

Tribhuvan University

Ecology in William Carlos Williams's Poems

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English, T.U.

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Arts in English

By

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Kirtipur, Kathmandu

May 2018

Tribhuvan University
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Letter of Recommendation

Deepti Regmi has completed her thesis entitled “Ecology in William Carlos Williams's Poems” under my supervision. She carried out her research from October 2017 to May 2018. I hereby recommend her thesis be submitted for Viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis, entitled “Ecology in William Carlos Williams's Poems” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Deepti Regmi has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my profound gratitude to my respected supervisor Mr. Hem Lal Pandey, Central Department of English, for his constant supervision and guidance. His vigorous efforts made me present this research work in this form.

I am also indebted to the Head of the Center Department of English Prof. Dr. Amma Raj Joshi for the valuable direction in concluding this research.

I would like to extend sincere acknowledgement to the entire group of professors, lecturers of the Department for their valued encouragement. My hearty respect goes to my parents, relatives and friends for their supportive role and inspiration for my study.

May 2018

Deepti Regmi

Ecology in William Carlos Williams's Poems

Abstract

This thesis entitled "Nature Centered Notion: Ecocritical Reading of Williams's Poems" is a ecocritical analysis of William Carlos Williams selected poems: "Queen Anne's Lace," "Red Wheelbarrow," "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus," "Paterson" and "Peace on Earth". From the perspective of ecocritical studies with reference to the text, I have come up with a finding that Williams explores the relationship between nature and human life in his writings. It adopts the theory of ecocriticism and ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and environment. It includes everything related to the human and non human elements i.e. hills, plants, trees, seas, animals, rock, soil etc. which are considered as a part of human world. Thus, the relationship between man and the environment are the most important concepts on the study of ecocriticism. Williams is a nature poet. His poems are based on beauty of nature and environment as well. Through his poems he suggests about the world wars that are worthless. For him nature is powerful and it gives solace to the human sufferings at the time of war. This paper presents that the preserving and conserving nature in the age of rapid progression on science and technology is important to get comfort in life, which is also the thematic perspective of Williams.

Key Words: Ecocriticism, Ecology, Environment, and Nature-Human

Interdependence

This research explores ecocritical issues in selected poems of William Carlos Williams. He was modernist but still he was a proto ecopoet. His poems "Queen Anne's Lace," "Red Wheelbarrow," "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus," "Paterson" and "Peace on Earth" depict the burning issues of environment. We love modern science and technology because we desire to have advanced and materialized life. But, due to unconscious and over ambitious production of modern science and technology, we are facing environmental pollution day by day. We are in the age of environmental degradation. So we need to spray environmental conscious to the people through mass media and literature. Hence I studied some poems of Williams through ecocritical point of view.

Modernist poet William Carlos Williams died in 1962 – a landmark year in the history of modern environmentalist movement. He did not live to see contemporary culture come to the deeper appreciation of humanity's place in the world which we now know as ecology. This paper focuses more on contemporary poetry which highlights environmental issues, known as ecopoetry. Not only pacing nature as the main theme of their poetry, ecopoets also try to reinterpret the relationship between human and nonhuman nature. One of the trends in literature nowadays is the increasing awareness towards environmental issue with the advent of ecocriticism. Ecocriticism focuses on the relationship between literature and the physical environment.

According to Worster, technological inventions and scientific discoveries were all directed towards achieving human control over the natural environment. It is the term "ecology" ("Okologie") mentioned in 1866. Ecology deals with organisms and their environment. It consists of all living beings, the natural surroundings in which they live, and their relationship to it. Haeckel defined it as the study of all

environmental conditions of existence. (22)

Furthermore, ecology is the branch of biology which studies the interactions among organisms and their environment. Ecology is not synonymous with environmental science. It overlaps with the closely related sciences of evolutionary biology, genetics, and ethology. An important focus for ecologists is to improve the understanding of how biodiversity affects ecological function. In this regard, Daniel Edmund Burke argues in his paper:

This study provides a guide to ecological and environmental qualities in the work of William Carlos Williams. It argues that although ecopoetics as a boarder field of American poetry has only come to defined and critically interrogated in the past few decades, Williams was clearly engaged (both implicitly and explicitly) in writing ecopoetry throughout his career during the first half of the twentieth century....Williams was ahead of his time...his appreciation for the interrelatedness of humanity and the natural world...his philosophical centering upon his local environment as an ecosystem. (1)

Most probably, the main purpose of being connected to environment is to make modern human beings conscious about optimal and sustainable use of natural resources. Williams establishes a focus on nature and a central theme of the cyclic progression in the natural world including human beings. We can get about the valorization of nature in the poems of Williams. As he was a doctor, he might have studied the nature through the perspective of medicine with healing power. In this sense, he connects the nature with human beings and vice versa. And as a poet, he wants to spread the awareness of environmental consciousness through his literature.

In spite of these entire facts, researcher's motto here is to find some burning issues of environment presented in the poems and its politics of portraying

environmental issues. Since today's most burning issue of the world is to address environmental problems, mass media and literature play vital role to make human beings conscious for the use of natural resources. I believe that not only today's literature brings environmental issues in the surface, literature before the emergence of ecocriticism has also raised the issues of environment very sincerely. So Williams, being modernist and imagist, vividly depicts human weaknesses critiquing malevolent nature of modern human beings.

The main thrust of this thesis is to display how environment is taken in the age of modernism. Modernist writers most often write encouraging on new innovation and technology. They valorize for the maximum utilization of nature rather than its preservation and conservation. Due to rapid progression on modern science and technology, our environment is constantly changing day by day. So, it is generally agreed that modern environmentalism begins with "Silent Spring" in Rachel Carson's book which opens with the following words:

There was once a town in the heart of America where all life seemed to live in harmony with its surroundings and, invoking the ancient tradition of the pastoral, goes on to paint a picture of 'prosperous farm', 'green fields', foxes barking in the hills, silent deer, ferns and wildflowers, countless birds' and trout lying in clear, cold streams, all delighted in by those who pass through the town. (21)

Moreover, these above mentioned lines give the impression that the novel is a log of events and a tale of what might be in the future if present practises and the use of pesticides were allowed to continue. That beautiful past with the nature remains only in the imagination. So, here Carson describes the elements of nature and wildlife to express the idyllic surrounding of the town. He uses language of melodrama to

inspire the reader's admiration for the beauty and harmony. But this beauty is not with the today's people of America.

As our environment changes, so does the need to become increasingly aware of the problems that surround it. Global warming has become an undisputed fact about our current livelihood. Our planet is warming up and we are definitely part of the problem. Current environmental problems make us vulnerable to disasters and tragedies now and in the future. Pollution, global warming and overpopulation are the major environmental concerns of today's world. At the same time, with the daily advances of technology in the modern society, we witness that modern society is filled with man's fragmented mentality, as a result of modern and postmodern views about life.

This study, on the one hand, helps us to find out how the environment is taken and, on the other hand, when we study past literature from today's perspective it becomes more effective to deliver good message to the readers. Unless we address the various issues seriously we are surely doomed for disaster.

The modern environmentalist movement as it emerged first in the late nineteenth century and, in its incarnation in the 1960s, gave array of fictional and nonfictional writings concerned with humans' changing relationship to the natural world. But here, researcher was more interested to search how interaction between human-environment and physical environment is going on in the poems of Williams. Some interesting questions, how environment is taken as before the issue of "ecocriticism" emerged in; Does Williams only depict physical world or he also raises environmental issues in the age of World War? How nature and human relationship in his poems is presented? How he treats nature to be? Such types of questions emerged in my mind and guided me to write my thesis on this topic. With this research paper,

researcher argues that American poet Williams seems nostalgic in his poems. He is nature lover poet as Romantic poets are. His poems are realistic along with fictional and imaginative setting; he shows fragmentation, disorder, illusion and confusion in his poems which is the demand of the contemporary world. Portraying lots of crisis in human life and environment, he is seeking its solution. And, this research studied the poems of Williams from today's ecological perspective, so it becomes helpful to convey the message to the people of postmodern era how important the nature is.

Greg Garrard argues that literature and environmental studies commonly called "ecocriticism" in analogy to the more general term literary criticism "comprise an eclectic, pluriform, and cross-disciplinary initiative that aims to explore the environmental dimensions of literature and other creative media in a spirit of environmental concern not limited to any one method or commitment" (417).

Ecocriticism is unique amongst contemporary literary and cultural theories because of its close relationship with the science of ecology. Garrard further explains:

Ecocriticism is an avowedly political mode of analysis, as the comparison with feminism and Marxism suggests. Ecocritics generally tie their cultural analysis explicitly to a 'green' moral and political agenda . . . ecocriticism is closely related environmentally oriented developments in philosophy and political theory. Developing the insights of earlier critical movements, ecofeminists, social ecologists and environmental justice advocates seek a synthesis of environmental and social concerns. (3)

Similarly, in Cheryl Glotfelty's view, "Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment" (85). Ecocriticism can be characterized by distinguishing it from other critical approaches because it expands the notion of "the world" to include the whole ecosphere. Glotfelty writes:

Ecological criticism shares the fundamental promise that human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it. Ecocriticism takes as its subject the interconnection between nature and culture, specifically the cultural artifacts of language and literature. . . . It has one foot in literature and other on land; as a theoretical discourse, it negotiates between the human and the nonhuman. (85)

Ecocriticism begins from the conviction that the arts of imagination and the study thereof—by virtue of their grasp of the power of word, story, and image to reinforce, enliven, and direct environmental concern can contribute significantly to the understanding of environmental problems: the multiple forms of ecodegradation that afflict planet Earth today. In this, ecocriticism concerns with other branches of the environmental humanities, ethics, history, religious studies, anthropology, humanistic geography, in holding that environmental phenomena must be comprehended, and that today's burgeoning array of environmental concerns must be addressed qualitatively as well as quantitatively. At least as fundamental to their remediation as scientific breakthroughs and strengthened regimes of policy implementation is the impetus of creative imagination, vision, will, and belief. Though the poet W.H. Auden famously wrote, "poetry makes nothing happen" in and of itself, the outside-the-box thought experiments of literature and other media can offer unique resources for activating concern and creative thinking about the planet's environmental future. By themselves, creative depictions of environmental harmfulness are unlikely to free societies from lifestyles that depend on radically transforming ecosystems. In this very regard, researcher taking the supports of some environmentalists, try to see what the weaknesses of human beings are presented in the poems of Williams regarding environment and how he becomes able to spread the knowledge of environmental

science in the age of rapid progression on science and technology.

In researcher's eyes, Williams is not that much different from environmentalists because if we study his poems in deep level, a kind of nostalgia can be seen. When we talk about nature and environment in literature, at that time we remember romantic poets because they have composed their arts making nature in the centre. They seem nostalgic due to rapid progression on science and technology. Similarly, Williams seems nostalgic in his poems, this nostalgia is seen maybe due to the continuity of World War and great economic depression of 1930s. The society of the time was fragmented and disordered due to World Wars; hence his poems are also fragmented and disordered. These disordered poems show lively situation of contemporary time. "Queen Anne's Lace", "Red Wheelbarrow", "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus", "Paterson", and "Peace on Earth" are some interesting and important poems of Williams and they are filled with environmental issues. No doubt multiplicity exists in his poems but the issue of environmental crisis is raised more importantly. With this thesis project, researcher argues that fragmented, destroyed and devastative picture of human beings can be seen in Carlos's poems but he does not only picturize the real world after World Wars, he also connects human beings with nature to make human beings conscious about nature. The main thrust of writing poetry for Williams is to bring peace and solace in the Earth. He does not valorize science and technology rather he constantly appeals us to address on environmental problems.

Obviously, modernist writers have tried to make literature 'new' in its form, content, language, versification and developed the idea of imagism, explicit theme and fragmentation due to the devastative and destructive nature of World War First and World War Second. Williams's poems are also mostly filled with modernist style

of writing. But he does not only show devastative, destructive and fragmented life of human beings, he also sees beautiful aspects of life: individual freedom, social welfare and solace in nature. Pyeaam Abbasi, in his paper “A Comparative Study of William Carlos Williams's “Pastoral” and Thomas Hardy’s “The Darkling Thrush,” states “William is more an observer of beauty” (1). One thing we can find in Williams's poetry is to explore human behaviour and activities in the present rather than in the past and future. Pyeaam, moreover, states: “Williams can participate in the sparrow’s joy and hoping since many of his poems refer to the nature in order to explore human behavior and human life” (4). Here, a small tiny bird’s joy can be taken as the symbol of willingness of joy of a poor human being in the age of World Wars and great economic depression. Here, speaker of the poem desires to have free and solace life of human beings. He enjoys with the songs of a little sparrow and wants to be as a sparrow but the environment and the situation is not in his favor. He seems nostalgic because of the destruction of the world. If we see only denotative meaning of the poem, we certainly not get the politics of writing this poem. The connotative meaning of this poem is to make so called materialized and advanced people think about the freedom of all beings. Sparrow is the representative of nature. If nature is healthy and happy at that time all the animals and human beings become happy and healthy. He supports to establish harmonious relationship between human beings and animals too. Moreover, Williams has also supported individual freedom; for an example we can see how Wordsworth describes Daffodils in his poem. “I wandered lonely as a cloud / That floats on high o’er vales and hills / When all at once I saw a crowd” (1- 3). Here, Wordsworth takes “daffodils” as the symbol of human beings. In reality daffodils cannot dance but he gives the quality of dancing to them, so they denote to the freedom and fantastic life of “thousand” (11) of human beings.

This concept of Wordsworth is derived in Williams's poem- "Pastoral," too. This urges researcher to seek glorification of environment in Williams's poems. One can be happy and dance as daffodils and also dance as a sparrow when the nature is cheerful and wonderful. Each and every aspect of human life is connected to nature so in Williams's view too there should be harmonious relationship between human and nonhuman.

Williams's book length poem "Paterson" also can study from ecocritical point of view. In "Greening the Lyre: Environmental Poetics and Ethics", David Gilcrest argues "our attitudes toward the natural environment will only change as a result of "environmental crisis" (22). Although this prediction is apt, as evidenced by the rise of resistance to environmentalism over the past decades, it implies that such environmental crisis must physically devastate the Earth before action will be taken. Such a model of apocalyptic environmental activism, however, has proven to be ineffective. Many contemporary readers are turned off by this brand of environmentalism because it predicts ruin without the hope of preventing it. As such, it is about how Gilcrest's claim can be examined through the poetry of William Carlos Williams, one of the best-known American poets of the twentieth century, here. In this paper it is argued that ecopoetics in William Carlos Williams' long poem "Paterson" allows crisis to occur in a text, creating both a material and allegorical poetic experience for the historically situated contemporary reader. It is considered how language becomes material in the text and argues that the physicality of the words, which appears to be formally and structurally impacted by the natural disasters described in the text, may function as allegory for present-day environmental concerns.

William Carlos Williams is often seen as a proto-ecopoet. Writing well before

the rise of mainstream environmentalism in America, Williams' integration of ecological concern into his poetry is beyond compare to his contemporaries. In "Paterson", the union of the imagined poetic world and environmental crisis is most evident. Divided into five books and set in Paterson, New Jersey, uses language as a physical force that is impacted on the page by the environmental catastrophes that plagued "Paterson". In other words, Williams integrates real disasters into his imagined poetic world and allows the text's meaning to be altered, confused, and sometimes destroyed by them. As the text is impacted by the poetic space and the historical documents embedded within it, readers are encouraged to intertwine the real and the poetic realms. In doing so, they become aware of the ways in which "Paterson" acts both materially and allegorically. Its material significance emerges through words that stand in as physical objects, thus demonstrating the interconnections between the real and the imagined. The Allegorical power lies in its potential to evoke the historically situated reader's responses to recent environmental disasters through the formal and linguistic havoc of poetic crises. As such, "Paterson" gains ecopolitical power by encouraging readers both to acknowledge the prospect of utter devastation through textual catastrophe and to allow the allegory to inform his or her interpretation of environmental threats.

Allegory has long been used as a tool for inspiring social and political change. In article, "Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global", Ursula Heise considers allegory as a method of gauging perceptions of the environment and its future. Looking specifically at how the image of the blue planet has influenced contemporary environmental attitudes, Heise highlights the value of allegory to inspire such change. She argues: The influence of the image of the Blue Planet floating in space is palpable in ... conceptualizations of Earth as a spaceship

with finite resources for survival, an allegory that highlights the sophistication and fragility of this extremely complex system as much as its self-enclosure” (25).

In this sense, a particular representation of the Earth reveals something that we had not previously considered. Like Heise’s “Blue Planet”, Williams’ “Paterson” raises awareness about the frailty of the real world through an artistic project. In relation to environmentalism, allegory seems to be an effective strategy because it reveals the importance of change without becoming admonitory.

Despite the presence of allegory in environmentalist discourse, critics have not read Williams’ work as an allegory for current environmental crises because it was written before most pressing contemporary environmental issues became evident. To be clear, this poem does not argue that Williams attempted to write an allegory of problems that were not yet realized during his time, but rather that the poem’s themes of environmental destruction and crises may be useful in understanding the devastating consequences of the contemporary environmental crisis and in promoting personal and political change. Although most scholars have not yet read “Paterson” as an allegory, many have pointed toward both Williams’ concern for the environment and the connections between the physical and the poetic worlds in “Paterson”. This critical attention signals the poet’s profound interest in the environmental disasters that occurred during his lifetime and allows for further extrapolation of how the historical events represented in the book might inform today’s reader as he or she confronts new waves of environmental devastation. Lawrence Buell and Lee Rozelle have interpreted Williams’ conflation of man and city as a shift from traditional anthropocentric writing to an ecocentric poetics in which the human body and the environment interrelate. According to Buell, the poet’s “desire to break down fixed boundaries between man [sic], poet, [and] dog” reflects not only humanity’s union

with nature but also the ability of language to integrate human and city, nature and poem, material reality and text (115). The blurring of this distinction between the physical world and the poetic realm in Paterson and its material and allegorical impact on the reader who is thoroughly grounded in their own social, material, and historical context, allows him or her to more readily register the ongoing environmental problems that face the world today.

I do not think that the importance of locality and the geographical and historical references can be overemphasized if we are to feel the impact of Williams's drive from the particular to general. By focusing on the local landscape, as well as its history and its people, Williams is able to transcend place and time in his attempts to universalize "Paterson". Just as, in ecology, naturalists tend to work within a given ecosystem, so does Williams in "Paterson".

This fusion of the physical with the poetic environment in "Paterson" is largely explained by understanding how Williams fits within the genre of ecopoetics, a branch of nature poetry that typically uses unique formal structures to convey a lived experience in text. In a seminal text on ecopoetics, "Sustainable Poetry: Four American Ecopoets", Leonard Scigaj argues that ecopoets "record moments of nondualistic inhabitation in specific places where the experience occurs only when the noise of human ratiocination, including the fabrications of language, has been silenced" (8). Scigaj explains ecopoetry as a record of oneness between humans and their environment, in which reason, language, thought, and even the self are "silenced" (8). The ecopoem is, then, a place in which a moment in the materiality of the world is preserved. In *Ecopoetry: A Critical Introduction*, Bryson observes that ecopoetics involves "an intense skepticism concerning hyperrationality, a skepticism that usually leads to an indictment of an over technologized world and a warning

concerning the very real potential for ecological catastrophe” (5-6). While Scigaj argues that ecopoetry is primarily about expressing an experience with as little distortion from human language and thought as possible, Bryson contends that it is a mode of activism. In fact, ecopoetry is often somewhere in between these two poles. Eco-poets frequently seek environmental change, but they do so through radical new poetic forms and perspectives on nature. This is perhaps best illustrated in Williams’ writing as he deploys words as material objects, but in doing so, creates a poem with real-world implications. In earlier short poems like “The Wind Increases” and “Rain,” and in one of his most popular later poems— Paterson—language attains a materiality as Williams uses words as objects and allows natural forces to shape the spatial arrangement of the text. Through the poetic world, the reader sees the effects of disasters at the local level. Rather than witnessing a flood that obliterates an area too far removed from the viewer’s psyche to warrant real concern or action, the poem demonstrates the utter destruction brought on by disaster within the more accessible poetic world that the words create. For readers who are experiencing the ways in which climate change has been environmentally and socially devastating, “ Paterson” may inspire ecopolitical awareness and action. The interplay between the poem and its physical environment is represented both contextually and formally. In “ Paterson”, poetic language and landscape become interrelated as reality is expressed through the imagination and the two forces begin to act upon each other: “The province of the poem is the world. When the sun rises, it rises in the poem and when it sets darkness comes down and the poem is dark” (Williams 100) The “sun rises” and “sets” on the poem, as it sets on the planet. The poem, then, is not only a space for words on the page, but it is a place in itself, a “world” of imagined reality.

The poems of Williams can be found paying attention on common things,

human nature, environment and rustic activities. He uses very simple words, the language of common human being. In this regard, Hsiao clearly states, “Ezra Pound announced that the Modernist poet’s vocation was to “purify the language of the tribe””; Williams, on the other hand, continues the Romantic poet’s project of discovering that the purest language toils in the mud of use” (197). We can see his poems’ titles “Red Wheel Barrow,” “Pastoral,” “The Nightingale” and etc which all are simple and simply elaborated. Williams develops a theory “no idea but the things,” I think, this idea is further extension of Wordsworth’s theory. Williams gives priority to very simple and rustic things in his poems, it urges us to think how equally important all things in the world are. So it can be argued that we can get benevolent theme in his poems.

Composed in Williams's fourth collection of poems *Sour Grapes*, in 1921 “Queen Anne’s Lace” is one of the most notable poems of his creation. There is no so much difference between the ‘love poem’ of romantic writers and “Queen Anne’s Lace.” I think through this poem, the poet may try to show harmonious relationship between love and lover, human beings and nature and among human beings in the age of World Wars. To make materialized, selfish and individualist human beings more concern on ‘love’, ‘way of living’ and nature probably Williams has applied romantic mode in this poem.

The title of this poem - “Queen Anne’s Lace” is the name of a common wild flower, but the first words of the poem, “Her body,” (1) certainly gives us hints that the poem is not only about a flower, rather it is also about a human beings. Or let me say, in a way of interpretation, a flower “Queen Anne’s Lace” is indirectly a woman in the poem. Hence, a woman is described through the eyes of a flower. If we observe this poem in a surface level, it is more similar to the “Sonnet 130” composed by

Shakespeare in which natural objects are taken to compare his beloved. Likewise, Williams tries to establish from the beginning that his love is real. And, similarly, the poem “She Was a Phantom of Delight.” Wordsworth describes his lover first as an ideally beautiful and charming woman, “She was a phantom of delight” (1). Then he takes her as a pleasant companion and a housewife and finally he behaves his beloved as an intellectual and moral being who is capable of guiding him. He begins first part of poem with a distant view which demonstrates an illusion but he ends the poem to a more realistic and spiritual view of his sweetheart. Williams’s poem- “Queen Annie’s Lace” is also similar to the poem “She Was a Phantom of Delight” in the sense that both poems talk about their lover comparing her with nature. It can be easily argued that the subject matter of the poems is love and nature:

Her body is not so white as
 anemone petals nor so smooth- nor
 so remote a thing. It is a field
 of the wild carrot taking
 the field by force; the grass
 does not raise above it. (1-6)

The title of the poem comes from the name of a flower that grows in open grassy fields, and being white, which is identified with the image of female like vulnerable, tender, fragile, beautiful, and transient flower. But the poet refuses to identify the female with flower and replaces it with the image of 'field'; the woman is more like a field, creative or fertile and sustaining life. He then removes the woman's body from decorative images of flowers and asks us to think in terms of a field. Williams establishes from the beginning that their love is real, not ideal, and the beloved is quite human and imperfect.

Here, the first words of the poem, “Her body” immediately gives a human dimension. The poet compares the woman with nature. The woman is described in terms of what she is not. The “white” of this flower symbolizes impurity. The poet's love of the flower brings his entire attention to bear on that single thing of nature. Williams was a doctor as well as a poet. He might have used flowers, wild carrot and herbs as medicine as the part of healing power.

Here is no question of whiteness,
white as can be, with a purple mole
at the center of each flower. (7 - 9)

Rich in metaphor, this poem depicts the conflict between qualities of purity and passion, symbolized by colors white and purple. There is no creation, in nature or art, without a “white desire”.

Williams also establishes the view that his love is real but not ideal. The beloved of the speaker is described in terms of what she is “not” in the poems at first. Here, she is neither as “white” (1) nor as “smooth” (2) as the “anemone” (2). With the help of two dominant senses, sight and touch, the lover describes his beloved. The healing power of art is illuminated in poems that mend the split between art and experience, body and spirit, self and world, ideas and things, sex and love. In "Queen- Annies - Lace", that healing force is nature. The poet's love of the flower brings his entire attention to bear on single thing of nature. Williams loves art of natural things, and many readers have noticed the "painterly" aspects of Williams's writing. In his poems; close observation, careful use of color, and visual arrangement of words and lines are found. The painting like images of natural things like, field, green grasses, flowers etc are the parts of environment that makes to run the livings and makes the environment beautiful.

Overall, this poem is about nature and at the same time it is also about "love";
 Each flower is a hand's span
 of her whiteness. Wherever
 his hand has lain there is
 a tiny purple blemish. Each part
 is a blossom under his touch. (10-14)

The poet describes the flower, especially whiteness of the flower. The 'flower' described in the poem has symbolic meaning. The poet is more like a spectator so he describes what he has seen and felt while observing natural object. At the first reading of the poem, it becomes confusing to understand what anemone and wild carrot denote to. Here, anemone is a wild flower which is also taken as the incarnation of Adonis. It is red, purple and white in its color. As for the wild carrot, it has a very beautiful nickname- Queen Annie's Lace. In the first sentence, the speaker says, "Her body is not so white as / anemone petals" (1 - 2). We can easily guess that the first word of the poem is "Her" which refers to a female. So it means speaker of the poem is not only describing a flower. Here, a white flower is personified and given human qualities. It may suggest that this unknown lady is virgin and pure or let me say the qualities of anemone flower are given to her. We know that white connotes light, purity, innocent and virgin. As for the fourth sentence, the lady's lover tends to take care of her, "his hand has lain there" (12). The word "hand" on the surface of a white flower is very symbolic. The speaker, here, maybe wants to care her or he should have sexually oriented mind in his unconscious level. "Each part / is a blossom under his touch" (13 - 14) also supports the idea mentioned above. The lady is so beautiful because of her lover's love toward her. With the nourishment of love, the lady looks even more beautiful. Next "the whole field is/ a white desire, empty, a single stem, / a

cluster, flower by flower, / a pious wish” also has some special meaning. It is a metaphor. The field of the Queen Anne’s lace is a white desire, which may suggest that Queen Anne’s lace is the lady and that the desire is to be with the man. Here, poet successfully depicts the image of his/her beloved through the image of a flower. In the image of a wild flower, a loved one is described. It is clear to feel us that poet is connecting human being with natural object. In the period of war and great economic depression too what human beings need is love and to get love one should be able to respect the nature.

Here, main motto of presenting this poem is to see it from environmental point of view. Not in surface level but in depth Williams prays for the beauty of nature. He composes his poems about nature, individual self and he also valorizes individual experience too. Similarly, “Queen Anne’s Lace” is also a natural object. It is very simple flower in the sense that most of the writers take the example of “Rose” flower to describe their beloved in English literature. But Williams has become able to depict his beloved through the description of a “wild carrot” (4). What Wordsworth focuses on “Preface to the Lyrical Ballads” is rustic and rural life as the subject matter of the poem. I think the concept of Wordsworth is applied while choosing the title of the poem “Queen Anne’s Lace” because it is also an exotic-“wild carrot” as he has mentioned. Speaker is describing a flower which has different color even in a single flower. Williams says that a poet should have “straight observation” on a thing and should describe it in clear manner. But he is not clear about what he has said in this poem. In reality the speaker is observing a field of “Queen Anne’s Lace” as the sun’s rays touch it.

Williams has based his poem in the natural surroundings and try to get “sublime” feeling from the nature as does by romantics. Main motto of glorifying

nature is to make human beings conscious about optimal use of natural resources. If we study romantic writers including Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats, we will certainly understand the value of depicting nature in this postmodern era in which human beings are destroying nature very unconsciously for the purpose of material gaining. First World War and Second World War had been destroying the world. Human beings were facing environmental crisis in Modern age. Anxieties and crisis were increasing day by day. People were facing great economical depression. In this very critical period, in my view, a notable poet or a writer should write his/her poems/writings making human beings conscious about nature. So, here, I am trying to explore the existence of natural consciousness in one of the most quoted poem "Red Wheelbarrow" composed by Williams in the age of Modernism although many critics have said that there is no natural consciousness.

If we interpret poem, "Red Wheelbarrow", today, the concept of ecocriticism cannot be ignored. According to Stuart Hall, "neither things in themselves nor the individual users of the language can fix meaning in language" (25). If we support the concept of Hall, we can interpret this poem through environmental consciousness, which was usually done by Williams. Why the writer valorizes the nature, why he sees solace in the nature and why he pulls us to nature is very important to acknowledge in this 21st era, in my view. Yes, the contemporary world was the era of industrial revolution throughout the world. Science and technology was in advance level. Human beings were trying to control over nature. In this critical period, I think Williams focuses his writings on the glorification of nature because of that so called industrialists would understand the value of nature. The poem "Red Wheelbarrow" makes us conscious about nature. Connotative meaning of this poem is to teach human beings about environmental consciousness.

“The Red Wheelbarrow,” which is taken as modernist poem, has environmental issues. The first line “So much depends / upon” (1 - 2) has negative meaning on itself. In general, depending on something unnecessarily is not good. We, human beings are so much depending upon “a red wheel / barrow” (3 - 4) can interpret as we are more and more consuming modern science and technology. Main motto of human beings of this time is to be materialist; it seems in American people after the World Wars. Nature is neglected in this modern and postmodern era. It cannot be ignored that this poem is trying to make human beings conscious about nature:

so much depends
 upon
 a red wheel
 barrow
 glazed with rain
 water
 beside the white
 chickens. (1 - 8)

Production rate of modern science is increasing day by day. Unnecessary things are also being produced for the satisfaction of human beings. These things are, primarily, destroying the nature. It is important to identify the relation between “the white chickens” and “red wheel barrow” presented in the poem. The chickens are white, probably suggesting that this is a pure and sacred, uncorrupted and honest profession. There is also peace in this natural and simple mode of a farmer. In my perception, there is no purpose of wheelbarrow to the “chickens” and thus nature is making it ‘glazed’ or red wheelbarrow is glazed by “rainwater”. It all suggests us that natural

power can destroy all human made things. Does not this poem highly glorify nature? Depending only upon technology is harmful and at the same time over production of unnecessary things like red wheelbarrow is not good. Williams claims that nature is so powerful that it can destroy human-made-things; so daydream of human beings to control over nature is worthless.

Similarly, Williams's poem "Peace on Earth" depicts the picture of the World Wars. He describes the bitter reality of the war in the poem. Yes, one could easily say that this poem is modernist poem because it uses images, fragmented, disordered and illusive life of human beings. But, I think, while analyzing the poem we should not forget to elaborate what the intended meaning of the poem is. If we give a short glance to its implied meaning certainly we can see 'nostalgia' for the loss of beauty of nature:

The ARCHER is wake!

The Swan is flying!

Gold against blue

An Arrow is lying.

There is hunting in heaven.

Sleep safe till tomorrow. (1 - 6)

It, undoubtedly, captures the image of the World Wars. Capitalized word "ARCHER" (1) denotes the fighter who is awaked means the war is started. Because of that "Swan is flying" (2) in the sky. Arrows are lying in the fields or let me say bombs are lying/ blasting because "there is hunting in the heaven" (5). So he requests human beings to be safe till tomorrow. It is the connotative meaning of the poem which seems modernist. But one should not forget what the politics of writing this poem is in the period of World Wars:

The Bears are abroad!

The Eagle is Screaming!

Gold against blue

Their eyes are gleaming!

Sleep!

Sleep safe till tomorrow. (7 - 12)

Obviously, “The Swan is flying! / The bears are abroad! / The Eagle is screaming!” show that poet is feeling unhappy. Exclamation marks also indicate the nostalgic feeling of the speaker while the wild-life was vanishing from America due to the Wars. During wars people were suffering from attacks. It has become the luck to be safe still tomorrow. Even the bears are not in the jungle, eagles too are screaming, gold is turning into blue. These are the very moments during war. Here, Williams seems to be conscious towards the nature and environment and tries to aware the people about the affects of modern science and technologies:

The Sisters lie

With their arms intertwining;

Gold against blue

Their hair is shining!

The Serpent writhes!

Orion is listening!

Gold against blue

His sword is glistening!

Sleep!

There is hunting in heaven-

Sleep safe till tomorrow. (13 - 23)

Modernity and the beginning city life are the things many of poets seem to hate. Pastoral setting in the poetry of Williams also indicates it. For poet, the city was a place that excited the mind far too much and dulled one's ability to think clearly and purely. This point of view conveys nostalgia for the times in which society was less centered on urban life. Similarly, it can be seen as a sense of longing for the past in the poem too. Williams writes what he sees as it is. If we ignore to elaborate his poems using poetic devices, at that time most of his poems do not seem as poems. Multiplicity can be applied in his poems.

Similarly, the abnormal activities of "swan", "eagle" and "bear" are also taken as the indication of war. That is why, speaker is requesting to be safe from the war. Specially, imagist poets most often do not use imperative language but here Williams repeatedly uses imperative language, "Sleep / Sleep safe till tomorrow" (6). The use of full-stop-mark at the end of every line of "Sleep safe till tomorrow." indicates that there is no hope of life; life may end by tomorrow too. So, here, what I get is that, Williams is indirectly praying for the end of war. Presentation of only problematic situation is also the indication of searching for its solution. Thus, the speaker of the poem is searching for "Peace on Earth". And, at the same time, we can see optimistic idea that if the people be safe till tomorrow, the war may end and they all will survive; a sort of ambiguity can be seen here.

Furthermore, using mythical character, Icarus, Williams tries to convey us that nature is more powerful than we human beings. An interest in the mystic and supernatural power cannot be found in modernist writers but an imagist poet- Williams frequently writes "There is hunting in heaven" (5). Heaven is abstract and mythological. Heaven is taken as utopian world but unbelievably there is hunting; a kind of paradox can also be found here. Here, the world is taken as the concept of

heaven, since heaven is taken as utopian world. Poet desires to make world as utopia but human beings themselves are hindrance to it. For him war is the main cause of destroying nature. Similarly, his poem “Landscape with the Fall of Icarus” is highly modernist poem but it cannot be ignored that there is the use of mythical figure- “Icarus.” Here also portrayal character-Icarus is the representative character of modern people, who are over ambitious, and want to challenge the nature like Icarus. But poet is clear in his vision in the sense that if we people challenge ecosystem and rule of the nature, we will certainly be drowning like Icarus:

unsignificantly
 off the coast
 there was
 a splash quite unnoticed
 that was
 Icarus drowning. (16-21)

In this poem, Williams creates a vivid image of the surrounding landscape. He describes the natural world. The tone of the poem begins with joy and happiness in the nature until the realization that Icarus is going to die. Nature is pure, powerful, colorful but it can take the human’s life because of the human’s nature. The same condition happens with Icarus: both father and son were happy to fly in the sky but it’s of the nature of Icarus that he couldn’t controll himself and fell down into the sea. It is the nature that saves our life and we have to save the nature. At the same time humans need to be careful towards the nature and from the nature. This shows the interrelationship between nature and human’s nature. “Icarus drowning” demonstrates the drowning of the world and human beings.

In Williams's poems too, we can sense some concept of nostalgia. In my view,

stating series of problems is also a kind of revelation of sense of guilt of the past. His poems are about common things and written in common language. That is why, an uneducated native speaker too understands his poems, which is beautiful aspect of his poems. Through simple and effective poems, Williams tries to convince modern human beings that; unconscious use of nature causes human life damaged. And, he also suggests us that World Wars are worthless; 'love' is powerful thing that makes human life harmonious and beautiful. So researcher's claim is that though Williams is proto-ecopoet, his poems are about nature. We can get the message of conserving and preserving nature. In the age of rapid progression on science and technology, too, he raises the issue of ecocriticism. His poems are still worth reading because they deliver the message of love and peace on the earth; they deliver the message of sustainable development in the world.

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