

The Canterbury Tales における同等比較

— “(as) as ____” の Set Phrases について —

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<はじめに>

And though that he were worthy, he was wys,
And of his port as meeke as is a mayde.

Prol. 68-9.

上の例は、G. Chaucer (以下CHと略) の *The Canterbury Tales* (以下CTと略) に登場するものである。下線部は同等比較 (Comparison of Equality)¹⁾ 構造と呼ばれるが、現代英語において、形容詞 meek に対し、名詞は maid でなければならないことはないし、逆もそうである。

And though so much distinguished, he was wise
And in his bearing modest as a maid.

Coghill, p. 21.

これは Coghill による上記2行の現代英語訳であるが、名詞の maid はそのままであるが、形容詞の meek は、より近い意味の modest に置き換えられている。これに対し、同じCTの中のつぎの例はどうだろうか。

“For thilke spouse that she took but now
Ful lyk a fiers leoun, she sendeth heere,
As meke as evere was any lomb, to yow!”

SN. 197-99.

現代英語訳：

Her very spouse, that she but now has taken

Fierce as a lion, hither has she sent
Meek as a lamb, his violence forsaken
For Thee, dear Lord!'. . .

Coghill, p. 457.

And as a lamb she sitteth meke and stille,
And leet this cruell sergeant doon his wille.

Cl. 538-39.

現代英語訳：

And like a lamb she lay there, meek and still,
And let the cruel fellow do his will.

Coghill, p. 354.

上の例では、Coghillもそのまま meek と lamb を使用している。現代英語の同等比較構造における meek の例を調べてみると、meek と lamb は密接に結び付いて、“Set Phrases”（以下SPと略）として共に使用され、SPとしての地位を完全に確立している。

He never complains about the way he's treated, he's
as meek as a lamb.

Longman Dictionary of English Idioms (p. 216)

すなわち、下線部 as meek as a lamb において、meek は lamb という特定の名詞と強く結び付き、lamb 自体が本来持つ特性が meek の意味に付加されて、‘very meek’ という強調された意味を生み出すSPを形成しているわけである。現代英語に対し、CHの英語において、この同等比較構造の中で、どのようなものが、SPとして扱われていたのであろうか。²⁾

この論文では、現代英語においては、*Longman Dictionary of English Idioms* (LDEIと略) から、CHにおいては、*The Canterbury Tales* から、この同等比較構造のほとんどを取り出し、両者を比較検討してみる。

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CTの中に、この同等比較構造が、つぎつぎと登場する箇所がある。

But of hir song, it was as loude and yerne
As any swalwe sittyng on a berne.
Therto she koude skippe and make game,
As any kyde or calf folwynge his dame.
Hir mouth was sweete as bragot or the meeth,
Or hoord of apples leyd in hey or heeth.
Wynsynge she was, as is a joly colt,
Long as a mast, and upright as a bolt.
A brooch she baar upon hir lowe coler,
As brood as is the boos of a bokeler.

Mil. 3257-66.

この物語に登場する「大工」の若い女房 Alison のことについて、swalwe, kyde, calf, colt などの動物を使用し、それらのイメージから彼女の快活さを強調し、bragot (=bragget), meeth(=metheglin) などの甘い飲みものを使用して、彼女の唇の麗しさを誉め称え、mast や bolt を使用して、彼女のすらりとした身体的特徴をありありと示している。すなわち、その強調したい形容詞自体によって、あるいは形容詞の種類によって、後に来る名詞がそれぞれ違っているのである (Cf. Winny,¹ p.62)。

ここでは、CTに登場する同等比較構造に使用されているほとんどの形容詞 (副詞も含む) を意味上から、大きく6つに分類し、現代英語のSPを参照しながら、それぞれ考察していくことにする。

- I) 性質, 性格に関する語
- II) 感情表現に関する語
- III) 色に関する語

IV) 天候, 明暗に関する語

V) 身体に関する語

VI) 状態に関する語

1. 大小, 強弱, 遠近など

2. 高低, 形態, 動作など

3. その他

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I) 性質, 性格に関する語

() の語は ModE , (=) の語はそれに近い意味の語。

buxom (=obedient) : wyf (wife)

For who can be so buxom as a wyf?

Mch. 1287.

coy (coy) : mayde (maid)

“Ye ryde as coy and stille as dooth a mayde

Were newe spoused, sittyng at the bord;

Cl. 2 - 3.

curteisly (courteously) : mayde

As curteisly as it had been a mayde,

Sh. 445.

digne (dignified) : water in a dich

She was as digne as water in a dich,³⁾

Rv. 3964.

egre (eager) : tyger yond in Ynde

Beth egre as is a tygre yond in Ynde;

Cl. 1199.

[=be fierce as a tiger --- Sisam, p.62, Winny⁴ p.90]

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fayn (fain) : fowel is of the brighte sonne

As fayn as fowel is of the brighte sonne.

Kn. 2437.

faire (fair) : any man in Engelond

As faire as any man in Engelond,

Pard. 921.

Cf. That Emelye, that fairer was to sene

Than is the lylie upon his stalke grene,

Kn. 1035-36.

fieble (feeble) : bataille (battle)

And sklendre wyves, fieble as in bataille,

Cl. 1198.

fiers (fierce) : leon (lion)

As fiers as leon pulled out his swerd,

Kn. 1598.

Cf. Ful lyk a fiers leoun, she sendeth heere,

SN. 198.

fyn (fine) : gold, any (silver) in youre purs or myn

For his crispe heer, shynynge as gold so fyn

WB. 304.

And make it as good silver and as fyn

As ther is any in youre purs or myn,

CY. 1128-29.

freendly (friendly) : his owene brother

As freendly as he were his owene brother;

Kn. 1652.

foule (foul) : womman, Genylon of France

That I ne sterve, as foule as womman may,

Mch. 2196.

And but I do, God take on me vengeance

As foul as ever hadde Genylon⁴⁾ of France."

Sh. 193-94.

gaillard (=lively) : goldfynch⁵⁾

Gaillard he was as goldfynch in the shawe,

Co. 4367.

gay (gay) : any pecok (peacock)

As any pecok he was proud and gay.

Rv. 3926.

gent (gentle) : any wezel (weasel)

Fair was this yonge wyf, and therwithal

As any wezel his body gent and smal.⁶⁾

Mil. 3233-34.

honestly (honestly) : kynges (king's)

His housynge, his array, as honestly

To his degree was maked as a kynges.

Mch. 2026-27.

just (just) : squyre (squire)

Thou shalt me fynde as just as is a squyre.

Sum. 2090.

現代英語における類語の S P :

regular : as regular as clockwork

kynde (kind) : any wyf

God helpe me so, I was to hym as kynde

As any wyf from Denmark unto Yndo,

WB. 823-24.

lordly (lordly) : king

He gan to speke as lordly as a king.

Rv. 3900.

loude (loud) : any swalwe (swallow)

But of hir song, it was as loude and yerne

As any swalwe sittynge on a berne.

Mil. 3257-58.

lewed (lewd) : gees (geese)

So that ye men shul been as lewed as gees.

Mch. 2275.

meke (meek) : lamb, mayde

例文は、〈はじめに〉で検討している。

peert (pert) : pye

And she was proud, and peert as is a pye.

Rv. 3950.

Cf. pitously : (piteously) : [as she was slayn]

Allas, so pitously as she was slayn!

Pard. 298.

上の例は、as の後が名詞ではなく、文になっている。

proud (proud) : pecok (peacock), pye (=magpie : カササギ)

As any pecok he was proud and gay

Rv. 3926.

And she was proud, and peert as is a pye.

Rv. 3950.

現代英語はCTと同じく peacock が使用される :

proud : as proud as a peacock

roial (royal) : prince

Thus roial, as a prince is in his halle,

NP. 3184.

sooth : [as God is trewe] , [as God is kyng]

And al this voys was sooth, as God is trewe.

ML. 169.

And certeinly, as sooth as God is kyng,

Mch. 1267.

tame (tame) : any lilye whyt (=white lily)

An egle tame, as any lilye whyt.

Kn. 2178.

vicius (vicious) : any feend (fiend)

Although that Nero were as vicius

As any feend that lith ful lowe adoun,

Mk. 2463-64.

現代英語における反意語の S P :

good : as good as gold [=very well-behaved]

wis (wise) : Pallas

Though she were wis as Pallas,⁷⁾ dar I seyn,

Phy. 49.

現代英語における他の類語の S P :

bold : as bold as brass

keen : as keen as mustard/a razor

obstinate : as obstinate as a mule

pure : as pure as the driven snow

snug : as snug as a bug in the rug

stubborn : as stubborn as a mule

CHにおいて、honestiy, lordly, roial, sooth, wis などの形容詞は、当時、絶対視されていた神様 (Pallas, God) や王様など (king, prince) を表わす名詞と密接に結び付き、その意味は極めて強調されている。

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II) 感情表現に関する語

1. 喜び

coltish (coltish) : flekked (flecked) pye

He was al coltish, ful of ragerye,
And ful of jargon as a flekked pye.⁸⁾

Mch. 1847-48.

glad (glad) : fowel, fowel of day

But was as glad therof as fowel of day :

Sh. 38.

For which they were as glad of his comyng

As fowel is fayn whan that the sonne up riseth.

Sh. 50-51.

現代英語の S P :

pleased : as pleased as Punch

joly/jolyf (jolly) : jay,⁹⁾ pye

As any jay she light was and jolyf,

Rv. 4154.

Stibourn and strong, and joly as a pye.

WB. 456.

[=... as mery and talkative as a magpie --- Winny,³ p. 91]

And forth she gooth as jolif as a pye,

Sh. 209.

Cf. That fressher was and jolyer of array

As to my doom, than is the month of May.

Fkl. 927-28.

murie (merry) : papejay, any aungel, white doke (duck)

Thanne shaltou swymme as myrie, I undertake,

As dooth the white doke after hire drake.

Mil. 3575-76.

And hoom he gooth, murie as a papejay,

Sh. 369.

For trewely, ye have as myrie a stevene

As any aungel hath that is in hevене.

NP. 3291-92.

Cf. His voys was murier than the murie organ

On messe-dayes that in the chirche gon.

NP. 2851-52.

Soong murier than the mermayde in the see;

NP. 3270.

現代英語における類語の S P :

merry : as merry as a cricket

chirpy : as chirpy as a cricket

happy : as happy as a lark/Larry/the day is long

lively : as lively as a cricket

wynsyng (=skittish) : a joly colt

Wysynge she was, as is a joly colt,

Mil. 3263.

CTにおいて、「楽しい」や「陽気な」を表わす形容詞 (coltish, glad, joly, murie, gaillard, gay, etc.) は「鳥」に関する名詞 (jay, pie, pecok, etc.) と密接に結び付いている。一方、現代英語の「楽しい」を意味する形容詞のほとんどが、名詞 cricket と結び付いている。OED (vol. II. p.1171) によれば、cricket の最初の例は1325年のものであるが、CTだけでなく、CHの他の作品でもまったく使用されていない。

2. 怒り, 悲しみ, 恐れ

agast (=afraid) : coward

Whil thow hast, as a coward, been agast."

Rv. 4267.

adrad (=afraid) : deeth (death)

They were adrad of hym as of the deeth.

Prol. 605.

angry (angry) : pissemyre (pismire 蟻 : ModE pismire は Obs.

で, ant の方が普通に使用されている)

He is as angry as a pissemyre,

Sum. 1825.

諺において, angry と結び付く名詞は wasp :

Now mery as a cricket, and by and by, Angry as a waspe.

Wilson, p. 14., Skeat, p. 334.

ただし, LDE I ではこの as angry as a wasp を SP として扱っていない。CT でも, wasp をこの構造に使用した例はない。

現代英語における類語の SP :

cross : as cross as two sticks (=very angry)

wood/woodly (=mad) : hare

For thogh this Somonour wood were as an hare,

Fri. 1327.

Cf. So woodly that he lyk was to biholde

The boxtree or the asshe dede and colde.

Kn. 1301-02.

Upon this Frere his herte was so wood

That lyk an aspen leef he quook for ire.

Sum. 1666-67.

この同等比較構造では見られないが、CHにおいては、wood と leoun の結び付きは非常に多い：

In his fighting were a wood leon

Kn. 1656.

上の例の他に、WB. 429., 792., Sum. 2152. などに見られる。

現代英語における類語の S P :

dart : as dart as a brush [=very silly]

mad : as mad as a hatter/a March hare

nutty : as nutty as a fruitcake [=very foolish]

CHの作品において、wood の使用が mad の使用を圧倒的に上回っていたが、wood は次第に使用頻度が減少し、20世紀に入ると完全に mad に取って代われ、ほとんど使用されなくなった (Cf. OED)。意味がほとんど同じである両語が、CHの時代も現代も、hare という同一の名詞を取っているのは興味深い。なお、この同等比較構造において、付加される名詞が「動物」の場合は、Rowland (p. 21) で詳しく扱われている。

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Ⅲ) 色に関する語

blak (black) : cole (coal), crowe (crow), sloo (sloe),
jeet (jet)

As blak he lay as any cole or crowe.

Kn. 2692.

And tho were bent and blake as any sloo.

Mil. 3246.

His byle was blak, and as the jeet it shoon ;

NP. 2862.

現代英語の S P :

black : as black as pitch [=very black]

as black as one is painted [=to be in reality as bad
as people think one may be]

as black as the ace of spades [=very dirty]

現代英語においては、同じ形容詞でもその持つ意味の違いによって
それぞれ付加される名詞が異なっている。

broun (brown) : berye (berry)

Broun as a berye, a propre short felawe,

Co. 4368.

grene (green) : laurer (laurel)

Myn herte and alle my lymes been as grene

As laurer thurgh the yeer is for to sene.

Mch. 1465-66.

現代英語の S P :

green : as green as grass [=lacking experience of the
world or the life]

CHの方は「非常に青々とした」の意味で、常緑樹である laurel
を名詞として使用しているのに対し、現代英語の方は「まったく経
験不足の (cf. a green teacher : 新米教師)」の意味で、grass
を名詞として使用している。

Cf. not as green as one is cabbage-looking [=to be not
as foolish or inexperienced as one looks]

greye (grey) : glas (glass), goos (goose)

His rode was reed, his eyen greye as goos.

Mil. 3317.

reed (red) : sowe (sow) and fox, brustles (bristles),

rose, coral

His berd as any sowe or fox was reed

Prol. 552.

Reed as the brustles of a sowes erys

Prol. 556.

His lippes rede as rose;

Th. 726.

Cf. His coomb was redder than the fyn coral,

NP. 2859.

現代英語の S P :

red : as red as beetroot [=red in the face from feeling
awkward or ashamed]

rody (ruddy) : the yonge sonne (young sun)

As rody and bright as dooth the yonge sonne,

Sq. 385.

whit (white) : chalk, dayesye (daisy), flour-de-lys (fleur-de-
lis = lily), lylie flour (lily flower),
morne milk, payndemayn, snow-whit swan

His nekke whit was as the flour-de-lys

Prol. 238.

Whit was his berd as is the dayesye ;

Prol. 332.

Heeng at his girdel, whit as morne milk.

Prol. 358.

A barmclooth eek as whit as morne milk

Mil. 3236.

Amydde a tree, for drye as whit as chalk,

Sq. 409.

Whit was his face as payndemayn,

Th. 725.

As whit as is a lilye flour,

Th. 867.

Whit was this crowe as is a snow - whit swan,

Mcp. 133.

Cf. His nayles whitter than the lilye flour,

NP. 2863.

上に登場した *payndemayn* は本来、中期ラテン語 *panis dominicus* から来たもので、'lord's bread' を意味するほど、CHの時代には最高級の真っ白いパンであった (Wyatt & Drennan, p. 10., Skeat, pp. 184-85, OED. vol. VII. p. 378)。

現代英語の S P :

white : as white as a sheet [=very pale in the face]

as white as driven snow [=pure]

yellow (yellow) : sonne, wex (wax)

This Pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex,

Prol. 675.

And that was yelow, and glytered as the sonne.

Kn. 2166.

Whit と *morne milk* の関係は非常に密接で (Winny,¹ p. 61., Winny,² p. 102) 普段、私たちが手にする段階の「牛乳」は同じ白色でも、どちらかというところ *pale yellow* に近いが、「絞ったての牛乳」は、この表現で良く使用されるほど「真っ白」である (Cf. Cunningham, p. 89)。

CHの「色」に関する特徴としては、一つの形容詞に対して、現代英語においてよりも、単純でしかも、直接視覚に訴えるような「色」を持つ、多種多様な名詞が選択されていることである。その結果、それぞれの形容詞の表わす「色」をより鮮やかに表現している。その分、現代英語の固定した、別の言葉で言えば、ありふれた S P には感じられない力強さを持っている。

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IV) 天候・明暗に関する語

brighte (bright) : any glas, any day, the yonge sonne

With wawes grene, and brighte as any glas.

Kn. 1958.

Hir forheed shoon as bright as any day,

Mil. 3310.

As rody and bright as dooth the yonge sonne,

Sq. 385.

His steede, which that shoon as sonne brighte,

Sq. 170.

Cf. Ful brighter was the shynyng of hir hewe

Than in the Tour the noble yforged newe.

Mil. 3255-56.

現代英語の S P :

bright : as bright as a button

Cf. **clene** (clean) : [as ye were born]

Yow that wol offre, as clene and eek as cleer

As ye were born. — And lo, sires, thus I preche.

Pard. 914-15.

現代英語における類語の S P :

clean : as clean as a whistle

neat : as neat as a (new) pin

Cf. **cleer** (clear) : [as ye were born]

例文は上の clene のものと同じ。

Cf. For in the sterres, clerer than is glas,

ML. 194.

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現代英語の S P :

clear : as clear as a bell/crystal

: as clear as mud [=confusing]

derk (dark) : pich, the cole

Derk was the nyght as pich, or as the cole,

Mil. 3731.

現代英語の S P :

dark : as dark as pitch

CHの名詞と現代英語の名詞が同一の例。

weet (wet) : beest (beast)

Wery and weet, as beest is in the reyn,

Rv. 4107.

現代英語の類語の S P :

cold : as cold as charity, as cold as marble

cool : as cool as a cucumber

dry : as dry as a bone [=very dry]

as dry as dust [=very dull or uninteresting]

warm : as warm as toast

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V) 身体に関する語

blynde (blind) : stoon (stone)

This Januarie, as blynd as is a stoon,

Mch. 2156.

現代英語の S P :

blind : as blind as a bat/a mole

doumb (dumb) : stoon, tree

To ride by the weye doumb as a stoon ;

Prol. 774.

And she, for sorwe, as doumb stant as a tree,

ML. 1055.

CHにおいて、名詞 stoon は上述の blynde や doumb のような形容詞の他に、stille と共に良く使用されている。

fat (fat) : whale

Me thynketh they been lyk Jovinyan,

Fat as a whale, and walkynge as a swan,

Sum. 1929-30.

Whale は、サイズの大きなものに言及するときには、一般的に良く使用された (Rowland, p.60)。

leene (lean) : rake, shaft, Cf. Ylyk a staf

As leene was his hors as is a rake,

Prol. 287.

Cf. Ful longe were his legges and ful lene,

Ylyk a staf, ther was no calf ysene.

Prol. 591-92.

That lene he wex and drye as is a shaft ;

Kn. 1362.

piled (=bald) : ape

As piled as an ape was his skulle.

Rv. 3935.

現代英語における類語の S P :

bald : as bald as a coot

現代英語における他の類語の S P :

deaf : as deaf as a post

CHにおいて、blynde や doumb の形容詞に対して stoon という

無生物の名詞が使用されていたが、現代英語においても、deaf という形容詞に対して post という無生物の名詞が使用されている。生物の特徴を表わす形容詞に無生物の名詞を付加することにより、その形容詞がよりいっそう強調されている。

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VI) 状態に関する語

1. 大小, 強弱, 遠近など

brood (broad) : the boos of a bokeler

As brood as is the boos of a bokeler.

Mil. 3266.

現代英語の S P :

broad : as broad as it is long

fer (far) : shippes saille (ship's sail)

Thogh thou myghte se as fer as shippes saille?

Mch. 2108.

greet (great) : a greet forneys, a thonder-dent,

Nynyvee, Rome, Alisundre, Troye and other three

His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys.

Prol. 559.

As greet as it had been a thonder-dent,

Mil. 3807.

Thogh it as greet were as was Nynyvee,

Rome, Alisaundre, Troye and othere three.

CY. 974-5.

hard (hard) : any stoon

That hath an herte as hard as any stoon,

Mch. 1990.

現代英語の類語の S P :

hard : as hard as nails

stiff : as stiff as a poker/ramrod/a board

large (large) : berne (=barn)

Withinne his tente, large as is a berne,

Mk. 2569.

この berne は前々行 (l. 2567 : But taak kep of the deth of Oloferne) の Oloferne と韻を踏んでいる。

現代英語の S P :

large : as large as life

long (long) : mast

Wynsynge she was, as is a joly colt,

Long as a mast, and upright as a bolt.

Mil. 3263-64.

strong (strong) : champioun, a greet camaille

Therto he strong was as a champioun.

Prol. 239.

Syn ye be strong as is a greet camaille ;

Cl. 1196.

現代英語の類語, 反意語の S P :

tough : as tough as nails : Cf. as hard as nails

weak : as weak as a kitten/a dishwater

smal (small) : a goot, any wezel

A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot.

Prol. 688.

Fair was this yonge wyf, and therwithal

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As any wezel hir body gent and smal.

Mil. 3233-34.

Cf. soft : ...than wolle is of a wether

And softer than the wolle is of a wether.

Mil. 3249.

Cf. unsofte : ...lyk to the skin of houndfyssh

With thikke brustles of his berd unsofte,

Lyk to the skyn of houndfyssh, sharp as brere —

Mch. 1824-25.

現代英語の類語の S P :

straight : as straight as a die/an arrow

2. 高低, 形態, 動作など

bisy (busy) : bees. Cf. lyk a bisy bee

In wommen been ! for ay as bisy as bees

Been they, us sely men for to deceyve,

Mch. 2422-23.

Cf. Lo, lyk a bisy bee, withouten gile, -- SN. 195.

現代英語も bee を使用している :

busy : as busy as a bee

hye (high) : an egle (eagle)

Or, if yow lyst to fleen as hye in the air

As dooth as egle whan hym list to soore,

Sq. 122-23.

light (light) : any jay, leef on lynde

As any jay she light was and jolyf,

Rv. 4154.

Be ay of chiere as light as leef on lynde,

Cl. 1211.

現代英語の S P :

light : as light as a feather

lowe (low) : oother

Men leyn that oon as lowe as lith that oother.

Mcp. 222.

round/rounded : appille (apple), a belle,
a belle of the presse

Of double worstede was his semycoppe,

That rounded as a belle of the presse.

Prol. 262-63.

And ryngge it out as round as gooth a belle,

Pard. 331.

Cf. As rounde as appille was his face --- RR. 819.

symple (simple) : dowve (dove)

Cf. And she was symple as dowve on tree. --- RR. 1219.

現代英語の S P :

simple : as simple as falling off a log

sharp (sharp) : brere (brier)

With thikke brustles of his berd unsofte,

Lyk to the skyn of houndfyssh, sharp as brere —

Mch. 1824-25.

現代英語の S P :

sharp : as sharp as a needle/tack/a razor

swift (swift) : fowel (fowl) in flight

Grehoundes he hadde as swift as fowel in flight;

Prol. 190.

現代英語における類語の S P :

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quick : as quick as lightening/a flash/thought

stille (still) : any stoon, lamb, mayde

This Nicholas sat ay as stille as stoon,

Mil. 3472.

“Ye ryde as coy and stille as dooth a mayde

Cl. 2.

In crepeth age alwey, as stille as stoon,

Cl. 121.

And as a lamb she sitteth meke and stille,

Cl. 538.

The bryde was broght abedde as stille as stoon ;

Mch. 1818.

Stant in the court as stille as any stoon.

Sq. 171.

現代英語における他の類語の S P :

dull : as dull as ditch water

quiet : as quiet as a mouse/the grave

silent : as silent as the grave

thikke (thick) : a branched ook (oak)

Were it as thikke as is a branched ook ;

Sq. 159.

現代英語における類語の S P :

thick : as thick as thieves [=very thick]

as thick as two short planks [=very stupid]

thin : as thin as a rake/lath/stick

upright (upright) : bolt

Wynsynge she was, as is a joly colt,

Long as a mast, and upright as a bolt.

Mil. 3263-64.

wight (=active) : a raa (roe)

I is ful wight, God waat, as is a raa ;

Rv. 4086.

現代英語における類語の S P :

dead : as dead as a/the dodo

as dead as a doornail

as dead as mutton

free : as free as a bird/air/the wind

3. その他

batailled (battled) : a castel wal (castle wall)

And batailled as it were a castel wal ;

NP. 2860.

dronken (drunk) : mous (mouse)

We faren as he that dronke is as a mous.

Kn. 1261.

Thou comest hoom as dronken as a mous,

WB. 246.

現代英語における mouse が、この同等比較構造で使用されている例は以下の通り :

as poor as a church mouse

as quiet as a mouse

現代英語における類語・反意語の S P :

drunk : as drunk as a lord

sober : as sober as a judge

famulier (familiar) : freend (friend)

That in his hous as famulier was he

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As it is possible any freend to be.

Sh. 31-32.

flekked (flecked) : pye (=magpie)

He was of foom al flekked as a pye.

CY. 565.

fressh (fresh) : the month of May, May,

the brighte someres (bright summer's) day

He was as fressh as is the month of May.

Prol. 92.

As fressh as is the brighte someres day.

Mch. 1896.

And been a feestlych man as fressh as May,

Sq. 281.

That highte Diania, fressh as May ;

Mk. 2120.

(現代英語で, May が使用された S P の例は, p. 62 を参照。)

Cf. And fressher than the May with floures newe —

Kn. 1037.

Cf. That fressher was and jolyer of array,

As to my doom, than is the month of May.

Fkl. 927-8.

現代英語における類語・反意語の S P :

fresh : as fresh as a daisy

old : as old as Adam/the hills

ugly : as ugly as sin

grym (grim) : as he were wood Cf. a grym leoun

The statue of Mars upon a carte stood

Armed, and looked grym as he were wood ;

Kn. 2041-42.

Cf. He looketh as it were a grym leoun,—NP. 3179.
pale (pale) : asshe colde (cold ashes)

His hewe falow and pale as asshe colde,

Kn. 1364.

現代英語における類語の S P :

pale : as pale as death

plain : as plain as a pikestaff / the nose on your /
someone's face

shameful (shameful) : [herte may devyse]

As shameful deeth as herte may devyse

Come to thise juges and hire advocatz !

Pard. 290-91.

siker (=sure) : hayl (hail)

For al so siker as cold engendreth hayl,

WB. 465.

Cf. Wel sikerer was his crowyng in his logge

Than is a clokke or an abbey orlogge.

NP. 2853-54.

現代英語における類語の S P :

sure : as sure as hell / egg is egg

right : as right as rain / ninepence / a trivet
as right as nails

smothe (smooth) : a strike of flex

But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of flex ;

Prol. 676.

Cf. As smothe it was as it were late shave.

Prol. 690.

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現代英語における類語の S P :

calm : as calm as a millpond

flat : as flat as a pancake

sweete (sweet) : the roote of lycorys, or of any cetewalle,
as bregot of the meeth or boord of apples,
the brembul flour

And he hymself as sweete as is the roote

Of lycorys, or of any cetewalle.

Mil. 3206-07.

His mouth was sweete as bragot or the meeth,

Or hoord of apples leyd in hey or heeth.

Mil. 3261-62.

And sweete as is the brembul flour

That bereth the rede hepe.

Th. 746-47.

現代英語における類語の S P :

pretty : as pretty as a picture

trewe (true) : any steel

But douteless, as trewe as any steel

I have a wyf, though that she povre be,

Mch. 2426-27.

vinolent (=full of wine) : botel in the spence

Al vinolent as botel in the spence.

Sum. 1931.

walkyng (=watchful) : swan

Me thynketh they been lyk Jovinyan,

Fat as a whale, and walkyng as a swan,

Al vinolent as botel in the spence.

Sum. 1929—31.

現代英語における類語の S P :

safe : as safe as houses

wery (weary) : beest

Wery and weet, as beest is in the reyn,

Rv. 4107.

Cf. As in a fourme sit a wery hare, —Sh. 104.

現代英語における反意語の S P :

sound : as sound as a bell

worth (worth) : the goode wyl (the good will)

for certes gold ne silver ben nat so muche

worth as the goode wyl of a trewe freend.'

Mel. 1159.

現代英語における他の類語の S P :

alike : as alike as two peas (in a pod)

like : as like as two peas (in a pod)

common : as common as muck

different : as different as chalk and cheese

cheap : as cheap as dirt

easy : as easy as pie/falling off a log

fit : as fit as a fiddle [=very healthy]

poor : as poor as a church mouse/Lazarus

rich : as rich as Croesus

slippery : as slippery as an eel

welcome : as welcome as the flowers in May

この VI) では、現代英語の同等比較構造に使用されている非常に多くの形容詞がそれぞれ、二つから三つの名詞を取っている。CTにおいて、CHが一つの形容詞に一つの名詞を固定させなかった一つの理由は、脚韻を合わせる

のに、その方がはるかに都合が良かったことが考えられる。

<おわりに>

以上見て来たように、現代英語においては、個々の形容詞がそれぞれ独自の名詞と密接に結び付き、完全な S P を形成している。それに対して、CTにおいて、この同等比較構造は、以下のような特徴をもつことがわかる。

S P として完全に確立しているものはまだまだ少なく、現代英語とまったく同じ結び付きをもつのは、つぎの 4 例のみである：

as bisy as bees

as derk as pich

as meke as a lomb

as proud as a pecok

付加されている名詞は、現代英語のものとは異なるが、CT では S P と一応見なしでも良いほど多く登場するのは：

as dronken as a mous

as fressh as the month of May

as stille as a stoon

as whit as morne milk

これに対して、意味の類似したいくつかの形容詞が、一つの共通した名詞と結び付いている場合が良くみられる：

stoon : hard, stiff, stille

jay : jolyf, murie, light

leon : fiers, wood, (grym)

pye : coltiss, flekked, joly, peert

形容詞と比較的密接に結び付いていた名詞が、現在では存在しなくなったり（例えば、payndemayn, pissemyre など）、その特徴や状況が当時とすっかり変わってしまい比較の対象となりにくくなったり（例えば、「白さ」を表

わすのに使用された *morne milk* は、現代社会では、酪農に従事している人以外にはほとんど見るができなくなってしまった)、形容詞の意味を強めるのに、より適切な他の名詞が選ばれたり(例えば、「広さ、大きさ」を表わすのには、CHが使用した *berne* よりも *life* の方が適切であろう)した中で、次第に一つの形容詞に対して、一つの名詞だけが選択され、それが固定し現代英語に見られる SP となったと考えられる。CTで使用されたものが、そのまま現代英語まで受け継がれた例は非常に少ないが、同一の形容詞に対して多種多様な名詞が使用され、その分だけ表現が豊かになり、また、使用する頻度もそれだけ高くなり、現代英語の同等比較構造を今日まで残し、現在見られるような SP を確立させるのに、大きく貢献してきたことは確かである。

<注>

1) この同等比較構造に対し、Nakao(pp. 232-33) は、「相関(原級)比較構造」(Correlative Comparison Construction)を、Miyake (pp. 50-1) は、「直」(Simile)を、Spearing (p. 98) は「伝統的比較」(Traditional Comparison)を名称として与えている。

2) *As...as* の起源については、Mustanoja (p. 278) や Nakao (pp. 232-33) を参照。

Cf. The omission of the first *as* may be due to rhythm (Kerkhof, p. 381).

3) The mocking alliterative comparison of pride to stagnant ditchwater (they both keep people at a distance) is traditional, but it is particularly appropriate to the fenny setting of the tale.

Spearing, p. 98.

4) Geniloun: Genilon or Ganelon, the traitor who betrayed Charlemagne's army at Roncevalles. For this deed he was torn to death by wild horses, according to the romance-writers.

Skeat, p. 170.

5) Goldfinches are brightly coloured and sing gaily.

Spearing, p. 111.

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6) This opening remark sets the tone of the description, which never loses sight of Alison's animal vitality. The comparison with a weasel, the first of several animal images, leaves a graphic impression of the slim sinuousness of her body ; and suggests in addition a sharp-witted cunning and quickness.

Winny,¹ pp. 60-1.

7) Perhaps Chaucer found the wisdom of Pallas in Vergil, Aen. v. 704.

Skeat, p. 262.

8) The animal images add comedy and establish at the same time a completely brutal assessment of life's possibilities, an attitude that was first brought to notice in the images of pike and bull.

Hussey, p. 93.

9) Elliott (p. 205) を参照。

<略語表>

ME	Middle English	Fri.	The Friar's Tale
Mod E	Modern English	Sum.	The Summoner's Tale
CH	Geoffrey Chaucer	Cl.	The Clerk's Tale
CT	The Canterbury Tales	Mch.	The Merchant's Tale
Prolog.	The General Prologue	Sq.	The Squire's Tale
Kn.	The Knight's Tale	Fkl.	The Franklin's Tale
Mil.	The Miller's Tale	SN.	The Second Nun's Tale
Rv.	The Reeve's Tale	CY.	The Canon's Yeoman's Tale
Co.	The Cook's Tale	Mcp.	The Manciple's Tale
ML.	The Man of Law's Tale	Pars.	The Parson's Tale
Sh.	The Shipman's Tale	BD.	The Book of the Duchess
Pri.	The Prioress's Tale	PF.	The Parlement of Foules
Th.	The Tale of Sir Thopas	TC.	Troilus and Criseyde
Mel.	The Tale of Melibeus	HF.	The House of Fame
Mk.	The Monk's Tale	LGW.	The Legend of Good Women
NP.	The Nun's Priest's Tale	RR.	The Romaunt of the Rose
Phy.	The Physician's Tale	OED	<i>The Oxford English</i>
Pard.	The Pardoner's Tale		<i>Dictionary</i>
WB.	The Wife of Bath's Tale		

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