



# Queen of the genre: the metaphor of nobility and culture in OF binominal constructions

Marie Turlais

[marie.turlais@sorbonne-universite.fr](mailto:marie.turlais@sorbonne-universite.fr)

**CELISO**  
SORBONNE UNIVERSITÉ/LETTRES



# Introduction



- (1) As the reigning **queen of pop** and of one-name moniker recognition, Madonna is no stranger to controversy – surely you haven't forgotten that kiss
- (2) Chicago, Dutchy, and O'Shaughnessy capture the witty early 20th century technique made famous by the original **kings of comedy**.
- (3) The highest and mightiest Presidents and Prime Ministers must still kneel before higher authorities: **the barons of the press**, industry, agribusiness, oil, war, drugs, and finance
- (4) *Day to Day* **Countess of Culture** Jessica Seigel talks to NPR's Madeleine Brand about the proper etiquette for thanking someone for a gift

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  - (4) *Day to Day* **Countess of Culture** Jessica Seigel talks to NPR's Madeleine Brand about the proper etiquette for thanking someone for a gift
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- ▶ Stylistic metaphor Goatly (2007: 11): an **object** or **concept A** (the **target**) is expressed through terms usually denoting another **object** or **concept B** (the **source**), thus establishing – or using established – implicit **similarities** or analogies (the **grounds**)
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- ▶ I/ Conceptual metaphor for quality and worth  
II/ Semantic and stylistic selection of N1 and N2  
III/ Role of OF in the construction of meaning



# I/ Conceptual metaphor for quality and worth

## 1. Multivalence in the source domains

- ▶ Goatly (2007: 35-40) :  
GOOD (QUALITY / MORALITY) IS HIGH (*high quality jade, high-class fruit, high-minded*),  
+ HAPPY IS HIGH (*on the top of the world, my spirit rose*),  
+ MORE IS HIGH (*the prices rose*)  
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→ MORE = GOOD (HAPPY)
- ▶ In our data:  
QUALITY IS UP (Goatly)  
+ HIGH STATUS IS UP (Lakoff & Johnson (1980: 16): *He has a lofty position. She'll rise to the top. He's at the peak of his career. He's climbing the ladder*)  
→ QUALITY = HIGH STATUS (NOBILITY)



# I/ Conceptual metaphor for quality and worth

## 2. Types of “quality”: types of N2

- ▶ Types of N2 in the data:
  - ▶ culture, art and entertainment (overwhelming majority)
  - ▶ sports,
  - ▶ science & technology,
  - ▶ industry, business and trade,
  - ▶ crime.



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## 2. Types of “quality”: types of N2

- ▶ Types of N2 in the data → notion of « quality »
  - ▶ culture, art and entertainment (overwhelming majority) → quality of the production, critical success, visionary dimension, popular success and influence
  - ▶ Sports → successful performances, technical prowess
  - ▶ science & technology → technical abilities, knowledge, financial worth
  - ▶ industry, business and trade → money / goods (quantity)
  - ▶ Crime → social hierarchy (no metaphor?)



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  - ▶ Crime → social hierarchy (no metaphor?)
- ▶ No representation of lower social contexts: spectacular accomplishments of public figures.



# **1/ Conceptual metaphor for quality and worth**

3. Further evidence of the cognitive nature of the metaphor



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### ► Combos and repetitions

(5) Theologies and theories are the sport of the not fully enlightened **princes of intellect**, sometimes **kings of mere verbiage**),

(6) I pray to God that he goes peacefully without suffering. What he has done for films... He will remain the **emperor of cinema** because an emperor is the one who is followed by **other kings**."

(7) First Joe Hill, because he tweeted first: That's pretty high praise from the **king and prince of horror**;

(3) The highest and mightiest Presidents and Prime Ministers must still kneel before higher authorities: the **barons of the press, industry, agribusiness, oil, war, drugs, and finance**).

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## 3. Further evidence of the cognitive nature of the metaphor

- ▶ Combos and repetitions
- ▶ *King of N2* denoting inanimate objects
  - ▶ Influence of the plural form :  
*king of oil* (industrialists) vs. *king of oils* (sesame oil)  
*king of metal* (musicians) vs. *king of metals* (gold)

*king of instrument, king of beer, king of wine, king of search, king of battlefield, king of herb, king of (the) smartphone, king of mushroom, king of food, king of burger, king of breakfast, king of casino, king of crypto*

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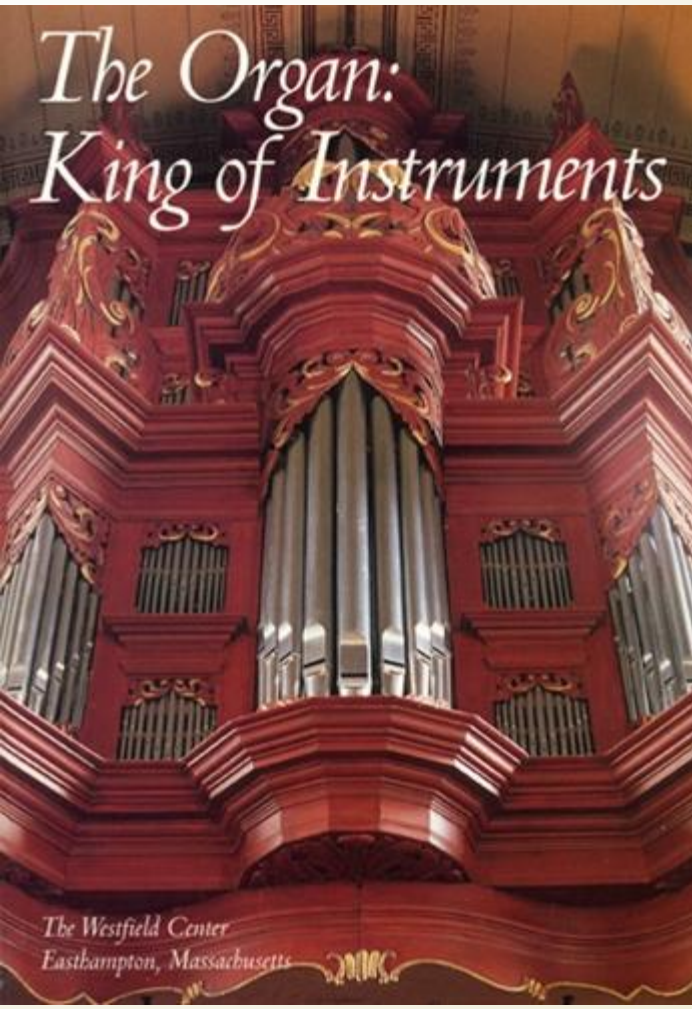
*king of instrument, king of beer, king of wine, king of search, king of battlefield, king of herb, king of (the) smartphone, king of mushroom, king of food, king of burger, king of breakfast, king of casino, king of crypto*

- ▶ Grounds: strength, high quality or scarcity, popularity.
- ▶ Gender? Cross-linguistic representations?



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## **II/ Semantic and stylistic selection of N1 and N2**

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- ▶ *Emperor & empress*:  
(6) I pray to God that he goes peacefully without suffering. What he has done for films... He will remain the **emperor of cinema** because an emperor is the one who is followed by other kings."  
(8) Imagine yourself as **supreme empress of the cinema**. What would you do?

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- ▶ *Baron*: business, agriculture, trade, finance. 5% of tokens denoting culture, sports or the media. 15% of tokens in the singular form.

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### 1. Choice of N1 determined by N2

	Types of N2 in <u>sports / science / technology</u>	Tokens of these N2
King	24,14%	13,08
Queen	21,28%	8,37
Prince	16,47%	9,27
Princess	10,00%	2,15
Emperor	14,71%	11,90
Empress	17,39%	6,32

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+ phonetic reasons: rhyme or alliteration → *duke of juke*;  
*duke of developers*; *countess of culture*; *countess of the court*.

# II/ Semantic and stylistic selection of N1 and N2

## 2. Other stylistic features of the constructions

- ▶ Modification of N1 with idiomatic modifiers
  - ▶ (1) As **the reigning queen of pop** and of one-name moniker recognition, Madonna is no stranger to controversy
  - ▶ (8) Imagine yourself as **supreme empress of the cinema**. What would you do?
  - ▶ (9) “if you have companies, for instance, like Apple and Google saying we're going to solve this...looking to the big **white knight of technology** to save us from problems that sometimes don't require a technological solution”
  - ▶ (10) Says Microsoft founder and CEO Bill Gates, **the crown prince of techies** and perhaps America's wealthiest entrepreneur;

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- ▶ Use of the construction to create irony
  - ▶ (11) **The clown prince of crime** made his onscreen debut 50 years ago. [the Joker]
  - ▶ (11b) Paul Gaffney is **the Clown Prince of Basketball**. He borrows shoes, purses and just about anything else from fans. He also throws water on the crowd, makes fun of the referee and fakes serious injuries two or three times a game.
  - ▶ (12) Then there's Boccardi, **not exactly** a **prince of journalism**

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- ▶ Metonymy in N2
  - ▶ *king of the court*: tennis player
  - ▶ *countess of the court*: basketball player;
  - ▶ *prince of the pulpit*: pastor;
  - ▶ *emperors and empresses of the bar*: lawyers.

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  - ▶ OED : "Forming various jocular (formerly often slang) phrases **denoting one who is a member of a certain trade or profession**, has a certain occupation or character, etc. In the majority of these the head of **the postmodifying phrase is the name of some tool or article commonly used by or associated with the person** designated, and the number of such phrases may be indefinitely increased."
  - ▶ *Knight of the N2* → *knight of the grammar* = schoolmaster, *knight of the brush*: painter.; *thimble*: tailor; *cleaver*: butcher; *pestle*: apothecary

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*knight of the thimble*: tailor  
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  - ▶ Yet (13) “He was, in truth, the very **knight of science**; **self-effacing, seeking no personal distinction, but only to advance the progress of truth**, and let the glory fall [with others].”



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  - ▶ Subject-verb agreement :  
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  - ▶ *Queen of pop*: N2 as the target domain, the actual topic in the (conceptual) metaphorical construction
- ▶ Integration process:
  - ▶ Nominalisation :  
*Pop music is a queendom, it has a queen → the queen of pop is Madonna.*  
The queen of pop = 1 noun phrase = 1 entity (Langacker, 1991)
  - ▶ Yet *pop* and *queen* still relatively autonomous (Cotte, 1983: 95-113), conceptualised separately → emergence of metaphor

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- ▶ Syntactic hierarchy : N1 as head (Quirk *et al*, 1985:1276)
- ▶ Semantic hierarchy.
- ▶ Integration process: nominalisation
- ▶ Comparison with N2N1 compounds
  - ▶ *comedy king, pop king, rap king, soul king, speed king, music king*
  - ▶ *pop king / queen / prince / princess / monarch / empress / emperor / sovereign*
  - ▶ *→ pop royalty*

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  - ▶ *pop king / queen / prince / princess / monarch / empress / emperor / sovereign*
  - *pop royalty*
  - ▶ Difference in frequency and in freedom of combination.  
(15) the Clarence Darrows and William Howard Tafts of today. **The emperors and empresses of the bar** indeed may have no clothes



# Conclusion

- ▶ Complex cognitive metaphor NOBILITY IS QUALITY
  - ▶ specific images of certain socio-cultural and professional domains
  - ▶ OF binominal construction is more frequent and freer than compounds
- 



Many thanks!



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