

# Peculiarities of Chronology in Christopher Buckley's Novel *They Eat Puppies? Don't They*

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**Abstract.** In this article the problem of chronology in political satirical novel is investigated. In such novels the category of time is generally being of secondary importance as the ultimate goal of writer is to reveal the mechanisms of political system or universal truth hidden by politicians. However, in the novel *They eat puppies, don't they* chronology also indicates the pace of the plot. The category of time is presented in various markers, making this novel topical for a research.

**Key words:** time, chronology, political satire, novel

## Introduction

The interest in the American satirical novel was present in literary criticism and interest in it has not disappeared even at the present stage. Researchers and scientists are attracted by the nature of American satire, because elements of comedy are present in the work of almost all representatives of American literature, regardless of genre. Famous American satirical writers preferred to expose the vices of society and the political system in the genre of the novel. It is this genre that allows you to capture a broad picture of reality and gives scope for exposing all "defects" with laughter. [1] Since the main goal of a satirical novel is to expose and destroy the prevailing orders in society with laughter, the plot does not limit the narrative, but acts as the basis for adding means of depiction and exposure. The characters in the novel are not limited - they are just a "means" so the satirist is not obliged to show their fate from beginning to end. Often, they are presented in some small period of time. Depending on the thematic component of a satirical novel, or the object of satire, a satirical novel can be divided into social, political, etc.

Thus, an American political satirical novel is a novel that exposes, through satire, both the American ruling elite and the peculiarities of the American political mechanism, the discrepancy between election promises and reality - the political life of the United States.

## Methods

The most prominent representative of modern American political satire is Christopher Taylor Buckley (1952-present), having worked as a speechwriter for Vice President George W. Bush, the writer reveals the ugly side of the American political establishment. His work is multifaceted, he equally flawlessly writes both a satire on business, the media, branches of government and on European history.

In 1981, Buckley moved to Washington, D.C. to work as a speechwriter for Vice President George W. Bush. It was this experience in this position that became the fundamental element for the themes of the political satirical novels of the writer. [2]

Directly political satire is reflected in the novel *They eat puppies, don't they?* The action of the novel takes place in 2012, thus the author creates a parallel reality in which for the first time he touches upon the topic of US-China relations. Today, this topic is very relevant in connection with the COVID-19 virus pandemic, former US President Donald Trump accused the Chinese government of hiding information about the epidemiological situation and not taking the necessary measures to eliminate the spread of the virus.

The plot of this novel is built around a scam with China's accusations of poisoning the Dalai Lama, which subsequently led to a state of alert for both powers. She was also the main trigger for the characters' actions. There are no other motives for the actions of the characters in the novel. The characters are divided both geographically and ideologically. The exposition of heroes in the American part is mainly represented by the judgments and thoughts of the protagonist Walter McIntyre. [3]

## Results and discussion

Time in the novel is conditional and transient, at the beginning of the story it is reported that there are more than 6 weeks left before the equestrian competition of a minor character. At the same time, time is fleeting only for two characters: Walter and Angel, their joint actions are developing rapidly. In the second storyline, in China, there are no temporal characteristics of the development of the action. There, the author initially presents all the scenes in the process.

Buckley presents the chronology as follows. For a week of “weeklong cram” Walter studies the PRC to find a reason for declaring the PRC an aggressor. [3]

On Friday, he finishes his studies, enters into a partnership with Angel, and goes home to the country estate.

On Monday, they decide to use the news of the poisoning of the Dalai Lama and accuse China of deliberately poisoning the latter.

Two days later, tentatively Wednesday, their speculation appears in India's Delhi Beast.

Three days later, American television picks up the news from an Indian newspaper.

Then there are four days of silence in the media, a complete lull. It turns out that at the end of next week, on Saturday, the author reports that Walter and worked hard in connection with the deterioration of the Dalai Lama's condition. [3]

On Friday, the Dalai Lama was diagnosed with a fatal condition and on Monday the news of the latter's death appears. Then the following events take place: the aggravation of the Taiwan issue and the abolition of the Tang Dynasty Cup. On the same day, Walter gets into a car accident.

After the last incident, temporal characteristics disappear from the narrative and the action in both parts of the novel is presented in the process through dialogues and descriptions of active actions. Thus, it turns out that in general the plot of the novel took about a month.

In addition to the characteristics by day, the narrative also mentions the hourly characteristics also before the accident. Basically, the author characterizes the movements of the characters by the hour, especially after the next news on television. Walter immediately goes to Angel's or they call each other. Also, the author uses hourly characteristics to indicate the work, Mindy usually gets up at 4 in the morning for training, and Walter works until the early morning on a novel. [3]

So, the impetus for accelerating the development of the plot is the situation with the Dalai Lama, in other words, this is a conditional starting point for the events in the novel.

Accordingly, the main triggers for actions can be identified: the beginning is the poisoning of the Dalai Lama in Italy, and then it is the deterioration of the latter's condition at a meeting with Prince Charles in the UK.

At the same time, the diagnosis of pheochromocytoma with metastases in the lungs of the last stage and the transfer of the patient to the Cleveland clinic in the United States are taking place, and the alleged murder of the Dalai Lama is already taking place in the United States.

China's refusal to bury the deceased in Lhasa coincides with the collision of a Chinese ship with a Taiwanese ship. And the last trigger is the call of the President of the United States to the President of China and the resolution of disputes around the Dalai Lama, the United States has allocated a satellite for the body of the deceased, which will be in the sky over the cemetery of lamas in Tibet.

## Conclusion

Time in the novel is conditional and temporal characteristics are present only in the initial chapters of the novel, and after the death of the Dalai Lama, there is no mention of temporal characteristics. Further actions are presented abruptly and in dynamics. From all the time references presented, it can be assumed that the action took place approximately within a month.

Thus, the artistic value of the novel *They eat puppies? Don't they?* lies in the abundance of artistic means of expression and drawing attention to the main political problems of our time.

This novel is a debut novel in the context of describing the mechanisms of US foreign policy. Despite the presence of an artistic component of the novel, the political one is the main one. Accordingly, the author derives political patterns: the manipulation of public opinion, the “dictatorship” of the United States in

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international politics and the formation of domestic policy through the media, where the reliability of information does not matter.

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