 2017).

In general, the structure is created in a form of an **interview**. It gives a feeling that all of the characters (among who are Caitlin, doctor and John Malcolm Brinnin) are talking to an invisible journalist. Everyone is recalling some moments with Welsh poet, which helps us realise he is not alive anymore. This feature also gives a reference to a documentary style of the film, every scene of which we tend to believe.

In addition, the current **time** of the last day is shown on the screen, as to forecast inevitable. Seeing the clock makes the spectator freeze in anticipation of the final itself. 10:00 am, 10:30 am, 12:00 pm and further, till 10 pm. Deep down, everyone knows the tragedy is inevitable, but the frames go unsteadily, and this leads to another technique.

At the very beginning of the film, the first **scenes change rapidly** as quick as a flash leading to the title presentation. They were colourful, as well as the landscapes of forest, where little boy is running while author is reading *Fern Hill*. This rapidity in shots gives an impression of clinical death, where the whole life (according to the testimonies of people who experienced that) flies in front of one as frames of the film. This technique will be used later as well, but in this very moment, the letters *Last Call* appear and the spectator is ready to plunge into the famous poet's story.

Thus, the scenes change quite chaotically, but at the same time they are pretty well organised. This might be a description for the author's poetry as well. It is hard to claim the lines are not structured, but the chaos of thoughts could not be misread. During one of scenes one gets to know Thomas's true fear. It matters to him what other people will think. He is afraid of being lost and forgotten to people's minds.

The bartender as a symbol of this fear claims: *“People are listening to you, not getting any word, but being affectionate, because they think it might sound massively”*. In the very end the internal fear rises its climax as well represented by Carlos's speech: *“You are writing about nothing. The secret is there's nothing in it. Each of your glass sounds so pompous, well-thought, wise, but... I can't recall any of them, as everyone who was here. As well as yourself. That's what I'm talking about. We remember only details. The rest is just noise”* (Bernstein, 2017). Attentive and lettered reader would notice an allusion to Shakespearean famous monologue from *Macbeth*, which, in its turn, gave origin to Faulkner's novel *Sound and Fury*.

“...It is a tale

Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing” (Shakespeare, 2005: 156).

Another scene when Carlos is being a dark horse is when he firstly quotes *“the miserable don't have another medicine, but only hope”*, giving a reverence to Thomas naming his third shot of whiskey as *hope*. At that moment Dylan starts suspect something wrong and asks Carlos which books he usually reads. At the same time, he doesn't let bartender finish his thoughts as trying to protect himself from possible unpleasant discovery. Carlos, on the contrary, looks quite confident and plays with Thomas's mind until the very finale. To add, the quote mentioned above is as well Shakespearean one.

It is interesting, that Thomas by himself touches the motives of Shakespeare, seeing that Carlos quotes him often. In real life, Thomas's father was a teacher of English and he tried to give his children the best in the field of language and literature. It is known, Dylan read and admired the Bard. In one of the letters to his friend Vernon Watkins, Thomas writes about one of the poems: *“I do realise your objections to my line; I feel myself the too self-conscious flourish, recognize the Shakespeare echo (though echo's not the word). If ever I do alter it, I'll remember your line”* (Watkins, 1957: 49).

The bartender character himself is quite a fascinating image from a deep layer of the story. Who is he? Habitually, bartender is like an attorney. You can talk your most hidden secrets to him and be sure it goes nowhere further. It is hard to imagine statistically how many confessions bartenders all over the world heard under the influence of alcohol. It seems that from time to time people of this profession also specialize in psychotherapy. Is Carlos just an image which represents deepest unconscious fears and hesitations of Dylan? The point to this thought gives a scene with Caitlin. There are only 3 people in a bar: Thomas, his wife and Carlos. A poet sees a vision of Caitlin and talks to her, but at the same time Carlos, the only one among other characters, can see her too. Bartender recognises Caitlin from the first sight, and on the next frame, when vision of Dylan disappears, they both are gone. It gives us the hint that Carlos is a vision as well, however, in opposition to Caitlin, black-and-white vision. He takes the authority and wins staying as an only figure with Thomas till his very end.

Sheila O'Malley's thought on this point approves this theory. She asks *“Is Carlos real? Or is he Thomas' worst fears made manifest? In his essay “Dylan the Durable”, Seamus Heaney wrote of “Do not go gentle into that good night”, “This is a*

son comforting a father; yet it is also, conceivably, the child poet in Thomas himself comforting the old ham he had become; the neophyte in him addressing the legend; the green fuse addressing the burnt-out case.”” (O’Malley, 2020). Could Carlos be the younger projection of Thomas? In this case, it would be clear why he represents author’s fears, because those could be the reflection of his youth struggles and self-doubt.

One way or another, it is beyond doubt, that the character of bartender is not only well-played and well-written (“*Rodrigo Santoro faz o bartender, Carlos. É seu melhor papel em língua inglesa, e difícil. Rodrigo recita Shakespeare, T.S. Eliot. Dança um tango inesquecível.*”, transl.: “*Rodrigo Santoro plays bartender Carlos. This is his best English-speaking role, and a difficult one. Rodrigo reads Shakespeare, T.S. Eliot, dances an unforgettable tango*” (O Estado, 2016)), but as well mystical and still to be attained.

At this very moment the question about *dominion* raises up. As it was mentioned before, this film has been named twice. The final choice, *Last Call*, was observed and interpreted as possible confession and covenant to future self. The last word of the poet. His last day of life and last monologue overheard in a bar by friends and strangers. What about *Dominion*? From the perspective of the opposition Human–Creator (in this case Carlos–Dylan), the latest dominates at the beginning of the day, but then loses his positions closer to the dawn. In other words, the more drunk and honest Thomas becomes, the more expansive and braver Carlos is. The fear and conscious undertake the domination. On the other hand, generally, it could be a dominion of author’s reminiscence from the past over present. And before death, it usually prevails over human, taking one into the last journey backward.

Finally, sophisticated reader and admirer of Dylan Thomas will definitely recall one of the most prominent poems named *And Death Shall Have No Dominion*. How accurately it gives a reverence to the final scenes in film. “*Though lovers be lost, love shall not*” (Thomas, 1974: 47) – though author is dead, his art is not. And recited (or, better said, sang) poet’s lines by Rhys Ifans, form another background layer of the picture.

The film nicely shows the manner of Thomas when he spoke his poetry from the stage. Every syllable seems like a sound in music and each line forms the song. Sometimes it is hard to tell if Dylan reads or sings. Nowadays everyone can listen to the parts of his broadcasts and lectures in America. It is obvious “*He sang from his depths of his being about life, death, sin, redemption, the natural processes, sex, creation and decay*” (Perkins, 1975: 50). Welsh

actor Richard Burton, who met Dylan in London and participated in his *Under Milk Wood* play of voices, recalls in his diaries that “*Only Dylan could read his own stuff*”. As others, such as T.S. Eliot, or Yeats, or MacLeish had great and the most evocative pieces of works, but read them “*with such monotony as to stun the brain*” (Williams, 2012: 185).

Undoubtedly, poetry included in film forms another quite important and fascinating background. It starts with *Fern Hill*. This poem generally considered as the best one from all perspectives. Images, emotions, writing technique... All is direct hit, as it evokes clear memories from the childhood. If one goes back to the past, one discovers that those recalls are the happiest, the faintest and the most innocent ones. A kid is not involved into adult nonsense and just explores life as happily as he can. A child’s mind looks through nature, investigates and tries to emerge with it. One has in mind at least couple of days, when felt carefree and enjoyed fully the being. That is why *Fern Hill* is so popular and loved among readers all over the world. We like to reflect upon past and relive our happiest memories again and again. The boy runs into the forest, through snow, like a deer – breathing the air of freedom, only at the beginning of life path. His heart is open to every thing in this world. He is ready to embrace the future.

“*And as I was green and carefree, famous among the barns*

...

Time let me play and be

Golden in the mercy of his means” (Thomas, 1974: 76).

Next moment, Dylan is lecturing in noir, still craving for his past and recalling his boyish past time:

“*Now as I was young and easy under the apple boughs*

About the lilting house and happy as the grass was green,

The night above the dingle starry,

Time let me hail and climb

Golden in the heydays of his eyes.” (Thomas, 1974: 76).

Further goes the opening paragraph of *Under Milk Wood*, which describes the small town in imaginative, associative epithets and images: “*It is spring, moonless night in the small town, starless and bible-black, the cobble streets silent and the hunched courtiers’ and rabbits’ wood limping invisible down to the sloeblack, slow, black, crowblack, fishingboat-bobbing sea*” (Thomas, 1995: 1). The spring is the beginning of everything. It gives birth and commence to liveness. The start of human’s life is often linked metaphorically to this season. The sea is another key

image from author's life. Thomas had a view on the sea from his house on Cwmdonkin Drive. He had a view on the sea in his own family house in Laugharne. He walked along Swansea Bay quite often and enjoyed staring on the waves at dawn, coming around. The sea always gave him inspiration and desire to create.

Fern Hill appears for the last time, but with new accent lines. The path of youth promised to be bright, brilliant and unforgettable. Thus, Thomas started working as the journalist and continued to write poems, stories, sharing them with his friends. The life upon seemed to be full of wisdom and fascinating accomplishments:

“...it was all
Shining, it was Adam and maiden,
The sky gathered again” (Thomas, 1974: 77).

This praise of life comes to the main celebration – *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, where Dylan once again is plunged into warm memories from his childhood. “*One Christmas was so much like another, in those years around the sea-town corner now and out of all sound except the distant speaking...*” (Thomas, 2014: 304). Pictures starting to move like slides, changing quite hastily. Spectator observes the swinging of the author's mood, struggling with his adult life, trials to lay way forward in life. “*By the sea's side ... My busy heart who shudders as she talks / Sheds the syllabic blood and drains her words*”, “*The force that drives the water through the rocks / Drives my red blood*” (Thomas, 1974: 42, 34). Then, approximately in the middle of the film, the crisis of adulthood reveals itself and as to revere that, Thomas reads the poem of Yeats, whom he admired in real life a lot. “*Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; ... / The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere / The ceremony of innocence is drowned*” (Yeats, 1921).

After the crisis in private, art, physical life, finally, after loss of his father, Dylan writes *Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night*. It motivates to keep going and try not to win death, but to stand straight and brave upon it. The poem invokes to go with a spark, with a sort of rebel inside. “*Rage, rage against the dying of the light*” (Thomas, 1974: 88). Thomas reads it as a prophecy to inevitable. Spectator knows: the end is coming. Doctor questions Dylan in quite a provocative manner: “*Do you want to die?*”. Poet tries to bypass the direct question giving a witty answer: “*Would I like to see my funerals? Yes, I would. I guess, everyone would. I'd read a eulogy to myself. I believe I'd do this quite well*” (Bernstein, 2017).

Not long before the scene of Dylan's passing in the film, *And Death Shall Have No Dominion* reverberates from a stage. Thomas speaks to every one and, firstly, to himself, as proclaiming that man cannot be dead

completely. In case of the author, he will live in his creations. In general, death is just an inevitable step for every human and it should not overwhelm one.

“*Dead men naked they shall be one*

...

Though they go mad they shall be sane,

Though they sink through the sea they shall rise again;

Though lovers be lost love shall not;

And death shall have no dominion” (Thomas, 1974: 47).

Extended paragraph from *A Child's Christmas in Wales* closes the scenes. After Dylan's death, it looks no more like a memory, but as the afterlife. It reflects how Dylan-the-poet was dedicated to the art of words. He reads this passage to the empty hall as to the eternity itself. “*Nobody could have had a noisier Christmas Eve*” as talking about his own life, that came to conclusion. And the last phrase genuinely leaves an open-ending: “*Would you like anything to read?*” (Thomas, 2014: 305).

During the film, Thomas drinks and names each of the 18 double straight shots of whiskey. The real-life story goes that when on November the 3rd Welsh poet returned from The White Horse tavern to the Chelsea Hotel, his last words were “I've just had 18 straight whiskeys. I think it's a record”. Steven Bernstein wrote the script while staying in the same hotel where Dylan Thomas lived his last days in New York. However, why Dylan was giving names to the shots? “*We are naming drinks. Giving them names, specific names. Names, designations, captions, titles, to label, to dub, to baptise, to name as we must name all of things to change them*” (Bernstein, 2017). From the very first glass till the last one author represents himself as a mixture of a poet and a human, and in this case, they are complementing each other. “*We should call this first drink innocence, which is, after all, how all things begin without guide or intention*” (Bernstein, 2017). Here are all of the glasses named by Mr Thomas that day:

1. Innocence. Everything takes its start from it. Innocence is a purity.
2. Enthusiasm (to that there's going to be more glasses during the day). Who knows what the future might bring? We need to be ready for it and might need some enthusiasm to go through.
3. Hope. Even the simplest things are changing their context to magical one with the help of hope. Reverie to Carlos's “*the miserable don't have another medicine, but only hope*”.
4. Recalcitrance.
5. Faith. Faith has more certainty than hope, but less evidence.

6. Grief. Observing our nothingness and attendance of death.

7. Resurrection.

8. Remembrance.

9. Regret.

10. Excess. The most of unlucks are over lived, in general, there is no sense in further existence, but we continue living. Optimists just for curiosity, other people just to participate in theatre scenes of life created by someone else.

11. Disappointment. To everything in which we invested our faith. Nothing was deserving it.

12. The Great Sadness.

13. Bravado, justifying one's life. Draws of attention to oneself.

14. Serving to followers, children, audience.

15. Uncertainty of something lying in front of us, further. Uncertainty whether the option for better exists. The lack of energy to explore the options.

16. A little portion of wisdom, which we got out from sound and fury. Small reward for what we have witnessed, suffered and survived.

17. Intoxication. The absenting of ourselves from all the noise of the world.

18. Is...

Thomas finished neither the 18th portion nor the sentence. He might have talked about death. The 18th symbolises the end to both: Dylan-man and Dylan-poet. The image of death is so almighty that it is even not pronounced by the author. He loses the consciousness before saying something else. Carlos,

as a younger alter-ego tells right before, that all the names were witty and deep but pointless as no one can recall them. On the contrary, poet's response is "*they really are quite easy to remember, because there's nothing to remember except the experience of the life*". Truly, in all these portions of whiskeys one could find the life story of oneself, from the start to finale.

Conclusion. In general, the film reflects the farewell of the author, his last call to the world. The image of a child running in a snowy forest shows that nature is the most comforting place for Dylan, because he was raised by it. He was born and bred among Welsh, observing native landscapes every day. Wales is the place of his birth, beginning, innocence, standing as a poet, writer and personality. Regarding the film, it has the lowest rates in a dubbed version between all of the existing ones dedicated to the author. However, among English-speaking viewers, the picture takes mostly positive reviews. No doubt, it represents fully the image of Thomas as a poet and Thomas as a human being. Was he good as a husband, father, lover? Maybe, not. Was he good as an artist, poet, creator? Not good, but brilliant! Steven Bernstein's work is full of philosophy, which is felt from every character in the story. Dylan-poet opens up his mind palace to all of the pub listeners. His words sound like a confession: not in a sinful life, but in a great experience itself. Experience, that deep inside we all share. Indeed, it is the main reason why we empathise every word written by this extraordinary and distinctive "rock'n'roll" artist.

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